

macCompanion

YOUR GUIDE TO ALL THINGS MACINTOSH

March



Madness

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In addition, thanks to you, our readers, who make this effort all possible.

Data Center Express



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The Data Center Express is the first ever secure, fully integrated, completely flexible and remotely managed data center designed specifically for smaller organizations.

Data Center Express Overview

Evo Network's Data Center Express (DCE) is the only fully integrated, completely flexible and remotely managed data center designed specifically for small organizations with 5 to 100 users. The DCE features integrated security, collaboration services, disaster recovery, and remote access. All of which, scale to meet future business demands. This is a true enterprise class data center solution for a fraction of the price. Best of all, no in-house IT staff is required.



The IT Challenges Your Small Business Faces

As small businesses grow, they begin to accumulate a hodgepodge of computing technology. While this may seem like the nature of the beast, trying to use and control the growth of an IT infrastructure that was never designed to work together becomes a nightmare to manage, expensive to repair (what was your last IT support bill), and in the end isn't even very reliable or secure.

With the IT industry as fast paced and complex as it is, SB owners and managers find it hard to create and maintain an IT solution that provides a reliable, secure and scalable infrastructure that eases the communication of information and ideas with the organization, its partners and its clients.

The Data Center Express Solution

The DCE was designed specifically to address these challenges. It combines industry standard technology to create an all-in-one solution designed to work together, but more importantly designed to work for your business.

Integrated security, collaboration services, disaster recovery and remote access make this a true enterprise class data center solution for a fraction of the price of typical data centers.

This scalable solution also means your business can continue to grow and evolve without having to "rip-and replace" the DCE or its components.

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DCE At A Glance

- Single solution for storing and managing data in your organization with up to 1.5 terabytes of storage (1500 GB)
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Secure Your Information

Simplify Collaboration

Insure Against Disaster

Eliminate IT Headaches

Evolves With Your Business

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Columns

Letter from the CEO

March Madness?

By Robert Pritchett

Are we all going crazy?

The cost of living is ratcheting up and many are struggling to make ends meet. The so-called safety net is in tatters, the national borders have been breached and the signs of the times are being made manifest.

Meanwhile, Apple goes on about its business as we watch from the sidelines. The rest of the computer industry is falling on its face and Apple is skipping right along like a little girl without a care.

The world is at war with itself and humanity is pushing the self-destruct button, but we somehow feel immune to the effects. Why is that?

Probably because the Mac is a safe-haven from the rest of the world. Not perfect, but perhaps the best we can get at the moment to help us get our jobs done and spend some quality time with our loved ones.

Wishful thinking? Perhaps.

I took a day off recently and spent it with the e3Washington (Education, Environment, Economy) crowd - <http://www.e3washington.org/Results/Results/TCe3/> when I could have been working to put food in my family's mouths instead. I listened to folks pray to their creator as Nez Perce Indians, worked in groups with predetermined agendas and goals regarding the environment and handed out business cards as part of a "Share Fair". I can't help but think this is part of the feel-good scenario being orchestrated by the Environmentalist religion. Sorry, that is my observation and I'm sticking to that story. This crowd knows more or less my feelings now too. I'm interested in pursuing the truth and not dwelling so much on the so-called "Crisis" issues that end up taking more of our god-given freedoms away from us by well-meaning folks who wish to coddle and save us from ourselves.

Among other things, I listened to Lindsay Williams talk about his experiences up in Prudhoe Bay in the 1970's - http://peswiki.com/index.php/Site:LRP:The_Energy_Non-Crisis and he wrote;

"I am convinced that there is a definite reason, and at this point I move from observations to personal opinion. There is only one thing on earth by which every human being can be controlled, if that product itself is controlled. That product is energy. The world today has

become dependent on energy—for its homes, its lights, its fuel, its automobiles, its airplanes, its trucking industry, its railroads, its delivery of goods, etc. Electricity is produced by the energy of today. Every facet and aspect of our lives can be controlled when energy is controlled. There is no other product on the face of the earth that can so control the American people—and all the people of the world. Whoever controls the energy ... controls us!"

I watched the BBC “The Global Warming Swindle - <http://video.google.fr/videoplay?docid=260796117116968826.9> that balances out the extremely left-leaning elitist “Inconvenient Truth” - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/An_Inconvenient_Truth. I learned that petroleum is an abiotic oil and is misnomered as “Fossil” fuel - <http://www.freeenergynews.com/Directory/Theory/SustainableOil/> with plenty of hydrocarbons raining down on Saturn’s moon known as Titan - http://www.nasa.gov/mission_pages/cassini/media/cassini-20080213.html. So much for thinking petroleum comes from dinosaur remains. How did they end up on Titan anyway?

We have so much to unlearn! I can remember in high school when DNA was being discovered and the scientists finally agreed we were living on floating islands (continental drift and tectonic plate activities).

I also was approached to be the Event Director for an annual Alternative Energy Fair towards the end of April - http://www.franklinpud.com/html/renewable_energy.html as I attempt to get more involved with my local community and region.

Meanwhile, I am still working on updates and adding new information constantly over at <http://www.peswiki.com>.

You do know our computers won’t do us much good when the power is turned off, right?

Now enjoy the few articles and reviews we have managed to pull together during this leap year month of February.

March Madness indeed!

According to Hoyle...

Alternative Macintosh Operating Systems

March 2008

by Jonathan Hoyle

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This month, we examine the various operating system alternatives that are available to the Macintosh user. Although Mac OS X and Microsoft Windows represents the operating systems run on over 99% of all Macintoshes, there are numerous others which are simply a download click away. The vast majority of these are essentially different flavors of the same operating system: Linux. In addition to Linux, there are other Unix-like operating systems, as well as others which are unique unto themselves. There are literally dozens of these options, although many are tied to very specific hardware, so the choices for your particular Macintosh computer may be limited. For this discussion, we will consider any operating system which is not a version of Mac OS or Windows.

Alternatives for the Intel-based Mac

On Intel-based Macs, there are two ways one can run *Microsoft Windows*: either by dual-booting via Apple's *Boot Camp* - <http://www.apple.com/macosx/features/bootcamp.html>, or by running virtualization software, such as *Parallels Desktop* - <http://www.parallels.com/en/products/desktop/> or *VMWare Fusion* <http://www.vmware.com/products/fusion/>. But can these avenues be used for non-Windows OS's as well?

Apple's *Boot Camp* is specified to run Windows XP or Vista only. Apple has not specified Linux as a possible choice for *Boot Camp*, but that doesn't mean it can't be used. Users who wish to include Linux as an additional *Boot Camp* option should visit this article - http://www.newsfactor.com/story.xhtml?story_id=11300002VV79, which details the procedure for triple-booting your Intel-Mac. It's a bit involved, and there are the usual driver issues, but after several hours, you can eventually reach your goal.

The far easier approach to running an alternative operating system on your Intel-based Mac is through the virtualization software approach. *Parallels* opens the door to just about any modern Intel-based operating system, including virtually all *Linux* distributions, any version of *Windows* from 3.1 to Vista Enterprise, *FreeBSD*, *Solaris*, *MS DOS* and even the forgotten *OS/2*, just to name a few. *VMWare Fusion* boasts an equally impressive list of supported operating systems. Essentially, the world is your oyster if you are a promiscuous operating systems junkie with a modern Mac.

What you cannot run though are most 68K- or PowerPC-based operating systems, such as *Yellow Dog Linux* - <http://www.terrasoftsolutions.com/products/ydl/>. You might be fooled into thinking that the PowerPC emulator Rosetta would assist in this endeavor, but Rosetta is a part of the Mac

OS X operating system and is not available when booting into another OS. If you are truly intent on guest-hosting a PowerPC-based operating system on your Intel-based Mac, your best chance is to check out *PearPC* - <http://pearpc.sourceforge.net/>, a Windows-based PowerPC emulator which supports *Mac OS X 10.3*, *Mandrake Linux PPC*, *NetBSD/PPC* and *AIX*. Neither the *SheepShaver* nor the *Basilisk* emulators will run these operating systems, as they fail to emulate the needed PMMU processor. However, *SheepShaver* and *Basilisk* can support guest operating systems within the Classic Mac OS (see the *Guest Operating Systems for the Mac* section below).

Alternatives for the PowerPC-based Mac

Despite the strong Intel partiality that predominates the Linux world, there are a surprising number of PowerPC-based Linux solutions available. Many of these are simply PowerPC rebuilds of preexisting Intel distributions, including *Debian* - <http://www.debian.org/ports/powerpc/>, *Gentoo* - <http://www.gentoo.org/doc/en/handbook/handbook-ppc.xml>, *Mandriva* - <http://www.mandriva.ie/products/powerpc.html>, (formerly *Mandrake*), *SUSE* - http://en.opensuse.org/Supported_PowerPC_hardware, *Fedora* - <http://fedoraproject.org/>, *Slackintosh* - <http://slackintosh.workaround.ch/> (a PPC version of Slackware), and the ever popular *Yellow Dog Linux* - <http://www.terrasoftsolutions.com/products/ydl/> (a PowerPC packaging of Red Hat Linux). In addition, there are PowerPC ports of *OpenBSD* - <http://www.openbsd.org/macppc.html>, *NetBSD* - <http://www.netbsd.org/ports/macppc/> and *CRUX* - <http://cruxppc.sunsite.dk/wp/index.php> as well. Each of these runs on more recent PowerPC-based Macs (G4's or G5's), although many also have prior versions still available to download which will run on earlier hardware.

With Apple's abandonment of the PowerPC platform, there are already signs that some of these Linux distributions are no longer being supported. For example, *Ubuntu Linux* - <http://cdimage.ubuntu.com/ports/releases/feisty/release/> supported G3 Macs and later, but announced that support was ending after version 6.10 (early 2007). Other distributions appear to have only half-hearted support for the Mac, such as *Rock Linux* - <http://www.rocklinux.net/people/clifford/powerpc/powerpc.html>, which tested against an older iMac, but no serious development since.

Going back further, *LinuxPPC* - <http://web.archive.org/web/20020124163137/http://www.linuxppc.org/> was a version written for PCI-based CHRP models, including Mac clones. This initiative began in 1996 but eventually died in 2002. Much of this initiative is now in the hands of *PenguinPPC* - <http://penguinppc.org/>. *LinuxPPC* has also been ported to Nubus-based Power Macs - <http://nubus-pmac.sourceforge.net/>. However, the most popular Linux available on these Nubus machines is *MkLinux* - <http://www.mklinux.org/>.

One very powerful and rather exciting operating system for pre-G3 Macintoshes was BeOS - <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/BeOS>. At the failure of the Copland project in 1997, Apple seriously considered acquiring BeOS as the foundation to its next generation operating system, but the decision was made to adopt NeXT as this foundation of the future. Although officially defunct, BeOS lives on in the hands of many enthusiasts - <http://www.bebits.com/>.

Alternatives for the 68K-based Mac

Do you have an old 68K Mac sitting up in the attic somewhere? If so, you may be surprised to find that you can dust it off and turn it into a Linux server with relative ease. The *Linux/Mac68K* project - <http://www.mac.linux-m68k.org/> (formerly *MacLinux*) has as its primary goal to allow Linux to run on as many 68K Macs as possible. Linux requires a PMMU (Paged Memory Management Unit) processor, which is not found on some of the earliest Macs. No 68000-based Mac has one, nor does the 68020-based LC. Fortunately, the 68030 processor has one built in, so any 68030 or better Macintosh can be used. Even the 68060 is supported, for those Macs with 060 accelerator boards. If you have the original 68020-based Mac II, you have the potential to run *MacLinux*, as this machine includes a socket for an optional 68851 PMMU to be installed. If you are one of the lucky few with this already pre-installed, you are good to go. Otherwise, you will have to purchase a 68851 and install it yourself. In addition, you will want to have a minimum of 4 MB of RAM on board, but maxing out your RAM is the recommendation for *MacLinux*. The latest version of *MacLinux* updated the kernel to version 2.2.25 (Fall 2003), and an OS X cross-compiler was made available in 2005 for developers interested in contributing.

Of similar vintage is *NetBSD/mac68K* - <http://www.netbsd.mirrors.pair.com/Ports/mac68k/>, the 68K equivalent to *NetBSD/macppc* project referred to above. There are also 68K Mac ports of *Debian Linux* - <http://www.jagshouse.com/Linuxm68k.html> and *OpenBSD* - <http://www.jagshouse.com/openbsd68k.html> (formerly *MacBSD*). If that's not enough, true Unix thrill-seekers may try to locate *MacMach* - <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/MacMach>, a 4.3 BSD / 3.0 Mach Microkernel project that was hot and heavy in the early 1990's, but I have been unable to find where it is today.

Many people think of Mac OS X as Apple's first and only attempt to put the ease of a Macintosh interface on top of a powerful Unix operating system. This is untrue, as Apple had its first Unix implementation in the late 1980's with *A/UX* - <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A/UX>. This wonderful operating system was essentially an SVR4 implementation with a System 7-like Finder and a compatibility layer to run standard Mac OS apps as well as Unix ones. It even included a command line Terminal shell for those more comfortable in that environment. This was a direct analog of Mac OS X for 68K Macs! Unfortunately, *A/UX* did not survive Apple's move to the PowerPC, as IBM's RISC-based *AIX* was considered its replacement. The final version of *A/UX* was version 3.1.1 from 1995, and with a little luck, you may be able to find it on Ebay or Craig's list.

Guest Operating Systems for the Mac

In each of the operating systems discussed above, we examined those which essentially *replace* the Mac OS. However, there are operating systems that may coexist with the native Mac OS as *guest operating systems*. These live and operate within application space, thereby not removing the standard Mac OS, into which the user is accustomed to booting. Essentially, these guest OS's are viewed as applications by the host Mac OS, whilst being an operating system onto themselves within their own domains. The benefits to this approach include an easy installation procedure, simplicity to launch (double-click like any other app), and the ability to coexist with

other Macintosh programs. Guest hosting as an application, such as the 68000-based Mac Plus or Mac Classic. The downside is pretty severe though: although these guest OS's can be pre-emptive multitasking and memory-protected in themselves, they are vulnerable to the limitations of the host OS. For example, a guest operating system running as a Classic application is itself multitasked only cooperatively, and the entire environment may be breached by a single errant Classic Mac program. Although this may appear as *the worst of both worlds*, it does buy you the greatest simplicity of running a separate operating system.

With all of the free Unices for the Macintosh, you might understandably think that none could be sold commercially by a 3rd party. If so, prepare to be surprised by *MachTen* - <http://www.tenon.com/products/machten/> by Tenon Systems, a 4.4 BSD implementation that lives inside the Classic application space. After *A/UX*, this was one of the most popular and well-supported Unix implementations available. Version 2.3 - <http://www.tenon.com/products/machten/23-info.shtml> was the last to support 68K, whilst version 4.1.4 was the end of the line for PowerPC. None of the product literature indicates if *MachTen* will run in the Classic Environment under Mac OS X; I emailed Tenon about this and was told that they remember having had success in testing this. In late 2002, Tenon announced their discontinuance of *MachTen*, marking it down from its high of \$695 to a mere \$99 "*while supplies last*". Apparently supplies were in quite abundance at the time, since more than 5 years later, *MachTen* remains available on their web site for the same \$99.

There are a couple of other alternative 68K Mac operating systems which live inside application space. One is the rather famous *MacMinix* - <http://www.pliner.com/macminix/>, a 68K Mac distribution of *Minix*, the Unix-like operating system well known to computer science students of the 1980's using Andrew Tanenbaum's textbook *Operating Systems Design and Implementation* - <http://www.amazon.com/Operating-Systems-Implementation-Prentice-Software/dp/0131429388>. Whether or not you believe that Linus Torvalds stole *Minix* from Andy Tanenbaum to create *Linux*, *MacMinix* is worth a look. Another is *MacMint* - <http://www.sra.co.jp/people/hoshi/macmint/index-e.html>, a Mac OS port of the Atari ST operating system *MiNT*, an OS written to be a *TOS / Multi-TOS* compatible replacement. *MiNT* is an acronym for **MiNT Is Not TOS**.

Coming Up Next Month: We look back at the face of Basic development environments in 2008. See you in 30!

To see a list of all the According to Hoyle columns, visit:
<http://www.jonhoyle.com/macompanion>

doc_Babad's Macintosh Tips

A Macintosh Tip or Three...

March 2008 Edition

By Harry {doc} Babad © 2008



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The software related tips were tested on a 1 GHz dual processor PowerPC G4 Macintosh with 2 GB DDR SDRAM; running under Macintosh OS X OS X 10.4.11.

This month I continue sharing my occasional tip related finds with you. For a change I've focused, three tips on related to turning *Vinyl or Tape to CD*, These tips were motivated by an outstanding presentation on the 14th of February by Scott Armstrong the president of the Mid-Columbia Macintosh Users Group [McMUG] here in the Tri-Cities Washington.

As the occasion warrants, some of the Tips I share come from Paul Taylor's Hints & Tips column <http://www.mac-hints-tips.com/>, and are used with his permission. Where I use any one else's tips for this column, I acknowledge both their source and their contributors. Yes, I do write some of the tips I've discovered while Macin' around.

Oh, I almost forgot! Unless otherwise noted, all the tips and tidbits I share, where appropriate, work on my computer. If I don't own the software but if the tip sounds interesting, I'll so note that factoid at the end of that specific write-up.

Tips I've provided this month, as always in a random order, include:

- A Leopard Ready Substitute for Fruit Menu, an Unsanity, LTD Haxie.
- Punctuation: Which Dash Symbol?
- Three Easy Ways to Encrypt {and protect} Your Data
- A Leopard Ready Substitute for Fruit Menu, an Unsanity Haxie
- Whether to go to Cassette or to CDs for You're Treasured Vinyl
- There's Too Much Static In The Grooves — Some Solutions
- How to Unwarp a Phonograph Record - At Your Own Risk
- Make Exact Disk Copies with Apple's Tools

Punctuation: Which Dash Symbol?

There are three dash characters in every font: the hyphen, the en-dash, and the em-dash. The hyphen (-) is shortest, the em-dash (—) is the same length as the point size of the type, and the en-dash (—) is half the length of the em-dash.

However, some fonts, including several installed with Mac OS, ignore these typographic traditions, and their em-dash is quite long.

Generally, use a hyphen (-) for hyphenating words and groups of words; just press the hyphen key. Use an en-dash (–) for separating numbers and dates (25–30, May 19–20); press Option/hyphen for an en-dash. Use an em-dash (—) where uneducated users place double-hyphens; press Shift/Option/hyphen for an em-dash.

Using a space before and after an em-dash is optional.

Exceptions: you’ll notice that the width of the en-dash and em-dash vary by typeface. If the em-dash looks too long, try an en-dash instead.

Design Tools Monthly
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Three Easy Ways to Encrypt {and protect} Your Data

1. *Create An Encrypted PDF* — It’s very easy to create a PDF in 10.4. Open the document you want to save as an encrypted PDF file, and choose File > Print. The print dialogue box opens up. Click “PDF” in the lower left corner of the print dialog box.

To create an encrypted PDF file, choose “Encrypt PDF” and enter a password. Anyone who wants to open the PDF file will need to enter that password. Of course, try and choose a difficult to guess password.

In your encrypted PDF, all graphics are at full resolution, and the file includes each font character it uses. Thus, in OS 10.4, any document that can be printed can also be stored as an encrypted PDF file. Pretty cool!

You can also create a PDF file of a document by clicking the “Preview” button in the Print dialog, and then choosing File > Save As.

2. *Create An Encrypted Disk Image* — Disk Utility, which is part of OS X, can easily make an encrypted Disk Image. In this case, “disk image” works like a virtual CD-R or flash key. Use an encrypted disk image to store lots of documents, or different kinds of data, such as PDFs, photos, Word documents, music, etc. You can even store encrypted PDFs in an encrypted disk image for drastic security!

To make an encrypted, password-protected disk image, browse to the Disk Utility program, which by default is stored in the Utilities Folder. The Utilities Folder is typically found in the Applications Folder. Launch Disk Utility and select File > New > Disk Image From Folder. Browse to the folder you want to encrypt. A dialog box will come up, asking you to name the disk image you are about to create. At the bottom of the dialog box are two drop-down tabs. Select the “Encryption” tab and choose “AES-128 encryption”. This is a very robust and fairly flexible encryption scheme. It allows passwords up to 255 characters. It is important to note that, if you forget your password, all data stored in the disk image will be forever locked up.

Name this Disk Image and select “Save As”. Disk Utility will create the encrypted disk image, and typically will leave the new encrypted disk image on your desktop. When you try and open the disk image, a window will pop up, asking you for your password (unless you have saved the password to your keychain, in which case the image will just pop open.)

You can add and remove data from this disk image. However, as far as I know, you can’t later go back and change the password on an encrypted disk image.

3. *Use A Third Party Program*

Sometimes it’s easiest to simply use a third-party program to lock up your data. I recommend Knox. It simplifies making encrypted disk images, and gives you new ways of working with them. Knox also allows you to make automatic backups to encrypted folders.



Knox is a great program to install on your laptop, especially if you often travel with it.

[\[http://www.macupdate.com/info.php/id/17827/knox/\]](http://www.macupdate.com/info.php/id/17827/knox/)

Finally, *just a reminder*, every month we seem to hear about misplaced, lost, or stolen laptops, that happen to be loaded with incredibly sensitive data. For example, the Veterans Administration famously lost a laptop with the credit reports of 26.5 million US veterans. ~ Ed

Small Dog Electronics

Paul Taylor January-February Hints and Tips
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A Leopard Ready Substitute for Fruit Menu, an Unsanity Haxie

For many years, prior to the disruptive influences of OS X, I stored files and documents I wanted to access quickly in the “Apple Menu” at the left of my screen. For those of you who don’t know what Fruit Menu does, in Tiger and earlier OS X systems: FruitMenu is a haxie that gives you the ability to customize the Apple Menu and contextual menus. Using a visual editor you can edit the contents of the menus to suit your needs and taste. FruitMenu will also display the contents of the FruitMenu Items folder inside of your Library folder, launch applications and shell scripts from the Apple Menu and contextual menus, to allow easy file navigation and launching.” Of course the Fruit Menu folder shouldn’t be filled with duplicates of you applications or documents. Alias’ work quite well and don’t create either hard disk bloat or duplicate documents, files that need to be synchronized. Since Unsanity has not yet released Leopard compliant version of its software, and I’m switching to Leopard right-soon, I did some checking.

Much to my surprise, I had an ideal Leopard ready solution already installed on my drive. The software by DEVON Technologies is called XMenu. <http://www.devon-technologies.com/products/freeware/> and version 1.8.1, specifically the ability to create a User Defined folder as a menu item, does the trick. Specifically the FREEWARE “XMenu brings back the Apple Menu to Mac OS X and also includes a complete application launcher. XMenu adds one or more global menus to the right side of the menu bar. They give you access to your preferred applications, folders, documents, and files. XMenu is the ideal addition to Mac OS X 10.5 Leopard as the switch to stacks makes folders in the Dock unusable for quick access to applications or folders with sub-folders.



Furthermore there's no explicit need for a configuration (e.g. creating lots of folders and aliases or adding items to user-defined setups) - just activate the menus you like. All menus and submenus update themselves automatically just like the good old Apple Menu so it's not necessary to refresh them manually. In addition, XMenu optionally displays small or large icons and follows aliases and symbolic links. Finally, please note that contrary to most other solutions, this is neither a hack ("haxie") nor an unofficial menu extra.”

The how to: I've dragged the contents of Fruit Menu folder (in my user library to XMenu's user defined folder, in preparation for a Leopard Upgrade. It was a done deal. Remember folks this all about aliases. Unlike to doc, dragging an application into XMenu Users Folder duplicates the real thing. But as noted above you can easily install, via the XMenu preference pane, applications, folders, documents, and files. Since I use only the User-Defined feature of x-menu; Alias' are a must. I then added a few spaces before its name (Fruit Menu Items) to bring it to the top of my XMenu list.

Now all I need is a substitute for Unsanity's Font Card and Mighty Mouse.

Harry (doc) Babad for macCompanion

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Whether to go to Cassette or to CDs for You're Treasured Vinyl

I recently attended a discussion of how to turn vinyl into CDs at the Mid-Columbia Macintosh Users group. Our president Scott Armstrong gave a masterful presentation, more compelling because most of the attendees had collected large numbers of LPs most of which were just sitting

idly in storage while they spun CDs or listened to downloaded music both at home or in their cars.

Many people I talked with over the years, middle-of-the-road audiophiles, agreed that transferring an LP to a cassette unless one had a **Nakamichi** Cassette deck, lets say a Nakamichi Dragon, and used metal (chrome biased) tape, resulted in larger losses of sound quality than desirable. Even on eBay such decks sell for more than \$400-\$700, the deck's operability/functionality is often misrepresented (e.g., auto-reverse doesn't work.) The result for just going from vinyl to cassette, an analog-to-analog duplication process is not good. With mid-price stereo component equipment, you get about mp3 sound quality. Now I'm hearing impaired but if I've read correctly, the sound on your normal bias cassette is not as good as a lossless mp3 format and certainly poorer in quality than the original album.



My choice has been going from Vinyl to CD. The good news is that it's easier these days with USB turntables that plug directly into your computer. If you have a stereo turntable, then there are low-cost preamplifiers available [e.g., Behringer's Microphono PP400 or its sister products

<http://www.behringer.com/PP400/index.cfm?lang=eng/>] to boost the signal from the phonographs out put to match the necessary gain needed by you computer – it must *hear* the signal. Thanks for the tip Scott (Armstrong), this looks simpler than the clunky Radio Shack preamps I've saved for ten of years.



Learn More — You'll also need software such as Roxio's CD Spin Doctor, which come with Toast Titanium 8 software [\$40 or \$99 respectively.] <http://www.roxio.com/enu/products/toast/titanium/overview.html/>] or the freeware program Audacity [http://www.macupdate.com/info.php/id/8052/audacity/.](http://www.macupdate.com/info.php/id/8052/audacity/)] I've been told that Apple's QuickTime Pro (\$30) has the capability to record LPs and create digital copies for burning to CDs.

Then all it takes is software, cables and time... did say time? Assuming you want to capture the sound and make a simple label, that seems to take about 2x to 3x the album length. Why, well cleaning the album, playing to check out groove skips, and then doing the recording, followed by identifying and separating tracks takes time. If you manually delete pops, hisses, hum, and crackle from your recording that too takes time. You can have the software do these tasks — as does many of my non-audiophile music loving friends.

Should you worry about capturing liner notes as jewel case booklets and converting album jacket covers to jewel case covers, you'll need a scanner and graphics software as well as software to create these labels. Did I say time consuming? I already have all to tools to do the job, but time remains a real issue. At almost 72, is this the way I want to spend my computing life?

I really don't want to turn you off of converting treasured LPs to CD's, I just want you to understand that although the process is relatively simple and the tools (hardware-software) are reasonably priced, it does take time. I'm so busy writing that I've not even taken the time to determine which of the ca. 2000 LPs I own, are: (1) not available as CDs already. Even at minimum wage my time is worth more than most CDs. (2) Secondly, where should I start. That means cataloging the collection, and getting real picky. The lowest price *duplicating* service I've found is \$17 an album including the artwork [Vintage54.com], to web advertised services charging upward of \$40 an album. I'm getting ready to try the lower cost service, since it close in price to buying a CD. I'll let you know.

Harry (doc) Babad for macCompanion

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There's Too Much Static In The Grooves — Some Solutions

Turning Older Well-Listened to Records to CDs — Some of our albums, (LP's) were well loved by our children and their friends. Despite the fact that we had a semi-automatic turntable with vibration isolation features, kids dancing around and singing to a Peter, Paul and Mary album, did unmentionable things to the recording. This despite the fact that the youngsters were not allowed to touch the tone arm and used a button to start and stop the album. I tried to protect the LPs by copying the to cassettes for the youngsters, but that never took, the spinning vinyl disk was more interesting.



Is there a way to get good CDs from a worn, slightly scratched, album? Perhaps. If you've a high quality turntable that can use interchangeable stylus cartridges or even phonograph styli (needles), try a different weight and diameter stylus. I still use a vintage Benjamin Miracord 50H which allowed for interchangeable cartridges. The included standard cartridge could play LP's and 45's, but needed a special cartridge getting the best sound for 78's. Check whether you can still get a diamond stylus that is wider in diameter and a bit heavier than the standard cartridge that came with your device. Amazon.com stocks cartridges as may other vendors. This may not be as hard as it seems since young people are rediscovering the joys of the warmer sounds of an LP, and the record companies are catering to their tastes.

The better the input, the better the CD. A word of warning! Many individuals with both excellent trained hearing and audiophile tastes find that CDs, even those made under the best recording conditions and processing lack warmth. You may want to consider how important that aspect is to your enjoyment of music. Certainly with older records, changing stylus diameter and weight allows you to continue enjoying the LP, but wears it out faster.

Harry (doc) Babad for macCompanion

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How to Unwarp a Phonograph Record - At Your Own Risk

“For record collectors, the most mysterious question of them all -

"I've got a record with a warp in it. How do I un-warp the record?"

"In a Utopian world ... all records that were pressed to be flat would remain flat for the duration of time. Unfortunately, sometimes records develop warps.

"Records can suffer from heat warps, which occurs when a record is exposed to prolonged sunlight or stored near a radiator or furnace. Records can also develop compression warps, when they are stored improperly and the vinyl is actually bowed or bent over time. Warping is an equal-opportunity problem; it affects shellac 78's, vinyl LP's and styrene 45's with equal malevolence.



"Sometimes a collector can compensate for a slight warp by simply adjust the tracking and anti-skate on their turntable tone arm. *[See the preceding tip]* The larger and more pronounced the warp, however, the more likely the needle will not track properly and the sound will be affected. Sometimes, instead of the peaceful gradual glide from record edge to run out groove, a warp can cause the tone arm to jerk and swing and bob and weave and bounce and (sometimes) leap from the groove. No warped record should ever be considered of a higher grade than Good. And, of course, the more severe the warp, the lower the collectible value.

"But what do you do if, for example, your copy of Mike Oldfield's Tubular Bells has developed a warp, and you want to un-warp the record? What if it was that pressing of the Delfonics' "Didn't I Blow Your Mind (This Time)" that was you and your girlfriend's favorite song? What if it was an old 78 of Rosemary Clooney singing "Come On-a My House" and you wanted to fix it so that it would play on your restored Victrola 78?"

"You may want to save this column. I (Chuck) asked many different people about their own un-warping techniques, and the success and failures of each. I also bounced around the Internet, and found more than a few homemade un-warping formulas.

"Before you break out that Rolling Stones "I Wanna Be Your Man" 45 with the slide edge warp and start any of these techniques, read these suggestions carefully, and understand that:

- (a) not every technique will work for every type of record;
- (b) un-warping a record is a very tricky process and requires a lot of skill, patience and perseverance;
- (c) you need to practice these techniques with records to which you have NO emotional attachment (now where are my wife's Christopher Cross records?).

"And many of these un-warping methods have varying degrees of success and failure; and there is no guarantee that even if you do get the record flat, the grooves will not acquire a hiss or a mistrack upon play. Neither Krause Publications or myself is responsible for any damage caused by an attempt to un-warp a record - in other words, if your Roy Orbison 45 gets damaged, don't come crying to me.

The "Oven Baking" method (has been known to work on shellac 78's and thick vinyl LP's) — Many people swear that they can unwarpage a record by using an oven. For this recipe, you need two 14-inch square sheets of tempered glass and an oven. According to [Greg Weaver](#), begin by preheating your oven to 150° degrees Fahrenheit. {I've done this at a lower 125 degrees, as a safety precaution, and it works.} [*Doc sez go Centigrade and you've made a coaster or flat Frisbee.*]



“Clean your record and rinse with distilled water, to make sure there is no dust, dirt or other residue in the grooves. Place the record between the two sheets of tempered glass, then place in your oven. Wait 12 minutes. Carefully take your glass-and-record sandwich out of the oven and place on a cooling rack for 30 minutes. Then gently remove the glass and inspect the record. It should have returned to its original flatness. Oven temperatures and cooking times may vary; you may have to add an extra two or three minutes in the oven to achieve the desired results.

The "Solar Baking" method (works best on shellac 78's). — “This method was discovered at [the Roadhouse website](#), a popular local for EBay music buyers and sellers. The formula requires two 14-inch pieces of 3/8" thick glass, two large pieces of approx. 3/16" "place mat/craft" vinyl/foam, one quality album sleeve, five pieces of cork and common household glue.

“Trace the outline of a 12" vinyl LP on the craft foam (make two of them, one for top and one for bottom). Cut out the center on each craft foam sheet, so that only the vinyl grooves are covered by the mats. Use common household glue to attach five (5) pieces of cork on the bottom piece of glass to avoid any clanking when setting it down, plus it makes it easy to pick back up.

Clean the LP and place it inside a protective sleeve, such as a *Discwasher* VIP sleeve. Then place the record and sleeve between the craft foam mats, and place all that between the two sheets of glass. Take outside on a sunny day and let sit for 10 to 15 minutes (sun times may vary whether you live in Houston or in Seattle). Bring the glass-and-record sandwich inside and let it cool for a day. Then inspect.

The "Hot Towel" method (may work better on 45's). — “For this you need a thick towel and heavy books. Place the towel in the dryer for a full cycle (no need to use static sheets). Once the dryer cycle is finished, take the towel out, place it on your table. Lay a record flat on one end of the towel, cover the other side of the record with the rest of the towel. Place heavy books on top the towel. Inspect after 30 minutes. – {*Doc sez, this does not seem either effective or with towel lint any too clean. It's nothing I would try*}

The "Heat and Bath" method — “This one is interesting. Once again, you place your records between two plates of tempered glass and bake in the oven. While your record is baking, go to your bathroom and fill your tub with cold water, at least four inches deep. After your record has baked for twelve minutes or so, takes the glass-and-vinyl sandwich out of the oven, carry it to your bathroom and submerge the entire mixture into the cold tub water. After a few seconds, you

should be able to remove a flat record from your tub. Make sure you have used tempered glass when cooking and submerging; some types of glass will fracture after going from extreme heat to extreme cold.

“Some of the other un-warping formulae I've (Chuck) have come across involve hand-held hair dryers, microwaves, wrapping in a towel and flattening it with a steam iron - but no matter what method you use to flatten a record, be aware that the following can happen:

- You could cause other heat warps or ripples, where the concentric groove would no longer allow the needle to track properly;
- You could melt dirt and debris directly into the grooves if the record is not cleaned ahead of time;
- You could actually flatten the grooves, making the record unplayable.

[Doc agrees.] “But what can you do if your record is just too warped to play - or even repair? There are two suggestions. One is to place a listing, letting web users know you want to buy a new copy of your currently warped record .

“Or, you can get really creative with your warped record. Take a 12" album and apply heat to the grooves. As the record softens, pull up on the edges until you have a bowl. Plug the record's center hole with a cork or tape. After enough practice, you've created a decorative potato chip bowl - a perfect party favor for Grammy night. And who said those arts and crafts classes in school would never pay off? Just think - an M&M bowl made from an Eminem Label 12" record.”



Notes:

1. I did a shorter tip of this subject for macC in my tips column of March 2007.
2. Chuck suggests using the *Goldmine* want lists and his magazine to post such request, but I found the links broken or not relevant.
3. Chuck Muller has a few other methods in his article, check them out if you don't find the ones presented above useful.
4. I experimented with the odd and to me uninteresting records I picked up for pennies at the local Good Will store.

Article by Chuck Miller <http://members.aol.com/clctrmania/cm-unwarp.html>
(This article was not copyrighted and attempts to contact the author failed.)

PS:

Every vinyl enthusiast has records in their collection or has come across LPs they'd love to own, but were just too warped for any cartridge/arm to track. The DFV-1 can be the one-stop, one-button solution to your problems. The Furutech DFV-1 provides controlled-heat perfect flattening for all your warped records, even those with only slight irregularities just enough to unsettle your cartridge and cause mistracking. But buying a widget to help comes at a high price, a mere \$1500.). Visit <http://www.furutech.com> for more information about their products or their Canadian distributor <http://www.audiyo.com> to



find out how you can get your hands on one of these units.

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Make Exact Disk Copies with Apple's Tools

OS 10.4's Disk Utility makes it easy to make an exact copy of a CD or DVD that can be stored on a hard drive as a disk image, or burned to a CD or DVD for future use. First, insert the CD or DVD you want to backup into your Mac. Next, drag the icon of the CD or DVD to the Disk Utility application (which is usually stored in the Applications Folder > Utilities Folder.) In other words, drag and drop the CD or DVD icon on top of the Disk Utility icon

Disk Utility will launch, and then it will immediately open a window asking you to name the new disk image, and where to save it. Go ahead and save the image to your desktop.

In the Image Format drop-down menu, choose DVD/CD master. This is especially important if you want to burn a copy of the disk, and have it function as an exact clone of the original CD or DVD you hope to backup.

Now click "Save". A new disk image will be created on your Desktop, with the extension ".cdr", It may take a few minutes to create this file.



If you click on the disk image, you'll see it works just like a CD or DVD. You can store this new disk image on a hard drive. If you want to burn it to CD or DVD, you should again use Disk Utility's burn function. Otherwise, you'll only be burning a copy of the disk image, and not an actual CD or DVD master. To burn a CD or DVD master, open Disk Utility and look for the disk image of your CD or DVD, on the left side of the window. Usually it's at the bottom of the list of drives. Now, simply select the image, and then click "Burn". Follow the directions to burn the disk.

This is a great way to back up expensive software titles and game titles. Many games that require a disk to run will run off of the disk image — great for traveling. ~ Ed

Small Dog Electronics
Paul Taylor January-February Hints and Tips
paul@mac-hints-tips.com

P. S.

Note that Doc sez you can do the same with Toast Titanium 8, a piece of software I prefer to that provided by Apple, but of course that costs an extra \$100. <http://www.toast-8-titanium.com/> for a richer more versatile and integrated software set.

That's all folks... Harry {doc} Babad



The Northern Spy

In The Picture - Part II

By Rick Sutcliffe

Technology News and Views Since 1983

March 2008

The product of the month,

is still the Canon EOS 40D digital camera. This time the Spy footnotes last month's comments on the camera itself.

Almost everyone who buys an SLR is not content with just purchasing a camera. The same people who accessorize their Macs do likewise for picture-taking gear. Indeed, instruments like the Canon EOS 40D are as much techno toys making a statement about their owners as they are functional devices with the ostensible purpose of recording life.

First up are lenses. The 17-85mm IS (image stabilized) f4.0-5.6 lens that came with this particular kit is all the Spy will use for now. The Canon 70-300 IS lens appears to be the best available addition to this kit, but with an actual range on this item of \$525-\$700+, he's elected to stay basic for now. BTW, in checking online versus local store prices on these lenses, he found, as for the camera itself, little price difference.

Warning: There are online outfits that consistently advertise prices on cameras and lenses (sometimes even in camera magazines) that are too good to be true. They are. Most of these outfits are really one company that does business under such names as Broadway Photo, A&M Photo World, Regal Camera, Prestige Camera, Preferred Photo, Royal Camera and similar names out of a New York address. (Do not confuse with the very reputable Broadway Camera in Vancouver.)

Typical BP tactics include offering to sell cheaply the body only, then pressuring to upsell lenses and other accessories at vastly inflated prices. If the customer balks, "sales" people become abusive and threatening, goods are not shipped, money is kept anyway, and the customer buys nothing but grief. Check online. You'll find scam warning notices on numerous bulletin boards and rating service, even notes that numerous fraudulent high ratings have been deleted. Never buy a camera or lens online without checking. This is one of the most common playgrounds for fraud artists.

Now, as to other auxiliary items, Canon does sell a kit consisting of a bag, battery grip, extra battery and other odds and ends (contents seem to vary) but the local price was well over \$350. This seemed excessive even for The True North Strong and RO, so the Spy turned to eBay, where all kinds of people hawk SLR accessories, especially for the big-selling Canon. It's not hard to find battery packs, for instance, at under \$10, vs. over \$70 for "genuine" Canon parts that could well be produced in the same factory.

The Link-Delight store (see link below) proved to have an interesting collection of such, and the Spy sprang for a lens hood, wireless remote, Hoya filter (67mm for this lens), angle finder, top loading camera bag, and battery grip. Pricing was in GBP and shipping from Hong Kong.

At 4.99 (roughly \$10) the filter was probably the best bargain. Even otherwise reputable camera stores sell these for \$50-\$100, a RO if there ever was one. The bag seems serviceable and rugged and at GBP15.99 also a decent bargain. Most of the other items were careful copies of products Canon itself makes and sells for two to three times as much as Link-Delight and others.

The exception to the copy rule was the battery grip. Like the one made by Canon, this is a box one attaches to the bottom of the camera, and that holds two battery packs (rather than one). It also has a second set of fingertip controls so that the camera can be rotated and still have the same feel and operation in the different position. The Link-Delight version lacks the weatherproofing advertised as a feature of the newest Canon versions, but adds a real time clock and an elaborate timer for making delayed and time exposures on a programmed basis. At GBP51.90 including two battery packs and a wired remote, this adds considerable value at a great price. Recommended.

The Spy's only caveat on Link-Delight is that they do not reduce shipping costs for combined orders, which produces de facto prices higher than those advertised. Searching for alternatives with better shipping policies is at least indicated.

The EOS 40D, unlike most cameras, uses the rather large-format CF cards for memory, and the Spy picked up one of these on sale locally. However, his other gear, and many other camera manufacturers, use SD or SDHC cards instead, which are physically much smaller. He got to thinking there surely must be an adaptor out there that allows SD cards to be plugged into a CF shell.

Sure enough. A minimal search turned up eBay seller Gigacity, which specializes in adapters from one type of memory card to another. The SDHC/SD/MMC to CompactFlash CF Card Adapter Converter was just the ticket, though at \$28.95, a little pricey, even for a specialized item. However, it was shipped quickly and does work, so all those SD cards the Spy already has can now serve yet another purpose.

OK, a little more practice outdoors if spring ever comes to the frozen north so we get out of the igloo, and the Spy will be ready for his trip to Ireland later in May.

Speaking of new purchases,

The Spy recently took delivery on a 17 inch MacBook Pro. Once he has it tricked out with maximum memory (never buy from Apple) a couple of docks for home and office, spare battery, carrying case, proper partitioning, and a few software upgrades, he'll report on his impressions. Seems a nice, sleek box at the moment--a worthy replacement for his old 1G TiBook, whose screen is starting to fail and whose hard drive and/or fan is making arthritic noises.

The Black Hat Department

gained another nasty trick this month as someone tried to download a large file from the Spy's download site--thousands of times. This is an apparent denial of service attempt, and the Spy is monitoring his servers, and gradually blocking the IPs that download numerous times in succession.

Still another nasty is the latest Linux intrusion, the random JavaScript toolkit. Means of access are at this point not known, but if you type from a shell "mkdir 1" and get an error (the first time) you may be infected. Another means of checking is to execute from shell `tcpdump -nAs 2048 src port 80 | grep "[a-zA-Z]{5}\.js"` and pay close attention to the JavaScripts that are being executed on a web page access. If there are ones you don't recognize as being on your server, chances are you're infected. The malware payload to the browser only goes out once per IP address, so several checks from different machines may be needed. Did I say you should use a Mac to do this so the malware does not affect you?.

You read it here first department

As forecast here many moons ago, Sony has now won this round of the format wars. Toshiba saw the handwriting on the HDTV and threw in the towel this past month. The Sony format gives us more data storage, but was slightly more expensive. Perhaps now we'll get Blu-Rays on all future Macs but at a mass-produced lower price than any seen yet.

One could wonder why Apple doesn't just buy Sony to get into gaming, content, and the winning Blu-Ray. Well, maybe this makes sense to some, but Blu-Ray nonetheless, Apple's a company on the way up with Sony going the opposite direction. Could iSteve transmit the aroma of success to the once belle of the ball, or would he be infected by the failure virus?

The pitter patter of little feats

A big raspberry to the music labels who negotiated terms for their tracks that have allowed Apple to dominate the retail music industry but are now trying to pay hardball for more money for concessions to allow DRM-free songs to be sold on iTunes. You can't legislate against stupidity (the Spy's first law). This may be legal, but....

Also in the small fruit sector, the Blackberry system failure last week could be a wakeup call for some. Given that RIM and Apple may push everyone else out of the Smart Phone market, this has to give busy execs pause about the reliability of the former. Who would you care to bet on in this "format war"?

The Spy notes that Microsoft has made much of a promise to release more software "openly". Indeed, and how many times has the corporation tried to ride that bandwagon with both feet dragging on the ground? Cancel all the patent threats against the real open software and the latest bump might have a scintilla of credibility.

Apparently iSteve has decided to try again with Apple TV rather than give up as many had suggested he might. The Spy doesn't have broadcast or cable TV and isn't in a position to put a thumb either up or down on this one. Does anybody else care?

Returning to MS for a moment, the Spy wonders why it's trying to buy Yahoo. Merging two mediocre also-ran search engines isn't going to produce a better operation to compete against Google. It's just going to create a larger second-rate, never mind waste 44.7 million smackeroos in the process.

Ho hum

Another quarter, another sales record for Apple, which peddled 2.3M Macs and over 22M iPods in the December-ending quarter, and banked another \$1.6B. You really gotta find something to buy with all that moola, Steve. How about a small country?

--The Northern Spy

Rick Sutcliffe, (a.k.a. The Northern Spy) is professor of Computing Science and Mathematics at Trinity Western University. He's written two textbooks and several novels, one named best ePublished SF novel for 2003. His columns have appeared in numerous magazines and newspapers, and he's a regular speaker at churches, schools, academic meetings, and conferences. He and his wife Joyce have lived in the Aldergrove/Bradner area of BC since 1972.

Want to discuss this and other Northern Spy columns? Surf on over to ArjayBB.com. Participate and you could win free web hosting from the WebNameHost.net subsidiary of Arjay Web Services. Rick Sutcliffe's fiction can be purchased in various eBook formats from Fictionwise, and in dead tree form from Bowker's Booksurge.

URLs

The Northern Spy Home Page: <http://www.TheNorthernSpy.com>

The Spy's Laws collected: <http://www.thenorthernspy.com/spyslaws.htm>

The Spy's Shareware download site: <http://downloads.thenorthernspy.com/>

WebNameHost: <http://www.WebNameHost.net>

WebNameSource: <http://www.WebNameSource.net>

nameman: <http://nameman.net>

opundo : <http://opundo.com>

Sheaves Christian Resources: <http://sheaves.org>

Arjay Books: <http://www.ArjayBooks.com>

Booksurge: <http://www.booksurge.com>

Fictionwise: <http://www.fictionwise.com>

Fictionwise: <http://www.myworld.ebay.com/link-delight>

Fictionwise: <http://myworld.ebay.com/gigacity>

Views from the Ivory Tower March 2008

Following up with Leopard 10.5.2

By Ted Bade

I admit I was a bit annoyed by the first version of Leopard that Apple released. However, in mid-February Apple released a large update for it which resolved a number of my issues. Not all of them, but most. Because I wrote so much about the complaints, I feel it is necessary to write about my current satisfaction!

First of all there is the Dock. As you might recall I didn't like the extra steps involved in opening an application which was located in a folder inside the Application directory. The icon view was nice eye-candy, but added steps. If your Application folder contains folders, you would have to select the folder of interest, have it open on the desktop, double-click on the application icon to run it, then you would need to close that folder. Several steps that in Tiger took only one. With this update, Apple added several options that make using folders in the Dock even better than before. First of all, a "list" view option is now available. This view is similar to Tiger's hierarchal feature. If you have a folder of folders, you can mouse over subfolders to open what is inside. I am pretty happy about the return of this feature, except it is going to take a while to remember to left-click not right--click to get the function to work ;-). Right-clicking brings up the options for the folder you click on.

Also you might remember that the icon seen in the dock was the icon of the first item within the folder, not the icon of the folder itself. The new Dock controls have a "display as" section, so you can choose to display it as a folder (showing the icon of the folder) or as a stack (showing the icon of the first item in the folder). This means you get the best of both features. If the folder icon works best choose that, or for a reminder of what is in the folder, select stack view. Stack view is great for folders of images.

Another issue people had with the new Finder look was the transparent menubar and menus. The menu opacity is now a lot less translucent than before. If you enter the "Desktop and Screen Saver" preference pane, you will see a button to click that says; "Translucent Menu Bar". Click this off to make the menu bar opaque.

Apple added a menu bar icon for Time Machine. Pull this menu down to easily access Time Machine or to force a back up. Pretty nice.

While I didn't see mention of a fix for Secure Delete, I did test the feature and it doesn't lock the Finder anymore. I placed one item in the Trash, and selected Secure Delete. The window came up saying it was deleting six items. Hmmmm, well, this wasn't correct, but it did grind away, the progress bar went away and then quit as expected. I can live with that. How many people actually look at the number of items they are deleting and more importantly, does anyone care? (For all I know, the Secure Delete might have been deleting some other items I had previously deleted.)

My test with running Disk Utility and fixing permissions didn't go as well. It still stays at one point forever for me. Perhaps there is something wrong on my system that it cannot deal with.

There were a lot of other fixes and enhancements in this update. Take a look at this document on the Apple site here - <http://docs.info.apple.com/article.html?artnum=307109>

Even though I was annoyed by some of the changes Apple made. I am really happy with Leopard overall. Thank you Apple for listening to our complaints and fixing the issues.

They are really switching, really - We see a lot of articles that are Pro and anti-Mac. This is a world of choices and not every method suits every person. Once in a while someone who wasn't really sold on Mac OS X decides to make the plunge. In one such case, Chris Pirillo, (learn more by visiting Wikipedia - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chris_Pirillo), decided to write an very nice article concerning the Mac OS giving 50 solid reasons to switch to Mac OS X. It's a great article and hits on a number of the points we have all become aware of over the years. It is definitely worth the time to check it out.

To read the article, visit here - <http://chris.pirillo.com/2008/02/14/50-reasons-to-switch-from-microsoft-windows-to-apples-mac-os-x/>

To quote reason #50,

“I've said it before, and I'll say it again: Windows users need Apple's software more than Mac users need Microsoft's. That's just a cold, hard fact. And given my severe disappointment with just about everything in Mac Office 2008, I'm even further driven away from Microsoft's desktop software.”

Enough said, read his article, it will warm your little Mac heart!

It's the cat not the view people like - Yet another article that tells us how Leopard is liked by those that have it and well, Vista, it appears that a lot of people who use it aren't happy.

According to an article located on the Redmond Channel (a Microsoft Business partner) site, in a recent survey of computer users, Apple got good scores while Microsoft didn't. Let me quote the beginning of the article.

“ChangeWave surveyed 4,604 consumers in the first week of January and found that **81 percent are "very satisfied" with the Leopard operating system**, compared with 53 percent for Windows XP Home edition and 51 percent for Windows XP Professional. Only **27 percent** of Vista Home Premium users and 15 percent of Vista Home Basic users gave their operating system the top ranking.”

Well, I am stunned. Not so much by the results but the publication that was presenting the information. Don't believe me, take a look for yourself! Visit and read the entire article by visiting here - <http://rcpmag.com/news/article.aspx?editorialid=9434>

Fore even more fun, follow the “more information” link provided in the article. Here you will find some interesting charts of how sales of Apples are skyrocketing.

Not only does this article point out how people like Leopard better, but it also talks about customer satisfaction. Reading the test, we see that Apple averages about 79%, while it's two closest competitors, Dell and HP rate at 59% and 58% respectively. Not bad ratings, but Apple's is excellent. Well done Apple and keep up the good work!

So I wonder why the stock price has been dropping so much? I really have no idea. Perhaps somebody is selling off large chunks (Microsoft or Mr. Bill perhaps. Didn't they purchase \$150 millions worth of shares several years ago when Apple Computer was on death's door?) Or maybe the market is just crazy (a fact which I believe must be true).

I will leave it to you to decide. In the meantime, Apple Stock is a great buy. Scarf some up before it goes back up!!

As always, keep on using your Mac!



Under the Magnifying Glass

Storycrafting Part 2

By Steven H. Fyffe

sfyffe@maccompanion.com

Welcome back to another adventure. Did you enjoy discovering the power of Automator in Leopard (1) and the hidden talents of Text Edit. What? You haven't read my February column (2) yet. OK. The joy still awaits you. If you're like me, these frigid days are good excuses to vegetate in front of the fireplace and a perfect time for a Mac safari, discovering the hidden gems, ... not that I really need an excuse.



Anyway, I would like to take you back to my January column "Our Storytelling-Storycrafting Apparatus" (3). Recently, I had the opportunity, at our local Macintosh User Group (4), to share my perspective on Keynote 4 (5) and other applications which facilitate our storycrafting. Therefore, I needed a good story to tell.





Larry is a good friend who honored my request to share his life story. I used Keynote as the canvas for crafting the visual story from the fabric of his life. In this column, I would like to briefly describe how the story materialized. I am not going into precise detail of the "how to", but hope to spark within you the desire to craft a story of your own and to discover for yourself how these

applications can help you orchestrate your own symphony.

Where to begin? Have a Vision!

I visualized a Charlie Rose-like interview between myself and Larry. On the Keynote canvas, the video clips would be layered in front. Photos or graphical illustrations with animation would be displayed behind and above us. I had hoped to achieve a three dimensional, warm atmosphere. I envisioned one camera on myself, a second on Larry, and the third capturing both of us ... two friends having a chat together ... sound familiar? This is also my vision when I undertake writing this column. Between video clips of our interview, I would display photos or movies with appropriate musical background.



Video Logistics

To capture our video interview, I used three cameras, an older Canon Optura MiniDV digital camcorder, my Canon Elph PowerShot 850 IS (6), and Larry's Canon Elph. It took awhile to figure out the logistics of the shot. Originally I had hoped to have a dark background similar to the one on the Charlie Rose show or like the current Apple iPhone commercials. Lighting and the size of our black backdrop cloth became an immediate stumbling block. The background was too narrow for us to sit comfortably for our camera arraignment and the lights cast a deep shadow behind us, since we were working in a restricted space. After about a half hour fussing with cameras, lights, chairs, and us, we decided to revise our vision ... always a good idea when reality brings out it's hammer. We settled on Larry's dining room as the set for our "meeting place". We used the ambient light coming through the windows. Ah. This worked great. We both sat on the same side of his dining room table, facing one another while we chatted. We placed the two Canon Elphs on the table to capture closeups of our profiles while we chatted and the Canon Optura captured the two of us in a longer shot.

We sure learned a lot from just the logistics of setting up our shot. Two important lessons was to listen for undesired sounds and recruit someone as a cameraman. After about five minutes into take one of the interview, I realized that there was a radio playing in the background, so scratch take one. When we started over for take two, I mistakenly placed one of the close-up cameras so it obstructed the view of my long-shot camera ... bummer ... and later I realized that

the closeup camera on me had stopped recording. A cameraman could have kept an eye on the cameras while Larry and I focused on the interview.

I also discovered, afterwards, that our cameras were not capturing sound with the same volume and quality. We should have done sound checks before doing the whole interview. Also, using a clap board or just clapping our hands, would have facilitated synchronization between the video clips ... yes, at times my lips looked like one of those dubbed in foreign films ... OK you can stop chuckling now.

Gathering the Resources - First, the Story

The first and paramount resource was Larry's story.

The interview went very well, actually with very few verbal stumbles. Although, both Larry and I were not quit as relaxed as I envisioned ... two friends having a chat ... but it didn't sound like we were reading from a Teleprompter either. I think it helped a lot to face one another instead of looking into the camera lens. Prior to the interview, I had e-mailed Larry some possible questions I planned to ask. Originally, I had thought about writing down the questions, but didn't do that after all. I think that turned out to be a good thing, since it gave the interview a more natural tone in our voices. It did result in me forgetting some of the questions I had intended to ask, but later we recorded follow-up questions over an iChat which went very well.

Gathering the Resources ... continued

Driving through the park on my journey home, I started thinking about Larry's story. What would I need to illustrate the story in Keynote? Of course, I would need a sample of his photos, since his passion is photography. I would also need to capture screen shots of his web pages, since he has become an accomplished web designer for his photo portfolio.

What else would I need to add warmth and feeling to the story of my friend? In the interview, he shared with me his roots in the coal mining towns of southwestern Pennsylvania, his family's move to Cleveland as a teenager, how he met his beloved, and his career at General Motors. I also asked Larry about the types of photos he enjoys taking, his trip out west, including a train ride, and his plans to visit Italy next fall. He also discussed the cameras and Macs he has used over the years.



For Larry's early years growing up in a coal mining town, I asked him to share photos. I also searched Google for typical scenes of coal miners and coal mining towns. Larry also sent me photos to illustrate his teen years, early adulthood in Cleveland, marriage, and career. I did Google searches for the different kinds of cameras and Macs he has owned.

What would I use for musical ambiance? Tennessee Ernie Ford's "16 Tons" would make a great musical background for the coal mining town section. And "Kookie, Kookie, Lend Me Your Comb" was perfect for his teen pictures ... yes, Larry's hair style had a remarkable resemblance to Edd Byrnes ... and brought quite a chuckle from members of our MUG and Larry also. Frank Sinatra's song "All the Way" would be great for the photos of him with his beloved. I wanted to include only a short clip from the songs, therefore, I used Amadeus Pro (7) to trim music clips and adjust the volume to fade out. I own iLife '08 so I did a Spotlight search for "piano". I knew that there are several musical jingles installed and sure enough I found Piano Ballad tucked away in a Jingles folder on my hard drive.

In his .Mac (8) iDisk Public folder, Larry also placed a copy of a movie he created from his photos using Photo-to-Movie (9). I used Quick Time Pro (10) to select a couple sections of his movie to create a trailer, inviting people to visit his web page. I also used Quick Time Pro to export the music from the movie to use as a sound track for the screen shots from his movie. I also used Snapz Pro X (11) to record portions of Larry's web pages (12) & (13).



The Texture of Our Canvas

Once I gathered all the resources for sharing Larry's story, the storycrafting

began in earnest.



Like selecting the texture of a painter's canvas, the first thing to do in Keynote is choose a theme. This sets the mood for our story. Apple includes several themes to choose from or you can purchase third party themes. I purchased Galleria from KeynoteUser (14) and felt this was the perfect atmosphere for the visual story of my photographer friend.

Planning ahead, I had the option to choose a slide size up to 1920 X 1080 which would fill my HDTV screen when the finished story was exported to a Quick Time movie and displayed using Apple TV (15). Now that Apple TV Take Two (16) has arrived, we can post our story on a .Mac Web Gallery (17) using iMovie '08 (18) for viewing without a computer or, if the Web Gallery is password protected, by subscribing and streaming from our Mac to the Apple TV.

Our Story's Musical Score

Keynote 4 gives two options for musical sound tracks. First, you can import one music soundtrack to play or loop during the entire story. Second, you can play one or more songs for a single slide. Although, there is no option to select a group of slides and play a sound track for only that selection, Keynote allows you to precisely time Builds (appearance and disappearance) of text, photos, and objects. For example, when I played "Kookie, Kookie, Lend Me Your Comb", I had two teenage photos of Larry which I wanted to display at close to full size. Therefore, I timed the first photo to appear and remain visible for several seconds, and then disappear right on cue, just as the second one swooshed into view. Also, by exporting the Keynote story to a Quick Time movie, you can use iMovie '08 (18) to add sound tracks over a particular section of slides.

Smart Builds Add Pizzazz

One thing new in Keynote 4 is Smart Builds. This allows you to display a group of photos within a single Keynote slide. This is the easiest way to match up an audio track with a large group of photos, because it is self contained within a single slide. For example, I used a Smart Build to "Thumb Through" photos Larry took out west while he discussed them with me.

Video Editing & Sound Tweaking

As I mentioned above, I had video from three different cameras. I used Quick Time Pro (10) to create separate video clips of questions and answers on each topic. The volume from my long-shot camera was lower than the one used for close-ups. Therefore, I exported the sound track using Quick Time Pro (10), used Amadeus Pro (7) to amplify the volume, deleted the movie's original sound track, and pasted the amplified version back into the movie, again using Quick Time Pro (10). For most of the story, I used video from the close-up cameras, but when Larry and I were more animated ... moving our arms around a lot to illustrate a point, I would switch over to the long shot camera.

Video Masks & Instant Alpha

In order to minimize distractions, like my shoulder showing on the corner of Larry's close-up video, I made a mask. For this, I needed a graphic with a transparent area to layer on top of the video clip. I used The Print Shop (19) to create the mask template. This was simply two identical shapes layered on top of one another. The bottom layer was larger and I used the soften edge tool to add warmth. The inner layer was a contrasting color (red). When imported into Keynote 4, it was very easy to make it transparent using the Instant Alpha tool by simply clicking on the smaller contrasting area and like magic it disappeared. Then, I just layered the graphic with the transparent area on top of the movie using Keynote's Arrangement tool. Sound difficult? Not in the least. Just jump right into using Keynote and The Print Shop and you will discover the joy of using these applications together.



Alpha again - Preview and Photoshop Elements

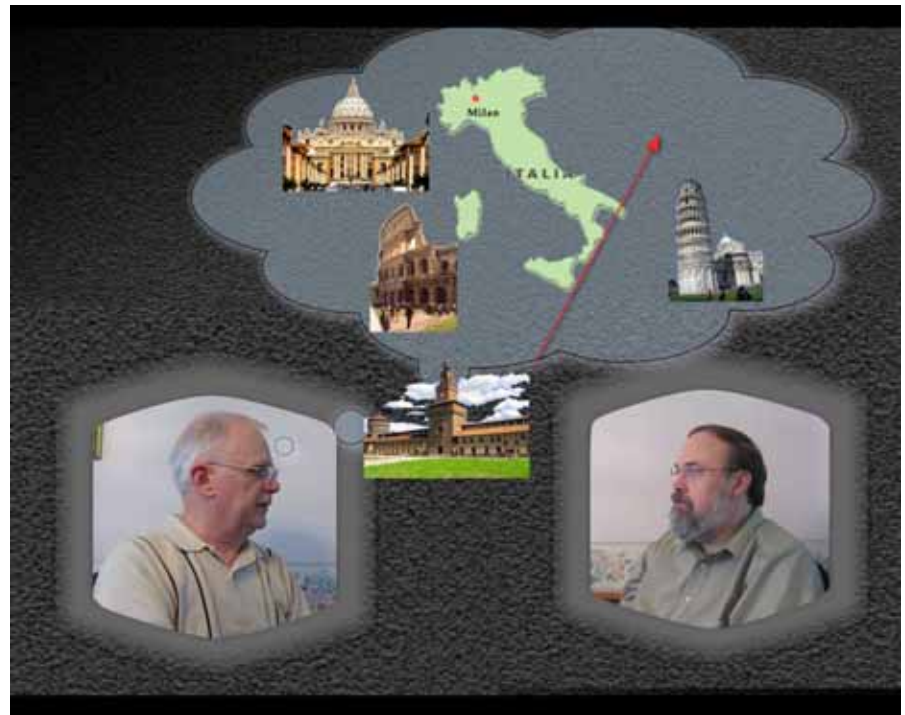
Speaking of Instant Alpha, having graphics with a transparent background is very useful for a Keynote story. I used a Smart Build to display all the cameras which Larry has used over the years, while he was discussing them in our video interview. I wanted them to appear to float above our heads, as if suspended in mid-air. I first did a Google search for each one and downloaded those which had a plain colored background, if possible. I have used three different applications to make the background invisible. Of course, Keynote 4 has its own built-in Instant Alpha which works great for graphic images already placed onto the slide. However, for Smart Builds you need to drag an image which already has a transparent background into the clipping bin. I found that the new Preview in Leopard (20) also has a great Instant Alpha tool to easily render the background invisible with the added advantage of being able to save the subject with the alpha channel (the subject alone) as a PNG file.

On occasion, it was more difficult to use Preview and Keynote's Instant Alpha when a graphic has complicated backgrounds (bunch of stuff instead of plain) or with background without sharp contrast to the subject (like white eBooks on a white background or cameras with black case displayed on a black background). For this, Photoshop Elements (21) was my best bet. I would first use the Erasure tool on the background making it a single color which was in sharp contrast to the subject. Then, using the Magic wand click on the background. Click Select in the Menu bar and choose Inverse from the drop-down menu. Now copy (Command-C) which copies the subject without the background. At this point, if you want to just drop the image into Keynote, all you would need to do is switch over to your Keynote slide and paste (Command-V). However, for a Smart Build you need an image file, so let's move on. You have the subject in the clipboard, but now you need to create a "transparency" slide ... remember indicate just overhead projectors? ... don't admit it ... it will Photoshop's then New how old you are. Under File in "transparency" Menu bar, select New and Photoshop with a transparent Image. Make sure the paste (Command-V) box is checked. new transparency creates an image box with a transparent background. Just paste (Command-V) your subject into the new transparency image and Save As a PNG file. It will then be ready to drag and drop into your Keynote slide's Smart Build photo bin.



Animation is Moving

Please allow me share with you just one more cool feature in Keynote 4. While Larry was discussing how his father relocated his family from the coal town of Pennsylvania to Cleveland, I wanted to show a map with a car slowly moving from one location to the other. Also, when Larry talked about his upcoming trip to Italy, I wanted to have objects move from his head over to a "thought bubble" which I made with Comic Life (22). And finally, in a couple slides I wanted a video clip to start playing in the center of the slide and then move to



a corner, slowly shrinking to fifty percent of the original size. All this can easily be accomplished using the new Animation Tool in Keynote 4. All you need do is select the graphic you want to animate and select Action in the Inspector window. You can designate the path you want the object to Move. You can also designate the degree of Opacity or Size you want the object to change, and then set the precise timing of your animation. Very cool.

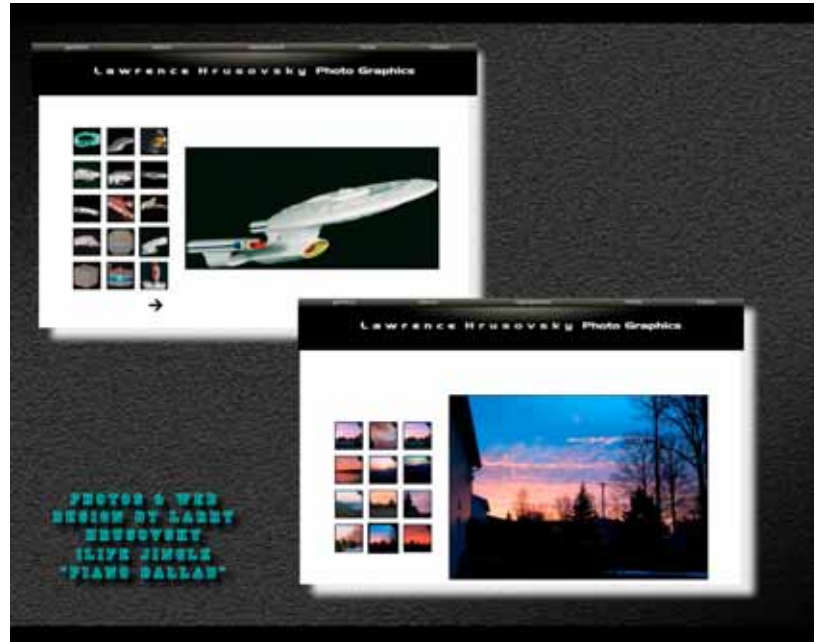
Time to Tell Your Story

If you read my second column (23), you recall that I wrote, "In my experience ... inductive learning (24) is the fastest and surest method for retaining knowledge". Today's column included a bunch of that deductive stuff ... you know what I mean ... lecturing. In order for you really learn the power of Keynote and the other applications in our storycrafting apparatus and to experience the joy of discovering how you can use them to tell your own story, you need to jump right in ... the water is fine and exhilarating. I have been preaching using Keynote as a storytelling tool for quite awhile, but not until I had the honor of crafting this visual life story of my dear friend Larry did I really experience it for myself ... boy did I learn a lot. You really need to try it for yourself! Call your great aunt that has all those photos from years gone by and ask her to let you video record her telling you about each one. Does your grandpa love to tell tall tales which always seems to include a moose? ... yes that's Jared's lot in life & he knows that no matter what the story is about a big old moose will wonder in to pester us. Anyway, first ask for the honor to share someone's story and then use our great storytelling/storycrafting apparatus to make it come alive.

Thanks, Larry

I want to say one more time how much I appreciate Larry's friendship, what a great honor it was to get to know him better while crafting his story, and how much he has enriched my life by having the opportunity to share his tale with others. I want to give all my readers a personal invitation to visit Larry's web pages (12) & (13), in order that you too may experience the depth of beauty Larry has captured in God's creation with his lens.

Thanks again for visiting. You all take care now.



References

- (1) <http://automator.us/leopard/index.html>
- (2) Under the Magnifying Glass - The Lonely Dynamic Duo
<http://www.macompanion.com/macc/archives/February2008/Columns/UMG6.htm>
- (3) Under the Magnifying Glass - Our Storytelling-Storycrafting Apparatus
<http://www.macompanion.com/macc/archives/January2008/Columns/UMG5.htm>
- (4) http://gallery.mac.com/neoac_mug#100047&view=mosaic&sel=0&bgcolor=dkgrey
- (5) <http://www.apple.com/iwork/keynote/>
- (6) <http://www.usa.canon.com/consumer/controller?act=ModelInfoAct&fcategoryid=145&modelid=15262>
- (7) <http://www.hairersoft.com/AmadeusPro/AmadeusPro.html>
- (8) <http://www.apple.com/dotmac/idisk.html>
- (9) <http://www.lqgraphics.com/software/phototomovie.php>
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- (14) <http://www.keynoteuser.com/prothemes/galleria.html>
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- (22) <http://plasq.com/comiclife/>
- (23) Under the Magnifying Glass - Observation of Trifles
<http://www.macompanion.com/macc/archives/October2007/Columns/UMG.htm>
- (24) http://www.thoughtful.com/strategies/Inductive_Learning.pdf

Books

The Book of Wireless, 2nd Edition: A Painless Guide to Wi-Fi and Broadband Wireless

Reviewed by Robert Pritchett



Author: John Ross

Publisher: No Starch Press

<http://www.nostarch.com/wireless.htm>

Released: January 2008

Pages: 336

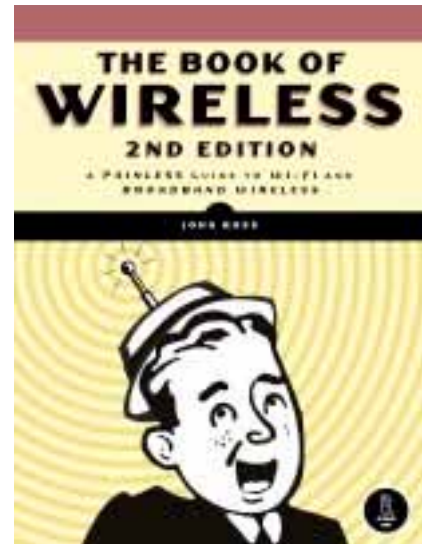
\$30 USD, \$36 CND

ISBN-10: 1-59327-169-7

ISBN-13: 978-1-59327-169-5

Strengths: Offers a non-geek-like approach to understanding Wi-Fi and Wireless communications.

Weaknesses: While attempting to cover Windows, Mac, Linux, Unix and Smartphones, the book tends to gloss over details and leans heavily towards the Windows environment.



Introduction

This plain-English guide demystifies configuring and using wireless networks-everything from shopping for parts to securing your network. Learn how to:

- Select and configure hardware and software for your Wi-Fi network and configure access points to minimize interference
- Secure your network using WPA encryption or a virtual private network (VPN)
- Discover open networks and maintain your privacy while surfing in public

- Use VoIP over a wireless connection to talk on the phone for next to nothing
- Evaluate wireless data services based on cost, speed, and coverage
- Extend your network to give your neighbors free wireless Internet access

Table of Contents - http://www.tinker.tv/download/wireless_toc.pdf

What I Learned

John Ross knows Windows and Linux, but not Mac so much. I could be wrong. The Mac chapter (8) is either thin on purpose, because the process is so simple and there isn't a whole lot to write about. I'm guessing he didn't dig deep enough. Nearly all the links in the book are for Windows-based snooping (wireless connectivity searching) and portable computer protection. Towards the back of the book there is mention of Voice over IP and possibly how to use it. My experience is that if the bandwidth is not fat, forget it.

I have been assisting with wireless installations and support in my region and the non-Mac folks have some incredible challenges to overcome to get things working well.

I am sorely tempted to say that doing wireless Internet with a Mac is so much easier, but a prophet is no prophet in his own land until somebody else who is respected enough in the community quotes him.

This book filled in a few of the knowledge gaps for me for Wi-Fi and the non-Mac environments. Not so much for the Mac environment.

Could it have been more technical? Yes, but apparently that is not the intended purpose of this book. Could it have dug deeper into Wireless Area Networking? Yes, but if it had, then it would not have been "a painless guide to Wi-Fi and Broadband Wireless".

Conclusion

This is a Beginner to Intermediate book on Wi-Fi networking. It tries too hard to be generic instead of naming names and devices in an attempt to keep current in the ever-changing world of wireless. Will it withstand the test of time? At least until the "next great thing"TM replaces the technology.

Flash CS3 Professional - Dynamic Learning Series

Reviewed by Robert Pritchett

O'REILLY®

Authors: Fred Gerantabee & Aquent Graphics Institute Creative Team

<http://www.agitraining.com/>

O'Reilly

<http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/9780596510572>

Released: September 2007

Pages: 456

\$45 USD, \$54 CND

ISBN 10: 0-596-51058-6

ISBN 13: 9780596510589

Requirements: Flash CS3 Professional, 1 GB hard drive space, DVD-ROM drive, Mac OS X 10.4.8 or later or Windows XP or later. QuickTime 7.1.2 or later. Internet connectivity.

Strengths: Excellent visual and interactive approach to learning Flash CS3 Professional.

Weaknesses: None found, except my own.

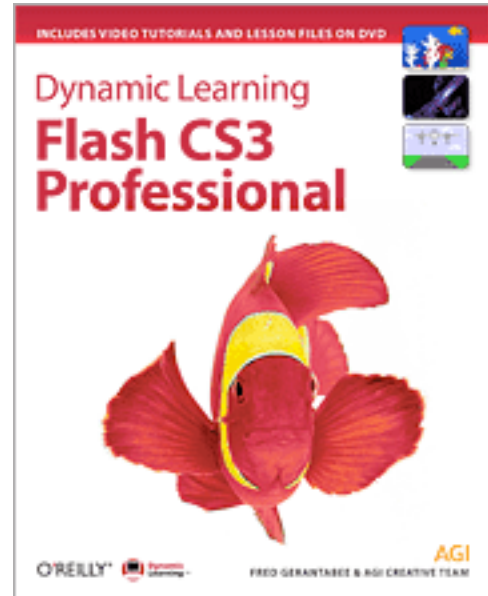
Introduction

“Learning Flash CS3 Professional is like having access to a top-notch team of your very own instructors. Written by product experts and trainers who have produced many of Adobe's training titles, the book takes you step-by-step through the process of learning to use Flash CS3 like a pro.

This full-color book is organized into lessons, with easy-to-follow instructions, tips, examples, and review questions at the end of every lesson. Each lesson is self-contained, so you can go through the entire book sequentially or just focus on individual lessons.

Topics covered include:

- What's new in Flash CS3 Professional
- Flash CS3 jumpstart
- Drawing tools
- Modifying and transforming graphics
- Working with symbols and the library



- ActionScript
- Working with video and audio

The DVD that is included with the book includes video tutorials and all of the files you'll need to complete the lessons, from the starting images and elements to the final, completed Flash animations. A free Instructor's Guide is available online.”

What I Learned

Okay, I admit it, I took this book on a business trip with me and read it on the plane. The book really needs to be used while sitting at the computer and running the included DVD.

I don't know, perhaps it is just me, but Flash animation has a negative connotation for me, based on Flash-based websites and cheesy cartoonish animations I've seen. I guess I'm not a "Flasher" and probably will never be one. Flash has always had a "history" with security issues ever since it was an app developed by Macromedia and this book doesn't even have the word "Security" in the Index –

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adobe_Flash

<http://www.actionscript.com/Article/tabid/54/ArticleID/flash-insecurity/Default.aspx>

http://www.adobe.com/cfusion/search/index.cfm?loc=en_us&term=Flash+Security

See, animated banners on websites can only go so far before they become extremely aggravating. Adobe has turned "tacky marketing animations" into an art form –

<http://www.adobe.com/products/flash/features/>

And accessibility for the visually impaired is next to impossible when Flash is used on websites.

But I do find ActionScript 3.0 intriguing...while it competes directly with Apple video capabilities online. And perhaps that is what is spoiling me. I can use a lot of Apple tools before I need to delve into Adobe activities. With non-Mac systems™, not so much. Those systems *need* Adobe! Apple has better graphics apps and Adobe put Apple on the back burner after eliminating a number of engineering positions that supported Apple technologies –

<http://blogs.zdnet.com/BTL/?p=8061>

And Apple gets 2nd shrift every time there is an update. Witness the latest go-around with "Print to PDF", Leopard and Adobe Acrobat Professional or the reasons why "Production Premium" is not "backward compatible" on the Mac platform.

And John Gruber had a thing or two to say about the latest so-called "feud" between Apple and Adobe –

http://daringfireball.net/2008/02/flash_iphone_calculus

You probably already know that Flash is the basis for video websites such as YouTube and Google Video.

The most important chapters to me are the ones that dig into adding sound to movies and doing video clips, working with video and delivering the final product to the Internet.

Like the book on Dreamweaver CS3 I wrote about last month, this book has colorized graphics that sometimes have the Windows-based frames intermixed with Mac OS X frames and frankly, the Mac-based pics indeed do look cleaner.

Conclusion

This book also follows the perfected format that makes O'Reilly-based publications so good and easy on the eyes. Being able to “see” how things are done in the “Digital Classroom DVD” projects just puts the icing on the cake and is greatly appreciated.

But for me, Flash is not really in my pan.

Illustrated Guide to Astronomical Wonders

Reviewed by Dr Eric Flescher

Authors: Robert Bruce Thompson & Barbara Fritchman

O'Reilly

<http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/9780596526856/index.html>

Released: October 31, 2007

Pages: 519

\$30 USD, \$36 CND

ISBN-10: 0596526857

ISBN-13: 978-0596526856

Novice/Intermediate/Advanced

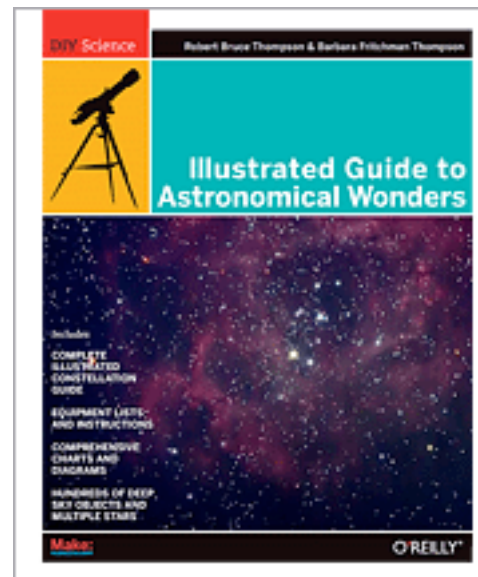
Strengths: One of the authors is involved in the Astronomical League and to his credit, he includes information about the different awards available through the club. Also included is the website to more Astronomical League information. Well laid out information. Good information about telescopes and equipment, disadvantages and advantages. Constellation pages includes historical information and helps guide the user through finding easier objects first and working the way to more difficult ones.

Weaknesses: The authors only mention 5 of the Club award levels for the Astronomical League. An explanation about the other clubs or making sure to take a look at them at the League's website would have been helpful and instructive. The print seems awfully small to me, but that's about it. Should have included more information about astronomy clubs in general and how to better use the Astronomical League. Information about meteors, comets, eclipses and other phenomenon are not included.

Introduction

The Internet was not around when I was growing up. I relied on encyclopedias and other resources to start and then expand my discovery and exploration of the astronomical wonders of the heavens. Today we have the internet, software that mimics, on our computer desktops, powerful planetariums. Also available are many online resources for the Internet in the way of websites, videos, images and much more. Books still have their place and it was of interest that I found the book *Illustrated Guide to Astronomical Wonders*. I wanted to find out whether it had astronomical resources and information that would be helpful to amateur astronomers (novice to advanced) and possibly provide enrichment beyond a book.

I found that the authors (at least one of them) are involved with astronomy. Robert Bruce Thompson is a coauthor of *Astronomy Hacks*, *Building the Perfect PC*, and *PC Hardware* in a Nutshell and works nights with his 10-inch Dobsonian reflector telescope. Barbara Fritchman



Thompson is the coauthor of *Astronomy Hacks*, *Building the Perfect PC*, and *PC Hardware in a Nutshell* and has worked as a librarian and now has her own home-based consulting law practice.

The constellations are black and white photos. However not seeing some of the colors regarding nebula, galaxies is a missing point. There are no Hubble images and additional images. The book consists of a Preface, Introduction to DSO (Deep Sky Objects) Observing and Observing equipment. It is followed by a constellation guide and a nice index.

The introduction to observing is a very nice section. Readers will learn about double stars, magnitude, measuring, degrees, declination and right ascension. There is a good introduction to (commercial only) planetarium software (p.18). This includes the names for software that are found on PDAs, for Windows, Macintosh and Linux. There is also a listing of the Greek alphabet, star and celestial object catalog. There is basic information about open clusters, globular clusters, four different types of nebula, supernova remnants, galaxies. Organizing your observing activities includes information about the Astronomical League six of the League's clubs.

There is a nice section (pages 32-33) that explains finding objects, working ahead and working with the tougher situations and objects to view in the "constellation pages". Ordering the observing assists with finding the objects during the best times of the year.

The constellation pages include a nice set of tables that highlight the best objects to see in each constellation sector of the sky. The object, type of object, magnitude, size, position in the sky (right ascension and declination), whether the objects can be found in the different AL observing awards and notes. A difficulty rating for finding objects is a nice touch and can help anyone amateur.

The observing equipment is well done. For anyone who may be interested in purchasing a telescope or appropriate equipment has photos and tells the disadvantages and advantages of different system. There is additional information about red flashlights, eyepieces, filters, observing chair equipment.

Planetarium software is also found past page 55. Printing charts, finding and using atlases has a nice section. There is even a page (p.63) with information about where to find and purchase equipment and also includes websites.

Conclusion

This book is certainly more focused and has quite a variety of more information related finding constellations then I had when I was young. Like the first book I used in elementary school days, that book mostly included constellations like this one. This one has more well laid and included different ways to acquire additional levels of information about the celestial objects.

If you want a general overview of the sky and learning about Astronomy as well as gaining additional information about software, hardware and telescopes, this is "a one stop shopping place". It might be the next best thing to going to your local astronomy club, of which there are many. I learned a lot from the astronomy clubs in Rhode Island that I worked with before I came to the high school level. Unfortunately, while the authors mention the Astronomical League, they

don't mention the benefits of searching and finding a local club near you. A few sentences would have been good concerning this.

The title of the book includes "astronomical wonders". There are other wonders but these are not listed (eclipses, meteors and more).

A major portion of the book included what is found in the regions around the constellations." However in many cases today, I could use planetarium software to find that same information. What is nice for some amateurs is that the information is all laid out for you on pages. For some, this book is more helpful a guide because all the information is nicely laid out right "between the pages". But there are some nice websites on the Internet that offer what this book offers plus includes color, videos, additional photos. However they are not contained like a physical book which has advantages and disadvantages. This book of course can be used with these other resources you read it. But fortunately the information on each "constellation page" tells more than just the objects, magnitude and more. Historical data and the way to discover the astronomical objects (by being walked through by the authors), helps to guide the learning process versus finding out all the information yourself. In that way the "Guide" helps with the learning process.

Before buying this book, I would suggest contacting your local star club, the Astronomical League and/or search out and read the host of wonderful astronomical websites (which are not mentioned in the text at all). The bottom line is whether you want to spend the money for this book and whether it offers the knowledge you want to learn. Depends what you want to do first.

For the most part, the book has a lot going for it. I would recommend this book for the novice (possibly intermediate) amateur astronomers. Those who are starting out with the hobby may find it a good resource. Amateurs, hobbyists, students and teachers who want a general overview of equipment, telescopes, celestial objects (their history, the astronomers of the past and more beyond the celestial objects themselves) may find it worth their while. It would be a good resource to use as you sit with your telescope and try to explore the heavens.

For some, having all your want in one place is a good thing. Sometimes all one need to get started is an all in one guide and this "Guide" may be the one you are looking for. If you would rather use your planetarium programs, clubs and Astronomical League as the prime resource that is another way. Then you can decide whether this book might be a good resource for additional astronomical discovery.

Mac OS X Server Essentials Second Edition: A Guide to Using and Supporting Mac OS X Server v10.5

Reviewed by Robert Pritchett



Authors: Schoun Regan, David Pugh

Peachpit Press

<http://www.peachpit.com/store/product.aspx?isbn=0321496604>

Released: January 17, 2008

<http://www.peachpit.com/store/product.aspx?isbn=0321509498>

eBook Released: February 25, 2008

Apple Pro Training Series

Pages: 560

\$48 USD eBook version, Paperback version - \$60 USD, \$66

CND, £43 GBP

ISBN-10: 0321496604

ISBN-13: 978-0321496607



Strengths: A good book for learning to pass the Apple Technical & Training certification exam.

Weaknesses: No troubleshooting section. Not designed to become an instant SysAdmin for Apple. No CD, as in the Tiger version of the book.

Introduction

“The only Apple-certified book on Mac OS X 10.5 Leopard, this comprehensive reference takes support technicians and ardent Mac users deep inside their operating systems, covering everything from networking technologies to system administration, customizing the operating system, command-line programming, and more. Keyed to the learning objectives of the Apple Certified Technical Coordinator certification exam, the lessons in this self-paced volume serve as a perfect supplement to Apple’s own training class and a first-rate primer for computer support personnel who need to troubleshoot and optimize Mac OS X as part of their jobs. Self-quizzes and chapter tests reinforce the knowledge gained along the way.”

What I Learned

At the time of this review the IT Instruction.com website was down. If they use Mac servers...

Anyway, Apple has a training path and Peachpit is the official source for books.

<http://training.apple.com/>

I had been asked by a prospective client to look at their Mac servers a while ago and I realized this was one area I had no real expertise in, so I figured I'd better bone up on what makes a Mac OS X Server tick.

So after reading this book and answering the questions at the end of each chapter I have a better idea on how to install and configure, provide basic DNS Service, authenticate and authorize accounts, use Open Directory and File Services, Host mail services, manage web services, use collaborative services, implement deployment solutions and manage accounts.

I might even have enough knowledge now to be dangerous as a Mac Sys Admin, however, that information is in another book.

What this book is shy on is information on troubleshooting when things go south.

Conclusion

If you have a desire to become a guru on Mac OS X Server v10.5, this is a good place to start. Other books will be needed to finish the process, however. There is a very good reason this one is named "Mac OS X Server Essentials" and is not all-encompassing.

It is an easy read and we are not expected to be gurus already. This book is Graphics User Interface-based and not intended to be a UNIX backend book.

Mac OS X Leopard All in One

Review by Ted Bade



Author: Robyn Ness and John Ray

Publisher: Sams

<http://www.informit.com/imprint/index.aspx?st=61091>

Released: December 2007

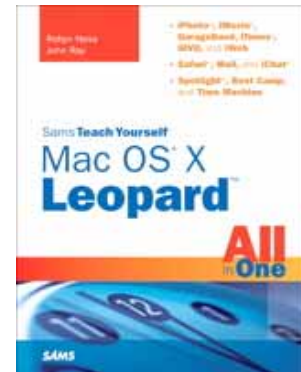
Pages: 678

\$34.99USD, \$37.99 CND, £24.99 GBP

ISBN-10: 0-672-32958-1

ISBN-13: 978-0-672-32958-6

Audience: Beginner/Intermediate



Strengths: Well written, easy to read, great use of images.

Weaknesses: nothing.

Introduction

Mac OS X Leopard All in One is a definitive book on using Apple's new Leopard operating system. It is chock full of information, from very basic to more advanced. It's a good read and a great reference for all users of Leopard from beginners to intermediate level.

This book is large, offering 649 pages of text and an index. Starting with the basics of using Mac OS X, the book progresses to applications, internet applications, iLife Applications, system administration and maintenance, and finally to advanced topics.

Overall the book is well written and the style is easy to read and understand. I thought even the more difficult topics were explained clearly, so that even a true novice would be able to learn. Throughout the book, special boxed in areas give warnings, add related information, or explain hidden features, which adds another level of detail to the book. Where they are helpful, screen shots and other images are used to make the material more clear.

If you want a look at the table of contents for this book, please visit the related web page on the Sams site - <http://www.informit.com/store/product.aspx?isbn=0672329581>

As you can see, this book covers a lot of material. In a nutshell, you will find information relating to using Leopard, Mac OS X in general, and all the applications that come with a new Macintosh that included with Leopard.

Leopard All in One isn't the type of book that merely introduces topics, it provides enough detail to get you started and beyond. As far as I am concerned, the information in this book is accurate. Although I did find one issue with installing BootCamp (they describe how to make a CD to

install Apple hardware drivers on the Windows side. At least for the present moment, ones uses the Apple DVD for this purpose.) Rather than an oversight or error, I am sure this is an issue with the authors working with earlier release versions and Apple changing things at the last minute.

You can use this book as a reference manual or it can be read through. As I read through the book it kept my interest up. I like it when a technology book does that. I even learned a few tricks by reading all the boxed special areas on the pages and reading the details on a few things I am not all that experienced with.

Conclusion

If you are new to Mac OS X or are interested in learning a lot more detail about Leopard, you should definitely consider this book. You will find yourself using it first as a book of instruction and later for reference. A terrific book that is well worth the money.

Note: A side note about Sams books; they offer an online library in which you can view many of their books online. There is a fee for this service. However, when you purchase one of their books, you get a code that gives you a 45-day trial to this service. While I am not one to sit at my computer and read, other might find it valuable. Since you have the ability to search for information within all the books available from this service, this service would be a great reference source for anyone who works regularly with computers. If you buy the book, definitely give their free trial a go.

Photoshop CS3 Workflow: The Digital Photographer's Guide

Reviewed by Dr. Eric Flescher



Author: Tim Grey

Sybex

<http://www.sybex.com/WileyCDA/SybexTitle/productCd-0470119411.html>

1151 Marine Village Parkway
Alameda, CA 94501

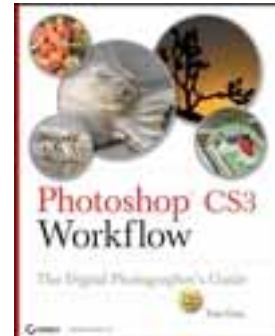
Released: May 2007

\$40 USD

Pages: 352

ISBN: 978-0-470-11941-9

<http://www.sybex.com>



Strengths: Includes information on raw format images. An in-depth highlight of curves with the applications, which is a very difficult topic, is applied in an excellent fashion in this book. Information regarding adjustment layers well done.

Weaknesses: Too much verbiage. There is a need for more arrows and pointers to integrate the information laid out in the screenshots and applied to the text and tutorials.

Introduction

“Workflow” is the latest “buzzword” regarding digital imagery. The word relates to the whole process of taking your images from the beginning to end and all the processes, tasks and management issues that are needed, for making your finished images even better. Photoshop CS3 Workflow: The Digital Photographer's Guide, is the next version of a popular book that takes your through the steps of workflow evolution.

The author, Tim Grey, is a renown Photoshop and digital photographer. He is Microsoft’s Chief ambassador to professional photographers and presents workshops on digital imaging. He is the author of another book Color Confidence. This book is the latest version of this book. I wanted to see whether this book has been updated compared to the previous version which I reviewed.

Within the book, there are many brilliant photographs to illustrate the points the author is trying to show you. Notes are also “peppered” throughout the fourteen chapters. Additional ideas related to the techniques are highlighted. I found these insightful and tied in well with the tutorial type information for the most part. Many screenshots, help illustrate the learning process but I wish some of them were larger. I would have liked to have seen more icons (like more red circles

or pointers) that could have served to highlight and focus what the author talking about in the text.

Part 1, points to “getting started” and takes you from the beginning. Chapter 1 talks about workflow foundations. The main focus is the final results you want for your images. Chapter 2, “downloading and sorting”, uses the browser Adobe bridge. On page 28, the “palette set up” is very well written in explaining and using palettes. The tool and palette shortcuts (page 34) are also well done and useful. Chapter 3, “raw conversion” is well explained in terms of the reasons for using RAW images instead of JPEG or other types of images.

Part 2, works on the basic adjustments that are needed. In Chapter 4, “Basic adjustments” details how to use basic tools as, rotate and crop, using crop tool, using aspect ratio.

Chapter 5 “Basic tone and color” specifically targets evaluating channels. This written introduction into channels is done very well. In fact, this is some of the best information on the topic that I have seen. The screenshots and the shots of the application windows (Curve, levels, etc.) helping with the understanding. However only in a few places (page 101) were additional pointers or guides used in the windows (red enumerated small circles or additional ways) to verify even more explicitly what the author is speaking about. This chapter (page 110) has a real nice listing of five benefits of adjustment layers but I would have liked to have seen this information earlier in the chapter and focusing specifically on the benefits through the tutorials and screenshots. Levels and problems signs followed with clipping, gaps and posterization with levels adjustment pages 110-113) but I did not feel that the information was cohesive enough. Color balance (page 108) and (page 112) basic saturation have well done instructions.

Notes in Chapter 6 are very helpful. Here in Chapter 6, “Image cleanup” has information concerning healing brush, cloning stamp (copying parts of the text to others to clean up smudges by copying from one part of the image into another – for example sky color).

Now Advanced adjustments come into play on Part 3. Chapter 7, “Advanced tonal adjustments”, covers working with image tones. Shadow highlights (page 138) is an interesting section and nicely done. Curves information and adjusting these (page 143) I fell are the most difficult to understand and master. The author does an exceptional job in explaining this topic done and is some of the best I have ever seen. Ways to use anchor points are excellently written. The curves table (page 159 and throughout this chapter visually nicely done.

Chapter 8 has advanced color adjustments information which includes hue / saturation, color casting and more. Chapter 9 works with the selection tools is not one of the best chapters. There should have been more visuals, many of the screen shots should have been bigger. I wish there was more to show and display how the selection actually work instead of all the verbiage.

Chapter 10. targeting adjustments layered masks I have been a difficult one to accurately portray and teach in many books. Once again there are too many words, not enough visuals and some parts are plain confusing to understand.

Chapter 11, creative adjustments talks about filters. The screenshots are small and there aren't arrows, pointers or circles. Steps to take are created in paragraph form and it “hurts “ when trying to figure out the processes.

Part 4 finishing the workflow (Chapter 12) finishes with saving files while workflow automation (Chapter 13) follow and finally there is (Chapter 14) teaches some of the output processing.

The Appendix has a sample workflow checklist which makes sense. I like that the chapters for target objectives are included here (but I would have been even better if the pages were listed). Finally the index is well done.

Conclusions

Overall the author portrays the PhotoShop tutorials for use of digital photography. The notes throughout the chapter help break up the use of the text but its not enough. There is just too many “words” in the explanation process.

I would have liked to have seen more arrows or pointer to the parts of the histogram that the instructions “talk about.” Sometimes the terms (like posterization on page 103) are inserted at the end of a paragraph and should have been integrated better instead of making me feel like some of the information is included at the end or the last second.

I “wrestled” with this review. While there is a lot that “hits the mark” in terms of understanding, I feel that style and way much of the instructions are written get in the way of learning. The text feels “too much like a seminar workshop” which the author is noted for. Lectures go too fast at times. Sometimes there is a need for visual pointers for additional guidance so one does not “get lost”. Sometimes with seminars, I say to myself “ stop, hold-it, backup”. The seminar has moved ahead and I am stuck or still digesting what is said. Added visual pointers can help slow down the written workflow when one needs to, to regroup and then forge onward.

But fortunately this is a book and you can go back and try to make sense of the process if you are listening to a presentation/ workshop. I thought about the final “grade” for evaluating this review. Overall this book is solid but it has a lot of gaps mainly because of the multitude of text and not enough visuals. The tutorials are too long and should have been broken up. At times I found it difficult to figure things what the author was trying to “say”. I have seen tutorials in other books. I just did not “get what the author was saying” part of the time. Part of the problem is “too much text”.

I was looking for something a little different to find out more about using Photoshop skills to supplement what I already knew and in some ways I found it in some of the chapters. But much of this book and the way it reads does not suit my “learning style”. For my tastes, I will have to look to my other resources to advance my workflow knowledge. But other Photoshop (intermediate and advanced) users who want to improve their image production and work on their workflow, may find the book to their liking.

Take Control of Fonts in Leopard — Install, organize, and use fonts with ease in Leopard!

Reviewed by Harry {doc} Babad © 2008



Author: Sharon Zardetto

Publisher: Take Control Books

<http://www.dppstore.com/cgi-bin/category.cgi?category=TakeControl>

Released: October 2007

eBook

Version 1.0, 217 pages

Hyperlinked PDF Format,

Price: US \$15.00, EU €13.11, GB £9.24, AU \$22.62



Paperback Version 1.0

ISBN: 1-933671-13-0

255 pages (including an index)

List Price: \$24.99; \$20 Street Price

[Free 37-page sample PDF available.](#)

Disclaimer: When briefly reviewing a book, I will often, as in this review, use the publishers descriptions, adding only my own conclusions about its worth. All other comments are strictly my own and based on reading entire book. Why need I rewrite the publishers' narratives, if they are clearly written and I agree with them?

Audience: Beginner/Intermediate Users

Strengths: The Ebook is professionally formatted for onscreen reading with clickable links to help you get around within the Ebook and to quickly visit discussed Web sites. It is easy to read and for the most part to understand, and has given a new and real understanding of the how, why's and where's of fonts and their behavior.

Weaknesses: Some of the topics in the end sections of the book were difficult, mostly because I don't have a background in detailed Font Formatting, Control Character Entry or Synchronizing with the Rest of the World. Since I seldom need to work with character-rich Unicode fonts, these topics went over my head. But the information is there, stored on my computer, should I ever need to get involved with font-intensive activities.

Introduction

For many years fonts have been both a joy and a trial for me. Well back in my SE-30, I started collecting fonts, and soon had 3.5" floppy disks full of them from various BBS sites. As fonts for the Macintosh evolved I switched to collecting the newer and *better* font formats. I even wasted

a bit of money buying CD collections and a bit of time transferring my disk formatted font collections to Iomega *super floppies* such as the Zip media and their 5-1/4 inch predecessor disks. Of course, with the Advent to low-cost CD burners, some of these collections were copied over to the new media where they now gather dust, at least the jewel cases do.

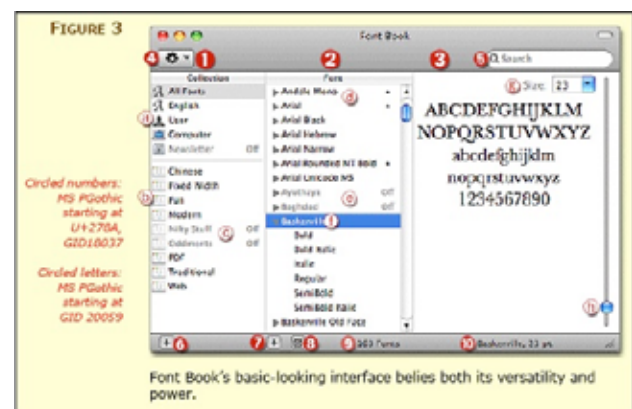
However, for several reasons, I know that those were collected toys I'd never really use. Despite studying, from afar, the design concepts so well documented in books by Robin Williams, my graphic needs are simple. I occasionally use Belight Software's Mail Factory or Software MacKiev's Print Shop to make announcements or greeting cards. These programs come with a collection of fonts beyond those installed by the Macintosh OS, NS Office Suite and the few Adobe Products I use. All in all that's more fonts that I'd likely use unless I become addicted to graphic design.

Be that as it may, all along my document creation activities I was plagued with minor font incompatibility problems, and also had no real understanding of the differences between font types or how they interacted with my operating system and software. Of course there were brief chapters on font use and behavior on the various operating system books I reviewed, but what I actually knew and could control was close to zero. Therefore when the font related TCo book became available, as I was considering finally succumbing to Leopard, I took the chance to review it. Why the TCo book? Tanya and Adam Engst's reputation for quality publications and a further chance to review an electronic edition of a book

An Overview of the Publisher's Description

"Sharon Zardetto has updated her Take Control book on fonts (Tiger in 2006) to Take Control of Fonts in Leopard because even though there are fewer font issues in Leopard, there are still many aspects of font management you need to be aware of. Sharon talks about why; why you might have font issues with Microsoft Office 2004 if you migrate to Leopard and how to resolve those issues.

"In this essential ebook, long-time Mac author Sharon Zardetto reveals all the details about how fonts work in Mac OS X 10.5 Leopard. She explains what folders your fonts reside in, in what order they load, and how to deal with font duplication. You'll also learn the ins and outs of different font installation methods; how to use Font Book to manage, validate, and organize fonts; how to make the most of character-rich Unicode fonts; and more. Whether you work in a font-intensive profession, use Unicode fonts for non-Roman languages, or want to wrangle the numerous fonts that have ended up on your Mac, you need this ebook.



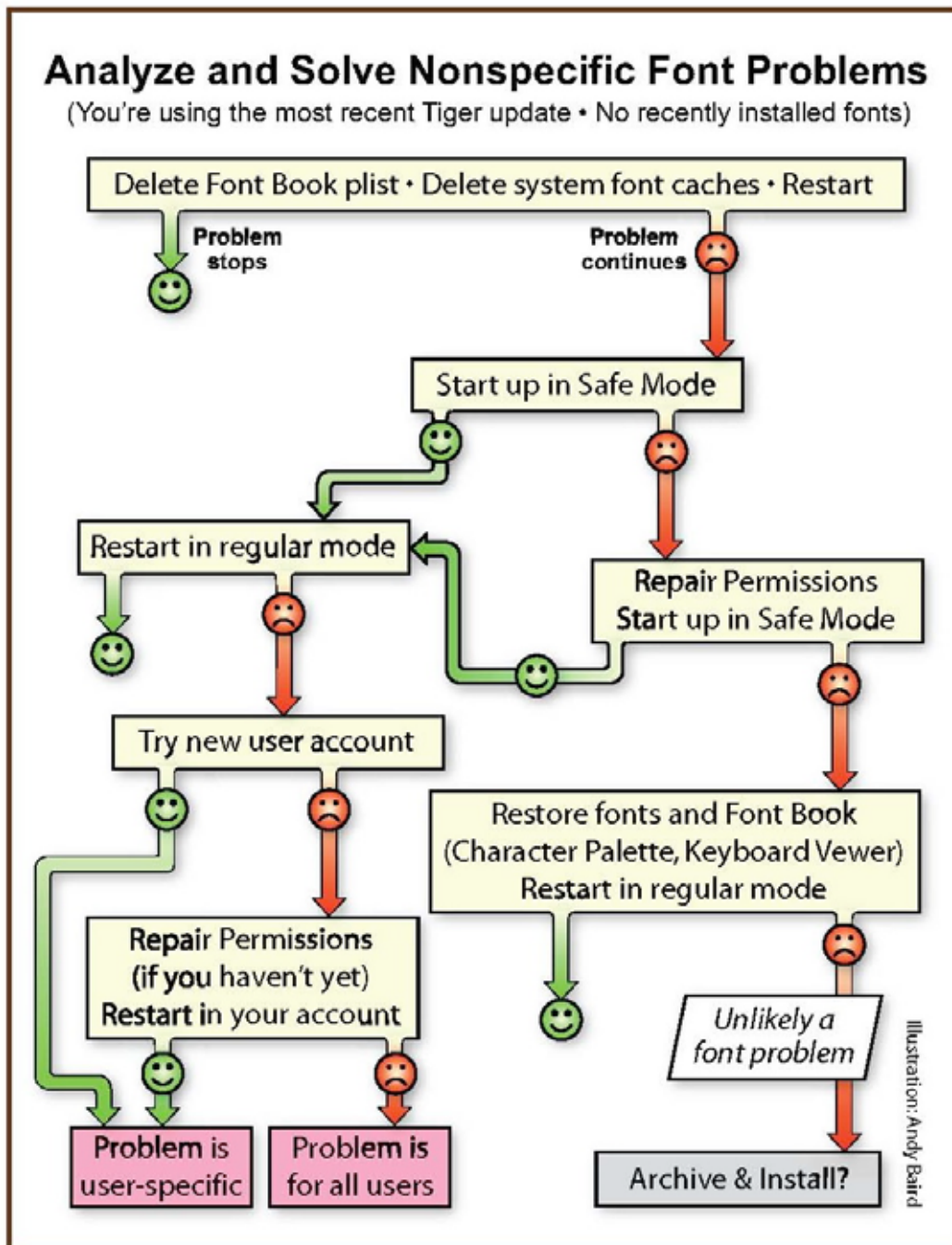
"You'll learn background details on Unicode and its ripple effect on almost every font-related thing you do, why document exchanges cause font problems, and how to access foreign-language characters and keyboards. And although it's too early to identify what Leopard's font problems will be when it's let out of its pre-release cage, Sharon does include a brief section on the most likely problems and their solutions."

In this book...

Although I'm still using Tiger and MSW 2004 to write this review, I found Sharon's Leopard book useful, even without anticipating an OS update to Leopard. The current book is an update of the authors Tiger edition TCo Book. Indeed she provides enough information about font behavior in Tiger that I was comfortable with experimenting in my present OS. For folks will wait to switch to Leopard, I suggest checking out Sharon's book *Take Control of Font Problems in Mac OS X: Tiger Edition* <http://www.takecontrolbooks.com/font-problems-macosx.html>

The book tells you everything you need to know (and then some!) about fonts on your Mac: what and where they are, how to organize them, how to access the hidden wealth of characters inside some of them, and how to use the Mac OS X font tools—Font Book, Keyboard Viewer, and Character Palette. These are new or greatly enhanced tools in Leopard that are associated with font use. Some of the book focuses on a number of issues key to understanding how fonts work in Leopard.

- What's new with fonts and Apples font tools in Leopard?
- What types of fonts can I use with Leopard? I've so many, old and new.
- Are duplicate fonts driving you crazy? Safe ways to remove them.
- *How Can I Remove Fonts I Don't Want*
- How does automatic font activation work? Why use it?
- In what order does Leopard access fonts from all their possible locations?
- What are font book's new capabilities – I am used to using Tiger's version?
- How can I figure out what characters are available in a Unicode font?
- Which fonts can I remove from my system safely?
- How can I minimize font-related trouble when sharing documents across platforms?
- I'm having problems, how do I *Solve Basic Font Problems*? Note: I used a Tiger based image because it was more photogenic, but you get the idea.



This is especially true because Leopard includes new fonts, new versions of old fonts, and has swapped some Apple provided fonts between the Library and System Fonts folders (to their more logical locations). There's more — but and read the book!

The book contains information rich details in its appendices. Updated tables in *Appendix A: Leopard System Fonts* and *Appendix B: Leopard Library Fonts* identify all the fonts. And there's more information in Appendices D-E.

Contend with Old vs. New Font Versions describes some of the issues involved regarding Leopard's replacement of old standbys with their new, improved versions.

And because the Leopard fonts have leapfrogged beyond Microsoft Office 2004's versions (which were superior to Tiger's) the "Organize Your Fonts" section has been rewritten; if you use Office, make sure you check out *Office 2004 and Leopard's Multiple-File Fonts*.

The book differs, according to Ms. Z's notes, in that fonts behave differently in Leopards new features such as CoverFlow, obviating the need to use font book under some circumstances. You can now search for fonts in spotlight, as I could using *EasyFind* software in Tiger — so no more lost or hidden fonts.

Finally, Ms. Zardetto, provide the readers with information about 3rd party font software for those who find Apple's offerings either too limited or too complex. Most authors of books that beginning and intermediates can use, don't share the availability and strengths/limitations of 3rd party products.

Comforts and Pleasures

Quick Start Section — The quick start section is a must read whether you're a beginner user or a more knowledgeable advanced user. Read it!

Font's Families and Faces — Although I read about this subject in Robin William's books, Sharon's descriptions and definitions (Page 19) made those differences stick.

It's Good Housekeeping — Organizing your fonts makes it easier to use control, and if needed trouble shoot them. The book provides very clear specific, set-by-step details on doing so. You'll get your Macintosh's seal of approval. Ms. Zardetto has also provided us with a listing of fonts arranged in four categories from absolutely essential though unnecessary.

Where Leopard Stores its Fonts — It's all tabulated and easy to learn what goes where. The book is full of simple table that describe the various kinds of fonts, their locations and specific contents and identify candidates for possible removal. Sharon goes so far as identifying Asian font names. Interesting, but you didn't know there was gold hidden there in the form of rare glyphs and symbols. The excellent table on common option and option-shift characters, those not shown on your keyboard is worth reading and memorizing. That's even easier than looking up the character's keystrokes in Apple's Keyboard Viewer.

Table 9: Common Option & Option-Shift Characters

| Seen | | Hidden | | Comment |
|-------|-------|--------|-----------|---|
| Plain | Shift | Option | Opt-Shift | |
| 2 | ⌘ | ™ | © | Both begin with T; trademark is 2 letters |
| 3 | # | £ | < | # and £ are both "pound" signs |
| 4 | \$ | ¢ | > | (American) money |
| 8 | * | • | ° | Basically round characters |
| r | R | ⊙ | ‰ | R's |
| v | V | √ | ◊ | V-shaped bottoms |
| - | _ | - | - | Hyphen, underline, minus sign, em (long) dash |
| = | + | ≠ | ± | (You do the math) |
| . | > | ≥ | ≈ | Greater than, greater than or equal to |
| . | < | ≤ | ≈ | Less than, less than or equal to |
| / | ? | ÷ | ¿ | What's the question? |

Keyboard symbols: Lucida Grande, Shift: U+21E7, GID 943, Option: U+2325, GID 950

Font Sites and More — Sharon has provided us with information about the better font site, those that are mostly clutter and advertising free, should you what to wile away an hour of three looking for new goodies to enhance your designs. On Pages 63-64 the author warns you about font pricing *scams*, and recommends the kinds of fonts to buy (e.g., Open Type, Windows True Type) as a Tiger or Leopard user. Why Windows True Type? — Buy and read the book.

Sharon's Enthusiasm – The following excerpt is typical of the enthusiasm and joy Ms. Zardetto shares with her readers when discussing hit font features.

“The joy of character-rich fonts

“I've mentioned several times that fonts can have non-Unicode characters in them; this isn't *exactly* true, since every character has a Unicode number. More accurately, fonts can include *non-defined* characters; that is, there are “slots” in the Unicode ID scheme that aren't defined to contain an A (slot 41), or a Clockwise Top Semicircle Arrow (slot 8,631) but are left empty for “private use”; in fact, there are over 6000 free slots in the first 65K of Unicode IDs. They are totally undefined and can be used for anything the font designer cares to plug in.

“Nothing's more fun (typographically speaking) than finding that a font is jam-packed with all sorts of useful alternate characters. These extra characters can include multiple glyphs for letters and numbers, genuine Small Caps, special ligatures, and so on. The major types of special alphanumeric glyphs, and why they're better than the ones faked from standard characters, are described here.”

A Few Disappointments and Discomforts

Unicode... Shmoonicode — I know it's important, but it's not a subject that turns me on. But don't let that stop you. I get around this subject by using Ergonis Software's PopChar <http://www.macupdate.com/info.php/id/7813/popchar-x> so am content to remain ignorant of the underpinnings of how fonts are encoded so your computer can use them. But then my system has almost no fonts other than those that my operating system and applications have added.

Make Backup Archives of Your Fonts — A minor omission, I always burn backup to a CD, despite routinely backing up my hard drive to an external hard disk. I prefer a CD to leaving an archive folder on my hard disk. A bit of belt and suspenders never hurts.

Duplicate Fonts — I did not understand the message in the author's explanation on *not trusting duplicates order lists* (Figure 1.6 ff on Page 107) but when I start thinning out fonts I'll need to reread it, perhaps more slowly.

Shareware Examples Needed — On Page 137, the author discusses the various tools Apple Provided for dealing with character input. However she does not at this point enumerate the other, excellent 3rd party tools that serve this function in an easier to use manner than Apple's tools. Sharon does describe 3rd party solutions in various places but the meat is mostly scattered so there doesn't appear to be a centralized list of such products. I would have appreciated an added Appendix F, which describes such offerings.

Conclusions and Recommendations

I do like this book. It will continue to live on my hard disk as long as I continue to write and do simple graphic design projects. For \$15, you've little to lose and an amazing large amount to learn; plus likely removing font *angst* from your life. You don't have to read this book all at once or even in order — check out the *Introduction* and *Quick Start* chapters, and then poke around in the areas where you need either help or enlightenment. You'll be glad you did.

Whether you're a font minimalist with nary a problem or a font fanatic with nothing but font conflicts, covering the basics, leaning about the what's were, and whys of font behavior, is a good place to start. Check out the *Supported Font Types*, and the oh-so-many places you can store them, in *Mac OS X Fonts folders*. In Tiger, despite much casual reading, I didn't have a clue. After having read Ms. Zardetto's book I'm clued into Tiger and will be when I switch to Leopard in a few weeks.

Explore the Unicode Universe, discover the wealth of characters stored in fonts with *The joy of character-rich fonts*, get up to speed with the latest font buzzword (and important concepts) in *The world according to glyphs*, and learn how to *Utilize Smart-Font Typography*.

Whether your font collection is a mess or merely a nightmare waiting to happen, get things in order with *Organize Your Fonts*, and keep them that way with *Stay Organized*.

About the Author

Sharon Zardetto has been writing about the Macintosh professionally since 1984, including nearly a thousand articles in Macintosh magazines and over 20 books. She's best known for writing several editions of *The Macintosh Bible*, along with *The Mac Almanac*. She made her first foray into electronic publishing with *Take Control of Fonts in Mac OS X* and *Take Control of Font Problems in Mac OS X*.

Additional Reading

Macworld | Tame type troubles *Aker*, Oct 9, 2007

<http://www.macworld.com/article/60424/2007/10/nov07workingmac.html?t=103>

TidBITS| Avoid the Most Common Mac OS X Font Mistakes, by *Sharon Zardetto*, May 29 2006. <http://db.tidbits.com/article/8546/>

TidBITS Media Creation: Are Your Fonts Ready for Leopard? By *Sharon Zardetto*, Oct 22 2007. <http://db.tidbits.com/article/9255/>

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Games

Guitar Hero III: Legends of Rock

Reviewed by Daniel MacKenzie



Creator: Aspyr

<http://www.aspyr.com/>

Released: December 20, 2007

\$79.95 USD, \$81.35 CND, 54.56 Euro,
41.23 GBP

Comes with the game, guitar strap,
stickers and the game itself.



Strengths: Loads of fun, good graphics, great for all ages, wide range of difficulties.

Weaknesses: Quits occasionally, unable to add your own songs, requires an Intel machine, little to no downloadable content.

Introduction

Do you want to be a rock star? Do you want thousands of fans cheering you on as you shred some major chords on stage? Do you want that huge cheque from your sponsors for doing what you love? Well, then this game is for you! You get to do this and more from the comfort of your computer. Rock out to some of the best rock songs in history from bands like Alice Cooper, Kiss, The Killers, Scorpions and lots more.

Let's start off with the game play. It's excellent. You can create your own band and choose your character. Customize your character's clothing with outfits purchased through the Guitar Shop. There are thirteen characters and many outfits for each. But don't worry; you don't buy them with a credit card. The better you do in your career, the more money you earn. Buy additional songs, characters, guitars, finishes and outfits to make your band the best in the world. After you have decked out your character, you can start to rock. I started on easy and it became pretty challenging as I reached the end of my career. I suggest that everybody, even the hard-core gamers, should start on easy. If you aren't very good at first, don't worry! You will get better as you go along. With four difficulty levels you won't get tired of this game. I didn't! You travel from show to show, gaining fans and cash as you go along. It's a lot of fun and has solid game play.



Now, let's look at the graphics. They are cartoons with a mix of realism. This allowed the animators to get creative with the characters and the show sets. Most of the small clips in between shows are straight cartoon but that shouldn't be a bad thing. The developers integrated them well. The menus are really impressive but they look like rock posters, stickers, etc. I'm glad they spent more time on the game than on the menus. The graphical side should function properly on any new Intel machine.

Unfortunately, everything isn't perfect. There are some glitches in the game. Occasionally, while playing Quick Play, the game will unexpectedly quit after you finish the song. You can't put in a high score; it just quits. Now this may have been patched by the update they released but they should have caught that earlier. Another downside is that it's Intel only. Sorry Power PC owners, you can't play this game yet. This is a huge drawback because a lot of Mac users haven't switched yet. I believe that they should have made the game universal so that everyone can play it. Something that I would like to see is the ability to add your own songs to the library. I don't know how hard it would be or if there would be a copyright issue but it would be pretty cool. Also, there isn't a lot of content you can download. There is a page in the songs menu that says "Downloads". This suggests that you will eventually download songs from the Internet to play in the game. If this is true, I can't wait for it to happen.

Let's get back to the good stuff. This is a game that everyone can play and enjoy. If you think you are too old for this game, think again. Kids and adults alike will enjoy this game. A good thing is that those of use who are right handed, you can turn off the "Lefty Flip" so the keys are in the right position on the screen. I have tried it the other way and it can get pretty confusing. Something else that might be interesting is that the keyboard is fully functional with the game. If you don't like the guitar, use the keyboard instead. Here is a warning. It is not as fun as with the guitar. Not even close. It's hard to get into the music when you have to keep your hands on the keyboard instead of rocking out with the guitar.



Still want more of a challenge? Take the battle online and play against real people. This should only be used by seasoned rockers and people who have done hard or expert on the career. There are people who will obliterate you if you try. I tried and was disappointed with my skills. I thought I was okay but I was wrong. Still, for more fun, give it your best shot.

Conclusion

Overall, this is a very solid game. Awesome game play backed up by decent graphics and great music make this game a must-have for any family, casual gamer and hard-core gamer. Some tweaks need to be made and maybe a few features but overall a great game. Great job, Aspyr!!!!

HYmini: Hybrid wind and PV-powered storage

Reviewed by Robert Pritchett



Minwiz Sustainable Energy Dev. Ltd
270 Zhong Shiao E Rd. Sec 5. 2F
Suite 2
Hsin Yi district
Tapei 110, Taiwan, R.O.C.
+886(2) 8786 7675

contact@hymini.com

http://www.hymini.com/html/HYmini.html#detail_1

Released: October, 2007

\$50 USD <http://www.hymini.com/eshop/index.html>
or \$70 USD with miniSOLAR panel and armband.



Comes with: HYmini, AC adapter, USB transfer cable, cellphone adapters and fanfold instruction manual.

60-day limited warranty.

Storage temperatures are between -20C and 45C.

Strengths: LED Light, portable power generator and recharger. Holds charge for up to 2 weeks. Functional, yet fun.

Weaknesses: Windpower does not fully charge the unit. Slow charging and limited number of charge cycles (500).

Video Review: <http://abcnews.go.com/Video/playerIndex?id=3682986>

Introduction

Developed by Arthur Huang, the HYmini is a handheld, universal charger/adapter device that harnesses renewable wind power/solar power and conventional wall plug power to recharge almost all 5 Volt digital gadgets.

Power sources: wallwart, USB outlet, miniSOLAR panel (up to 4 panels may be used) or wind-powered generator recharges an internal 1200MAH lithium-ion to recharge cellphones, MP3 players, iPods, PDA, digital cameras, etc.

MINIWIZ follows the design criteria for the “Golden Ratio” - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Golden_ratio

The HYmini is designed to capture wind power between 14.5 kph (9 mph) and 48 kph (30 mph). Maximum capacity is set at 65 kph (40mph) beyond which the extra energy cannot be converted.

Based on Miniwiz's uninterrupted 30 kph (19 mph) wind tunnel test, 20 minutes charge time provides 40 minutes on MP3 players, 40 minutes on PDA, 30 minutes on iPods, 4 minutes on a 3G mobile, or 20 pictures on camera.

Dimensions: 134 mm (5.4 inches) height x 87.5 mm (3.4 inches) width x 33.5 mm (1.3 inches) thick

Weight: 100 grams or 3.2 ounces

Input: 5 Volts DC, 1 Amp

Output: 5 Volts DC, 300 to 850 milliamps

Battery recharge cycle: 500 complete charge cycles at 1000mAh. 4-hour recharge using the wallwart. The unit has a safety circuit to prevent overcharging.



The miniSOLAR panels are made with cardboard, so don't get them wet. MINIWIZ calls the units “Solar batteries” and not solar panels. The HYmini can only accept up to .7W MAX via the DC input jack and is why only four panels may be connected in series.

Dimensions: 160mm (6.3 inches) height x 80mm (3.1 inches) width x 9mm (.3 inches) thick

Output current: 140 milliamps MAX

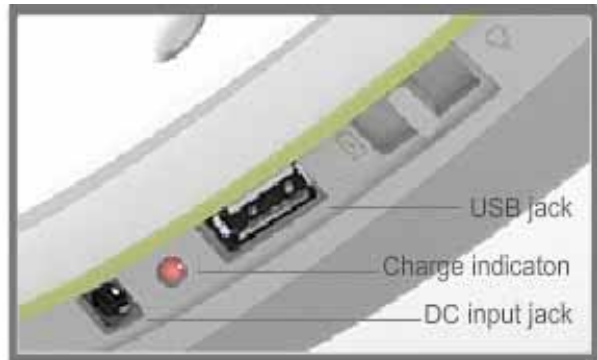
Output voltage: 5 Volts DC MAX

Avoid fire and high heat conditions.

Wind generation is limited to 1Watt maximum capacity.

The USB adapters that are thoughtfully provided fit the iPod and the mobile phones from Nokia, Motorola, Sony Ericsson and LG.

A silicon rubber strap covers the power jack, LED power indicator (red is charging, green is charged) and USB 2.0 jack. The slide switch is a 3-way, with the two LED lights (flashlight mode) to the right, OFF being in the center and “battery charging devices” to the left.



The Bike Holder is a nice idea, but the screw holding the black piece to the holder was out too far and scratched the holder where it slides in. I didn't get the Armband.



A car window mount is being designed.

The HYmini is considered to be weatherproof, but not water resistant, so don't try to recharge on your bike or while running when it is raining.

The propeller of the wind turbine is flexible and stops easily so children (or adults) will not cut themselves on the blades. There is another mini LED indicator light that comes on inside the windcone, when the propeller is turning fast enough to be charging.

Conclusion

If you literally want to wear "Green" on your sleeve or swap out the pinwheel on your bike or just hold one of these in your hand when the wind is going faster than 9 miles per hour, you might enjoy having one of these units.

If you want to show off solar technology, then run a few solar panels in series to get a charge out of the HYmini device.

If you want to learn to appreciate just how much power is needed to run your portable devices, using one of the recharging methods (besides the wallwart) provides a quick lesson on how long it takes to do the job.

Recommendation

The USB adapters alone make this worth the purchase price. This is a fun conceptual instrument for demonstrating alternative energy solutions. By the way, the HYmini is precharged at the factory and a paper strip comes printed with when it was done. I like that kind of attention to detail and I expect to see more innovative “Green” devices from MINIWIZ.

What is OverUnity™?

By Robert Pritchett

We cannot get something for nothing, but we sure can try!

What is the definition of "Overunity"? <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Overunity> The first thing to come to mind is Perpetual Motion. Perpetual motion is a system that runs itself without any new energy applied. The second thing to come to mind is Synergetics - <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Synergetics>, “an interdisciplinary science explaining the formation and self-organization of patterns and structures in open systems far from thermodynamic equilibrium”. However, I would like to think Overunity is really a closed-loop system that is self-powering, producing more power than it apparently consumes and perhaps uses Zero-Point Energy Fields to do so - http://peswiki.com/index.php/PowerPedia:Zero_point_energy. I see Overunity as is the scientific equivalent of the holygrail™ as a process that somehow overcomes friction or gravity and goes beyond the known laws of thermodynamics – until it is “explained”.

There is a competition by Stefan Hartmann for an Overunity device for a monetary prize with specific conditions to be met at OverUnity.com and the prize keeps getting bigger - <http://www.overunity.com/index.php/topic,2157.0.html>

These are the conditions –

- “1. You need to build 3 working units, all must work in overunity mode, so to make sure, it is a replicatable device.
2. Each of the 3 devices must at least put out 50 Watts of continuous electrical AC or DC power. If your device is more a mechanical or chemical (e.g. electrolysis or **cold fusion** devices) device, you must build also into it the converter to get electrical power out of it, so it is producing at least continuous 50 Watts of free power without using any fuel other than water or air.
3. Batteries can be used in it, but must be declared and must not be hidden and battery lifetime and recharge time must be specified.(If batteries are used as a buffer the testing time must be prolonged to test, if not just the batteries are delivering all the output energy).Battery life should be at least 3 years and to change the batteries should not cost more than 50 Euros (each 3 years or better after a longer time period)
4. The 3 devices must be shipped to 3 different favourite **Website** owners in the free energy news and discussion movement.
One device must be shipped to me at OverUnity.com (Dip. Ing. Stefan Hartmann)

and the 2 other devices can be shipped for instance to Mr. Jean Louis Naudin (jlnlabs.org) and Mr. Sterling D. Allan (freenergynews.com) or similar entities, which are able to test and measure these devices and publish in details the reports about these devices.

5. Patented devices do not apply, cause we want a solution that has no rights yet on it and which would be free to build by anyone. Commercial replications must pay at least 10 to 20 % license fees to charity organizations or similar organisations, that "feed the world" and help the poor. This should be watched by the community to verify that commercial builder companies really pay these licenses to charity organisations.

6. The inventor will get the prize money from me, if all 3 devices work at the website owners and will still work after 3 months of time. 3 Months should be long enough to study and verify the 3 units and also do extensive tests and measurements with them and first replications would be then already available from the community.

The verification tests will be published widely all over the [internet](#) to spread quickly together with the blueprints PDF File building instructions.

7. The device should not cost more than 500 US\$ in part- and material- prices to build and the inventor must also supply a DOC or [PDF file](#) with pictures and building instructions and an explanation how he thinks that it works.

8. The inventor of the devices must build 3 devices from his own money and [loan](#) these 3 devices to the 3 website owners for the 3 months test periods and after this he can choose, if he wants to get the 3 devices back or would like to sell these 3 devices to the test website owners to keep for themselves. The inventor needs to ship the 3 devices on his own costs to the 3 website owners. If he can supply convincing videos in advance of the functioning of his 3 devices, shipping charges can be paid by me, if he is low on money.”

The New Energy Congress posted this over on the PESWiki website –

“The phrase "**Over Unity**" typically refers to systems in which more energy comes out than was apparently put in. That is most likely a function of a new, unseen input source not yet recognized or measured. Theoretically all energy comes from existing energy and is only transformed from one form to another. Some over-unity claimant's purport that the new energy is being generated ex-nehilo (out of nothing). Most would reject that stance and just wait patiently for new discoveries of where that energy is coming from.”

A fascinating compendium regarding Perpetual Motion information is found here - http://peswiki.com/index.php/PowerPedia:Perpetual_motion

Jean-Louis Naudin has posted a list of websites dedicated to the pursuit of OverUnity - <http://jlnaudin.free.fr/html/weblinks.htm>

Tom Bearden may have the real technical answers on obtaining Overunity with charged barrier devices and negative resistors -

<http://www.cheniere.org/techpapers/Final%20Secret%2013%20May%201994/index.html>

Patrick Bailey wrote up an article on testing practices for Overunity back in 2001 -

<http://www.padrak.com/ine/DANGERSPOWER.html>

We look towards electrical power as a means to possibly obtain Overunity, but only come close with “free energy” http://peswiki.com/index.php/Directory:Free_energy devices that absorb ambient electromagnetic fields like we see with the crystal radio - <http://www.crystalradio.net/>

We have harnessed Alternating Current (AC) and Direct Current (DC). What’s next, electrical power through Self-Sustaining Current (SSC) or Magnetic Current (MC)? -

<http://www3.sympatico.ca/slavek.krepelka/exper/magcur.htm>

http://www.josephnewman.com/Single_Magnetic_Charges.html

We use transformers and amplifiers to get things done, but they take energy and produce work and generate “waste” heat as a byproduct. Electrical devices can be built without creating heat. Curiously, I see ultracapacitive electrical power as possibly achieving Overunity such as a device made by EESstor - <http://peswiki.com/index.php/Directory:EESstor>

Magnetism is also another “source” of power -

<http://peswiki.com/index.php/Magnetism>

<http://peswiki.com/index.php/Directory:Magnets>

This 50-minute 3-part video on “Running on Water” by Authur C. Clarke from 1995 is also rather interesting - <http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=2464139837181538044>

Another direction is in harnessing hydrogen -

http://peswiki.com/index.php/Directory:Hydrogen_from_Water

There are more videos produced by Sterling Allan and the PES Network here -

http://peswiki.com/index.php/Video:Water_as_Fuel_%28via_ZPE%29

Will water, magnetism and electricity mix? Maybe if we add photophoresis or light –

<http://physics-animations.com/engboard/messages/121.html>

http://peswiki.com/index.php/PowerPedia:Solar_Energy.

By the way, if you are now coming full circle with me and thinking, “what about Nuclear Power”, it is not Overunity - <http://www.srsi.org/Onsite/BBStext/whatisou.htm>

In reality, it all depends on what we include or exclude to determine if something is Overunity. It is like watching magic. It is magic if we don’t understand how it is done. Once we figure out how the trick is done, it is no longer magic. We say something has reached Overunity until we

can explain where the power is originally coming from to operate a device. Then it is no longer Overunity in our minds.

Again we look to Patrick Bailey (from 1996) for a definition;

“The definition of "over-unity" depends entirely on where you draw the circle around the device that you are considering. If the circle is small enough, the device is obviously and without question "over-unity", and energy may appear to not be conserved. Actually, it is. When you draw the circle large enough, then energy is seen to be obviously conserved.

A good example is that of putting new batteries into a flashlight. To someone in the 17th Century, this would be an "over-unity" device and a "perpetual motion" machine! Light comes from nothing!!! Energy from nothing!!! It lasts for days and days, etc.

By drawing the circle around the flashlight and the batteries, we see that energy is NOT conserved, and that the flashlight is a "free-energy" machine (just like a car) - until it runs down. Then it needs to be recharged. Ah hah!

Drawing a circle around the formation of the flashlight and of the batteries, we see that energy IS conserved, and that the potential energy generated by putting dissimilar metals together causes the voltage potential that creates the energy to power the light bulb. The whole process, is actually way "under-unity", as it takes energy to create the batteries and the flashlight. "God" or some other force was responsible for making those chemicals first.

The same argument applies to Hoover Dam, where we are obviously getting more energy out than any humans put in, due to the weather patterns and rain and snow filling Lake Mead. Draw a circle around the Dam itself, and you have a free-energy device and a perpetual motion machine. No question on that! Draw a circle around the Earth and Sun and you have conservation of energy. Where the energy of the Sun came from is quite another question...

There are LOTS of potential energy sources around here on the Earth's physical plane. The process occurring in "cold fusion" is the latest new one that is investigated right now. Let's uncover some other ones as well.”

Perhaps in striving for Overunity, we can use devices that are close enough to mass produce and give us a positive sea shift in energy use. The fun is in the striving.

Hardware

Flip Video Ultra - Simple Video Capture and Sharing

Reviewed by Wayne LeFevre



Flip Video Ultra

http://www.theflip.com/index_flip.shtml

Released: September 12, 2007

\$149, 1GB, \$179 USD, 2GB;

\$151 USD, \$182 CND, £76, £91 GBP

Requirements: Mac OS X 10.3.9 or later; Universal binary; 512 MB RAM; SVGA display (1024 x 768) monitor and video card. QuickTime 7 or later.



Strengths: Very portable, all in one video recorder needing no external gear. Comes in several different colors.

Weaknesses: Can't directly access from iMovie, Shaky.

Introduction

In this day and age, information is king, and “unless you have video, it never happened” – as the saying goes. The Flip Video and Flip Video Ultra is to the camcorder that the point-and-shoot camera is to the DSLR. I don't think it is designed to replace your current digital camcorder, but at roughly 4 inches by 2 inches, it is a fantastic product to carry “just in case”.

Getting Started

The process for shooting video is as simple as taking it out of the box, installing two AA batteries, turning it on and hitting the big red button. The box design, by the way, could have been designed by Apple themselves and is very iPhone-esque. The package contains the camcorder, tv connector cable, wrist strap, a cloth carrying case, two AA batteries, and

instruction booklet. The 1 GB model will record 30 minutes of MPEG4 AVI video and the 2 GB model records 60 minutes.

The installation to the computer requires a quick slide of a button on the side that pops out a built-in flip-out USB connector arm. Connecting that to your Mac will mount the camera just like an external disk drive. Included on the camera is the software that will allow you to edit and export your videos.

The camcorder uses your computer as its power source while connected, instead of using the batteries in the camcorder, helping to conserve battery life. You must therefore connect your camcorder to a powered USB port in order to run the Flip Video Program.

The only problem I see with this is that often, especially with desktop computers, is the USB ports can be a pain to get to, or, as with any computer, just inaccessible to this type of connection due to other accessories being plugged into ports next to it. The simplest solution, of course, is to use a USB extension cable. This is not included, though being almost a necessity, should be!

The first time you use the camera software, and it will keep the editing software on the camera – there is no installation to your hard drive, it will ask you to install the included 3ivx video codec. I had previously installed Perian and DivX, I skipped the 3ivx codec, and the videos it produces still plays fine. However, in order to run the included editing application, no big loss there, it insists that you install the 3ivx codec whether the files will play or not.

If you choose, you can also play the movies on the camcorder directly to a TV using the included NTSC Composite cable.

Using the Hardware

The actual use of the Flip Ultra couldn't be easier. Simply aim at subject and press big button on back of camcorder. The other controls on the back are play, delete, zoom and forward/back navigation buttons. It takes about 2 seconds from On to Record ready.

There is a 1½ inch TFT display screen on the back for recording and playback. The lens is fixed focus with a 2X digital zoom. It has a built in microphone and speaker and on the front of the camcorder next to the lens is a small area that glows red when in record mode. There is an mount on the bottom to place on an tripod, and an underwater case is out and good up to 30 feet, which should be really interesting. (Though without any sort of built in light, I'm not really sure how well this will work.)

The video itself is from a ¼ inch 4:3 640x480 CMOS sensor. All levels and exposures are automatically balanced. In my experience, it is every bit as good as a normal digital camcorder. It captures well in low-light situations, but does it's best outdoors or in bright light, as any camera would. The 30 fps 480p picture is clear and sharp. The zoom works well, though it is digital and not expected to do as well as an optical would. The compression is decent, though some videos there is an apparent jump every once in awhile. It records with an average data rate of 1,500 kbps.

It does capture sound quite well at a rate of 44.1kHz mono , though again, not quite as good as a higher end model of camcorder that would allow you to record with your choice of bit rate, with a more directional mic.

The software that runs on the camera is a simple management and editing application, with a very simple interface that is not at all Mac like. It allows you to download your videos to the hard drive and organize them into albums. It will allow you to save, share, delete videos and make movies. Saving simply saves it to your hard drive. There are also options to Save for DVD at Retail and Save for Email. Saving for Retail lets you save videos back to your camcorder to take to an authorized Pure Digital retailer for burning onto DVD. Save for Email will save it into a MOV file to make them more compatible with others. By drilling down within the finder window into the directories, you can find and manually copy your movies from the finder.

Sharing a Video

Private Email Sharing goes through AOL Video, and wants you to sign into AOL using either your screen name, AIM, or The video then gets converted and uploaded onto AOL. It will send an e-mail to whom you specify, where they can watch the video in their browser in Flash format. Share Greetings does the same thing, but with a colorful matt or card around the outside of the video. Public online sharing will give you choices to upload to AOL Video, YouTube, or another web site.

Make Movie allows the combination of movies into one and Delete Videos will take videos off of your camcorder. The only editing of the videos are in the form of dragging one start time slider and one end time slider, and then cropping the remaining. You can't see the camera from within iMovie, nor



can you drag movies from the finder straight into iMovie. You must convert it, using the included camera software or another encoder for use with iMovie. Another caveat is though it is a USB camera, you cannot use it live while hooked up to the computer – even with software like iChatUSBCam from ecomm network.

Conclusion

This camera is perfect for carrying along with you when you just don't want to be bothered by lugging a large case with a regular sized camcorder in it. For the YouTube or Google videos, you really can't go wrong. There are some minuses. You won't want to use the included software, except maybe to convert it into something you can edit with iMovie or the like. There is no image stabilization feature, and being so small with nothing to rest it against, it will constantly shake unless you use a tri-pod. No zoom except a 2x digital. But the plusses on this one really outweigh the minuses. So small you can stick it in a pocket, yet still have great looking video that lasts 30 minutes and 60 minutes, depending on the model.

Recommendation

If you travel a lot, stick it in your glove box, briefcase or purse. You never know if the video you capture will be on the news, the next big thing on YouTube, or even a favorite impromptu clip that will be enjoyed by your family for generations to come. The best video is never set up, it just happens that you are there at the right place and the right time to record it. The Flip is just the thing to make sure that you'll be ready when it does.

Software

Guide to Birds of North America version 3.9.3.0

Reviewed by Robert Pritchett



Creator: Pete Thayer
Thayer Birding Software
809 Walkerbilt Road, Suite #4
Naples, FL 34110-1511

<http://www.thayerbirding.com/>

Released for Mac – December 3, 2007, For MS Vista,
July 31, 2007
\$85 USD.

<http://www.thayerbirding.com/dnn/Default.aspx?tabid=608>

Includes: The Birder's Handbook

Requirements: A desire to do birding. Internet access.
Mac OS X 10.3 or later, 256MB RAM, 750 MB hard drive
space, CD-ROM to install.

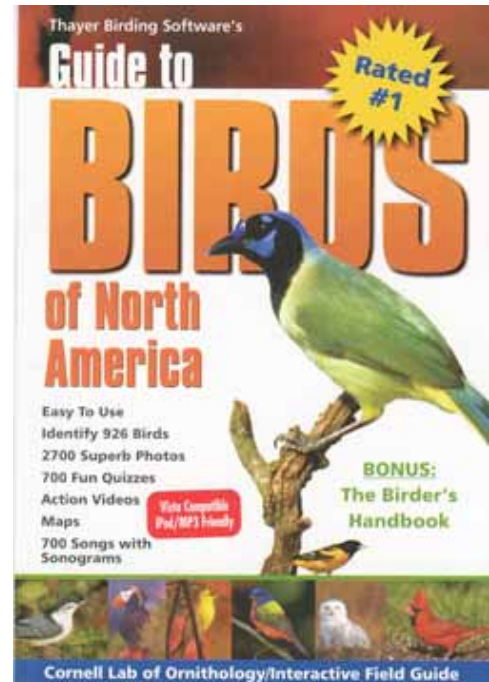
ISBN: 1887148914

Strengths: Ability to find birds by location, size, habitat,
color, field marks, group or even sound. Links to more info
included online.

Weaknesses: Forum registration requires copy/paste of
source code in Safari, since the .aspx site doesn't play nice
with Mac OS X 10.5.2 Leopard. Male-centric photos.

Introduction

With this app installed on your computer, along with the RavenLite app, we can view over 2,700 color photos, see 90 video clips, hear over 700 songs and learn how to identify 925 birds that have been seen in the continental U.S. and Canada. We can also take over 700 quizzes. We can identify unknown birds by color, size, habitat, location and even by sound and compare two birds side-by-side. We can keep a record of the birds we have seen. We can add your own comments, photos and Internet links to each bird.



We can learn more than just bird identification - with the Birder's Handbook (included in electronic format) we can learn about diet, nesting behavior, raising young and more for over 650 breeding birds. There are also 250 essays on birds, bird behavior and famous ornithologists.

What I Learned

We can also watch action videos of birds in their habitat, from the Guide to Birds of North America and we can download to iPods or MP3 players. The Birder's Handbook however is loaded with essays and lists bird biologists in 247 articles. With the included Raven Lite 1.0 software from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, I can listen to and see spectrograms of many of the bird's calls (at least 708 of them) and do recordings as a taste for going to the Pro version –

<http://www.birds.cornell.edu/brp/raven/Raven.html>

For example, by using this software, I now know what a humming bird call sounds like of one that is in my part of the state of Washington (I can choose from among 478 birds in the list).

If I so desire, I could make screen savers that sing.

I can also list similar species and birds of the same family. I can also find common names of birds in French, German or Spanish as well as English. Lists can be shown with common or scientific names and in alphabetical or taxonomic order.

The forums can be found at <http://www.thayerbirding.com/dnn/Forums/tabid/599/Default.aspx>. As of this review, I had to copy/paste the source code to be able to register using Mac OS X 10.5.2. I'm sure it is a security issue, since the site is .aspx technology.

There are links to the top 25 birding sites, Wildbirds, Cornell Lab on Ornithology, BirdSource, Project FeederWatch, Backyard Birds, the American Birding Association, a checklist by state and province and a free birding newsletter.

Conclusion

I'm excited that there is such software available for the Mac that works with Leopard. The quizzes are great, the maps are wonderful and the sounds are pristine. The additional info associated with the included electronic books are a great thought and so is the included Raven spectrograph software. It is obvious this app was developed by a bird-lover.

Now I'm going to go bug the cat and see if he can get excited about hearing the birds on the computer and seeing them as well.

Smart Trash (Menu) 1.1.3 – Simple but effective menu based trash tool

Reviewed by Harry {doc} Babad © 2008

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>Hyperbolic > < Software</p> <p>Hyperbolic Software support@hyperbolicsoftware.com http://www.vendorwebsiteURL.com Released: November 14 2007 Shareware Cost: \$10 USD, \$9.95 CND, £5.05 GBP, €6.77 Euro Requirements: Mac OS X 10.4 and later - Full Leopard compatibility. Requires 2.0MB disk space and is PCC/Intel compatible.</p> |  |
| <p>Strengths: An easily accessible menu based flexible trash features enhancement tool for Macintosh OS X. One that works as designed, every time I used it.</p> <p>Weaknesses: Lack of a Secure Delete feature forces me to go back to Apple's tools when such a need arises.</p> <p>Copyright Notice: Product and company names and logos in this review may be registered trademarks of their respective companies.</p> <p>The software was tested on a 1 GHz dual processor PowerPC G4 Macintosh with 2 GB DDR SDRAM running under OS X 10.4.11</p> | |

Introduction Including Publisher's Summary

As I get ready for my new iMac and Leopard, I am working my way through all of my application, preference tools and the like to assure I have no OS X 10.5 translation glitches. For many years, since September of 2004, I have used Kanzu Utilities, iCan 3.05 as my favorite trash tool. Although I never used it in the sits on the desktop mode, I made daily use of its features acceptable from my menubar. iCan gave me ways to simply trash items, showing the size of the trashcan, from my startup disk. I could also smart (selectively) trash items, or force trash stubborn items that were stuck in the trash even after rebooting. I could also do a variety of secure deletes, with the number of write-overs chosen by my paranoia level.

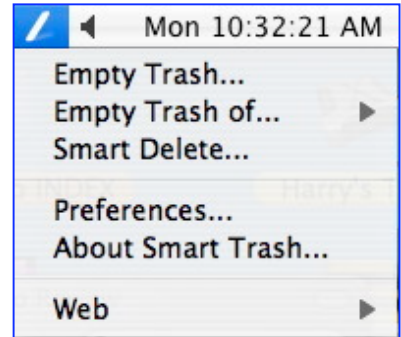


Rather than take a chance using software that was last tested in 2004, I started searching for a Leopard compatible tool. Checking the MacUpdate site I found several possible tools, that among other functions like putting the trash can back on my desktop (yuck) might give me a Finder Menu Bar flexible trash tool. Only Smart Trash seemed to come close to what I wanted. Although it is less feature rich than iCan, beggars can't choose.

According to the developer, Smart Trash enhances the functions of the Mac OS X trash by adding several menu options including: selective file deletion, extensive logging, the ability to empty the trash on specific volumes, or delete selected files from the booted volumes on your computer.

Using the Software

The software comes with an installer, making it easy to install and configure. I did not make use of the logging function, either in testing the software or in daily use. The installation puts a pink/blue eraser icon on your Finder menu bar. From there you can both control the way which trash is deleted and set your preferences. Since Smart Trash keyboard short cuts interfered with some of my established ones, so I turned them off. I could have assigned new keyboard combinations to the trash modes but why bother... the menu-based icon is just a mouse click away.



Comforts and Discomforts:

Comforts:

- Smart Trash is simple and easy to use – its sits in the finder menu bar until I need it. It neither stutters nor otherwise malfunctions. I empty trash several times a day, not worrying much about the stuff I toss. In part I feel secure because I keep a separate backup runtime copy each version of the articles I write, Smart Trash, as did iCan alerts me to the size of the items being trashed so I have a quick way of determining whether I tossed something I wanted to save.
- Selectively Deleting Trash from Mounted Volumes – I didn't know I missed this until I gained the ability to do so with Smart Trash.



Discomforts

- There's no help information in the readme file that describes the differences between the trash options. I had to write Giuseppe Giunto to get that information. I recognize that with a little bit of paying attention, I could have figured it out for myself but I was hoping "Smart Delete" was a secure delete feature. It wasn't; see the next item. The screen shot shows some of the details that not immediately intuitive.



- Apple's Secure delete allow one to securely and unrecoverable destroy confidential trashed information. You knew of course that trashing a file only removes its directory entry. Therefore anyone who gets access to your hard disk can recover trashed files until you've overwritten it with new work. Lack of a Secure Delete feature in Smart Trash forces me to go back to Apple's tools when such a need arises. Apple's tools allow one pass, seven passes or 35 overwrite passes from either Apple's Disk Utility or Finder [Menu Bar Icon] > Secure delete trash. All the deleted items become 01010101010.] *See Shredding Your Trash* at the end of this review.

Conclusions and Recommendation

Although this utility lack one feature I need, the ability to secure deleted selected trashed items, it does the rest of your trash related housekeeping very well. Ten dollars is a fair price to pay if you have an active computing life and generate lots of things you want to get rid of when you're done with a project. Smart Trash would have been a perfect "10" or a 5 macC product if the author adds secure delight

PS:

Shredding Your Trash

Synopted from http://www.delamaincreativity.com/articles_how-tos/apple-mac-osx/secure-erase-hard-drive.html

As of Mac OS 10.3, Apple made it easy to securely erase your data, and in 10.5 they made it even simpler. **Warning**, once started, OSX will run a 35-pass overwrite of the file, essentially going well beyond the basic recommendations of any government security department. Once it is done, there will be no going back, even the most accomplished tool-rich expert will NOT be able to get that data back from that hard drive or memory store.

How it works — Once you have moved the items you need to securely remove to your trash, then select *Secure Empty Trash* from the File Menu in the Finder Menu.

In 10.5, this can be done the same way, or by using the respective button in the window tool bar having opened the Finder window for the trash by double-clicking the Trash icon in the Dock.

Get Some Tea or Coffee — If you intend to secure erase large files, it could take a substantial amount of time in order to complete the secure erase process, given that a large file would have to be overwritten 35 times.



Speed Download 5 – Download Manager

Reviewed by Robert Pritchett



YazSoft

info@yazsoft.com

<http://www.yazsoft.com/index.html>

<http://www.yazsoft.com/download.html>

Tour: <http://www.yazsoft.com/content/tour.html>

Free 21-day trial.

Released: February 20, 2008

\$25 USD <http://www.yazsoft.com/content/buy.html>

Upgrades for \$15 USD, Switchers from other download managers for \$15 USD

Requirements: Mac OS X 10.4.11 or later, Internet connection and a browser. 19 MB hard drive space.

Strengths: Really does speed up downloads!

Weaknesses: None found.

Don McAllister's Video Screencast for Version 4:

<http://screencastsonline.com/sco/Shows/files/SCO0085-speeddlpt1.html>

Last reviewed:

<http://www.macompanion.com/archives/June2006/Software/SpeedDownload.htm>

Introduction

Speed Download 5 combines four amazing products — a turbo-charged download manager with auto-resuming downloads, a fully featured secure FTP client, a file sharing utility with full encryption, and complete .Mac/iDisk/WEBDAV connectivity — into one small and easy-to-use application.

Speed Download 5 also introduces a stunning new user interface option that feels right at home in Mac OS X and is designed to help you be even more productive with fewer mouse clicks hence, completely redefining what you can do with your time online. Introducing SD Minimized mode; a serious upgrade to the Speed Download floater. Fully supports drag-n-drop, completely resizable, customizable

- Redesigned interface with simple iTunes-like Minimized and Advanced usage modes
- Re-engineered 'universal' download engine optimized for maximum performance
- A powerful database to manage all your downloads, uploads, and file transfers



- A brand new fully featured, built-in FTP client with dual pane view
- Encrypted file sharing between SD5 users
- A Filters bar
- A high performance utility for downloading web content for offline viewing
- .Mac iDisk integration
- Auto-resuming file transfers all the time (downloads, uploads and file transfers) and live bandwidth throttle
- Unlimited UNDOs throughout the entire application
- Smart folder technology
- Individual file scheduling, queue download scheduling
- Download website content for offline viewing

As an added bonus, Speed Download now includes a link to Transmission - <http://www.transmissionbt.com/>; a BitTorrent application. Transmission is a free, lightweight BitTorrent client featuring a simple, intuitive interface on top of an efficient, cross-platform back-end.

Speed Download is optimized for ANY Internet connection (dial-up or broadband).

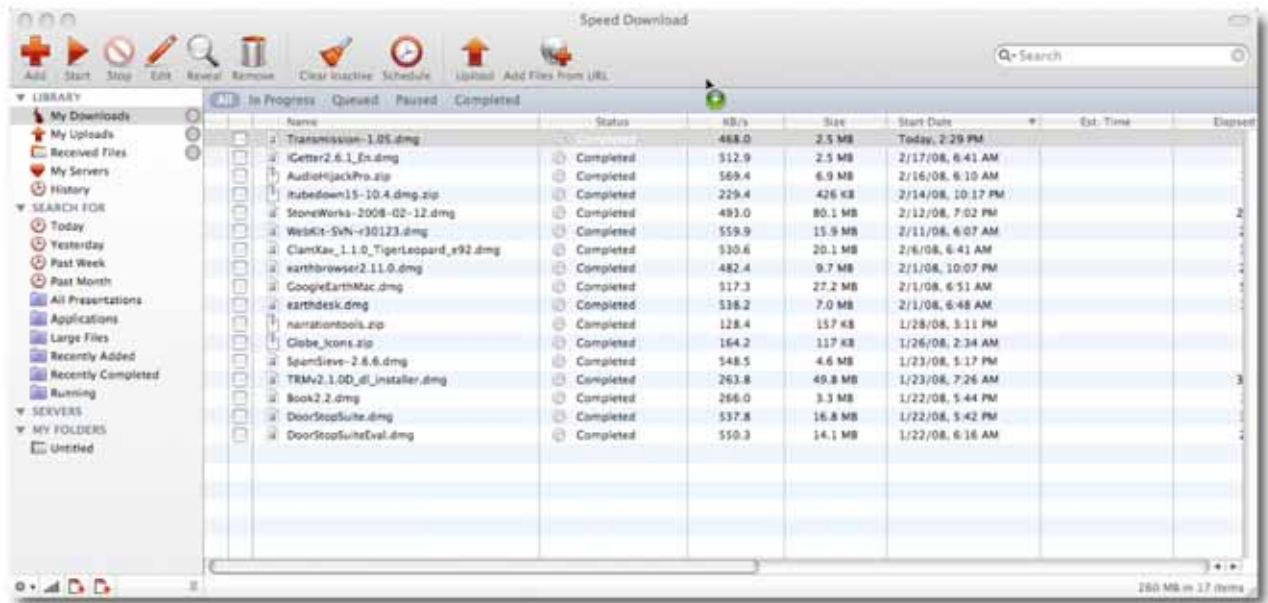
My Experience

Well, I figured since I had downloaded the latest from MacHeist - <http://www.macheist.com/>, I was good to go, but YazSoft sent out their upgrade shortly after and gave no indicator that it would be a paid upgrade when we clicked on version 4 to upgrade, so I figured I was screwed. Many of the others who participated in MacHeist did too. I downloaded the cross-platform iGetter X 2.6 from Presenta Software (Bulgaria) - <http://www.igetters.net/> (same price as Speed Download) to keep going. It operates from your browser and does things a little (no, a LOT!) differently than Speed Download does.

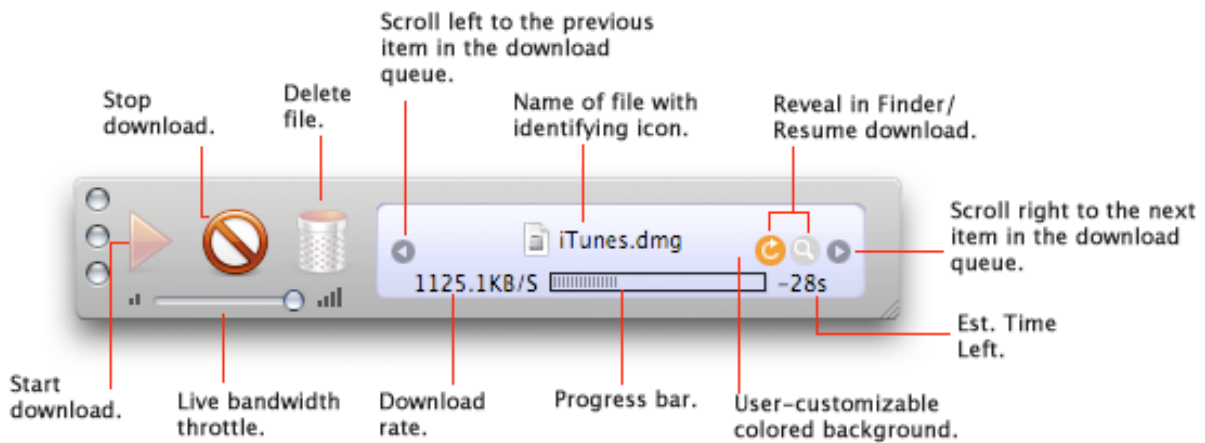


And then I was asked to review version 5 of Speed Download and I jumped at the chance. Our last review in 2006 gave it a rating of 5. So how could they improve? Well, first of all, it works well with Leopard – but so did version 4.

I had just removed nearly 2 years of downloaded files using Speed Download and that stopped when I switched to iGetter. I won't be revealing too much by showing the current Speed Download page...



If I used the Minimized mode it would look something like this –

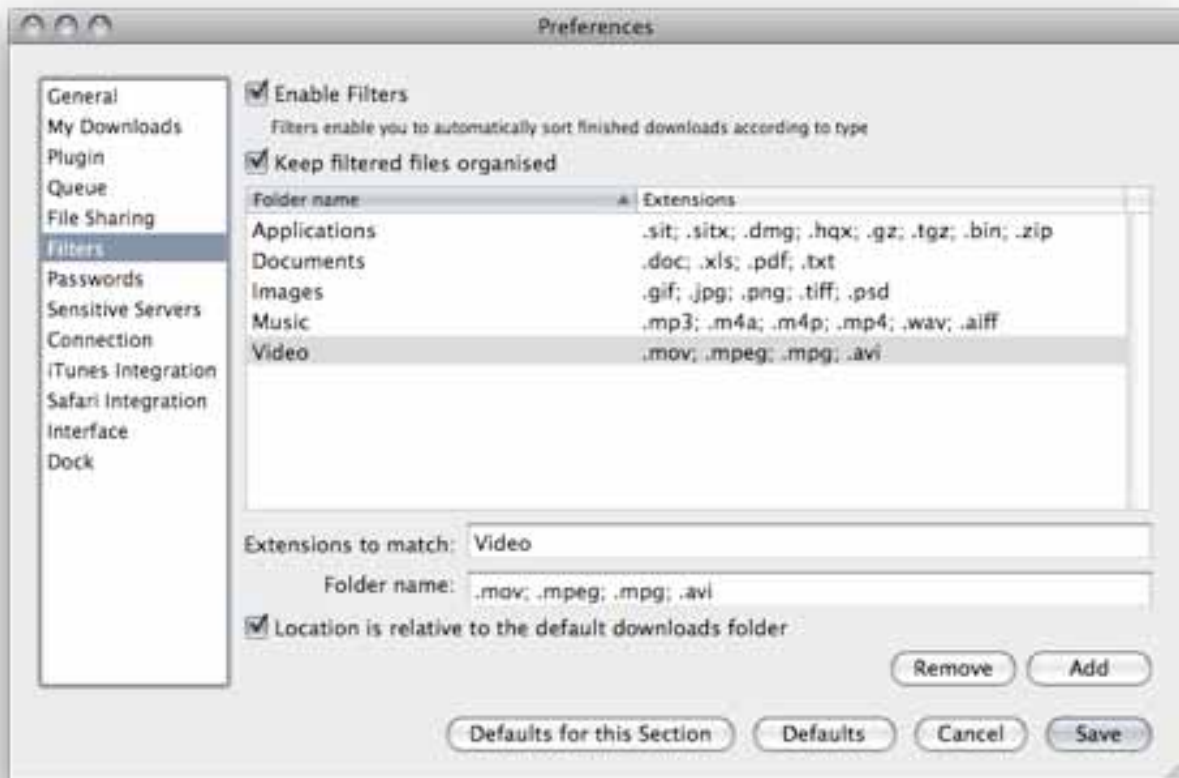


Or perhaps even this...

The enhancements I like are the auto-resuming feature and encryption (assuming I know of others who also use Speed Download 5). I like the fact that I can go back and check on files I've downloaded in the past and reload them if necessary. This was put to good use when I switched from Tiger to Leopard.



I like the filtering capability by organizing files by type -



The FTP function will be of interest to those who do not already have an FTP app. I do, so this could be of some use, but not much right now to me.

I don't do .Mac (and yes, I do have an account), so integration there is not of much use to me either. Nor do I do Smart Folders. I figure I have stuff in one location and I haven't really grasped the significance of "aliasing" folders yet.

However, remote controlling Speed Download from afar through Terminal mode is also of some interest to me. I see that as being very useful.

Conclusion

Speed Download 5 is an improvement and worth the \$25 USD fee or \$15 USD for upgrade of you need a turbo-charged download manager with auto-resuming downloads, a fully featured secure FTP client, a file sharing utility with full encryption, and complete .Mac/iDisk/WEBDAV connectivity. It continues to succeed in its goal of being both a time and productivity enhancer.

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<http://www.amazon.com/gp/homepage.html/002-5842389-7443202>

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<http://www.evonetworks.com>

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Contact Dennis Sellers, our Ad and Marketing Director, for working through the process of advertising with us.

dsellers@maccompanion.com

We are the Macintosh® Professional Network (MPN), Limited Liability Corporation (LLC). MPN, LLC continues to evolve, ever since its creation in 1996 as a way to reach out to those who use computers for a living in an effort to make their lives easier and their work both enjoyable and profitable.

We also provide monthly book, hardware and software reviews at [macCompanion](#). We offer ways and means for folks to get comfortable using the Macintosh™ created by the Apple® Corporation in the multibillion-dollar computer industry. We know that bad software doesn't live long in the Mac™ environment. On the other hand, good computer equipment and software becomes great as the word spreads, and we are very good at helping to spread it. Our suggestions over the years have also helped improve many successful products in use today. Through kind and gentle efforts, we have been able to help many people move to better tools-of-the-trade so they can be more productive in their work.

Besides our website and consulting efforts, we also create *macCompanion* as a freely available PDF-based monthly. It averages about 100 pages per month. July 2006 was the 4th-year anniversary of this labor of love. The *macCompanion* staff is an all-volunteer team of writers and reviewers from many parts of the globe, and they also have a great wealth of knowledge and experience in their backgrounds. That base of talent also continues to keep growing as the Macintosh Professional Network expands.

Statistical Analysis

We are very excited about our site statistics! The multilingual-capable [macCompanion](#) website is close to 2 million page views a month and readership continues to increase rapidly through our "whisper campaign". (Just don't put too much attention to web statistics and you will be okay though - <http://www.goldmark.org/netrants/webstats/>.)

We continue to get greater visibility every day. Many of the various 35 computer operating systems (with many moving towards the Mac® OS X™ environment), 115 online search engines, 269 countries and domains and 319 online robots have discovered us – and continue to do so. So far, over 201 other websites have also linked to us. Many of our readers have made our site one of their favorites. While nearly 70% of our readership stops by for a quick visit via RSS feeds, over 23% spend between 1/2 to 1 hours at a time going through over 250 different pages on our site (mostly archives). Many of those who quickly drop by, come to get the monthly PDF issue of *macCompanion*. Over 35GB of bandwidth was used in December 2005 alone for download purposes. Previous months have averaged around 20GB. Trend analysis indicates that will continue to increase as folks decide to "Move to the Mac".

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We have some advertising options you may choose from, and multiple months receive a 20% discount for both website and PDF-based ads. All advertising must be paid in advance. We accept credit card payments via PayPal, checks, money orders, by regular mail and cash in US currency by hand, if you meet us face-to-face.

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Talk with Dennis Sellers about advertising rates. Negotiable. Following the KISS principle, we accept banner ads in only one size at this time - 468x60 pixels (per the [Interactive Advertising Bureau](#) standards for a Full Banner Ad Interactive Marketing Unit.) The ad will be rotated through with other ads, and there is no limit to how many you want to include.

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Well that's it for this issue. Please come back again next month!

The *macCompanion* Staff