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YOUR GUIDE TO ALL THINGS MACINTOSH

Letter from the CEO

Über Communications and Privacy

Harry "Doc" Babad
Ted Bade
John Hoyle
Robert Pritchett
Dan Robinson
Rick Sutcliffe

Too Much Communication?

macCompanion

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

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Letter from the CEO

Über Communications and Privacy

Robert L. Pritchett

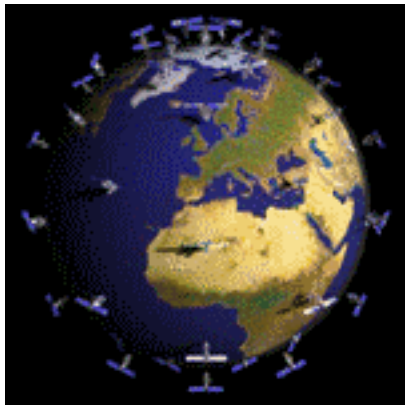
Über, or best of the best http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Über, is what "we" are striving for, but can we get there with technology without sacrificing our liberty and freedoms? As we noted in the article on "Systematic Site Shutdowns" in March http://www.maccompanion.com/macc/archives/March2009/Columns/SystematicSiteshutdowns.htm under the "All-Seeing Eye", we see the "Internet of Things", "Ubiquitous Computing" and Web 3.0, where everything works in harmony and full interoperability and world peace. Don't you feel empowered?

We are rapidly rushing towards an electronic world of Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/RFID, Wireless Sensor Networks (WSNs) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wireless_Sensor_Networks, Electronic Product Code Information Services (EPCIS) http://www.epcglobalinc.org/home and Auto-IDs http://www.autoidlabs.org/.

We see this also in Global Positioning Systems http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Global_Positioning_System, where "we" can identify our location anywhere on the surface of the planet within 10 meters (in reality, down to 1 mm, see "Further Investigation") – and so can anybody else. Even Apple made this easy with the iPhone 3G - http://www.apple.com/iphone/features/gps.html.

A Court ruling already has established that law enforcement can tag your vehicle, on your private property, with a GPS tracker, without due process - http://www.metromilwaukeetoday.com/wp-content/uploads/wi-gps.pdf

You can even track your Mac via the built-in iSight camera http://lifehacker.com/software/theft/hack-attack-turn-your-mac-books-isight-into-a-ftp-backed-up-security-camera-207605.php, in case the portable gets pilfered. But if you can take pictures remotely, so can others without your knowledge. *Adeona* was such a program that has been temporarily disabled at the server level http://adeona.cs.washington.edu/downloads.html. I found it a bit disconcerting that it would activate my iSight and keep me under constant surveillance at all times, day and night by randomly turning on the camera and taking my picture, send it to the server at Planet-Lab http://www.planet-lab.org/ > http://www.measurementlab.net/ > Google. Google already monitors every move you make online. I finally remembered I had this Adeona app in action



and removed it last month (anyway, I think it is removed), as we were discussing security on the Mac. That doesn't keep Google from keeping tabs on me. It does keep them from taking snapshots remotely of me however, without my express permission.

And that's the point. In a world where lawbreaking ACORN http://www.acorn.org/ is going around and GPS-painting everyone's front door in the USSA http://projectworldawareness.com/2009/05/obama-and-acorn-gps-marking/, I think we need to be a little more concerned about Über Communications and making ourselves just a little *less* available at all hours of the day and night. I guess they want more precision than can be obtained by extended Zip Code configurations (these can be used by military systems for missile drops already).

The GPS systems that will be installed in all vehicles will be used to not only track our location, but also will be used to bill us per mile for taxes above and beyond what we pay at the pump.

We are on the brink of not being able to even get away from electronics in our lives with such technologies as Smart Dust http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Smartdust, where devices can communicate at the micrometer level wirelessly.

We will be given universal IDs, so we can be tracked via our username and password anywhere with the advent of "semantic" Web 3.0 services http://videos.howstuffworks.com/podtech-networks/1399-intel-cmo-on-future-of-web-and-media-video.htm.

Kevin Kelly discussed the advent of Über Information over a year ago http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J132shgIiuY.

You may find this interesting as well; The USSA ranks 6th out of 52 nations for most aggressive electronic surveillance of its citizens, preceded only by China, North Korea, Belarus, Russia and the UK - http://wnd.com/index.php?fa=PAGE.view&pageId=97489 > https://secure.crypto-hippie.com/pubs/EPS-2008.pdf (*The Electronic Police State*). Do you care? I do!

I can assume you are familiar with RFID. If not, go here - http://www.spychips.com/. We discussed this in our review of the book, "The Shell Game" a year ago -http://www.maccompanion.com/macc/archives/June2008/Greenware/ShellGame.htm.

Welcome to the Matrix. There is always a dark side to technology. Do we really want to be a part of it? Will we be able to even exist without it?

When is too much information about us posted online? Should our day-to-day activities be chronicled online instead of in a locked private paper-based diary?

We've been warned about the dangers of putting too much information on Facebook and MySpace and other social networking sites - http://www.utexas.edu/its/secure/articles/social_networking.php. Perhaps we should take those warning seriously. With Über Communications, we can either have the best of the best or it can be turned into the worst of the worst. How will you use it?

Think about it and react accordingly.

Sincerely,

— Robert L. Pritchett

Further Investigation

Here is a GPS provider from China - http://wwwCu.cybergraphy.com/English/news.htm

Current GPS systems are accurate down to 1 mm – but your access to the system is being "dumbed down" - http://db.tidbits.com/article/10276

Brigadoon Software computer tracking and recovery software - http://www.brigadoon-software.com/ (One time charge of $30 for license)

Arten Science – "MonitorMyMac" takes timed snapshots of your computer Screen(s) and/or takes snapshots from your connected Webcam. These images are stored locally (or remotely) and are also optionally uploaded to your FTP server, meaning they can they be accessed from anywhere with Internet Access." (25 GBP) http://www.monitormymac.co.uk/

Koingo Software - "Digital Sentry" - Watch for such system events as waking from sleep, pro-

gram launches, closes, or switches, file modifications, incorrect password attempts, mouse and keyboard input, and many more. Then, perform any number of tasks like sending an e-mail, shutting down the computer, starting a simulated self-destruct, pinging a web URL, taking a web cam shot, taking a screenshot, playing a multimedia file, speaking some text, executing a shell script...($20 USD)
http://www.koingosw.com/products/digital-sentry.php

Keeping Track of Yourself on the Internet - Knowing who you appear to be when people look for you on the web can be revealing. Not knowing when inaccurate information about you shows up on the web where anyone (including employers, prospective employers, prospective mates, …) can be a disaster in the making.
http://www.walterbristow.com/2009/05/22/keeping-track-of-yourself-on-the-internet---the-starting-point-of-personal-branding/

eKit - "Travel Journal" - Provides a suite of travel communication services including mobile phones, SIM cards, global calling cards, Internet calling, voicemail, text messaging and email solutions. These services are accessible worldwide from more than 152 countries. "Travel Journal" is a free service. Why?
http://www.ekit.com/ekit/tj

Retina-X Studios - "iPhone Mobile-Spy" - You will SILENTLY learn the truth about calls, text messages and GPS locations by logging into your Mobile Spy account from any web browser for any smartphone system (not just iPhones). ($100 USD)
http://www.mobile-spy.com/iphone.html

Doc Babad's Tips

A Macintosh Tip or Three

Harry {doc} Babad © 2009

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

- Four Ways take a Desktop Screenshot
- Choosing Blank CDs and DVDs
- Changing the Mouse Pointer Size
- Finding Mac Software… and Here's Apple
- Eliminating App Crashes and Freezes by Checking PLIST Files

Four Ways take a Desktop Screenshot

At least a couple times a month, I hear people ask how to take a screenshot of their Mac's desktop (Geoff...). The ability to easily take desktop screenshots is an "occasionally essential" feature of Mac OS X. Here are four easy, built-in ways to take screenshots on your Mac:

Reviews were carried out on my iMac 2.8 GHz Intel Core 2 Duo with 2 GB 667 MHz DDR2 SDRAM running Mac OS X version 10.5.6.

Product and company names and logos in this review may be registered trademarks of their respective companies.

Disclaimer and Boiler Plate: When briefly reviewing share-freeware I will often use the developers' product, functions and features descriptions. All other comments are strictly my own and based on testing. Why need I rewrite the developers' narratives, if they are clearly written?

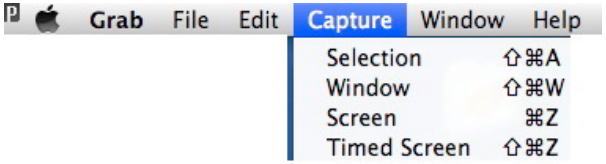
Oh, I almost forgot! Unless otherwise noted, all the tips and tidbits I share, where appropriate, work on my computer. If I don't own the software but if the tip sounds interesting, I'll so note that information at the end of that specific write-up.

To take a screenshot of your Mac's entire desktop, hold down Command/Shift/3 all at the same time. This records the entire desktop at full resolution. In Leopard and Tiger, the selection will be saved to your desktop as a PNG file. Panther saves the image as a PDF.

To capture only a part of your desktop, hold down Command/Shift/4. The cursor will turn into a trigger. Drag the trigger across the part of the screen you want to record and then release the mouse. If your Mac's sound is on, you will hear a snapshot sound. In Leopard and Tiger, the selection will be saved to your desktop as a PNG file. Panther saves the image as a PDF.

To take a screenshot of an individual application window (say an individual Safari window, or a single email, or single Preview image), hold down Command/Shift/4/spacebar. A camera icon will suddenly appear. You can rotate through application windows with this camera, until you land on the application window you wish to record. In Leopard, the selection will be saved to your desktop as a PNG file. In Leopard and Tiger, the selection will be saved to your desktop as a PNG file. Panther saves the image as a PDF.

All this screenshot fun is powered by the "Grab" application that is stored in your Mac's Utilities folder. Additionally, it does something particularly cool: it allows you to take a timed screenshot.



To take a timed screenshot, browse to your Applications folder, and then browse to the Utilities folder contained within. Open the Grab application, then click "Capture" in the menu bar. At the bottom of the list is the option for "Timed Screen." The Timed Screen grab gives you a 10 second countdown to taking a screenshot. Once a screenshot is saved to your desktop, you can open the PNG file in Preview or any image editing application to shrink its size or perform other edits as needed. You can also drag the screenshot into an email, document, or IM to send to someone else.

Extra credit: Instead of saving files to your desktop, you can save a screenshot to your Mac's clipboard, to be pasted into an application such as Photoshop, Word, or an email. To do this:

- Hold down Command/Control/Shift/3 to take a screenshot of the screen and save it to the clipboard
- Hold down Command/Control/Shift/4, then select an area, to take a screenshot of that area and save it to the clipboard
- Hold down Command/Control/Shift/4, then space, then click a window to take a screenshot of a specific window and save it to the clipboard

Extra-extra credit: Take screenshots within Preview! To do this, launch Preview, then navigate to File > Grab, where all the screenshot options above are also available by using the Grab submenu in the File menu.

— Ed Shepard
Small Dog Electronics
Courtesy: Paul Taylor November 2008

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Choosing Blank CDs and DVDs

Blank recordable CDs and DVDs come in so many flavors that it's often difficult to figure out which you should be purchasing.

You're probably familiar with designations such as CD-RW and DVD+R, so let's start there. Obviously, the first part of this designation tells you whether you're looking at a CD or a DVD. They are the same physical size but a DVD can hold more than 6 times as much data as a CD can. It is the only practical choice for very large files such as movies, but can in fact be used for any kind of data.

An "R" alone at the end of the designation indicates that this is a recordable "write once"

disc; that is — it can't be erased and reused. An "RW", on the other hand, indicates a "rewriteable" disc that can be erased and reused numerous times. These were popular for a while but fell into disfavor, as problems of poor reliability and short life of "RW" discs became better understood. Few people would recommend using "RW" discs today.

Between the two sets of letters there's an arithmetic sign, which will be either a plus (+) or a minus (-). These indicate two different methods of disc formatting which are not compatible, though happily there are many disc drives that are built to read and write both types of disc.

A relatively new disc type in the computer world is the dual-layer DVD, which can hold twice as much data as a normal DVD. These carry the letters "DL" following the normal designation.

To see which kinds of disc your Mac can use, go to the Apple menu and choose About this Mac; then in the small window that opens, click the More Info button, which will open the System Profiler. Look for the heading Hardware in the left hand column and if necessary, click the small black "disclosure triangle" beside the word Hardware so that you can see the list of hardware items.

Click "Disc Burning" and refer to the right hand panel. Look for the lines labeled CD-Write and DVD-Write and you'll see the types of disc your Mac can burn (record).

So far, so good; but what about the device on which you hope to view your CD or DVD, if this isn't just the same Mac that recorded it — a Windows PC or a domestic DVD player, for instance?

Broadly speaking, most modern computers can read the disc types mentioned so far, but if the computer is a few years old you may find that it can read only "minus" discs if it's a Mac, or only "plus" discs

If it's a Windows PC, and it may not be able to read "DL" discs at all.

If you plan to view your discs on a domestic DVD player, the situation is similar. Players a few years old may be able to play only "plus" or only "minus" discs, depending on the manufacturer. Later models are likely to be more accommodating, and most will play DL discs as those are commonly used for commercial movies.

Despite all your careful research and disc purchasing you may find that discs burned on your Mac may simply refuse to play on one particular domestic DVD player, though they may well play perfectly on another. This isn't as uncommon as you might think, and possible solutions are to use a different brand of disc, burn at a slower speed, or burn on a different Mac. If none of these measures work, it's probably time the troublesome media player was replaced with a newer model.

If you're tempted to try using dual-layer (DL) DVDs to take advantage of their greater data capacity, be aware that getting these to play in machines other than the one that burned them can be especially tricky. Whichever kind of disc you decide to buy, there is one well-researched rule — you get what you pay for. Buy only well-known brands such as Sony, TDK, Imation, Maxell and Verbatim. Then to help extend their lives, store your discs in a dark place at moderate temperature. Light and heat are the enemies of recordable discs of any type or brand.

Finally, it may surprise you to learn that the most common cause of an inability to read an optical disc is fingerprints! Wash the disc carefully in very diluted warm detergent solution, rinse and wipe dry with a soft cloth.

— Steve Cooper
AUSOM News, Melbourne, Australia
Paul Taylor's Hints and Tips, May 2009

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Changing the Mouse Pointer Size

For those (like me) who have trouble seeing the small mouse pointer among a clutter of other things on the screen, Apple offers help. Go to System Preferences, click "Universal Access," click "Mouse & Trackpad." Near the bottom of this window is a slider labeled "Cursor Size." It can be moved to the right (by the mouse) to make the mouse pointer bigger.

— Bruce Craven
AUSOM News, Melbourne, Australia
Paul Taylor's Hints and Tips, May 2009

Finding Mac Software . . . and Here's Apple

If you need some software to perform a particular task it can often be difficult to know where to start looking. Old hands will tell you about VersionTracker and MacUpdate but you may find it difficult to interpret what you see there.

Time to take another look at your Apple menu. There, right below the Software Update item, is Mac OS X Software, which is quite a different animal. Click this item and you'll actually be taken to <http://www.apple.com/downloads/> where you'll immediately see a number of interesting applications, but perhaps not the kind you need.

Now click the "All Downloads" bar at top left, and you can begin to explore the complete library of listed software. Note that there's a "Search" box as well, in case you want to search by keyword(s).

Try this resource next time you need an application of a particular kind. You may be surprised at the volume of information available there. Commercial software, shareware and freeware are all covered.

— Steve Cooper
AUSOM News, Melbourne, Australia
Paul Taylor's Hints and Tips, May 2009

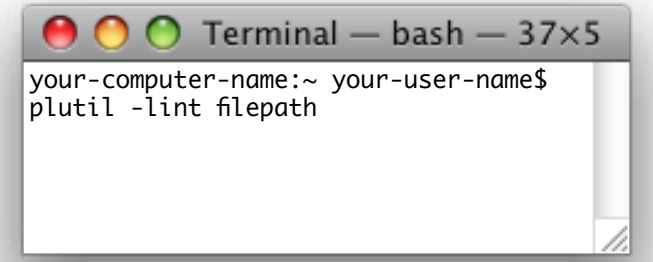
Eliminating App Crashes and Freezes by Checking PLIST Files

Many application-based problems users experience seem to be stem from faulty .plist files. The standard solution in these cases has been to remove the plist files and have the application recreate them. While this is a quick solution, it also resets the settings stored in the .plist files, and requires the user to recreate custom settings.

Apple includes a command line utility with Mac OS X dubbed "plutil" which can be used to check plist files for damage and manage their properties. This program should be used prior to resorting to the default delete of plist files. With the utility, you can check for syntax errors and convert them between XML and binary format.

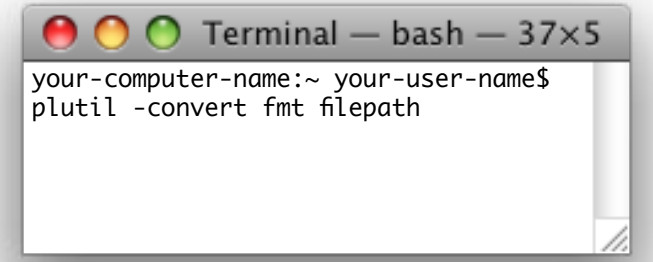
To use this utility, launch the Terminal (located in /Applications/Utilities, then enter the following command, replacing "filepath" with the path the target .plist file. Most pertinent plist files are located in ~/Library/Preferences.

Checking for errors:



If a program is not properly storing settings, or seems to be acting oddly and you suspect it is a property list file error, run this utility to first check for errors and then try switching between the two formats before resorting to deleting the file and starting over.

Converting to different formats



("fmt" in the command is either "xml1" or "binary1", depending on whether XML or binary format is desired).

— MacFixIt Site
Monday, June 30 2008
http://www.macfixit.com/article.php?story=20080630104537494

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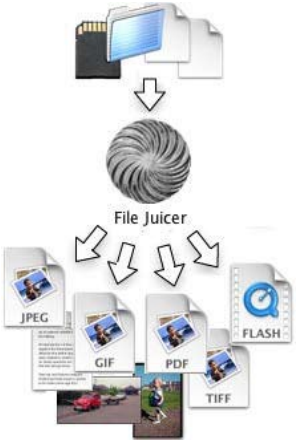
Open Just About Anything

File Juicer (shareware, http://echoone.com/filejuicer/, $17.95) is a drag-and-drop can opener and data archaeologist. Its specialty is to find and extract images, video, audio, or text from files that are hard to open in other ways.



It finds and extracts: JPEG, PNG, GIF, PDF, BMP, WMF, EMF, PICT, TIFF, Flash, Zip, HTML, WAV, AVI, MOV, MP4, MPG, MP3, AIFF, AU, WMV, or text from files which contain data in those formats.

Lossless extraction — File Juicer doesn't convert the images, sounds, or videos it finds, but saves them unchanged in their original format when possible. See the manual for details about supported formats.

This is useful if:

- You have old files you can no longer open with current applications.
- You receive emails with attachments you cannot open.
- You have corrupt files or databases.
- You have damaged or accidentally erased flash cards for your digital camera.
- You receive self-extracting EXE files designed for Windows.
- Or if this is just faster than copying and pasting from the file.

When you have extracted some files — for instance from an accidentally erased flash card — you can then check that they are intact with QuickTime Player or convert them with other applications.

For images, checking validity is done by letting File Juicer generate icons for the files. Then the files with icons are the ones that are intact.

—Phil Russell
Mouse Droppings, Corvallis, OR
Paul Taylor's Hints and Tips, May 2009

How to Protect Your Email Address Book

I learned a computer trick today that's really ingenious in its simplicity.

As you may know, when/if a worm virus gets into your computer, it heads straight for your email address book and sends itself to everyone in there, thus infecting all your friends and associates.

This trick won't keep the virus from getting into your computer, but it will stop it from using your address book to spread further, and it will alert you to the fact that the worm has gotten into your system.

Here's what you do:

- First, open your address book and click on "new contact," just as you would do if you were adding a new friend to your list of email addresses.
- In the window where you would type your friend's first name, type in "A".
- For the screen name or email address, type "AAA@ AAA.AAA."

Now, here's what you've done and why it works: The name "A" will be placed at the top of your address book as entry #1. This will be where the worm will start in an effort to send itself to all your friends.

When it tries to send itself to AAA@AAA.AAA, it will be undeliverable because of the phony email address you entered. If the first attempt fails (which it will because of the phony address), the worm goes no further and your friends will not be infected.

Here's the second great advantage of this method: If an email cannot be delivered, you will be notified of this almost immediately. Hence, if you ever get an email telling you that an email addressed to AAA@ AAA.AAA could not be delivered, you know right away that you have the worm virus in your system. You can then take steps to get rid of it!

Pretty slick, huh?
If everybody you know does this then you need not ever worry about opening mail from friends. DO IT NOW and pass this on to all your friends.

— Malkin Strong, Long Beach, CA
Paul Taylor's Hints and Tips, May 2009

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Spring into spring-loaded folders

Today's easy-peasy fix comes courtesy of reader Paul Sarlis, who writes:

"With older versions of OSX I could grab a file that I saved to my Desktop and hold it over my hard drive icon. When I did that the hard drive would open so that I could place the file where I needed it. Is this option still available or is there a new way to do this?"

Yes the option—called spring-loaded folders—is still there. In your case, it appears that it's been switched off. To switch it on, choose

Finder -> Preferences, click the General tab if it's not already selected, and enable the Spring-Loaded Folders and Windows option. With the Delay slider below you can determine how long the Finder delays springing open a folder or volume after you've dragged an item to it.

Easy and peasy though this question and answer are, it's a nice reminder of a feature that far too many people fail to use. If this spring-loaded thing is new to you, it works this way: Drag an item to a volume or folder and continue holding down the mouse button. The volume or folder will blink a couple of times and then its root folder will open. You can let go of the mouse button and the item will drop into this folder. Or, you can hold the item over yet another folder and, sure-as-shootin', that folder will also blink and then open. Continue this process until you dig down into the folder you want to access.

Doc Sez, I plan on trying the tip with my Eudora address book, but I'm not sure it will work.

— Christopher Breen, Mac 911
Finder Newsletter
Mid-Columbia Macintosh Users Group
May 2009

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Business Card Design 101

Before you create your own business cards, consider these principles

It's easy to make custom business cards using today's online printing services. But before you start, take a moment to review these tips from designer Walter Gray Lamb, who has been designing business cards for more than 30 years. [http://www.waltergraylamb.com/]

Remember Your Profession — Carefully consider the message you want your card to send. If you're in a conservative field like finance or law, an outrageous design could undermine the recipient's confidence in you. If you have a creative job, a card that's too dull might cast doubts on your creative abilities.

Pick the Right Font — Text on a business card should be sized between 8 and 10 points. Serif fonts are more traditional and easier to read than sans serif fonts, which are more modern and less personal. Italics are conversational. Boldface should be used sparingly.

Make Your Name Pop — To make your name stand out from the rest of the information on your card, put extra white space around it, make it bold or a different color, or set it in all caps.

Don't Make Your Mark — Unless you have design experience, do not attempt to create your own logo. It's more difficult than it seems. Using a poorly designed logo is the easiest way to look like an amateur.

Keep it Simple — Avoid piling too many design elements and colors onto your card. Consider leaving some negative space or one side of your card blank for notes. (Keep in mind that glossy cards are difficult to write on.)

Leave Something Off — A classic calling card trick is to not print one piece of information—your cell phone number, for instance. Before handing your card to someone, hand-write your number on the back of the card. This creates a personal connection between you and the recipient and makes them feel special.

Doc Sez, use business card software such as Business Card Composer from Belight Software [http://www.belightsoft.com/products/composer/overview.php], or better yet their

entire Printfolio Collection for most of your graphics needs.

— Heather Kelly,
Business Card Design 101 | Working Mac |
Macworld 2/16/09
http://www.macworld.com/article/138746/businesscarddesign.html?loomia_ow=t0:a16:g2:r1:c0.337585:b21894927

- -

Improve Your Google Searches

Search smarter with these expert query tips

If you turn to Google.com for the bulk of your Web searches, learning some of its lesser-known tricks is worthwhile. Simply by adjusting your preferences and using some special expressions, you can home in on the right results more quickly.

Set your Preferences — In your Web browser, go to www.google.com and click on the Preferences link to the right of the search field. Two options here can be particularly useful. In the Number Of Results section, use the pop-up menu to change the default Display 10 Results Per Page option to a nice large number (such as 100). Having more results on each page means less clicking.

Likewise, save yourself some typing by selecting the Provide Query Suggestions In The Search Box option in the Query Suggestions section. Google will now guess the rest of a search term as you enter it, providing common search terms and likely matches. (A pop-up list of suggested terms will appear; use the arrow keys to navigate the list, and press return to select a term.) Once you've customized your settings, click on Save Preferences. Note that you must repeat this procedure in each browser you use—Mozilla Firefox and Apple's Safari. For example—but that the settings will apply not only when you search from the Google page, but also when you use your browser's toolbar search field.

Get Specific With Quotes — Most people simply type one or more words into Google's search field, press return, and then scan the results for something that looks like a match. But you can increase the chances that what you're looking for appears among the first few hits by being more specific with your searches. For example, by default, Google looks for pages containing all the words you enter in the search field, in any order and in any location on the page.

Suppose you remember reading the phrase motion itself is impossible the first 1,000 matches, that article won't show up in the first 1,000 matches, because so many pages contain all four of those words somewhere.

However, enclose the phrase in quotation marks ("motion itself is impossible"), and my article about Zeno's Paradoxes on Interesting Thing of the Day is the first hit. Whenever you want to find a phrase that includes common words, you can improve your odds by enclosing the phrase in quotation marks.

Leave Out What You Don't Want — If you want Google to omit pages that contain a word, put a minus sign (-) in front of that word. For example, if you're searching for information on Pluto the astronomical body, you might want to weed out mentions of Pluto the cartoon character. To do this, try a search like Pluto -Disney.

Find This OR That — Sometimes you don't want Google to search for all the terms you enter, but rather to show you pages with any of the terms you enter. To broaden a search this way, you can type the word OR (in capital letters) between two words. Say you want to find a recipe that uses either of the two cheeses you have in your refrigerator. If you search for Recipe Emmenthaler Mimolette, you'll find only pages that mention all three words—recipe, Emmenthaler and Mimolette. If you search for recipe Emmenthaler OR Mimolette, Google returns results that contain the word recipe and either the word Emmenthaler or the word Mimolette.

Find Similar Words — When searching the Web, you often know approximately what you're looking for but are unsure exactly how something may be phrased on a particular site. For example, say you're looking for a wearable Bluetooth audio device, but you don't know whether to search for headphones, earphones, ear buds, headsets, or any of numerous other similar terms. In that case, place a tilde (~), which means, "words like this" (in other words, synonyms or near synonyms) in front of the word you're unsure of. Search for blue tooth ~headphones, and Google returns pages with the word Bluetooth as well as the word head-

phones and similar terms.

Learn More Google Tricks: — To learn about more special Google search features, such as weather reports, airport flight information, package tracking, and movie show times, see Google's Search Features page.

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— Joe Kissell, Macworld.com

Improve your Google searches | Working Mac | Macworld 2/16/09
http://www.macworld.com/article/138777/searchgoogle.html?loomia_ow=t0:a16:g2:r4:c0.0653543:b21894915

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That's all folks . . .

— Harry {doc} Babad

Acknowledgements — As the occasion warrants, some of the Tips I share come from Paul Taylor's Hints & Tips column http://www.mac-hints-tips.com/, and are used with his permission. If you have tips to share send them to Paul — paul@mac-hints-tips.com. I also use user group published tips with their consent if I can make the contact with the appropriate officer. Where I use any one else's tips for this column, I acknowledge both their source and their contributors. Yes, I do write down and share some of the tips I've discovered while Macin' around. If a tip or hint comes from a more traditional commercial source, I both acknowledged that fact and almost always modify the tip to personalize it for our readers

According to Hoyle

WWDC '09 Preview

Jonathan Hoyle

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For the second year in a row, Apple's Worldwide Developer Conference is sold out. In 2008 when it first happened, everybody was surprised...everybody except Apple that is. Although there had never been a sold out WWDC previously, Apple was seeing steady surges of attendance over the past few years. After the long lines and wait times experienced in 2002, Apple was forced to change its venue from the San Jose Convention Center to the more spacious Moscone Center in San Francisco. However, this merely postponed the inevitable. After three straight years of record attendance in San Francisco (3,800+ in 2005, 4,200+ in 2006, 5,000+ in 2007), the next jump was easily expected to max out even the capacity of the Bay Area's largest convention center. What surprised even Apple was how quickly this sell-out took place. After factoring in the necessary number of Apple engineers, security, media, support personnel, etc, the Moscone West could accommodate not much more than 5,200 attendees. That number was reached a good three and a half weeks prior to the start of the June 2008 conference. Apple made its sell-out announcement in mid-May, catching a lot of would-be attendees off guard (not expecting that they could actually be locked out).

But of course, that was last year. The economy was relatively good in comparison. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics [http://www.bls.gov/], the unemployment rate in April 2008 was at a reasonable 5.0% (and improving slightly from 5.1% of the previous month). This year is completely different, with the April 2009 jobless rate standing at a whopping 8.9%. Busi-

nesses are laying people off at record numbers. Companies are slashing salaries, bonuses, cutting back travel, and even asking employees to take unpaid furloughs. Since conferences and conventions are considered to be discretionary spending, many figured that WWDC was vulnerable to a dramatic attendance drop this year.

Once again, Apple appears to have broken the rules. Not only were WWDC ticket sales as strong as ever, and not only did WWDC sell out yet again, but the sell-out took place even sooner than it did in 2008: April 28, 2009 (mere days after early registration ended). All tickets were finalized a full six weeks before the start of the show. Those lucky enough to obtain their tickets early (including yours truly) were grateful that they had done so.

As with last year, WWDC tickets are being scalped on Ebay. Last year's record was $3,500 for a WWDC '08 ticket. This is pretty impressive, considering that the videos of all WWDC sessions are made available after the conference for only $1,595. This year has already broken that record with a winning bid of $4000 for a WWDC '09 ticket [Ebay auction #120421105470]. With still more tickets to be sold, and the remaining number of days shrinking, one can only guess how high a ticket price will eventually become.

Expectations

It's a little bit of a risk to write a preview of WWDC in a monthly column. After all, what you are reading now will be of interest only for the first week of June. On June 8th, real WWDC news items will flood the electronic media, making this column all but moot for 23 of its 30 days of life. You fine readers won't be able to read my words of wisdom about the conference itself until July 1st.

Rereading last year's preview column of WWDC http://www.maccompanion.com/macc/archives/June2008/Columns/AccordingtoHoyle.htm , I think my predictions were fairly accurate. I believe I was actually the first person to publish the possibility of *Snow Leopard* being the name for the next OS. Furthermore, I was also correct in that 10.6 would be Intel-only. However, I did miss out on guessing that Rosetta (Mac OS X's PowerPC emulator) becomes an optional install item with 10.6. I had privately assumed Rosetta would not be reduced to optional status until at least 10.7, and not dropped completely until 10.8. It appears now that Apple is further ahead in planning obsolescence.

We see that the topic for this year's conference is once again 10.6 Snow Leopard (rather than a 10.7). In fact, Apple intended to officially launch Mac OS X 10.6 Snow Leopard with this year's WWDC, and it is clear that its management team is very disappointed that this will not happen. Instead, attendees will be given what is marketed as "the Final Developer Preview release of 10.6 Snow Leopard". Of course, these are just weasel words for "another beta-release" (plus the added hope that no further release is needed).

At WWDC '06, Apple announced some of the new features for its upcoming Mac OS X 10.5 Leopard operating system, which it planned to be released in the summer of 2007. When WWDC '07 rolled around, Apple added a bit of a surprise with a number of new UI look & feel, and pushed off Leopard's release to the Fall. Is history about to repeat itself? At WWDC '08, Snow Leopard was announced with no UI changes. Yet the rumor mill is all abuzz about a new Snow Leopard look & feel codenamed *Marble*. A number of web sites are posting pictures and videos of Snow Leopard, which quickly get removed after legal threats from Apple. Rather than participate in such risky behavior, I will merely mention it here and rely on my readers' knowledge of Google to see more.

One casualty this year appears to be the Scientific Poster session. It had been part of Apple's big push into the scientific community, and by all measures it was a wonderful display. Running since WWDC '06, it appeared to be rather successful. Sadly, it is MIA in Apple's WWDC Events page http://developer.apple.com/wwdc/events/ . It is unlikely that this is an oversight. Perhaps the conference is just getting too big to manage so many events, and this one was at the bottom of the priority list?

Losing Jobs

With the economy the way it is, people are concerned about the loss of jobs. The same is true at WWDC: we are concerned about the loss of Jobs: Steve Jobs. (Okay, okay, feel free to groan here.) Anyway, after 11 straight WWDC key-

note addresses, Steve Jobs will not be giving the WWDC keynote this year. For 2009, it will be Phil Schiller, who is on the whole a better choice than Bertrand Serlet (who typically hosts the Mac OS X State of the Union). Rumor has it that Steve might make a brief video appearance, so he can wow the audience. This would indeed be a welcome surprise to developers if it happens. Sadly though, that possibility is heavily dependent upon how healthy Steve can continue to appear. He didn't look great last year, so I can only imagine how he must look now. If his appearance, even over video, does not convey a sense of optimism and confidence, then no appearance (video or otherwise) will happen. The rumor mills suggest that his health is deteriorating worse than is generally known, and if true, Apple will need to plan a near-term future without Steve Jobs.

Contrary to these rumors, Apple is speaking openly about Steve Jobs' return in late June to introduce a new set of iPhones. Would Apple be so reckless as to publicly speak of Jobs' return if it were not confident that this was likely? If we are to believe this report though, Steve Jobs will be fine in late June, yet still choosing to miss WWDC, Apple's single most important developer event.

Whatever the truth is, we know one thing now: Apple is publicly stating that Steve Jobs will not be giving the WWDC '09 keynote.

The big question is: can Phil (or anyone) bring the same level of excitement and interest that Steve Jobs had in previous WWDC's? Hard to imagine anyone being able to do what he did. Let's face it folks: Steve Jobs saved the company. But did he save it well enough so that it can survive without him? And will conference goers react with the same level of enthusiasm under Phil Schiller? We shall see. But it should be noted that WWDC was filled with rabid Apple fans every year, even prior to Steve Jobs' return.

Topics

Apple has publicly posted a partial list of 118 sessions and 102 labs on its WWDC web site http://developer.apple.com/wwdc/sessions/ , with the same three tracks as last year: Mac, iPhone & IT. Once again, the iPhone track appears huge: 64 sessions, 45 labs. However, this is a bit misleading as about half of those are actually Mac sessions that are cross-listed as iPhone sessions. There are only 33 sessions and 21 labs that are iPhone-exclusive. When looking at the Mac track, we see 72 sessions and 74 labs. Not to mention another dozen or so IT sessions & labs. In other words, this remains primarily a Macintosh conference, despite the media blitz about iPhone. Moreover, Mac developers can easily adapt their software to work on the iPhone/iPod with little effort. Since the iPhone's Cocoa Touch API is primarily a subset of Mac OS X's Cocoa API (with a few extensions), one can loosely think of the iPhone as another Mac platform.

Looking at the session list, I see that Grand Central Dispatch (Apple's new multi-core API) appears to be getting some special attention, as is OpenCL in general. As processor speeds begin to level off, concurrency across processor cores becomes the next great opportunity for performance improvements. I also see some interesting sessions on advances in Objective-C Garbage Collection and some well-needed updates to the creaky NSImage object. Of course the most interesting will be advances in Xcode. Last year's compiler session detailed the alternatives of gcc 4.2 and LLVM compiler technologies, and how this advances will be of particular interest.

With Xcode 3.1's release last year, we have seen continued improvements with dot releases (version 3.1.2 is the latest). But it's the improvements in newer versions of Xcode that will be of greatest importance to developers at this year's conference. One presumes that Apple will keep gcc as its default compiler in Xcode, but LLVM may become more compelling in the not too distant future. gcc 4.0 has been Apple's default for quite a while now, so it is of no surprise this default changes to version 4.2 under Snow Leopard. But gcc is not standing still either, with version 4.3 having been released a little over a year ago, and 4.4 this past April. And as we speak, gcc 4.5 is actively being developed. Perhaps future version of Xcode will become compatible with these latest versions of gcc. (For more information on gcc, visit: http://gcc.gnu.org/.)

Memories

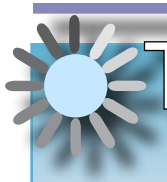
It's funny how memory works. People tend not to remember the bad things as much as they

think they will. Even in such a short period as one year. I found this to be true with me.

Case in point: I re-read my review of WWDC '08 http://www.maccompanion.com/macc/archives/July2008/Columns/AccordingtoHoyle.htm from last July, and I am surprised at how negatively I described it (I gave it a score of C-). My feelings now are a bit more relaxed about last year's experience there. All of the negatives I cited (no Mac info in the keynote, over-crowding, lousy food) all remain valid, but they seem a bit less important now looking back. Changes with Snow Leopard are evolutionary, not revolutionary, making me feel less frantic and more optimistic about the Apple's future. With the huge changes on the face of the Mac over the past few years (new features dumped in Tiger, then an entire processor switch to Intel, followed by another massive feature dump in Leopard), it's nice to be able to worked with improved API's on the current feature set (rather than have to rewrite everything from scratch once again). A grade of C- seems a bit harsh in retrospect, considering I gave WWDC '06 a grade of B+. The food was no better in 2006, it was nearly as crowded, and we were staring down at a lot more work with the upcoming 10.5 changes. A C+ may have been a more objective grade to give it.

Coming Up Next Month: Your intrepid reporter makes his annual pilgrimage to WWDC to report on his findings! See you in 30!

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



The Northern Spy

A Finger in the Plot

Technology News and Views Since 1983

Rick Sutcliffe

"Hey Professor, how's it going?"

I barely glanced around at the visitor who'd wheeled a spare swivel chair behind mine and was now staring over my shoulder at my Northern Spy column.

"Hi, Nellie. Don't you believe in knocking?"

"Is Billy Graham a Baptist? Besides, your door was open."

She did have a point. Students, secretaries, and janitors tend to wander through my office at random. The only ones who knock are other faculty, and that term will never describe Nellie Hacker. She calls academics 'piles higher and deeper'.

"You haven't been by to talk for a while."

"Your fault"

"How so?"

"You keep me so busy chasing around with a sword in that sixth novel you just finished I ain't had much time for palaver."

"The Builder isn't quite finished, Nellie. It needs several rounds of editing before it goes to the publisher, probably later this year." I carefully refrained from commenting on what might happen to her in The Throne, which will be the seventh volume of The Interregnum, my series of SF novels on choices in technology deployment.

"Same deal as usual?"

"Same deal. Anybody wants to edit chapters, plots, or the whole book just has to ask. Best is 'eyes for eyes' where I swap edits with another writer."

"Plot's set?" She looked grim. Ah, so this was why she'd stopped in. Since having been my secretary once upon a time, Nellie felt free to critique my stories. She especially didn't like surprises.

"Only minor changes now, Nellie."

"Well if you ask me, rehabilitating a major criminal while killing off a main character is a bit much. I don't like you dragging that meek little thing Tiffany into the thick of things, I don't like what you done with Mike and to Lucas, and I'm especially irritated that my friend Mara went over to the bad guys."

"And became Mara MacCarthy? Essential to the story."

"Some people aren't going to like you doing alternate history around Noah's flood, either."

"Ah, but one of the points of an alternate history is to shed light on the real one--such as pointing out that the ark could easily have taken an additional few hundred people."

"Well, I said my piece." She grimaced slightly, and changed gears so fast she almost lost traction on her mental corner. "That Safari 4 you got idlin' over in the next window? Some dumb interface changes, but I found a website claims it's wickeder fast than any other browser. Typical Apple. They enter a category, and it ain't long before they dominate." Nellie never stayed on one subject long.

"Ahead of you on that one, girl. The reference is already at the end of the column. Camino wasn't listed on the site so I tried the benchmark with it and got speeds barely one seventh as good as those of Safari 4. That's running a 2.5G quad G4. Odd, that, Camino once having been reputedly the fastest Mac browser."

I switched the screen focus to Safari. "Speaking of the web, Nellie, here's a site that ought to interest you and your nerdy friends."

"Impress the Kamikaze Cracker Colleens? Take some doing. Whatchyer got?"

"A search engine, sorta."

"Best be a load o' jam in that 'sorta'. Search engines are yesterday."

"Ah, but this one works on pre-analyzed data, using Mathematica as its engine."

"So that's what my good buddies at Wolfram have been up to lately. Plenty of midnight oil burning over there."

"Interesting irony using the term once used for useless melting pot sludge to describe a company whose mission is making really useful software. Wolframalpha.com is your site for this one--a computational knowledge engine all set to do your math, analyze stats, tell you all about data that's already been or can at your command be analyzed."

She chuckled. "Truth don't do much for the melting pot model of society, do it?"

"Not when you know that sludge rises to the top, no."

"Hmm." She bent past me, nearly elbowing me out of the way to read the site's fine print. Money and finance, math, chemistry, geography, physics, engineering, and stats. Seems the right target audience. I'll buy that."

"Don't need to, kiddo. It's free. Just use it."

She got out what appeared to be a smartphone and bookmarked the site.

"Interesting looking box. Appears to be an Apple product," I commented, trying to get a better look.

She covered it with one hand, finished up, and shoved it back into her belt pouch. "You didn't see that," she snapped.

"At least not until 0900 June eighth," I appended. "How'd you get one?"

"They wanted us to test security."

"How'd it do?" I was impressed. The KCCs charged via a vacuum hose connected to a cli-

ent's bank account for their testing services.

"The Cupertino boys are getting better. Took a half hour longer than the last model to unlock."

"Thirty two meg, faster processor, tetherable, more features, a large screen option?" I pressed.

"Forget it. For now, this is strictly three monkeys zilch."

"Ah yes. Hear nothing, see nothing, speak nothing. Well, I wouldn't want to start a rumour, anyway."

"Nice sentiment. The rumour mill is so overloaded, water buckets are flying off in all directions. Pretty soon it won't grind corn nohow. Wanna know my theory?"

"You want to tell me and I have no objection to hearing it."

Nellie looked askance. She always claimed she' disliked Jane Austin, but protocol called for her to ignore such quotes, otherwise she'd be admitting she had large chunks of Pride and Prejudice memorized.

"Very well, then. My theory is that iSteve has most of the rumours intentionally planted both to try out new ideas and to confuse the truth."

"You think he should eschew obfuscation?"

She ignored that sally too, pointedly looking around my office. "Got anything new to talk over with your reader this month?"

I ignored the slight, certain I have at least two. "Logos sent me a copy of their new Bible software product for the Mac, but it'll be one or two columns hence before I can write intelligently about it."

"If then," she grunted dyspeptically. "Any preliminary thoughts?"

"It's a large library of books and texts with a customized manager/search engine. Fits somewhere below Accordance in the serious scholar's pecking order, costs a fortune for the full package at over $600 (though you can start at under $300), uses a third party library manager, and has an arcane installation procedure, but does look like a slick product. Cut the price some and it could be a killer package."

"Thought something like." She picked up a pile of loose paper. "You printing out FAQs from the web now?"

"Special case. That's the ninth 'paper' edition of the Tekserve technical FAQ for trouble shooting Macs and the Mac OS by David Lerner, Aaron Freimark, and Jazmin Hupp. You can either download this version as a PDF eBook, or check out their website for the longer and more detailed FAQ from which this version is condensed."

Nellie flipped through the sixty-some pages, stopping occasionally to check an answer. "Good stuff. Generally gets it right."

"They should. Tekserve runs a Mac service and repair shop. They probably use this as their technicians' manual."

"Nice of them to give up a pile of business by letting people do their own troubleshooting. They might not have to take their computer or drive in to them. Course, they could bring it to me." She grinned, and it reminded me of a shark I'd once seen.

"True, but not everybody lives in the Big Apple." My unspoken addendum was "and nobody should ever give Nellie Hacker their hard drive."

"Speaking of worms, what do you think of conflicker now? All blown over?"

"Not exactly, Nellie. The concept has proven useful enough to the black hats to continue work on hardening such worms against security boffins like you. I think it's a dress rehearsal, and we'll see more and trickier. I still wouldn't rule out government involvement in the whole thing."

"They ain't got a chance."

"I hope not, girl. But what would happen if one of your KCCs went over to the other side?"

That gave her pause for thought. "If'n any one of about forty people," she began cautiously, "what I ain't saying if I know any of 'em well

enough even to pass along the Mexican flu, was to switch hats, the whole Internet would die in a week."

"Shut it down how long, you think?"

"She looked at me like I'd said the dumbest thing. "Permanent, at least until he or she got locked up behind a door with no key. Even that couldn't stop some of us."

"Apple fix most of the security holes and other problems you found in OS 10.5.6, by the way?"

"Not bad. A few people with nonstandard mods got bit a little on the 10.5.7 install, but most people will find joy, even if they don't know what it saves them from. Snow Leopard will be better though--sounder foundation."

I didn't comment. We're both under non-disclosure on that one for a little while longer. Instead I dredged out my regular monthly topic. "I see where Apple has year over year doubled its smartphone market share to almost 11%.

"Think iSteve's gonna become the gorilla of the next generation?" The quintesssential free spirit, Nellie constantly worries about monopolies and their potential to tie her hands.

"Not until he learns some bad habits of his own. Besides RIM's Blackberry increased share, too, so it may become a two horse race."

"Depends on whether Jim Balsillie, the high mugwump over at RIM, gets too distracted trying to scoop the Phoenix Coyotes from the bankruptcy courts and move them up to the True North Strong and Free. Won't be to Hamilton, though," she mused, "'cause the league can't allow a move to wipe out the Buffalo franchise."

"Well," I noted, restoring the strayed topic with a new faceoff, "some of the old crocs are feeling the pinch while Apple flies high over its piles of money. Last report, HPs revenue slid 24% on desktops, 13% on laptops. Then you've got Microsoft and others laying off even as Apple captures more market share with each passing month."

"GM and Chrysler versus the imports, with the names changed to protect the guilty. It's déjà vu all over again seeing the word 'beleaguered' in front of 'Motorola' and 'Palm' all the time instead of 'Apple'. Well, unlike your novels, it's apparent who will win and who will fall on a sword."

I chuckled. First she complains about my plot complexities, then says they're too obvious. She was fishing for plot information of course. But I was the non-discloser this time, so I spun round a conversational corner of my own. "By the way, any of your friends involved in this new Russian project to clone everything Apple under the sun?"

She scowled. "Told them they ought not. Sell those things outside Mother Russia where there're real copyright laws, and iSteve will eat their shorts with torts in the courts--unless he's just going through the motions against the cloners and actually wants the attention they bring."

"Is this a new conspiracy theory of yours?"

"Nah. But if he was serious about stopping cloning, he'd chip his own machines and run the OS against that chip. Done right, it might stop most people."

The obvious unspoken addendum was that it wouldn't impede her and the KCCs, so I didn't comment further.

At this point, Nellie finally got past her temporary and uncharacteristic politeness long enough to officially stare at my hand. "Speaking of getting stopped, what's that on your finger? It's nearly as big as your whole hand, and yer typing even more weirdly than normal tryin' to not hit four keys at once or rest yon superfinger on a key long enough to hammer out forty characters."

"A bandage, as you can well see. It's not as if you haven't applied dozens by now, considering you have medical credentials of a sort in my novels."

"But, covering up what kind of mistrake of the sort you say you never have?"

"I moved one hand putting something out of my way, and due to my greatly advanced age, lost track of my body image. Unfortunately my left hand traversed the space where my right

was already holding an extended utility knife sporting a brand new blade."

"Hit hard?"

"About six centimetres long, down to the bone in places. Only five stitches. Don't worry Nellie. The Lord of Heaven willing, I'll live to write you into the next novel. Maybe." Whether I also wrote her out of it was another matter. I still had to script the second battle of Glenmorgan, and she was a leading candidate to lead the Royalist troops for Alfred Dennison. And, as politicians and marketers know as well as generals, no battle plan survives contact with the enemy. See also the Spy's third law.

She nodded. "Besides, like you always say--a little pain never hurt anyone. I suppose if you'd cut it off, you could've just become a more major character in your own novels and got a dose of regrow from Mara to get it back."

"I appreciate your compassion and sympathy."

"How'd you make out at the hospital?"

"Four hours fifteen minutes. I had to wait for their only suture bed to come free. When it did, they hurried me in a little."

"Drip on their floor to convince them?"

"No, I meant the previous guy had cut his finger right off, and when they moved him, they hadn't yet taken away the ice bucket to the surgeon from the shelf adjacent my new bed."

"Typical Canadian socialist hospital messup. Make everybody the same and the average care we all get is lousy."

"Is that better than the system to the south of us where the rich pay for premium service so the law of averages applied to a scarce resource necessarily dictates some others get the same service as we do, but the rest get little or nothing--don't sick when you're poor or you die?"

She pondered a while before responding. "The high tech industry sure don't work so. Competition makes it better."

"That's because the physical product is so cheap numerous manufacturers can compete at all levels on better functionality and design for more market share and thus profits."

"I see. And neither health system has any incentive to improve--not in Canada because the government pays it all, and not in the Excited States because the insurance companies do. There's a structural monopoly."

"Exactly. The lower the level of service a hospital provides, the less the cost, creating a disincentive to better service in the pursuit of increased profits. The patient isn't the customer, so can't use choice to drive the system as she can with technology. Any new money that goes in is likely to find its way into more and higher supervisor salaries, not individuals' health."

"So," she concluded for me, "the real analogy to our free market system would be to allow hospitals to make a profit, but only by keeping people from getting sick or injured in the first place, and when they do, by being abler to show they effected best practice healing. Think it could ever happen?"

"Maybe on one of my alternate earths, but not in our lifetimes here, Nellie. Oh, by the way." I decided to drop the bomb I'd been saving in retaliation for some of her earlier comments. "How old are you, girl?" She liked to think of herself as a teenager.

She must have guessed something like that was coming, because she scarcely hesitated before dulling my thrust. "Depends on whether you use the version of me from these here columns or the inconsistent one in your novels. I was a sassy teenager, call me sweet seventeen, in An Apple for Nellie, written before the first Northern Spy column back in October 1983. That makes me forty-three and counting. But the me in the novels was born September 15, 1975, so I'm nine years younger than my other self."

"Might be a cousin in an alternate universe."

"Hey, you and I know there have been several Nellies who worked for you over the years, either as secretaries or manuscript reviewers. So maybe as your the call goes out for more volunteers to help edit the latest one, my character, who's a composite of us all, will continue to change."

"Nellie Pan grow up? I don't think so."

She didn't mind the slam. It was all part of our give and take over the years. Some people after all, count their true friends by the number of people they can insult and be insulted by with impunity. We chatted a while longer about other things, and she left. But I'll see her at least in the next book, if not sooner.

Oh, and one more thing. The Spy will be on a low technology vacation from June 3-13, so the next column may be little more than a rehash of how all the rumours turned out in truth. Until then, we remain...

— The Northern Spy

Rick Sutcliffe, (a.k.a. The Northern Spy) is professor and chair of Computing Science and Mathematics as well as Senate Chair at Trinity Western University. He is also on the board of CIRA, operator of .ca. 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 Amazon'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
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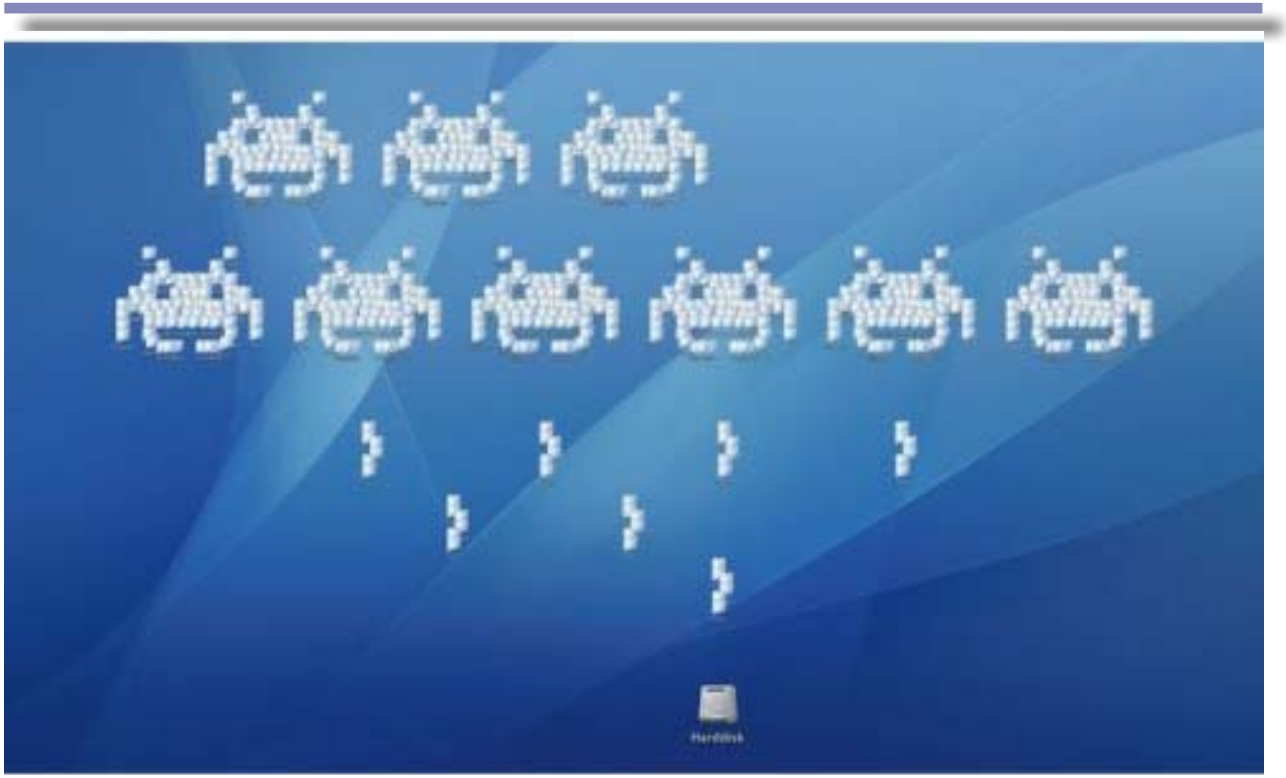


Views from the Ivory Tower

Social Networking

Ted Bade

This month's topic is social networking.

As long as there has been a computer, some geek or another has tried to use it to communicate with someone else. Back in the ancient days of computing, this was just the simple text message. As time went on, those computer guys (and gals), gave us services like email, IRC chat, and Newsgroups. To communicate with one friend, you send an email, to actually chat live with a friend, you used IRC chat and to share your ideas with a group on a specific topic, you used Newsgroups.

This started with local networks, but as time went on, someone else created the concept of the Internet. Now one could communicate not only with anyone on the local network, but anyone connected to the Internet. Geek communication heaven!

Personal computers became more sophisticated, which means that we could add graphics, audio and eventually video to our communications. When the World Wide Web was created, everyone involved wanted to go out and create a personal web site. This gave one the ability to share their thoughts and interests with anyone else on the WWW, who knew your web address (URL). The problem was that guessing a URL wasn't a simple matter. So one would have a nice web page and only a few friends would ever see it.

Audio and video chatting arrived well before typical home user bandwidths could handle the traffic. I tried playing with it first using a standard telephone line connection, It worked, but not very well. Yet I could talk with a friend (although with large delays which today we call lag) and even see very slow video. It was marvelous!

Today, we have a wealth of ways to communicate with our friends. While there still are the old ways of IRC, Newsgroups, the web, and email, there are more interesting options available to us.

If you are into video chatting, there are a couple of options I am aware of and have personally tried some of them. For immediate friends and family, there is nothing like iChat.(http://www.apple.com/macosx/features/ichat.html) You can text, talk or even video conference. My experience with it is that it works very well. iChat isn't the only such program for the Macintosh. If a friend invites you to use a service, check to see if a Macintosh version is available, it usually is.

These type of applications function to provide easy peer to peer communication. The real trick with these type of programs is to figure out which the majority of your friends use, and keep that one running. Alternatively, you can run them all! I have tried a few of these chat programs with video, just to see how they work, and so far I haven't had any issues. A couple I am aware of are Yahoo Messenger (http://messenger.yahoo.com/) and ICQ (http://www.icq.com/).

For video chatting with groups there are programs like ISpQ (http://www.ispq.com/) where you use the application to connect to a server that offers a variety of "rooms" with specific topics. Friends can meet there or you can look for other people who post information about themselves that might be of interest. There are a couple of programs like this that work on the Macintosh. (for instance one called CamFrog (http://www.camfrog.com/).

For general getting in touch with friends and family, there are some good choices for social networks. I personally haven't tried anything other then "Facebook" (http://www.facebook.com). This service lets you create a personal

space, providing as much or as little information about yourself as you like. The site gives you a variety of ways to locate friends and lost family. You can search by using an email address or a name. If you provide the graduation year and school name for your High School or College, you can search for others who graduated at the same time. You can also see the list of people who are friends of your friends. You might get a match that way. For instance, when my niece added me as a friend, I saw my brother also was on and invited him. The more information about yourself you provide, the easier it is for people to find you as well.

The site provides a wealth of goofy yet sometime fun things to do with or (virtually) to your friends. I can recall getting invited to take a number of silly surveys, received a virtual "hug," got involved in a squirt gun fight, and so forth. While I am not necessarily a fan of these things, many people enjoy them, so what the hey!

You can share things of interest with your friends. You can post photos, links to web sites, movies, and so forth. The site allows the people on your friends list to comment on just about any aspect of your space there. Don't be surprised to find a friend having made a comment on some obscure area! I once carried out a long conversation with a high school friend after commenting on a picture in her album. Facebook is about communication with friends. There are new activities arriving daily. I personally have only touched the surface of what can be done.

I expect that the Facebook owners make use of, at least some, of you personal information for marketing purposes. I have noticed some of the adds I find on my pages are related to things that might interest me. However, since Facebook is free to the user, the company needs to make money in some way. I won't complain about that as I see it as a fair exchange. Also, if there is something about what you do that you don't want as general knowledge, don't post it. Like with any social interaction, don't go shouting the things you don't want others to hear.

There are other social web pages like this, which I have little experience with. Twitter seems to be all the rage lately. I believe it is geared more toward short statements about whatever you want to post. Another I have visited but not joined is MySPace (http://www.myspace.com/). It is a lot like Facebook, but with some different rules.

Another type of social network are the online virtual worlds. While playing a game like World of Warcraft (http://www.worldofwarcraft.com/index.xml) doesn't sound like a social thing, I have a friend who actually married a women he met playing. In these types of games there are groups called "Guilds." These people often are or become friends in the real world, not just in the virtual. But even without a Guild connection, I have met and interacted with a few people and had a great time. If you are a gamer, sites like these are social!

Going beyond a game environment and into more virtual reality, there are services like "Second Life." (http://secondlife.com/) In this world you create an avatar and have it live a life. While I don't have any first hand experience, I have read a little and have to admit, I am a bit intrigued. In this world, you can interact with other players, build places to live, go to a variety of events put on by other players, and do just about anything you might it real life. Except, of course, it is totally anonymous. I will leave further information about this and other services to those who actually tried them.

So today, we have a wealth of social networking options. None of the older stuff has really dies and new ways to interact are arriving all the time. Who knows what the future might hold. Perhaps we will have telepresence, so instead of watching your avatar interact in a virtual world, you will be the avatar in the virtual world. Then again, perhaps the basis of the movie "The Matrix," wasn't that far off.

So get out there and socialize!

Cyber Security

Safe, Secure & Polite Macin'

Things You Should Practice

Harry {doc} Babad © 2009

Introduction

Most of us are well aware that the world we 'live' consume and compute it is vulnerable to the actions of the "bad guy." Never the less, few of us have ever sat down with a checklist and done the few simple things that would lower our personal and family risk. None of what will follow is quantum physics, rocket science or even coding and scripting. I know because I can 't do any of these things, but my friends to them w/o blinking an eye. Notice I've not mentioned medical disease diagnosis or genetic engineering; those are still alas closer, these days alas, to witchcraft and intuition (psi), than science.

Nope, what I'm sharing is enhanced personal security and protection of your valuables, including both your money and your reputations. Indeed a book I recently reviewed, How to be a Geek Goddess, did a great job at sharing what those in the business call vulnerabilities. However, the 'peoples' mother lode of such information resides on the US Federal Trade Commission's site called OnGuard Online focused all aspects of the relationship between you and your computer and the thieves and nair-do-wells that are attempting to steal from you, or besmirch your good name. [http://www.onguardonline.gov/topics/overview.aspx]

Okay — Here's an overview

The topics covered are broad and although focused at computer users can be used for protection even if you only use a phone, talk to uninvited sales persons, or even fill out physically mailed questionnaires.

I've taken the liberty, since Federal sites are in the public domain, of copying the topics pages of that site for your convenience. Use the checklist that follows and follow your nose or mouse to see how to protect yourself and loved ones from the do-bads that want to enrich themselves at your cost.

OnGuard Online – The many ways toward making your computer and life more cyber secure

Stop • Think • Click: An Overview of Computer Security

The internet gives you access to information, entertainment, financial offers – frankly, countless products and services. At the same time, it can leave you open to online scammers, identity thieves, and more. Learn experts' top tips for computer security.

Broadband

Broadband refers to high-speed Internet access available through services like digital subscriber line (DSL), cable, fiber optic, wireless, or satellite. Learn about the types of services that are available, and the questions to ask to get the best deal for your needs – whether you shop, play games, make phone calls, watch movies, listen to music, or use other applications.

Computer Disposal

Computers are newer, better, faster—but how do you safely dispose of last year's model? Learn what to do before getting rid of your old computer so your personal information – and the environment – is both protected.

Cross-Border Scams

The internet has opened access to a world of goods and services. Learn how some unscrupulous people are using it to commit cross-border thievery through foreign lottery offers, money offers, and check overpayment schemes.

Watch out for unclaimed cash or earning of over 15% in a 2% environment.

Email Scams

Most people agree that getting "spam" is annoying. Spam – unsolicited sales pitches – also can be costly, with offers for bogus products and fraudulent promotions. Learn to spot 10 common spam scams and what to do if one shows up in your inbox.

Buy good anti-spam software, there are great items of Macintosh users including the great SpamSieve [http://www.macupdate.com/info.php/id/9116/spamsieve]

Identity Theft

Identity thieves can steal your money and ruin your credit rating. Learn how to protect your identity, what to do should it be stolen, and how to minimize the damage

quickly by putting a fraud alert on your credit report.

Internet Auctions

Internet auction sites expand your access to markets for buying and selling merchandise. Learn how to navigate online auctions and recognize potential snags, including late shipments, bogus escrow services, and check overpayment scams.

Kids' Privacy

One of the many choices kids face online is how to deal with their personal information. Learn more about your rights as a parent and what you can do to help your kids make smart, safe choices online.

I know it feels like spying, but that's too bad; you're there to protect and teach your kids about the realities of the WWW.

Laptop Security

Your laptop is your desk-on-the-go, helping you work no matter where you are. Learn how to keep your laptop out of the hands – and off the lap – of a stranger.

Malware

Criminals sometimes use malware – programs like viruses and spyware – to get into your computer. Once it's there, they use it to steal information, send spam, and commit fraud. Learn the signs of malware and how to reclaim your computer and the information it stores.

There are lots of great products and services out there to protect your self, but read the reviews in trusted sources before you bite.

Online Investing

While the internet features investment opportunities, the rules say, "caveat investor." Learn more about the relationship between risk and

reward, and hackers, scammers, and identity thieves who use investment opportunities to wreak havoc on your personal finances.

Have I got a deal for you! Just send money or your credit card number. Remember, If you cant afford to lose it, don't use it!

Online Shopping

Shopping online … it's easy, fast, and convenient. Learn how to identify disreputable vendors or fraud artists that may be setting up shop – and how to minimize your chance of a shopping mishap. *Check the customer-satisfaction web sites to be sure the vendor is both reputable and provides good and appropriate service. Such sites include: NexTag, PriceSCAN, or BizRate. And PriceGRABBER.*

P2P Security

Peer-to-Peer (P2P) file sharing enables people to share files online through an informal network. P2P can give you access to lots of information, but also can up your exposure to viruses, spyware, illegal material and more. Find out how to minimize your risks when using P2P.

Phishing

When fraudsters send spam or pop-up messages, they're casting a wide net in hopes of getting people to divulge their personal and financial information. Learn how to spot a phish-

ing message, how to avoid getting "hooked," and what to do if – oops - you realize you've been phished.

Remember, a sucker is born every minute . . . fortunately there only 525,949 minutes in a year and the birthrate us higher than that.

Social Networking Sites
Social networking sites are big. And while these sites can increase your circle of friends, they also can increase your exposure to people with less-than- friendly intentions. Learn how to help your kids – and other family members – socialize online safely.

Most employers or services check the social network sites, or have it done, when interviewing for key positions. Don't get embarrassed or turned down, because you're exercising bragging rights to your friends.

Spyware
Criminals can install stealth software on your computer that lets them steal your identity and do other damage. Learn what spyware is, how to tell if it's on your computer and get rid of it, and how to avoid it altogether.

VoIP {Voice over Internet Protocol}
VoIP is a way to make and receive phone calls using a broadband internet connection instead of a traditional phone line. Read about the pros and cons of making the switch – and some questions to ask – as you weigh your options.

Wireless Security
Wireless internet access offers convenience and mobility. Learn how to keep your wireless network and the computers on it more secure using encryption and other techniques.

Your Health Online
Going online can be a convenient way to compare prescription drug prices, research health products and services, and answer health questions. Learn what to look for when you search for health information or consider buying health care products online. As more and more information gets digitized, this will become a bigger issue. Stay on top of what's happening the President wants to cut medical costs and to protect your information. See how well the system works. Check out the Electronic Frontier Foundation [EFF] http://www.eff.org/ for coverage of this and other issues.

Doc Sez: I've added few comments in italics to the Guard Online categories above.

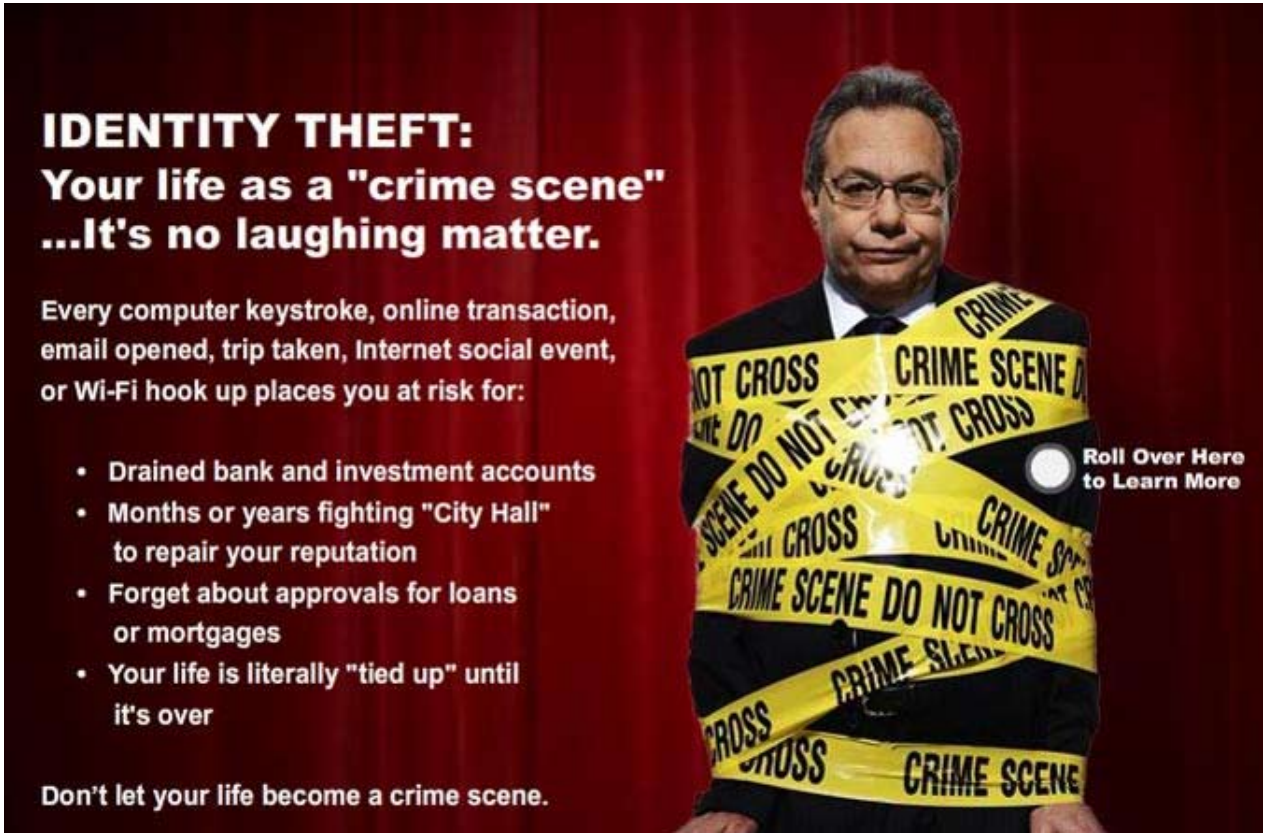
Final Thoughts

Much of the preceding materials have been interpreted by more publicly visible media sources, but this core list of focal arias is what you need to use as a checklist

Ask yourselves, are you vulnerable? Are you or don't you use or practice safe cyber based activities? You know, protective software, secure passwords, think before you click, remember {THIMK} — Personal data it's no ones business but your own and the IRS; a sucker is born every minute!

Use Broadband	Safely Dispose of old Computers
Recognize Cross-Border Scams	Remain Vigilant against Email Scams
Protect Yourself Against Identity Theft	Participate in Internet Auctions
Help Assure Your Kids' Privacy	Practice Ever Vigilant Laptop Security
Protect Your Computer & Drives Against Malware	Do Online Investing
Do Online Shopping	Remain Aware of P2P Security Risks
Know How to Avoid Those Phishing You	Actively Participate in Social Networking Sites
Install Protection Against Spyware	Use VoIP to Cut Phone Bills
Practice Wireless Security	Manage Your Health Online

How about figuring out, for any of the items listed, If you don't take care or preventative action how much, worse case, can you afford to loose?



If your answer is like mine, you'll see those cyber criminals in h--l before they get a dime of your money or mess with your reputation. Then take an afternoon of to start to protect your self. Read the information provided in the references. Acquire the appropriate tools to keep your system safe and keep them up to date. Write your mouth and fingers a gag order to assure you keep personal information private. Look after your kids and elders, seniors and the young are very susceptible to scams.

In closing, remember, if it's too good to be true it's not. Insider information just for you is like taking money offer from a bank executer with unclaimed money! Don't be a naïf, there's no free lunch, and someone must pay the piper; recall all those puerile but all too TRUE clichés.

References & Acknowledgements: Unless otherwise noted I have provided the source of the material in these articles, even when not copyright protected. Not all of the references are recently printed, but like at a wedding, some old and something new makes a great addition.

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Living Water

LiveH2O.TV

Network Launched With Call for Activism

Jackie Lindenbach - 208/265-8065

LIVEH2O.tv, the first Internet television network featuring the unique physical and metaphysical properties of Water has been launched. The new network plans to reach millions using video players on websites worldwide before a history making broadcast, June 19-21, 2009, from more than a dozen international venues.

Planning for LIVE H2O, Concert for the Living Water, has evolved from research and science over more than a decade. The unprecedented event calls musicians and music-lovers to a new social awareness based on mathematical proofs and emerging perspectives fundamental to science and theology.

LIVEH2O advances an old concept now made understandable--LOVE, the "Universal Healer," is received and transmitted vibrationally by Water. Proven mathematically to involve 528Hz frequency, the central harmonic property of LOVE resonates universally through Water, including our bodies that are eighty percent Water. Simply stated, the good vibration of harmony in relationships is communicated naturally "hydrosonically" between people with open hearts.

To achieve optimal benefits, LIVEH2O advances a plan for lasting peace, world health, and sustainable resources, including abundant Water, all threatened by climate change and economic collapse.

The idea came from LIVE H2O Executive Producer, Dr. Leonard Horowitz, a graduate of

Tufts University and Harvard School of Public Health. Having authored 16 books, the award winning behavioral scientist and emerging diseases expert researched the original musical scale upon which physical reality, universal gravity, sacred geometry, and the mathematical constants Pi, PHI, and the Fibonacci series are based.

This simple knowledge, Dr. Horowitz claims, yields optimal awareness. Everything is vibrating, either in healthy resonance or distressing dissonance with nature's harmonics. This overlooked technology for optimal productivity and creativity is necessary to evolve us beyond potential disasters.

"Psychosocial, geopolitical, and economic challenges currently threaten and debilitate people everywhere," Dr. Horowitz explains. "LIVE H2O is a global initiative to turn these lemons

into lemonade." "LIVE H2O is based on truth, faith and prayer power," says Sheri Thomas, spokeswoman for the history making event. "The truth about Water is so freeing, faith in it is so empowering, and prayer honoring this Creative Juice so capable of doing good, everyone on our team is thrilled to advance LIVE H2O as a simple solution to the world's most complex problems."

Water is the "Universal Solvent," and music is the "Universal Language." If LOVE is the "Universal Healer," then singing and chanting prayerfully using this key 528Hz frequency is expected to cause a mass awakening of human hearts that is paradigm shifting.

"Water reflects more than light," says Japanese Water scholar, Dr. Masaru Emoto, co-creator of LIVE H2O and author of the *New York Times* best-seller, *The Hidden Messages in Water*. Dr. Emoto published evidence linking music and language to Waters" dynamic capacity to alter its molecular structure in response to sonic energy including prayer.

Other experts say Water is a liquid crystal superconductor of sound. Throughout history, cultures have revered its primal spiritual significance. Holy Water is one example. A quick read of Genesis 1:1-2 tells you that Water flowed with God and the Holy Spirit during the "Big Bang." Thus, before there were religions, or the "Trinity" in history, Water comprised a third of the "Triune God."

"LIVE H2O applies amazing new knowledge to affect a global baptism, uplifting spirituality by communing in harmony with unconditional LOVE.... We have faith that this powerful prayer will honor and enrich the 'living God' within and around us, and accelerate the Spiritual Renaissance," Dr. Horowitz said.

The worlds of music and medicine are already shifting because of LIVE H2O proponents say. Leading humanitarians, physicians, clergy, recording artists, celebrities, scientists, and energy industrialists have come together to co-create LIVE H2O as a celebration of Divine intention to cure what ails us and our planet.

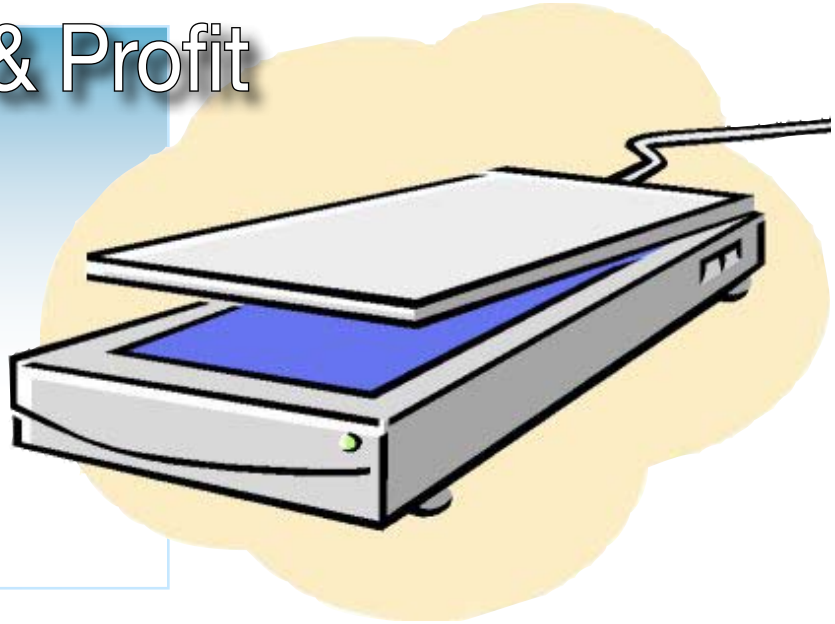
Simple instructions to become a network affiliate with the LIVEH2O.tv player embedded into your website are available online at www.live-h2o.tv. Concert information and a list of venues are also online at www.liveh2o.org.

Dr. Leonard Horowtiz wrote; "*Every Tuesday night, at 9PM PST (Midnight EST), you can now watch me "live" on ITV as I broadcast "The Insight Hour" over this new network.*"

Dan's Scans

Socializing on the Web

Dan Robinson



It's no secret that I met my wife on the internet. This wasn't in a chat room or eHarmony. It was way before these came along in their current guise. It was back in the nineties on a Macintosh Special Interest group on a bulletin board site. Perfectly legitimate and all that rot.

Anyhow, she posted a Mac question from Charlotte, NC and I, in L.A., was the only one in the world who knew the answer. (The only one on that bulletin board, anyhow.) To make a long story short, I now live in Charlotte.

So it is perhaps with a more sympathetic eye that I look on the surge on social networking. But even if I am sympathetic, I prefer meeting people face to face and never really felt much pressure to participate in the likes of MySpace, FaceBook, and Twitter.

But in the interests of good journalism, I decided to get a FaceBook account and see what happens.

I'm confused at what's happened.

They's peepul comin' outta the woodwork!

The first was a client for whom I did a book three years ago. *"Alpha added you as a friend on Facebook. We need to confirm that you know Alpha in order for you to be friends on Facebook."*

OK. Sure. Minutes later . . .

"Beta added you as a friend on Facebook. We need to confirm that you know Beta in order for you to be friends on Facebook."

OK. Beta is a wannabe writer who at one time was in a group with me on a fan fiction site. I know him.

"Delta added you as a friend on Facebook. We need to confirm that you know Delta in order for you to be friends on Facebook."

Now who the heck is this? Oh! a friend of Beta! What the hey! — 'Approved.'

"Gamma added you as a friend on Facebook. We need to confirm that you know Gamma in order for you to be friends on Facebook." Gamma is a friend of Delta, who is a friend of Beta, who is an acquaintance last heard from in 2003.

This is getting out of hand.

By the way, Epsilon posted a picture of herself with a rapturous smile, holding up a fantasy novel written by someone else!

I hate fantasy. I'm a hard SciFi guy!

So what is the protocol? Can I go back and tell Delta, Gamma, Phi, and Epsilon that I don't want to have them as friends? Will it hurt their wittle feelings?

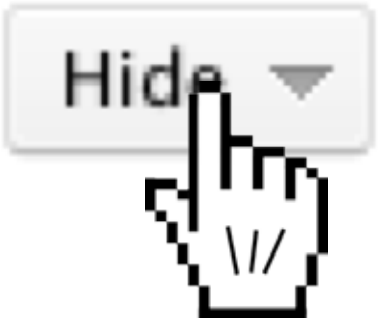
After due consideration, I just turned off email notifications. When I go to facebook, I'll see who has asked me to be their friend.

Therein lies the problem. If you approve everyone, you'll have so many friends, friendship itself becomes diluted and of decreased importance. People you don't know and don't care about posting things that don't interest you.

Of course if you're too selective, you won't have any friends, anyhow.

Ah Ha!

Mousing around, look what popped up! (Circled on the right) I'll try that! This way, everybody gets approved, but if they post drivel — which is pretty much everyone on the sample to the right — ZAP! They can post all they want . . . I just won't have to wade throu



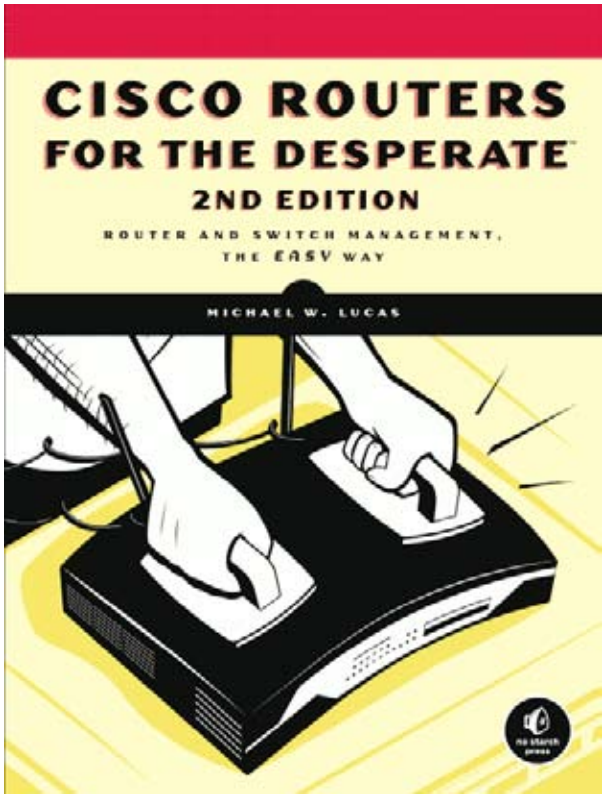
Book Review

Cisco Routers for the Desperate

Router and Switch Management, the Easy Way

2nd Edition

Robert L. Pritchett



NO STARCH PRESS
"the finest in geek entertainment"™

Author: Michael W. Lucas
No Starch Press
http://nostarch.com/cisco2.htm
Released: February 2009
Price: $25 USD
Pages: 144
ISBN: 9781593271930

Strengths: Great "in case of emergency, break glass" book for IT managers.

Weaknesses: None found.

Introduction

Cisco routers and switches are the cornerstones of many networks. But when things break, repairs can intimidate even the most competent administrator. Luckily, just knowing the "in case of emergency" basics will take you far.
Just like the original, this second edition of the highly acclaimed Cisco Routers for the Desperate is written for the administrator in crisis mode. Updated to cover switches and the latest Cisco terminology, with a tighter focus on the needs of the small network administrator, this second edition gives you what you need to know to provide reliable network services and fix problems fast. You'll find coverage of:

- Installation—how to get your router and network connections up and running right the first time
- Troubleshooting routers and switches, so that you can determine whether your hardware or the Internet is broken
- Security concerns, like how to keep your network equipment safe from hackers and install a private network between two offices
- How to implement basic network redundancy to reduce the risk of network downtime

Cisco Routers for the Desperate, 2nd Edition is designed to be read once and left alone until something breaks. When it does, you'll have everything you need to know in one easy-to-follow guidebook.

What I Learned

This really ought to be the book inside every Cisco Router box or when the very slim chance things go goofy and help is needed "right now".

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Hardware Review

e-Cig

The Real Electronic Patch to Help Quit Smoking

Robert L. Pritchett

E 3 Cigs
1441 Walla Walla Ave
Walla Walla, WA 99362
Phone: (509) 529-7905
Mobile: (509)-540-5764
e3cigs.sales@charter.net
http://www.e3cigs.com
Released: 2008
$140 USD

Strengths: The psychological look and feel of cigarettes — without the toxic side effects and air pollution. One year warranty.

Weaknesses: Atomizer needs special care and handling.

Demo:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z1f80uhXMuQ

Introduction

E 3 Cigs E-Cigarette is a Washington based company pioneering in electronic smoking products. They are offering a tar-free alternative to smoking traditional cigarettes and currently offering a groundbreaking electronic smoking device. You can step down gradually with their product and have fun doing it with over 20 different flavors to choose from.

E 3 Cigs *E-Cigarette* is non-flammable and uses

a state-of-the-art sophisticated micro-electronics device that gives users the feeling they get when they smoke a real cigarette.

The management of E 3 Cigs E-Cigarette wants to create a smoke-free environment by offering an option for smokers to "smoke" nicotine without the fire, flame, tobacco, tar, carbon monoxide, ash, stub, smell and all the other chemicals found in traditional cigarettes.

The battery is lithium ion and is recharged via a USB charging device that comes in the box.
The atomizer is the "special sauce" and must be treated with care.
The atomized cartridge is disposable.

What I Learned

This is true "vaporware". Vapor is created and is inhaled. The LED at the end in fact does act like real ash that lights when inhaling and fades out when the person stops inhaling. Real "smoke" is exhaled — but it is vapor created by the atomizer and not nasty, toxic cigarette smoke. Gary Hall has sources for the liquids (going to 25 flavors) that do not contain propylene glycol. Each cartridge is good for 400 puffs before refilling and recharging via a USB charger. There is a no-nicotine cartridge available.

The devices are manufactured in China.

I don't smoke. I live what we call the 'Word of Wisdom", a health code that has been around since the early 1800's. One of the challenges has always been that for folks to become members of my particular religious organization, they had to give some things up — like smoking. For many, it was too much of a sacrifice and sadly, they could not do it. Well, now a product has made that process just a little more easier — the electronic cigarette.

We believe also in avoiding even the appearance of evil and face it, smoking is really evil! But what if a process were in place that did the look and feel of smoking without the debilitating consequences? Folks have joked for years about a "silver bullet" for smokers. I think this comes very, very close.

I lived with my step grandfather, who was a chain smoker. His smoking helped my grandmother die sooner with the combined complications of both diabetes and emphysema. She made the mistake of allowing him to smoke inside her house. Putting wet towels under my bedroom door didn't help much in keeping my clothes from getting nicotine stained and filled with the smell of burnt tobacco. I abhorred the situation, while going to college. If this product had been around then, perhaps my grandmother would not have died so miserably.

If you still smoke, perhaps this to will help you quit and you won't have to suffer from the most preventable leading cause of death today — health complications caused from smoking.

Conclusion

What makes this "green", is the fact that those who still smoke now have a choice that acts and feels like smoking — but doesn't pollute the air the rest of us enjoy breathing. Thousands have tried this product and testify that it helped them quit smoking. Why not give it a try? You don't need to give all of your money to government in sin tax do you?

Other Sources

BloogPlanet - http://bloogplanet.com/media.html

Many countries consider the devices to be illegal for use - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/E-cigarette

Cigarette Taxes Burn Smoker's Cash - http://www2.newpaltz.edu/little-rebellion/?p=1257

e-Cigarette news - http://www.e-cig.org/category/e-cigarette-news/

Electronic Cigarette Association - http://www.e-cig.org/2009/05/12/about-the-electronic-cigarette-association-eca/

UK Expert: Electronic Cigarettes Not A Gateway To Smoking - http://www.officialwire.com/main.php?action=posted_news&rid=3507&catid=42

Hardware Review

Universal Cell Wrap

Drive Using Cellphone Hands-Free

Robert L. Pritchett

Save Your Life & A Ticket

Ronaele
P.O. Box 111073
Tacoma WA 98411
http://www.universalcellwrap.com
Released: June 2008
$30 USD Universal Cell Wrap, Pink or Black.
$12 USD for the Wrap Strap, Black, Red or Blue.

Strengths: "Lifetime" warranty. Universal Cell Wrap; Work-through transparent face. Real leather. Good Velcro. Wrap Strap; Solid Seat-belt material and Velcro.

Weaknesses: Using brain-tumor studies as reason for purchase. Ignore the 6-month warranty on the box. The 1-year warranty is correct.

Demo:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DSONyEJefcE

Introduction

The Universal Cell Wrap takes advantage of user's own cell phone speaker without Bluetooth, wires or earpieces. It works with any/all cell phones. It clips (easy on/off) to any seat belt.

It is practically invisible when in use. It can also be used as just a holder for cell phones & MP3 players.

The materials used are leather, metal, see-through plastic and Velcro.

Cell Phone Driving Laws
http://www.ghsa.org/html/stateinfo/laws/cellphone_laws.html

Discount Coupon Code for June 2009

kh802

$5.00 off one Cell Wrap
$45.00 for two Cell Wraps
$32.00 for one Cell Wrap and one Wrap Strap

(No, I do not have horns!) {iPhone self-shot}
Seatbelt lanyard

What I Learned

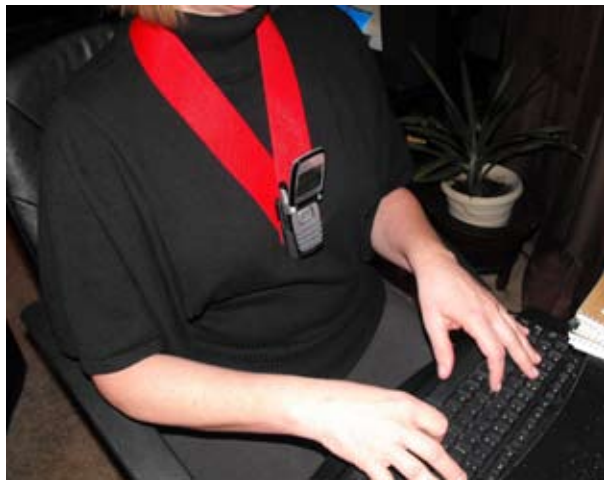
The website says the Universal Cell Wrap has a lifetime warranty. The package says 6 months limited warranty for mechanical and material problems. (Return with $8.25 for replacement.)

I was given a red seatbelt material Wrap Strap with Velcro, but I found I can only use it "under the collar," because the iPhone is heavy enough that it causes the Wrap Strap to slide down my frontside.

I also found with the iPhone, that I really need to remove it from the leather holder I use, so the Universal Cell Wrap will center in the back where the well-made rotate-360-degree clip is located.

On the Roneale website, there is a "12-Facts" page dedicated to Cellphone health and dirty power emissions. It may just be enough information to keep you away from cellphones permanently. If that doesn't do it, the next tab goes to "Cover-Up Risk?," which is a reprint from an article written by Byron J. Richards, "Truth in Wellness," from April 16, 2008, discussing the health advisory on Mobile Phones and Brain Tumors and *that* may do the trick!

I'm suggesting that these articles are intended to make us think twice about putting the cellphone next to our ear for extended periods of time. They have merit, but I do not think that those "dirty power" articles will sell a lot of "Universal Cell Wraps." Cellphone overuse



is not healthy. Maybe the Universal Cell Wrap will help us from getting brain tumors. Or not.

If I happen to answer a call on my iPhone while driving in the state of Washington, I'm not supposed to have either headphones or earphones or a cellphone against my ear. I can get ticketed. Supposedly, the Universal Cell Wrap will allow me to talk on the iPhone in a hands-off mode. I drive that Hydrogen Hybrid diesel heavy-duty van. It is loud inside because there is only metal between me and the road. No wall insulation of any kind. I find it rather difficult to have a phone conversation as it is.

The Universal Cell Wrap might be a good hands-off solution for road-warriors that use vehicles that pick up less road noises than my current situation involves.

BYW, I can use the unit with the iPhone. The transparent plastic does not hinder performance.

Conclusion

Using the state laws as a reason for using this device has merit. Using brain-tumor studies as a reason, does not. It is still a great cellphone holder and using a seatbelt strap to anchor too, is a good idea.

Note: If they added a nape-grapper to the red, black or blue cellphone lanyards made from seatbelt material, guys could wear them without having to tuck them in under their collars.

How to Use the iPhone Speakerphone

http://www.ehow.com/how_2080582_use-iphone-speakerphone.html

http://www.usageorge.com/Wallpapers/Computer/Apple-Macintosh.html

EVO NETWORKS

Secure Your Information | Simplify Collaboration | Insure Against Disaster | Eliminate IT Headaches | Evolves With Your Business

Data Center Express Overview

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

The IT Challenges Your Small Business Faces

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

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

The Data Center Express Solution

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

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

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

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

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DCE At A Glance

- Single solution for storing and managing data in your organization with up to 1.5 terabytes of storage (1500 GB)
- Shipped to you preconfigured and ready to go
- Integrated Firewall protects entire network from external threats
- Handles 800+ secure remote connections (VPN)
- Built-in Antivirus protection, with optional Antivirus service to protect all client computers
- Disaster recovery solution protects servers, desktops, and notebooks
- Encrypted backup drives ensure secure off-site protection
- Can support over 100 wired and hundreds of WIFi devices
- Protective, whisper quiet desk-height enclosure with casters
- Uninterruptible power supply protects the entire DCE
- Optional 24x7 Support + Maintenance
- Mac and Windows Versions Available
- Designed and Assembled in the USA

Data Center Express

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

Hardware Review

Belkin Dual USB Auto Charger and Micro Auto Charger

Never go "low power" again!

Robert L. Pritchett

synch cable for iPod and iPhone. 1-year limited warranty.

Strengths: Solid. Flush mount.
Weaknesses: None found.

BELKIN

Dual USB Auto Charger
http://catalog.belkin.com/IWCatProductPage.process?Product_Id=474680
Released: April 20, 2009
$30 USD
Requirements: A working "Accessory" adapter in the vehicle. An iPhone or other device that needs recharging.
Comes With: Two 3-foot charge and sync cables for iPod and iPhone and 12-volt Auto adapter. 3-year warranty.
Works With: Any mobile phone or GPS device with mini-USB connection. iPhone. iPod.

Strengths: Works out of the box. 3-year warranty. Smooth solid surfaces. One QuickCharge port.
Weaknesses: None found.

Other Reviews:
http://store.apple.com/us/reviews/TS861LL/A?fnode=MTY1NDA0MQ

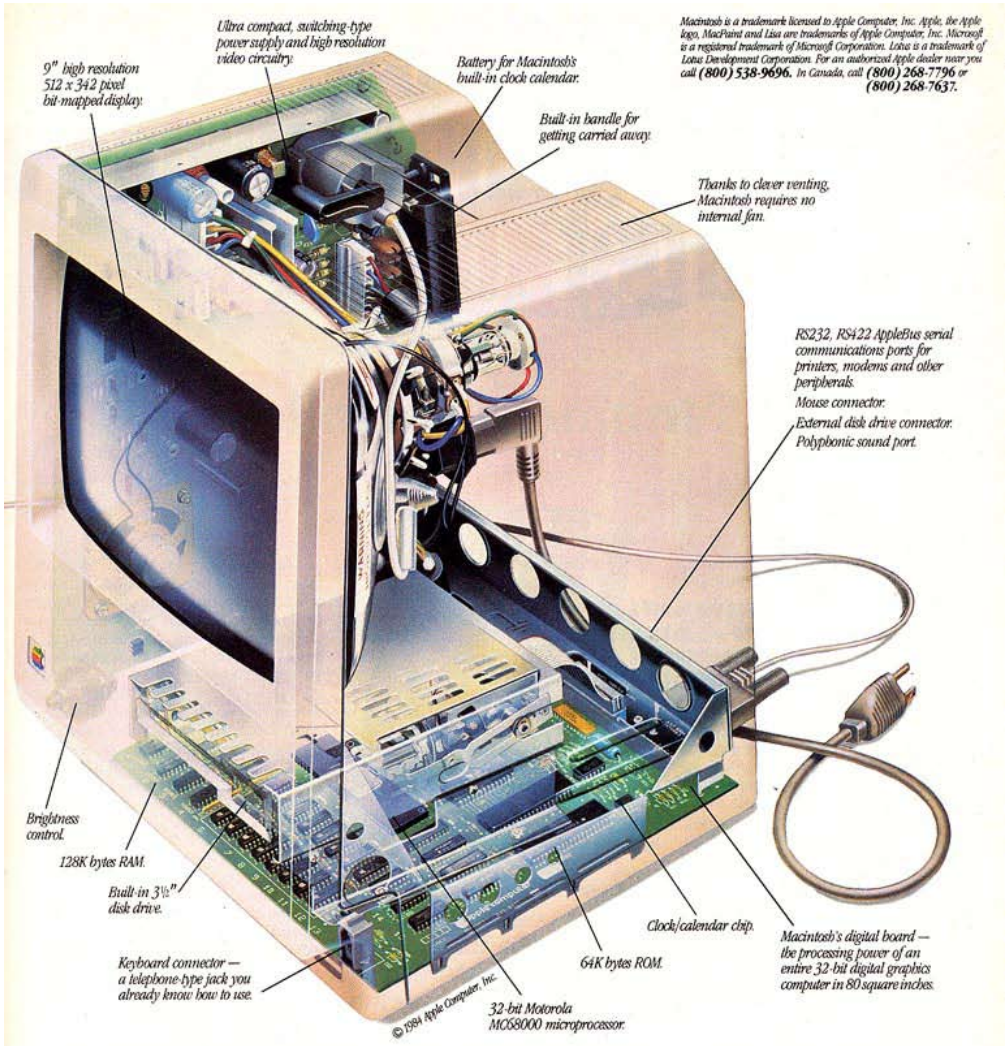
Micro Auto Charger
http://catalog.belkin.com/IWCatProductPage.process?Product_Id=489423
Released: May 2009
$20 USD
Comes With: Flush-mount Auto Charger, 3-foot

Introduction

Keep your iPod and iPhone playing while you drive. Just plug the Belkin Dual Auto Charger into your accessory socket and it will charge both devices while in use, providing unlimited play, call, and stand-by time.

Features

- Charges two devices simultaneously via USB, 1 amp (QuickCharge) and 500 milliamps.
- Quick-charge port to minimize iPhone charging time
- Compatible with most cases that offer dock access
- iPod/iPhone charging cable and mini-USB cable



drive, you can do so without paying for a disk controller card—that connector's built-in, too.

There's also a built-in connector for Macintosh's mouse, a feature that costs up to $300 on computers that can't even run mouse-controlled software.

One last pointer.

Now that you've seen some of the logic, the technology, the engineering genius and the software wizardry that separates Macintosh from conventional computers, we'd like to point you in the direction of your nearest authorized Apple dealer.

Over 1500 of them are eagerly waiting to put a mouse in your hand. As one point-and-click makes perfectly clear, the real genius of Macintosh isn't its 32-bit Lisa Technology, or its 3½" floppy disks, or its serial ports, or its software, or its polyphonic sound generator.

The real genius is that you don't have to be a genius to use a Macintosh.

You just have to be smart enough to buy one.

Soon there'll be just two kinds of people. Those who use computers. And those who use Apples.

Or use the Micro Auto Charger instead, for single port (1 amp) use.

What I Learned

I have two accessory ports on my old Ford Diesel E-350 dash. One is dead and I guess I need to find the bad fuse. The other is fine and the Belkin Auto Charger worked great in keeping my iPhone charged.

Curiously enough, nobody in our home currently has a device that uses the mini-USB adapter. If you do not need the mini-USB adapter, the Micro Auto Charger is also available with a 1 amp charge.

The black iPod/iPhone charge/synch cable seems to be better built than the white interface cable that came with the iPhone 3G.

While driving around, the low battery message kicked in on the iPhone and I thought, "I need to recharge, rather than "dismiss" and reached into my computer bag (I did remember to pack it) and pulled out the Belkin Dual Auto Charger, connected the cable and iPhone and I was back in business. Sweet!

I've used other cheap "accessory" auto chargers before. This one looks and feels solid in comparison. The round, smooth surfaces actually feel good to the touch. The cables are also solidly built.

I am very impressed with the fact that the iPhone really did recharge quickly off the 500 milliamp USB port (instead of the QuickCharge port) compared to either charging off the Macbook Pro or the Apple-supplied wall adapter for the iPhone.

I wish they made one for the MacBook Pro. (See the other hardware article by Mike Gyver for this month {June 2009}).

Conclusion

From what I've read, heard and experienced firsthand, this is an excellent charger for small USB-enabled portable devices.

Hardware Review

MacBook Magsafe DC Car, Airline Adapters

Mike Lee

Mikegyver™ Computer & Tech., Inc.

MCT, Inc.
PO Box 1146
Goldenrod, FL 32733
contact@mikegyver.com
http://www.mikegyver.com
Pricing depends on configuration. $75 with Magsafe cable exchange or $165 without.
http://www.mikegyver.com/support/tipcableguide/index.html

Q&A: **http://mikegyver.com/support/magsafeQA/index.html**

Strengths: Currently the only Auto Accessory Charger available for Apple portables that use the Magsafe wallwart.

Weaknesses: Requires sacrificing a Magsafe adapter, since Apple does not currently license the technology.

Introduction

Who said there were no car or airline adapters for the Macbooks?

Back when Apple released the Magsafe connector, it meant that thousands of Apple laptops will be saved from accidental power cord yanks. Me included. But for some that also meant limited third party adapters, because Apple has a patent on the Magsafe connector.

Apple will not license the technology, and it's not just a simple magnetic connector. It is a lot more involved then just the magnetic aspects of it. Having gone through the patent process myself with other inventions, I fully respect Apple's patent and welcome it. It protects the great inventions we have today from Apple.

So we've come up with a way to offer users the full advantage of third party adapters - such as car or airline adapters. We buy Apple adapters and upgrade them for use with other adapters. Yes, we know it's expensive, but that's the only way we can do it without making Apple upset. We then offer our own warranty on the magsafe cables, and we do have exchange and buyback programs where we take your good condition Apple "brick" adapter and forward it on to the next user.

One of the most frequent questions I get is which adapter is the best?

Well, hopefully I'll answer them here. If you just want something that will work, then we suggest the "Mikegyver Power Travel Kit". It is cheaper (we call it the good model.). However, because we have to modify the patented Magsafe connector from Apple, you'll need to disconnect the Magsafe cable from Apple's AC adapter and plug it into the Car/Airline adapter. You'll notice that we lock it at 16v, because in 97% of the cases you'll be just fine, and also, airlines provide limited power and 16v would be the best setting

without making the airlines upset.

The next set of adapters that we sell are AC/DC adapters. We call them our Better/Best selection. Please make no mistake, these are NOT inverters. Most people write me asking why it is so much more expensive when they can buy a car adapter (it really is an INVERTER) at XYZ place for cheaper. Without getting too technical, you are pretty much converting car power into household power, then using the Apple adapter converting it back to car power. Now does that sound efficient? No! Is it wasteful? YES! (No, I'm not a tree hugger, I just like being efficient).

I've heard stories where people would run out of power in no time, and in some cases, they can't even use their MacBook Pros since the adapter trips the inverter breaker.

These AC/DC adapters have TWO inputs. One can be used to plug into normal household power. The other, which is more important, is Car or Airline power. The second input just modifies the DC power or Car power into the SAME power as your MacBook, just a different voltage.

So, now, which of these AC/DC adapter do I recommend?

- First choice; We happen to like the Kensington K33197(US)adapters because they are slim and light. It also has a long cord and in most cases, you'll be sitting quite far away from the power outlet on your hotel bed. It also has an optional Y-cable so that you can power both MacBook, and some other accessories. One feature that the iGo does not have, is that this adapter has a low power shut off to save your car battery from going completely dead if you are running purely off car battery. Speaking of accessories, the Kensingtons do have tips for accessories, such as a USB power tip, but not nearly as much as the iGo's.

- Second up; The New iGo everywhereMAX. It is now smaller, but not quite as thin as the Kensingtons, but indeed lighter and smaller then the iGo 130w everywhere. As mentioned, it has more tips for more accessories on the market. It also comes with the Dual power accessories for your other devices (tips for those accessories sold separately).

- Third; The Kensington 33403 AC/DC adapter. It's a little heavy and big, but it makes the list, because it has a built-in USB port on its side. So, in a sense, that's your dual power port the iGo's have. Most devices nowadays use USB power, so this will work nicely for you. Since the iPhone 3G uses USB power, this will work just fine.

Of course if you don't notice by now, ALL our adapters will come with the Magsafe cable, not to mention our other accessories, such as external batteries for the MacBook line of computers.

Happy charging away from home!

— Mike Lee
Mikegyver.com

Software Review

Icon Tools:

Icosystem 2.1 & Telling Folders 1.0

A twofer I stumbled upon

Harry {doc} Babad © 2009

Telling Folders 1.0
Developer: omz:software
http://www.omz-software.de/stuff/
Cost: Freeware

System Requirements: Mac OS X 10.5, PPC/Intel, 876 KB in size.

Released: 15, June 2008
Rating: 4.5 macCs
Users: All

Strengths: Easy to use and intuitive.
Weaknesses: None worth mentioning.

Icosystem 2.1
Developer: Alberto Pammac
http://www.macupdate.com/info.php/id/25017/icosystem [The vendor site is in Italian]
Cost: $8.00 USD Shareware

System Requirements: Mac OS X 10.4 or later; PPC/Intel, 5.8 MB in size.

Released: 12, November 2007
Rating: 4.0 macCs
Users: All

Strengths: Easy to use once you learn its interface.
Weaknesses: Hidden interface, and lack of help files.

Introduction

Over the years I have had lots of fun customizing the icons, mostly for folder, but at times drives and hard disk partitions, external media and even documents. I recently had occasion to demonstrate two of my often-used tools to our Mid-Columbia Macintosh users group [MC•MUG]. Although I'd reviewed these, oldie but still working goodies, products previously for macCompanion, they remain my favorites.

FolderBrander 2.3 — Generally change folder appearance in Finder sidebar windows. It specifically lets you easily change the look of your folders - pick a different color and add a short text label. Yellow Mug Software, Shareware $10 [USD] [Leopard]
http://www.macupdate.com/info.php/id/15288/folderbrander
http://www.maccompanion.com/macc/archives/January2008/Columns/MacTips.htm

IconCompo 3.7.3 — Create a customized icon

Sidebar #1: Copyright Notice: Product and company names and logos in this review may be registered trademarks of their respective companies.

Sidebar #2: Reviews were carried out on my iMac 2.8 GHz Intel Core 2 Duo with 2 GB 667 MHz DDR2 SDRAM running Mac OS X version 10.5.7

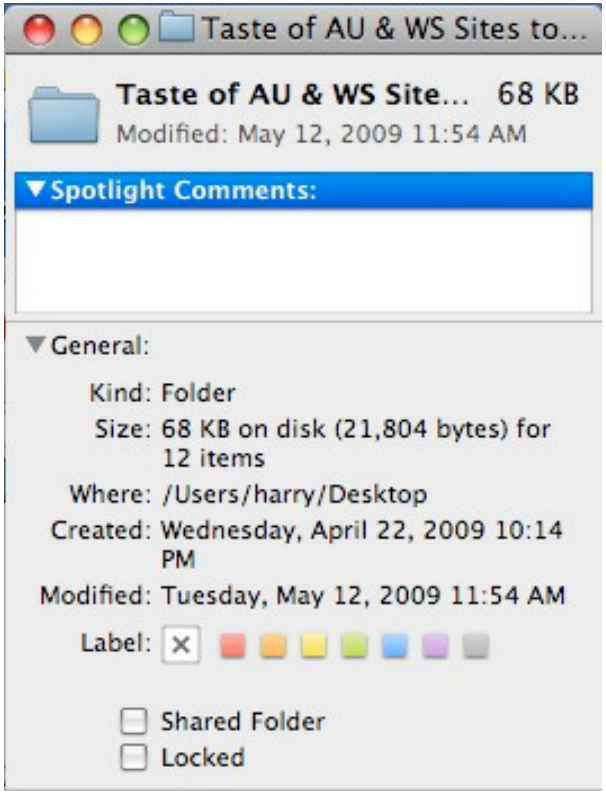
Sidebar #2: Disclaimer: When briefly reviewing shareware I will often use the developer's product, functions and features descriptions. All other comments are strictly my own and based on testing. Why need I rewrite the developer's narratives, if they are clearly written?

from 2 images. Drag and drop one or two images onto the main window of the program and then adjust the images in various ways - position, size, directions, transparencies and colors, text. Trolin Software, Shareware $17 [USD] [Leopard]
http://www.macupdate.com/info.php/id/6453/iconcompo
http://www.maccompanion.com/macc/archives/January2008/Columns/MacTips.htm

Since I am a visual as well as verbal person; I like my articles well illustrated and my icons interesting looking. I am not, however, an obsessive compulsive, at least not often. Therefore, I will not develop a scheme of organizing the contents of my Macintosh, using icons, under a unifying and universal scheme. [It's a little bit like living with that great database you've created and never having the discipline or time to keep it maintained.

Life is just too short. However I remain picky about the clarity and representational aspects of my icons, that both organize and catch the eye; be it my recipe collection; clipart associated files, computer review materials or the profession al writing I do as a consultant about things nuclear and energy related.

As Barry Wiseman noted recently on the Apstorm blog, "When you go searching for a file, you start looking in folders. If you're like me, your 'Documents" folder can just look like a pile of blue folders. Finding that Pages document or PDF you haven't accessed in a while can mean just looking through a series of al-



phabetically arranged folders- unless you make certain folder stand out.

"The first thing we can do is as simple as add some color to the list, giving us an easy way to visually pick out certain kinds of files. By just applying a labeling scheme, it's easy to add a visual highlight to folders or files so that they stand out against the normal sea of blue. It's as simple as right clicking (or CTRL-Clicking) the folder you want to label. Pick a color you want to use and you're done. Now the name of the folder has color behind it to help it stand out. You can use this system for any file or folder. [Check Barry's article for details]

"After coloring the folders and files, you may need to go a step further- change their individual icons. There are a slew of ways to do this, and I've tinkered with many of them. Let's focus on the folders first" by using Telling Folders. Enough quoted, read my review and check out the more details at the Apstorm site including links to other icon creation/modification articles.
http://mac.appstorm.net/how-to/os-x/visually-organizing-in-os-x/

The Rest of the Review Background — As part of preparing for the MC•MUG demonstration, I did a quick check, MacUpdate site, to identify new tools for creating or customizing icons. To my pleasure, I found two new, to me, items. In addition, for a future review, I found the Trolin Software had developed iconXprit 1.2.4, Contextual menu to adding color/icons to desktop items. [http://www.macupdate.com/info.php/id/27327/iconXprit]

Icosystem 2.1 and Telling Folders 1.0, whose use I'll share with you after sharing a bit about creating and using custom icons, skip this stuff this if you're not a newbie.

WARNING — Classical Icons are 32 x 32 point images while those for OS X are 512×512 pixel based artwork. Don't Clutter Them Up!

Custom icons can be used to breakup the sameness of native OS X icons, as a way of quickly identifying folder contents by icon theme or as another way to organize your files. You can eas-

ily get carried away by the simplicity of doing your own icon thing, so KISS and make nice. Use enough customization to please yourself but not enough that it becomes a chore or an eyesore.

About Obtaining and Using Custom Icons

There are two beginner-oriented steps in creating and using custom icons on your Macintosh

1. Find or create an icon 'image' use one of the tools mentioned at the end of this review, or download the icon(s) for your choice.

2. Paste the icon "onto" the appropriate document or folder. You can paste any image, of any size or resolution, into the icon box of the Get Info Window associated with a folder/document/alias icon. [Just select your target, and do the Command - "I" thing. Alternately, on a three-button mouse, you have upgraded – haven't you, select Get Info from the contextual menu. It's the icon image in the upper left hand size of the get info window. So a copy-paste of anything graphic into that window creates a new icon. That converts the clipboard graphic to an icon-sized image of the pasted material. Remember what you copy is what you get, in a 32 x 32 or 512 x 512 pixel sized images at lower resolution than your original downloaded graphic. If you want words imposed on a folder or one containing or a custom image, you must create that icon using the tools I list in the appendix.

Icon Design Reminder — Follow the KISS Rule! If using the Get-Info route, with images from Google or your photo collection. Remember busy or blurry icons just annoy!

If found posted icons doesn't meet you esthetic standards or needs; use the icon creation tools, of which I provide a list, to cook your own.

FREE or Low-Cost Icon Sources

Sources	Link
Apple Computer	http://www.apple.com/downloads/macosx/icons_screensavers/
Cool Archive	http://www.coolarchive.com/
IconBazaar	http://www.iconbazaar.com/
ICONS ` Mac	http://rats2u.com/clipart/animation/clipart_icons.htm#iconsmac
Icons-CX	http://www.icons.cx/icons/
IconsPLUS	http://www.iconsplus.com/
InterfaceLift	http://interfacelift.com/icons-mac/
Kira's Icon Library	http://www.lightsphere.com/kicons/icons.html
Leo's Icon Archive	http://www.iconarchive.com/index.php
MacUpdate & Version Tracker Sites	http://www.macupdate.com/ http://www.versiontracker.com/macosx/
The Icon Factory	http://iconfactory.com/freeware

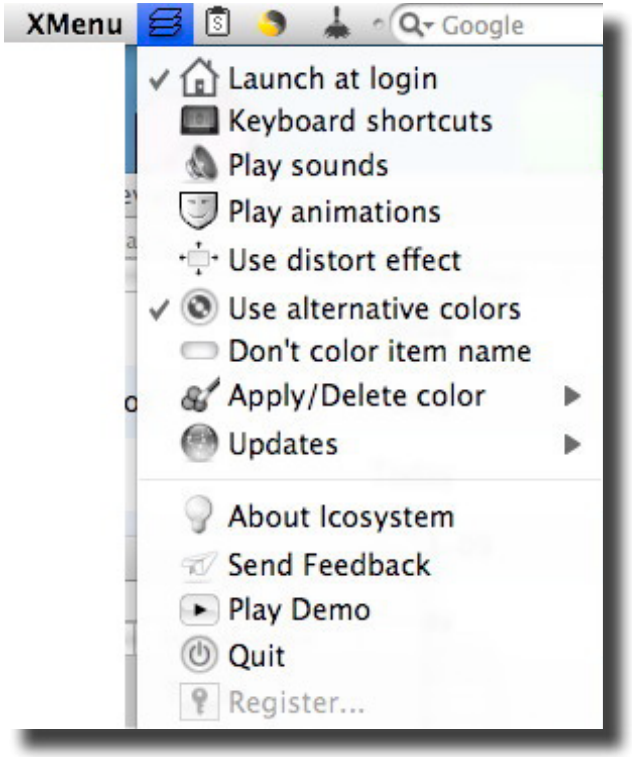
Most icons I've downloaded, free or otherwise, are too-too very-very cutesy for me. But check out http://mac.appstorm.net/roundups/graphics-roundups/50-unusually-awesome-icon-sets-for-mac/

- -

Icosystem 2.1

The product allows you to apply the same color to an item icon as you select a color label for its title (name.).

As you know, the Mac OS X Finder doesn't color the icon, but only it's name. Now, with Icosystem, folders, files and apps can be easily and beautifully tagged with colors! You just have to use the Finder's Get Info command or the Finder contextual menu on an item! Just as usual! For those into keyboard shortcuts, you can also press a key combination to tag your files with live colors!



It's also possible to just apply a color to the item icon, and skip colorizing its label name.

Overall Assessment

Although, once I figured out that the developer's installer had not installed a tradition style application into my applications folder, I began to see the light.

Traditional applications open and you access their features in an application's window. Other types of programs, for example, can either install a preference panel or a contextual menu item. All three interfaces are Macintosh standard, and build upon operating system paradigms. How, I discovered after a bit of experimenting that I needed to access the program from the Get Info window. Being somewhat slow that day, it took a bit of added time to note that the program had installed its application icon on the menu finder's main menu bar. That icon, the way to access the program, was only visible when I'd selected a document or folder icon.

The absence of either a readme file, or help files was an annoyance. That's enough to turn a less experienced user away from this otherwise useful and easy to use product. It's also, at 5.8 MB, a bit of a memory hog.

Although I was annoyed by the lack of access to Apple's a color pallet, a feature that is a part of all other icon tools I tested. The developer has provided two color intensity levels for your use. These contain the seven color alternatives you see when you open the Get Info window. The two color intensities are saturated and lightly bleached. You can also choose to color an icon and leave the title uncolored.

This lack of color intensity control (degree of transparency of the icon color) blotted out FolderBrander and IconCompo customization.

Conclusion

This is an interesting and easy to use tool for those who can live within its limitations. However, I've already chosen my favorite tools, albeit they are getting a bit long in the teeth, and Icosystem will not replace them. 4.0 macCs

- -

Telling Folders 1.0

Do all your folders look the same? No longer! With Telling Folders, you can easily put any image on top of your folder icons to make them easily distinguishable. Telling Folders is a new

program, completely free, aimed at allowing Mac users to create custom folders to show off their favorite applications.

A QuickLook function is supported, so you are not limited to images alone. Drag any file in and see a rich visual representation on top of the standard folder image. Drag a folder in to set its icon - easy. Just in case you accidentally change a folder's icon, Telling Folders' Undo function has you covered.

Discomforts

Indeed, there was only one mildly annoying attribute of this otherwise fine product. I would have like to be able to reside the image inserted onto a folder, so that it would fill me space. However, I can do so in the other tools I use, so am not stuck with a small superimposed image than I want.

Creating a custom folder with Telling Folders is a simple, two-step process:

1. Open the program, where you'll see a rather large window with a large, blue folder in it.
2. Simply drag an image, icon, or even an application onto the blue folder. Instantly, that image, icon, or the icon of the application, will be superimposed on it.

That's it! You've created your own customized folder.

As noted by my tests and Barry Wiseman, Telling Folders makes it simple to add an image (icon, logo, or anything you want) to your folder list. You simply drag the folder you want to change to the workspace and then drag in the image you want to use (you can use a white border so it looks like a picture or you can go without).

In my experience, I've been able to drag JPG, PNG, and PDF images into the application window.

While the "color label" feature in Mac OS X does a great job at allowing you to distinguish various types of folders on your computer, Telling Folders does this even better; by letting you slap a picture onto each folder you have.

Using Telling Folders, you will be able to put someone's picture on top of the folder containing more pictures of that someone. If, for example, you're a recipe hound like me, I place its flag into its top-level recipe folder. If I'm working with a type of food (pork, shrimp, chicken, pastry, breads) I use such images. That makes it easier to when working with my recipe collection, all 24,000 recipes worth. So the Telling Folders isn't just limited to folder images alone, but can be used for most of the icons in your hard drive, albeit sometimes changing drive cons doesn't work.

Slapping icons, wily-nilly on folders can easily

Appendix

There's Lot of Neat Tools Out there!

- CandyBar 3.1.2 — Customize your OS X toolbar icons and much more. 4.0
- Change Folder Icon 1.0 — Change the default icon of non-system folders. Freeware
- Color Labels 1.2 — Colorize icons in the Finder.
- Colored Folder Creator Extreme 1.0 — Create custom folder icons, optionally with sounds.
- Colored Folder Creator Pro 10.7.6 — Create folders in colors with flags and animals and more.
- Folder Icon Maker 2.0 — Combine icons and export to different formats.
- Folder Icon X 3.0.2 — Create custom OS X folder icons
- FolderBrander 2.3 — Change folder appearance in Finder sidebar windows.
- Icon Brush 2.5.5 — Icon creation and editing tool.
- IconCompo 3.7.3 — Create an icon from 2 images.
- Iconizer Pro 3.0.6 — Build 32-bit icons from pictures.
- iconXprit 1.2.3 — Contextual menu to adding color/icons to desktop items.
- Icosystem 2.1 — Apply label color to icons
- *Labels X 1,8,2* (Unsanity) — Brings back Classic label colors to OS X. Alas, does not work in Leopard.
- Telling Folders 1.0 — Customize folder icons to make them more distinguishable. Freeware
- Viou — Freeware Drag & drop icon-combining tool

CODE: I use or will use these On my Test List Not a Favorite

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get a user confused about the contents of their own folders, in a few weeks after playing with the software. The application also has an at times needed "Undo" function. So if you accidentally change a folder's icon, or simply change your mind about the whole folder-customization thing, you can easily 'repair' the "damages."

Traditionally in Get Info, selecting the icon and pressing delete is all it takes to restore that icon to its system give original form.

Conclusions

This is a wonderfully simple way to mess around creating custom icons, you cant beat the price — FREE. Its interface appears newbie proof, and if you know how to use a mouse to drag and drop things into a window, you're trained.

This would be an outstanding product even if it were shareware priced between $10 and $20; for free it's doubly great. Go of it! As always, I'm stingy with grades; 4.5 Macs.

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Name Mangler 2

Easily Rename Files to Meet Your Organizing Needs

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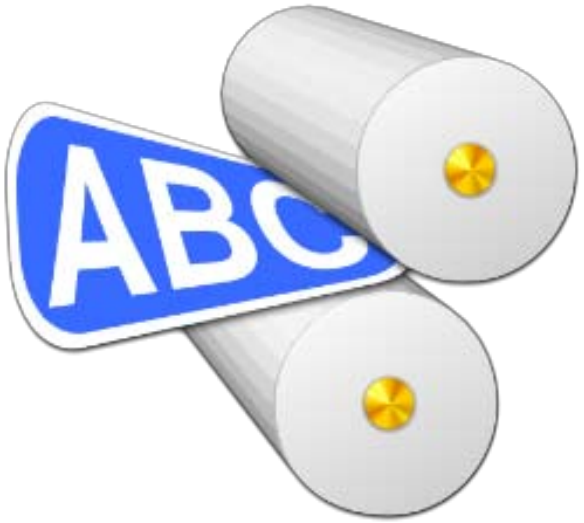


Many Tricks Software

http://www.manytricks.com/namemangler/
Release Date: 14, February 2008
Cost: Freeware/Donationware
System Requirements: Mac OS X 10.5 or later; PPC/Intel
Strengths: Ease of use, flexibility and price.
Weaknesses: None worth mentioning.
Audience: All users.

Introduction

Are you one of the people who collect, and have collected, hundreds if not more related documents over the years; all stored neatly in nested folders. You know who you are – fellow photography buffs, recipe collectors, trivia hunters, or perhaps wise saying or witticisms?

Have you noticed over the years the naming conventions you use have changed? No, not just because the Macintosh OS now allows more letters in a document's title. It's because you've grown wiser, and have gotten defacto more organize, I hope.

Have you ever tired to re-harmonize the way you name files to make searching for them more consistent? Or has your collection grown that you need another descriptor in the title of a set of documents — more than Photo A# to Z# or perhaps more reasonably Summer snapshots to Summer of XXXX snapshots for the folders and perhaps adding tag year for all the files in that folder. [Yes, I know there is both get info and perhaps metadata related to each image but… who has the time. There's a hard way, file-by-file — folder-by-folder. There's a perhaps clever way, if you use Automator or script, of writing a script or macro to do each individual change set, but I'm not so skilled.

Sidebar #1: Copyright Notice: Product and company names and logos in this review may be registered trademarks of their respective companies.

Sidebar #2: Reviews were carried out on my iMac 2.8 GHz Intel Core 2 Duo with 2 GB 667 MHz DDR2 SDRAM running Mac OS X version 10.5.7

Sidebar #2: Disclaimer: When briefly reviewing shareware I will often use the developer's product, functions and features descriptions. All other comments are strictly my own and based on testing. Why need I rewrite the developer's narratives, if they are clearly written?

Alternatively there's the freeware Name Mangler 2.0 way, doing batch changes at once. A process that change be quick as a minute or less or take 10-15 minutes if you're working with thousands of files.

If you've got a bunch of files that need renaming, Many Tricks' Name Mangler 2.0 (a major update to developer's previous File List program) is they way to do that. You just drag your files into its window, choose your renaming options, and click a button.

Publisher's Summary

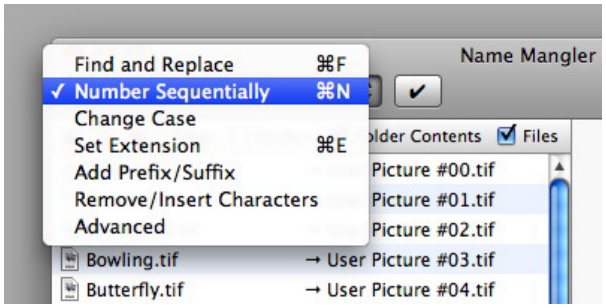
"If you need to rename several files at once, this is the application you have always been looking for. Name Mangler is a batch file renamer that supports the following renaming tasks: Find and Replace (including support for regular expressions); Number Sequentially; Change Case; Set Extension; Add Prefix/Suffix; Remove/Insert Characters.

"Moreover, you can combine all of these using the Advanced renaming mode, which even comes with some extra features, such as conditional statements, nested counters, and more.
"But Name Mangler is more than just one versatile renaming utility, According to it's developer, It's an infinite number of task-specific renaming utilities: Name Mangler's Droplets make it ridiculously easy to store configurations and use those repeatedly for different, alternating purposes. Just drop your files on them.

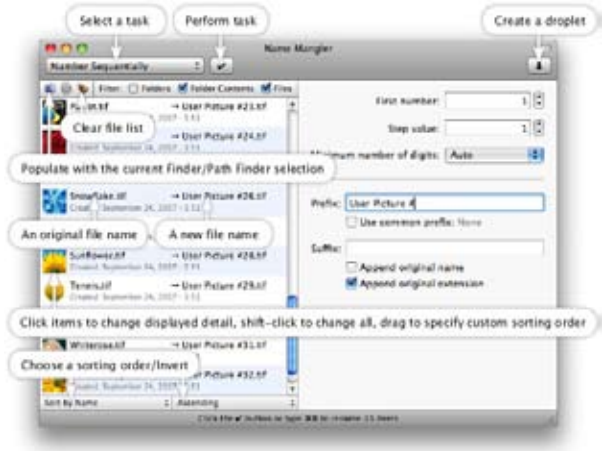
Using the Software

The range of easy-to-use renaming options includes find-and-replace, numbering, case changing, extension setting, adding prefixes and suffixes, and removing and inserting characters.

Just check out the menu items and pull down windows in the product's main window, The



range of easy-to-use renaming options includes find-and-replace, numbering, case-changing, extension-setting, adding prefixes and suffixes, and removing and inserting characters. You can learn even more, if you needs fall beyond the straightforward choices built



into the product by checking out the built in help files,

You'll discover that there's even a mode for using a special scripting language for more-advanced procedures. As a bonus, a live preview shows you how each file's name will be changed before making the change.

My Experiences with Recipe Files

As noted earlier I have many thousands of recipes, collected over the last 50 plus years. Many of my favorites, were collected as scraps of paper, index cards, recipe clippings, Co-op grocery store newsletters. Deciphered, well my mother never measured things and wrote in a central European script. They had to be hand deciphered and entered in a word processor. When I started using a computer {Macintosh SE-30) and then a few years later I acquired a flat bed scanner, I was in recipe collectors paradise, or at least purgatory.

No I haven't converted my large recipe book collection to digital form, but there are lots of recipe eBooks out there — check them out.

Now over the years I adopted a number of naming conventions for my recipe documents, and even for the nested folders into which they were stored (organized). In part this was the result of changing naming limitations imposed by the operating system, and in part because as my collection grew, I made changes recipe naming conventions I used. A few simple examples illustrate the uses I've made to recipe names using Name Manger.

First Try — changing in my recipes folder, the word 'with' to 'w' all 148 of 26,550 items. The process took less than 9 minutes. I used

Easy Find 4.0.1 my favorite document name search program to check the before and after results [http://www.macupdate.com/info.php/id/11076/easyfind], Simultaneously, while renaming files, with Name Mangler running in the background, I wrote this review. There were no unforeseen changes to any names in my recipe files.

I also, but incorrectly changes 740 files containing the word 'and' to &. By not being careful of my search criteria I accidentally incorrectly changed all the recipes named Andouille {Cajun sausage) to &ouille and also Tandoori (Indian grilled meat) to T&oori,

Altogether about 35 items were misnamed; not problem, by using Name Manger, I fixed these easily, a quick set of changes.

The table below summarizes my recipe collection oriented tests.

I did however come of with a bit of in sight on how I needed to use the program.

1. If all the changes you want to make are in a nested folder, start there. It's faster. For Example, Recipes > Indian > Tandoori. I stated with Indian because I'd not distributed all tandoori recipes to that folder. Thank you Easy Find. But I checked, Easy Find, and found that there were a few tandoori recipes found in other Cuisines such as Chine and Thai – it called fusion cooking.

2. Use a search took to see how the changed word/phase are distributed on you hard drive, in my case Recipes. Why, the fewer items the program needs to scan, the faster the results; you can always clean up outliers.

Present Name Element	Name Change Wanted	Notes/Errors
Recipe names/folders containing 'and'	Recipe names/folders changed to '&'.	Andouille to &ouille Tandoori to T&oori Okay, it's easy to fix!
Recipe names/folders containing 'with'	Recipe names/folders changed to 'w'.	None
Recipe Names Labeled _FNK (Food Network Kitchens). Also, _FdNet…	Recipe Names changed to _Food-Network using a Droplet.	I used a variety of name_source for items from this website varied over the years. I wanted to use a single source convention
Recipe names/folders containing 'Stir Fry or Stir-Fry'	Recipe names/folders changed to 'Stirfry'.	None

3. If you're like me, with ample disk space, you may store some collections on CD/DVDs, it is preferable to store duplicates of inactive files in alternative folders, rather than

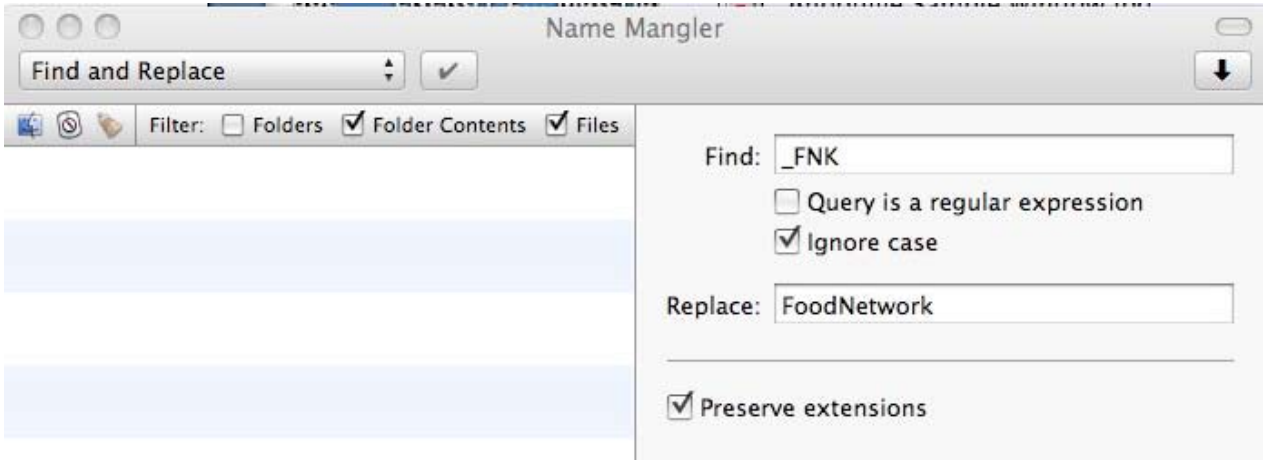
use an alias that will not work on a PC. The software finds those and warns you about that; I chose to leave the duplicates, changing whatever is needed on both.

4. Be aware of the syntax of your changed subject. Example, 'and" is not equivalents to ' and '. Okay play, but keep track of what doesn't quite work perfectly to sharpen your search criteria.

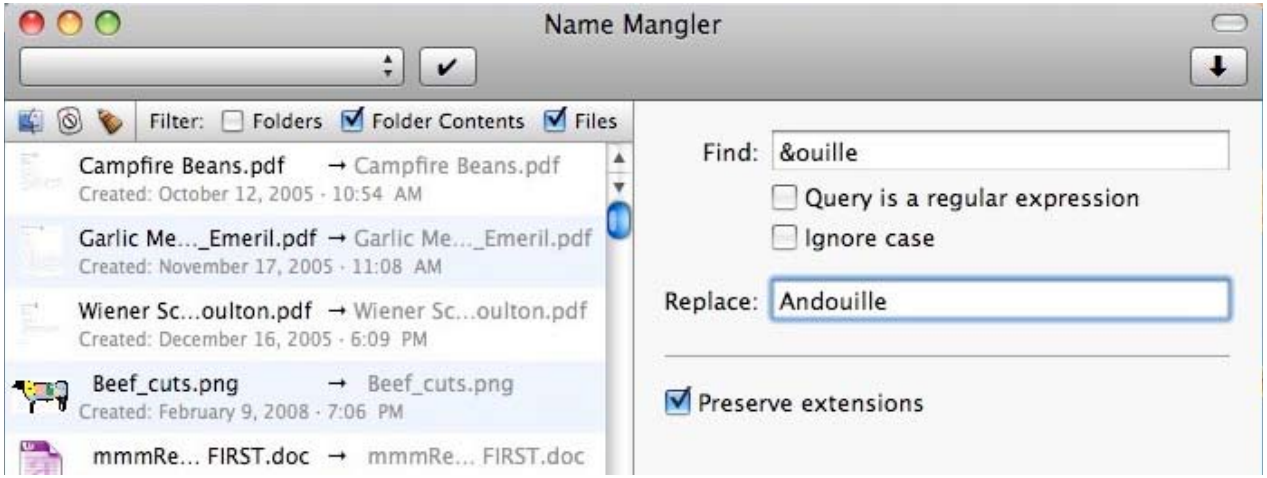
An Aside — According to posted blogs, Name Mangler is meant to be easier to use than those comparable Automator actions. From what users report, it seems they do indeed perceive Name Mangler as being the easier way. But beware; automation is in Doc's future, I asked for a book to review to force me to learn how to use the application — Stay Tuned!

Discomforts

A Bit of Easier To Access Help — I would have appreciated the developer adding the contents of the Help files, to a ReadMe doc-



Food Network Name Change



Andouille Error Correction

ument, and adding this to the installation package. I consolidated the help files and now have an easier to access, in a separate window, means of exploring the products more advanced features.

Conclusions and Recommendation

What's not to like! Easy to use, easy to learn, out of the way advanced features to use as your needs evolve, no scripting need by most users, and best of all FREE. Send these folks a donation; they do great work. Download the product. Even if you use it a few times a month, it doesn't take much space – 447 KB; making changes to names one at a time is coolie work, for which I'm not suited. You can't beat 5.0 macCs, go for it now!

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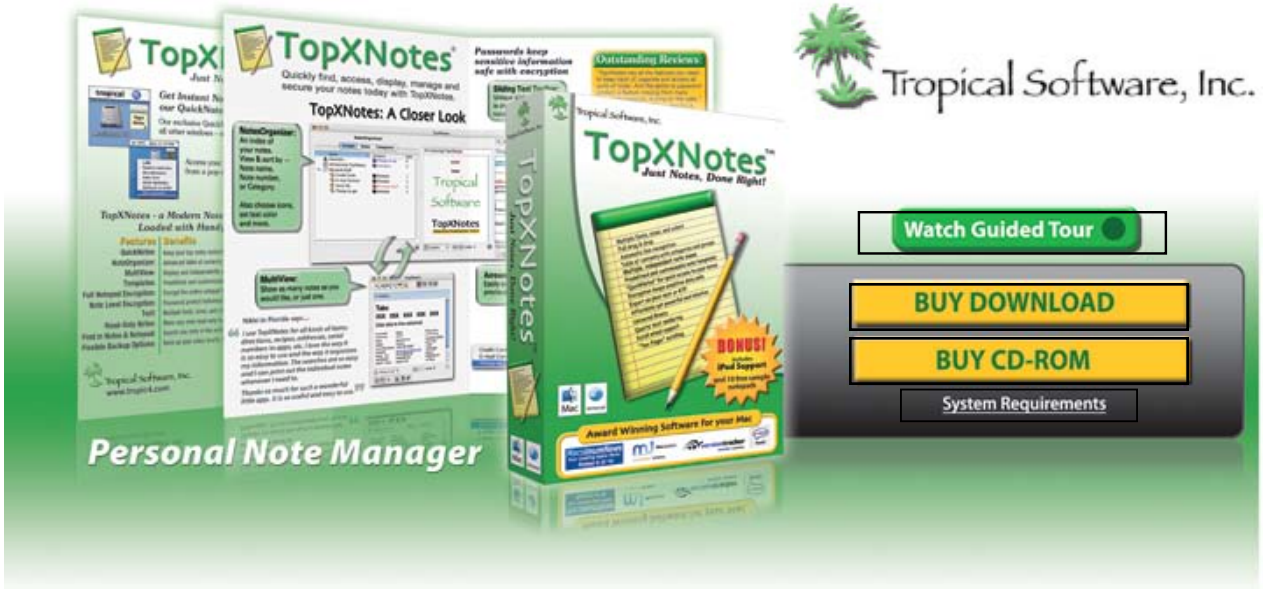

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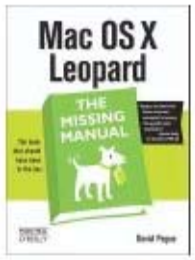

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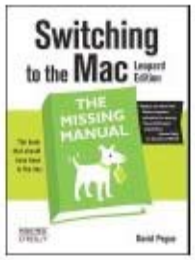

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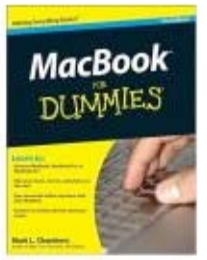

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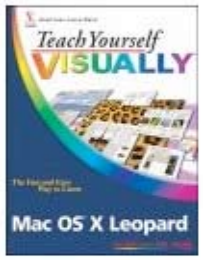

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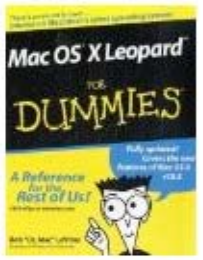

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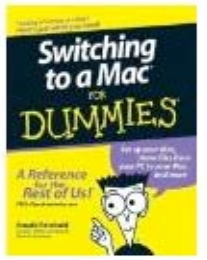

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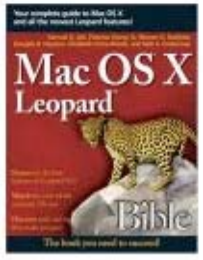

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We also provide monthly book, hardware and software reviews at macCompanion. We offer ways and means for folks to get comfortable using the Macintoshä created by the Appleâ Corporation in the multibillion-dollar computer industry. We know that bad 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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We do affiliations, and work with those who have made arrangements with online affiliate systems, or we deal directly with you if you have created code, and have a contract we can sign. Check out the Bazaar on our website at http://www.maccompanion.com/bazaar/bazaarindex.html

Sponsorships

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