

macCompanion

YOUR GUIDE TO ALL THINGS MACINTOSH

Happy Holiday's?



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Our special thanks to all those who have allowed us to review their products!
In addition, thanks to you, our readers, who make this effort all possible.

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Columns



Letter from the CEO

AT&T and iPhone Support

By Robert L Pritchett

<http://www.att.com/wireless/iphone//>

am so tired of driving through areas in my part of the country where there is “no service” or “data connection lost” messages my iPhone when I try to find customers using the iPhone map and phone service. I have to leave those areas in order to close tickets or communicate with customers.

Verizon’s commercials showing coverage pretty much says it all.

“Verizon’s latest Christmas-themed television commercials continue the teleco’s critique of competitor AT&T, using the Island of Misfit Toys, Blue Christmas and Santa’s Elves. The three ads set out to reveal the flaw in Apple’s iPhone deal with AT&T, subtly suggesting that the Verizon Droid make its way onto Christmas shopping lists this year.

An adapted scene from the 1964 Rankin/Bass stop-motion animated Christmas film, Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer. “We’re on the island of misfit toys”, sounds the soundtrack as an iPhone swaggers onto the island. “What are you doing here?”, asks one of the toys. All becomes clear when the iPhone reveals the difference between AT&T 3G coverage and Verizon 3G coverage.”

<http://theinspirationroom.com/daily/2009/verizon-christmas-bags-iphone-coverage/>

Verizon Misfit Toys

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4JgrBtn8XdU>

Verizon Elves

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xw9oNBrmv0g>

Verizon Blue Christmas

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nRIqIWxhTIQ>

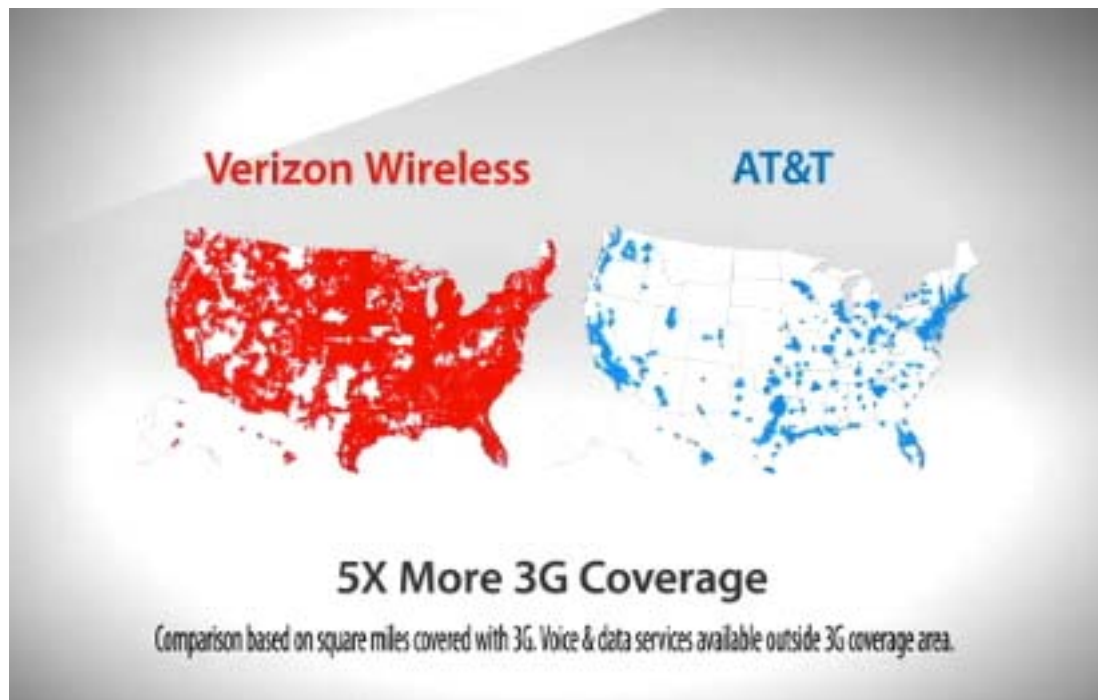
You will notice that Verizon was every careful not to diss Apple , but focussed specifically on poor 3G coverage by AT&T, since the exclusive contract with AT&T will be up for renewal next year and that means contracts will possibly be open to all carriers, not just AT&T.

<http://dvice.com/archives/2009/04/atts-iphone-con.php>

Coverage Maps

There's a map for that

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=37NKnDRPFKU>



Verizon

<http://www.verizonwireless.com/b2c/CoverageLocatorController?requesttype=NEWREQUEST&coveragetype=broadband>

AT&T

<http://www.wireless.att.com/coverageviewer/#?type=voice>

Work-Arounds

Jonny Evans posted an article over on 9to5mac regarding “tethering”. AT&T has been a “no show” after promising this service for over a year for iPhone users.

http://www.9to5mac.com/att_iphone_tether_tease_50049

<http://www.9to5mac.com/iphone-att-tether>

mtech20 <http://www.youtube.com/user/mtech20> wrote;

“What good is a Ferrari if the only road you can drive it is full of pot holes? I'd rather have a solid phone on a superior network, than a trendy phone on a subpar network.”

The work-around apparently has been use of Verizon Mifis -
http://www.verizonwireless.com/b2c/mobilebroadband/?page=products_mifi

Supported devices show 32-bit only for the Mac (G3 or later with OS X 10.4.7 or later) and none for the iPhone, so tethering has to be done with a Mac to iPhone connection to make this work – and the extra Verizon monthly fee.

<http://www.vzam.net/download/supported.aspx>

A **MiFi** is a mobile intelligent hotspot WiFi router.
<http://learning.verizonwireless.com/learning/MiFi2200/index.html>

“Mobile Broadband Connect is a product offering from Verizon Wireless that allows you to use your device/handset as a modem if you subscribe to a qualifying data and/or calling plan. By using the adaptor cable that comes with the purchase of the appropriate Mobile Office Kit or that is contained in the box for your BlackBerry device or Smartphone, a connection can be made from your laptop computer to your Mobile Broadband Connect capable device. By linking your laptop to your Mobile Broadband enabled device, you can establish a broadband connection anywhere within our Mobile Broadband Rate and Coverage Area. When you are outside this area, your laptop will connect using NationalAccess anywhere within the Extended National Enhanced Services Rate and Coverage Area. If you have a BlackBerry device or Smartphone, you also can roam on the Canadian or Mexican Broadband Rate and Coverage Areas. By using Mobile Broadband, you can transfer files, securely access corporate email and applications - even data-intensive ones - and download short video clips, audio files and Web graphics. Having a true desktop-like experience while out of the office will help you stay as productive and efficient as ever.”

Why can't AT&T offer the same service? Oh yeah, it was promised over a year ago. I'm still patiently waiting.

By the way, I figured my iPhone was glitchy, because voicemail apparently is batched to my iPhone. Recently the messages I get are incredibly garbled and only the last snippet of messages are understandable. Nope, this is a problem on non-iPhone cellphones as well, according to other AT&T customers I've talked to. Please do not get upset if I do not respond to your calls immediately. Some voicemails take up to a week to appear.

So what is keeping AT&T from upgrading infrastructure services? Oh yeah, that is supposed to be completed by 2011, announced back in May –

“AT&T’s network infrastructure gives us a tremendous advantage in that we’re able to deliver upgrades in mobile broadband speed and performance with our existing technology platform,” said Ralph de la Vega, president and CEO, AT&T Mobility and Consumer Markets. “With the array of smartphones, laptops and emerging devices taking advantage of AT&T’s 3G network today, we know that customers are excited to experience higher mobile broadband speeds, and we are deploying the right technologies at the right times to help them get the most from that experience.”

The upgraded network platform could allow for theoretical peak speeds of 7.2Mbps. Typical real-world downlink and uplink speeds experienced by customers with upgraded 3G will be less than the theoretical peak and will vary based on a number of factors, including location, device, and overall traffic on the local network at a given time.

AT&T’s 3G mobile broadband network is now available in nearly 350 U.S. major metropolitan areas, with about 20 additional metro areas planned for deployment in 2009. The HSPA 7.2 technology will be deployed widely in the network, with the benefits of the network upgrade to be announced on a local basis as the faster speeds are turned up. AT&T will introduce multiple HSPA 7.2-compatible laptop cards and smartphones beginning later this year.

The speed upgrade is one of several ongoing initiatives to expand and enhance AT&T’s mobile broadband service. Other key projects in 2009 include:

- **Near-Doubling Radio Frequency Capacity.** In 2008 and 2009 to date, high-quality 850 MHz spectrum has been deployed in more than half of AT&T’s 3G network footprint to improve overall coverage and in-building reception, with additional markets planned for later in the year.
- **More Bandwidth to Cell Sites.** We are adding fiber-optic connectivity and additional capacity to thousands of cell sites across the country this year, expanding the critical connections that deliver traffic from a cell site into the global IP backbone network. These upgrades will support the higher mobile broadband speeds enabled by both HSPA 7.2 and LTE.
- **More Cell Sites.** Deployment of about 2,100 new cell sites across the country.
- **Wi-Fi Integration.** Many AT&T smartphones will be able to switch seamlessly between 3G and Wi-Fi connectivity. AT&T customers with qualifying smartphone and 3G LaptopConnect plans have access to the nation’s largest Wi-Fi network – more than 20,000 hotspots, including locations in all 50 states – at no additional charge. AT&T’s global Wi-Fi footprint covers more than 90,000 hotspots, and AT&T also can create permanent or temporary extended Wi-Fi zones in areas with high 3G network use, like a grouping of hotels or a festival.

- **MicroCells.** Customer trials leading toward general availability of AT&T 3G MicroCell offerings, which utilize femtocells to enhance in-building wireless coverage.

Capital investment for these projects fits within AT&T's previously outlined expectation of total capital expenditures for 2009, targeted toward the \$17 billion to \$18 billion range. AT&T matches this network investment with unsurpassed choice in the range of devices, services and applications compatible with its 3G network."

<http://www.att.com/gen/press-room?pid=4800&cdvn=news&newsarticleid=26835>

Jeffrey Marks wrote;

"I am writing to you today to express my sincere disappointment in the treatment iPhone users receive from your company. We represent the most profitable sector of your business, yet we are treated like second or third class citizens.

My specific concerns arise from the double standard applied to features on the iPhone versus other mobile phones. For example, AT&T has blocked tethering, despite Apple making it available in the operating system. However, Blackberry users have been able to tether with AT&T for some time. Additionally, AT&T has blocked the Sling Player application from operating over 3G. Meanwhile, the Blackberry version works just fine over 3G.

It shocks and amazes me that a company can discriminate against one set of customers in this way. It is my intent to leave AT&T the moment iPhones are available in the United States on any other carrier.

You should also be aware, that every feature you block is available if a user jailbreaks the phone. It has taken every bit of restraint I can muster to remain honest and not employ this fix.

It seems that AT&T entered into an agreement with Apple without understanding the burden that a phone of this nature creates for the wireless network. It is a travesty. However, you made that agreement. Now you need to accept the consequences and provide the services that iPhone users require. Otherwise, expect to lose your customers to other providers, or expect those who stay to jailbreak their device."

Disgruntled,
Jeffrey Marks

<http://www.lionfishpictures.com/2009/11/i-have-had-it-with-at.html>

Jailbreaking the iPhone

“**Jailbreaking** is a process that allows iPhone and iPod Touch users to run unofficial code on their devices bypassing Apple's official distribution mechanism, the App Store. Once jailbroken, iPhone users are able to download many applications previously unavailable through the App Store via unofficial installers such as Cydia, Rock App, Icy, and Installer. Cydia is preferred by the community, while Rock App has a small catalog of mainly paid apps. Icy and Installer are officially unsupported by their developers and rarely used. Cydia founder Jay Freeman estimates that 4 million (out of 40 million) iPods and iPhones are jailbroken.”

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jailbreak_\(iPhone_OS\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jailbreak_(iPhone_OS))

Tethering worked on jailbroken iPhones prior to the 3.1 “upgrade”.

Jailbreaking 3.1

“Apple released their iPhone 3.1 firmware on September 9, and now the iPhone Dev Team has released their **Pwnage Tool 3.1** software which can **jailbreak iPhone 3.1**. There is no Windows Pwnage Tool 3.1, it only works for Mac. If you're a Windows user then you'll have to wait for the iPhone Dev Team to release redsn0w. If you're a Mac user, then follow the steps below to jailbreak iPhone OS 3.1.”

<http://www.quickpwn.com/2009/09/jailbreak-iphone-3-1-with-pwnage-tool-3-1-mac-only.html>

There is also this workaround – which if used, means the iPhone has to be tethered each time you reboot –

Jailbreak iPhone 3.1.2 firmware with blackra1n

“If you want to jailbreak iPhone 3.1.2 or iPod Touch 3.1.2 firmware, you can use the blackra1n software to do it. blackra1n is available for both Windows and Mac. This post has the download links for blackra1n and also gives you a tutorial on how to use it.”

<http://www.iphoneos3.com/2009/10/14/jailbreak-iphone-3-1-2-firmware-blackra1n/>

3.1.2 Jailbreak/Unlock (all devices) iPhone/iPod Touch

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cdUPLnYAlnI>

Consequences of Jailbreaking

Jay Santos wrote;

“There is now a worm that is spreading in all iPhones that are jailbroken wherein it'll change your wallpaper into a picture of Rick Astley and give you messages that indeed your iPhone has been infected by a worm or virus. This is only for all iPhones jailbroken and with their SSH passwords not changed from their default ones. Having the default password for SSH means that anyone can enter your iPhone and do customizations to it without your permission. The worm spreading around iPhones isn't really that destructive but it gives you a sense or feel on how hackers can and will attack our phones.

Good thing I still choose not to be jailbroken and be locked to my carrier, Globe Telecom.”

<http://jaytrixz.blogspot.com/2009/11/risks-of-jailbreaking.html>

Secure your jailbroken iPhone against worm

David Martin wrote;

“If your **iPhone** was recently "**Rickrolled**" by a worm that targets jailbroken **iPhones**, the following six steps will show you how to change the root password--used to connect to your device via a Unix software secure shell--to protect yourself in the future. Before starting, you will need to have **MobileTerminal** installed from the Cydia store.

Then:

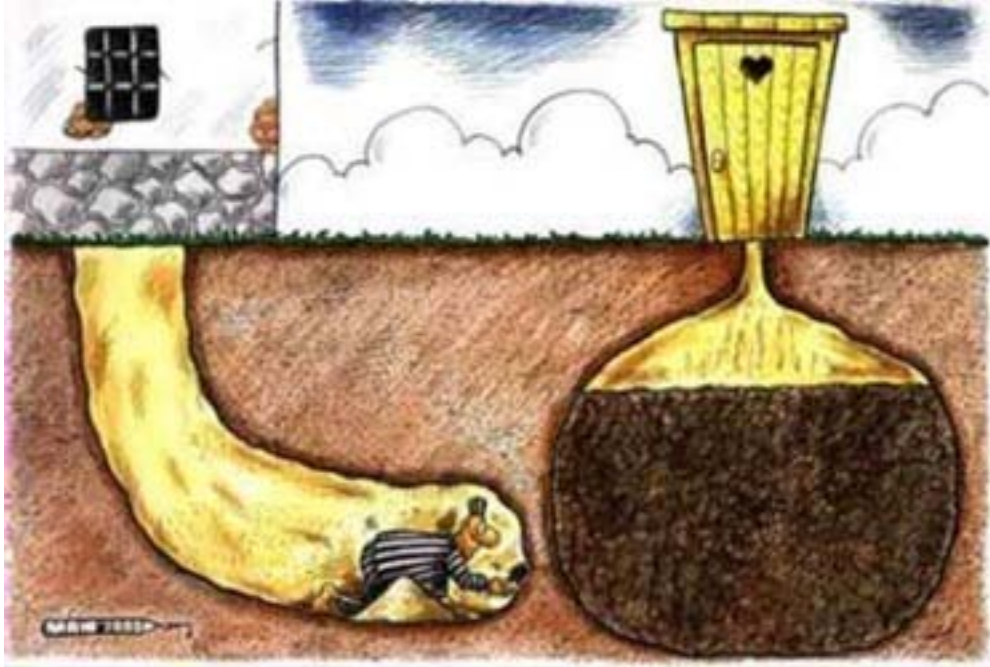
1. Tap the MobileTerminal icon to open a terminal window.
2. Enter **su** and press return.
3. Enter the current default root user password **alpine** and press return.
4. Type **passwd** and press return.
5. Enter a new password and press return.
6. Enter the new password again and press return.

The root password is now changed, and your jailbroken iPhone or **iPod Touch** is now a bit more secure than it was before and less vulnerable to the **first worm detected that targets the iPhone.**”

http://reviews.cnet.com/8301-19512_7-10393541-233.html

You void the warranty if you jailbreak your iPhone. That is probably the real reason why I had to pay for a new one when my old one got wet.

<http://www.maccompanion.com/macc/archives/March2009/Columns/LetterfromtheCEO.htm>



Source: <http://justanotheriphoneblog.com/wordpress/general/ironic-zibri-ziphone-site-showing-cartoon-on-consequences-of-jailbreaking>

Egypt wrote:

“Jailbreaking means that you can add native applications (people who make home made applications) which is really useful, because it has the things that the iPhone didn’t come with such as video recording, video streaming, you can customize every aspect of the phone to the background to the icons to the sounds it makes when you open and close it to game emulators.”

<http://answers.yahoo.com/question/index?qid=20080829141850AAVGB51>

More here: <http://forum.theiphoneblog.com/iphone-jailbreak-unlock/>

And here: <http://forum.theiphoneblog.com/iphone-jailbreak-unlock/165682-read-before-posting-jailbreak-faq-updated-3-9-09-a.html>

Semi-tethering using Greenpois0n

ChronicDev wrote;

“Current plans are releasing a "lite" greenpois0n that supports only iPod touch 3G, as well as the updated bootrom ipt2/3G[s]. After gplite is applied, your device will be able to be used normally with Apple and App Store apps on a normal boot, then when you connect to our program and boot you will be able to use your Cydia apps as well.

This is known as a “semi-tethered” jailbreak, basically meaning you can reboot normally (especially important for people with new 3G[s]) and use it as a normal iPod / iPhone, and then connect to your computer and boot when you get home or whatever to use Cydia apps and such. Later on, a full featured version of greenpois0n will be released, followed closely by the source for the backend.”

<http://chronic-dev.org/blog/2009/11/greenpois0n-what-it-is-and-what-it-is-not/>

Digging Deeper:

Cydia is a [software application](#) developed by Jay Freeman (also known as "saurik") for the iPhone OS that allows the user to browse and download applications usable on a jailbroken iPhone or iPod Touch. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cydia_\(application\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cydia_(application))

Hacking the iPhone – Google video

<http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=713763707060529304#>

The **iPhone Dev Team** is a group of hackers in the iPhone OS community who have developed many tools to enable the use of applications unauthorized by Apple Inc. on the iPhone and iPod Touch devices and to enable the use of the iPhone on GSM carriers unauthorized by Apple.

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

iPhone Wiki dedicated to collecting, storing and providing information on Hacking the iPhone

<http://theiphonewiki.com/>

Robert X. Cringely jumps in

http://www.infoworld.com/d/adventures-in-it/hey-att-map-least-your-problems-328?source=IFWNLE_nlt_blogs_2009-11-13

AT&T Responds to Verizon Ads

http://www.macworld.com/article/143849/2009/11/att_verizon.html?lsrc=rss_main

Verizon responds to AT&T's Lawsuit

<http://www.insanely-great.com/news.php?id=10687>

Truth about 3G

<http://www.att.com/truthabout3g/>

Memo to AT&T: When you're in a hole, stop digging

<http://blogs.zdnet.com/BTL/?p=27327&tag=coll;post-27545>

AT&T loses first legal battle against Verizon ads

http://news.cnet.com/8301-30686_3-10401094-266.html?part=rss&subj=news&tag=2547-1_3-0-20

AT&T blasts Verizon with new U.S. national TV ad featuring Luke Wilson (with video)

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

iPhone's AT&T exclusivity locked in until 2010

http://digg.com/apple/iPhone_s_AT_T_exclusivity_locked_in_until_2010

Apple's latest iPhone ads take a swipe at Verizon

http://www.9to5mac.com/iphone_verizon_30104?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+9To5Mac-MacAllDay+%289+to+5+Mac+-+Apple+Intelligence%29

Verizon: How Much Do You Charge Now?

<http://www.newworldorderreport.com/Articles/tabid/266/ID/39/Verizon-How-Much-Do-You-Charge-Now.aspx>



According to Hoyle...

C++0x Part 3: Making Coding Easier

December 2009

by Jonathan Hoyle

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macCompanion

<http://www.jonhoyle.com>

Two months ago, we began our series

<http://www.maccompanion.com/macc/archives/October2009/Columns/AccordingtoHoyle.htm>

on the changes that will be coming the C++ language. Last month

<http://www.maccompanion.com/macc/archives/November2009/Columns/AccordingtoHoyle.htm>

we examined some of the updates which were expected to take place: fixing embarrassments and syncing up with ANSI C99 changes. With this month, we look at some more improvements available to C++ developers of the future. Specifically, changes which make coding easier.

Standard C++ Library Enhancements

The Standard C++ Library, including STL (the Standard Template Library), is a generous supply of useful containers and utilities. Despite its fullness of capabilities, there were still a number of components missing. C++0x fills these gaps:

regex: a long awaited regular expressions class

array<>: a 1-dimensional array class containing its size (can be size 0)

STL hash classes: **unordered_set**<>, **unordered_map**<>, etc.

(These do the same thing as their ordered counterparts, except using a hash table)

tuple<>: a templated tuple class of multiple types: **tuple**<int,int> x; **tuple**<double,void*,A,B> z;

Mac users are fortunate in that they do not have to wait for the Standard Library changes: they are available today in gcc 4 (the compiler inside *Xcode 2.x* and later). These library additions are within the library namespace **std::tr1::** ("**tr1**" stands for *Technical Report #1*, the standard's committee report defining these new classes).

Variadic Templates

For years, the C language has allowed functions to have a variable number of parameters. Unfortunately, this was not true of template arguments within C++98. In C++0x, templates can have a variable number of types. Here is an example in which a templated `DebugMessage()` function can take advantage of variadic templates:

```
// Prints to stderr only when DEBUG flag set
template<typename... TypeArgs>
void DebugMessage(TypeArgs... args)
{
    #ifdef DEBUG
        ... // Implement writing to stderr
    #else
        // Do nothing if the DEBUG switch is off
    #endif
}

// Later in code
DebugMessage("The value of n = ", n);
DebugMessage("x = ", x, ", y = ", y, "z = ", z);
DebugMessage("TRACE:",
    " time = ", clock(),
    " filename = ", __FILE__,
    " line number = ", __LINE__,
    " inside function: ", __func__);
```

This new flexibility with macros will make it easier for developers wishing to use them, as their current restrictions make them occasionally cumbersome.

Delegating Constructors

Other languages, such as C#, allow one class constructor to invoke another. In C++98, this was not possible, thus requiring the class designer to create a separate initialization function if it wished to use common code across multiple constructors. In C++0x, this becomes available, as the following example shows:

```
class X
{
    public:
        X(); // default constructor
        X(void *ptr); // takes a pointer
        X(int value); // takes an int
};

X::X(): X(NULL) // calls X(void *)
```



```

{
    ...                // other code
}

X::X(void *ptr): X(0) // calls X(int)
{
    ...                // other code
}

X::X(int value)      // does not delegate
{
    ...                // other code
}

```

With constructor delegation, C++ class designers can simplify their implementations.

Null Pointers

In ANSI C, **NULL** is defined as **(void *)0**. In C++, the use of **NULL** is deprecated. Why? Because unlike in C, it is illegal in C++ to assign a **void** pointer to any other type of pointer:

```

void *vPtr = NULL;    // legal C, legal C++
int *iPtr = NULL;    // legal C, illegal C++
                    // Cannot assign a void * to int * in C++!
int *iPtr = 0;       // legal C++

```

However, the proliferation of **NULL** in C++ code remains so great, many compilers simply generate a warning, not an error, when such a pointer assignment mismatch takes place. Others redefine **NULL** in C++ as **0**. Despite these occasional compiler courtesies, it is still very confusing for beginning C++ programmers, especially in examples such as these:

```

void foo(int);        // Takes an int
void foo(char *);    // Takes a char pointer

foo(0);              // Is this supposed to be a ptr or the number 0?
foo(NULL);           // No matching prototype

```

For this reason, C++0x introduces **nullptr**, a type-safe null pointer which can be used with any pointer, but is not compatible with any integral type:

```

char *cPtr1 = nullptr; // a null C++ pointer
char *cPtr2 = 0;       // legal, but deprecated
int n = nullptr;      // illegal
X *xPtr = nullptr;    // can be used with any ptr type

void foo(int);        // Takes an int

```

```

void foo(char *);           // Takes a char *

foo(0);                     // Calls foo(int)
foo(nullptr);              // Calls foo(char *)

```

Essentially, C++ programmers now have a type-safe replacement for **NULL**, which matches similar behavior in other more recent languages.

The Amazing Return of auto

When the C language first evolved, the **auto** keyword was used to specify to the compiler that a variable was being allocated on the stack, for example:

```

auto    x;                /* a variable named x, implicitly an int, is placed on the stack
*/

```

When ANSI C was ratified in 1989, the implicit **int** rule was removed:

```

auto    x;                /* illegal in ANSI C */
int     x;                /* OK, auto assumed */
auto int x;              /* OK, but redundant */

```

Since that time, **auto** remained a keyword in the C (and later C++) languages, even though virtually no one had used it since the 1970's. After over 30 years of disuse, the C++0x standard will reintroduce the **auto** keyword to mean that the variable type is implied by the initializer:

```

auto    x = 10;          // x is an int
auto    y = 10.0;        // y is a double
auto    z = 10LL;        // z is a long long
const auto *p = &y;      // p is a const double *

```

The savings becomes more significant with complicated types, such as the following example:

```

void *foo(const int doubleArray[64][16]);

auto myFcnPtr = foo;      // myFcnPtr is of type "void *(const int(*)[16])"

```

In addition, **auto** becomes useful for temporary variables whose types aren't important but merely just have to match. Consider the following function which walks through an STL container:

```
void foo(vector<MySpace::MyClass *> x)
{
    for (auto ptr = x.begin(); ptr != x.end(); ptr++)
    {
        ... // Code modifying the data
    }
}
```

Without **auto**, the type for variable **ptr** would be **vector<MySpace::MyClass *>::iterator**. Moreover, any change to this container, such as changing it from a **vector** to a **list**, or changing the class name or namespace, would require changes in the **ptr** variable definition, despite the fact its type is completely unnecessary to note (other than for the compiler).

Note that an initializer is still required to use **auto** for C++0x:

```
auto x; // still illegal in C++0x
```

But suppose you knew what type you wanted (based upon another variable) but did not want to initialize? The new **decltype** keyword is available for just such purposes, as the following example shows:

```
bool SelectionSort(double data[256], double tolerance);
bool BubbleSort(double data[256], double tolerance);
bool QuikSort(double data[256], double tolerance);

decltype(SelectionSort) mySortFcn;

if (bUseSelectionSort) mySortFcn = SelectionSort;
else if (bUseBubbleSort) mySortFcn = BubbleSort;
else mySortFcn = QuikSort;
```

With the inclusion of *auto* & *decltype* in C++0x, a great deal of simplicity is restored to C++ development, without any loss of power.

Coming Up Next Month: Part 4 of C++0x, where we continue with some of the powerful new features of the upcoming C++ language.

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



Not all that Glitters is...

By Robert Pritchett

And before you ask, how this affects Apple Corporation – think electronics and what goes into them.

Real unemployment in the US is around 55%, not 17%. This is a worldwide catastrophe caused by the banksters intending to control our lives and depopulate the world through war attrition and plagues. We seem to be living in the times foretold by scripture regarding the “last days”.

Meanwhile as underemployment and unemployment progresses, we see the different actions taking place on all fronts and we seem to have nowhere to turn to resolve the issues. No time in the history of the US have so many been living on unemployment benefits for so long (averaging over 6 months). 7,000 per day in the US are coming off the unemployment rolls, because they have maxed out their claims. The gold is gone.

We recently saw that Fort Knox is allegedly full of fake bullion (tungsten bars instead of real gold) and that info is now being suppressed on the Internet. The whistleblowers were those who “own” over 60% of this country – the Red Chinese -

<http://www.marketoracle.co.uk/Article14996.html>
and <http://news.goldseek.com/GoldSeek/1258049769.php>

“The amount of “salted tungsten” gold bars in question was allegedly between 5,600 and 5,700 – 400 oz – good delivery bars [roughly 60 metric tonnes].

This was apparently all highly orchestrated by an extremely well financed criminal operation.

Within mere hours of this scam being identified – Chinese officials had many of the perpetrators in custody.

And here's what the Red Chinese allegedly uncovered:

Roughly 15 years ago – during the Clinton Administration [think Robert Rubin, Sir Alan Greenspan and Lawrence Summers] – between 1.3 and 1.5 million 400 oz tungsten blanks were allegedly manufactured by a very high-end, sophisticated refiner in the USA [more than 16 Thousand metric tonnes]. Subsequently, 640,000 of these tungsten blanks received their gold plating and WERE shipped to Ft. Knox and remain there to this day. I know folks who have copies of the original shipping docs with dates and exact weights of “tungsten” bars shipped to Ft. Knox.”

And

“A Chinese company called Chinatungsten <http://www.chinatungsten.com/> is advertising imitation gold merchandise on its website. The following quote is taken directly from their Tungsten Alloy for Gold Substitution page:

"a coin with a tungsten center and gold all around it could not be detected as counterfeit by density measurement alone ... We are well accustomed to exploit more innovative applications of tungsten products. Gold-plated tungsten is one of our main products."
<https://www.kitcomm.com/showthread.php?t=53241>

All I could do is laugh at those who are selling gold on TV right now. How do you know the certificates are backed by real gold?

How to Make Convincing Fake-Gold Bars

“A top-of-the-line fake gold bar should match the color, surface hardness, density, chemical, and nuclear properties of gold perfectly. To do this, you could start with a tungsten slug about 1/8-inch smaller in each dimension than the gold bar you want, then cast a 1/16-inch layer of real pure gold all around it. This bar would feel right in the hand, it would have a dead ring when knocked as gold should, it would test right chemically, it would weigh *exactly* the right amount, and though I don't know this for sure, I think it would also pass an x-ray fluorescence scan, the 1/16" layer of pure gold being enough to stop the x-rays from reaching any tungsten. You'd pretty much have to drill it to find out it's fake. (Unless, of course, central bank gold inspectors are wise to this trick and have developed a test for it: Something involving speed of sound say, or more powerful x-rays, or perhaps neutron activation analysis. If bars like this are actually a common problem, you certainly could devise a quick, non-destructive test for them, and for all I know, they have. Except, apparently, in Ethiopia.)”
<http://www.popsoci.com/diy/article/2008-03/how-make-convincing-fake-gold-bars>

Brigham Young once wrote;

“Were I to ask the question, how much wheat or anything else a man must have to justify him in letting it go to waste, it would be hard to answer; figures are inadequate to give the amount. Never let anything go to waste. Be prudent, save everything, and what you get more than you can take care of yourselves, ask your neighbors to help you. There are scores and hundreds of men in this house, if the question were asked them if they considered their grain a burden and a drudge to them, when they had plenty last year and the year before, that would answer in the affirmative, and were ready to part with it for next to nothing. How do they feel now, when their granaries are empty? If they had a few thousand bushels to spare now, would they not consider it a blessing? They would. Why? Because it would bring the gold and silver. But pause for a moment, and suppose you had millions of bushels to sell, and could sell it for twenty dollars per bushel, or for a million dollars per bushel, no matter what amount, so that you sell all your wheat, and transport it out of the country, and you are left with nothing more than a pile of gold, what good would it do you? You could not eat it, drink it, wear it, or carry it off where you could have something to eat.

The time will come that gold will hold no comparison in value to a bushel of wheat. Gold is not to be compared with it in value. Why would it be precious to you now? Simply because you could get gold for it? Gold is good for nothing, only as men value it. It is no better than a piece of iron, a piece of limestone, or a piece of sandstone, and it is not half so good as the soil from which we raise our wheat, and other necessities of life. The children of men love it, they lust after it, are greedy for it, and are ready to destroy themselves, and those around them, over whom they have any influence, to gain it” (Journal of Discourses, 1:, p.250).

Here is a fun read regarding gold collection using the horsetail weed –
<http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,851097,00.html> from 1941!

And this made headlines when India bought IMF gold. How much of it was Tungsten bars?
<http://www.istockanalyst.com/article/viewarticle/articleid/3608516>

The Dollar Bubble

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eZA0qNsf4m0>

I was told recently that if we look at the value of the dollar even from 1896 (yes, 1896, not 1996) to the present, the value of the “energy value” of the dollar has not changed – ½ of one cent.

What can we do to turn things around? Pat answers are; pray, repent, live within our means, be austere in our habits, have a usable food supply and do not allow government to control our lives. It starts at home.

Digging Deeper

PEOPLE For Mathematically Perfected Economy™ (PFMPE™)

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

Cloward-Piven Government

http://www.americanthinker.com/2009/11/clowardpiven_government.html

Obama Insanity Watch

<http://dicksguides.com/ObamaInsanityWatch2.htm#A1>

TEA Parties Need Teeth

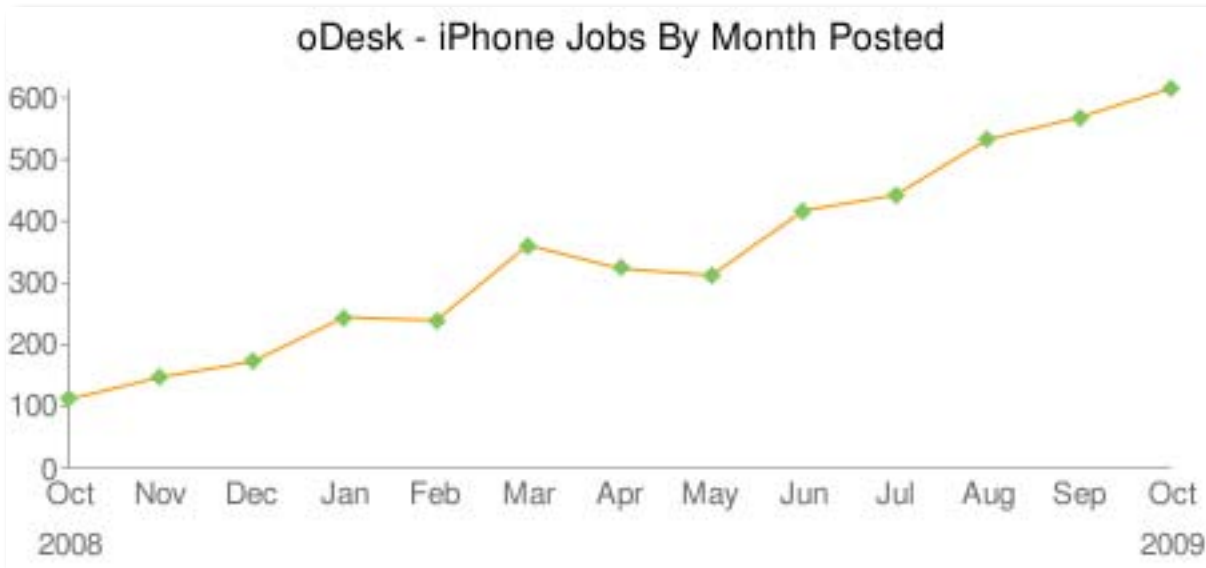
<http://www.newswithviews.com/Vieira/edwin201>. <http://newssarasota.com/htm>

Fake gold bars! What's next?

<http://www.viewzone.com/fakegold.html>

Why is iPhone Development so hard?

By Chris Lozinski – Specialty Job Markets, Copyright, November 2009, Reprinted with permission from <http://article.iphone.specialtyjobmarkets.com/>



I see 600 iPhone jobs posted on oDesk, just for the month of October 2009. If each job takes six months, we need 3600 experienced Objective-C developers. How many iPhone developers are there? oDesk reports that they have 1,857 iPhone developers, but that probably includes people who just mention that they own an iPhone. How many of those have focused on the iPhone market and have taken the time to learn the platform? oDesk reports that they have 765 candidates who have the word iPhone in their title. That sounds like a more believable number, and consistent with what I know. I remember reading somewhere that oDesk only fills 25% of their iPhone jobs. Which is consistent with the 765 number. I record 658 candidates in my iPhone database accumulated over 10 years.

We just don't have enough experienced Objective-C developers out there to fill the demand. Something needs to change. Sure newbies can get the apps to run, but we need to make big changes to how this industry is structured. I hope that the experienced developers will share their experience by publishing reusable components. In so doing they allow the other developers to accomplish a lot more, and will distinguish themselves from the newbies.

“Compared to all of the other embedded systems I've developed for, the iPhone is a veritable utopia of developer goodness.” Micheal Ellis

I have never seen as productive a single developer environment, as the now deprecated ZClasses running on Zope, ZODB, and Python.

On March 16th of this year, I started writing an iPhone application TextFaster. It has big keys to make it easier to type. It is now 8 months later, and I am only now uploading the app to the iPhone store. Since the iPhone is so easy to use, hiring managers expect it to be easy to develop for. This is simply not the case. The disconnect between expectations and reality angers some developers. It confused me, and led me to write this article. A better understanding of the issues made me realize that there are several things we can all do to speed up development. In the future, I will be assembling new applications from existing software components.

Let me start by saying that iPhone App development is way easier than any embedded or cell phone system I know of, with the possible exception of Python on the Nokia Maemo platform. And of course iPhone development is way harder than Linux based Python development. Understand that it is all relative, which is important in putting this article in context.



Here is a clickable screenshot of the TextFaster keyboard



Here is a screenshot of the iPhone keyboard

Which keyboard do you prefer?

I think that it is no one thing that makes iPhone app development so hard, rather it is multiple things. Part of it is related to history. Part of it is related to the hardware. And part of it are things that I hope Apple will fix in the future. So I have organized this article into three parts; First I write about why fundamentally it is hard to write for the iPhone, then I talk about specific problems that Apple can fix, and finally I talk about issues that are outside of Apple's control.

Fundamental Issues

Multi-Touch Interface

I built these multi-touch interfaces. Mostly they work. You can slide your fingers around, when you slide on, the key is pressed. When you slide off, it is released. It is only when you raise the finger, that the button is acted on. I still occasionally get a button that stays highlighted when the user lets go. I have no idea why. I am not even sure how to debug it. This processing of multi-touch events is not at all the sequential type of algorithm that I am used to. It is just hard. It is one thing that adds to the level of difficulty.

The #%&@? screen tilts

I had all the code working in landscape mode, and the users say they want portrait mode. The number of buttons are different. The positioning of the buttons are different. Some code can be shared, others has to be modified. Data has to be saved across the different tilts, even though the view controllers are being released and recreated. And when you tilt, not only are buttons stretched, but some have to be moved to fit. I have never seen anything like this.

Memory Management

There is limited memory on the iPhone. So we have to manage it carefully. Memory management on the iPhone is not that hard, but it is a little tricky. It is a big accounting problem. You have to remember to release all the things you freed, but not before they are being done being used. Frankly I think some code generation tools could do this all for me.

Missing Garbage Collection

In Python, Smalltalk, and even the mainstream release of Objective-C, garbage collection is supported. When I am done with an object, I forget about it, the garbage collector cleans it up for me. In contrast, on the small-memory-footprint iPhone, there is (wisely) no garbage collection. I have to do it all myself. Not a huge issues, just one more thing slowing down development.

Not knowing what we are building

I asked people, and they said that they needed a keyboard with bigger keys on the iPhone. Made sense to me, so I first I build a chord keyboard. Then everyone asked me to build a one-touch keyboard. So I did. Then they asked for a portrait mode keyboard. So I did. Then they asked me for a Qwerty keyboard. I will do that next. And then I expect them to ask for a chord keyboard. I am joking. My mentor says users don't know what they want.

In the meantime it turns out that the blind users just love my keyboards. I never expected it. Their needs are significantly different than I ever planned on. And so it is with the iPhone. You do not know where it is going. You jump off the cliff, some of us lone wolf entrepreneurs take a running jump off the cliff. We do not know where we are going to land, but by landing there before anyone else, we get to stake our claims. So it is really hard to plan on how long it will take to build something, when you do not know the end thing that you are building. Sure I had clear vision and plans and specs. Until all of that changed. Because really on such a new platform, people do not know what they want. I spent several weeks at [TechShop](#), a do-it-yourself workshop in Silicon Valley, just showing the application to multiple people. Really no one person gave me a clear vision. It was only by integrating feedback from lots of different users that I was able to figure out what is needed.

Design Methodologies

There is a huge difference between the software visions of pure OO developers using the Smalltalk, Delphi, Objective-C or most Python developers and the mind set of those who do functional decomposition on database applications or C/C++ languages, or Visual Basic. Even for the message-passing purists like me, it took me a little while to grok the various messages being sent to my app from the iPhone world. For those not used to this way of thinking, it may be quite a nightmare. While I really can't speak for those people, I did need to mention this point.

It is embedded development

Traditionally embedded development has been very hard. Apple has made it so easy. Push one button and the application compiles, downloads, and starts running. Just brilliant. But it is still embedded development. The application has to be pushed through that usb cable, and when I have a lot of files to download each time, one for the sound of every letter in every language, it just takes time. Sure I can disable the sound downloads for development purposes but it still just takes time. And worse yet, every time I try to run it, it asks me if I want to save the file, then it asks me if I want to stop the running application. Give me a break. You can be sure Apple will fix it very soon.

Issues within Apple's Control

Getting the software license

My legal address is in Hollywood, but the software registration thinks that 90029 zip code is in Los Angeles, so my application for a license to develop on the iPhone took about 3 months to get. At least that is how long it felt like. I met another person who had similar problems. It is not just my credit card, my entire family tried to get me a license, eventually my mentor got it for me. And eventually Apple did fix the problem, but it certainly wasted some of my time, and caused me intense stress.

Broken Development Tools

I hate to say it, but there are bugs in Xcode. It has crashed on me a number of times. Just yesterday two of my sound files disappeared. I know not the cause, but Xcode is getting the blame. I have had to reload things into Xcode multiple times. This appears to be standard practice within the support groups. I load in new software files, and it puts them in the root directory, rather than in the Classes directory. I still do not know how to move Files in Xcode, once they have been loaded in. I am not saying it is impossible, just that I am not smart enough to figure it out. The good news is that it looks like Apple is [hiring someone to fix this problem](#).

Complex development tools

There was a web page that showed why Google and Apple were successful, but not you nor I. Does anyone know the link? Google has a simple home page with one field and two buttons. The iPods have 4 buttons. Then your or my web app has a million fields and buttons. That is how Xcode feels to me. Just way too complex. Steve, please turn your attention to this problem. You know how to make a great user interface for developers. Please do it.

The simulator does not support BlueTooth

I expect my next application will use BlueTooth. Since the iPhone simulator does not support BlueTooth, everytime I want to recompile, link and test my app I have to download it to my device. Worse yet, I have to download it to two devices. Or maybe even three devices. I fear I cannot do them simultaneously. This is going to be so painfully slow.

Digital Rights Management

No developer wants Apple to have a stranglehold control on execute permissions. But we all secretly admire Steve Jobs for having accomplished that. But please make it easier. I was a student of Ron Rivest, the MIT professor who patented the RSA algorithms. While I do not know the details of the complex math, they are easy to understand. There is a public and private key. I hold the private key, everyone else gets the public key. One can encrypt with either key, and only the person holding the other key can decrypt it. Really easy to understand.

Now compare that to the Apple DRM. I have a developer profile, a distribution profile, and a release profile. When I add a device, first I have to add the device, then I have to tell each profile to use the device. Well at least I tell the development and beta profiles, but not the release profile. And when I update the profile, I get a new profile, but it has the same name as the old profile, but if I use the old profile, which has the same name it will not work. And when I download the new profile, I have to tell XCode about the new profile, even though it has the same name as the old profile. And if one of my files has a bad name, it will tell me unzip needs a password, but it will go ahead and install, but not run. Did I get it right? You can't make this stuff up. Seems to work for me. My app works, and can be installed. But I still do not really understand the Apple DRM. The man who invented the 4-button ipod can certainly make this simpler.

Oh, and when I run my Beta Tests over at iBetaTest.com, I have to ask them about their devices, and I get a file with all the devices, but if I go back to the Apple store, and I register an old device along with the new devices, it throws out all the new devices. And even if it accepts them, I have to go back to iBetaTest.com and register the new profiles. Simple right. And that is just DRM. Please fix this Apple. You are better than that.

Broken Libraries

There are a few libraries in the iPhone SDK that I would like to use, but that are broken, so I had to write my own. Rounded Rectangle Button is one of them. If you want to use it, it is a hidden library. There is no interface file available. The interface file is missing, so you have to download a manually generated interface file, and update it the next time the software is updated. Even if you do that you try to subclass it but you can't. You think you did, but you did not. It is quite tricky to debug. The alloc method returns a rounded rectangle button, rather than an instance of your subclass. And the PoseAs: method is deprecated so you are not allowed to fix the problem, let alone address the need for additional instance variables. But the Broken Libraries problem is really a very small issue.

Missing Libraries

This is a much bigger issue. Both the iPhone calculator and my application allow one to slide the finger across the app to highlight different keys. Only on releasing the key is it pressed. In my case, for the blind users, I speak the name of the key, so that they can find the right key to release. Processing all those touches is a bit complex, and uses the same software, but I had to write all of that myself, I was not able to reuse the existing iPhone libraries. More libraries are needed on the iPhone. The good news is that it looks like Apple is [hiring someone to fix this problem](#).

Missing Persistent Object Database.

Core data looks pretty good for making the objects in an App persistent. A single App can store its state to Core Data, access individual objects as needed and flush them from memory when no longer needed. Since there is not much memory available, and there is this Flash RAM sitting right there, it just makes sense to include an object-oriented database, and a cache of objects or object store in the Flash RAM. Core data provides all of that.

But the data is limited to my App. Only addresses and groups are shared across Apps. We are in the twenty-first century, with no hard drive in sight, why do we still just have a file system on the iPhone, and no persistent object-store. The Newton had a persistent object store. Was that 15 years ago? The iPhone needs a persistent language-specific object database shared across Apps. Which requires a good security model, and a schema shared across multiple developers.

Python has the brilliant ZODB, written by Jim Fulton of the Zope Development Corporation. It is the basis for the under appreciated Zope platform. I can store a persistent tree of python objects on the file system. A little known feature of the database is that it can also act as a network of objects. There is nothing like this in the Objective-C world. It is not that hard to do. Give me a call if you want some advice on how to do it.

Degrading Language.

Many years ago, and still today, there was a brilliant language called Smalltalk. But it was and is a bit slow. Brad Cox at Stepstone took the core ideas, moved them to the C language, and thus Objective-C was born. A bit more complex, but worth it for the speed. Since then things have been going downhill. For reasons I still do not agree with, they decided to create interface files. Zope 3 did the same thing. What are Interface files? Every object responds to messages. These are defined in the source code. But some one decided to create two copies of each message definition, one in the source code, and one in the interface file. So things have to be changed in two places or there is trouble. That was the first degradation from the Smalltalk model.

Next Inc. moved the software to the GNU C compiler. Which is a great idea. Then they made things worse. Now when I define a variable, I have to define it in three places.

```
id myVariable; //Defines the Variable.  
@synthesize myVariable ;  
@property (nonatomic, retain) id myVariable;
```

So now when I change the variable I have to change it in 3 places. That is 3 places in two different files.

And things are continuing to get even worse. There used to be a function called PoseAs. My Portrait View Controller could Pose As a Landscape View Controller, and all was well. I had to be a bit careful with memory allocation, and overwriting variables, but these were reasonable restrictions. Now it is being deprecated. So I have to store all those variables somewhere and read them in again. Ouch.

I fear that the problem is deeper than just redundant definitions, and the app is being deprecated. I fear that the software team at Apple does not share the Smalltalk vision of networks of objects sending messages to each other. What is the evidence for this? They certainly like the C language API's. And most methods return void rather than an Object ID. And performance is a huge issue for them. But who knows for sure what their software philosophy is. The challenge is to support both visions at the same time.

App Store Approval Process

When I build my websites, I would just throw them up on the web. People would complain about bugs, and I would fix them; very fast and efficient from the developers' point of view. With the App store, it reportedly takes them 2 weeks to approve a release. I am terrified that they will reject it, and label me a poor developer, and ignore future releases. I am terrified I will do something they do not like, and get blacklisted. And all of that slows me down, and slows down development. It would be better if the App Store had a Beta Testing section. These are apps or prereleased versions that have not yet been approved. Use at your own risk. That would *so* simplify my life!

Rigid Design Models

I am a heretic. I do not believe in the model view controller methodology. I believe there is a network of objects sending messages to each other, and we get to peak at it. But I have not much choice with the Apple tools. The Apple interfaces are based on MVC with user interface delegates which are view controllers. I do not quite buy into this methodology. I would like to just subclass views. But I am locked into the Apple way of doing things. Such is life. This is not that big a problem in small apps.

Interface Builder Demos

One of the brilliant things Steven Jobs did is to make these fantastic demos with Interface Builder. They look just great, but as a developer, I still do not quite understand what Interface Builder is doing. Mostly it gets in the way. Toss it and the view controllers out, and I would be a very happy man. Sure arguing against the model view controller paradigm is heresy, but in the internet era, allow us each our own religions.

Issues outside of Apple's Control

C language and Objective-C language characters and strings

There are two models of characters and strings floating around in this world, the C language model, and the Objective-C model, and sometimes we operate with one model, and sometimes with the other, and then we have to switch back and forth. If you are new to this, or if it has been a while since you have touched all of this stuff it can be quite confusing.

Windows Operating System

Why does the Windows operating system still cause me trouble? I am developing on Mac OS X, and installing on the iPhone OS. But sadly many of my customers are installing from Windows XP, and so that affects me. And iTunes unzips the files onto the Windows operating system. So files like *.wav, ~.wav, @.wav just cause trouble.

UNIX Operating System

Mac OS X is basically Unix, and there are some things that Unix does not like. Reportedly Unix supports mixed case file names. But that is not true. Create a file called a.wav, then create a file called A.wav and look at the two files. There is only one file. I have no idea where the other one went, or why it disappeared.

Conclusion

Impact on the market

So how do these issues impact the market? Well, Apple has won the battle for the cell phone market. Walk into a bar in the US and just see how many iPhones people have. Walk into any iPhone store and see how fast new units are being sold. And the customers are using them, not just leaving them on the table. Every Independent Software Vendor wants to target the iPhone.

And every consumer wants the iPhone, because of all the apps. As Wozniak said: "Game over." Steve Jobs won.

What about the Google Android phones? They support a Java development environment. The joke goes: Say you have a software problem to solve. And you choose Java. Now you have two problems. And yes, that is a flippant analysis, for a more serious analysis go and read, "Why I need Objective-C", Journal Of Object-Oriented Programming. Christopher Lozinski September 1991 - <http://www.tenon.com/products/codebuilder/Objective-C.shtml>. Still the best article on this topic. I need to update it and publish the new version on the web.

What about the Nokia Maemo environment? Now this is much more interesting. With Nokia, I can run Python applications on the client cell phone. You see the consumer is not the only marketplace. There is also the corporate custom apps market. Certainly it is smaller, but it is still significant. If you are a corporate developer, and by training I am, then you have to look at the software tools on the client and on the server. Apple no longer supports Objective-C WebObjects on the server, so if I run Objective-C on the client iPhone, then I have to run a different language on the server, and I cannot move my code back and forth between client and server. In contrast, if I am a corporate developer using the Nokia platform, I can run python on both client and server, I can move my code back and forth, and better yet, I can move the code back and forth at run-time. With the python-based Zope application servers, I even get restricted python, meaning that I can safely move someone else's code onto my client or server at run-time. That is a developer's dream. And while there is no business case for doing that, to be competitive, Apple has to offer Objective-C WebObjects on the server. Which is great, because then my database of iPhone developers, which include 10 years of data on WebObjects developers, will once again be a very valuable Internet resource.

Apple gets it. Literally as I was writing the last paragraph, (on November 9th, 2009) I received an email from Apple, inviting me to the "Apple Snow Leopard Server tour." They understand the importance of the server for the corporate market. And even if they are not planning on resurrecting Objective-C WebObjects, their customers will tell them it is needed. And Apple listens. Now if they could just throw in a nice Objective-C Object Database, I would be a very happy man.

And if Apple would get rid of that Digital Rights Management stuff, I would have nothing to complain about. Or at least make it easy to use!

Sidebar

iPhone Object Libraries

The second biggest risk to the iPhone App investor is that someone else will beat them to market. The investor can double the number of developers, but that will only decrease the time to market by a third, and it will increase the management complexity and cost. Really the only way to make iPhone App development easier and faster is to reuse existing Object Libraries. Since the days of Brad Cox, people have been dreaming of reusing Object Libraries, now the time has come. I started [a directory of iPhone software components](#). If you have libraries, or need libraries, please [send me an email](#).

So how does this work? We start with your application specification. Then we plug in the libraries needed to build it. Realistically the libraries will need some customization for your application, so we also hire the developer to fix and maintain the libraries for you. He then reports to your developer/system integrator, who reports to you. There is a nice clean management structure, and time to market is significantly reduced. Emotionally it is so much easier than trying to build it all yourself.

What is the impact? Well I was just burnt out from writing software for the iPhone! It is just too slow and painful. I asked myself what can I do differently? Now I am happily shopping for libraries, and polishing my libraries to give to other developers. This is much more fun.

Furthermore, it has freed me from the low-level grunt work of building the software required to make my app, and allows me to focus on the higher level issues involved in building a Content Management Framework for the iPhone. I am happily back at work on software development.

About the author.



Chris Lozinski went to MIT, and U.C. Berkeley He started being an Objective-C developer more than 20 years ago. Then when the whole world jumped on the C++ fad, he stayed with Objective-C, and later upgraded to Python. He is now an iPhone developer, a Python developer and a recruiter. He runs both the [iphone developer resume database](#), and the [python and zope resume database](#). He is the author of the text faster keyboard for the iphone. He is available to help you with your problems.

His company has a lot of experience with outsourcing.

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

**So, how's that
"hope" and "change"
working out for you?**

rightwingwag.com

The Fundamental Transformation of America

By Matt Bruce November 21, 2009 Copyright News Saratosta.com Reprinted with permission
http://www.newmediajournal.us/staff/m_bruce/2009/11212009.htm

“When Obama wrote a book and said he was mentored as a youth by Frank, (Frank Marshall Davis) an avowed Communist, people said it didn't matter.

When it was discovered that his grandparents, were strong Socialists, sent Obama's mother to a Socialist school, introduced Frank Marshall Davis to young Obama, people said it didn't matter.

When people found out that he was enrolled as a Muslim child in school and his father and stepfather were both Muslims, people said it didn't matter.

When he wrote in another book he authored “I will stand with them (Muslims) should the political winds shift in an ugly direction" regarding the Palestinian issue, people said it didn't matter.

When he admittedly, in his book, said he chose Marxist friends and professors in college, people said it didn't matter.

When he traveled to Pakistan after college on an unknown national passport, people said it didn't matter.

When he sought the endorsement of the Marxist Party in 1996 as he ran for the Illinois Senate, people said it doesn't matter.

When he sat in a Chicago Church for twenty years and listened to a preacher spew hatred for America and preach Black Liberation Theology, people said it didn't matter.

When an independent Washington [organization](#), that tracks senate voting records, gave him the distinctive title as the "most liberal senator", people said it didn't matter.

When the Palestinians in Gaza, set up a fundraising telethon to raise money for his election campaign, people said it didn't matter.

When his voting record supported gun control, people said it didn't matter.

When he refused to disclose who donated money to his election campaign, as other candidates had done, people said it didn't matter.

When he received endorsements from people like Louis Farrakhan, Mummar Muammar Kaddafi and Hugo Chavez, people said it didn't matter.

When it was pointed out that he was a total, newcomer and had absolutely no experience at anything except community organizing, people said it didn't matter.

When he chose friends and acquaintances such as Bill Ayers and Bernadine Dohrn who were revolutionary radicals, people said it didn't matter.

When his voting record in the Illinois senate and in the [U.S. Senate](#) came into question, people said it didn't matter.

When he refused to wear a flag, lapel pin and did so only after a public outcry, people said it didn't matter.

When people started treating him as a Messiah and children in schools were taught to sing his praises, people said it didn't matter.

When he stood with his hands over his groin area for the playing of the National Anthem and Pledge of Allegiance, people said it didn't matter.

When he surrounded himself in the White house with advisors who were pro gun control, pro abortion, pro homosexual marriage, anti-capitalism, anti-free markets, pro-government control over everything and wanting to curtail freedom of speech to silence the opposition, people said it didn't matter.

When he aired his views on abortion, homosexuality and a host of other issues, people said it didn't matter.

When he said he favors sex education in Kindergarten, including homosexual indoctrination, people said it didn't matter.

When his background was either scrubbed or hidden and nothing could be found about him, people said it didn't matter.

When his first act as President, literally within 5 minutes of taking office, he signed executive order #13489 that sealed his own records, people said it didn't matter.

When the place of his birth was called into question, and he refused to produce a birth certificate, and continues to spend millions in court to keep the material sealed, people said it didn't matter.

When he had an association in Chicago with Tony Rezko, a man of questionable character, who is now in prison and had helped Obama to a sweet deal on the purchase of his home, people said it didn't matter.

When it became known that George Soros, a multi-billionaire Marxist, spent a ton of money to get him elected, people said it didn't matter.

When he started appointing czars that were radicals, revolutionaries, and even avowed Marxists and Communists, people said it didn't matter.

When he stood before the nation and told us that his intentions were to "fundamentally transform this nation" into something else, people said it didn't matter.

When it became known that he had trained ACORN workers in Chicago and served as an attorney for ACORN, people said it didn't matter.

When he appointed a cabinet members and several advisors who were tax cheats and Socialist, people said it didn't matter.

When he appointed a science czar, John Holdren, who believes in forced abortions, mass sterilizations and seizing babies from teen mothers, people said it didn't matter.

When he appointed Cass Sunstein as regulatory czar and he believes in "Explicit Consent", harvesting human organs without family consent, and to allow animals to be represented in court, while banning all hunting, people said it didn't matter.

When he appointed Kevin Jennings, an overt homosexual, and organizer of a group called gay, lesbian, straight, education network, as safe school czar and it became known that he had a history of bad advice to teenagers, people said it didn't matter.

When he appointed Mark Lloyd as diversity czar and he believed in curtailing free speech, taking from one and giving to another to spread the wealth and admires Hugo Chavez, people said it didn't matter.

When Valerie Jarrett was selected as Obama's senior White House advisor and she is an avowed Socialist, people said it didn't matter.

When Anita Dunn, White House Communications director said Mao Tse-Tung was her favorite philosopher and the person she turned to most for inspiration, people said it didn't matter.

When he appointed Carol Browner as global warming czar, and she is a well known socialist working on 'Cap and Trade' as the nation's largest tax hike in history, people said it doesn't matter.

When he appointed Van Jones, an ex-con and avowed Communist as green energy czar, who since had to resign when this was made known, people said it didn't matter.

When Tom Daschle, Obama's pick for health and human services secretary could not be confirmed, because he was a tax cheat, people said it didn't matter.

When as president of the United States, he bowed to the King of Saudi Arabia, people said it didn't matter.

When he traveled around the world criticizing America and never once talking of her greatness, people said it didn't matter.

When his actions concerning the middle-east seemed to support the Palestinians over Israel, our long time friend, people said it doesn't matter.

When he took American tax dollars to resettle thousands of Palestinians from Gaza to the United States, people said it doesn't matter.

When he upset our European allies by removing plans for a missile defense system against the Russians, people said it doesn't matter.

When he played politics in Afghanistan by not sending troops the Field Commanders said we had to have to win, people said it didn't matter.

When he started spending us into a debt that was so big we could not pay it off, people said it didn't matter.

When he took a huge spending bill under the guise of stimulus and used it to pay off organizations, unions and individuals that got him elected, people said it didn't matter.

When he forced the takeover of insurance companies, car companies, banks, etc, people said it didn't matter.

When he took away student loans from the banks and put it through the government, people said it didn't matter.

When he designed plans to take over the health care system and put it under government control, people said it didn't matter.

When he set into motion a plan to take over the control of all energy resources in the United States through Cap and Trade, people said it didn't matter.

When he announced he was returning the masterminds of 9/11 to New York City to stand trial as ordinary criminals -- not war criminals -- and thus allow them the benefits from our system of jurisprudence, the mainstream media loved it and the people said it didn't matter. (Oh really? Go

ask an FDNY FF, NYPD Cop, NY EMS, NY Port Authority Cop or Transit Worker, or a 9/11 Families member who was at the World Trade Center 9/11/2001 and see if it matters.)

When he finally completed his transformation of America into a Socialist State, people finally woke up, but it was too late.

Any one of these things, in and of themselves does not really matter. But when you add them up one by one you get a phenomenal score that points to the fact that our Obama is determined to make America over into a Marxist/Socialist society.

All of the items in the preceding paragraphs have been put into place. All can be documented very easily. Before you disavow this, do an Internet search.

The last paragraph alone is not yet cast in stone. You and I will write that paragraph. Will it read as above or will it be a more happy ending for most of America ? Personally, I like happy endings.

If you are an Obama Supporter, please recognize that you have elected a president who is a 'socialist'. There is simply no debate about these facts. But you need to seek the truth; you will be richer for it. Don't just belittle the opposition. Search for the truth. I did.

Democrats, Republicans, Independents, Constitutionalist, Libertarians and what have you, we all need to pull together. We all must pull together or watch the demise of a society that we all love and cherish.

If you are a religious person, pray for our nation.

Never before in the history of America have we been confronted with problems so huge that the very existence of our country is in jeopardy.

Don't rely on most television news and what you read in the newspapers for the truth. Search the Internet.

Yes, there is a lot of bad information, lies and distortions there as well, but you are smart enough to spot the fallacies. Newspapers are a dying breed. They are currently seeking a bailout from the government. Do you really think they are about to print the truth?

Obama praises all the television news networks except Fox, who he is currently waging an open war against. There must be a reason. He does not call them down on any specifics, and he has failed to refute any facts presented – because it is all true. If they lie, he should call them out on it, but he doesn't.

Please, find the truth, it will set you free.

Our biggest enemy is not China, Russia or Iran; no, our biggest enemy is the current contingent of politicians in Washington DC, led by the Progressive Left Liberals who support the previously mentioned things.

Wake Up America!

There's still time in 2010 to take back America and send a message LOUD and CLEAR to those who think "it doesn't matter."

I happen to think it does matter."

Matt Bruce is a 2-time combat wounded U.S. Army Vietnam Veteran and has a son currently serving in the U.S. Marine Corps. He also is a retired 25 year Fire-Rescue Captain and recipient of the Fire Department's Highest Award For Heroism, 'The Medal of Valor'. Now he is the Managing Editor & Publisher of News Sarasota.Com and host of the popular "The Captain's AMERICA" Radio Show heard weekday afternoons on AM 1220 WSRQ Radio in Sarasota, FL. and syndicated weekends heard via satellite & broadcast around the world on the Internet.

Dig Deeper

News Sarasota

<http://newssarasota.com/page/qavo/HOME.html>

Glenn Beck's Exclusive Obama Interview on his Fundamental Transformation of America

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?carolev=uPX9vmvZTWs>

Obama and the "Fundamental Transformation of America"

<http://keyboardmilitia.blogspot.com/2009/08/obama-and-fundamental-transformation-of.html>

Obama's Fundamental Transformation

<http://www.rapturealert.com/2009/110309transform.asp>

Obama's Next Big Push

http://www.americanthinker.com/2009/09/obamas_next_big_push.html

Fundamental transformation

<http://proletariatblog.com/2009/03/11/fundamental-transformation/>

Impeach Obama Campaign

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

American Grand Jury

<http://americangrandjury.org/>

Prosecute Obama

<http://prosecuteobama.org/?sid=005rp>

Appeals briefs scheduled in Obama eligibility challenge

<http://www.wnd.com/index.php?fa=PAGE.view&pageId=117141>

A Question of Eligibility

http://www.disclose.tv/action/viewvideo/27944/A_Question_of_Eligibility_1_of_5/

http://www.disclose.tv/action/viewvideo/27945/A_Question_of_Eligibility_2_of_5/

http://www.disclose.tv/action/viewvideo/27946/A_Question_of_Eligibility_3_of_5/
http://www.disclose.tv/action/viewvideo/27947/A_Question_of_Eligibility_4_of_5/
http://www.disclose.tv/action/viewvideo/27948/A_Question_of_Eligibility_5_of_5/

The Mystery of Barack Obama Continues

http://www.westernjournalism.com/?page_id=3255

Multiple SSNs and Addresses for Barrack Hussein Obama?

<http://giveusliberty1776.blogspot.com/2009/10/is-barack-hussein-obama-nothing-more.html>

List of properties and social security numbers associate with Barack Obama and family

http://www.westernjournalism.com/?page_id=3326

Sanskey Investigations, Inc.

<http://www.scribd.com/doc/20042509/KEYES-v-OBAMA-69-5-Exhibit-Dossier-4-Gov-uscourts-cacd-435591-69-5>

Orly Taitz and Obama's 39 Social Security Numbers

<http://arthurgoldwag.wordpress.com/2009/10/31/709/>

Catching a SSN Cheat

<http://moneycentral.msn.com/content/Banking/FinancialPrivacy/P117952.asp>



The Northern Spy

Technology News and Views Since 1983

Year End Roundup Miscellany

by Rick Sutcliffe

December 2009

Marketshare ramblings

Troubles continue to plague iSteve's competitors at the checkout. As part of a worldwide effort to shed 20% of its workforce, Sony Ericsson is closing its North American headquarters and consolidating continental operations in a smaller Atlanta office.

Meanwhile, takeover rumours plague in-tough Palm, though the Spy isn't sure what's worth taking over other than possibly the engineers. Pity. When he bought his Treo Palm was riding high.

Biggest loser so far in the phone wars appears to be MS, currently facing nearly 30% loss of market share, and now last among major vendors. Perhaps Redmond could acquire Palm. A deadly embrace might be a good fit. To put it another way, what percentage of developers out there would spend themselves to take a chance on developing a killer app for the Pre, the Android, Nokia phones, Win mobile? Just so.

Biggest potential loser looking a few years down the track seems to be RIM, which appears to be treading water, something no company can afford to do during a technology battle. Burdened by a aging, clunky interface, and a restless installed base, it seems to the Spy that RIM has nowhere to go but way down.

Apple meanwhile, from a standing start three years ago next month, has not only already captured over 15% of the smartphone market, it has redefined the telephone, as it did music players before. Imagine what breaking away from the equally deadly embrace of AT&T could do to market share.

Perhaps more interesting is Apple's move away from Windows terminals to iTouch technology for its own stores' POS. There, as in other places, the iPhone/Touch is morphing into a device controller solution. Besides POS, the Spy notes scientific instrumentation, medical device control, security system control, and remote business applications, among the many potential markets for pocket computers. Expect the hardware add-on market to explode, especially if Apple is a little freer with the hardware APIs. It's too late to buy Apple stock for \$7, though. The price is hovering around all-time highs.

Notwithstanding that product sightings

are vigorously denied and substanceless rumours until iSteve climbs the stage to pull the trigger on a launch, hoards of speculators are in a feeding frenzy once again (still?) over what most term the iTablet. Apart from a possible size (apparent orders of 10-inch screens) and tales of a device being shopped to Australian content providers, there is little of substance here--except for the small factor called inevitability. The portable computer market has a yawning hardware gap between the iPod Touch/Phone and the AirBook, one the cheap and unreliable netbooks cannot possibly fill.

But to make the iSlate (the Spy's preferred term) work implies inventing a market--or, more likely rather, capturing and reinventing one. Seems to the Spy the best candidate is books--sadly, for his own bottom line as an AH-SF author, not fiction, especially not science fiction. No the market segment that is most troubled, most ready for an iSteve re-invention, is textbook publishing and distribution. A typical university frosh (note the gender neutral term) can blow a \$900 hole in the pocket with one visit to the textbook store at the beginning of the semester. Books for specialized upper level science and mathematics courses are seldom available second-hand, and can run over \$300 a pop. Throw in publisher financial troubles, declining revenues, increasing costs, a truly 17th century distribution system, unconscionable retail markups, along with peanuts for the authors who do all the work, and you have a system staggering under the weight of its sheer brokenness, gasping for the kind of lifeline iSteve is capable of throwing.

"Pitch in with us, boys, and students cut their book bills by 75%, you can keep a bigger cut, pay your authors more for their work, even hire editors who know what they're doing. Then you distribute through the book department of Apple's iStore (renamed when books and hardware are added to apps, video, and music) to our cool new iSlate, thus eliminating regional and local wholesalers, store chains, and the local retailer altogether--all the deepest money sinks. 'Course, we keep our usual 30% cut, but you and your ink-stained bondservants keep the rest, and as a bonus, hey, your industry manages to survive--at least until we find a way to cut you out, too." (The last part uttered *sotto voce*.)

In like dire straits only slightly less troubling, but with more immediate need of rescuing because of the length of the decline, we present exhibit two--the newspaper and magazine business. The vendor who can deliver National Geographic content in equivalent photographic quality will own magazine distribution for a generation. The one that can replace the faltering newspaper experience with something better (as good as is not enough) will do likewise. Do these two and textbooks in a portable communicating and computing device and you have the basic functionality of the Spy's PIEA, featured lo this past decade and more in his novels. Yeah, fiction would be in there too, but as a low-return passenger.

"What about timing? you ask. Given the available technologies, pricing, and the legwork needed to make introductory content a reasonable reality, the Spy can't see iSlate happening before third quarter 2010. Assume an announcement at WWDC, sooner only if it has a phone and prior regulatory disclosure is required. Do assume more than one form factor and price point. Eventually. Don't assume either an Apple branded cell network or an outright takeover of Radio Shack to extend market reach to every mall on the continent. Yet.

Logos systems is in the Spy's glass again,

this time for an iPhone/Touch app version of its reader software. From the company's name, one might easily guess that they are in the wholesale word/Word business. But as the Spy noted previously, Logos has already taken a different approach to Bible software than other vendors with its Windows/Mac applications (Libronix) for it prefers to market a (potentially general) reading tool more than it does a focused Bible study application. Thus the Logos offerings are much more about the general reading experience, search abilities, and the libraries available with the package than they are about Bible study tools *per se*. Hey, there are many file readers, particularly on the iPhone/Touch platform. The Libronix bigger brother reader has gone through a version 4.0 major rewrite lately, but more on that when the new product reaches the Mac (real soon now).

Meanwhile, how does this (currently free) Logos reader on the iP/T match up with, say, the venerable Olive Tree product? Fairly well, actually. Oh, there are rough edges. First, not all the Bibles that Logos says on its web site are included for the platform actually show up in the library. This may be a function of the Mac version of the main reader not being up to version 4.0 as yet, and thus not communicating account availability properly. However, the fact remains that the NIV is in the Spy's desktop version, but not on his Touch. Second, the purpose of the "bookshelf" within the library is unclear, as is how items are put there or removed. Third, accepting the offer of the daily reading plan results in two offers for the reading plan being listed, with no ability to remove same. Fourth, the list of thirty-one additional resources appears to be accessible only if you sign up for a Logos account. It is unclear to the Spy, even after accessing his account, whether this benefit accrues even if using an existing one. Ambiguities like this should be explicated. Fourth, the nav bar of (presumably locally cached books) at the bottom of the control screen does not appear to be under user control, say to remove entries.

Finally, by way of comparison, the Olive Tree pedigree of several years worth of refinement of mobile Bible readers is rather obvious. So is its focus on Bible. In OliveTree, one scrolls down continuously through a bible (much better) rather than sideways page by page as in Logos. Moreover, one can press a button for a split screen to compare, say Greek and English (any two bibles) at any time, without having to leave the main reader mode for the separate "compare text" mode as in Logos. Mind you, in the Palm version, Olive Tree allows three simultaneous screens, whereas on the iP/T it offers only two. Last, in Logos one must be connected to the net to allow the product to "know" where it stands in relation to the account. If a book has not been specifically read and therefore cached locally, it won't be available when offline. But the user is not told this, whereas in Olive Tree, one explicitly downloads each item, and whatever shows up in the library is available locally. The Logos approach can be both slow and confusing.

The bottom line is that Olive Tree has a definite edge, which should not be surprising given its long head start and many prior versions. What is very remarkable is how solid a product the Logos offering is for a first cut at a mobile reader. If development continues at this pace, we could be looking at a new leader in this market in short order. Definitely a reader worth having, despite some initial rough edges.

In other iP/T app news,

the Spy rather likes the Bloomberg market reader better the standard Yahoo version. More markets, more info. He's also decided to live with the intrusiveness of giving Google his RSS data in return for continuing to use NetNewsWire on his desktop, his portable, and now his iP/T, with three way sync.

He does feel a little burned at having bought Apple's Keynote remote, only to learn that he has to upgrade the program itself before the remote will work. Does make him think, though. Apple could produce a lot of ninety-nine cent apps to pad the old bottom line.

And, he'll take a parting shot at the Apple iTunes store, whose interface is browser-like, but that suffers by comparison with good web apps, and seems a little clunky. Needs work, particularly in remembering state when returning to the previously visited page.

Armageddon,

a little tired from writing this. The Spy finally escaped the prison of the sling on his right arm this week. 'Course the freed appendage isn't much good for anything yet, but it is convenient to type with two hands rather than one. It will be a long time before the partially frozen joint is freed up, the severed tendon functions, and the atrophied muscle regenerates. At this point, he's not sure whether he would have been better off beggaring himself in the dysfunctional American medical system to get quick service, or staying with the no-cost but long wait he endured in the differently but equivalently dysfunctional Canadian system. Oh, well. Pretty soon the American one will be dysfunctional in yet new ways.

If he can get back to a normal quantity of electronic scribbling between physiotherapy appointments, he's got an I/O library to finish designing for an upgraded programming language project, and the editorial notes of a number of readers to incorporate into the sixth *Interregnum* novel before the draft can be sent to the publisher. Entitled *The Builder*, this will be the penultimate book in the series, and available at your favourite corner eBook store as soon as the formal editing is complete (one to two years more?) This volume focuses on Hibernia's civil war, two men called the "builders of Tara" and, in telling the story of the first builder of Meta, begins to unravel the series' major secrets. It also checks in at just under 300K words. Lotsa electrons in them there ePages. When that's done, he gets serious about the accumulating stories already slouching toward birthing the seventh and final volume, *The Throne*.

Part of the program of babying this arm along includes a ban on snow shoveling. Since that's unrealistic in this climate, the Spy has now purchased a brand new snow thrower to handle the igloo's driveway (where he parks his dog sleds). Time will tell whether he's done his research adequately, so he'll report on this technology only when he's actually used the thing. Meanwhile, he observes that the experience was much like last year's purchase of a new refrigerator, for despite the superficial appearance of numerous marketplace brands, there are really only a handful of manufacturers, who not only sell under their own name(s), but through a variety of chain store house brand names. "Sure, we'll price match," then hastily add, "on an identical unit." And, though the machines may be mechanically the same, they do bear different brands and part numbers, and so are not identically identical. "Sorry." Marketing malfunctions toward the consumer much the same way in all sectors. Perhaps Apple should make Macs branded with the Pystar name. IBM? MS?

Book of the month

If you don't count the Spy's own, and the Bibles available via Logos and Olive Tree (see above), this month's offering is the second edition of David Sawyer McFarland's *CSS, part of* the missing manual series from--who else--O'Reilly. Normally this series deals with understanding hardware that could have used a manual, but the series is quite *a propos* a vehicle for explicating the mysterious and convoluted Cascading Style Sheet.

The Spy has built a number of web sites, from the brain-dead simple information container with a few pages, through medium weight old-portal-style sites dependent on tables, and on to heavily Ajaxified and highly optimized sites complete with CSS styling and dynamic menus (all his own code and framework) and weighing in at hundreds of pages. Invariably, in the process he runs up against problems with styling, and the obscurities of understanding what the cryptic documentation (where it exists at all) for CSS really means. He could only wish he had a book like this one from the start so that he wouldn't have had to puzzle out CSS mysteries by trial and error--mostly the latter.

No doubt the designers of CSS in the first place were well-meaning. Separating content from presentation is a good idea. However, the devil (at the end of the road paved with good intentions) is in the implementation details, and the system was not, in the beginning, well-implemented, with the biggest offender both then and now being IE, which never conformed to standards, and even today requires much code to be written to work around its idiosyncrasies. A book like this one goes beyond telling the relative neophyte to properly style how to do it; the author also details what generally does not work in IE (lots). One rarely has to special code for other browsers any more. The Spy doesn't even want to think about some of the coding kludges that have been commonplace for the MS browser. Thankfully however, the latter's market share is sinking rapidly. Perhaps the whole IE product line will one day be nothing more than a bad memory swapped for other horror stories over summer campfires to scare the kids to sleep.

CSS has chapters on redesigning HTML for style sheets, selectors, inheritance, how cascading works, formatting text, graphics, tables, and forms, improving navigation, general layout and positioning, and an advanced topic section of CSS for the printed page, selectors, and colour (well, they spell it differently.) The material in chapter seven on floating elements and that in chapter thirteen on positioning was of particular interest, for the Spy well remembers doping all this out with little help from the few then available books and their confusing and contradictory instructions, then testing it in various browsers, only to discover that the implementors' understanding was inferior to his own, and even more confused.

CSS is good stuff for relative beginners, though experienced designers wouldn't likely use it as a reference. Then again, that is precisely the point of the missing manual series. As usual for an O'Reilly book, the Spy highly recommends this one. If you need it you really need it.

--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 (paper and online), 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>

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

nameman: <http://nameman.net>

opundo: <http://opundo.com>

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

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

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

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

O'Reilly: <http://www.oreilly.com>



Smoking Macs

By Robert L Pritchett

I worked for years on office equipment and by far, the worst ones were those that were used by smokers. I never refused to work on those machines, but they made me physically ill anyway.

I always wondered why the computer manufacturers didn't do the HEPA filter route for their machines like was done with one (now long gone) external storage device. A blue filter, white filter and deep inside, a cigarette filter on the Iomega Bernoulli drive.

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

<http://www.iomega.com/25years/index.html>

What “crashed” these drives were the filters being packed with tar smoke. We routinely replaced the blue (fine) and white (course) filters and later learned there was a 3rd filter pack inside that was like a cigarette filter that also removed particulates, but the cigarette smoke destroyed those as well. We ended up putting those systems on a quarterly maintenance schedule.

For the life of me I could never understand why computer companies didn't put filtration systems in their machines. Some computer techs make a living just going around and blowing dirt and dust, animal dander, etc. out of computers (along with removing malware, etc. from PCs, but that is another kind of hazard).

I was so happy when I learned a smoking ban had been put in place in public buildings.

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

<http://tobaccodocuments.org/pm/2072360955-0956.html>

The shop I worked in was filled with smokers who worked on office equipment for the government. I got my job when the previous tech died of a heart attack at his bench while smoking. The other smokers eventually retired or quit smoking, but that was the environment I was in. They didn't like it when I kept my window open to work on machines, but I needed to breathe.



Those machines I worked on would be disgusting, but I never dreamed in a million years I could refuse working on them because they were a biohazard!

We had a washer that would clean most machines and an oven to dry them out afterwards. We used Stoddard Solvent to clean them. Stoddard solvent

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/White_spirit is toxic, but it was better than Carbon Tetrachloride

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carbon_tetrachloride. We didn't use Stoddard Solvent on electronics. We probably could have used a steam cleaner, however. We used isopropyl alcohol http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isopropyl_alcohol instead, but it didn't cut the tar.

Now we hear that cigarette smoke voids the AppleCare warranty if a tech decides the machine is so bad that he can't work on it.

It isn't the 2nd-hand smoke that destroys machines, it is the heavy-metal-laced, carbon-based sticky-goopy tar that builds up and destroys the electronics. I concur that the tar transfer is a biohazard. I do not concur that 2nd-hand smoke is the reason Apple voids the warranties. Tobacco smoke in the equipment is "user abuse".

H. George Dean once upon a time wrote;

"This is a compilation of facts and studies from several sources. Studies are still being done, so it is by no means complete.

60% of data loss on floppy disks (not due to actual damage like bends or creases) is due to cigarette smoke.

90% of general read error failure in a floppy drive is due to collected smoke on the drive heads.

15% of floppy drive failure is due to smoke.

80% of data loss on a hard drive (not due to physical failure) is caused by smoke and 25% of hard drive failure is due to smoke. If you have company records on a central computer it is recommended that it be in a SEALED 'Clean Room' to prevent loss of data.

Erratic behavior of a computer is often due to the power supply. 30% of power supply problems are believed at this time to be caused by smoke. (it appears likely this is conservative).

Smoke is believed to cause failure of other components in your computer.

Wherever there are contacts there may be a failure. The 'acid' content of smoke may also eat away at circuit boards and components. Studies are still in progress on this.

It is recommended that your hard drive be replaced once a year to prevent data loss from smoke. At a minimum, at least once every two years.

Smoke is carried throughout a facility by fans, central air conditioning and central heating. Even when you cannot smell it, enough smoke is present to do damage to your computer equipment.”

The AppleCare <http://www.apple.com/support/products/proplan.html> warranty states;

“Damage to the Covered Equipment caused by accident, abuse, neglect, misuse (including faulty installation, repair, or maintenance by anyone other than Apple or an Apple Authorized Service Provider), unauthorized modification, extreme environment (including extreme temperature or humidity), extreme physical or electrical stress or interference, fluctuation or surges of electrical power, lightning, static electricity, fire, acts of God or other external causes.”

http://images.apple.com/legal/applecare/docs/AppleCare_ara_NA_en.pdf

Derek Bolander wrote;

“AppleCare is not accidental damage insurance. AppleCare states that it will honor service for failures attributed to manufacturing defects. This alone disqualifies repairs being covered by AppleCare. Nicotine creates a tar film on the internal components of computers contributing to their failure, get a tech job and see this for yourself if you’re in disbelief.

Additionally, AppleCare Protection Plan is not marketed as an accidental coverage or even as a warranty. The term warranty requires companies to honor service terms as is. By using the words protection plan, terms and fees can change at any time. If you do not like your AppleCare service you can contact Apple and they will cancel the remaining term of your protection plan and refund you a prorated amount.”

<http://mac.blorge.com/2009/11/21/apple-canceling-smokers-warranties-over-contamination/>

Seattle-Light (Alan) wrote;

“Smoking and computers really just don't mix well.

I had a good friend who went through three computer systems in a single year. He was a chain smoker, and the fine particulates in the cigarette smoke just clogged up the works. Easily attracted to electrostatic charges and then fused to the components by the heat (tar seems like a particularly nasty thing to be putting into a computer). The computer was acting like an air filter, trapping a high percentage of the airborne particulates.

At the time, it was replaced under warranty, but he was hopping mad about getting yet another defective machine. Then the technician opened up the machine and showed him how critical internal components coated with black crap (that couldn't be blown away with compressed air) and how the ventilation was almost completely closed off (it was a wonder that it had been working up to that point) and then showed him another machine that had been in use for more than a year that was pristine in comparison.

It was at that moment that my friend realized if it could do that to his computer what it must be doing to him. At the very least, it was killing him professionally. He quit smoking that day (if only for his computers). Probably saved his life.

It's not that Apple is against people smoking, it's that smoking is proven to be hazardous to your computer. If you're going to smoke around your computer, you're going to need to take extra care to keep it from killing your machine. It's better to not smoke around your computer. If you do, you should understand the risks involved in doing so. ”

<http://www.retouchpro.com/forums/hardware/28271-smoking-will-void-your-mac-warranty.html>

Smoking Near Apple Computers Creates Biohazard, Voids Warranty

<http://consumerist.com/2009/11/smoking-near-apple-computers-creates-biohazard-voids-warranty.html>

http://www.pcworld.com/businesscenter/article/182829/does_secondhand_smoke_really_void_apples_warranty.html

http://9to5mac.com/wtf_apple_smokers_witchhunt_30098

<http://forums.appleinsider.com/showpost.php?p=1524464&postcount=31>

http://forums.mactech.com/ubbthreads.php/topics/478761/Re_Smoking_Your_Macintosh_Repa

http://news.cnet.com/8301-17852_3-10402711-71.html

<http://industry.bnet.com/technology/10004177/smoking-hazardous-to-apple-equipment-or-at-least-warranty/>

What happens to smoke-damaged computers

<http://www.squidoo.com/cigarette-smoke-computer-damage>

http://www.ehow.com/facts_5242629_effects-cigarette-smoke-computers.html

How to get rid of cigarette smoke damage

<http://www.howtogetridofstuff.com/living/how-to-get-rid-of-cigarette-smoke-damage/>

Real Life computer photos from the Computer Wizard

<http://www.thecomputerwizard.biz/photos.htm>

Vent Blockers

<http://www.theregister.co.uk/2009/11/13/ventblockers/>



gene steinberg's
TechNightOwl

TechNightOwl

Microsoft Loses the Windows 7 Upgrade Battle

By Gene Steinberg

<http://www.technightowl.com/2009/11/microsoft-loses-the-windows-7-upgrade-battle/>

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Consider Microsoft's plight. Hundreds of millions of customers, ranging from home users to the enterprise, bypassed Windows Vista and chose to stick with XP. Worse, many of them actually downgraded computers equipped with Vista, because they didn't want to deal with its problems, real or imagined.

Without having the exact figures on hand, I think I'm safe in saying that the R&D costs spent to create Windows 7 are in the billions of dollars. Microsoft has a huge development staff to feed, and projects routinely take years to complete, even if Vista's successor is mostly a refresh with some revised eye candy and a new name to counteract the stench of its predecessor.

You would assume, then, that Microsoft's executives would really want to do everything they can to encourage their user base to dump an eight-year-old operating system and embrace Windows 7. Instead, they have made the upgrade path as draconian as possible. Instead of just putting the DVD in your PC's drive, you have to first backup all your stuff to an external drive — assuming you have one — because you're forced to do a clean installation to get the latest and greatest version of Windows.

The setup process will actually erase your PC's hard drive, meaning that once Windows 7 is up and running, you'll have to restore all your documents, and each and every application, assuming you even have the installers anymore. It's very much different from the Mac, where installation files, even if they stretch beyond the Applications folder, are usually easy to find and copy to another drive.

Yes, Microsoft does include a utility to migrate your own files, and there are third party products that promise to simplify the XP to 7 upgrade mess. But there are no guarantees any of this stuff will really work reliably in the real world. No wonder computer shops are going to make a bundle selling you upgrade services.

Or you can just buy a new PC and put that old box out to pasture. While Microsoft doesn't earn near as much money from each user license if you get Windows 7 preloaded on your new computer, they won't be peppered with near as many support calls from disgruntled users.

On the other hand, the upgrade from Vista to 7 can, theoretically, be done in place without having to do anything more than sit back, click a few prompts and get on with your business. Well, at least that's the theory, but the real world doesn't always match Microsoft's "head-in-the-sand" expectations. Or maybe they would rather not tell you.

Now consider what I tried to do this week after receiving a copy of Windows 7 Ultimate from Microsoft. You see, my particular installation of Vista Ultimate was done with VMWare Fusion 3.0, the recent major upgrade to their Mac virtualization software. My test Mac, by the way, is an Early 2008 Mac Pro with 16GB of RAM, running 10.6.2.

After the Vista installation was complete, I changed very few system settings beyond screen resolution. I also installed the latest Firefox, Opera and Safari to check how our sites appear on the Windows platform, plus the special bundled version of McAfee's security suite supplied by VMWare.

So you'd think that a straight in place upgrade ought to proceed without difficulty. Well it would on any Mac even after far more system and application changes, but Microsoft is nothing if not inscrutable about such matters. What this means is that my Windows 7 installation was interrupted several times to warn me of potential compatibility issues.

What compatibility issues? Well, after closing the Windows 7 installation, I discovered a prompt from, believe it or not, Apple, to install QuickTime and Safari upgrades. Once that was done, I started the 7 installer again, only to be admonished to restart my PC to complete the installation of some unknown updates before trying Windows 7 again. After three failures, the installation actually began in earnest.

I won't bother describing the process in detail. Except for somewhat prettier status screens, it's not terribly different visually from Vista. Every process is frequently interrupted with "Please Wait..." prompts. I also ran into a few "Gathering additional information before expanding files" that were just as peculiar. Just what information does Microsoft need on a system that's only a few steps from stock?

There were also several restarts during the process plus a notice that "Setup is upgrading registry settings" that had the usual frightening implications. Indeed, the dreaded Registry is one of the "features" that persists in Windows, despite being an endless source of performance bottlenecks, instability and general customer confusion. You'd think that Microsoft could manage to set aside a few billion dollars to just get rid of it and devise a settings database scheme that actually works.

In all fairness, I suppose some of the peculiarities might be attributed to running Windows in a virtualized environment rather than the real thing. On the other hand, neither VMWare nor Parallels ever presented problems installing Windows XP or Vista, so maybe it is a 7 thing after all, or just the consequence of upgrading an existing Vista setup rather than creating a new virtual machine.

At the end of the process, which consumed well over 90 minutes after the initial interruptions, Windows 7 restarted as a nearly virgin system. As you know, it doesn't even include such basics as contact, calendar and even email software until you actually download and install the Windows Live Essentials files from Microsoft's site. Talk about dumb!

While it's too early to say much about Windows 7, I do agree with the critics that it's noticeably snappier than Vista, with a more attractive interface. That doesn't necessarily make it easier to use, and while I suppose it is more Mac-like, it doesn't come close to replacing Apple's operating system.

See Comments via the link.

Gene responds to one:

“Obviously, Snow Leopard is only for Intel-based Macs, which can only run Tiger or Leopard as the previous operating system. With the PC, today’s hardware can use XP. Microsoft’s problem is that many XP users avoided Vista, but the upgrade from XP to 7 is messy. Microsoft surely has enough resources at its disposal to develop a tool that would automate the process, even if they can’t figure out how to build a proper in place installer. They chose not to do so, or maybe they don’t know how.

Apple devised an installer that succeeds in providing in place Snow Leopard upgrades for the vast majority of Tiger and Leopard users. There aren’t many failures, and those would apply largely to systems heavily modified.”

Peace, Gene

Books

The Best Camera is the One That's With You

Reviewed by Robert L Pritchett



Author: Chase Jarvis

<http://www.chasejarvis.com>

New Riders

<http://www.newriders.com>

<http://www.thebestcamera.com>

Released: September 22, 2009

\$20 USD

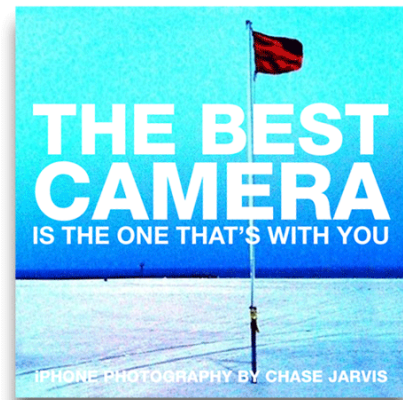
ISBN: 9780321684783

Strengths: An interesting way to establish a 3-part ecosystem with an iPhone app, a book and an online community.

Weaknesses: It's a shutterbug book gone wild. iPhone pic shovelware.

Introduction

World-renowned photographer and director Chase Jarvis today announced the launch of an ecosystem—the first of its kind, including a new book, a new app, and even a new online community—centered around the idea that *The Best Camera Is The One That's With You*. With the new iPhone application "Best Camera App" now available on the App Store, an online photo-sharing community, and a book, this unique project encourages photographers, both amateur and professional, to explore and share their vision with the world. With only an iPhone 3GS in his pocket, Chase has an endless outlet for creative expression, inspiration, and photography at the click of one button. As more than 2 million visitors discovered (in just 72 hours), when Chase Jarvis published his first iPhone gallery, the iPhone is truly capable of creating and sharing interesting and intriguing images.



The App: Best Camera The [Best Camera App](#) allows users to creatively edit and share iPhone images more simply than ever before. There's a unique set of filters and effects that can be applied at the touch of a button. Stack them. Mix them. Remix them. There are virtually infinite creative possibilities.

The Community: TheBestCamera.com The Best Camera App also allows users to share their images directly with the world via Twitter, Facebook, e-mail, and www.thebestcamera.com, a new online community where iPhone users can contribute to a living, breathing gallery of iPhone photography from around the globe. This virtual exhibition displays images uploaded by Best Camera App users and lets them vote for the images they like.

The Book: The Best Camera Is The One That's With You Chase has pulled a collection of his iPhone photography together into an amazing visual journal. Proving the phrase he inadvertently coined, [The Best Camera Is The One That's With You](#), his new book released by New Riders, part of the Peachpit family of creative imprints, reveals what is possible with an iPhone camera. In [The Best Camera Is The One That's With You](#), each page displays a beautiful image taken with his iPhone, with Chase sharing inspiring anecdotes.

“For me, this book has become a stake in the ground. With it, I hope to underscore—perhaps even legitimize—the idea that an image can come from any camera, even a mobile phone,” said Chase Jarvis. “Inherently, we all know that an image isn't measured by its resolution, dynamic range, or anything technical. It's measured by the simple—sometimes profound, other times absurd or humorous or whimsical—effect that it can have upon us. If you can see it, it can move you. I am proud of the ecosystem we've created: this book, this app, and this community. Join us. I look forward to seeing your pictures.”

The Best Camera App is available for \$2.99 from the App Store on iPhone or at itunes.com.

The book, [The Best Camera Is The One That's With You: iPhone Photography](#) by Chase Jarvis, is now available at Peachpit.com, Amazon.com, Barnes & Noble, Borders, and other retailers worldwide.

Readers can learn more about the app, the site, and the book at TheBestCamera.com and by following Chase on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [YouTube](#), and via his blog, chasejarvis.com/blog.

What I Learned

A shutterbug goes crazy snapping pics of everything imaginable and then somehow, gets those pics printed so he can advertise his iPhone Best Camera app. Oh, but there's more! The website dedicated to the book also has live feeds of images from other folks who caught the bug and are willing to post their latest iPhone pics online too! Oh, and you can go online and talk about them too.

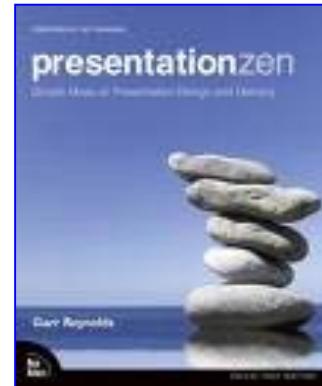
What a way to make a buck.

Conclusion

“It’s the world’s first photo book featuring exclusively images from a mobile phone.” It’s also a means to an end in establishing a photogenic worldwide community.

Presentation Zen: Simple Ideas on Presentation Design and Delivery

Reviewed by Harry {doc} Babad © 2009



Author: Garr Reynolds

Publisher: New Riders Press (Peachpit); 1st edition (January 4, 2008)

Web Site: <http://www.peachpit.com/store/product.aspx?isbn=0321525655>

Product Dimensions: 228 Pages including the Index, as an 8.9 x 7.5 x 0.4 inch paperback.
Language: English **ISBN-10:** 0321525655, **ISBN-13:** 978-0321525659

Cost: List \$29.95, Street \$23.09 USD or Safari books online, an eBook \$25.19 USD

Review Ratings: Readers open to or Comfortable with oriental concepts —



The rest of the world's challenged would be presenters; you too can overcome! —



Audience: Anyone who has to give or individual with *influence* who will have to sit through canned presentations at meetings and symposia.

Strengths: Nancy Duarte, CEO, Duarte Design, noted: "Garr is a beacon of hope for frustrated and bored audiences everywhere. His design philosophy and fundamental principles bring life to messages and can invigorate careers. His principles of simplicity are as much a journey of the soul as they are restraint of the mouse." This book will make you rethink everything you've known (and likely done) about how a presentation should be designed.

Weaknesses: This is not a PowerPoint or Keynote recipe book about how to create slides. The book contains no software mechanics of sets of prefab templates that follow the Microsoft of other corporate presentation rules. This, as the author and other presentation experts he cites note, is about re-imagining how your entire presentation will work together as a persuasive and integrated graphics and verbal (you) show, from conception through delivery. Hurrah for Garr Reynolds.

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Sidebar #1: Reviews were written on my iMac 2.8 GHz Intel Core 2 Duo with 2 GB 667 MHz DDR2 SDRAM running Mac OS X version 10.5.8 with all current security updates installed. Techniques were tested, more for fun than necessity, for doing this book review; and I do own both the latest versions of MS PowerPoint and Apple's Keynote.

Sidebar #2: Disclaimer: When reviewing books I will often use the authors or publishers product, functions and features descriptions. At times, when they say it better than I can, I cite other reviewers. Because of this unless I'm quoting directly from *another source*, I do not clutter up the review with quotation marks. All other comments are strictly my own and based on my review. Why need I rewrite the author's narratives, if they are clearly written?

Sidebar #3: All the slides that illustrate this review were liberated from Garr Reynolds website. Thanks sir, they complement my review perfectly.

Introduction

When I first moved from academia to industry, I had no training in making presentations other than teaching (lesson plans) and giving papers at professional societies. I've been cleaning out very old files including view graphs from those days gone by; yuck... what boring hard to understand crowded visual material! I hope my talks were better than my visuals, but alas none of those have survived. On a more positive side, all the papers I had written, around which the presentations were planned and made, made sense and were for the most part still technically valid.

About two score and five years ago, I was first formally exposed to the concepts of persuasive presentation. I took the lessons to heart, and even created mini-courses for my colleagues, but alas all too many of my talks turned out to be death by viewgraphs, slides and more recently PowerPoint. Like many others, I have grown (very) weary of the so-called "death by PowerPoint" culture in which I live and work. It saturates the Nuclear Waste Management and Energy sector where I consult. Whether in presentations by contractor management types, often brilliant technical researchers, or the engineers that makes things happen — death my power point is not a choice I'm often willing to take. Understand, its not PowerPoint or any other slideware that is the problem, but the way it is being misused.



This is true whether dished out by contactor personnel, the staff of US DOE or the regulatory community.

How weary? At the Phoenix based annual International {Nuclear} Waste Management Conference, my favorite information exchange venue, I attend a minimal number of papers beyond the plenary sessions. Instead, caging authors for a copy of their submitted manuscript. I'd rather take 30 minutes to digest a peer-reviewed paper than spend 20 minutes in the dark, at a presentation filled with sound and fury signifying, not much.

It wasn't until I started reading this book that I began to see way in which I could have better shared my ideas with my audiences that were often 50 people strong.

Publisher's Introduction — Presentation designer and internationally acclaimed communications expert Garr Reynolds, creator of the most popular Web site on presentation design and delivery on the net - presentationzen.com - shares his experience in a provocative mix of illumination, inspiration, education, and guidance that will change the way you think about making presentations with PowerPoint or Keynote. Presentation Zen challenges the conventional wisdom of making "slide presentations" in today's world and encourages you to think differently and more creatively about the preparation, design, and delivery of your presentations. Garr shares lessons and perspectives that draw upon practical advice from the fields of communication and business. Combining solid principles of design with the tenets of Zen simplicity, this book will help you along the path to simpler, more effective presentations (by Guy Kawasaki).

The Nature of the Beast — Key Ideas to Stimulate Your Mind

Slides and the Presentation — The slides at the author uses to illustrate the ideas in this book do not tell nearly the complete story. If you attended his presentations, the slides would have served to reinforce the points and establish a connection to the audience. But on their own, aside from being interesting and perhaps nice to look at, they served no real utility outside his specific presentation. And that is OK.



Presentations are ephemeral, a unique moment in time to connect, to teach, persuade, sell, or whatever your purpose of the talk may be. Once it's over, it's over. A printout of slides, like the ones above, will be of little use. And that is precisely why I do not printout my slides for the audience. Instead, I provide a *handout* to be distributed after my presentations. This allows Garr to provide more detail and better-written prose, rather than short, bulleted lists contained within wordy PowerPoint slide printouts that confuse (not to mention bore) more than they inform.

The Sins of our Corporate Trainers — Pages of slides, chock full of text, cluttered unreadable tables and graphs, Borders that border on nothing, unneeded-distracting use of special effects, company logo's and topic lines that take half the slides space. Presentation Zen is about simplicity and storytelling.



Garr's Premise — Your slides should support you, the speaker. If someone can get all the information from your slides, why do they need you? Your slides should not overwhelm the audience, but should reinforce the points that you are sharing in your talk. Couple this focus on you with your desire share stories about your subject, rather than recite facts, and you can put together presentations that will be appreciated, remembered, and best of all, acted upon.

How the book is organized (with annotated comments.)

Presentation Zen is not a step-by-step systematic process to good slides, as I hoped it would be. It is an approach to which Reynold's touches of Zen almost make it feel like a way of life. Readers of this book will be most comfortable with it is they have been exposed to Oriental philosophy such as the Japanese Zen or perhaps the mental underpinnings of the martial arts. Westerners can not open up to these ideas will found the book shallow of detailed hot to do its and unsatisfying. Although not a disciple of any of the oriental mind practices, I sufficient familiar with them that I could tie into what Garr was sharing about mindset and presentation design.

I, as have other reviewers like Marieke Guy [<http://www.ariadne.ac.uk/issue58/guy-rvw/>], admit to a feeling of disappointment when starting to read this book. Yes I know the publisher was clear on defining its scope and purpose, but... I had hoped that there would be a baker's dozen steps to presentation nirvana, but then it I realize my own bad slides have been 35 years in the making and I won't solve my less than perfect presentations in a day or a month. As Reynold's implies, it a journey taken for its own joy, to expecting top reach an end point. Actually I don't really miss the advice that has guided me for years. (E.g., Tell then what you'll tell them, tell them in detail, and the at the end remind them of what your told them; *or* no more the 8-10 lines including blank spaces on a slide.)

Introduction, Presenting in Today's World — “This is not a book about Zen; this is a book about communication and about seeing presentations in a slightly different way, a way that is more in tune with our times. ... Our professional activities—especially professional communications—can share the same ethos as Zen. That is, the essence of spirit of many of the principles found in Zen concerning esthetics, mindfulness, correctness, and soon can be applied to our daily activities including presentations.” Garr Reynolds.

The book is an approach, not a method, to persuasive presentations. The book is not prescriptive. There are no recipes, rules, or procedures in this book. It does however share the idea that not only is each audience for a presentation different, but each time a presentation is given it will be different because you and the circumstances have changed.

PREPARATION

The typical PowerPoint presentation consists of a speaker presenting streams of information on slides with general titles. They include hokey, usually unrelated clip art and endless bulleted lists highlighted only with unintelligible report-style graphics and tables. The human mind cannot process such intense visual data and listen to you at the same time. The result, after only a half hour or so, you forget what you've seen and heard: that is if you managed to stay awake. Topics and concepts discussed herein include:

- Creativity, Limitations, and Constraints – You'll need both your right (creative) and left (organized) side of your brain. After all, creative thinking and design awareness are both useful attributes of successful businessmen, academics and presenters. An example of a Zen concept introduced here is start with a beginners mind... be open to possibilities despite potential risks. Even if you afraid to admit it, remember you too are creative in what you do. It's you're presentation, let it all hang out!
- Planning *Using Analog Tools* – Why paper and pencil matters. As you prepare your presentation remember these ideas... simplicity, clarity and brevity
- Crafting the Story – Story boards can be of real help and value; sometimes brainstorming helps if it's to be a hard to sell idea, in a soft pitch disguise. Know your audience, know your purpose, and most of all you should be willing to freely share with them. Before you get started, think through the answers of some critical questions related to your presentation and the venue in which it is to be made. (See pages 61-62, and 67). Define your central point – use it as a compass to guide your presentation. Stay anchored; determine what's the point for presenting at the meeting, and why does your talk matter?



DESIGN

- Simplicity: Why it Matters
- Presentation Design: Principles and Techniques — These are concepts, not a tutorial. Design is very much about subtraction. This need for simplicity leads on to the general design principles that Reynolds describes in the book:

- Reduce the signal versus noise ratio – Take out irrelevant items including, if possible, organizational logos and super-sized distracting space wasting headers.
 - Use good quality images, not cutsey clip art – People remember visuals better than bullet points. Reynolds recommends a number of different stock photo suppliers, some free.
 - Empty space is good, wasted space is bad.
 - Contrast – Create dynamic differences. There’s nothing much duller then the blahs.
 - Repetition – Repeat a few critical carefully selected elements in your presentation
 - Alignment – Use a grid to align objects successfully. Try the rule of thirds (page 151) great photographers do.
 - Proximity – Ensure that related items are grouped together – they eye notices. Don’t group them together and the togetherness link is lost.
- Sample Slides (Chapter 7)— Too many illustrations without any sense of coherent linkages to either a story behind them or even Garr sharing of why some are good, others bad and ugly. See the next section my disappointment at this limitations.

DELIVERY

- The Art of Being Completely Present — Everyone is overloaded and distracted. Too much so. Put it behind you when you get up to talk, for those few minutes, nothing else should matter. It isn’t easy, but to it anyway. Make eye contact, pitch to different part of the audience, and mainly be there for these folks; they came to listen.
- Oh yes, keep the #@\$%# light on! You can’t connect with an audience you can’t see. Use a projector/computer remote mouse and most of all get unchained from that awkwardly placed podium. Who are you hiding from?



THE NEXT STEP — The Journey Begins. Like all things, using a Zen-like metaphor, “A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.” Confucius. Take a chance, you be surprised at the results.

Disappointments

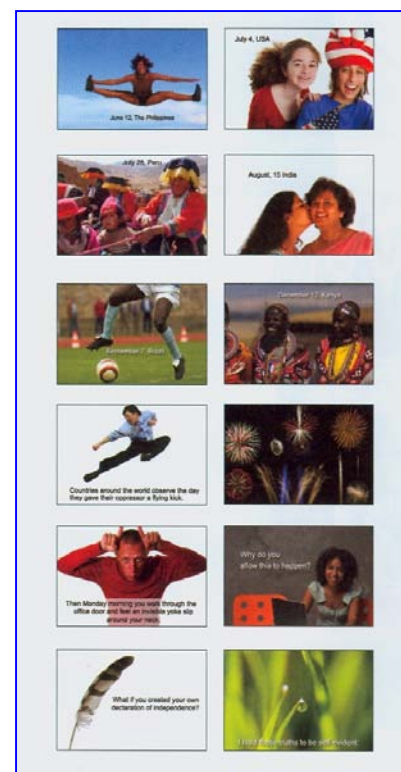
A Reader Audience Check Please —I felt Reynolds seemed out of touch with the usual working environment, whether it is in the United States or in Japan. Unless you were a CEO, think Apple’s Steve Jobs, with staff to design you Zen-like presentation at you’re beck and call. Garr alas, unrealistically makes the suggestion that if we put 25-30 hours into the creation of a slide presentation. The reason, we’d save our collective audiences that time. I’m sure most of us could put together great slides in 3 working days.

I have always, due to the press of other priorities, written my papers, prepared my talk and created my slides at home, after wok or on a weekend. However, as a manager I could not expect most of our staff to be able to free up that amount of time. I would have welcomed a few tips and guidelines to split the difference between where I am and where I’d like my presentations to go, taken of course from a more time-saturated academic or business perspective.

Zen Terms and FOG — I would have welcomed a glossary of Zen terms at the end of this book, one with simple definition to which westerners can open up. The book’s FOG index is a bit higher than a general outreach book should be. Having said that, so were my first experiences, years ago, with the thoughts and ideas of Zen. But patience, above all else and the desire to make thing clear, will allow you to succeed in your presentation efforts.

Too Much Repetition — I recognize that a Zen master will repeat concepts to their students until they have internalized the ideas. But we do not read books in that manner, whether they are approaches, guides or tutorials to our subject matter.

Too often, the book was frustratingly repetitive, with even the simplest points restated through multiple chapters (really, how many times do you have to suggest using limiting the use of bullets or graphics taken as is from reports?). For example, the book was frustratingly repetitive, with even the simplest points restated through multiple chapters (really, how many times do you have to suggest using post-it notes? (Paraphrased from Andrew C. Saks, an Amazon.com reviewer)



No Formal Bibliography of Sources — As a writer of textbooks and technical papers, disturbs me. Although I had no trouble googling the individual referenced books and their authors. Indeed, to his credit, many of these citations were available on Mr. Reynolds website. However, that's more work, alas, than I'd bargained for when starting to review this book.

Sample Slides, a Poor End Game — I was disappointed by the last few sections of the book, especially as related to the pages of provided sample slides. The book is replete with sample slides, starting at page 165 — there's page after page of examples.

However, with little to no analysis of their focus or design elements being illustrated, they were only slideware. Pretty, when I could see them, slideware that accompanying guides or slide evaluations, did nothing for my understanding of what I should learn or even see in the graphics provided. Some of the thumbnails were so small that I could not tell, even with a magnifying glass, which design features were represented.

Alas, this is the opposite treatment that Garr makes in the earlier parts of the book – that of always trying to maintain focus, clarity and connectedness.

Conclusion

To the individual who has never been exposed to the concepts inherent in Zen, some of the concepts Garr Reynolds presents seem a bit off-putting. That coupled with a somewhat high “FOG” index will slow a newbie in accepting and practicing the discipline of “*Using Zen concepts in creating focused, persuasive and audience capturing Presentations*” Initially uncomfortable. But go with the flow, it will all come together in a way that everyone who is willing to look and see, can succeed presenting persuasively.

I have found many faults with this book for a reader and from a presenter perspective. I do however recommend it to our readers and would-be presenters who are acquainted with the concepts of oriental philosophy. It need not be Zen, any of the oriental philosophies of life, whether they are of Chinese, Korean or Indian origin, share many common concepts that parallel those in Zen. 4.5 macC's

I am less convinced that readers who are either uncomfortable with the ideas of oriental philosophy and design will gain as much from the book as I did. That includes folks who are totally comfortable with the corporate or academic practice of presentations, or are unwilling to get out of their comfort zone, no matter how many PowerPoint deaths they may cause. 3.5 macCs

I totally agree with Seth Godin, Speaker and Blogger (Amazon.com Review.) "Please don't buy this book! Once people start making better presentations, mine won't look so good. (But if you truly want to learn what works and how to do it right, Garr is the man to learn from.)" But the book, it will grow on you and you will grow on your audiences.

About the Author

Garr Reynolds is the author of *Presentation Zen* and a leading authority on presentation design and delivery. A sought-after speaker and consultant, his clients include many in the Fortune 500. A writer, designer, and musician, he is currently Associate Professor of Management at Kansai Gaidai University in Japan. Garr is a former corporate trainer for Sumitomo Electric and worked as the Manager for Worldwide User Group Relations at Apple, Inc. A long-time student of the Zen arts, he currently lives in Osaka, Japan, where he is Director of Design Matters Japan. His popular blog can be found at <http://www.presentationzen.com>. For more, check: <http://www.garrreynolds.com/>

Notes and References...

Check out Garr's detailed 3 section Presentation tips at <http://www.garrreynolds.com/Presentation/index.html>. No it will not replace this book. It will provide you a great introduction to Garr Reynolds ideas. There's even a sample presentation handout for you to reflect on.

For professionals today, presentation and public-speaking skills are more important than ever. Management guru, as noted in the book, Tom Peters for example, says that presentation skills are worthy of extreme obsessive study!' Strong presentation skills and the ability to engage and connect can truly set you apart from the crowd. Garr Reynolds website, and the links to other material he provides, can complement the book can start you on your journey to satisfying successful presentations.

Rethinking the Presentation — These practical tips can help you improve your presentations and avoid sabotaging your business's chances of success. Business Week, April 4, 2008.

http://www.businessweek.com/print/smallbiz/content/apr2008/sb2008044_186674.htm

Presentation Zen: Simple Ideas on Presentation Design and Delivery, A review by Marieke Guy, University of Bath, the United Kingdom. [<http://www.ariadne.ac.uk/issue58/guy-rvw/.%5D/>]

Presentation Zen Design, by Gar Reynolds, New Riders Press; 1st edition (December 28, 2009), ISBN-10: 0321668790 ISBN-13: 978-0321668790 [List Price - \$35 (USD), \$23 Street Price.)

Mac OS X Support Essentials v10.6: A Guide to Supporting and Troubleshooting Mac OS X v10.6 Snow Leopard

Reviewed by Robert L Pritchett



<http://www.peachpit.com/store/product.aspx?isbn=0321635345>

Author: Kevin M. White

Released: October 15, 2009

Pages: 696

\$58.49 USD

ISBN: 9780321635341 also available as an eBook.

Requirements: Mac OS X Snow Leopard.

Strengths: Offers the most recent updated info regarding Mac OS X Snow Leopard for those who need to provide support for the OS.

Weaknesses: Seems to have slipped in at least one Leopard 10.5 chapter...

Previous Reviews:

Introduction

“The only Apple-certified book on Mac OS X v10.6, this revised best-seller will take you deep inside the latest big-cat operating system—covering everything from installation to automation, customizing the operating system, supporting applications, setting up peripherals, and more. Whether you're a support technician or simply an ardent Mac user, you'll quickly learn and master the new features in Mac OS X 10.6, including native support for Microsoft Exchange Server 2007. Following the learning objectives of the Apple Certified Support Professional exam, this self-paced book is a perfect guide for Apple's training and a first-rate primer for computer support personnel who need to troubleshoot and optimize Mac OS X as part of their jobs. Chapter review sections and quizzes summarize and reinforce acquired knowledge.

The Apple Training Series serves as both a self-paced learning tool and the official curriculum for the Mac OS X and Mac OS X Server certification programs.”



What I Learned

I don't like "shovelware", i.e., take a recent publication and change the title and numbers with very little internal changes and sell it as a new book just because there is a rev number difference. However, that aside, this book does a great job showing what has been added to Leopard to make it Snow Leopard. I caught the author referring back to older OS revs to show when a particular trait was added, but I think he overdid it with one chapter, by not changing the rev number from 10.5 to 10.6, but then again, it may be just me. I'm guessing, because I didn't review the older Leopard version of the book.

I really dug deep into this book, because the installation was so easy and painless, I had to be dreaming. I bought the family pack and proceeded to add the upgrade to the machines that would accept it. I discovered one machine I thought was Intel-based, to not be. Too bad, so sad. But the portables are all up-to-date now and they all work great. Of course not included in the book was rev 10.6.1, that was added mercifully within a matter of days of the DVD release. While others reported issues on MacFixIt, I have not personally experienced any issues so far.

I love how TimeMachine only does quick incremental backups now.

Not so loved is Adobe's Acrobat 9/Microsoft's Office 2004 snafus, even with the updates and work-arounds from those companies. It would be nice if they would get with the program now, rather than later. Their dallying cost me about ½ month in getting the PDF version of the October issue of *macCompanion* magazine made available. Issues with MS Office 2008 for the Mac and me being able to access those files, has caused me to begin seriously looking at NeoOffice and requesting some staff members to do the same, due to some (can't read the files as .doc, but can with Pages or NeoOffice) nasty glitches.

The Network Troubleshooting section gave me a hint of what to do with the old iMac G5 I had - <http://www.macompanion.com/macc/archives/July2008/Columns/Troubleshooting.htm> Apparently, the wireless card had been removed and not replaced when the motherboard was replaced. I/we only discovered this, after I spent nearly a day trying to get it to work (no AirPort connectivity) and found it was gone. I had my dad go buy another one and install it, but it didn't get beyond "yellow", so I had to hardwire the G5 to the Clearwire/Linksys combo so he could use the machine to get online. After reading the Network Troubleshooting section, I realized the issue was that the Clearwire/Linksys combo didn't recognize the IP address of the now discontinued AirPort Express card. I had no trouble getting on that network with my MacBook Pro, but the G5 AirPort Express card just would not play nice. Thank goodness the Ethernet port worked. But that cost me 3 days and 3 100-mile trips over 3 weeks to get things straightened out (everything comes in 3s). I wish I had had the book earlier to get me at least into the right ballpark. But it did get the "ahah!" light turned on for me.

I will mention that the local computer repair store ([Complete Computer Services - http://www.ccsoe.com/](http://www.ccsoe.com/)) in Ellensburg, WA where dad bought the card was a great help in identifying that the card was good. They definitely know what they are doing. I've dealt with them before over the years and I liked them then because they used Macs for their business. This time, they had non-Macs using QuickBooks to do business, but hey, they did have a troubleshooting desk with Macs in use, which I thought was cool.

Mom knew them by first-name basis when she was using a PC to do her work. She helped them financially with all her service calls back then. ;^)

My mistake this time, was that I should have checked the G5 for wireless connectivity when I got it back from the Richland, WA repair shop (which will remain nameless at this time). I had no reason not to use it hard-wired to the LAN. That was a spendy mistake on my part, when I upgraded dad from his still-working-just-fine eMac as a wireless machine and then discovered the G5 would not communicate with his LAN wirelessly. But now he has a better system (larger screen, quieter system) and a better hardwired connection (beachballing is significantly reduced while using the FamilySearch website for research). I like being able to put a smile on dad's face.

Conclusion

The book is not a "get in super deep" book, but it has plenty of links that can get you there and it does an excellent job also looking at the UNIX and Terminal side of things to get at the nitty-gritty of Mac OS X. It doesn't not over-promise and under-deliver. It does live up to its name as an excellent reference to provide essential support for Mac OS X 10.6 Snow Leopard.

Greenware



ClimateGate and the Copenhagen Treaty - I've been vindicated!

By Robert L Pritchett

I wrote *Global Warming, the Cult of Gaia and "Edidence"* back in May of 2008 and kept things updated over on peswiki.com under *Global Cooling*, until crossing swords with the president of the *Pure Energy Systems Network* too many times, contributed to my demise as the VP of IT in managing the site. He purports to be an Environmentalist Religionist and I do not.

<http://www.macompanion.com/macc/archives/May2008/Greenware/Global%20Warming.htm>

I think however he is savvy enough and seems to have tested the wind and can see which way it is blowing –

http://www.peswiki.com/index.php/News:Hacked_Climate_Research_Unit_%28CRU%29_Email_s

Recent activities regarding the exposé of the Climate Research Unit at the University of East Anglia, records showing manipulation and suppression of data that was in direct opposition to the Global Warming agenda that has been brought to light, should have an effect on the Copenhagen Treaty at the Climate Summit that is designed to take away sovereignty of nation states (read trashing the US Constitution) in December. As a result, there seems to be an unprecedented attempt for “duck and cover” by the environmentalist wackos, as they try to kill the messenger, instead of fessing up to the greatest scientific hoax perpetrated on humanity in recorded history.

Quick, take the ClimateGate Pop Quiz!

<http://us.asiancorrespondent.com/gavin-atkins-shadowlands/climate-science-the-quiz.htm>

“Hide the Decline” song

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nfVwEBkuqts>

Searchable CRU Email list

<http://www.eastangliaemails.com/index.php>

64MB download

<http://rs487.rapidshare.com/files/309710046/FOI2009.zip>

The Climate Research Unit Hack

<http://xenophilius.wordpress.com/2009/11/25/the-climate-research-unit-hack-64-mb-foi2009-zip/>

Climategate: 'Scientists would rather change facts than their theories'

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aPDyfNVUt08>

They can run, but they cannot hide –

The Scientists Involved in Deliberately Deceiving the World on Climate

<http://canadafreepress.com/index.php/article/17364>

Climatic Research Unit e-mail hacking incident

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Climatic_Research_Unit_e-mail_hacking_incident

ClimateGate: The Fix is In

http://www.realclearpolitics.com/articles/2009/11/24/the_fix_is_in_99280.html

Climate Audit

<http://www.climateaudit.org/?p=7168>

Global Warming On Trial: Inhofe Calls For Investigation Of UN IPCC

<http://www.prisonplanet.com/global-warming-on-trial-inhofe-calls-for-investigation-of-un-ipcc.html>



Climate Depot – must see site!

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

"Climate Gate" Development: CEI Files Notice of Intent to Sue NASA

<http://spectator.org/blog/2009/11/24/climate-gate-development-cei-f>

UN scientists turn on each other: UN Scientist Declares Climategate colleagues Mann, Jones and Rahmstorf 'should be barred from the IPCC process' -- They are 'not credible any more'

<http://www.climatedepot.com/a/4100/UN-scientists-turn-on-each-other-UN-Scientist-Declares-Climategate-colleagues-Mann-Jones-and-Rahmstorf-should-be-barred-from-the-IPCC-process--They-are-not-credible-any-more>

This is how the Mainstream media reported the findings...

<http://blogs.telegraph.co.uk/news/jamesdelingpole/100017451/climategate-how-the-msm-reported-the-greatest-scandal-in-modern-science/>

Scripture says that bad things will be shouted from the rooftops as they come to light about “secret combinations” in the last days. Well, we’re shouting. Is anybody listening?

2 Nephi 30:16 Wherefore, the things of all nations shall be made known; yea, all things shall be made known unto the children of men.

17 There is nothing which is secret save it shall be revealed; there is no work of darkness save it shall be made manifest in the light; and there is nothing which is sealed upon the earth save it shall be loosed.

18 Wherefore, all things which have been revealed unto the children of men shall at that day be revealed; and Satan shall have power over the hearts of the children of men no more, for a long time.

D&C 101:81 Now, unto what shall I liken the children of Zion? I will liken them unto the parable of the woman and the unjust judge, for men ought always to pray and not to faint, which saith—

82 There was in a city a judge which feared not God, neither regarded man.

83 And there was a widow in that city, and she came unto him, saying: Avenge me of mine adversary.

84 And he would not for a while, but afterward he said within himself: Though I fear not God, nor regard man, yet because this widow troubleth me I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.

85 Thus will I liken the children of Zion.

86 Let them importune at the feet of the judge;

87 And if he heed them not, let them importune at the feet of the governor;

88 And if the governor heed them not, let them importune at the feet of the president;

89 And if the *president* heed them not, then will ***the Lord arise and come forth out of his hiding place, and in his fury vex the nation;***

90 And in his hot displeasure, and in his fierce anger, in his time, will cut off those wicked, unfaithful, and unjust stewards, and appoint them their portion among hypocrites, and unbelievers;

91 Even in outer darkness, where there is weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth.

92 Pray ye, therefore, that their ears may be opened unto your cries, that I may be merciful unto them, that these things may not come upon them.

93 What I have said unto you must needs be, that all men may be left without excuse;

94 That wise men and rulers may hear and know that which they have never considered;

95 That I may proceed to bring to pass my act, my strange act, and perform my work, my strange work, that men may discern between the righteous and the wicked, saith your God.

When I quoted Lord Monckton over on peswiki.com, I was derided by my former boss for doing so. Now Lord Monckton fights back against the fraudulent propaganda peddlers of the global warming agenda;

“Monckton said that the agenda behind the global warming movement was to set up a communistic world government which will be run by people who “do not care how many people they kill with their policies” and that their goal is to “do away with democracy forever by stealth using the excuse to save the planet.”

Monckton said that the people running the scam had a “deliberate desire to control population by killing people in large numbers deliberately if necessary.”

Lord Monckton: Shut Down The UN, Arrest Al Gore

<http://www.prisonplanet.com/lord-monckton-shut-down-the-un-arrest-the-warmist-criminals.html>

I linked to it before, but here is his entire lecture on the consequences of the UN treaty to be signed in Copenhagen –

Updated with Slides - Lord Christopher Monckton Speaking in St. Paul

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4zOXmJ4jd-8>

Branded as the Kyoto 2 protocol, the Climate Change Summit has the New World Order agenda written all over it. As I listened to an American Grand Jury conference call, I heard credible evidence that when this treaty is signed by the traitorous illegal alien in the White House, the US Constitution will have become null and void and the UN will have control over the US. Verified here -

Copenhagen Treaty: Premises and Motivations

<http://dissidentvoice.org/2009/11/copenhagen-treaty-premises-and-motivations/>

NGO Copenhagen Treaty

<http://www.greenpeace.org/seasia/en/press/reports/ngo-copenhagen-treaty>

The Copenhagen Climate Change Treaty Draft – wealth transfer defined, now with new and improved “dignity” penalty

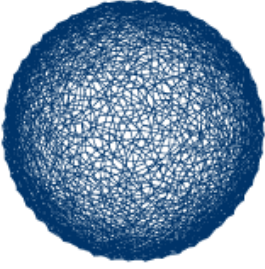
<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2009/10/03/the-copenhagen-treaty-draft-wealth-transfer-defined-now-with-dignity-penalty/>

Copenhagen is on; Obama proposes a treaty and leads U.S. delegation

<http://trueslant.com/jeffmcMahon/2009/11/25/copenhagen-is-on-obama-to-a-lead-u-s-delegation/>

Copenhagen Treaty Will Demand American Taxpayers Buy "Dignity" for Third World

http://www.moonbattery.com/archives/2009/10/copenhagen_trea.html



COP15
COPENHAGEN
UNITED NATIONS CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE 2009

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
<http://unfccc.int/2860.php>

UK Scientist: 'Case for climate fears is blown to smithereens...whole theory should be destroyed and discarded and UN conference should be closed'
<http://www.climatedepot.com/a/4077/UK-Scientist-Case-for-climate-fears-is-blown-to-smithereenswhole-theory-should-be-destroyed-and-discarded-and-UN-conference-should-be-closed>

Meanwhile, the world keeps getting colder instead of warmer, so any discussion of the weather and our supposed ability to control the same is still moot.

Let's be clear on one thing, Co2 is good for vegetation. Plants thrive on Co2. When that is taken away, they die.



Source: http://superstore.wnd.com/store/item.asp?ITEM_ID=3457

The other name for "Climate Change" is "Weather". ;^)

I have not changed my stance on the subject. Have you? Our freedom and liberty are at stake. So are our very lives.

Don't believe me? Try this evidence that is being systematically whitewashed and removed from the Internet now. It also links to other examples of threats, intimidation, blackmail and censorship –

'Execute' Skeptics! Shock Call To Action: 'At what point do we jail or execute global warming deniers' -- 'Shouldn't we start punishing them now?'

<http://www.climatedepot.com/a/1096/Execute-Skeptics-Shock-Call-To-Action-At-what-point-do-we-jail-or-execute-global-warming-deniers--Shouldnt-we-start-punishing-them-now>

Al Gore confronted on Climategate in Chicago

<http://www.wearechangechicago.com/algore.html>

Al Gore Goons Use Force to Silence Exposure of ClimateGate

<http://targetfreedom.typepad.com/targetfreedom/2009/11/gore-goons-use-force-.html>

ClimateGate For Dummies

<http://www.infowars.com/climategate-for-dummies/>

Climategate: the scandal spreads, the plot thickens, the shame deepens...

<http://blogs.telegraph.co.uk/news/jamesdelingpole/100017977/climategate-the-scandal-spreads-the-plot-thickens-the-shame-deepens/>

Global warming industry becomes too big to fail

<http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/politics/Global-warming-industry-becomes-too-big-to-fail-8581165-72824992.html>

'Copenhagen Diagnosis' Ramps Up the Rhetoric

<http://thenewamerican.com/index.php/tech-mainmenu-30/environment/2430-copenhagen-diagnosis-ramps-up-the-rhetoric>



Source: Deesillustration.com

The Church of Climatology

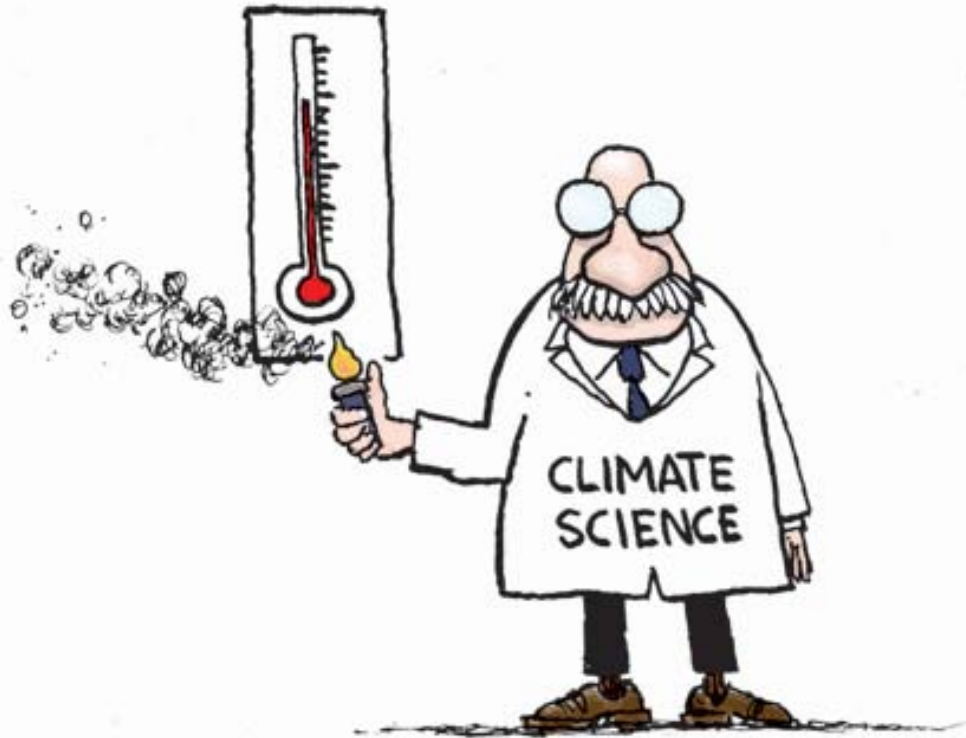
<http://www.kennethgdavenport.com/2009/01/church-of-climatology.html>

Global Warming Hoax, Planned in 1961

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SvcuylMrkXk>

! The Heartland Institute – Climategate: IPCC Email Scandal

<http://www.globalwarmingheartland.org/IPCCscandal.html>

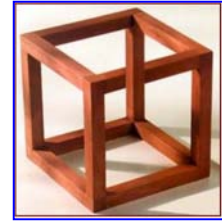


AN INCONVENIENT TRUTH

Source: <http://content.patriotpost.us/img/legacy/broadcasts/humor/120109.html>

The Greening Continues — The most eclectic of what I read

By Harry Babad © 2009
macCompanion December 2009



Sources & Credits:

Most of these items, were located in the newsletter *NewsBridge* of ‘articles of interest’ to the libraries users. It is electronically published by the Pacific Northwest National Laboratories, in Richland WA. I then followed the provided link to the source of the information and edited the content (abstracted) for our readers.

Much of what I will share also comes from the various weekly science and environmental newsletters to which I subscribe. Their selection, my choices, is obviously, and intentionally biased by my views.

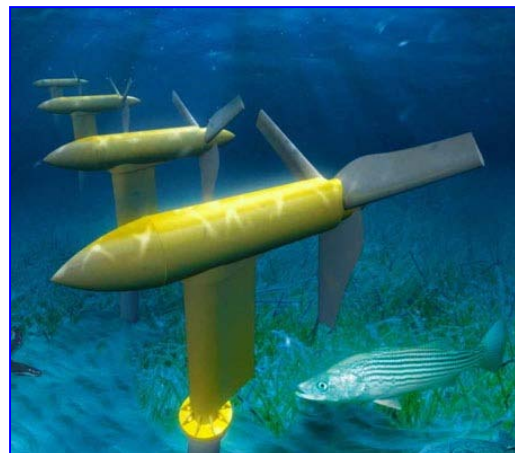
The resulting column contains a mini-summary with links to articles I found interesting. I also get technology feeds from the New York Times, Business Week, Discover Magazine, Science {AAAS} and the American Nuclear Society.

With A Chip on My Shoulder — I avoid greening sites that equate a demonstration of a concept (e.g., lab test) to having an industrially viable commercial solution; no government subsidies don’t make things commercial — all governments have the proven habit of bowing to either lobbyists or homo populous <the loudest voice> and have, International, been shown to pick losers. Supporting R&D, and funding large scale demos – wonderful; subsidizing industry — no way. The fifth or sixth law of technology... if you don’t check the whole lifecycle of a new process or energy solution; you’re going to fail — a 100% bomb out.

Now, As Usual in No Formal Order, the Snippets

Producing Power from Undammed Rivers and Ocean Tides

Pacific Northwest National Laboratory will receive about \$6.8 million to help make a reality renewable power production from ocean tides and free-flowing rivers. The bulk of the money awarded by the Department of Energy, \$3.45 million, will be used to study how such renewable power production might affect fish and other aquatic life.



Getting power from sources of water movement without having to build expensive structures such as dams and weirs is a potentially viable way of increasing our supply of renewable energy. It also overcomes grid load evening problems with interruptible power generation using windmills (no wind) and solar collectors (nighttimes.)

Ms. Cary notes, This work will help remove the roadblocks that currently prevent developers from putting tidal-, wave- and current-powered machines in the water," said Charlie Brandt, director of PNNL's Marine Sciences Laboratory in Sequim. Research will be conducted over three years by staff at PNNL offices in Richland, Sequim, Portland and Seattle.

Installing technology in the ocean or in undammed stretches of rivers to produce renewable power could have several potential impacts on fish. A turbine, paddlewheel or other device likely would need to be installed, presenting a potential hazard to fish from spinning pieces of the equipment.

Research is needed to see how fish react to blades, which would be at 90 degrees to the water flow. Scientists want to learn whether fish will see the blades as they swim in hard flows and whether and how often they can move out of the way, Brandt said. The fish behavior may change based on the type of machinery. In addition, because the devices are connected to the power grid, an induced electromagnetic field will be present. Researchers don't know how that will affect species that detect prey based on their prey's electromagnetic field.

By Annette Cary, Tri-City Herald staff writer

This story was published Wednesday September 2nd 2009
<http://www.hanfordnews.com/news/2009/story/13935.html>

Secretary of Energy Chu Announces Completion of Critical Energy Conservation Appliance Standards

Final energy efficiency standards for beverage vending machines released

Washington, DC – U.S. Energy Secretary Steven Chu announced today that the Department of Energy has completed energy efficiency standards for a critical group of appliances that will together save up to 1.1 billion metric tons of carbon dioxide once in effect. In February 2009, President Obama visited the Department of Energy to emphasize the importance of quickening the pace of energy conservation standards for appliances, while continuing to meet legal and statutory deadlines. Yesterday, the minimum energy efficiency standards for beverage vending machines – the last of the five energy conservation standards the President highlighted in his [memorandum to DOE](#) – were published in the *Federal Register*.

“These energy efficiency appliance standards will play an important role in lowering energy use in homes and business across the country,” said Secretary Chu. “By improving the energy efficiency of each of these appliances – from lighting to ovens to vending machines – we can save money, reduce carbon pollution and increase our energy security.”

This is the first time the Department of Energy is regulating energy consumption for the approximately 2.3 million beverage vending machines in use in the U.S. The final rule published on Monday will reduce carbon dioxide emissions by up to 9.6 million metric tons from 2012 through 2042 - roughly equivalent to removing over 2 million automobiles from the road for a year – and will save commercial customers of the machines between \$38 and \$52 million per year over the same time period. The efficiency standards, which take effect in 2012, apply to both glass-front type and solid-front type beverage vending machines that are commonly found in office buildings, schools, colleges, retail sites, and manufacturing facilities.

This year, DOE has also released energy conservation standards for:

- Dishwashers and general service incandescent lamps
- Microwaves and electric and gas kitchen ranges and ovens
- General service fluorescent lamps and incandescent reflector lamps
- Commercial boilers and air conditioning equipment

Each of the final standards was issued on time and ahead of any applicable deadlines. To ensure that the appliance standards are as effective as possible, DOE will work to aggressively and consistently enforce energy efficiency standards across the country.

US Department of Energy, September 1, 2009

<http://www.energy.gov/news2009/7853.htm>

China Changes The Terms of the Climate Debate

China will argue that Western consumers buying Chinese-made goods should pay their fair share of the cost of cutting the pollution used to make the goods.

I agree since that will make the goods more expensive and create more markets for American manufacturers. In any case, it will serve to even up costs, especially if Congress passes the impending climate change legislation with reasonable control fees using cap and trade rules. (But again I'm not an economist; let's see what Business Week and The Economist Magazine have to say.

Ms. Meredith notes “China has just laid out its negotiating position for the upcoming summit in Copenhagen, where diplomats will gather in December to try to hammer out an agreement on how to battle climate change. The West is not going to like it. Essentially, China will argue that Western consumers buying Chinese-made goods should pay their fair share of the cost of cutting the pollution used to make the goods.

West and East have been arguing for years about who is to blame for climate change and how to cut down on the greenhouse gas emissions that cause global warming. Broadly speaking, developed countries like the U.S. have looked with alarm at the fast increase of pollution in the East and insisted that nations like China and India must save the planet by acting quickly to curb pollution.

Developing nations have cried foul, arguing that cutting pollution levels would unacceptably slow down their economic development, keeping tens of millions of people mired in poverty. They argue that the West was allowed to pollute during its period of industrialization, and that they should be allowed to do the same. They say it would be unfair to penalize poor countries when richer Americans and Europeans consume far more energy than Asians do on a per-capita basis.

Because the U.S. and China are by far the world's biggest polluters--and China is expected to surpass the U.S. this year in carbon dioxide emissions--they are expected to be the drivers of debate in Copenhagen. Raising the stakes in an already heated discussion, China has just taken the wheel with its *new line* that the consumers of end products are responsible for the pollution it took to produce them.

Forbes Magazine by Robyn Meredith
Forbes.com 02 Sep 2009 — No better link found.

Inventor Develops Nonlethal Sonic Weapon

OAK RIDGE, Tenn., Sept. 1 (UPI) -- A U.S. inventor says he's developed a non-lethal, portable sonic weapon that makes its targets drop their weapons and cover their ears.

Lee Bzorgi, director of the National Security Technology Center at the Y-12 nuclear weapons plant in Oak Ridge, Tenn., says his new Banshee II device emits an ear-piercing, 144-decibel siren that can incapacitate those within range, the Knoxville (Tenn.) News Sentinel reported Tuesday. The newspaper said the prototype is powered by a 9-volt battery and uses proprietary circuitry to produce a noise loud enough to force people to immediately cover their ears with their hands.

"It also has a frequency-switching system that pumps your ear drums, so it sounds like there's a drum beating there," Bzorgi told the newspaper. "You physically feel it in your ear drum." He told the News Sentinel the Banshee II has broad potential for law enforcement, such as an alternative to the Taser.

"It's useful in my opinion to have a non-lethal weapon that cannot kill people if you abuse it," he said. "So it is a true nonlethal weapon."



Also Checkout the Sonic Handgun, Weapon of the Future, March 13, 2008.

<http://www.gadgetastic.com/2008/03/13/sonic-weapon/>

Doc sez, he would hope the Oak Ridge model is smaller and more ergonomic than the speaker driven mode shown. Perhaps its even piezoelectric based. Nine volts, after all, is not a whole lot of energy.

September 1, 2009. © 2009 United Press International, Inc.

http://www.upi.com/Top_News/2009/09/01/Inventor-develops-nonlethal-sonic-weapon/UPI-40411251830821/

Los Alamos Technology Strikes a Chord with Algal Biofuels — Award-winning acoustic focusing technology will help create ‘green gold’.

An award-winning Los Alamos National Laboratory sound-wave technology is helping Solix Biofuels, Inc. optimize production of algae-based fuel in a cost-effective, scalable, and environmentally benign fashion—paving the way to lowering the carbon footprint of biofuel production.

Algae innards contain a high concentration of lipids, or oils. These lipids can be extracted by a relatively simple chemical process and concentrated into “biocrude”—or “green gold”—an alternative to crude oil that can be refined into biodiesel, gasoline, or even jet fuel. Acoustic-focusing—the novel use of sound waves at the heart of the Los Alamos Acoustic Flow Cytometer, a 2007 R&D100 Award-winning technology—is being harnessed and commercialized in partnership with Solix to harvest algae for fuel. The work is part of a cooperative research and development agreement (CRADA) between the Laboratory and Solix.

In order to turn algae into transportation fuel, the tiny plant-like organisms first must be separated from their watery home and the growth medium used to sustain them. Current methods rely on giant centrifuges to separate liquids from algae solids. Centrifuges take a lot of power to operate, raising production costs and increasing the process’ overall carbon use. Moreover, standard fuel-conversion methods extract lipids from the algae using solvents that are potentially hazardous to humans and the environment, and costly to dispose of.

Thanks to use of Los Alamos’s acoustic-focusing technology, the algae-water-growth-medium mixture is subjected to ultrasonic fields that concentrate the algal cells into a dense sludge. This combined separation and concentration method uses hundreds of times less power than centrifuges. The Lab’s lipid extraction and fractionation technique also avoids the need for costly, hazardous solvents.

LANLToday

Los Alamos, New Mexico, September 2, 2009

http://www.lanl.gov/scat/los_amos_technology_strikes_a_chord_with_algal_biofuels_nr09020

9

Unspoiled Nature in Shadow of a Nuclear Site — Doc sez, this is where I've worked for the last 35 years.

THE Hanford Reach National Monument in the arid steppe of south-central Washington is a nature lover's dream with the Columbia River flowing wide and free below chalk-white cliffs, an abundance of birds, and populations of deer, elk and coyotes. But there's a twist: It surrounds the Hanford nuclear reservation, one of the world's largest environmental clean-up projects.

The 586-square-mile Hanford Site, administered by the United States Department of Energy, played a major role in the building of the world's first atomic bomb and produced roughly two-thirds of the plutonium used in the nation's nuclear weapons arsenal before operations ceased in the 1980s. Today it's home to nine abandoned atomic reactors and tons of radioactive waste.

This juxtaposition of spoiled and unspoiled land might bring to mind visions of radioactive tumbleweeds. But locals hope the unusual pairing of World War II and cold war history with the region's natural beauty will play a bigger role in a tourist trade that already lures visitors with its wineries, golf courses, desert-like climate and ample sunshine.

In recent years the Energy Department, which oversees the Hanford Site's cleanup, has opened the area to tours of sites like the B Reactor, the world's first production-scale nuclear reactor. And in 2000 the 195,000 acres of shrub steppe that surrounds the site was declared a national monument. The gateways to the nuclear site, the national monument and other attractions are the cities of Richland, Kennewick and Pasco, which hug the Columbia south of Hanford. *Here's the Columbia River as seen from Richland. It's even prettier from the Hanford Reach, especially when the ducklings are hatched.*



The B Reactor was designated a national historic landmark in 2008, and local groups want to make it a museum. “We’re working with the National Park Service to develop a thematic exhibit plan,” Michele Gerber, the Hanford Site historian, said after the tour. Despite the site’s toxic legacy, sections open to the public are deemed safe. Tickets for free weekday tours of the Hanford Site and Saturday tours of the B Reactor only (both run on selected dates April through September) generally sell out within hours after they are made available online.

The Hanford Reach National Monument, which on a map looks like a crab’s claw clutching the Hanford Site, was left untouched because it was a buffer zone. Recreational activities here include hunting, fishing, hiking and boating, but the park’s Web site warns, “Visitors should be prepared for minimal signing and primitive facilities.”

By Jeff Schlegel, The New York Times, September 4, 2009
http://www.nytimes.com/2009/09/04/travel/escapes/04Amer.html?_r=3

IBM Plunges Into The 'Smart Grid For Water'

Even as billions of dollars are being spent around the world to modernize the electricity grid, the systems to delivery fresh water are also in desperate need of a 21st century upgrade. ... IBM and Intel will be forming a working group to study how information and technology can be used to improve water management.



IBM is developing a portfolio of IT-related water management technologies, a business that it estimates can total \$20 billion within five years. At a water conference next week, IBM and Intel will be forming a working group to study how information and technology can be used to improve water management, according to IBM. The goal is to sketch out the technical architecture required to more efficiently use fresh water, only one percent of the available water on Earth.

Water systems even in developed countries like the U.S. are notoriously outdated, with faulty pipes--some of them still made of wood--result in 25 percent to 45 percent lost water. That means high-tech approaches, such as using sensors to gauge water quality, are a tough sell to cash-strapped municipalities, most of which are more concerned with maintaining the basic infrastructure. IBM is betting, though, that fresh water will have more value attached to it from the public, governments, and corporations.

The hard truth is that most of the countries in the developing world are outgrowing the amount of water that is available to them," said Peter Williams, the chief technology officer of IBM's Big Green Innovations program, who representing IBM at a conference organized by the Water Innovations Alliance industry association next week. [<http://www.waterinnovations.org/%5D/>] "Certainly, it's the case that water is the great sleeping crisis and it is most definitely starting to wake up."

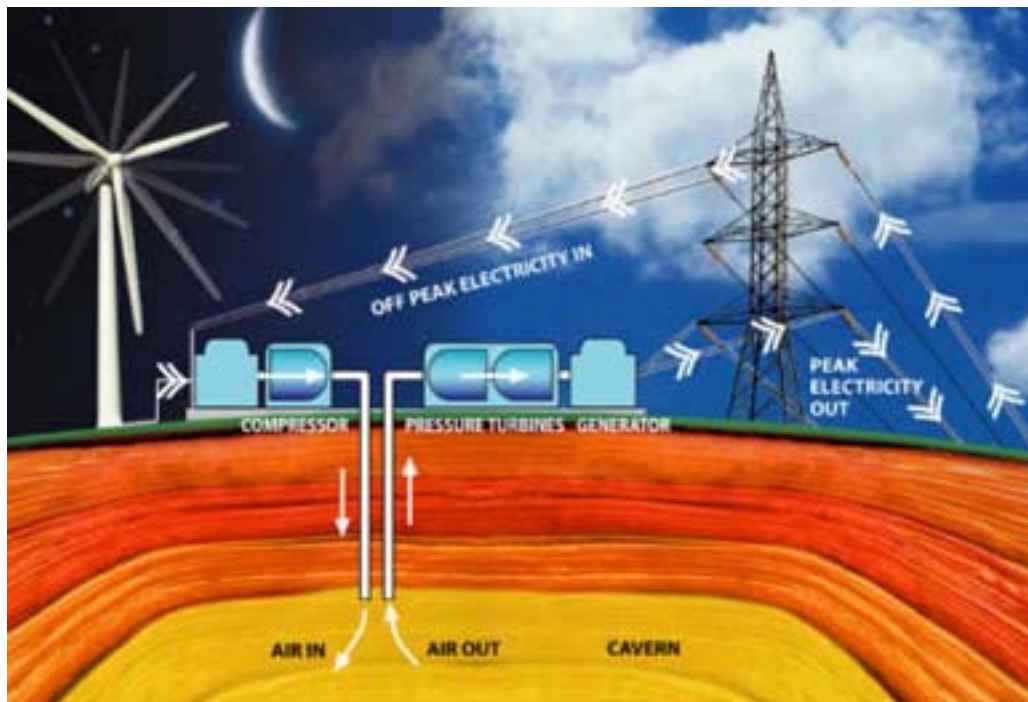
By Martin LaMonica, CNET News, Sepember 4, 2009

http://news.cnet.com/8301-11128_3-10345122-54.html?tag=mncol

Utility Energy Storage No Longer Just Giant Batteries

If you need more evidence that energy storage is much more than lithium ion batteries, take a look at the latest smart-grid utility storage projects. The Department of Energy on Tuesday announced that \$620 million in stimulus funding is going to 32 smart-grid programs, which will be coupled with another \$1 billion in private money. A total of \$770 million from government and industry sources in the next few years will go to energy storage, giving a number of storage technologies a dose of real-world experience.

Notable in the list is the prominence of compressed-air energy storage and flow batteries, two technologies rarely discussed just a few years ago. The advantage of underground compressed air storage is that it can be cheaper than batteries and can store many hours worth of energy. PG&E forecasts that its Kern County, Calif., project can deliver 300 megawatts of power for 10 hours, enough to supply tens of thousands of homes.



From www.reuk.co.uk/Storing-Wind-Power-with-Compressed-Air.htm

Also in the mix are flywheels and using batteries for distributed energy storage in communities. It's unlikely that all the DOE-aided projects will immediately prove to be commercially viable. But storage has clearly emerged as a key component in the vision of the smart grid. A number of start-ups are developing technologies they hope can address a specific storage application or undercut pumped hydro, considered the cheapest form of utility storage, on price. With pumped hydro, water is pumped uphill and released at peak times to run a generator. But its use is limited by geography.

By Martin LaMonica, CNET News, November 25, 2009

http://news.cnet.com/8301-11128_3-10405069-54.html?tag=mncol;title

Recyclable Hydrogen Fuel Tanks

A new process makes regenerating hydrogen fuel more efficient. One challenge in using hydrogen as a transportation fuel--besides finding a clean, cheap source of the fuel itself--is how to safely and reversibly store it without taking up too much space. Hydrogen has a low density, so it's necessary to confine it either under pressure, which presents a safety hazard, or chemically or in an absorptive material.

Below is an image of a fuel cell driven concept car created by GM called the Sequel that can burn hydrogen, preferably from a low pressure, safe storage tank.

In a chemical storage system, hydrogen is bonded to the molecules in a solid material such as ammonia borane. The advantage of chemical storage is that these materials are inert solids, and the hydrogen can be readily removed for reaction in a fuel cell. But the materials under development for chemically storing hydrogen have a major limitation: refueling them once they're spent takes a large amount of energy. Now researchers have developed a series of reactions for refueling the high-density hydrogen-storage material ammonia borane at lower temperatures through a process that consumes much less energy.

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) has set a goal of a hydrogen fuel-cell car that can travel 300 miles on a single fuel tank using chemical hydrogen storage. The cars would be taken to a center to exchange the spent tanks for fresh ones, with the spent tanks regenerated at a plant.



The capacity of a material to chemically store hydrogen is measured as the percentage of its weight taken up by the element; in order to meet its goals, the DOE benchmark for hydrogen-storage materials is 6 percent by weight by 2010 and 9 percent by 2015. "The good news about ammonia borane is it can hit or surpass the volume and weight targets" set by the DOE, says Jamie Holladay, a senior research engineer at the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory. Ammonia borane contains 19.6 percent hydrogen by weight. "The challenge is regeneration of the spent fuel," he says.

"Once you get the hydrogen out of the ammonia borane, you can't just pressurize it with more hydrogen to regenerate the fuel," because this is too energy-intensive, says John Gordon, a research chemist at Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico. In order to find out which reactions were likely to work best without having to test hundreds on the bench, chemists at Los Alamos collaborated with David Dixon, a professor of chemistry at the University of Alabama, who developed algorithms to predict the energetics of the reactions. The group then tested the most promising chemistries and found that using a tin catalyst and regenerating the material in several steps required much less energy than driving the reaction directly.

Of course, a major problem remains before hydrogen fuel-cell cars become practical: developing improved methods for making hydrogen fuel in the first place, a challenge other researchers are working on. Doc sez, of course they, in the US, are avoiding nuclear energy.

By Katherine Bourzac, Technology Review, MIT, September 8, 2009.
<http://www.technologyreview.com/energy/23370/?a=f>

Renewable Energy Plan Creates Rift with Environmentalists

The morning heat hits triple digits as a whiptail lizard darts below a creosote bush near Route 66. Gazing across the desert valley, power company executives, environmentalists and federal land managers stand beneath a cloudless sky and argue over the landscape.

PG&E project manager Alice Harron says she is "comfortable" with the solar power plant her utility wants to build on government land here along 4 miles of the Mother Road that connected Chicago and Los Angeles long before the interstate system.

David Myers of the Wildlands Conservancy is not. Renewable energy projects such as this one — which could power 224,000 homes — sound good in theory, he says, but if they tear up pristine vistas, they're not "green."

President Obama wants a "clean-energy economy" that relies on renewable sources such as solar and wind power instead of coal and oil. He wants to put these new utilities on federally owned lands like this stretch of the Mojave Desert, one of the sunniest places on Earth. The administration wants to lead the way by taking advantage of its vast holdings, which account for 20% of all land in the USA, mostly in the West.



That idea is creating a rift among environmentalists, who favor renewable energy but are at odds over where to produce it. Some are willing to compromise with utility companies to build large power plants on remote federal lands to accelerate the transition to clean energy.

Purists are dead set against disturbing pristine landscapes. *I guess the purist want to keep using fossil fuel since they are against nuclear, don 't believe hydropower is recyclable, and want to keep the land pristine (Doc).*

Obama's goal is to meet 25% of the nation's energy needs from renewable resources by 2025. Today, the figure is 11.1%, according to the Department of Energy.

As noted, one of the purist is Myers, who worries that the government will industrialize the desert with acres of solar mirrors, trampling treasured landscapes. Groups such as the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) counter that large, centralized projects are needed to speed the shift to non-polluting energy. "It's hard, because many of us have fought to protect the very lands" that could be affected, says Johanna Wald of the NRDC.

By [Andrea Stone](#), USA TODAY, September 9, 2009

http://www.usatoday.com/money/industries/energy/environment/2009-09-07-renewable_N.htm

That's all folks, more next month... Perhaps I'll get current.
Harry, aka doc_Babad

Hardware

MC Transport Media Transport Controller

Reviewed by Wayne LeFevre



Euphonix MC Transport

www.euphonix.com



\$399 USD, \$423 CND, £241 GBP, 266€ Euro—Street prices based on current exchange rates.

Requirements: G4 with a 1.25GHz or faster Mac OS X 10.5 or later; Universal binary; 1GB RAM; 150 MB Hard Drive Space; CD-ROM/DVD-ROM; Display with 1024-by-768 resolution or higher, Ethernet hub or switch required to connect additional MC Mix and/or MC Control unit(s) or connect to a network.



Strengths: Can use with most if not all applications. Highly configurable. Works incredibly well.

Weaknesses: Could use labels. Other than that, nothing.

Introduction

Sticking with my video theme of late, this month I am reviewing the newest compact media controller from Euphonix, the MC Transport.

Starting with Final Cut Studio 3, now you have more of a choice when it comes to using control surfaces. In fact, before FCS3 and Euphonix, your options for using control surfaces were very limited, and very expensive. So much so that small production houses and hobbyists were really at a disadvantage. That has all changed with Euphonix new Artist Series components.

The Artist Series media controllers consist of four major components. The MC Mix, MC Control, MC Transport, and MC Color. All are now available, with the MC Transport and MC Color being the latest offerings.

In a quick nutshell, the Euphonix MC Mix offers an eight channel motorized mixer. The MC Control offers high resolution touch-screen interface, four motorized faders, eight rotary encoders, soft keys and transport controls for multi-format metering, plug-in parameters, track information, pretty much anything you can think of control over your applications.



Euphonix's latest offering is the MC Color. It basically is exactly like the other colorist's control surfaces, yet thousands of dollars cheaper. It provides three trackballs, trackwheels, touch-sensitive encoders and other programmable keys.



Finally, the MC Transport, the least expensive of all the surface offerings, yet just as important—especially for Final Cut Pro users. It consists of a large, optically encoded jog wheel and shuttle ring. Seven transport/navigation keys with multi-color status LEDs, Six programmable Soft Keys, and 16 numeric keys in a keypad arrangement for time code/marker navigation or any other programmable uses. There is also a Shift button, that when pressed can make all the programmable keys on the



MC Transport have an alternate function, effectively doubling the amount of keys.

Getting Started

The secret behind all of these control surfaces; the way they interact with each other and the computer, plus the ability for the user to use not only multiple controls, but multiple workstations, is via Ethernet and a protocol developed by Euphonix called the EuCon. One thing you ought to understand is these control surfaces aren't a Final Cut Pro or a Logic only controller. It can actually connect and use almost any application that you care to set up with it. But more on that later.

Installation of the software is done via the included CD-ROM. Also, using the enclosed Ethernet cable, you attach the MC Transport to the computer itself, or an Ethernet Switch. All communication between the controllers and the workstations are through Ethernet. By this same method, the same MC Transport can connect to multiple workstations on the network that have the EuCon client application installed.

I used the second Ethernet controller on my Mac Pro to hook up the MC Transport, and it found the controller right away after a recommended restart. One interesting item of note is that no matter what application your in, the name of that application is displayed in the controllers display screen. For example, right now I am typing in Pages, and Pages is displayed in the screen. When they say that the controller will work in any application, it is really true. If I wished, I could simply set the EuCon to use the jog wheel as a left and right arrow key when in Pages. Then, I could use the jog wheel to quickly move through the document one character at a time. On the same line, I could have the shuttle ring as the up and down arrow, quickly running through the document one line at a time. I don't know why you would want to use it this way, just that you can.

Using the Hardware

Using the MC Transport is simply a matter of remembering what keys do what. Since I am mainly using this with Final Cut Pro, this is what I will focus on.

I'll start with the keys around the shuttle ring, as the jog wheel and shuttle ring are, though very effective and work extremely well, are pretty basic in their function and are self explanatory. Just know that the jog wheel is well weighted and smooth rolling, with the shuttle ring having sufficient springs and weights to quickly bring the ring back to center when released. However, depending on the application, can also have other functions. For example, the job wheel usually positions the cursor in a projects timeline, quickly scrolling through the timeline. It can also be used to zoom horizontally and vertically. Yet in other applications, the jog wheel can act as an assignable knob allowing adjustment of any control the cursor hovers over, such as faders and pan knobs and volume.



The Seven Transport Keys have multiple colors depending on their use. Yellow, red, and green. The factory default assignments are application specific and follow industry conventions. For example, using Final Cut Pro, the two outermost keys are assigned at the factory to mark your clips In, (left,) and Out, (right.) The second-most keys are Previous and Next clip. The two keys



flanking the middle key is used for Back and Forward, with the middle key being Play/Stop. Again, though, you can have an alternate use for the keys by selecting the shift key as well as the ability to change the factory assignments to anything you want.

The Soft Keys also have initial programming done at the factory for different uses for each different application. They too can be reassigned within each application, and when pressed,

glow with a yellow LED to let you know when they are active. In Final Cut Pro, they are assigned to enable the jog wheel, enable the shuttle ring, preview the previous and next clip, Insert clip, and Undo. When the shift button is activated, the keys now let you use the jog wheel as Clip Gain, adjust the trim, Link Selection, Deselect All, Toggle Timeline, and Undo.

Finally, there is the Numeric Keypad. They can be used, of course, as numeric entry into an application. Again, the shift key accesses alternate functions. The keypad can also be programmed to provide other functions if you want to override the numbers input and use it to hold fourteen other functions.



One of the advantages of being able to program the keys to your liking is the ability to not only have it issue a key-command, but an entire macro set. You can assign several commands to one key, even assigning if you want it to repeat, how many times, and to do it as fast as possible or so many times a second. It can use the full range including Control, Shift, Alt/Opt and Command modifiers allowing the MC Transport to be the ultimate one-button macro device.



Conclusion

The whole purpose of a control surface is to save time. In most instances, time equals money. Euphonix has brought out a number of well designed media controllers that will help you save both time and money right out of the box, with very little learning curve. In pricing them not only to be affordable to the smaller guys, and breaking them out in different components to let you buy only what you need, it's really a welcome relief to a needy and wanting market. I've actually seen where some people are wary of these affordable products. Like Apple pricing Final Cut Studio into affordability, these components will let more people use professional products like this and get good results quicker. This scares some, as they see more people being able to push into their higher-end marketplace. When you can do the same job cheaper and just as quick, it concerns the same people that think YouTube is going to take over the television market. I personally scoff at this. I think that anytime you can bring high end products like this into the mainstream, it's good for everyone, especially when it is of the caliber that Euphonix is putting out.

The MC Transport is but one piece of whole that luckily can be used alone. It can be used in any application you like. My next step is to acquire a MC Control. Strike that, my next step is to acquire a MC Transport, for unfortunately, I have to send this unit back. But I will be getting one, it's that good for me.

Recommendation

If you haven't guessed by now, I highly recommend the Euphonix MC Transport. Not only for editing video, but audio, and really any other application where you would like to create quick one-button macros for complex workflows. It's not the cheapest jog wheel out there, for there are a couple cheaper USB wheels, but it's craftsmanship is tight. It feels well made, with zero cheapness feel about it. Also it does much, much more than your average jog wheel.

It's really not a matter of if you get one of these or not. If your in the business, whatever new media business that may be from video editor to podcaster to musician, you really owe it to

yourself to try one out. It will save you time, and again, this is a well made quite impressive control surface that is affordable, but not cheap. Well worth it, and well worth 5 stars.



SolarCharger 908 - Monocrystalline Solar Panel for handhelds

Reviewed by Robert L. Pritchett



i.Tech Dynamic Limited
5/F Harbourfront Landmark 11 Wan Hoi Street
Hung Hom, Kowloon
Hong Kong

http://www.itechdynamic.com/en/products_spec.asp?cid=9&pid=09050

Contact Form:

http://www.itechdynamic.com/en/contactUs_en2.asp

http://www.itechdynamic.com/en/products_spec.asp?cid=1&pid=01200

Released: September 20, 2009

MSRP: \$60 USD

Comes with: 10 adapter plugs, USB charging cable, cradle, windshield attachments, User manual.

User Manual:

http://www.itechdynamic.com/en/download_MIME.asp?filePath=userManual/SolarCharger_Manual.pdf

Strengths: Alternative energy solution using sunlight to externally power portable devices.

Weaknesses: Sun recharge takes a long, long time (22 hours) and requires there be some juice left in the batteries to recharge (40%). No doubt, it works better during the Summer than during the Winter.

Introduction

“i.Tech Dynamic introduced SolarCharger 906, a portable unit that lets on-the-go consumers charge their cell phones, PDAs and other handheld mobile devices with solar energy wherever they are—day or night.

The company also introduced the SolarSet 905, which combines SolarCharger 906 and i.Tech’s portable in-car speakerphone in one package. When used together, the products provide more than 30 hours of in-car talk time, longer than any other product currently on the market.



SolarCharger 906 Charges Most Mobile Devices Anywhere, Anytime

Roughly the size of a deck of cards, SolarCharger is small and light enough to fit comfortably in a purse, tote, briefcase or glove compartment, and it is compatible with most mobile devices.

“It happens to everyone: You need to use your cell phone, but it’s out of power and there’s nowhere to charge it. That’s when SolarCharger can be a real life-saver,” said Stephen Ngan, Deputy Managing Director of i.Tech Dynamic Ltd. “SolarCharger is ideal for taking anywhere you go as a backup charger, and it’s perfect for emergency use. When your iPhone, iPod, BlackBerry or other power-hungry portable device runs out of juice and you’re away from an electrical outlet, SolarCharger can get it up and running again quickly.”

Superb Performance

SolarCharger features highly efficient solar conversion due to a high-performance monocrystalline solar panel and special solar chipset. The panel-and-chipset combination enables the unit to quickly respond to solar energy and generate more power from the solar panel’s surface area than other solar charging devices.

When fully charged, the eco-friendly unit will completely charge one or more USB devices, depending on the target device’s charge capacity and current charge level, and it can store a charge for up to a year.

What’s more, SolarCharger only needs to be 40% charged to provide a cell phone with enough power for an emergency call.

In addition, unlike other mobile chargers, SolarCharger is designed to perform even in hot conditions: It charges at temperatures up to 158 degrees Fahrenheit, and it charges mobile devices at temperatures up to 127 degrees Fahrenheit—higher than any other portable charger on the market today.

The elegantly designed unit also includes an internal, high-density lithium-ion battery, so it can be charged through a computer USB port (cable included). It fully charges within 22 hours in optimal sunlight and within three hours with USB connection. (USB connection should be used when SolarCharger is being charged for the first time, when the device is totally drained or when it has been idle for three months or more.)

Many User-Friendly Features

SolarCharger comes with 10 adapter plugs for use with a variety of mobile phones and entertainment devices, including iPhone, iPod, BlackBerry and other name-brand products.

“Other solar chargers only include a few adapter plugs,” Mr. Ngan said. “By including a large assortment of adapters standard, i.Tech minimizes the chance that customers will need to order additional ones for charging all of their portable devices.”

Ideal for in-car use, SolarCharger comes with a cradle, suction cups and plastic tips for attaching to a windshield.

A red light indicates when the unit is charging: The light flashes when the unit is solar charging and is solid red when charging via USB. A separate row of four battery status indicator lights specifies the device’s charge level.”

Other specifications include:

Solar Panel: .5V, 1A

DC Charge Time: 3 hours with USB or 22 hours with sunlight.

Battery capacity: 1260 milliamp-hours

DC Input and Output: 5V, 500mA

DC Charging Temperature: 0 to 53C or 32 to 127 F

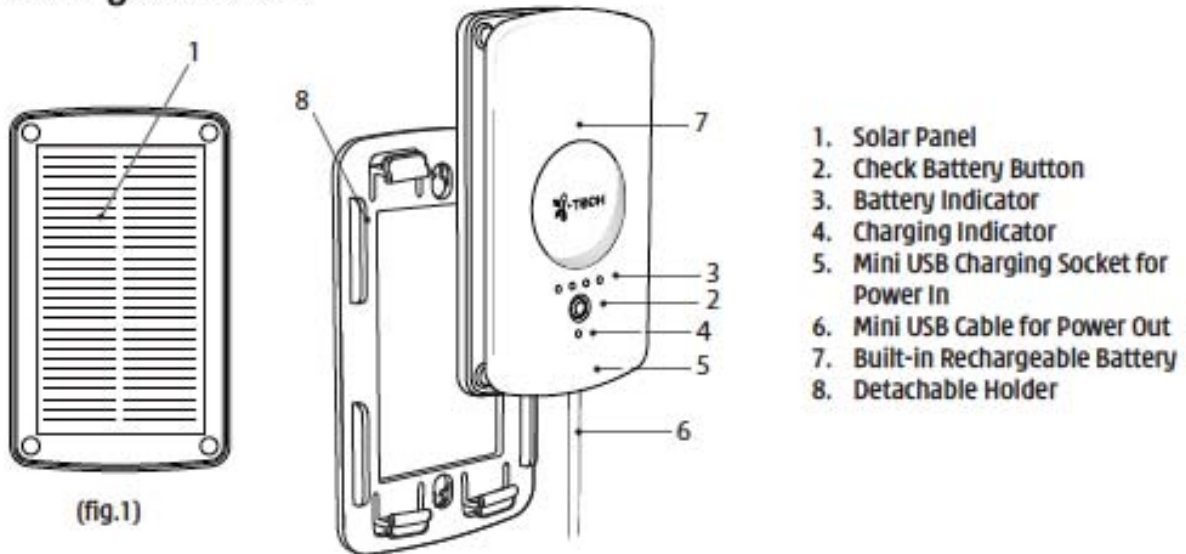
Solar Charging Temperature: 0 to 70 C or 32 to 158 F

Dimensions: 105 (L) x 64 (W) x 15 (H) mm or 4.13 (L), x 2.52 (W) x .59 (T) inches

Holder: 130 (L) x 71 (W) x 17.5 (T) mm or 5.12 (L) x 2.80 (W) x .69 (T) inches

Weight: 100 grams or 3.53 ounces

SolarCharger Overview



What I Learned

With this solar power storage device, I no longer need to worry about running out of juice when using my iPhone while driving hither and yon on service calls for 10 hours a day. I *could* use a car adapter, but why, when this makes it so much easier!

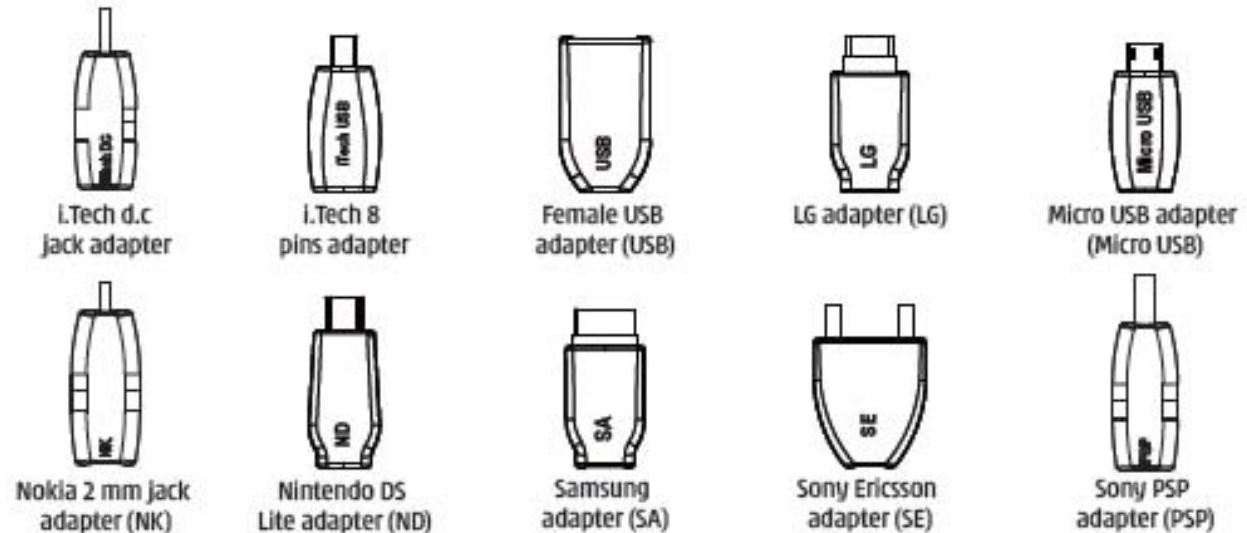
It took me a while to figure out that the USB adapter was provided to charge the iPhone instead of using the proprietary adapter used by Apple Corporation for the iPhone. No Apple-provided cable, no worky.

There are technically about 6 hours of useful light per day for solar panels, so if there is no USB connector available (Mac Book Pro), it may take up to 4 days to charge the unit if sunlight is the only option.

The adapters are an interesting lot: iTech DC, iTech USB (8-pin), female USB (iPhone and iPod), LG (for Chocolate), Micro USB (for Motorola and Blackberry), Nokia 2 mm jack (NK), Nintendo DS Lite (ND), Samsung (D800), Sony Erickson SE for K750i), and Sony (PSP).

Using Your SolarCharger

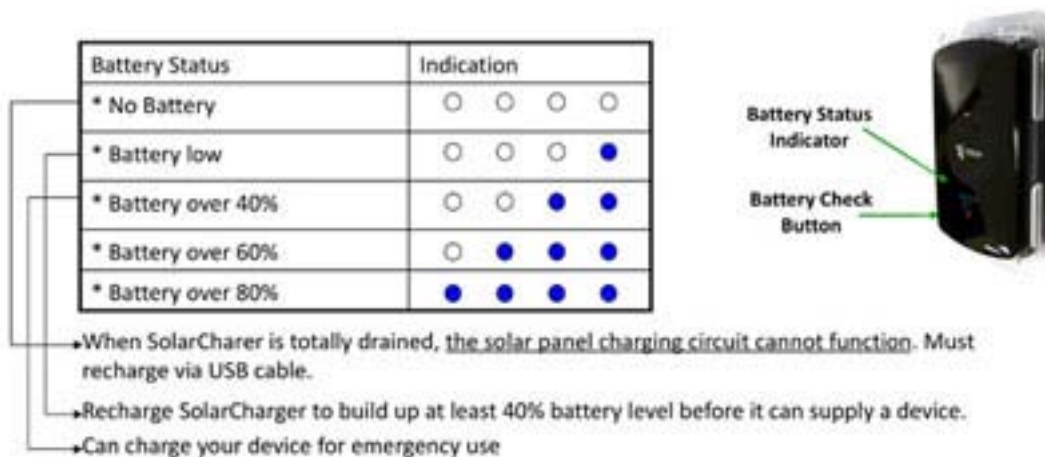
The adapter tips contain:



I found it interesting that the charger will not charge below freezing, so I assume it is a function of the monocrystalline structure of the solar cells (liquid?).

Even though the unit can hold a charge for 1 year, they recommend that it be recharged every 3 months.

The manual also states that for the solar panel to help recharge the batteries, they have to be at least 40% charged already (2 LEDs lit).



Also, if the windshield has been UV protected, the solar panel will not charge. It needs direct sunlight (perpendicular) and is affected by shade.

Getting the device wet is not an option, not so much for the solar cells, but for the lithium-ion batteries. Also, if the device gets too hot (over 70 C or 158 F), the circuitry will cut off for self-protection.

The reason the device has a 1-year warranty is probably because the full charge/discharge cycles are *only 500 times!*

I left the unit fully charged on the dash connected to my iPhone. When I got back from a service call, the iPhone was dead and the device fully discharged. That was a rather unpleasant surprise!

Conclusion

If you want to have “peace of mind” and like the green aspect of using solar power to charge portable devices, then this one seems to fit the bill for the price. Weigh that against what it costs for replacement batteries in an external battery device for portables and this may be seen as a real bargain.

Then again, you probably would be wise to carry a traditional alternative energy source (vehicle auxiliary power device) – just in case. ;^)

SolarVoice 908 - "First" Solar-powered Bluetooth Headset with noise reduction

Reviewed by Robert L. Pritchett



i.Tech Dynamic Limited
5/F Harbourfront Landmark 11 Wan Hoi Street
Hung Hom, Kowloon
Hong Kong

Contact Form:

http://www.itechdynamic.com/en/contactUs_en2.asp

http://www.itechdynamic.com/en/products_spec.asp?cid=1&pid=01200

Released: September 3, 2009

MSRP: \$75 USD

Comes with: USB charging cable, travel charging adapter, cradle, ear buds, ear hook and User Manual.

User Manual:

http://www.itechdynamic.com/en/download_MIME.asp?filePath=userManual/SolarVoice_Manual.pdf

Strengths: Noise-reduced Solar cell-based earpiece.

Weaknesses: Works best in non-noisy environments.

Other Reviews:

<http://tgsreviews.wordpress.com/2009/10/20/itech-solar-voice-908-bluetooth-headset-review/>

Competitor: http://www.iqua.com/products_sub.php?navi_id=1476

Introduction

“i.Tech Dynamic introduced the solar-powered SolarVoice 908, a Bluetooth headset that lets users go green while maintaining their productivity and listening to their favorite tunes.

“Our new SolarVoice 908 taps into the power of the sun to charge, making it perfect for consumers who are trying to be environmentally conscious,” said Stephen Ngan, Deputy Managing Director of i.TechDynamic Ltd. “SolarVoice stays charged as long as it’s exposed to sunlight, so busy people have two less things to worry about: keeping their Bluetooth headset charged and reducing their carbon footprint.”



First Solar Headset to Feature Noise Reduction for Clear Calls

Sleek and stylish, the eco-friendly SolarVoice 908 is the first solar-powered Bluetooth headset with background noise reduction for clear phone calls. The unit employs an advanced suite of digital signal processing software to reduce background noise and distortion. The noise reduction technology improves the sound quality of a signal by adaptively removing noise or hiding it from the listener through lowlatency, low distortion, multi-band signal processing and psycho-acoustic masking.

A2DP Bluetooth Profile for Streaming Multimedia Audio

SolarVoice features Bluetooth's Advanced Audio Distribution Profile, or A2DP, which lets users stream songs from Bluetooth mobile phones or music devices with A2DP. The headset also lets users hear audio content from videos they're watching on A2DP-compatible multimedia devices and smartphones, such as the iPhone 3GS and the second generation iPod touch (3.0 software required), or from YouTube and other Web sites (Wi-Fi connection required).

Innovative Ear Buds Eliminate Deafness and Fatigue

SolarVoice's innovative ear buds are specifically designed to allow air to reach the ear canal, which eliminates the feeling of deafness and fatigue users may experience during extended use of other ear buds. Designed for superior comfort and fit, SolarVoice's ear buds come in four sizes and hold the headset firmly in place, so an ear hook is not necessary. (For those who prefer to use one, an ear hook comes standard with the headset.)

Many Other User-Friendly Features

A flashing green light indicates when the unit is solar charging, and an elegant headset cradle designed for desktop and in-car use perfectly positions SolarVoice to absorb maximum sunlight.

SolarVoice gives users up to five hours of talk time, infinite standby time while in optimum sunlight and up to 140 hours of standby time without sunlight.

The unit also has an internal lithium-ion battery, so it can be charged via A/C power and a computer USB port (travel adapter and cable included). SolarVoice fully charges in three hours via A/C power or USB connection.

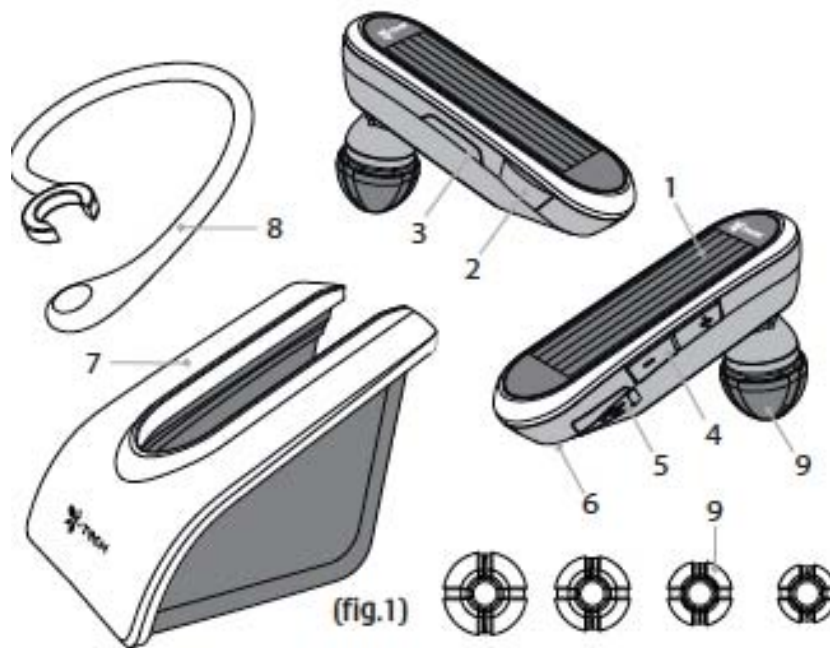
Headset functions include voice dialing (mobile phone dependent), last-number redial, call reject, call transfer (from headset to mobile phone and vice-versa), auto re-link (which re-establishes the Bluetooth connection when the user returns to within range of a device), call waiting and call swap.”

Other features and specifications include:

- Bluetooth Version 2.1 + EDR Class 2
- Headset and hands-free Bluetooth profiles
- Multipoint technology, which lets the headset connect simultaneously to two cell phones
- Charging status indicators
- Volume adjust, call transfer and call reject button
- Range: up to 33 feet

- Dimensions: 54.5

SolarVoice™ 908 Overview



1. Solar Panel
 - Provide infinity standby time under direct sunlight
2. Multi-function Button (MFB)
 - Power On / Off
 - Pair with mobile phone
 - Answer / End a call
3. Status Indicators
 - Show Bluetooth status
 - Show solar charging status
4. Volume Up & Down
 - Adjust Volume Up & Down
 - Reject / Transfer a call
5. Charging Socket
6. Built-in Microphone
7. Cradle for Desktop & Car-use
8. Ear Hook
9. In-earbud x 4 (S, M, L, XL)

4

What I Learned

Noise reduction isn't the same as noise elimination. Driving at 70 MPH in an old truck, this device apparently picks up highway noise. For the other person to hear me, I have to cup the earpiece. It works much better when the vehicle is parked. Even though I turned up the volume on the earpiece to hear better, the person on the other end said it made no appreciable difference as far as them being able to hear me, while I was driving on the highway in a non-quiet truck.

The SolarVoice 908 is not the first solar-powered earpiece, but apparently it is the first solar-powered earpiece with noise reduction.

Once I read the miniscule instructions on how to pair the device with the iPhone, the iPhone was able to identify it and when I use the iPhone, I had a choice of whether or not to use the earphone. Sweet!

I've tried various earpieces over the years and the design of this soft-rubber split-cushion system seems to be well done.

I'm not worried about reducing my carbon footprint. However, I don't have to worry about paying for battery replacements anytime soon.

Intriguing items: voice-dialing, last number redial, call reject, waiting and swap.

Conclusion

This is a Bluetooth borg-piece I think has traction. As long as there is light, this unit will get a trickle-charge to keep it in operation – and it works just fine with the iPhone!

Software

Business Card Composer 5.0.1

Personalize your outreach - It takes only a few minutes and a few mouse clicks

Reviewed by Harry {doc} Babad ©2009



Belight Software

<http://www.belightsoft.com/products/composer/version5.php>

For a demo of this product: <http://www.belightsoft.com/download/download.php>

Requirements: Mac OS 10.4.11 or later, PPC/Intel in Leopard; Snow Leopard compatible, and color printer.

Released: November 5, 2009. Download Size 56.6 MB

Cost: \$34.95 (Standard Edition), \$39.94 (Retail Edition) as a download, Upgrade from Version 4: \$19.95. [USD]. An academic discount is available for 30% off. Note: The standard edition of Composer contains a more limited number of clipart images (1,000), designs (about 500) with no additional 100 fonts



macC Star Ratings:

Audience: Anyone, who like me who still believes in the old-fashioned 19th century Western practice, or ongoing oriental convention of exchanging business and calling cards. Why, it not only clicks with who I am but also helps me stay remembered a bit longer than any casual face-to-face. I even use them as inserts with the custom made CD's I share with friends and for ID cards for meetings.

Strengths: The easiest way I know to create and print well designed, attractive and useful business cards for exchange or other uses.

Weaknesses: None worth mentioning. However to make better use of the new barcodes, advanced graphics tools and incorporating Google maps features onto the backs of my cards, I did need to skim the new manual.

Previous Reviews: Printfolio 1.0, which contains BCC, was reviewed in the April 2007 macC, Volume 5 Issue 4.

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Sidebar #1: 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 10.5.8

Sidebar #2: Disclaimer: When reviewing software I will often use the developer's product, functions and features descriptions. Because of this unless I'm quoting directly from *another source*, I do not cut up the review with quotation marks. All other comments are strictly my own and based on testing. Why need I rewrite the developer's narratives, if they are clearly written?

Introduction Including Publisher's Summary

Over the years as part of work, for companies that did not offer them, and as a compulsive volunteer, I've been fond of business cards. Perhaps it was reading of 19th century British fiction, or seeing such exchanges in classic films, but I knew I wanted to use this means of keeping my memory alive just a bit longer in my contacts minds. Or for you armchair psychologist, it was because I'm one of the 10% of the population who, it's genetic, can't remember names, and so assume the reverse is true.

My card first creation tool, ThePrintShop and its PS Companion, developed then by Broderbund, was easy to use. However, as it evolved the developers betrayed me, and the rest of their Macintosh users. Each version change, as the Macintosh OS evolved, Broderbund changed formats of their documents, while creating no tool to migrate my cards from the earlier version to the current one. I, to my chagrin, discovered that I could not recover any of their supplied clip art in high-resolution format. After all I reasoned, I could always retype the text messages, but the few pieces of clip art I chose were special. No they were neither part of my *Art Explosion 750,000 Images* set nor could I Google them. All I could rescue was dull and faded.



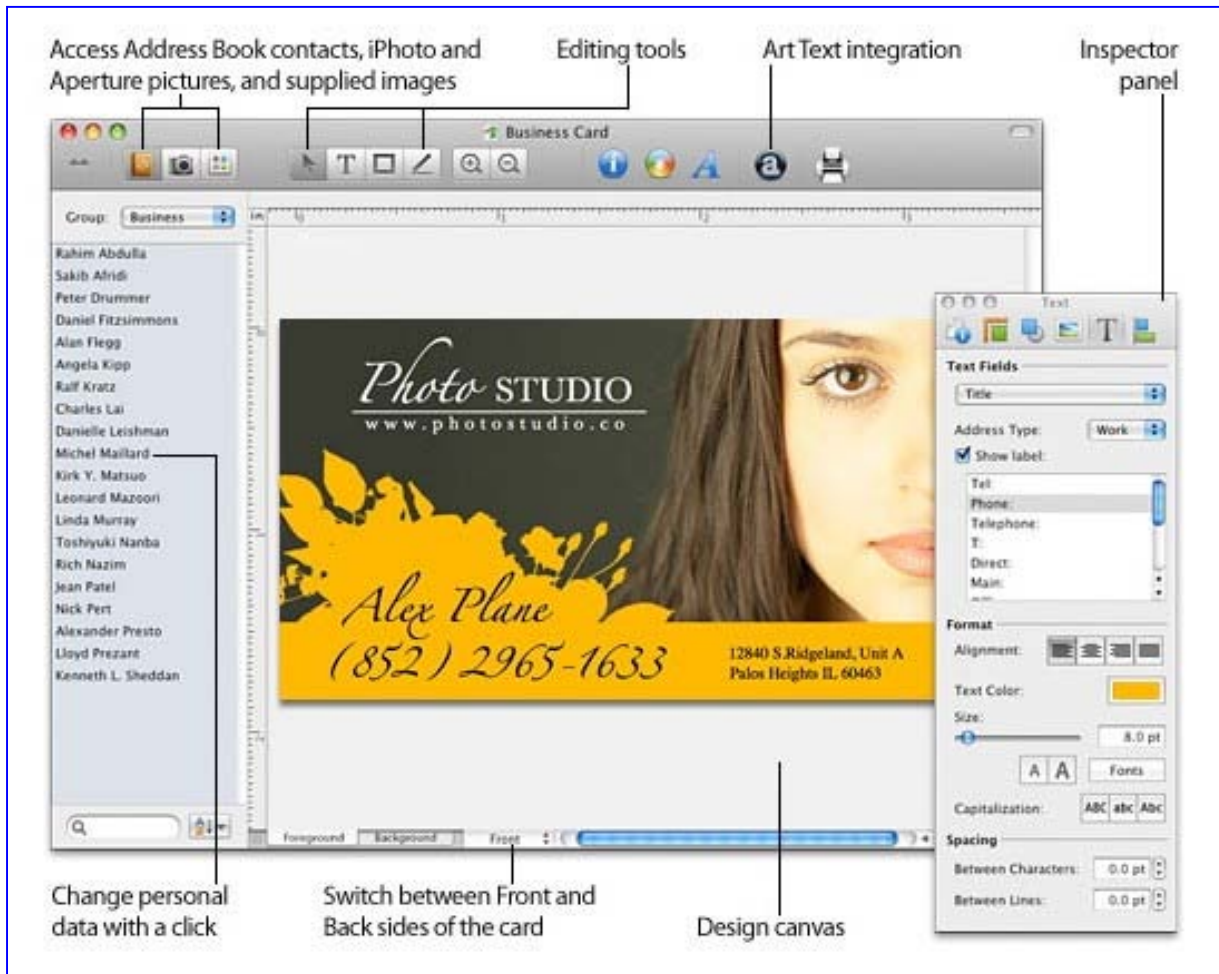
After struggling along with the Broderbund product for a few years, often redoing cards from scratch, I discovered an early version of Business Card Composer... I was hooked. Although, because of clip art extraction problems, from the PrintShop my new cards were not quite identical to my old ones, it still was easy to migrate them all to BCC.

So now, I have personal business cards for each organizational affiliations. Groups [501(C)3] for which I volunteer; including fund raising. , I've also made cards for my several small businesses and a JOAT-jr card for fun. I also supply some of my volunteer co-workers with cards. Last but not least, I use them in customized formats to send out with the CD's data I send to clients and friends. Nothing fancy, just nice clean legible information; at times even my photo.

BCC 5 conveniently can use personal data from Apple Address Book, and images from your iPhoto collection to use in card design. Or you can use or download your own graphics and backgrounds. The program contains over 700 business card stock papers from leading manufacturers. I still use Avery's bought in bulk on the Internet. Belight makes it easy to add more layouts as paper stock manufacturers make them available. Composer also supports duplex printers for printing double-sided cards, which on by HP color LaserJet 3500, takes me two printing steps.

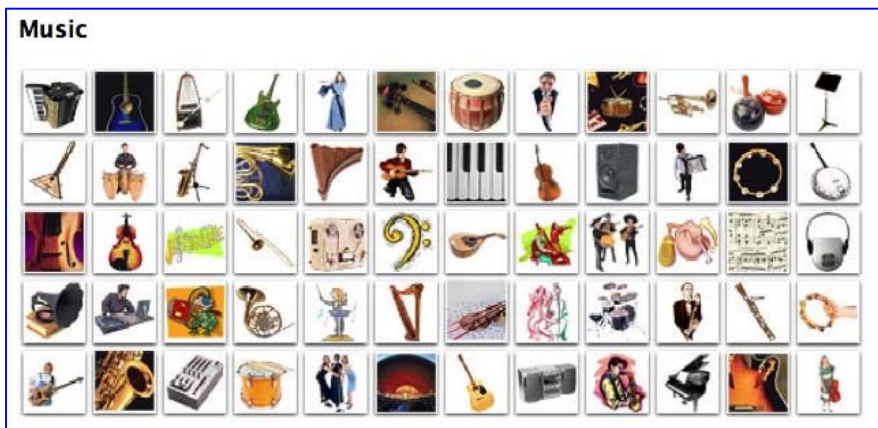
Publishers Description...

Business Card Composer is a Mac OS X tool for designing and printing business cards, calling cards and badges. Thanks to prepared designs and image collections, making cards is easy and fast. This application allows you to print cards on paper stock from major vendors as well as on custom paper, and has powerful capabilities for working with text and images. Check the easy access the to tolls in the main window.



As the developers at Belight Software note, Business Card Composer, aka Composer [BCC] is a complete *kit* to create and print business cards, calling cards and badges. The package contains 1,000+ high-quality clipart images with a total of 24,000 available by download or when buying the boxed product.

These 24,000 images include various Raster, Vector and Photo images that are easy to identify, identify with, and use. For image and background image thumbnails check out: <http://www.belightsoft.com/products/resources/additionalclipart.php>



There are 500+ ready-made designs, just a click away, or do as I do, and create your own and save it as a template. The product is replete with easy to use advanced editing tools. So-called *retail* versions come with 100 additional Fonts, to further add to the ability to express your self.

Getting Started

This is a well-developed Macintosh application. Drag it to your applications folder. Start using it in demo mode or type in a password. Register, the folks at Belight are good about identifying updates. Decide which preference settings you prefer. Quick-check the readme files. You're good to go. If you want more guidance, or if you're new to this kind of software genre, check out one or more of the following:

- The short but clearly focused *BCC Quickstart Guide*
- Check out the 116 Page *Business Card Composer Users Manual*
- Start to Mac-around and see what you get.

It's easy; download a trial version and start playing.

Using the Software

You have two distinct, easy but alternate choices when you boot Composer. That is assuming you left the assistant alternative checked in the product's preferences pane. I don't!

My Usual Choice — You have a card style and image in your head, and own the associated clip art or logos. You more or less and know what you want the card to look like. Start with a blank card. Add images, text and background to suit your needs. If necessary you can dink with font variations, to me an unlikely need if you're creating a KISS card.

Let Assistant Help Guide You — Alternatively start by choosing a template from Composer's assistant. Select a template category (Card Type, Card Style, Profession, and then open a thumbnail of the template you'd like to use. Then pick the card stock (paper) you'll use, and quit (finished) assistant. The developer suggests you next calibrate your printer, for best quality results. There are step-by-step instructions for that, and the program remembers your settings. (I don't remember doing that, but love the quality of the cards I get.)



Add/modify the text on the template to show your contact information, and also graphics if desired, to the card template you chose in assistant. Details on how are clearly identified in the manual. To modify images, use tools located in the Image, *Fill & Shadow and Geometry* tabs of the Inspector tool. Using *Convert Text to Curves* feature converts text to vector images before sending the design to the printer. The later option lets you avoid some problems with printers, a non-issue for my HP printer.

Printing you cards is also easy and almost intuitive. BCC lets you print one card, a sheet of 10 identical cards, or up to 10 different cards of a sheet of stock, or variations there-of. You can print on commercial card stock, or blank custom paper and cut your own. It's all easy.

A Note to the Wise — Font's, backgrounds, graphics, format styles... wow! Don't get carried away. Remember to KISS, follow Robin William's advice in the Non-Designers Design book published by Peachpit Press our follow the ways of oriental designers. Your cards should always look sharp, be easy to read, and appear professional, displaying good taste.

A Partial Annotated Selected Key Features List —

New to version 5 brings you Google Maps integration and support for 2D barcodes. Object grouping, gradient fill options, and new guideline capabilities, have been enhanced and made easier to use. There's more but you can check out the Belight website for those details. Some of this was unfamiliar to me, so I checked that manual. I recommend all users of a product should do, sooner or later. That is the Macintosh Way – Trial and error first, then start learning to master your software's features.

This is something that Belight make it easy for users to do – their FAQs are useful, user forums well supported and manual excellent. The few times, not for Composer, I needed technical support, available via eMail and iChat, it was of good quality and responsive.

Kudos

Powerful, But Simple Photo Editing Features — You want your business cards to be noticed, and appealing images can help you do just that. Business Card Composer contains an intuitive and powerful image and photo editor powered by Belight's [Image Tricks](#). Apply over 60 Core Image effects and filters to your pictures to make your business cards stand out. You can also choose from over 100 unique image masks or use your own image as a mask. Check out the details at: <http://www.belightsoft.com/products/composer/features.php>



The BeLight Library — Additional resources to assist you with print projects and more. Here you'll find articles about design, choosing the right paper and printer, as well as recent technologies. The vendor has picked for you a selection of graphics oriented tutorials, products and services that will help you create quality illustrations, logos, choose correct paper and printing devices. We hope they will make good companions for your business.

The BeLight Library's Partial Resources

[Printing Tips](#) — Recommendations on how to get best-quality business cards on your inkjet or laser printer.

[Choosing a Printer](#) — A brief overview of printers, most appropriate for printing business cards.

[Preparing Your Card for a Print Shop](#) — If you decided to print your cards in a print shop read this article.

[Choosing Business Card Paper](#) — Don't know what paper to choose for your business cards? Read this article.

[BeLight Clipart Images](#) — Collection of 24,000 images included with some BeLight Software products.

[Supplied Fonts](#) — 100 additional fonts included with some BeLight Software products. Check them out.

[Clipart Collections](#) — Sources of additional clipart images to use on business cards or anything else you may want to design.

[Font Collections](#) — Where to get and how to use various Fonts.

[Business Card History](#) — When did the first business card appear? What do you know about the 18th and 19th centuries' etiquette? A must read for information junkies like me.

[Check:](#)

[\[http://www.belightsoft.com/products/companion/CompanionProducts.php\]](http://www.belightsoft.com/products/companion/CompanionProducts.php)

Discomforts

Fonts — My review copy did not have the associated extra 100 “Nick’s Fonts” so I could not play. But with almost 500 fonts and font families installed in my iMac, I did not feel unduly deprived.

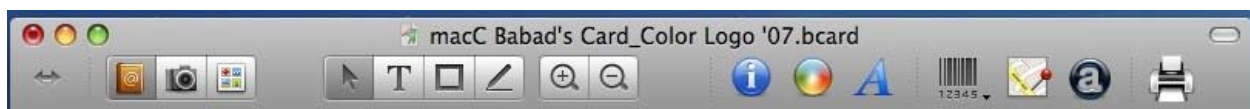
The Address Book Tool — I don’t keep contact information in Apple’s Address book, and most of my cards are for me to use, so I didn’t find the address book access feature useful. But you might.

Conclusions and Recommendation

No matter what your profession or interests may be, most of you communicate with people on a daily basis. Do they come remember you after the first meeting? Did you know or have you noticed that business cards have the ability to bring back the memories about the people you met and under the circumstances it happened? You can give yourself an edge. Try handing personalized-customized out business cards to your new contacts. I keep two sets in my wallet.

If you need to create a lot of different business cards, as I do, Business Card Composer is the best way I’ve found to do it. Whether you start from scratch or use the *Business Card Assistant*, BCC extremely easy to use. It has every text and graphics editing feature you should need, and even newbies or non-graphics types like me can turn out a professional looking product in a surprisingly short time.

Business Card Composer is a powerful and flexible program that allows complete customization of all facets of card creation. If you only create a card or two a year for your self and friends it’s a wonderful tool. If like me you make dozens of cards a year, tweak and update your older ones, then it’s a must buy.



I know I can buy business cards on the Internet or from my local print shop. For better quality cards, I love the embossed look and feel of raised letters, but except for special uses, to attract business, the professional cards are too pricy for my needs. I’ve not tried various Internet services that print business cards starting at about \$13.00 for 250 one-sided color cards to upward of \$100. Don’t ask, I’ve not figured out the cost spread.

I rarely need more than 30-50 cards at any one time, but over a year's time, I create a dozen or more cards, varying the styles, designs and personalization. At first, I used card stock on sale at my local (franchised) office supply company; as the brand's or card stock model changed, tuning my printer to that stock. I soon found that buying the stock in 100 sheet packages is even less expensive. My calculations, no I didn't use a spreadsheet, convinced me that buying BCC, and the stock to 'roll' my own was both less expensive, and more fun.

Okay doc, who are you trying to fool? You bought it because it was a great new toy and you were a business card user.

That said, try it, buy Composer, and enjoy creating your own identities, or whatever. The Belight product is well worth 4.5 macCs.

Appendices and Post Scripts

If you have a use for software to design & print CD/DVD (media) labels, create letterhead and stationary; produce professional looking flyers and stationary, as well as business cards, invents in Belight's Printfolio collection. Belight's interface and tools are common to its key products making leaning a switching between the easy.



Not only do you save about 50% of the cost of the combined set, the other programs are as easy to use as Composer. Printfolio is a suite of programs tailored to create eye-catching and attractive business cards, flyers, brochures, CD and DVD labels; envelopes and address labels. Check it out at: <http://www.belightsoft.com/products/printfolio/overview.php>

Photoshop Elements Version 8

Reviewed by Ted Bade



Adobe Corporation

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

<http://www.adobe.com/products/photoshopelmac/>

\$100 USD (MSRP)

Released: September 23, 2009

Requirements: Mac OS X 10.4.11 or later. 512 MB RAM, 64 MB Video RAM, 2 BGX Hard drive space, DVD-ROM drive, QuickTime 7, Internet connection.



Strengths: Great features, lots of power, many easy to use enhancements, easy interface.

Weaknesses: Installation is odd, some issues with Bridge.

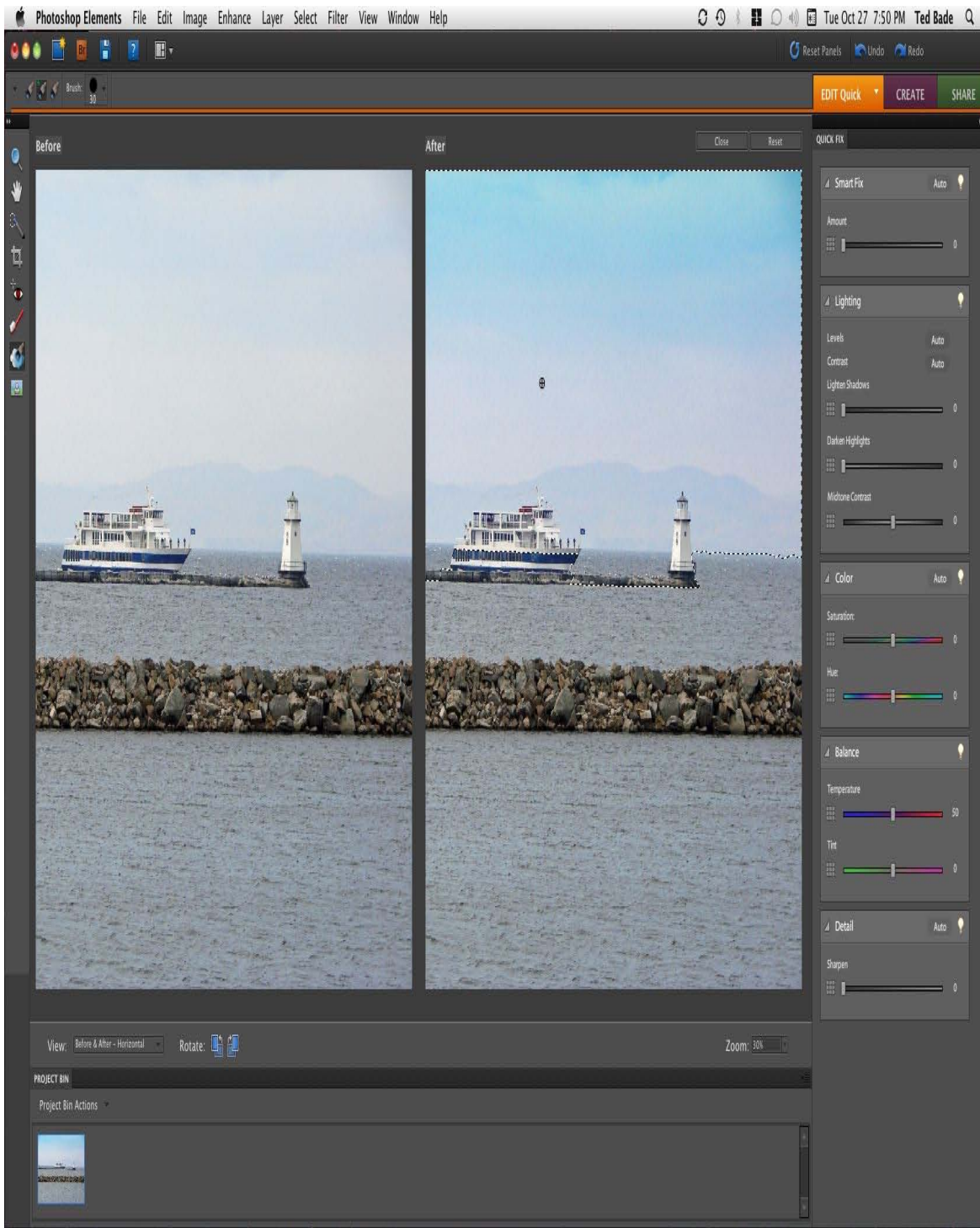
Adobe has released a new version of Photoshop Elements, the consumer level version of Photoshop. Along with application enhancements and improvements, this version adds easy access to a number of interesting ways to enhance photos. As always, Elements offers much of the power of Photoshop with an interface that is significantly easier to learn and use. It is a great addition to any Mac's suite of applications.

Photoshop Elements and its helper program, Adobe Bridge, make it easy to edit and enhance your photos. It provides lots and lots of features that can tweak a mediocre image creating a good or even great one. Let's face it, we all take pictures but most of us don't have a clue about lighting or composition, and no matter where you are, somebody always manages to walk into that perfect scene! Let us not forget that conditions aren't always perfect and, unlike a professional photographer, you don't have time on your one-week vacation to wait for conditions to allow for that perfect scene. So we turn to Elements to enhance the photos.



Version 8 has all the features in previous versions of Photoshop Elements. I am going to focus on newer features I found useful. I assume the reader is probably familiar with the basic features of Elements. Let us just say that Elements provides a wealth of features, which give even the most basic user the ability to change dull photos into rich and beautiful ones. It offers different interface levels, from guided (which walks the user through the process), to quick (using simple sliders to instantly enhance a photo), and to full (where the more advanced user can use a variety of tools to enhance the photo). No matter the interface level, the full power of the program is available to the user.

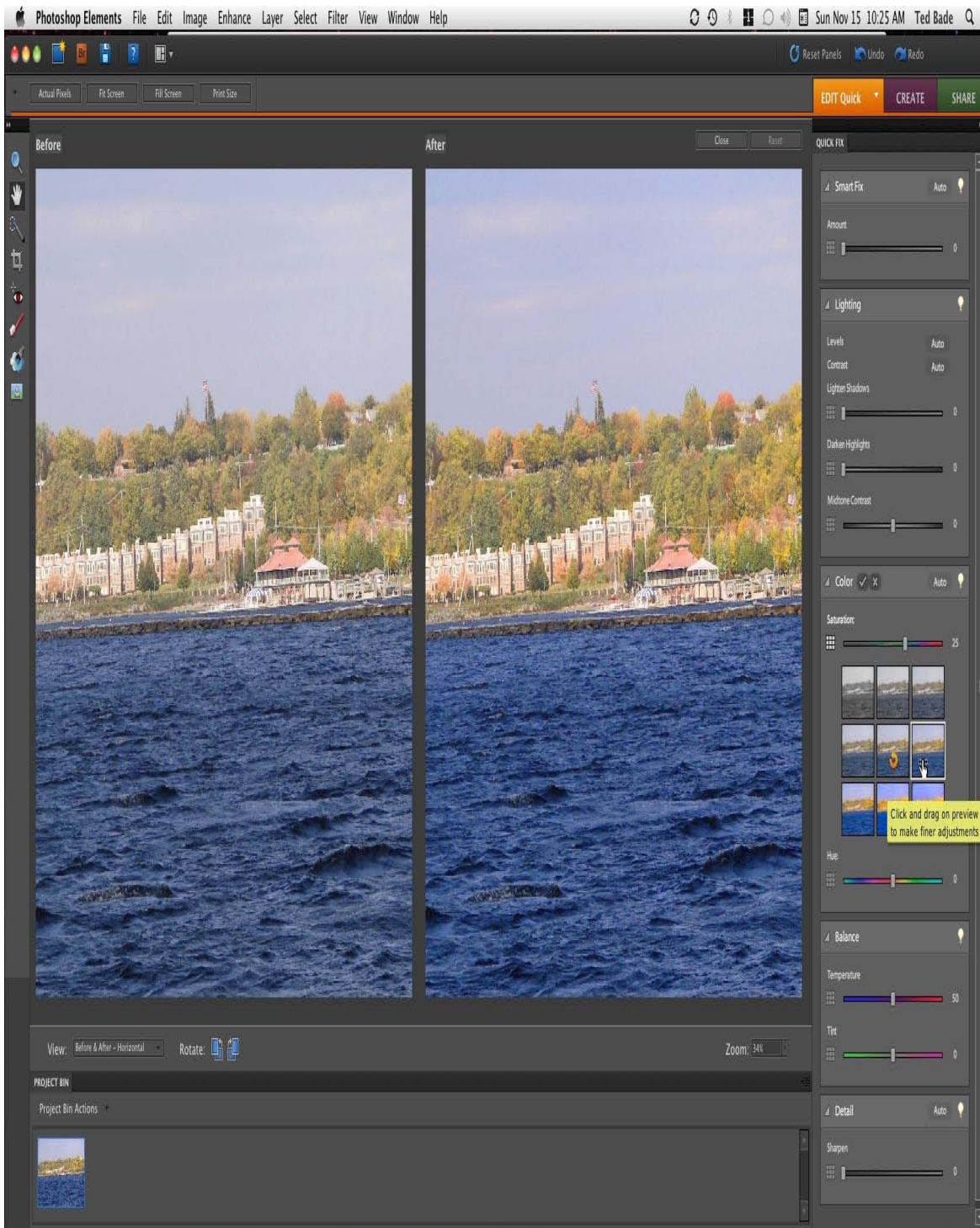
This version of Elements offers several new features that make it easy to “correct” an image, making it more pleasant to the eye. I use the quotation marks, because the correction doesn’t necessarily make the image closer to reality, but closer to the ideal. For instance, we have all taken photos of scenery with a dull hazy sky. The scene might be nice, but the image would be a lot more pleasant if the sky was blue instead of gray or grayish white. Elements 8 has a touch up brush designed to add blue to a washed out sky. I tried it on some of my vacation photos and was quite pleased with the results. Adding the blue sky makes the image richer and a lot more pleasant. Although the photo isn’t a true image of what was, the results are more how I remember the shot ☺.



(Notice how the bluer sky brings out the blue in the lake and the boat)

When I use software to enhance an image, I often try several different settings before I am satisfied. Sometimes I have to go back and try something a second time to be sure I like it less or perhaps better than another setting. Which leads me to another new feature I found very useful. When using Element's quick fix editing, you can choose a preview function to show several previews of how your image would look using various levels of an enhancement.

You don't need to know what the settings do or how they are set, you simply choose the preview you like the most and save it. Although the preview thumbnails are kind of small, as you mouse them, the larger "after" image on the main window changes to show what this effect does. Additionally, Elements chooses one of the previews as the best option for the image, which you can agree or disagree with. The program also allows you to make a fine adjustment to each setting before saving it. In my example, I decided that I wanted a bit more intensity in my image to enhance the New England scenery.



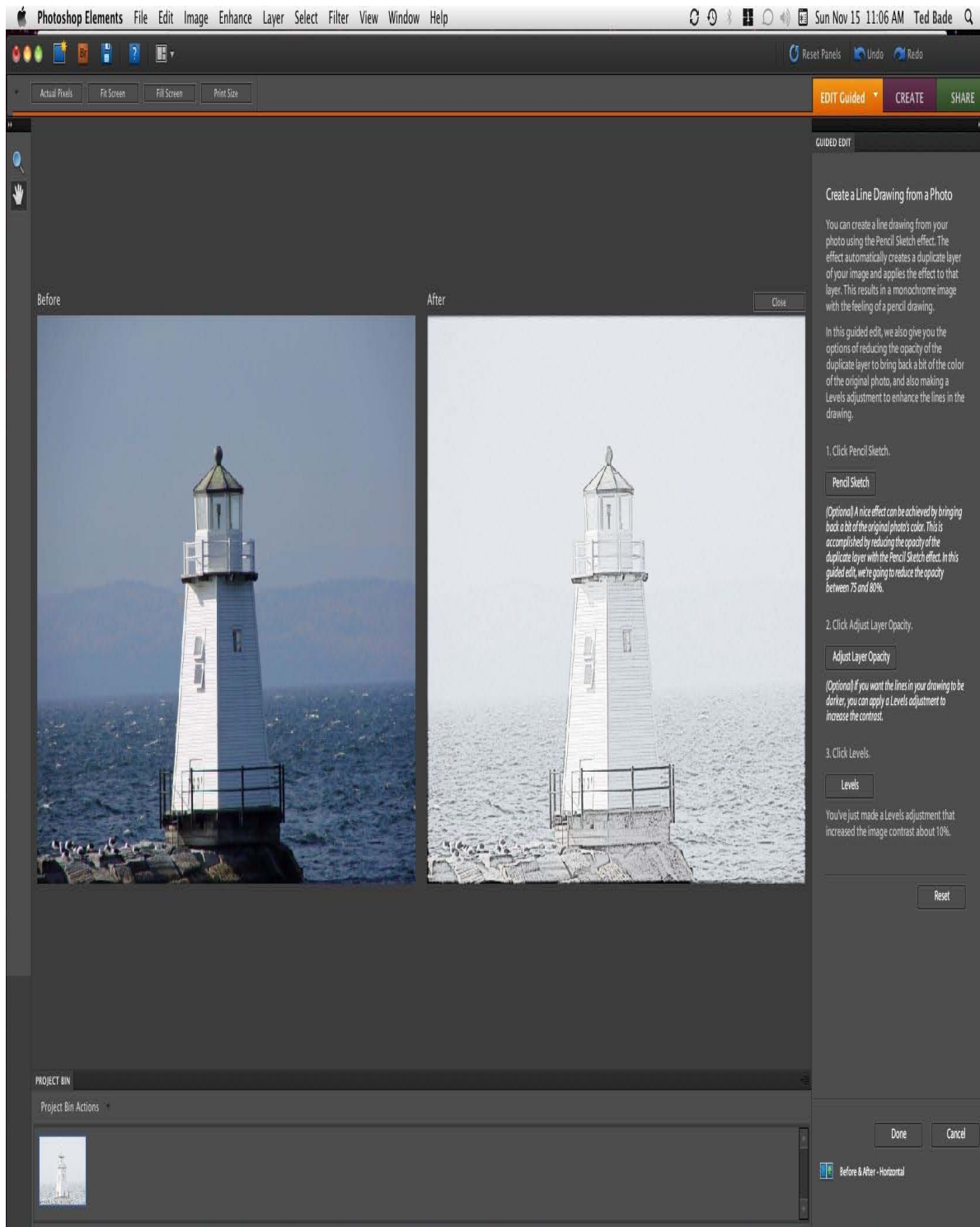
(Notice the symbol on the center image, that is Element's choice, I liked the richer colors)

While I am not one to concern myself with how nice teeth look in a photo, there are people who do. Elements version 8 includes another enhancement brush that is designed to easily whiten teeth. The magic of the brush isn't in whitening, but in being smart enough to whiten only the teeth of an image.

The brush works pretty well overall. Since teeth tend to be a smaller part of an image, it is necessary to select a smaller brush or you will end up whitening the person's face. Once you get the brush size reduced and zoom into the teeth, the correction is quick and very effective.

Elements 8 has includes the ability to perform a series of actions to a photo to create some effect. Most of the included actions add artistic effects to your photo. For instance, you can fade the ink to simulate a sepia image, or create a snapshot layout with a border and space for a caption. There is also one to make the subject look a little thinner ;-). The actions included in Elements 8 aren't something I would regularly use. But the ability to script a series of actions I nice. Action sets can be imported from those created by Photoshop, provided the components of the action are supported by Elements. There doesn't seem to be a way to create action sets in Elements.

There are a number of preset "Artistic" effects available in the guided edit as well. For instance you can create a line drawing from your image, turn it into an "old fashioned" photo, or apply a saturated slide film effect. While adjustments on these effects are limited, they work pretty well.



(I am such an “artist”, LOL)

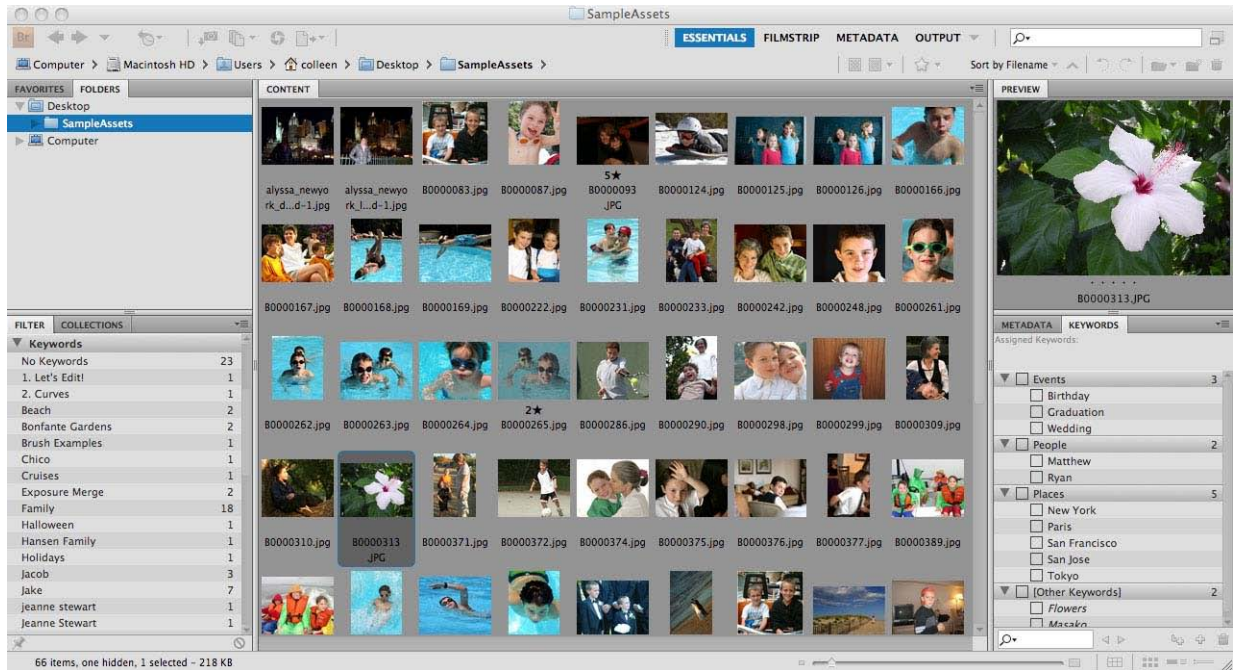
Have you ever tried to create an image, only to find that somebody unwanted stepped into it at the last moment? I am sure we all have. If only a small part of the person is in the image you can sometimes edit or crop out that small piece, but when the moving person is squarely in the frame, you really cannot do anything.

That is unless you managed to take a second shot and use a new feature in Elements 8. This new feature, called Clean Scene, allows you to combine pieces of two images to remove an unwanted person moving through the image. This feature works by combining the unobstructed side of one image with the unobstructed side of a second image, to create a single image with no obstructions. Obviously, to make this work, you need to have taken two images that the program can work with. But it does the job very well. Alternately, you could wait until no one else is around or hire an army of people to clear the space, but taking two images and processing out the interference is probably the easiest solution!

Another useful people related feature is the ability to recompose images after they are taken. Elements 8 has the ability to reconfigure an image without adding significant distortion. One example is taking a picture of a group of people in landscape view. Let's imagine that you would like to use the image in a card, so you need the group shot in portrait view. If you simply crop the image, some members of the group will be cut off or even cut out. Elements 8 allows you to scrunch the image to bring all the people together, without significantly distorting the image. It is an interesting effect. This effect works well for most backgrounds, but I saw a bit of distortion with an image that included parallel vertical bars in the background. But let's face it, the program can't perform miracles ;-)

Besides editing your images, Photoshop Elements 8 provides a variety of tools for presenting them to others. It has options for composing and creating Photo Books, Greeting cards, prints, photo collages, web galleries, and even to create a slide show in PDF format.

Photoshop Elements 8 comes with Adobe Bridge version 8. This version of Bridge has been enhanced a bit as well. You can now flip through images in full screen mode rather than just as thumbnails. Additionally, you can view a slide show of any folder of images. Bridge provides easy access to folders containing images and offers several functions that allow you to organize and move your photos about.



(This is a stock image, not mine)

My experience with Photoshop Elements version 8 wasn't perfect. I don't know if it is just me, but I found the installation process a bit odd. You have to open the CD then open the Elements folder to locate a program called "Setup". I ran "Setup" and suddenly an oddly named drive image appeared on my desktop. I imagine many people don't watch the install process, but I generally do. Having drives appear on the screen that don't have names related to the product I am installing gives me the creeps! It is soooo PCish. But I guess that is the direction Adobe has taken.

Once the new application was installed, I was a bit surprised to find the application icon to be a rather drab one. Elements 6 had a cute circular icon with a camera shape in it. The new one is simply a light blue rectangle with darker blue PSE in it. Dull. I am getting the impression here that Adobe is trying to change their market image toward a rather drab business market rather than toward a fun home or artistic market. Which is odd, since Element's splash screen and box image are a terrific "Alice in Wonderland-ish" image, which I think creates a sense of artistry and is not drab. Go figure.

I didn't run into any real problems running Elements, but I had Bridge 8 lockup and crash on me in several instances. This was mainly when I tried to move several images I had edited from the temporary folder I had placed them in for editing, into other folders that organize the images. What I do, for example, is select a group of images, say flowers, in the temporary folder, then right click on them and select the "Move To" contextual menu, then select the folder I want to save these images to. Generally when I choose more than one image to move, Bridge locked up. I had to force quit, then restart it. Usually after the restart, I would be able to move the images.

Conclusion

Overall, I feel that Photoshop Elements is the best home consumer option for editing and enhancing images. It offers a tremendous amount of photo editing power, and a multitude of ways to enhance, modify, organize, and enhance your images. The User Interface is relatively easy to use and editing functions can be accessed as guided functions for the beginner or without guidance for the more experienced user. Photoshop Elements puts a lot of power at the user's fingertips, truly more than I regularly use! If you are looking to buy a program to enhance your photos, you won't go wrong with Photoshop Elements 8.

Advertisers Index

Alternative Energy User Group

<http://maccompanion.com/RenewableEnergy/index.htm>

A Better Handyman and Contractor Service

<http://www.abetterhandyman.net/aboutus.html>

Apple Corporation

<http://store.apple.com/AppleStore/WebObjects/BizCustom?qprm=484614&cid=AOS-US-KOW-BPRO&aosid=p212&kbid=1137>

Amazon.com - macCompanion Store

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

Century Roofing

<http://www.centuryroofing.biz>

OxySilver

<http://www.oxysilver.com/index.asp?AffID=108>



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OXYSILVER™ is produced through unique energetic processes using laser light, sound, and silver to electro-magnetically activate the hydrosol to deliver a 528Hz frequency of natural harmony to your body. This important harmonic is amplified by tiny, electrically-conductive, nano-sized silver particles bonded to oxygen in this water containing pure lava-heated steam harvested on the Big Island of Hawaii. 528Hz hydrosonics is fundamental to health, wellness, and all creation.

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Can you Imagine **a world free of infectious diseases, viral cancers, and AIDS?**

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

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