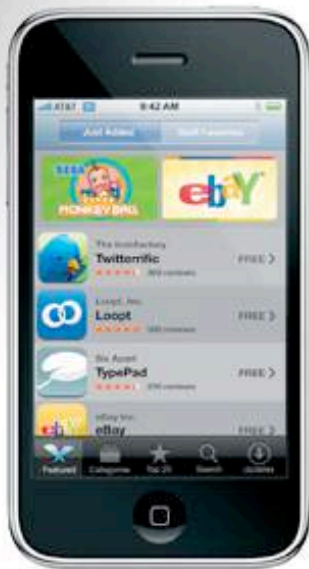


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macCompanion

YOUR GUIDE TO ALL THINGS MACINTOSH

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Volume 6 Issue 7

Masthead

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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.

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EN offers truly affordable and comprehensive 24x7 service and support for those companies that have few or no IT staff.

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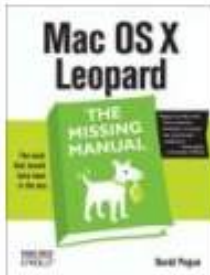
Eliminate IT Headaches

Evolves With Your Business

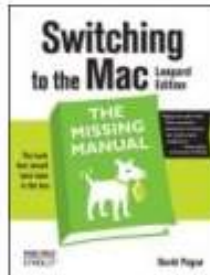
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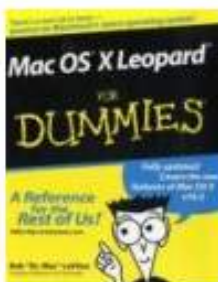
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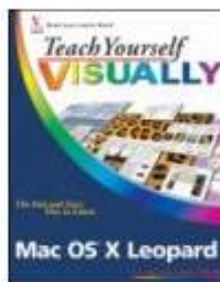
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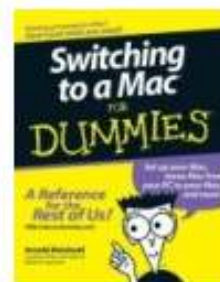
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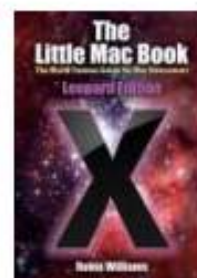
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by Robin Williams
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Apple MagSafe 85w Power Adapter (Macbook & MB Pro)

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Columns

Letter from the CEO

CellPhone Popcorn Popping

By Robert Pritchett

Cardo Systems set up groups in various countries and released the YouTube videos all about the same time to sell their remote headsets.

<http://www.cardosystems.com/pop/>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kAd0aWxs7kQ>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vPf8dXsZ1PE&NR=1>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AcLS2WJERQ0&feature=related>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Oj6SZgbBuSQ&feature=related>

The contents of these videos are fictitious and humorous optical illusions, designed for entertainment. Nothing in these videos is meant to imply that mobile phones can make popcorn and Cardo Systems, Inc. ("Cardo") specifically disclaims that these videos contain any portrayal of facts or comments about safety. Cardo disclaims any liability for the information in these videos.

<http://blog.wired.com/gadgets/2008/06/video-cellphone.html>
<http://blog.wired.com/underwire/2008/06/cellphones-cant.html>
http://blogs.guardian.co.uk/technology/2008/06/11/so_the_microwave_popcorn_with_your_phone_thing_is_a_hoax_done_how.html
<http://blogs.pcworld.com/tipsandtweaks/archives/007078.html>

This one is even funnier - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A_KFQqmhGq8

Is this kind of viral advertising ethical? (Find a social hot button and YouTube theme and Ju Jitsu it to advantage). Is any kind of viral advertising ethical any more?

Note: The earlier cellphones did send out 3 Watts of power when in use inside a vehicle. I know. I experienced "brain cooking" when traveling from Richland, Washington to Corvallis, Oregon and using a cellphone all the way (6-hour run).

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QJJnsTWYeQ&feature=related> I experienced head-warmth near my ear, headache and nausea and disorientation with a unit that had the omnidirectional antennae way back in 1996. At the time I didn't know why.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mobile_phone_radiation_and_health That is why many vehicles had external antennae for communications.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k2KZQmI83_w&feature=related
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gkeMLOIAEKU&feature=related>

It is also why I have steered away from using a cellphone – until now. Back then there were no earphone units. Now there are remote "hands-off" units for cellphones, thus reducing the hazard to the head of electromagnetic frequency radiation (EMFs).

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IOWLhFX75Ss&feature=related>

Are Cellphones safe today? This was then - How about now?

Ten highest radiation cellphones in use today in the USD –

http://reviews.cnet.com/4520-6602_7-5020357-1.html?tag=lnav

Note: SAR is supposed to give an indication on the biological effects of Electromagnetic (EM) waves.

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

Carrier wave oscillates at 1900 megahertz (MHz) in most phones, which is mostly invisible to our biological tissue and doesn't do damage. The information-carrying secondary wave necessary to interpret voice or data is the problem, says Dr. Carlo. That wave cycles in a hertz (Hz) range familiar to the body. Your heart, for example, beats at two cycles per second, or two Hz. Our bodies recognize the information-carrying wave as an "invader," setting in place protective biochemical reactions that alter physiology and cause biological problems that include intracellular free-radical buildup, leakage in the blood-brain barrier, genetic damage, disruption of intercellular communication, and an increase in the risk of tumors. The health dangers of recognizing the signal, therefore, aren't from direct damage, but rather are due to the biochemical responses in the cell.

One thing all these conditions have in common is a disruption, to varying degrees, of intercellular communication. When we were growing up, TV antennas were on top of our houses and such waves were up in the sky. Cell phones and Wi-Fi have brought those things down to the street, integrated them into the environment, and that's absolutely new. The recognition mechanism, where protein vibration sensors on the cell membrane pick up a signal and interpret it as an invader, only works because the body recognizes something it's never seen before."

"This means we're on the beginning curve of an epidemic, with epidemic defined as a change in the occurrence of a disease that is so dramatic in its increase that it portends serious public health consequences," says Dr. Carlo. "This is what's not being told to the public. One of the things that I suggest to people who use a cell phone is to use an air tube headset. If you use a wired headset, the current moving through the wire of the headset attracts ambient informational carrying radio waves and thereby increases your exposure."

Apple iPhone - back



GSM 850
ECSM 900
Antenna

DCS 1800
PCS 1900
Antenna

WiFi & Bluetooth Antenna

Battery

Radio Board Shield

Camera

Antenna location on the back of iPhone
GSM 850 - EGSM 900 - DCS 1800 - PCS 1900
AT&T Cingular typically sends PCS 1900
so place the Universal Adapter right above that location

<http://iphoneantenna.com/>

iPhone 3G Disassembled http://content.zdnet.com/2346-9595_22-210341.html

The newer cellphones use Mandelbrot or fractal directional antennas and use less power.

Dr. Nathan Cohen, <http://www.fractenna.com/about/management.html> designed, engineered and patented many practical **fractal antenna** solutions and founded "Fractal Antenna Systems" - <http://www.fractenna.com/> in 1995.

The newest cellphones don't even have an antennae nub in them any longer.

<http://www.scienceprog.com/fractal-antenna-constructions/>



Microwaving Popcorn

Can popcorn really be cooked using a cellphone array today? (I'm guessing it is possible, depending on microwave frequency, concentration and sweetspotting.) Since the process involves water excitation in seeds, can cellphones generate enough energy to do electrolysis and create hydrogen? Probably not.

cmcrae1 wrote;

"To heat the ~250 uL of water in one kernel to boiling point (which is what causes the kernel to pop) would require ~ 85 J of energy input. Assuming the kernel of corn was receiving the full power from even three phones, it would take ~ 50 sec to boil the 250 uL of water.

As a consequence of the long microwave wavelength (~ 12 cm) and the size of popcorn kernels (~0.5 cm), microwave popcorn packets need to have a foil liner in their base to make the corn pop. It is actually the foil liner that is heated by the microwaves, and which subsequently pops the corn, not the corn kernels themselves.

Microwave ovens operate around 2.4GHz. Cell phone transceivers run around 800MHz outside the US (GSM), 1.9 GHz inside the US (CDMA), 2.4GHZ when connected via Wi-Fi. Complete microwave popcorn popping requires the plate in the bag to get warm to heat the popcorn so it can pop evenly, but it does work if inside a closed bag without a plate.

JT wrote;

1. Cellphone frequencies are not correct for boiling water (needed to pop popcorn)
2. Cellphone do not emit enough power to pop popcorn (boil the water), especially in 10 seconds (it takes a minute in my 500 W microwave that is optimized for boiling water)
3. The cellphones are somewhat randomly placed and can not possibly be placed well enough for any standing wave effects.
4. The cellphone would need to all be at the same frequency. CDMA (Sprint, Verizon, etc) and GSM (Cingular/ATT, T-Mobile, etc.) use different frequencies and different waveforms. All phones would need to be using the same wavelength and waveforms.
5. Multiplexing of the signals to and from the towers would also reduce any chance of positive reinforcement of the signals.

Chris wrote;

"Sorry but this was after-effected. The table cloth is perfect for clonestamping other parts over the kernels. The phones make a great reference for the motion tracker. Make the kernels disappear. Make a null object, track the motion, assign the motion to the null object, get a nice alpha image of popcorn linked to the null object, have it move upwards for about 3 frames, then have someone behind the camera man drop popcorn onto the table. Easy Peasy. Lemon squeezy."

Alpha bravo wrote;

"I think it could work, in theory...

A kernel of corn is 0.5g of which 15% is water, apparently. So that's 0.075g of water that needs to be heated to 180 degrees to pop, which is 160 more than room temperature, which requires $160 * 0.075 = 12$ calories = 50 joules or 50 Watt seconds.

A microwave produces 700W, so could cook 14 kernels/second in theory if it was all absorbed.

The highest radiation phone on the market produces 1.6W/kg of human tissue. Assume human tissue is the same as popcorn. So that's 0.00012 watts absorbed by the water in a kernel.

So one microwave is equivalent to 5,833,000 phones, which could cook 14 kernels/second. So 416,642 phones could cook 1 kernel/second. So 155 phones could cook 1 kernel in an hour. In theory. And with some pretty liberal assumptions.

So you'd need to somehow fit 115 phones in a microwave with one kernel of corn, and be talking on all of them at the time so that they're transmitting and not just receiving. And wait for an hour, and then you'd have one popcorn.

In a week you'd have a whole bowl! Someone who didn't drop out of physics could probably find a whole lot of problems with this..."

And if you didn't catch it the first few times, look here – it is a clever hoax - <http://blog.wired.com/underwire/2008/06/cellphones-cant.html>

Now let's see if we can cook an egg with cellphone. Oops, already been fried, er, tried... - <http://www.snopes.com/science/cookegg.asp>

Like anything that sounds too good to be true, it probably is, even if it is based on "evidence". My personal experience with a cellphone is that at the time it was not a good thing to be using it inside a vehicle for extended periods of time. To protect myself years ago, I should have hooked it up to an external antenna outside the passenger compartment.

We added this page to the PESWiki website - http://peswiki.com/index.php/Directory:Cell_Phones_Popping_Pop_Corn

The iPhone G3

The Joy of Tech – iPhone or Millionaire <http://www.geekculture.com/joyoftech/joyarchives/1125.html>

The Guided Tour - <http://www.apple.com/iphone/guidedtour/>
It comes with a stereo and mic headset, so the iPhone G3 will be busy at arms length instead of connected to my head.



The older iPhone Specs - http://www.iphonefreak.com/2007/01/official_iphone_1.html

Phone technology: Quad-band GSM (MHz: 850, 900, 1800, 1900) and EDGE (This means the phone is not a 3G phone but a 2.5G)

Wireless data: Wi-Fi 802.11b/g, Bluetooth 2.0

The newer iPhone G3 Specs - <http://www.apple.com/iphone/specs.html>

Cellular and wireless

- UMTS/HSDPA (850, 1900, 2100 MHz)
- GSM/EDGE (850, 900, 1800, 1900 MHz)
- Wi-Fi (802.11b/g)
- Bluetooth 2.0 + EDR

3G Network Coverage - <http://www.wireless.att.com/coverageviewer/>

AT&T's 3G Coverage Discrepancies - <http://blogs.zdnet.com/Apple/?p=1983&tag=nl.e539>

More on iPhone G3, GPS and power management -

<http://blogs.zdnet.com/Apple/?p=1862>

iPhone 3G: It's not world peace, but it's close -

http://www.computerworld.com/action/article.do?command=viewArticleBasic&articleId=9095898&source=NLT_MAC&nid=62

Opinion: You already have an iPhone, should you buy a new one? –

http://www.computerworld.com/action/article.do?command=viewArticleBasic&articleId=9095898&source=NLT_MAC&nid=62

Engadget FAQ –

<http://www.engadget.com/2008/06/12/iphone-3g-everything-you-ever-wanted-to-know-but-were-afraid-t/>

Walt's Report –

<http://www.insanely-great.com/news.php?id=9215>

iPhone 2.0 Unlocked –

<http://gizmodo.com/366751/iphone-20-unlocked-runs-all-apps>

7 Diss- appointments –

http://www.macdailynews.com/index.php/weblog/comments/forbes_offers_up_seven_iphone_3g_disappointments_and_one_of_them_is_even_va/

Wait, Wait Don't Tell Me NPR – Next Generation iPhone predictions –

<http://www.npr.org/templates/rundowns/rundown.php?prgId=35&ft=2&f=35>

MacWorld's iPhone Central -

<http://www.macworld.com/article/133988/2008/06/iphone3gfaqs.html?t=213>

The Danger of the New iPhone –

<http://www.cioinsight.com/c/a/Strategy/New-iPhone-Danger/?kc=CIOMINEPNL06242008>

MacWorld iPhone Coverage - <http://www.macworld.com/products/iphone.html?lsrc=mwweek>

10 Things the 3G iPhone is Still Missing -

<http://www.macworld.com/article/134469/2008/07/whatsmissing.html>

The Soup: iPhone 3G video - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cDZUk67FpB0>

Donate the Old iPhone - <http://www.rubarudirect.com/iphone/>

The iPhone was worth the wait -

http://www.computerworld.com/action/article.do?command=viewArticleBasic&articleId=9109698&source=NLT_MAC&nid=62

Enterprise Apps for the iPhone - <http://www.infoworld.com/slideshow/2008/07/162->

[enterprise_apps-1.html](#)

iPhone Alley - <http://www.iphonealley.com/>

iPhone Dev Team Portal - <http://wikee.iphwn.org/>

The iPhones Are Coming! The iPhones Are Coming! -<http://www.eweek.com/c/a/Security/The-iPhones-Are-Coming-The-iPhones-Are-Coming/?kc=EWKNLSTE071508FEA1>

Terry White's iPhone 3G Review - <http://terrywhite.com/techblog/?p=713>

ModMyiFone - http://www.modmyifone.com/cms_index.php

Apple's iPhone Configuration Utility Disappoints - <http://www.eweek.com/c/a/Mobile-and-Wireless/Apples-iPhone-Configuration-Utility-Disappoints/?kc=EWKNLEDP07172008A>

iPhone 2.0 Raises Device's Enterprise Profile - <http://www.eweek.com/c/a/Mobile-and-Wireless/iPhone-20-Raises-Devices-Enterprise-Profile/>

iPhone 2.0 Tip Sheet - <http://www.eweek.com/c/a/Mobile-and-Wireless/Your-iPhone-20-Tip-Sheet/?kc=EWKNLEDP07222008A>

5 ways the iPhone 3G still lags in enterprise -

http://www.infoworld.com/article/08/07/23/5_ways_the_iphone_3g_still_lags_in_enterprise_1.html?source=NLC-MOBILEHARDWARE&cgd=2008-07-23

I don't think there is any danger of being able to pop popcorn, cook eggs, or even parts of my anatomy if I use a headset instead of having the iPhone G3 anchored to one of my ears.

According to Hoyle...

WWDC '08 Roundup

July 2008

by Jonathan Hoyle

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<http://www.jonhoyle.com>

This month we cover the 2008 Apple Worldwide Developer Conference <http://developer.apple.com/wwdc/>, the annual Mecca for Macintosh engineers, techie and overall geeks (and I say that in the good way). This is the one conference I look forward to each year (being my 11th out of the last 13), and I am pleased to be able to share what took place. This year's conference had over 5,200+ attendees, the most ever. It could have probably sold many more tickets than even these, but Apple was forced to declare the conference sold out once the attendee size reached the maximum allowed by the Moscone Center. In recent WWDC's, the ratio of Apple employees to attendees was 1:4, a very generous number and extremely helpful for engineers who need to make contacts. This year, however, the number of Apple employees was cut back to 1,000 so as to accommodate more room for paying attendees. The maximum theater size capacity allowable by Moscone West is 6,080, meaning that the number of Apple employees, conference workers, technicians, security, reporters, celebrities, media moguls, etc. could not exceed 800 at any one time. Any larger figure would have involved a visit from the San Francisco Fire Marshall.

One Less Thing...

Last month if someone told you that the WWDC '08 keynote would briefly mention the Macintosh within the first 3 minutes and not at all thereafter, would you have believed him? I certainly would not have. But that is exactly what happened.

This year's WWDC spotlighted iPhone development. After last year's blunder of not providing an iPhone SDK, Apple's pendulum swung in the other direction by focusing the entirety of the keynote address on the iPhone and its development. Although this is great news for iPhone developers, Mac programmers were left feeling like second class citizens, at least during the keynote. No other references to the Mac were made, no "One More Thing...", not even the usual Mac/PC ad created just for WWDC. Only the revelation that Mac OS X 10.6 was going to be called *Snow Leopard* (hey, whaddaya know, I was right last month!) and it would be addressed at the *Mac OS X State of the Union* after lunch.

Next month we'll devote an entire article on *Mac OS X 10.6 Snow Leopard*, but suffice it to say that most all the rumors mills (myself included) pretty much nailed it in advance. However, there are a number of details that were not available before the conference that we will cover in more depth next time.

iPhoney Baloney

At last year's WWDC, Steve Jobs introduced the iPhone, and the cell phone industry has been rocked more in the past twelve months than in any point in its short history. During this introduction however, Steve made it clear that there would be no iPhone SDK. He said instead that iPhone development would simply be via Web 2.0 + AJAX programming, calling this (believe it or not) "*a sweet solution*". Rather than a *solution*, it was (as I called it) *iPhoney Baloney*. Not surprisingly, this approach completely underwhelmed the development community, and many simply began to walk away from creating iPhone apps. Although he has found it difficult to admit mistakes in the past (it took him years to reverse the round mouse fiasco), the gently aging Steve Jobs is a bit more pragmatic these days. He was not going to allow this misstep of his to kill this great technology. Last March, Apple finally delivered a real iPhone SDK, and with WWDC '08 updated it to powerful levels.

By heavily leveraging Mac OS X's Cocoa API, iPhone application development can be done in *Cocoa Touch*, a rich object-oriented API, which heavily intersects standard Cocoa. Using the same Xcode development environment you use to create terrific Mac OS X applications, you can create new iPhone applications, and under some circumstances simply port your Mac apps to it.

Mobile Me & the Decommissioning of .Mac

One part of the keynote that I did not like was the replacing of *.Mac* with *Mobile Me*. Now that Apple is not just the Mac anymore (it's also iPod, iPhone and even Windows-ported iApps), Apple is rebranding everything formerly associated as *.Mac* or *@mac.com* as *MobileMe* and *@me.com*. Not to worry though, all of us fanatics proud to use their *@mac.com* email address may continue to do so. All current email addresses will work with either domain.

More on this in an upcoming article.

Special Events

Most evenings during the conference, Apple hosts an event. This year's evening schedule was very similar to last year, with no real improvements. The trend over the years has been to cut back on many of these. Sundays used to be a day dedicated for students, usually finalizing with a big Student reception in the evening; however, Apple has not offered anything like that for two years.

Monday: Each year at WWDC, the Monday night is set aside for the big *ADC Reception*. And this year, big meant **big**. The second floor of Moscone West was overwhelmed by the sheer volume of attendees. Developers stood in long lines for mediocre food, and everyone was elbow-to-elbow. The intention behind this event was to allow Apple Developer Relations people to mix with the development community. But as you can see from the accompanying picture, it was far too crowded to allow for any kind of mixing. Many chose to simply go out to eat rather than fight the crowds. I myself left and returned an hour later when the remaining numbers (still very large) were a bit more manageable.



Tuesday: For the second year in a row, Apple left an evening open with no events. Perhaps they did this so that people wishing to sight-see would be able to do so? I don't know, but with three events scheduled to run late on Wednesday, they certainly could have put at least one of them here. Prior to 2004, WWDC used to have a tradition of a movie night, and this could have been perfect for that. In 2006, their "light" evening (then a Wednesday) included rebroadcasts of popular sessions, so that those with conflicts could attend them. In any case, with all these possibilities ignored, I remain dumbfounded as to what their logistics people are thinking.

Wednesday: This was the long night, with three great events running in overlap form. Although I would have preferred these to have been split up across Tuesday & Wednesday, but if Apple must triple up on one night, it was better that these happen on Wednesday rather than Tuesday, as it was in 2007. With many East Coasters still dealing with jet lag, getting back to their rooms at 11PM felt more like 2AM. The extra day allowed adjustment for the time change.



With the overbooking of events on this night, I was only able to really see two of them: the *Apple Design Awards* http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apple_Design_Awards and *Stump the Experts* http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stump_the_Experts. The *Scientific Poster Session*, which I greatly enjoyed the previous two years, was one I could only peruse quickly. The Design Awards, on the other hand, I was able to fully enjoy. ADA host John Geelynsse was at his best, with perhaps his most memorable moment in the history of ADA: John playing *Slow Ride* on *Guitar Hero III*:

Legends of Rock <http://www.aspyr.com/product/info/85> , the game winning the *Best New Mac OS X Leopard Game*. As for *Stump*, it too was a good as ever; however, this one began on a more touching note with an audience standing ovation for Stump expert Tom Dowdy who passed away earlier this year. All in all, Wednesday evening was a lot of fun, the best evening up to that point in the week.



Thursday: For the second year in a row, the Apple Party was held at the Yerba Buena Gardens, just across the street from the Moscone West conference center. Prior to 2007, Apple would host a party (formerly a beer bash) on its campus in Cupertino. Apple provided buses to transport developers each way, and there would be live music and generally good food. After moving the conference from nearby San Jose to San Francisco, this bus trip went from a quick 15 minutes to 45. Worse still, the numbers involved made this a logistical nightmare. In 2006, when the conference topped 4,000 attendees for the first time, it was an absolute nightmare. I myself gave up the attempt and did not go that year.

Having moved the party on site to the conference was an excellent choice. I looked forward to this night, as I remembered how well the party went last year. I figured that the food would be the best of the week and the music mostly agreeable. This year I was disappointed by how crowded it was, as it negatively impacted my ability to circulate and visit with other attendees. The food was also unspectacular as well. With the exception of the hand rolled sushi station (still excellent), the rest of the food was only barely better than what we had at the *ADC Reception*. I was about to write off the party as another casualty of WWDC declines until the surprise band took stage...



Yes, that's right, the *Barenaked Ladies* <http://www.bnlnmusic.com/news/> ! I couldn't believe it! Apple actually pulled in a major band for a change and we were all very impressed! If you haven't seen *the Ladies* in concert before, I can tell you they are excellent live. They do a great job of engaging the audience, and being long-time Mac fanatics themselves, were great crowd pleasers. What a delight they were indeed. It was also fun to watch native San Franciscans walking by the Gardens looking in saying, "*Hey isn't that BNL!?!?*" The lousy scheduling and mediocre food was all worth this one night. I will always remember WWDC '08 as the year the *Barenaked Ladies* performed exclusively for Macintosh developers.



Friday: No, there were no Friday evening events, but how Friday afternoon was managed was the single logistical success of the conference. In the past Apple had difficulty deciding how to handle this day, as many people leave early to catch their flights home. In 2006, they ended the day by noon, not even a lunch. This simply caused the defections to take place earlier. This year, they kept one Friday session after lunch, but left the labs open until after 6PM. This had the agreeable affect of giving attendees time to speak with Apple reps without missing a session or fighting crowds. Well done, Apple!

Size Matters

In case you haven't already gotten the message, this conference has simply gotten too big. The attendance sizes for the last four conferences (according to Apple) have been 3800, 4200, 5000 and 5200, each one beating the previous records.

Fortunately it cannot get any bigger (without changing venues), so it can get no worse than what we saw this year. Still, Apple should strive for *lower* attendance at this point. This year's 5200 may seem like a small increase over the previous year, but that is only because WWDC '07 was very near sell-out size and there was little allowable growth. Had Moscone allowed it, who knows how much bigger WWDC '08 could have been?

One suggestion is to split WWDC into two conferences: one for the Mac and one for the iPhone. Unfortunately, this is not likely solve the problem. After all, the iPhone track is new only this year, whilst the conference has been ballooning in size well before then. Moreover, there is sufficient overlap in development technologies that it would not make sense to divide it up. Another is to find another venue. That may be difficult, as it is my understanding that the Moscone Center is the largest conference facility in the Bay area. It was in fact the basis behind Apple's decision to move there in 2003, away from the smaller (but more convenient) venue of the San Jose Convention Center, which hosted WWDC's throughout the 1990's and up to 2002. Without moving the conference to another city, I do not think it makes sense talk about accommodating any larger numbers than what we already have. To make the conference both enjoyable and actually useful for networking, the conference size ought to be capped to no more than 4500 attendees.

Other Products

Apple's Worldwide Developer Conference is not just a milestone for Mac developers, but many Mac software vendors use this time to launch new products. This year was no different, but there were two products updated at this year's conference that are especially worth noting that you might not have heard of.

PGP Enterprises, known for their data protection software, announced that they have added pre=boot authentication to their *Whole Disk Encryption* product for Mac OS X http://www.pgp.com/newsroom/mediareleases/wde_for_mac_osx.html . This is great news for those very concerned about the security of their hard drives. With the increasing risks of data breach and escalating costs of protection, this meets an essential need in the marketplace. It works great with *Time Machine* <http://www.apple.com/macosx/features/timemachine.html> (although incompatible at this time with *Time Capsule* <http://www.apple.com/timecapsule/>) and will work on Intel formatted hard drives. Multi-boot OS partition drives, such as *10.4 Tiger* and *10.5 Leopard*, work just fine, since the authentication is pre-boot. The current release is not compatible with drives partitioned for *Boot Camp* <http://www.apple.com/macosx/features/bootcamp.html> , but plans are in place to support this in a future release. Visit this link <http://www.pgp.com/products/index.html> for more information.

Aquafadas, the makers of the incredibly fun and powerful *PulpMotion* <http://www.aquafadas.com/en/pulpmotion/> , has upped the bar with *PulpMotion Advanced* <http://www.aquafadas.com/en/pulpmotion/advanced/> , a next generation animation utility that creates some of the coolest slideshows. One of the problems that many of us have with our powerful new digital equipment is that we don't have the slightest idea of how to merge and present our pictures and movies other than using the boring templates available on the web. *PulpMotion Advanced* gives you very powerful effects at the touch of a button, making videos and slideshows a breeze. This killer app is to slideshows what *Photoshop* was to digital images.

Take a look, you won't regret it.



Does WWDC '08 Make the Grade?

So, how would I rate WWDC '08 overall? In recent years, the conference has been going downhill. Today's conference is unrecognizable from those of the previous decade in which third party companies would host lavish events, T-shirts and other giveaways were to be had by the asking, and developers were treated like royalty. Since the move to San Francisco in 2003, each conference has grown in size but gotten decidedly worse with respect to food and amenities. Movie night was dropped in 2004 and the vendor booths were removed in 2005. 2006 was the last year with a serious Student track, and 2007 was filled with logistical faux pas. There used to be over a dozen feedback forums scheduled in older WWDC's, but have been trimmed over the years, down to only one in 2007, and finally done away with completely this year. In 2007, there were 159 sessions available. Subtracting out the new iPhone track, WWDC '08 had only 119 sessions dedicated to Mac developers, a huge 25+% drop. Combining all this with the offensive dismissal of the Macintosh in the keynote address, this year's might have been the worst conference since the depressing 1997 WWDC. Thankfully though, many of the events this year remained as enjoyable as always, including *Stump the Experts* and the *Apple Design Awards*. And of course the *Barenaked Ladies* were a wonderful surprise at the Apple Party.

Despite the downward trend, the conference continues to grow in size, the each year breaking the previous year's attendance record. And though far less than the celebration and party it used to be, the information made available is indispensable for the Mac developer.

And with Apple revealing less and less about future OS directions, attending is now becoming nearly mandatory. Perhaps this is why Apple is now planning to sell these sessions over iTunes.

With regard to technological content, WWDC '08 was excellent. Apple representatives made themselves available for the future directions of *Snow Leopard*, and sessions were very well done. I am very much looking forward to viewing other presentations once they are posted on iTunes. I think that Apple's direction with *Snow Leopard* is a good one. I only wish that Apple would have taken this conference more seriously. Seriously for Mac users, that is.

Overall Conference Grade: C-

Coming Up Next Month: A preview of *Mac OS X 10.6 Snow Leopard*: what know one else will tell you. Hey, you can't miss this one. See you in 30!

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



The Northern Spy

Technology News and Views Since 1983

Summer Miscellany

July 2008

by

Rick Sutcliffe

Recently back from Ireland,

that land noted for highways as wide as a bed, down the centre of which some jokester has often painted a line, and where there is invariably a bus coming the other way when you are a kilometre from the last lay-by or driveway, the Spy notes with interest the ubiquity of the .ie brand (in the Republic). Perhaps businesses and individuals also had the .com version of their domain, but advertising focused on .ie--this despite the high price and higher hurdles to getting the cc domain (one has to document a legitimate connection with Ireland.) Northern Ireland is a different story, but that's part of the same tapestry. Despite the effective erasure of a border for travellers, the peoples of the Emerald Isles live in two solitudes--the once prosperous north, and the up-and-coming south.

The Spy has misgivings about any and all forms of nationalism and tribalism, including those fostered by church denominations, but perhaps there are marketing lessons in this observation for CIRA (the Canadian Internet Registration Authority). *First* the success of IEDR suggests that it is possible to better market any cc domain, even apart from strong nationalist sentiment. *Second*, CIRA could excise a page from the Quebec nationalists' futile attempts to get their own cc domain by getting permission from ICANN to offer .que as a synonym for the secondary .qc.ca (similar to .cat for Catalan sites). Hey, it's a potential marketing opportunity. *Disclaimer: The Spy is a member of the CIRA board, but is not expressing official CIRA policy on this matter.*

Lethe Revisited

After the Spy mentioning his own and Apple's sleeping disorders her a couple of times back, he's pleased to report both have improved. More tests needed on his own internal infections, but the pain is down and sleep time up. Similarly Mac OS X, whose latest bug fix seems to have greatly improved the MacBook Pro's sleeping patterns. There are still issues when switching from one dock to another, particularly with Time Capsule, but.... *Second disclaimer: Both these problems have standing of so many years that any suggestion of a final resolution seems ridiculously premature.*

iTablet

or, perhaps *iSlate*, was not unveiled at WWDC. Two remaining launch windows this year are school opening (August) and Christmas (November). *Third disclaimer: This comment is based solely on rumours. The Spy has no inside knowledge relating to which Apple lawyers might sue for sources.*

New Version of Note

is Firefox 3, which now actually looks like a Mac application, rather than a clunky port. The Spy hasn't used the new product extensively, as he prefers Camino and Safari for actual browsing, but the Fox's debugging tools and plug-ins make it invaluable for site development.

Pratfall of the month department

Honours get shared here between the Spy himself, who on his first night in Ireland fell out of an unfamiliar bed and injured his arm, and the MS nobbins currently falling over their own words explaining why the move to excise VBA from Excel 2008 was really only temporary. Weren't they lauding it as the greatest thing since the internal combustion engine just a few months ago? Mind, the Spy regards VBA as the worst excuse for a language ever invented, but killing cross-platform compatibility to replace it with ill-implemented AppleScript was just plain dense. *Fourth disclaimer: In his TWU day job, the Spy teaches programming languages and is alleged to know what he's talking about in this respect--sometimes.*

Speaking of the half-baked,

is it just the Spy, or does Leopard have a semifinished air to the rest of *hoi poloi*, too? Somehow, the Finder behaviour, icon appearance, awkwardness of views, dock, and a dozen other little irritants seem to add up to steps backward toward a less polished version rather than forward to some bright new future. Yes, there are advances, but spit and polish it ain't. Let's hope the recently announced "no-new-features-just-fixes and-speed-enhancements" *Snow Leopard* lives up to its billing. Leopard needs a nice shine, not more bells and whistles.

Oh, by the way. The major means of reducing OS footprint, as Apple promises, is to dump support for the PowerPC chips from Snow Leopard forward. Don't say you weren't warned.

iTelephony 2G3G

took us another leap away from the POTS last month, with the new 2G iPhone (using 3G networks) being announced for delivery in over sixty countries this month (July 11 in some, later in others). Too soon to say whether Canada's Rogers (and other providers) will offer reasonable data pricing or continue to gouge, though (leaked) word has it Rogers will charge \$30 for personal and \$45 for corporate data plans--both unlimited--on top of the voice plan selected. In any case, the revenue sharing plan that characterized the 1G iPhones seems to be deprecated, replaced with a more conventional discounted-phone-for-multiple-year-contract model.

And, the Spy won't be chucking out his Treo 600 for a while yet. He needs Olive Tree's Bible Reader, Adobe's PDF reader, and the Mobipocket reader ported first. All three present difficulties, for they use the business plan "give away the reader and charge for content". It's not clear how that can fit Apple's marketing system. Content files for all three should work on any version (i.e. platform) of the reader, and in the latter two cases are widely available from many vendors. Only Olive Tree sells (and sometimes gives away) Bibles and reference material for its own system, but the point is content is distributed on a platform-agnostic basis for free readers. Apple wants everything sold through their store. Hmmmm. The Spy isn't giving up his accumulated eBooks (mostly from Fictionwise and Mobi) or pocket Bibles (KJV, NKJV, NIV, NASB+lex, GNT, Gramcord, Darby, Douay, LITV, NET, NLT, Vulgate, Young) just to put OS X in his pocket--not even for the iconic iPhone, thank you very much. You thought there were a lot of telephony acronyms.

The Book of the Month

is *Design Accessible Web Sites* by Jeremy J. Sydik, from The Pragmatic Bookshelf imprint of O'Reilly Media. Given the growing emphasis on opening up the Internet to persons with disabilities, this is a timely tome. *DAWS* is best read by managers or senior programmers, for it is largely an extended argument for constructing web sites from the get go with accessibility in mind.

Practical issue discussion abounds, particularly with respect to visual impairment. Techniques are discussed to order data flow for readers, for checking colour blindness issues with the chosen palate, for ensuring keyboard accessibility to links, for using style sheets and scripts appropriately, and for complying with various accessibility standards (some of which are legislated, by the way.)

For someone like the Spy, who likes to experiment with the more esoteric aspects of element placement and scripting (including AJAX) that underpin the more complex Web 2.0 pages, this is a troubling book. CSS tags that affect layout, graphical content incorporating text for security reasons, DOM manipulation to achieve placement effects, any use of PDF, and AJAX techniques for incorporating dynamic content incorporation without reloading a page are all problematic for accessibility. Sydik mentions but does not address these in detail, and the drift of the book is that designers should avoid techniques that render sites via visually-oriented methods that trump the linear HTML flow. This would not be easy for someone who employs such CSS tags, for instance, to eliminate tables as a layout technique, or calls dynamic content into cells. Resolving such issues may require a new look at HTML, JavaScript, and related standards.

These are huge issues for sites generated or funded by government agencies, institutions, or large corporations, which often are bound by specific accessibility codes. Sydik has done project managers a big favour by bringing accessibility matters together under one cover, even if he doesn't provide as many detailed answers as he does general ones. Highly recommended and very thought provoking reading. Your sites may benefit more than you think.

Seen in the wild

are several versions of a new Trojan aimed at OS X systems. AppleScript.THT exploits a vulnerability in Apple remote desktop Agent and can take over a machine as root. The trojan is distributed as a compiled AppleScript called ASthtv05 or an application bundle called AStht. It moves itself into the /Library/Caches folder, and adds itself to the System Login items.

Of course, being a trojan, it has to be downloaded and run before anything happens. Following good sanitary habits with web sites and the downloads they offer should be sufficient to protect most people. The more adventuresome need to keep their malware scanning software up to date. What else is new?

--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>

Apple: <http://www.apple.com/>

Raiders of the Lost Macintosh July 2008

Best free downloads, shareware and demos

by Dr. Eric Flescher

Here are some of the best free, shareware and demo applications out there that I have found. Try some of these out. You will be amazed what some Mac authors have created and designed.

Leech 1.1.2

Requirements: Mac OS X 10.4

Optimizers & Diagnostics

Review <http://www.macworld.com/article/133638/2008/05/leech.html?lsrc=mwgems>

LensTweaker 1.0.1

Requirements: Mac OS X 10.4

Optimizers & Diagnostics

<http://www.macworld.com/article/58125/2007/05/lenstweaker.html?lsrc=mwgems>

PosteRazor 1.5

PosteRazor is a free utility for making low-cost, large-size posters of your images.

<http://www.macworld.com/article/133539/2008/05/posterazor.html>

iLabel-it CD

Freeware

Quickly and easily create and label your own CD / DVD with iLabel-It-CD. Personalize the title, contents and add the date and then output to a PDF template for printing. Use Worldlabel.com product WL-OL1200, 4.5"; CD, same size as Avery 5824.

<http://www.apple.com/downloads/dashboard/>

Plasma Tube - Motion Light Widget

<http://www.apple.com/downloads/dashboard/>

About Plasma Tube - Motion Light Widget

Engineered Like No Other. The Plasma Lamp Leaves your grampa' s old Motion Light in the 60's! We've filled this sucker with a material patented exclusively to innermindMedia. This Plasma is like no liquid you've ever seen and it simply defies the laws of gravity and physics. This is the ultimate Eye Candy for your Os X Dashboard.

What's New in this Version

- Glass is fully Transparent!!
- Misc Bug fixes For Leopard
- Optimized for smoother experience

Wiretap

<http://www.ambrosiasw.com/utilities/wiretap/>

If you can hear it, WireTap Studio can record it. Using WireTap Studio, you can record the audio output of any application, as well as all system audio, or record audio input from any microphone, line-in, or audio input hardware.

Once recorded, organize your recordings in the convenient Recording Library, and edit them with WireTap Studio's integrated lossless audio editor. Use the full Audio Unit effects support, for adding professional quality effects to your audio.

Troubleshooting Issues with Leopard and iMac G5

By Robert Pritchett

Executive Summary

The iMac G5 we use for publishing *macCompanion* magazine for the last 5 years started acting up. Here is the long, sordid, painful trip on what finally happened to it. Did Trojans take it down? After all, Macs don't fail, right? Right?!?!?

Owies

We've been having a rash of brownouts and lightening strikes recently. Brownouts due to a phenomenal increase in community growth and lightening due to weird weather phenomena. It was still snowing down to 1,500 feet in June!

After watching my machine gracefully(?) degrade over the last few weeks to the point of unusability, I continued to try and get it to boot properly, so I could actually use it. I failed miserably. Oh, happy C-cord chimes are here again!

BTW, If you want to control that startup sound, try this freeware –
<http://www5e.biglobe.ne.jp/~arcana/software.en.html>

Diagnostic tools list - <http://www.pure-mac.com/diag.html>

Symptoms – Screen "Mottling" and a Bruised Machine

These symptoms did not manifest themselves until I did the AirPort security update for Leopard. Did adding that cause my machine to get goofy?

The screen would begin "mottling" about 5 minutes into operation and usually mid-sentence in Email or while editing web pages and the cursor would move, but no windows or toolbar or dock items would respond. Mottling is the winkie-blinky, 4th of July-like "screen anomalies" caused by missing memory or electronic failure manifesting itself. Shutdown and rebooting would give me both alternating blue and black screens with the blinking pixels in different parts of the screen. It didn't matter if I warm or cold-booted. When I tried rebooting, the screen would either land on Blue or Black or alternate between both. It was severely bruised.

This symptom was an issue with early iMac G5s years and years ago and Apple replaced the logic boards for free to correct the problem. That is how I ended up with this refurb. This iMac G5 has been very, very good to me – until now.

Seeking Solutions

I did all the usual fixes; PRAMing, Utility Disc hard drive and Permissions, reinstalling Mac OS X Leopard, etc. to no avail. I pulled all cables and that seemed to be the only way I could get a login screen. I read that the external USB hub could be a problem, I disconnected it. Then the problem persisted until I removed the FireWire hub. I figured that was it. Nope, it did it again. I swapped out the mouse figuring the Wacom Tablet and mouse combo might be the problem. Nope, it persisted, Keyboard? Nope.

Desperation

I asked *macCompanion* staff what to do. Here I am with a Master of Science in Computing and I'm stumped. Ted Bade gave me some advice; Do the test account in Mac OS X and see if anything changed. Nothing did. So that pointed to this possibly being a hardware problem manifesting itself in a strange, yet beautiful way.

And no, my copy of TechTool Pro 4 wouldn't even boot up, so don't ask. The hard drive was okay and so were Permissions – after repair. I finally removed the CUPS printer apps though (it kept showing up in the Permissions Repaired log), since Adobe had replaced their Adobe Acrobat 8 printer function to finally to work with Leopard. I had just left it in there as a printer, "just in case".

Software Infections?

With the recent spat of activity regarding Trojans and Rootkits, I wondered if I was a carrier. I used MacScan - <http://macscan.securemac.com/> to check things out. It found 64 cookies it figured were big-brothering me and those disappeared. It didn't find anything else.

I ran ClamXav - <http://www.clamxav.com/> for 3 days in the background, as it slowly chunked through my hard drives, finding Email phishing add-ons to spam and scam Email. Those were trashed (they were hiding in the Mail.app deleted email folder). It found the February PDF issue of *macCompanion* having the PDF- 6 Exploit in it, - <http://www.adobe.com/support/security/advisories/apsa08-01.html>, so I cleaned that up and reposted it back up on the website. Adobe sent out a fix in February, but the Exploit latched on in January when we published the issue – without me knowing about it. Adobe recently sent out another security update for Adobe Acrobat 8.1.2 (June 25) while I was correcting this faux faux.

ClamXav also pointed to ColdFusion as having issues, so that was trashed. So was Adobe AIR, since it was tagged next. Bye. See ya.

I dumped all logs and caches and histories and I was good for about one week, sort of.

It's Baaaack!

I thought I was safe and had resolved the issue. Meanwhile, my wife and boss at Pure Energy Systems Network both gave me permission to get a MacBook Pro so I could do my job. I thanked them both and my credit card company loves me. My wallet now has a big hole in it. I ordered the machine through Mac2o – <http://> for the best deal I could find at the time (just a day or so ago). I'm still waiting for the customized machine to arrive. Later...

So another week of pixilation screenwork and lockups continued. I took time off from work (my access to PESWiki and other sites were through this machine only) and I took a whole day to just explore the cause and effects to this problem. Now I can write about it.

I am running Virtual PC and XP Pro on this machine. I figured that might be a factor...then again, maybe not so much. This was Mac-related.

Safe Mode -

http://support.apple.com/kb/HT1564?viewlocale=en_US

Power Supply Replacement Program -

<http://www.apple.com/support/imac/powersupply/repairextension/>

I read that there are 4 LEDs on the Logic board that where 3 have to be on to make sure the machine is operating correctly. They always did.

iMac G5 LED Diagnostics –

<http://docs.info.apple.com/article.html?artnum=86815> I looked. They did.

Option-Command –Escape didn't work – ever.

I quickly learned about Single-User Mode, Safe Mode, Kernel panics (Blue Screen), Grey screens, Black screens -

http://support.apple.com/kb/TS1411?viewlocale=en_US Doing the fsck-fy seems to sorta-kind help, but the bruised screens always came back.

PRAM resetting (Option-Command-R-P), Permissions resetting in Disk Utilities (I kept having to do that), RAM swapping –

<http://www.mac-forums.com/forums/showthread.php?t=85782> (RAM swapping didn't help.)

Obscure key commands and Open firmware, like "Option-Command-O-F" to remove a disc -

<http://face.centosprime.com/macosexw/startup-keys-boot-options/> (That got the DVD out when attempting to boot using the C key didn't work.)

I even had the cover off most of the day and was alternating between the SMU button and the crowbar button - <http://docs.info.apple.com/article.html?artnum=300908>, because the regular on/off button (internal off button) wasn't working as advertised. I moved the machine to a different outlet, because I figured the surge protect was failing and possibly causing the problem. (Nope, no difference.) I read that software would give me the mottled-screen treatment, but after removing lots of apps and also running the separate login test account and saw no difference, I cried; "Uncle!" and decided to do the OS replacement process. I prayed for inspiration – and got it.

Reinstalling the OS

At the point of desperation (I do have to work actually), I ended up reloading the Leopard Mac OS in the afternoon - or tried to. The first time it again failed, part way into reinstallation.

I figured I then had lost everything (save previous system to folder option - did it?) and after working solidly for 12 hour straight to give 'er the olde Yankee try, I left it alone for a few of hours and read books instead.

I finally successfully re-installed the OS and it pretended to work, but rebooting gave me back the blue and black screen treatments, so I figured it was a power supply issue. The machine beachballed - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spinning_wait_cursor all night long after reboot and way early this morning, I was “up and at-em” again early in the morning to see if I could rescue the machine without having to go to an Apple-authorized shop and get the screen replaced for \$500 - <http://www.dttservice.com/imac/imacg5.html>.

(I'm sure my boss was wondering if I had fallen off the edge of the earth. I sent him an Email from another machine, but it didn't get to him, because I didn't type in his address correctly on the Spanish-based keyboard.)

I was on eggshells, because I did *not* have a current backup of everything.

Well, I tried a few incantations, offered up prayers and blessed the machine and I can say, it seems to be working better now. However, after changing out the OS, it MADE NO DIFFERENCE, once I did the security and Mac OS X 536MB+ updates - <http://support.apple.com/kb/HT1222> and <http://www.apple.com/support/downloads/>. *PRIOR* to doing the updates, it seemed to work for a while. I strongly suspect a secret combination of Security updates crossing code with overzealous apps. My machine was truly possessed!

Still Goofy

Even after all that, the machine still gave me the mottled screen on bootup. But at least it was booting up and not blue or black-screening. Nothing was in the Launch items folder. So what to do? I went back and looked at updates.

What was changed? When did things go goofy and what did I add at that time? I cleaned up the log files and everything else in history using MacCleanse. I then looked at apps again by booting with the Leopard Mac OS X DVD in the drive and alternating between the Command-S and Command-V thing.

Mellel was beta. It was moved to the Trash and excised. Next was Media Central, then DevonThink Pro and finally, Daylite 3. Only then, did things finally settle down.

Final Answer? NOT!

I'm amazed that replacing the OS didn't trash all my other settings and software app installations or destroyed the mail folders when it only did a partial install the first time. My hat is off to the excellent engineering feat to make that happen. I'm also simply amazed at the compactness and clean design of the insides of a Mac machine after having toiled for many years inside the unfriendly confines and skin-slicing PC boxes. Apple engineering for the tech is second to none, in my book.

Now the machine stopped the blinking pixelation screen effects (mottling) and screen lockup (mouse worked, no connection to windows onscreen, but hard drive churning and doing what it does best) for a while. By looking at the crash logs and looking at what may have been causing the screens to take forever to refresh, I figure it could very well be the latest update from Daylite 3 (it phones home and runs a database app as well as marries itself to Email, etc., according to Little Snitch logs). DevonThink Pro does something similar. With them off the main drive now, things seem to be operational.

I could now boot up without all the waiting, screen changes from black to blue to black to blue and beachballing. At least for a while...time to go sleep on it.

The Battle is Still Raging!

The system ran great until I awakened Skype Beta. Then all heck broke loose and I ended back where I was before with a frozen screen, etc. So I spent another whole precious, valuable day trying to get my computer back to normal. I discovered Option-Command-Shift-Delete with the DVD installed. After doing the Option-Command-F-O thing and ejecting the DVD and reinserting it. I fsck-f-ed and then redid the Option-Command-Shift-Delete, this time letting it find the DVD. By booting from the DVD, the mottling disappeared from the screen. Skype got bit-bucketed.

I also discovered XSlimmer <http://www.xslimmer.com/> and ran that to see if it would make any difference. I doubt it. It is designed to remove unnecessary files that were left behind by developers. But I got this far, so what the heck! 3 GBs of "stuff" gone from apps. Meanwhile, I reinstalled the Mac OS X to Leopard 10.5 with out doing the updates. We will see what happens...

Housecleaning

Peeved, I sent an Email to my boss and to my magazine staff not too long ago stating I wished Apple would flush its head down a toilet for putting out software updates that screwed up machines. After all, Macs aren't supposed to act like PCs. But then again, my situation is worst-case. I work with lots of different software. I run XP Pro on my IBM-chip-based machine.

In the process of troubleshooting this computer, I removed about 20 GB of apps that had not migrated to Leopard, or did not have current versions requiring a fee to upgrade or asked for licenses I no longer had access to or for apps that let me know they were not designed to work with Leopard – ever, since Leopard essentially replaced them with new act-alike functionality. Those got removed. I'll just have to wait and see if this really fixed it. I've been wrong so many times before. I get plenty of exercise jumping to conclusions and mental gymnastics by making assumptions.

I ran Subrosasofts's <http://www.subrosasoft.com> MacForensicsLab. It is bootable through use of the Option key. Well after a while I couldn't use it much either. This was just getting weirder and weirder by the minute.

Resolution

By now you are probably thinking; “This guy is a glutton for punishment. Why doesn’t he just take it in to be serviced?” Well, I did. Finally. I took it in to Alpha Computing, who has a great Apple computer museum, by the way, and let them mess with it. They called back saying indeed it was a hardware issue and the logic board needed to be replaced.

Apple Cares

They called Apple, who told them the repair under warranty was rejected. The store asked me to contact Apple directly and plead my case. I did. I talked to Customer Relations. They saw that I never called in my Apple Care to be registered, so there was no record of it for this particular machine.

Note: If you have AppleCare, you need to break the seal and call in to have it activated – for the 3 years. I’m over 6 months beyond that grace period and then some.

“Patrick” plead my case to higher-ups and the box will get a new brain without my having to pay for the logic board replacement. Then after that, the box has 90 days warranty and then all bets are off.

All I can do is say; “Thank you Patrick and Apple for looking out for me!” And thank you Alpha Computer <http://www.merchantcircle.com/business/Alpha.Computer.Center.Inc.509-946-4230> for being an Apple store since day one. I never had to really use your services until now...

That Oh, So Precious Backup

I never did a disc image and dug out an older WiebeTECH external FireWire drive to transfer all files and folders over during those brief moments when the machine was pretending to be sane. I made the external drive bootable. I figured all the apps would retain their registrations, etc. And the Mail.app would also stay intact. I was wrong. I also was not able to boot from the drive to the iMac G5. Apparently the extra Finder gave the schizoid machine a split personality. That is when I threw in the towel and took the unit in for repair.

So I’m running on borrowed time and limping along on my family’s machine (iMac Intel with internal iSight) and cramping their style. The 17” - 4GB RAM, Hi-Res glossy screen, 300GB hard drive MacBook Pro is on its way...from Mac2O.

Of Rainbows and Silver Linings

This exercise in frustration also allowed me time to catch up on reading some good technical books that have been collecting dust on my "To-Do" shelf. Waste not, want not! And sometimes burning down a virtual house can be good for the soul, though rescuing it from certain destruction is even better!

And as soon as the MacBook Pro arrives, I can begin reviewing software that doesn’t work on an IBM-based Mac.

Well, now you know the “real” reason why the July issue of *macCompanion* is going to be a little late getting out the door.

Follow-up

Sometimes it is worth waiting a while to discuss happenings. It is now August. The MacBook Pro (MBP) helped me possibly do a video gig after I learn Final Cut Pro. This a promo for the "Concert for the Living Waters Love H2O" on June 21, 2009 where 144,000 voices will all sing at 528 Hz or so to promote harmony and peace around the earth and bring positive vibes to the world - <http://www.liveh2o.org/>

Water actually vibrates in the key of LOVE, broadcasting harmony that humans generally neglect.

Critical knowledge for urgent times reveals the precise tones that makes water, and everything natural, so wonderful! Among these nine notes is the one special sound of LOVE. That is, the 528 Hertz (Hz) frequency, central to the entire electromagnetic spectrums of sound and light, is the key transmitting most powerfully and effectively through water.

Yes, the MBP portable does get warm, yes the battery life could be longer. And yes, this is a great tool for getting work done!

Now, will the machines to offered by Apple in January be optical computers?

Books

Rick Sammon's Canon EOS Digital Rebel Personal Training DVD

Reviewed by Michael Potter



Author: Rick Sammon

Publisher: Wiley Publishing, Inc.

<http://www.wiley.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-0470180757.html>

Released: July 2007

\$20 USD, \$24 CND

ISBN-13: 9780470180754

Audience: Beginner

Requirements: Standalone DVD Player or OS X 10.3.9+, DVD Drive and DVD Player app.



Strengths: valuable tips, summaries of lessons at the end of each segment.

Weaknesses: No additional content on disc, some lessons could be more in-depth, no “play all” option.

Introduction

It's not unheard of for someone to run out and purchase the latest and greatest DSLR camera and then simply leave it in its fully automatic mode for much of the time, failing to take advantage of the power they paid for.

Okay, I'll come clean. It's not unusual for ME to do that, and that's exactly what happened when I purchased my first Canon EOS Digital Rebel.

Coming from the film world, where I had been using a Canon AE-1 shutter priority camera for nearly 25 years, it was daunting, to say the least, to move to the Digital Rebel, where the question became not only a matter of setting the shutter speed, manual focus and shooting, but a wide gamut of choices including the shutter, aperture, white balance, multiple focus points, exposure compensation plus a wide range of fully automatic modes for more casual shooting.

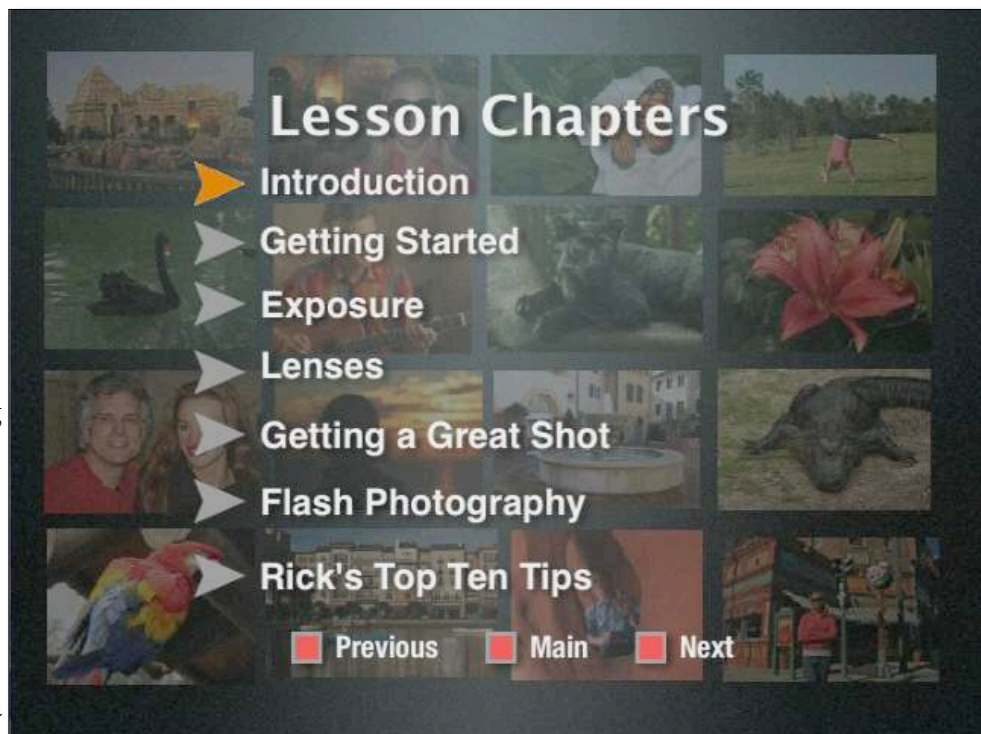
Because I picked up my camera just a week before a family vacation, I dove right into using it and, though I fiddled around with JPG vs. RAW, ISO, adjusting the focus points, and it's shutter priority mode, I usually kept it in Program mode, not bothering with any of the more creative settings I could use to take better shots. As a result, I developed some bad habits and got used to doing things a certain way, even though I fully realized that I wasn't taking advantage of the camera's features as I should.

While the manual that came with my Digital Rebel was adequate and I did, many times, set out to read it, it's rather dry and, sometimes, that urge to simply pick up the camera and start snapping overwhelms the desire to focus on the details. The hour and a half worth of lessons found on *Rick Sammon's Canon EOS Digital Rebel Personal Training DVD* attempt to get you using your new camera to its fullest, yet out and shooting as quickly as possible.

On this DVD...

Specifically addressing the Canon EOS Digital Rebel XTi camera – which was the current model until very recently – this DVD Photo Workshop is divided into seven Lesson Chapters: Introduction; Get Started; Exposure; Lenses; Getting a Great Shot; Flash Photography; and Rick Sammon's Photographic Tips and Tricks.

For someone moving from a pocket point and shoot camera, an older SLR camera or, from another brand camera to the Canon line, you'll want to watch this disc from the beginning where basic topics such as setting the exposure mode, working with memory cards, reading the LCD display and holding the camera are all covered.



The Digital Workflow lesson, especially, is important for anyone moving to digital from film. Everyone else may be tempted to jump straight to the Exposure lesson skipping the introductory lessons, but don't discount helpful reminders such as the need to back up your photos in multiple locations as well as some of the little nuggets even more experienced photographers might pick up.

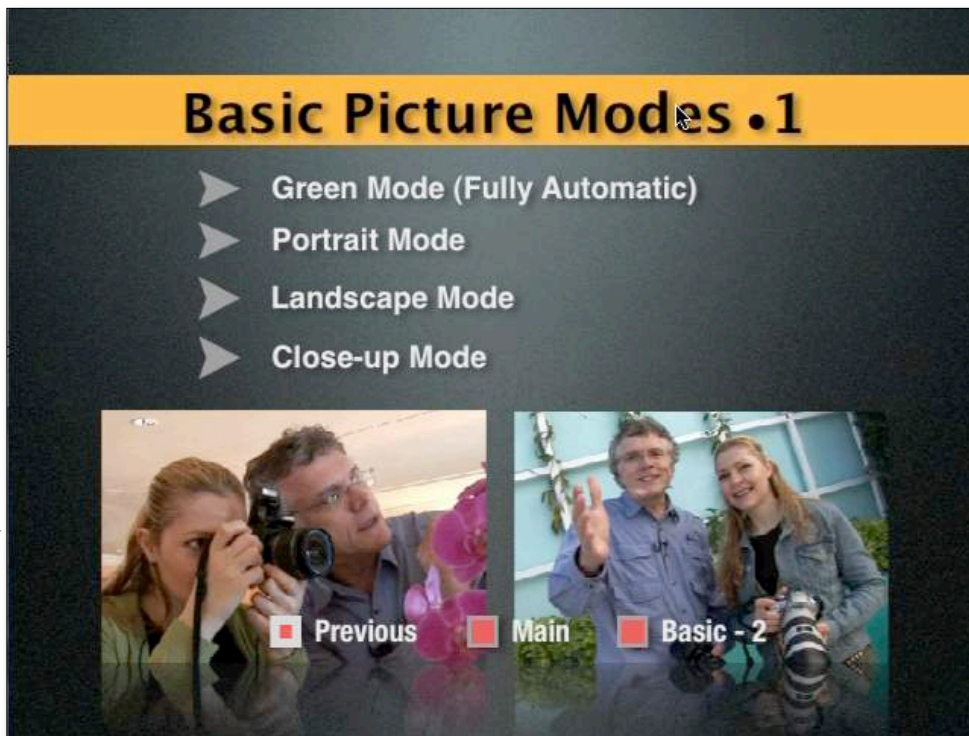
As an example of one of those “huh, I never noticed that before” moments, Canon has a clever, but decidedly low tech way of indicating that a battery needs to be recharged: simply flip the protective battery cover and a built in cut-out on the cover allows a color strip on the battery to show through which serves as a visual reminder that your battery is fully charged.

Other tips I picked up in the introductory lessons include some slight adjustments to the way I hold my Digital Rebel when shooting and a handy tip on the relationship between ISO and the amount of space the pictures take on the camera's memory card.

After the basics, we're next lead into some more detailed instruction for using the Digital Rebel beginning with the Exposure lesson. For this lesson – and most of the others – we're taught how to use the Digital Rebel by Rick Sammon through the eyes of our on screen surrogate, and new Digital Rebel owner, Vered. Though this works for much of the disc, there are some segments where, because we're not in the room and can't always see some of the adjustments Sammon is making to Vered's camera, we can get a bit lost for how or why her shots improved.

Each lesson is divided into multiple sub-lessons and some of those divided further still. Exposure, for instance, is divided into five main sections with one, Basic Picture Modes, comprised of seven individual segments covering each of the camera's fully automatic modes as well as when and why you might want to use them.

As you work your way through the lessons, you'll definitely want to have your camera at hand so you can try the settings as you watch. Because of the complex nature of a DSLR, it would be near impossible to try to recall everything covered on the disc if you didn't at least try it once while watching.



A particularly helpful feature of each segment is a quick recap of the most major points discussed, along with some closeups of where to find those buttons and dials on the camera. However, this brings up an issue I discovered while working through the disc. Sammon doesn't always get in depth with the “whys”. Sometimes he grabs the camera from Vered, makes some adjustments, hands it back and says “there, try that.” Again, we're left wondering not only the adjustment he made, but why he made the change. I've got the feeling that Vered often wonders too.

The longest segments top out at around 6-7 minutes while some are exceedingly short. So short, that I'm left questioning why they even bothered to include it. For example, the segment on Image Stabilization lenses found in the Getting a Great Shot lesson was about 30 seconds long with 20 seconds of review. Certainly there's more to say about IS lenses than that?

Overall, however, the lessons found on the disc are useful and serve as a good overview for the Digital Rebel camera and help make the manual included with the camera more accessible.

Conclusion

At times I found the menu structure of the DVD a bit odd and there were situations when it appeared that some buttons were missing text and perhaps some proof-reading might be in order. Many of the short segments could probably have been combined into longer segments or moved to other Lessons, and many could be fleshed out a lot more. The IS Lenses segment I mentioned a moment ago, for example, could be much longer and might be a better fit in the Lenses lesson rather than Getting a Great Shot. There was also no discussion in the Digital Workflow segment of software solutions to help catalog and organize your photos – an essential part of the digital workflow in my opinion.

I would also like an option to “Play All” for each lesson which would help make the odd navigation of the menus a bit more palatable to me and prevent my constant reaching for the remote to move on to the next segment.

My final issue with the disc is one of those things that will either annoy the jeeppers out of you or it won't bother you one bit: Rick Sammon tends to remind us over and over (and over) that he's “a professional photographer” and, while I'm reasonably certain it's not intended to be so, I find the manner in which he repeatedly drives that point home a bit condescending.

In the end, I enjoyed this disc. The lessons covered include just about all the basics someone new to the Digital Rebel will need to know to take better pictures, and I picked up some great tips along the way.

Recommendation

Ultimately, you're never going to improve your photography with your face glued to the TV or your nose buried in a book. The best way to hone your skills behind the lens is to go out and take pictures. *Lots* of pictures! Though it's not perfect, *Rick Sammon's Canon EOS Digital Rebel Personal Training DVD*, is a good motivator for new Digital Rebel users and, at \$20 list, it's worth checking out and keeping on the shelf as a quick review whenever you're ready to tackle something new with your camera. The short lessons found here, when reviewed with camera in hand, will help you do just that.

The Computers of STAR TREK

Reviewed by Robert Pritchett



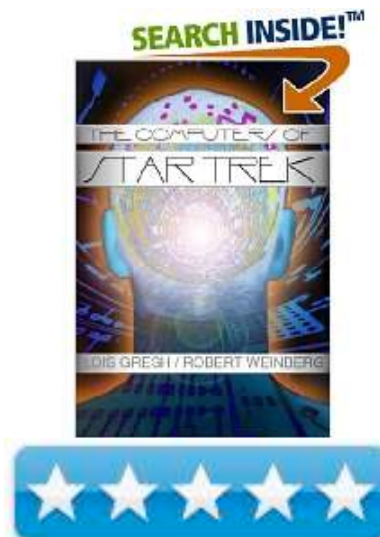
Authors: Lois H. Gresh, Robert Weinberg
Perseus Books Group
http://www.perseusbooksgroup.com/basic/book_detail.jsp?isbn=046501299X

Released: May 27, 2001

Pages: 174

\$14USD £8 GBP

ISBN: 9780465012992



Introduction

The depiction of computers on the various "Star Trek" series has ranged from lame to breathtakingly imaginative. This book covers the gamut, and makes lucid and entertaining comparison of these fictional computers with those that now exist or are likely to inhabit our future. Throughout its history, "Star Trek" has been an accurate reflection of contemporary ideas about computers and their role in our lives. Affectionately but without illusions, *The Computers of Star Trek* shows how those ideas compare with what we now know we can and will do with computers.

What I Learned

What a cool book! I didn't realize that Star Trek was so "last century" when it came to computing. Time and again as the authors discussed various episodes, I kept thinking; "Yeah, I remember that!" or, "'Yeah, why *DID* they do that?'

This was one fun read for Father's Day and quite a blast from the past. I would bet most Mac users are also Trekkies of one kind or another.

There are 8 chapters in this little book covering footsteps into the future, a 24th-century mainframe, security issues, navigation and battles, artificial intelligence, Data (the guy, not the stuff in computers), the Holodeck and missing bits.

There is discussion of nanoprocessors and isolinear optical storage chips, how much they do. The thought crossed their minds regarding why certain folks needed to go into Jeffries tubes to work on circuitry instead of letting the system self-heal. OR why if ships could zip through space why a battle line of Dominion ships could not be end-runned or how ships could stay in one place and take k hits, if they could let the computer systems do the fighting without voice-commands to protect themselves in auto-mode.

And then there was the discussion about self-aware holograms.

We now have "Smart-shirts" that can create data about the health of the wearer for \$30 each (remember this was in 2001!) that can also monitor bullet wounds. Why not let shirts like that heal the wearer 3 centuries into the future?

And the book ends with a discussion of DNA computers – something we have already. But what we don't have and is still a challenge is a Universal Translator an intergalactic Rosetta Stone that can bring different languages together understandably and without cultural mistakes. Now wouldn't that be cool?

I think it would be called the Adamic language from the planet Kolob, but that would be a different book....

Conclusions

Have some fun letting your brain wrap itself around some interesting thoughts on STAR TREK computing technologies and where we were a few years ago.

Recommendations

"Make it so..."

Google Apps: The Missing Manual

Reviewed by Robert Pritchett

O'REILLY[®]

Author: Nancy Conner

O'Reilly

Pouge Press

<http://oreilly.com/catalog/9780596515799/index.html>

Released: May 2008

Pages: 740

\$40 USD

ISBN: 9780596515799

Requirements: A robust online connection.

Strengths: Enables those who want to "break free" of Microsoft Office.

Weaknesses: The book may be there, but Google Apps (not the book) still needs a little tempering in the fire to be battle-hardened. And there is the issue of ownership and privacy...

Introduction

This comprehensive and easy-to-follow new book teaches you how to use the new web-based applications from Google that are providing a viable alternative to Microsoft Office for many businesses. While Google's office suite shows a lot of promise, navigating what you can and can't do and -- more importantly -- understanding how to do it isn't always easy. With this book, you can get the most out of Google web-based business suite.

What I Learned

Yes, Google Apps is a "work in progress" as a viable possibility in using it as an "office Applications" Suite almost rivaling Microsoft Office, but not quite there yet.

If you have a Google Gmail account it can be use interactively with "Docs and Spreadsheets" and "Google Calendar".

Banking on the Internet as being the computer, Google is basically enabling the mindset to move from desktop to Internet-based computing.

Since there is no "book" on use, this one fills the bill.



Did you know there was also a Google Talk? How about creating a Wiki using Google? How about online sharing and collaboration?

This sounds an awful lot like what we already have for the Mac community and the Macintosh, but Google is enabling the same kind of thinking out onto the Internet for non-Mac folks to also experience.

And then you can "Blog" post the files ("labels" in Google-speak) after they are ready to publish.

It isn't all sweetness and honey yet, but it is pretty darned close.

And it is essentially "free".

The book has 5 parts covering the productivity suite, creating slide shows, using Gmail and Google Talk, tracking schedules with Google Calendar, creating iGoogle web pages, doing one-click web design with Page Creator, customizing domains and administering and managing apps, creating Google Sites for teaming and looking at the Google Solutions Marketplace and Google APIs. The Appendix looks at keyboard shortcuts.

Conclusions

If you want to collaborate in real time on documents you can now online.

Recommendations

What have you got to loose besides privacy? You might want to look a little closer at the usage rights and privileges from Google. What you put out there will not be your own. Really. Just a word to the wise, okay?

Foundations of Mac OS X Leopard Security

Reviewed by Robert Pritchett



Authors: Charles S Edge Jr., William Barker , Zack Smith

Apress

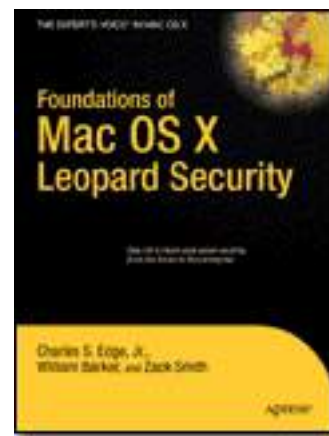
<http://www.apress.com/book/view/9781590599891>

Released: April 2008

Pages: 488

\$40 USD

ISBN13: 978-1-59059-989-1



Strengths: Provides an updated resource to Apple OS security.

Weaknesses: None found.



Introduction

Foundations of Mac OS X Leopard Security is written in part as a companion to the SANS Institute course for Mac OS X - <http://www.sans.org/sans2008/> . It contains detailed Mac OS X security information, but also walkthroughs on securing systems. By using the SANS Institute course as a sister to the book, the focus includes both the beginning home user and the seasoned security professional not accustomed to the Mac, and allows this title to establish the “best practices” for Mac OS X for a wide audience. Additionally, the authors of the book are seasoned Mac and security professionals, having built many of the largest network infrastructures for Apple and spoken at both DefCon and Black Hat on OS X security.

What I Learned

With the recent flurry of Trojan activities and Email Phishing expeditions, social engineering efforts and even the Adobe Acrobat 8 exploit that caused us to even update the February issue of macCompanion magazine's PDF issue, we have to be on guard and ever-vigilant, even on the Apple platform.

This vigilance is even more of an issue on the Intel-based machines from Apple, as they are even more prone to vulnerabilities and exploits based on their chipset than the previous-generation IBM-based chipsets that used Virtual PC to navigated in the landmine-infested non-Mac environments.

I learned a little bit more about the stealth mode, hiding wireless networks, file services through AirPort, blocking hosts based on robot.txt and using the .htaccess file for protecting directories.

The book has 5 parts in 16 chapters and 4 appendices on security fundamentals, and essentials including malware security about viruses, worms and rootkits, log reviewing and monitoring, network traffic, setting up the Mac OS X firewall, securing a wireless network, sharing files services, and securing websites as well as remote connectivity and server security, workplace security on network scanning, intrusion detection and prevention tools, backups and fault tolerance and forensics.

The appendices cover Xsan security, acceptable use policies, secure development and an intro to cryptography.

Conclusions

If you want an updated book on Mac Leopard Security, this is it.

Recommendation

Even though these guys seem to be speaking to the PC-side, they did their homework. After all, they all work for one of the largest Mac security consulting firms, 318 - <http://www.318.com/>

Make: The Best Of - 75 Projects from the pages of MAKE

Reviewed by Robert Pritchett

O'REILLY®

Edited: Mark Frauenfelder
O'Reilly

<http://oreilly.com/catalog/9780596514280/index.html>

Released: October 2007

Pages: 384

\$35 USD

ISBN: 9780596514280

Strengths: A Tinkerer's dream for DIYers.

Weaknesses: Heavy on electronics.



Introduction

After two years, MAKE has become one of most celebrated new magazines to hit the newsstands, and certainly one of the hottest reads. If you're just catching on to the MAKE phenomenon and wonder what you've missed, this book contains the best DIY projects from the magazine's first ten volumes -- a surefire collection of fun and challenging activities going back to MAKE's launch in early 2005.

What I Learned

This is pretty much MAKE in book form. Okay, best of MAKE. I liked Phillip Torrone and Simon Hill's "Maker's Bill of Rights" regarding what should be serviceable and what should be available for Do-It-Yourselfers instead of the trend of assembly replacements instead of component replacements.

There are nine chapters on tooling up, electronics, microcontrollers, toys and games. Robotics music, flight and projectiles, photography and video and ending with cars and engines.

I particularly enjoyed the info on solar engines used to make bot-types roll , jump, crawl, swim, fly, etc. One thing that struck me were the items for Mac-ophiles – a MacsWagen for using a Mac Mini onboard a VW and hardwiring iPods to get quality music out of iPodding stereo equipment. There is also a section on creating Frankenmice – those little reincarnated self-propelled computermice gone wild that could drive cats crazy. Now we know what to do with mice that go bad – turn them into electro-gadgets!

But there also is a section on making biofuel that actually is well-written and does a great k job summarizing what can be found in the "Biodiesel Basics and Beyond" book reviewed in this issue of *macCompanion* magazine.

Conclusion

If you never subscribed to MAKE magazine, here is an opportunity to get a "MacGyver " book and see what you've been missing.

My New Mac: 52 Simple Projects to Get You Started

Reviewed by Robert Pritchett



Author: Wallace Wang
No Starch Press

<http://nostarch.com/frameset.php?startat=catalog>

Released: April 2008

\$30 USD

ISBN: 9781593271640

For Mac Newbees.

Strengths: A Great Beginner's Book for Mac OS X.

Weaknesses: None found.



Introduction

What do you do with your Mac after you turn it on? Do you even know how to turn it on and off properly or put it to sleep? You need a book like *My New Mac* to make everything easy. The author will show you, step-by-step, how to use tools like iPhoto to organize your photos, track birthdays with iCal, and clip and save information from the Internet so you can find it again.

- Organize your files and folders by color and keyword
- View stocks, flights, and the weather
- Set up and manage parental controls to limit your children's computer and Internet access
- Play and burn CDs and DVDs
- Transfer photos from your digital camera to your computer
- Share songs, images, and documents wirelessly between Macs

What I Learned

I didn't know I could clip a web page in Leopard and then use it in Dashboard as a widget. Did you? Wallace Wang takes this and 51 other projects to task in 5 parts in Basic training, shortcuts, putting the Mac to work, Interneting, and maintaining the Mac. (Yes, I did read that last part too!)

Conclusion

If you don't like "Macintosh for Dummies", get this book instead.

MYSQL In a Nutshell: A Desktop Quick Reference 2nd edition

Reviewed by Robert Pritchett

O'REILLY®

Author: Russell Dyer

O'Reilly

<http://oreilly.com/catalog/9780596514334/index.html>

Released: April 2008

Pages: 564

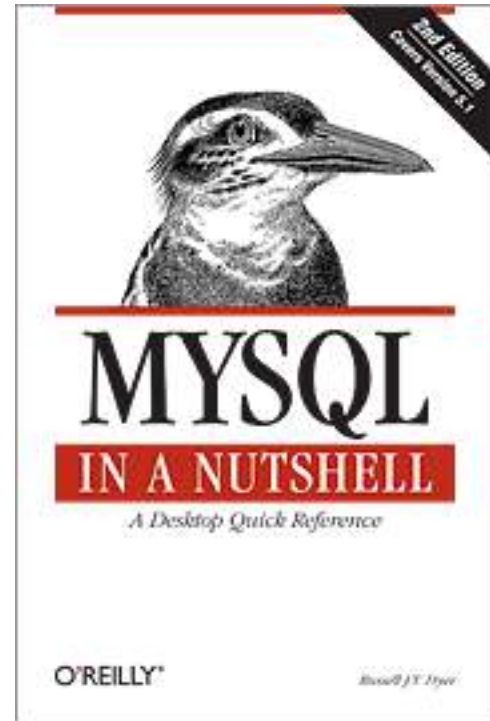
\$35 USD

ISBN: 9780596514334

For those who have a foundation in databases and want to learn about MYSQL.

Strengths: Provides the latest "stable" environment for My SQL.

Weaknesses: None.



Introduction

Need to find something in MySQL? This convenient reference offers you all the details you need, day in and day out, in one concise and extremely well organized book. The new edition contains all the commands and programming information for version 5.1, including new features and language interfaces. It's ideal for anyone using MySQL, from novices who need to get up to speed to advanced users who want a handy reference.

he new edition contains all the commands and programming information for version 5.1, including new features and language interfaces. It's ideal for anyone using MySQL, from novices who need to get up to speed to advanced users who want a handy reference. Like all O'Reilly Nutshell references, it's easy to use and highly authoritative, written by the editor of the MySQL Knowledge Base at MySQL AB, the creator and owner of MySQL.

Inside, you'll find:

- A thorough reference to MySQL statements, functions, and administrative utilities
- Several tutorial chapters to help newcomers get started
- Programming language APIs for PHP, Perl, and C
- Brief tutorials at the beginning of each API chapter to help anyone, regardless of experience level, understand and master unfamiliar territory
- New chapters on replication, triggers, and stored procedures
- Plenty of new examples of how MySQL is used in practice
- Useful tips to help you get through the most difficult subjects

Whether you employ MySQL in a mission-critical, heavy-use environment or for applications that are more modest, this book puts a wealth of easy-to-find information at your fingertips, saving you hundreds of hours of trial and error and tedious online searching. If you're ready to take advantage of everything MySQL has to offer, *MySQL in a Nutshell* has precisely what it takes.

What I Learned

These Nutshell books hold large nuts and there is a lot of meat in them. MySQL is indeed open source and is impacting both domains of Oracle and MS SQL Server, but it isn't a panacea for all things database. It does have limitations. It does not scale well, but in most cases it does the job, does it well and has plenty of support around the world.

MySQL is included in every instance of Mac OS X, but it is usually an older version. The book indicates how to do the update using either TAR or PKG. The book also spells out how to install distributions for other OSes as well.

The book is in 5 parts with an intro, install and basics, SQL statements and functions, security, database and table schema, data manipulation, table and server admin, replication, stored routines, aggregate clauses functions and subqueries, string, data, time, mathematical and flow functions, server and client tools, command-line utilities, APIs and connectors for C, Perl and PHP and 3 appendices on data types operators and server and environmental variables.

Conclusion

The book covers version 5.1 and not 6.0, but hey, it provides the latest foundation for being able to speak intelligently about one of the most popular and widespread relational database programs out there. It's also a pretty good way to look under the skirt of most servers – including Mac servers that use it as their "mental memory". It is a Reference Guide, after all.

Create Your Own Photo Blog

Reviewed by Dr. Eric Flescher



Author: Catherine Jameson

Wiley Publishing

<http://www.wiley.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-0471767743.html>

Released: April 2006

Pages: 301

\$25 USD

ISBN-10: 0471767743

ISBN-13: 9780471767749

Novice/Intermediate/Advanced



Strengths: Good layout, sound advice and techniques. Tabs on the outer edges of the left side are helpful in easily finding the chapter numbers.

Weaknesses: Since the book came out in 2006 when moveable type was very common with creating blogs, the book focuses on these techniques. While still valuable, it you require the need of blogger or other blog engines, you may find other resources or use this book with others that you. Most others like blogger are much easier to use then moveable type.

Introduction

I had created websites but did not know about blogs and how they were different from websites. As I explored more, I found out about their different uses. Blogs continue to be quite popular with many computer users and it is nice to see that some blogs and websites actually have education, visual or other value. One type of blog to create is called a photoblog. The book called Create your own photo blog it one book to help you get started for making your photoblog a reality.

The author is Catherine Jameson is a photographer, writer and has an award winning photo blog called Utata. She has written a book with many ideas and resources and I was interested to find some new techniques about blogging in general for this review as ideas that might help me elevate the use of some of my blogs.

The book is nicely laid out. Throughout there were photos and screenshots that help illustrate the points of creating blogs. Ideas penned as designer tips, pro tips, notes are found throughout the book. There are also little icons that look like red mice that indicate where in the screenshots the tutorials can find the information in the tutorials. More authors should use some techniques like this (and some do), which keep one from having to wonder where in the screenshots the focus is.

Twelve chapters encompass the three main sections in this book: getting started, setting up (blogs); use of photos and include Six ideas (page 13) detail six primary reasons for using a photo blog. Mac and PC users are given instructions how to start with general equipment.

Understanding styles and using styles for your intent are outlined. Before 2006, many blogs used the moveable type publishing platform which many still use. Since then there are more publishing possibilities. If you do not want to use Movable Type publishing platform (which allows the users much flexibility, unlike some other blogging creation engines). This book may not be for you if you are using blog engines after 2006 (blogger, xanga etc). They are not outlined in detail as the book came out in 2006. Still the book is useful in many ways.

The book outlines (chapter 3) the use of photo sites, creating blogs from scratch and using other free photo areas to showcase their photos (Flickr, etc). Learn skills with shooting your photos, create your blog site, promoting your blog and improving your site are also included. Understanding composition is highlighted (chapter 8). I particularly like the section and how RSS feeds are explained (chapter 10).

Conclusion

This book is illustrated well and that it is easy to read. The book packs a lot of good readable information. There are resources within the book that can be used for comparing and contrasting other blogs and in that way learn how to create and improve your blog particularly with Movable Type publishing platform technology. You can use this book to make your own or use Movable Type publishing platform or some of the other blog engines and you could be fine. The book excels at creating and finding information about photo blog and is a wealth of resources. It is great for learning about style and making your site better is where this book excels. Blogs then and now can do more than just post photos. If your purpose is focusing on photos then this book and the authors insightful instructions can help you.

The Photographer's Eye: Composition and design for better digital photos

Reviewed by Dr. Eric Flescher



Author: Michael Freeman

Focal Press

30 Corporate Drive

Suite 400

Burlington, MA 01803

<http://www.focalpress.com/Book.aspx?id=602&terms=9780240809342>

Released: May 15, 2007

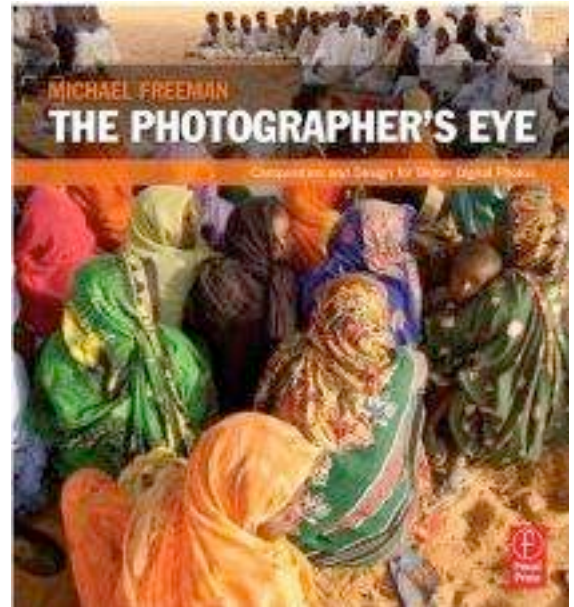
Pages: 192

\$30 USD

ISBN-10: 0-240-80934-3

ISBN-13: 9780240809342

Novice/Intermediate/Advanced



Strengths: Beautiful photographs. Great layout and good titling next to photographs.

Weaknesses: The chapters relate to design and composition. Somewhat helpful if the author also focused on the subjects of most photographs as applied to photographs (nature, sports etc).

Introduction

This book is all about design, a most important factor in the creation of good photographs. The main focus is the subject of composition and design for digital photographers. The importance of seeing and then shooting your favorite photographs, involving all the dynamics, can be a daunting task. The Photographer's Eye can be a book that can help you see your visions more clearly.

The author is a renown international photographer and writer who specializes in travel, architecture and Asian Art.

The 6 chapters have a multitude of stunning photos that implore you to read further into the insights that went into creating these insightful visuals. The main aim of the book is to show you more about what is behind the author's eye as he took this photographs.

The book covers the essentials of: image framing (cropping, stitching and extending, filling the frame); design Basics involving contrast, texture, pattern, balance, visual weight etc); graphic/ Photographic Elements (horizontal, vertical, diagonal lines, curves, motion, focus, exposure); light and color composing; focus on the Intent (a great chapter which made me stop and ponder my own internal motivations and intentions in taking images); process (search for order, anticipation, juxtaposition). So while the book is not a lengthy one it covers much within its pages.

Conclusion

This book is not an easy read, per se. Most of these photos include a title which highlight and critique the the details that produced the idea behind the photograph. This book is definitely not a quick guide or set of easy tutorials. It is more a comprehensive look into many approaches that will help in the taking and later possibly editing your photographs.

Normally the procedure of taking a photograph is think of a scene or a photograph you want to take of it and then let your digital camera do its work. However to acquire a better photograph you need more then quick ideas. This book is not about quick ideas to make your photographs quickly. This book is all about absorbing the ideas found in the details of the book. The author really wants you to see into the "minds eye " involved perceptions. He shows you with brilliant photographs, helpful principals to guide you through taking better photos. He reflects on the dynamics involved and shows the results "that will stand out".

All in all, I like this book. I can't fault the author for designing a labor intensive reaching. Learning about details and composition and translating these to making your photographs better takes more time then just browsing. There is much to learn from this book and what he has to say. But for me (and possibly others), to really get the most out of the book, I feel like I will have outline some of these design aspects and seeing how I can incorporate his ideas and insights into my photographic sessions in the future.

The trick will be how and when this book will, to an even greater extent, help me with the viewing or seeing a scene that can help me visualize and take better notice of opportune moments, reflections or scenes I see through my camera's viewpoint.

Reading this book will help me in the future. It is just a matter of looking through all these "pearls of wisdom" and focusing by better use of opportune times when I hope to make better photographs. While I have done that in the past, the book has helped me realize there is even further "ground for me to break" in the area of capturing better photos using "my mind's eye". Take a look at this book and see what it might do for you.

Photoshop CS3 Accelerated

Reviewed by Robert Pritchett



Author: Blues Kim

YoungJin

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<http://www.youngjin.com>

O'Reilly

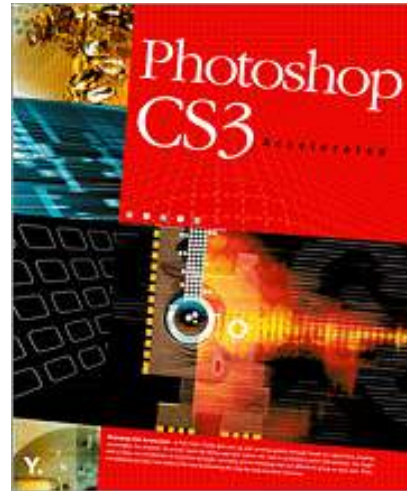
<http://oreilly.com/catalog/9788931434378/index.html>

Released: April 2008

Pages: 280

\$25 USD, £15 GBP includes chapter sample CD.

ISBN-13: 9788931434378



Strengths: Excellent graphics presentation in book form.

Weaknesses: None found.

Introduction

Photoshop remains the world's most popular digital photo software. The hand-on, practical exercises presented in this book will allow new users to quickly master the basics and move on to creating their own projects. Dozens of exercises will guide readers to on topics such as image editing, advanced retouching techniques, filters, color correction and special effects. All illustrated in full-color in an easy-to-follow tutorial.

What I Learned

Photoshop has always been rather un-Mac like for me with all the tools, etc. that seem to get in the way. Blues Kim makes no assumptions with the reader and begins from the beginning with installation and what Photoshop is, making selections, showing basic editing skills and blending pictures, painting and imaging editing, and retouching images, working with layers, paths, types and shapes, looking at Channels, color correction and filters.

The included CD goes through a number of each section and step-by-step exercises that go along with fantastic photo-realistic pictures in the book.

It really made me what to do the button image in a heart shape, create neon lights and fireworks and gave me some ideas to work with within Photoshop CS3.

Conclusions

I've labored through training sessions with multiple-CD sets and exercises. Blues Kim has distilled much of this knowledge down to simple book-level education that help the newbie get up to speed quickly.

Recommendation

If you have somehow been able to get through computing so far without having to deal with Adobe Photoshop and you have to use it now, this book will be a great help in getting in, getting things done and getting out in a friendly, fun way.

You could also watch Deke's podcast on Photoshop - <http://digitalmedia.oreilly.com/2008/06/24/dekepod-101-photoshop-tips.html>

Adobe Photoshop Lightroom for Digital Photographers Only

Reviewed by Dr. Eric Flescher



Author: Rob Sheppard
Wiley Publishing

<http://www.wiley.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-0470047232.html>

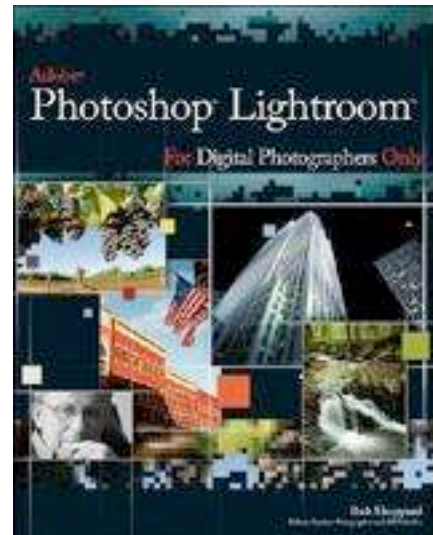
Released: may 2007

Pages: 352

\$35 USD, \$42 CND, 23 GBP

ISBN: 9780470047231

Novice/Intermediate/Advanced



Strengths: Very nice glossary and index. Instruction is top notch and instructional tutorials are extremely well laid out and easy to read. The instruction is solid and the screenshots and photos integrate with the instructions. Book can be used as a good resource to skip around with the book or read sequentially. Great instruction in the use of Lightroom software. Even if you don't use Lightroom you may gain valuable ideas from the author and the instructions by using another image processing software like iPhoto, etc.

Weaknesses: Vertical titling of the chapter names, down the outside of the pages, is disconcerting. These and the page numbers should have been placed horizontally on the top of the page.

Introduction

Interestingly, Photoshop it is said, was never designed for photographers even though it is the best image - processing applications. The highlight of the book is what the software can do for you and how you can apply the software to complete your best photographs. While Photoshop Elements was created to fill part of this void, Lightroom is not focused on graphics but organizing your photographs to make them easy to find, search and use. Lightflow sounds like a version of iPhoto that connects with Photoshop. My main aim was to see whether this tool is equal to or greater than iPhoto or other image processing collection applications so that Mac users and myself can learn about different image collection programs.

The books' 323 pages cover three part/sections and 13 chapters. It is nice that the pages have tabs that correspond to chapter selections. However, I do not like that the chapters' titles run down the sides vertically. There was ample room to place these on the top of the pages with the pages numbers as well. I don't like having to turn the book sideways to read the titles. Each chapter has a Q&A (Question and Answer instructions and additional assistance about specifically targeted ways to use the photos (slideshows etc.).

Side notes include: Pro tips, X-ref (additional reference guides within the book). The author has provided nicely sized screenshots (using Macintosh OSX interface) so that photos and screenshots are readable. But what is missing are arrows, circles or additional icons that "can zone in on" the selections to show the instructions for displaying even more clearer. While there are a couple of white arrows and bulls eye icons, its not enough. Still the instruction is quite suitable and for the most part easy to understand as integrated with the tutorials.

Part 1 is about all you want to know about Lightroom, introduction to the Lightroom concept, basics and working with the camera. Part 2 covers the Library Module, image processing presentations possibilities, working with slide shows, printing and working with the web module. Part 3 provides knowledge about Lightroom and Photoshop.

What also makes the text readable is that each page is separated into two columns, uses bold text to highlight the beginning of the instructional paragraphs. Numbers with the paragraphs and spacing of the paragraphs makes for manageable reading.

Conclusions

In many case, tips are provided for both Windows and Mac operations. The section on Library module including information concerning keywords is well done. The Lightroom allows the creation, storage and use of Keywords as in iPhoto. Folders and collections can also be used with the selection process as iPhoto. The Lightroom interface for the keywords seems a little more straightforward then iPhoto but both seem to operate in the same manner. I like the section on Lightroom modules (chapter6) and the nice screenshots of the tone curves and other basic calibrations. The tonal, color setting and color corrections curve instructions are very well done. I also like the way the author provides instructions when working with slideshow module.

While it sounds like a version of iPhoto, Lightroom seems a little more elegant but functions in much the same way. Where the book and the instructions from the author excel is not only how to perform basic functions using the software but more specifically how to take these instructions to the next level. This book is well done and in many ways entices you into trying Lightroom.

The author provides you with the instructions and more ideas to work with regarding photographs. This book is a great guide and resource if you are using Lightroom. If you don't have Lightroom, you might find the instructions can be used with other image processing programs and possibly with iPhoto (instructions don't come with iPhoto as you know). Clear and very well done, you can learn much from this author.

Portrait and Candid Photography: Photo Workshop

Reviewed by Dr. Eric Flescher



Author: Erin Manning
Wiley Publishing
<http://www.wiley.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-0470147857.html>
Released: October 2007
Pages: 250
\$ 30 USD, \$36 CDN, 20 GBP
ISBN: 978-0-470-14785-6
Novice/Intermediate/Advanced

Strengths: Nice layout. Reads like a well instruction oriented lessons. Good glossary and index. Good photos and screenshots. Good bold highlighting of the number of the chapters and the titles on the top left pages makes for easy access and shuffling through the pages you want to find or browse. Good basic information about software and editors.

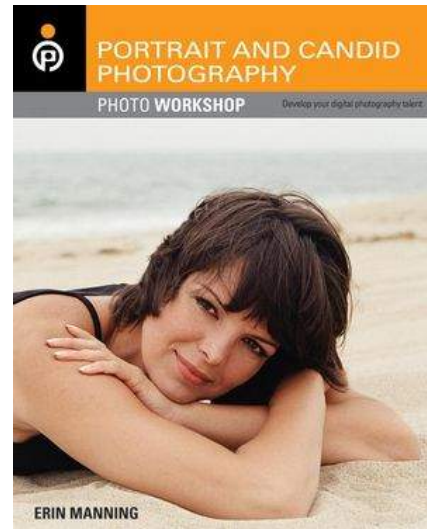
Weaknesses: If your require more information about photographic software and editors Chapter 10 is a good start but you might want to use other books to sharpen those skills.

Introduction

Shooting portraits and candid photography is an art in itself. It is not just luck and takes much preparation. But how do you learn how to make better photos for portraits and candid shots whether for commercial, your business or just of family? This book is a good place to start.

The author is Erin Manning, DIY Network host of The Whole Picture, who encourages photographers to take outstanding photos of people. This book represents the author's efforts to provide instruction in this area. She helps readers gain the skills and confidence to successfully use the digital camera as a tool to create and capture life's moments

The 10 chapters include in-depth instructions and information about cameras, accessories, working with light, composing your pictures. I particularly like how the author details the information by focusing more concerning the using of your camera and using to its best advantage. Of course the technology and the basics are introduced.



But what is even nicer, the reader can better learn to develop their artistic eye, using techniques that will help prepare for actual photography. Action shots are also covered. The last chapter 10, also includes some information about enhancing and sharing your photos (even includes information about using Picasa (Google) and iPhoto (Apple), Windows software, Adobe's Photoshop Elements and more.

Working with lighting, location, angle, composition, physical characteristics, environment, and more, including the unique challenges of photographing babies, group activities, and action, are covered with insightful instructions. Every one of the ten chapter ends with an assignment that readers are encouraged to complete. Users can even upload their best image to Photoworkshop.com too.

Conclusions

It is rare for a book to clearly show the photographer camera user how to study your subjects in their natural habitat. There are great ideas within this book which related to observing, reacting and interacting with your subjects and how make the photos come "alive". The techniques for improving photos of babies and children are very interesting and well done. Learning to capture facial expressions and learning how to tell a story with a series of candid photos is also included. There is a nice section concerning how to add interest to large-group shots.

If you are looking for a great instructional manual that focuses on techniques for portraits and candid shots, this is a great book. The fact that the instruction is teaching tips and information are performed in several ways other than reading the tests give you a better idea of how to take better photographs. I recommend this book highly.

Programming Amazon Web Services: S3, EC2, SQS, FPS and Simple DB

Reviewed by Robert Pritchett

O'REILLY®

Author: James Murty

O'Reilly

<http://oreilly.com/catalog/9780596515812/index.html>

Released: March 2008

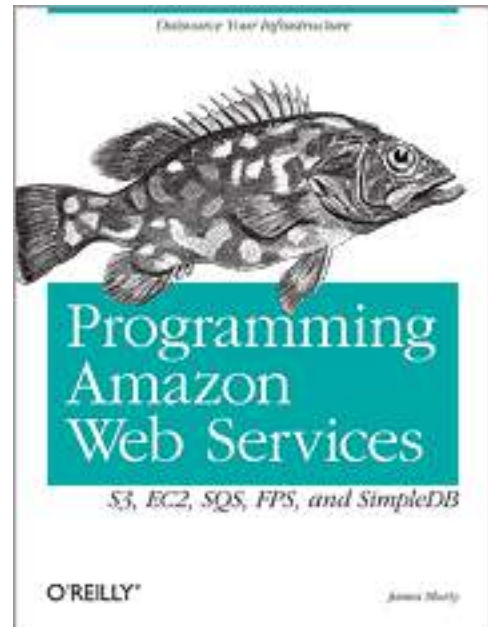
Pages: 600

\$50 USD

ISBN: 9780596515812

Strengths: Remember mainframe services? Guess what...

Weaknesses: You have to pay to use these services from Amazon.



Introduction

Building on the success of its storefront and fulfillment services, Amazon now allows businesses to "rent" computing power, data storage and bandwidth on its vast network platform. This book demonstrates how developers working with small- to mid-sized companies can take advantage of Amazon Web Services (AWS) such as the Simple Storage Service (S3), Elastic Compute Cloud (EC2), Simple Queue Service (SQS), Flexible Payments Service (FPS), and SimpleDB to build web-scale business applications.

With AWS, Amazon offers a new paradigm for IT infrastructure: use what you need, as you need it, and pay as you go. *Programming Amazon Web Services* explains how you can access Amazon's open APIs to store and run applications, rather than spend precious time and resources building your own. With this book, you'll learn all the technical details you need to:

- Store and retrieve any amount of data using application servers, unlimited data storage, and bandwidth with the Amazon S3 service

- Buy computing time using Amazon EC2's interface to requisition machines, load them with an application environment, manage access permissions, and run your image using as many or few systems as needed
- Use Amazon's web-scale messaging infrastructure to store messages as they travel between computers with Amazon SQS
- Leverage the Amazon FPS service to structure payment instructions and allow the movement of money between any two entities, humans or computers
- Create and store multiple data sets, query your data easily, and return the results using Amazon SimpleDB.
- Scale up or down at a moment's notice, using these services to employ as much time and space as you need

Whether you're starting a new online business, need to ramp up existing services, or require an offsite backup for your home, *Programming Amazon Web Services* gives you the background and the practical knowledge you need to start using AWS. Other books explain how to build web services. This book teaches businesses how to take make use of existing services from an established technology leader.

What I Learned

Amazon figured out how to offer mainframe services in the guise of "Web Services" and also made it sweet enough that all the programmers are buzzing around it like it was nectar. Or so Amazon would like us to believe. This book tells how Amazon has turned AWS into a lucrative business for itself and strives to be the end-all by offering its services form lessons learned to those who don't want to reinvent the web e-commerce wheel.

There are 13 chapters on infrastructure, interaction, Simple Storage Service, applications (sharing, backup, elastic drives and mediated access), Elastic Compute Cloud instances images and applications, Simple Queue Service, and applications, Flexible payments service, transactions and accounts, Gatekeeper language, and micropayments, building marketplace applications and subscribing to event notifications and Simple DB domains, items attributes and stock price. There are also two appendices on AWS resources and error codes.

Much of these were done in Ruby.

Conclusion

If you want to pay and pay and pay for web services through Amazon, you will learn how to do so. If you want to emulate their service structure, you will need to go elsewhere. They invented the E-commerce wheel and know how to drive this web-based vehicle. This book is the driver's training instruction manual.

Visual Communication in Digital Design

Reviewed by Robert Pritchett



Author: Ji Young Park

YoungJin

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418-1 Mapo-dong

Mapo-gu, Seoul, 121-7324, Korea

<http://www.youngjin.com>

O'Reilly

<http://oreilly.com/catalog/9788931434347/index.html>

Released: March 2008

Pages: 218

\$30 USD, £18 GBP

ISBN-13: 9788931434347



Strengths: A coffee-table book approach to visual communication.

Weaknesses: None found.

Introduction

The art of visual communication is the arrangement of design elements in a way that is balanced, visually appealing and most importantly, effectively delivers its intended message to the target audience. This full-color tutorial serves as an introduction to understanding this art of visual communication and the creative process of design. The author presents the basic elements of design - line, shape, color, typography, placing these into a visual structure that always keeps in mind the audiences' visual perception.

What I Learned

Dr Ji Young Park has done a magnificent job of balancing design application with design practice. Visual presentation is an art form and a delicate balance is needed to blend theory with practice. The book walks us through sequential steps in 12 beautifully illustrated chapters on design and elements, principles, grid system and visual elements, color, shape, lines, texture, form and perspective, typography, web vs print and visual communication. Each chapter ends with a Student Gallery for grasping the ideas presented.

Conclusions

If you need to get the "look" back into visual communication, this is a great place to start.

Recommendation

Assuming you are not visually impaired, this book will help to quickly get up to speed in understanding the "art of visual communication".

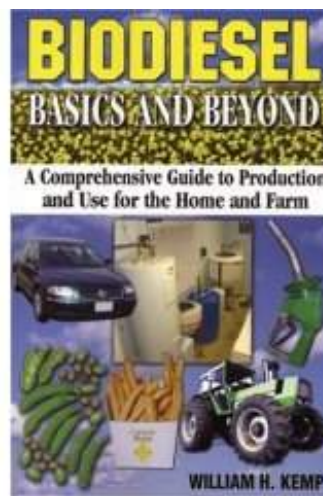
Greenware

Biodiesel: Basics and Beyond: A Comprehensive Guide to Production and Use for the Home and Farm

Reviewed by Robert Pritchett



Author: William H. Kemp
<http://www.aboutus.org/PowerBase.com>
Aztext Press
2622 Mountain Road
Tamworth, Ontario, Canada KOK 3G0
Michele@aztex.com
<http://www.aztext.com/biodiesel-book.cfm>
Released: April 1, 2006
Pages: 300
\$30 USD
ISBN: 9780973323337



Strengths: A great read on Home-brew Biodiesel production and for creating a biodiesel plant.

Weaknesses: Repeated pictures and information in book. Picture captions also repeat paragraphs of information in the book. Will scare off Newbees. Pay attention to Steve Fugate's comments at the end. The book ought to be updated.

Introduction

Biodiesel: Basics and Beyond is a comprehensive guide to the production and use of biodiesel for the home and the farm. Various home brewing methods are investigated and the results of years of research are shared. The author Bill Kemp designed a microscale biodiesel production facility that he built at his own home that produces ASTM certifiable biodiesel.

What I Learned

Disclosure: I represent Green World Biofuels - <http://www.greenworldbiofuels.com/> in the Northwest for Steve Fugate. I settled on his system because it is precise, concise and pretty much is extensible for the small business operation. It is a clean, off-the-shelf earth-friendly system.

That said, one needs an instruction manual and understanding of what all is involved in producing a quality biodiesel product. This book may meet that need.

William Kemp provides a step-by-step process including lots of pictures on how this can be done both safely and economically.

The book is divided into 10 chapters and 3 appendices.

They cover energy consumption, technical background of diesel and biofuels, oil feedstocks, commercial biodiesel production, high blend levels of biodiesel (VB100), debunking a lot of homebrew myths, doing small-scale plants, homeheating and glycerin. The Appendices cover the ASTM D 6751 Fuel Quality Standard, a resource guide and oil production of common crops. There is also an extensive glossary.

Yes, there are some typos and a few pictures that kept getting repeated in the book (specifically the clogged fuel filter). I would have liked to see pictures that were photos and in color to see better definition. All pictures in this book are black and white and don't really do justice to the topic. Of course, colorized would have raised the price substantially.

I loved the Myth Buster entries scattered through the book and the subtle occasional Canadian humor.

Is it coincidence that what to do with unrefined glycol would be covered in Chapter 11? (Many Biofuel operations are going into bankruptcy.) Handling the waste stream correctly is what is killing off a lot of homebrew operations. It is much worse today than when this book was first published in 2006!

Conclusions

If you want a book that introduces the topic of the basics and beyond, the title of this book is absolutely correct. And William Kemp pulls no punches regarding so-called Myths about how easy this process is(n't).

Recommendations

I may not agree with some of his political conclusions, but I do like that fact that this is a Basics book that goes beyond.

Here is what Steve Fugate wrote in response to my question about the book – and he has extra copies he gives out from time to time;

“I have given its contents a great deal of thought though and many of his assertions are hotly debated in the home brew community. We have proven with actual data that several of his "facts" are off base. He had agreed to remove a few inaccuracies, but failed to do so. His publisher had wanted me to promote and distribute it. I feel that a newbie would be scared off by it, and by the looks of his setup, it is not used very much, if at all. While engineers may have some great ideas, often they make things far more difficult than they need be.

We do include the excellent reference ‘Building a Successful Biodiesel Business’ from the knowledgeable folks at Iowa State University that is MUCH more comprehensive, expensive and less likely to frighten someone.”

<http://www3.me.iastate.edu/biodiesel/>

http://www.biodieselbasics.com/catalog/product_info.php?products_id=30&osCsid=9592b506142da86906a317fc1cf09d40

Hardware

Innovellis BudFits

Reviewed by Robert Pritchett



Innovellis, Inc.

10865 Able St. NE

Blaine, MN 5434

Phone: 763-360-2671

Sales@Innovellis.com

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

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

\$9 USD

Requirements: Ears. iPod or iPhone earbuds.

Strengths: Keep earbuds in place.

Weaknesses: None found.

Introduction

BudFits will ensure your iPod earbuds won't fall out during even the most demanding physical activities while maximizing your comfort by eliminating the need to wedge the earbuds in your ear canals.



My Experience



With the design awards that Apple has garnered in the past one has to wonder why they screw up little things like earphones, multi-button mice and keyboards, but they do.

Enter, stage right, Innovelis with a solution to at least one of those design faux paux – with BudFits.

in Red China, sold via Amazon.com, these devices come in 3 colors; clear, white or black. Assuming you have ears, BudFits will fit over them and hold the earbuds in place.

Conclusion

I guess what I could say is that BudFits will grow on you as the earbuds sprout out of your ear canals. Come up with your own jokes, but why didn't Apple come up with this first?

Recommendation

If you are still using Apple's Earbuds and want to get away from having to expect your earlobes (again assuming you have those) to do all the work, get these. I never could "stuff or wedge earbuds into my ear canals" anyway. Now I don't have to try.



C.E.O.™ Premiere for iPhone 3G

Reviewed by Robert Pritchett



MARWARE, Inc.
2402 Hollywood Blvd.
Hollywood, FL 33020 USA
info@marware.com
PHONE: 954.927.6031
FAX: 954.927.2477
<http://www.marware.com/PRODUCTS/iPhone-3g-cases/iPhone-3G-C-E-O-Premiere>
\$35 USD

Requirements: iPhone 3G

Strengths: Real Leather case. Strong magnet clasp.

Weaknesses: None.

Introduction

Executive leather hip case

The C.E.O. Premiere is a stylish, premium leather hip case for iPhone 3G. This classically designed case features textured, perforated leather with elegant contrast stitching and an ultra-slim permanent belt clip. Constructed of soft textured Nappa leather, this versatile case can be worn on the hip or slipped into a purse or bag. The secure enclosure flap holds the iPhone safely in place when not in use, while the opening on the bottom allows the iPhone to be easily pushed out of the case when needed. Side openings allow access to headphone minijack and sleep/wake button, without obstructing the speakers.

Features

- Soft leather iPhone protection with microfiber interior
- Stylish perforated design accents with contrast stitching
- Secure closure
- Built-in, slim belt clip for bag and belt attachment
- Easy access to headphone minijack and sleep/wake button
- Push-thru access for easy removal
- BONUS: Clear protective film and microfiber cleaning cloth included
- Marware's Lifetime Guarantee



What I Found

I love the smell of real leather and this is as real as it gets!

The quality craftsmanship becomes obvious with a lifetime guarantee for the Hip case.



The reason why the cover is so strong so that the iPhone won't fall out, is because it has a very strong magnet that goes the length of the inside cover underneath the leather and another not-as-strong magnet in the outer overhanging part of the case. The under magnet is so strong, that a table knife can pick it up and not shake loose. Yet it is not so strong that you cannot pull the iPhone out, if necessary, with one hand.

I like the heavy-duty belt clip that grips tightly to pants or belt. There is no airgap between the clip and the side of the case.

Conclusion

If you want that professional, sophisticated, learned look about you while using an iPhone, why not get this one? A lifetime guarantee for \$35. Soft leather that doesn't crack and looks classy.

Mareware also is planning to release a FlipVue case for the iPhone 3G that combines protection and ease-of-access for \$30.



Software

Xslimmer 1.5.3 – Put your Mac on a Diet!

Reviewed by Robert Pritchett



LateNiteSoft

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

Released: May 31, 2008

\$13 USD

Download:

<http://www.xslimmer.com/download/index.html>

Requirements: Mac OS X 10.3.9 or later.

FAQs - <http://www.xslimmer.com/FAQ.html>

Blog: <http://latenitesoft.blogspot.com/>



Strengths: Removes the unnecessary code from apps, based on chipset usage.

Weaknesses: None found. Just be careful about moving apps from PPC to Mac-Intel systems. If you “cleaned” them, you may need to reinstall instead.

Competitor: Monolingual - <http://monolingual.sourceforge.net/>

Other Reviews: <http://www.atpm.com/14.03/xslimmer.shtml>

Introduction

Remove unnecessary code from fat binaries. Xslimmer determines which code your machine needs and removes the rest. This is achieved by removing the code inside the Universal Binaries that does not fit with your machine's architecture, a code that never gets executed and just wastes your disk space.

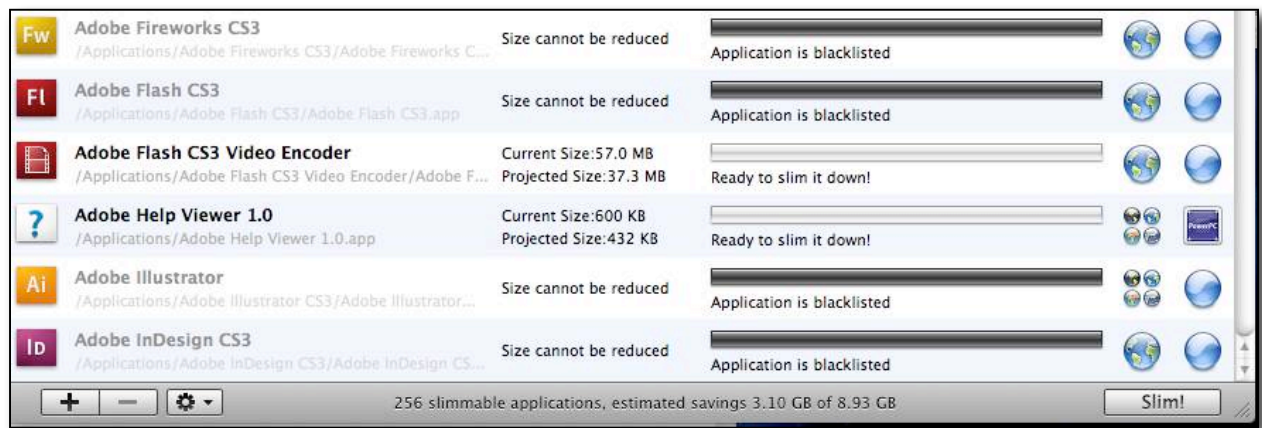
Strip out unneeded languages. Safari is available in more than a dozen languages, Adium in more than 20. This is great, but how many of those do you need? Xslimmer allows you to select how many languages you want to preserve in your apps and will remove the rest, recovering lots of precious free space from your disk.

My Experiences

While working on trying to figure out why my machine has been behaving badly I found this app, which I thought was a great idea.



Did it resolve my OS issues? No, but I feel better knowing a lot of excess baggage is now out of the way and I saved over 3 GB of space doing so just in my apps folder.



When there is less area in a program to navigate, and less space on a hard drive for little ones and zeros to travel, there is less room for error and things speed up as a result. There really is a lot of scruff and nonsense loaded inside programs that just get in the way. Millions of lines of code can get goofy over time. Why not make that tempting target for Murphy's Law a little smaller to hit?

And why didn't Apple do this a long time ago? I found that nearly every Apple app was reduced in size not just by a little bit, but by a whole lot.

What I found a little ironic is that Xslimmer itself was reducible, so no programmers are infallible – or they did it on purpose to make a point.

Since I go through a few apps to try each month, I now can trim them *before* allowing the bloat on board.

For apps that just won't play nice, LateNiteSoft has set them aside as "blacklisted", meaning that they don't like being modified. They even thought of a feedback mechanism in case those of us who use his program find apps that don't like being tweaked, can they be researched and possibly added to the list later.

They even provide a failsafe in case apps that are slimmed don't like their new look and want to go back to being fat again.

Will apps speed up when there is less of their overhead to wade through? You can count on it.

Conclusions

This is one of those "finally somebody made it" apps that strips out unused and otherwise unnecessary code. You can try before you buy, so why not do it to it and see if your apps don't feel a little bit zippier?

Caution

If you plan on moving your apps from an IBM-based machine to an Intel-based machine, you might want to wait just a bit before removing those fat bits. Otherwise, you will have to do as I did and reinstall all the apps. (See my Troubleshooting article in this issue of macCompanion magazine.)

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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".

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