



The GAB'er

The Newsletter of the Greater Albany Apple Byters

Volume 25, Number 7 - March 2009

Safari 4.0 Beta Gets Beefed Up on Security



In spite of being path breaking in some ways, such as in its private browsing mode, Safari has a record as a laggard when it comes to security features. It has lacked phishing protection, EV-SSL support, malware site blocking and a variety of lesser functions. At one point Consumer

Reports urged users to dump Safari and PayPal hinted that a browser such as that was unsafe to use with their service.

All of these features are now in Safari as of the beta of version 4.0. The Safari 4.0 feature list includes a fat section on Security and Privacy. Many of the features aren't in other browsers, such as extensive parental controls and (on OS X only) extensive tagging of downloaded files to mark where and when they came from. On the other hand, on Windows Vista and later it doesn't have Internet Explorer's Protected Mode support, a feature which provides substantial defense-in-depth against many compromises.

But Safari 4 is a huge step up and, from a security standpoint, you can feel a lot better about using it than prior versions.

Coordinator's Corner



by John Buckley

In February we looked at what is new from Apple in terms of productivity software. Just released, the latest version of iWork 09 the combination word processing, spreadsheet, and presentation package from Apple that is beginning to look like a big contender for Microsoft Office at a very small price.



This month we will look at part of the Microsoft mainstay, Microsoft Word 2008 for the Mac. Word has so many features, we will not be able to look at them all, but we will look at those that are most useful for the average user.

The March meeting will be held at Troy High School in room 212 on Wednesday, March 11, 2009. The meeting will begin at 7:00 p.m. Troy High School is located at 1950 Burdett Avenue two blocks south of Samaritan Hospital. From the Northway, take exit 7 to Alternate Route 7. Follow Alternate Route 7 to Troy. Route 7 becomes Hoosick Street in Troy. Travel east on Hoosick Street to the first light past a liquor store. This is Burdett Avenue. Turn right and travel past Samaritan Hospital for about two blocks. Troy High School will be the second school on your left. The name is on the front of the building. You can park in the front lot. Come in the main entrance, go up the main stairway to the second floor, turn left and go to room 212. There is an elevator in the main lobby if needed. Usually, a custodian will provide access.

Next GAAB Meeting
March 11, 2009
Word 2008
7:00 p.m.
Room 212
Troy High School

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Serving the Apple Computer User Community Since May 1984

The Greater Albany Apple Byters is an Apple Computer User Group. Meetings are held the second Wednesday of each month (except July and August) in Room 212 of Troy High School, located on Burdett Avenue, Troy, NY.

Annual membership fee is \$10.00. Membership privileges include this newsletter, access to a large public domain software and video/audio tape library, local vendor discounts, special interest groups, and other special offers.

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Apple Ambassador

by John Buckley

This month I thought it would be interesting to take a look at some fun things related to Macs. The first article from Appletell (<http://www.appletell.com>), an Apple news provider. In this article they are reviewing MacHeads, a documentary about Macintosh nuts. The second article is from Associated Content (<http://www.associatedcontent.com>) demonstrates just how far Mac fans will go. To view the actual video go to (http://www.theonion.com/conent/video/apple_introduces_revolutionary).

Appletell Reviews the MacHEADS Documentary by Jake Gaecke

MacHEADSStudio: Chimp 65 Productions
Directed by: Kobi Shely
Release Date: January 7th, 2009
Runtime: 55 minutes
Format: Download or DVD
Price: Rental \$2.99 Buy \$9.99
Availability: Now
Website: www.macheadsthemovie.com

MacHEADS is a documentary just for us. By us, I'm referring to the diehard Apple fans. If you've ever fallen in love with a product that had an Apple logo on it, then you're going to enjoy MacHEADS. We all know there's something a little different about the community of Apple users. We're not satisfied with having hardware and software that makes us feel superior to our PC friends. We demand more out of our computers, and often, we get it.

MacHEADS Andy Ihnatko

Now there's something I have to get off of my chest. I haven't always been a Mac fanboy. In fact, I was quite the opposite for a number of years thanks to some pretty bad influences (mostly school). Needless to say, I could probably benefit from a little Apple history lesson from time to time. That's not to say that MacHEADS is a history lesson, but there's some history here. Funny thing is, the director of this film is a lot like me. He got his first Mac in 2000 and has been intrigued ever since.



It was produced from 2007 to 2008, starting with the first day of Macworld 07. You might recall a minor change that took place that day. A little something we like to call the iPhone.

Continued on page 11.





In January, almost 600,000 people were laid off in the United States. More job losses are expected. The Internet gives employers unprecedented access to information about you. Employers aren't content with facts gleaned from public records. They're also using the Internet to assess your character. That means they're searching your name on Google. They're visiting social-networking sites and reading blog posts. Unflattering comments and photos can put you out of the running for a job. So, you will want to clean up your online reputation before job hunting.

Search for yourself

Your first step is to assess your online reputation. Start by doing a Google search of your name and its variations. Do other searches that include your profession, previous employers and locations. You may be surprised what turns up. You should also search networking sites. Pipl, Wink and PeekYou will search multiple sites quickly. You will want to make two lists from your searches. On one list, place links to sites with unflattering information. On the other list, place links to flattering information.

Remove the negative

Maybe you posted some of the unflattering images or comments. In that case, remove them immediately. Err on the side of caution and remove anything that is potentially offensive. Next, contact the owners of sites that cast you in a negative light. Send a polite e-mail requesting that negative information be removed. State your case clearly. If a post is erroneous, provide proof of its inaccuracy. It doesn't hurt to mention that you're job searching. Things are more complicated with unflattering photos and truthful information. You will need to appeal to the writer's sense of decency. Keep your requests pleasant and polite, and you may be successful.

Promote the positive

Some sites will honor your requests. Other sites may not. So, you may need to mitigate negative posts with positive ones. I recommend that you start a blog highlighting your professional skills. Write posts on your field to show off your professional knowledge. List your full

name at the bottom of your posts. Include links to the positive comments you found. And be sure to list your accomplishments in your bio. These postings should push the negative postings from Google's top search results. You can also use your blog to speak indirectly to potential employers. For example, say you share a name with a porn star. You don't want potential employers to confuse the two of you. So, create a post listing people who share your name. It's a good way to eliminate confusion.

Don't forget networking sites

Networking sites like Facebook and MySpace are the biggest threat to your job search. Clean up any networking profiles you have. If you don't have networking profiles, create them. Then link to them on your blog. Employers will be able to find your profiles easily. These profiles, of course, will be squeaky clean. Why create the profiles? It can eliminate confusion. An employer won't confuse you with that other Mary Johnson with a raunchy profile. Create a profile on LinkedIn. Use it to showcase your professional accomplishments. You can also network with others who can help with your job search.

Professionals can help

Companies like ReputationDefender and Reputation Hawk specialize in improving online reputations. These services can be costly. In some cases, you'll pay thousands of dollars. Others charge \$30 or so for each post they remove. These services are handy if you have money but no time. You can do most of this yourself, though. Cleaning up your reputation can take months. So, start now — whether you're currently job hunting or not.





Education SIG

Tech Trends Every School Leader Should Know

by Meris Stansbury, eSchoolNews Assistant Editor

The following article shows the direction educational technology is taking in schools and what educational leaders should be preparing for in the future to be able to be a viable educational institution in the future.

Today's CTOs need to become business savvy.

A new generation of students with vastly different learning needs is redefining expectations for classroom instruction, and a growing emphasis on school accountability is changing the role of the school district IT leader: These were two of the main ideas outlined in a Dec. 10 webcast from the Consortium of School Networking titled "Major Technology Trends that School District CTOs Must Know."

According to William Rust, research director for the IT research and consulting firm Gartner, there is a new digital divide occurring in schools. Whereas this divide used to refer to whether or not students had access to technology, now it concerns whether schools are using technology effectively to achieve results.

Rust identified four key trends that school district chief technology officers (CTOs) should be aware of: accountability, the changing nature of learners, the accessibility of technology, and the "internal and external demands" that are now placed on ed-tech executives.

"If CTOs are thinking about these four factors and how they can keep up with these changes, they'll stay ahead of the divide," he said.

Regarding the changing nature of learners, Gartner believes that so-called "digital natives" will demand, and need, new types of learning experiences.

Citing a report by Ian Jukes and Anita Dose of the InfoSavvy Group, Rust said digital native learners prefer (1) receiving information quickly and from multiple resources; (2) parallel processing and multitasking; (3) processing pictures, sounds, and video before text; (4) random access to hyperlinked multimedia information; and (5) interacting and networking simultaneously with many others.

"The biggest shift we're seeing right now is student preference shifting from print to digital resources," Rust noted. "It's all about the web."

As for accountability, Rust explained that No Child Left Behind's extensive data tracking and reporting requirements have prompted the use of robust student information systems and data-warehousing strategies in schools. Now, the next logical step will be to apply this same degree of scrutiny to schools' financial data, Gartner believes.

Soon "NCLB will be on steroids," Rust predicted, and will extend to a school district's fiscal reporting, holding educators accountable for their purchases and spending.

The greater accountability ushered in under NCLB has changed the internal and external demands on school district CTOs, Rust said--especially with regard to storing data and granting access privileges. Whereas data once were locked away and stored forensically, he explained, now they are made available to teachers, parents, and staff.

And technology's broad accessibility, Gartner believes, is changing the paradigm for how students receive instruction. Like the growing trend of telecommuting to work, Rust predicted, virtual and distance education soon will trump the delivery of instruction via brick-and-mortar classrooms.

The changing role of the CTO

The increased emphasis on accountability applies not only to school systems, but also to their IT departments, Rust said.

"IT accountability is definitely ... a growing trend," he said. "IT budgets might seem to be constantly under attack, because a lot of CTOs [don't] know how to explain major purchases and decisions to [their] stakeholders."

Rust described how many CTOs use emotional appeals, such as "technology will save this school," or appeals to stakeholders' sense of pity, or even appeals based on blind faith with no supporting research, when advocating for ed-tech expenditures.

He explained that with budgets feeling the pinch of the current economic crisis, and with school accountability



reaching an all-time high, school district IT leaders will have to undergo a major change: from having technical skills to acquiring business skills; from needing to know how to fix a computer to knowing how to sell an idea and work with business leaders.

Gartner predicts that by 2010, the IT profession will be split into four domains:

1. Technology Infrastructure and Services. Now composing 65 percent of IT staff, this segment will dwindle to 40 percent. This group should emphasize technical knowledge, such as: "How does this technology work?"
2. Information Design and Management--will rise from 20 percent to 30 percent. This group will need to focus more on business-specific knowledge, such as: "What makes this institution tick?"
3. Process Design and Management--will rise from 10 percent to 20 percent. This group will need to balance business knowledge with core process knowledge, such as: "What processes make this area unique," and with industry knowledge, such as: "What characterizes this sector?"
4. Relationship and Sourcing Management--will rise from 5 percent to 10 percent. This group will need to balance business knowledge with core process knowledge.

Gartner also predicts that by 2010, six out of 10 people affiliated with IT will assume business-facing roles around information, process, and relationships.

"Less than 10 percent of new CIOs hired by Global 1000 companies in 2012 will have engineering and/or computer science degrees," predicted Rust. "This means that technically educated and/or experienced IT practitioners--including current CIOs--must target 2009 to begin acquiring at least one or two years of non-IT business-unit management experience if they wish to viably pursue new CIO opportunities opening up in 2009 or 2010."

Changing school practices

To help put these trends into perspective and offer real examples of how schools are dealing with IT changes, Bailey Mitchell, chief technology officer for Georgia's Forsyth County Schools, cited some of his district's recent action plans.

According to Mitchell, Forsyth County has added video conferencing and revised its acceptable-use policy (AUP) to allow for personal devices, such as cell phones, smart phones, and laptops, on school grounds.

"As consumer devices come into the schools, the CTO doesn't own all the services anymore," said Mitchell. "We've dealt

with this change by asking students and teachers to take more responsibility for the role technology plays in their work in a self-serve sense."

Forsyth County also is looking at Web 2.0 tools, but making sure to ask questions, such as: "What is the purpose and educational value of social networking in our schools?" Mitchell said it's important to choose a good fit, providing a resource that not only will be used, but also will produce academic results.

"Right now, we've had to tighten the budget a little, so we've started to use web-based and open-source resources," Mitchell added. Forsyth County uses OpenOffice software, as well as various Google applications and Skype. "We've saved over \$300,000 this year by making this switch," he said.

Another way Forsyth County is saving money is by transitioning to digital content rather than textbooks. According to Mitchell, textbooks usually cost his schools \$85 per student, but digital content only averages \$35 per seat.

Ed Zaiontz, executive director of information services for the Round Rock Independent School District in Texas, also said saving money was a major concern, prompting Round Rock to pursue virtualization at the server and PC level.

"That provides more bang for your buck, as well as switching to open-source technology," said Zaiontz. "We're also trying to focus on total cost of ownership; we need to prove that our purchases are productive, that they produce results. It's all about the value of the investment."

Zaiontz also listed several areas and trends that Round Rock is taking an interest in:

- Energy efficiencies, such as green IT;
- Individual mobile devices and wireless environments;
- New safety and security measures that are needed for the connection of personal devices to school servers;
- Document management and eDiscovery in response to record-retention laws;
- Web and video collaboration;
- Online learning, to help cut the millions of dollars that go toward new school construction;
- Software as a Service (SaaS); and
- Creating a flexible AUP to reflect ever-changing technology standards.

In closing, Gartner's Rust recommended that CTOs use and share best practices; establish effective communication with stakeholders; look ahead, and stay out in front; provide solutions, not problems; and understand the business implications of IT.



How Cloud Computing Works

by Jonathan Strickland, HowStuffWorks.com

Let's say you're an executive at a large corporation. Your particular responsibilities include making sure that all of your employees have the right hardware and software they need to do their jobs. Buying computers for everyone isn't enough -- you also have to purchase software or software licenses to give employees the tools they require. Whenever you have a new hire, you have to buy more software or make sure your current software license allows another user. It's so stressful that you find it difficult to go to sleep on your huge pile of money every night.

Soon, there may be an alternative for executives like you. Instead of installing a suite of software for each computer, you'd only have to load one application. That application would allow workers to log into a Web-based service which hosts all the programs the user would need for his or her job. Remote machines owned by another company would run everything from e-mail to word processing to complex data analysis programs. It's called cloud computing, and it could change the entire computer industry.

In a cloud computing system, there's a significant workload shift. Local computers no longer have to do all the heavy lifting when it comes to running applications. The network of computers that make up the cloud handles them instead. Hardware and software demands on the user's side decrease. The only thing the user's computer needs to be able to run is the cloud computing system's interface software, which can be as simple as a Web browser, and the cloud's network takes care of the rest.

There's a good chance you've already used some form of cloud computing.

If you have an e-mail account with a Web-based e-mail service like Hotmail, Yahoo! Mail or Gmail, then you've had some experience with cloud computing. Instead of running an e-mail program on your computer, you log in to a Web e-mail account remotely. The software and storage for your account doesn't exist on your computer -- it's on the service's computer cloud.

Cloud Computing Architecture

When talking about a cloud computing system, it's helpful to divide it into two sections: the front end and the back end. They connect to each other through a network, usually the Internet. The front end is the side the computer user, or client, sees. The back end is the "cloud" section of the system.

The front end includes the client's computer (or computer network) and the application required to access the cloud computing system. Not all cloud computing systems have the same user interface. Services like Web-based e-mail programs leverage existing Web browsers like Internet Explorer or Firefox. Other systems have unique applications that provide network access to clients.

On the back end of the system are the various computers, servers and data storage systems that create the "cloud" of computing services. In theory, a cloud computing system could include practically any computer program you can imagine, from data processing to video games. Usually, each application will have its own dedicated server.

A central server administers the system, monitoring traffic and client demands to ensure everything runs smoothly. It follows a set of rules called protocols and uses a special kind of software

called middleware. Middleware allows networked computers to communicate with each other.

If a cloud computing company has a lot of clients, there's likely to be a high demand for a lot of storage space. Some companies require hundreds of digital storage devices. Cloud computing systems need at least twice the number of storage devices it requires to keep all its clients' information stored. That's because these devices, like all computers, occasionally break down. A cloud computing system must make a copy of all its clients' information and store it on other devices. The copies enable the central server to access backup machines to retrieve data that otherwise would be unreachable. Making copies of data as a backup is called redundancy.

Cloud Computing Applications

The applications of cloud computing are practically limitless. With the right middleware, a cloud computing system could execute all the programs a normal computer could run. Potentially, everything from generic word processing software to customized computer programs designed for a specific company could work on a cloud computing system.

Why would anyone want to rely on another computer system to run programs and store data? Here are just a few reasons:

- Clients would be able to access their applications and data from anywhere at any time. They could access the cloud computing system using any computer linked to the Internet. Data wouldn't be confined to a hard drive on one user's computer or even a corporation's internal network.



- It could bring hardware costs down. Cloud computing systems would reduce the need for advanced hardware on the client side. You wouldn't need to buy the fastest computer with the most memory, because the cloud system would take care of those needs for you. Instead, you could buy an inexpensive computer terminal. The terminal could include a monitor, input devices like a keyboard and mouse and just enough processing power to run the middleware necessary to connect to the cloud system. You wouldn't need a large hard drive because you'd store all your information on a remote computer.
- Corporations that rely on computers have to make sure they have the right software in place to achieve goals. Cloud computing systems give these organizations company-wide access to computer applications. The companies don't have to buy a set of software or software licenses for every employee. Instead, the company could pay a metered fee to a cloud computing company.
- Servers and digital storage devices take up space. Some companies rent physical space to store servers and databases because they don't have it available on site. Cloud computing gives these companies the option of storing data on someone else's hardware, removing the need for physical space on the front end.
- Corporations might save money on IT support. Streamlined hardware would, in theory, have fewer problems than a network of heterogeneous machines and operating systems.
- If the cloud computing system's back end is a grid computing system, then the client could take advantage of the entire network's processing power. Often, scientists and researchers work with calculations so complex that

it would take years for individual computers to complete them. On a grid computing system, the client could send the calculation to the cloud for processing. The cloud system would tap into the processing power of all available computers on the back end, significantly speeding up the calculation.

Cloud Computing Concerns

Perhaps the biggest concerns about cloud computing are security and privacy. The idea of handing over important data to another company worries some people. Corporate executives might hesitate to take advantage of a cloud computing system because they can't keep their company's information under lock and key.

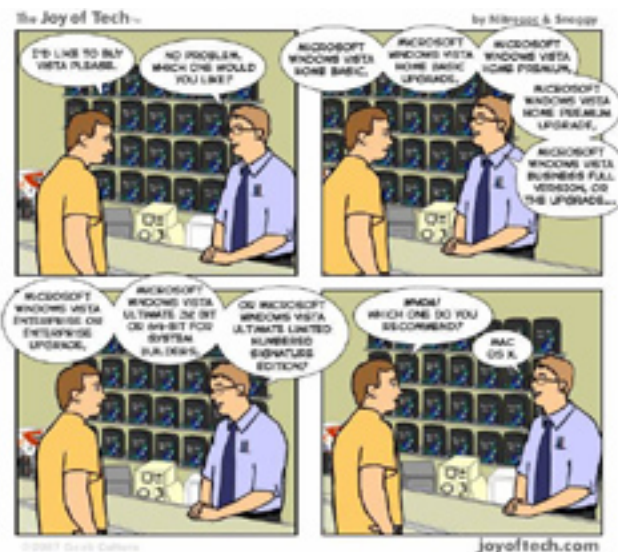
The counterargument to this position is that the companies offering cloud computing services live and die by their reputations. It benefits these companies to have reliable security measures in place. Otherwise, the service would lose all its clients. It's in their interest to employ the most advanced techniques to protect their clients' data.

Privacy is another matter. If a client can log in from any location to

access data and applications, it's possible the client's privacy could be compromised. Cloud computing companies will need to find ways to protect client privacy. One way is to use authentication techniques such as user names and passwords. Another is to employ an authorization format -- each user can access only the data and applications relevant to his or her job.

Some questions regarding cloud computing are more philosophical. Does the user or company subscribing to the cloud computing service own the data? Does the cloud computing system, which provides the actual storage space, own it? Is it possible for a cloud computing company to deny a client access to that client's data? Several companies, law firms and universities are debating these and other questions about the nature of cloud computing.

How will cloud computing affect other industries? There's a growing concern in the IT industry about how cloud computing could impact the business of computer maintenance and repair. If companies switch to using streamlined computer systems, they'll have fewer IT needs. Some industry experts believe that the need for IT jobs will migrate to the back end of the cloud computing system.



Geniuses at Play, on the Job

by David Pogue, *New York Times*

Unless you're just off the shuttle from Alpha Centauri, you're already aware of the product that made Google famous: its Search box. It's become the card catalog for the Internet (and a whopping moneymaker for Google).

But any time you cram some 20,000 of the world's smartest people into one company, you can expect to grow a garden of unrelated ideas. Especially when you give some of those geniuses one workday a week — Google's famous "20 percent time"— to work on whatever projects fan their passions. And especially when you create Google Labs (labs.google.com), a Web site where the public can kick the tires on half-baked Google creations. Some Labs projects go on to become real Google services, and others are quietly snuffed out.

Such innovations — and a number of smart acquisitions — have led to hits like Google Earth, Gmail, Picasa, Google Docs, Blogger, YouTube, Google Calendar and others.

But they have also cultivated a vast jungle of lesser-known features. Unfortunately, it's so vast, you'd need a professional tour guide to help you find the gems.

Hello, my name is David. Keep hands and feet inside the tram at all times.

IGOOGLE Google.com became famous for its minimalist look. It loaded quickly in the days when dial-up modems ruled the earth.

Today, at iGoogle (google.com/ig), you can dress up all that white space with useful miniboxes containing additional info. Hundreds of useful displays are available: a clock, local weather, movie listings, incoming e-mail, news, daily horoscope, to-do list, Twitter updates and whatever-of-the-day (joke, vocabulary word, quotation, Bible verse and so on).

The best part: this stuff doesn't slow you down. You can type in and execute a quick Google search before all those widgets have appeared.

GOOGLE READER Why spend your time finding and navigating to the Web sites that cover your favorite topics? They can all come to you — all nicely congregated on a single page, called Google Reader (reader.google.com).

Technically, Reader is what's called an RSS feed reader, but you don't need to know that. You type in a topic, inspect the search results, and click the Subscribe buttons that look interesting. After that, Reader displays the first paragraph from each site or blog; click to read more. Star items to read later, or pass along your favorites to friends. Fantastic.

FLU TRENDS One of Google's geniuses figured out that whenever people get sick, they use Google to search for more information. By collating these searches, Google has created an early-warning system for flu outbreaks in your area, with color-coded graphs. Google says that Flu Trends (google.org/flutrends) has recognized outbreaks two weeks sooner than the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has.

GOOGLE MAPS It's driving directions on steroids (maps.google.com). Choose the directions you want: by car, by public transit or on foot. Drag the path line with your mouse around construction sites or down interesting streets. View current traffic conditions. Turn on Street View to see actual photographs of your destination.

Way, way better than MapQuest.

EMAIL LABS Gmail is already the world's best free Web-based e-mail service, with terrific organization tools and a superb spam blocker. But if you click Settings and then Labs, you find a huge list of on/off switches for cool enhancements.

There's Text Message in Chat (send text messages to your friends' cellphones from within Google Chat or Gmail); Offline Mail (work on Gmail when you're not online); Canned Responses (build a menu of stock answers to your mail); Multiple Inboxes (manages mail by auto-creating multiple mail folders); and the delightful Send & Archive (one click sends your reply and removes the original from the list).

Here, too, is Mail Goggles, which is intended to avert the kind of personal disaster that can result when you send mail while drunk. During periods that you specify (for example, weekend nights from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m.), this feature prevents you from sending mail until you've answered five mental math problems in 60 seconds. (But those Google geniuses can probably do it even after a few pitchers of margaritas.)



QUICK SEARCH BOX Here's a promising Google Labs project indeed (code.google.com/p/qs-b-mac): a sweet, fast little Mac program that opens when you press the Command key twice. Opens programs, searches your Mac, searches the address book, searches the Web, looks up words or weather, and more. And since it's open source, more people will add even more features.

TRANSLATOR Translate any text or Web page to or from 40 languages (translate.google.com). It's not perfect, but you'll get the gist of that spam from Russia.

800-GOOG-411 Possibly the best voice-recognition cellphone service in existence. Call the number, say what you're looking for ("comedy clubs, Chicago" or "Domino's Pizza, Cleveland"), and Google's auto-voice reads off the closest eight matches. You can speak the number of the one you want, and he'll connect your call automatically — no charge. You never know or care what the phone number was; it's like having a personal secretary.

Or you can say "text message" at any time to have the address and phone number zapped to your cellphone in one second.

GOOGLE SMS Send a message to GOOGL (46645). In the body of the message, type the sort of information you want: weather report ("weather dallas"), stock quotes ("amzn"), movie showtimes (type "slumdog millionaire 44120"), definitions ("define schadenfreude"), directions ("miami fl to 60609"), unit conversions ("liters in 5 gallons"), currency conversions ("25 usd in euros"), and so on. Five seconds later, Google texts back the details.

GOOGLE ALERTS Keep tabs on what the world is saying about you, your company or your interests. At Google.com/alerts, type the search phrase (like your name), and specify which channels you want to monitor (blogs, Web pages, discussion groups and so on). When someone mentions you online, you hear about it in an e-mail alert. It's a personal clipping service — no charge.

GOOGLE SETS At labs.google.com/sets, type in several items in a series (like "cleveland browns" and "dallas cowboys"); Google fleshes out the list with others like it (all the other football teams). Great when something's on the tip of your tongue (a kind of fruit, president, car, holiday, currency) but can remember only something like it.

SECRETS OF THE SEARCH BOX Usually, whatever you type into Google's Search box is treated as a quest for Web pages. Certain kinds of information, however, get special treatment.

For example, you can type in an equation (like "23*9/3.4+234"); press Enter to see the answer.

Think of Google, too, for conversions. For example, type "83 yards in inches," "500 euros in dollars," or "grams in 3.2 pounds"; then press Enter.

Google is also a dictionary (type "define:ersatz"), package tracker (type your FedEx or U.P.S. tracking number), global Yellow Pages ("phonebook:home depot norwalk ct"), meteorologist ("weather san diego"), flight tracker ("AA 15"), stock ticker ("AAPL" or "MSFT"), and the world's best movie-listings site (type "movies:10024," or whatever your ZIP code is).

Oh, dear, look at that — the end of the column is approaching, and we haven't even mentioned Sketchup (free 3-D software), Scholar (search all published academic papers at once), Books (search inside millions of books — see a snippet of the text), Sync (two-way wireless syncing of your Google calendar/address book with your iPhone, BlackBerry or another smartphone); GrandCentral (unify your phone numbers and voice mail systems), and all of their friends.

But that's all right. Already, that's enough good free stuff to last you a lifetime. Or at least 20 percent of one.



Fortunately, this was covered under the extended AppleCare Plan.

Apple Tells Investors That Steve Jobs Plans to Return

by Brad Stone, New York Times

CUPERTINO, Calif. — For the last nine months, Apple has refused to get into specifics about the well-being of its chief executive, Steven P. Jobs, even as he said last month that he was taking a six-month leave of absence to deal with health problems.

On Wednesday, the company's shareholders had their chance to press for more information — but they did not get far.

At its annual shareholder meeting here on Apple's corporate campus, run by the chief operating officer, Timothy D. Cook, the company responded to inquiries about Mr. Jobs by saying that he still planned to return to the company in June.

"He is deeply involved in all strategic matters and has delegated day-to-day authority to Tim Cook and his team," said Arthur D. Levinson, a co-lead director of Apple and the chief executive of Genentech. "That's where it stands."

Mr. Levinson said that Apple's board regularly discussed the matter of succession at the company and that "if there is new information we deem of import to disclose, that will happen."

Daniel Cooperman, Apple's general counsel, declined to answer a question about a reported investigation by securities regulators into how Apple has handled the disclosure of information about Mr. Jobs's condition.

At the meeting, shareholders approved the re-election of Apple's eight-member board, which includes Mr. Jobs, Al Gore and Google's chief executive, Eric E. Schmidt. All of the board members were present except for Mr. Schmidt and Mr. Jobs.

Shareholders also voted down a proposal, offered by the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees union, that would have given investors an advisory vote each year on the pay packages for top executives. Congress is considering mandating a similar measure.

Apple's response to questions about Mr. Jobs's condition did not satisfy some shareholders. Brandon Rees, a representative of the A.F.L.-C.I.O. Reserve Fund, who raised the issue during a question-and-answer session at the meeting, said afterward that the company needed to say more about an issue that could clearly affect its stock price.

"I was disappointed by the fact that the board was not more transparent about the health of Mr. Jobs in addition to a succession plan," Mr. Rees said.

But other shareholders said that Mr. Jobs was entitled to some amount of privacy, even as they lamented his absence.

"I came to see if he was here," said Steven Winegarden, a longtime shareholder. "I do believe he has made a very significant contribution over the last 12 years, and it will be very difficult for someone else to capture the attention of everybody in the same way."

At one point, Apple shareholders acknowledged Mr. Jobs's 54th birthday, which was Tuesday, by standing and singing "Happy Birthday."

The Five-Billion Dollar Steve Jobs Rumor

The Rumor:

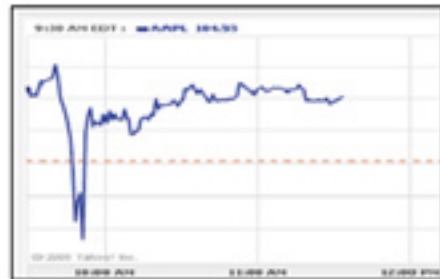
Apple CEO Steve Jobs had a heart attack!



The Damage:

As soon as word hit the internet that Jobs had been rushed to the hospital with a failing heart, this happened to Apple stock:

In the first hour of trading the stock lost 10% of its value (\$4.8



billion dollars), spurred by panicked investors who apparently believe that Apple Computer Inc. is made up entirely of Steve Jobs working alone in his garage.



Apple Ambassador

Continued from page 2.

MacHEADS Mac Soul

What MacHEADS tries to point out is that there's a social movement that goes along with Apple. There's a community, unlike others, that's focused around this brand and the type of people it attracts. I mean come on, I know I wasn't the only one who waited in line for an original iPhone. But the documentary also tries to argue that the community is dying. I don't necessarily agree with that, I just think the times, "they are a-changing."

Before the rise of the internet, there were user group meetings, and there still are. But now that we have a tool like the internet, face to face meet-ups are more a thing of the past. And it's probably a bit sad, because meeting other Mac users is great. Now that Macworld is dying, our chances to meet each other are getting few and far between. But then again, there's always iChat and Skype.



And then MacHEADS takes a turn, and points a finger at those among us who love Apple because it's fashionable. We're all very different people, though, with very

different reasons for loving Apple. Is it wrong to love Apple just because it's fashionable? I'd tend to think not, but it's not for me to decide. All I know is that Apple makes wonderful products, and I don't want to prevent anyone from using them. I want to see the community expand, even if that means we lose a bit of our uniqueness or the close knit feel that once was the Apple community.

Overall, MacHEADS is a great and fun documentary that any Apple fanboy or girl will enjoy. If you've ever watched a keynote, attended a Macworld or stood in line to buy something with an Apple logo on it then you'll have a lot of fun with this documentary.

Appletell Rating: PRODUCT Review:Buy MacHEADS

The Truth About Apple's MacBook Wheel By Colleen Starr

Did Apple introduce a new MacBook wheel? We are not worthy.

The internet is a buzz about a new Apple product just announced at the MacWorld conference. The new device is called 'MacBook Wheel' A brand new Mac laptop that has no keyboard.

But before you Mac lovers start drooling and googling, understand that this is just a spoof product featured on the Onion

News Network. The video looks so authentic, many tech lovers started to blog about the new MacBook Wheel. The video says this brand new Apple laptop is keyboardless. It appears to be a hybrid between a traditional iBook and a iPhone. The video of this new 'MacBook Wheel' shows it has intuitive typing.

This spoof claims the brand new MacBook Wheel has a base retail price of \$2,599 and to get the fully upgraded 40 GB version you will pay a hefty \$9,960. You can view the very well produced video here. One of the lucky testers in the video says, "I'll buy almost anything that is shiny and made by Apple" Another funny note: "The computer is virtually indestructible unless dropped or broken."



Many Apple fans are watching this video not realizing the MacBook Wheel is not real. Emails are being sent about this hot new laptop. People can't wait to get their hands on this new laptop.

The video will temporary get most Mac fans until they show Steve Jobs debuting it at the MacWorld conference. We all know Steve Jobs did not give the keynote speech at the Mac conference this year. Steve released a letter on the Apple website explaining his recent health problems. The rumors on the health of Steve Jobs were made much worse when Bloomberg news accidentally released his obituary prematurely. You can read more on Bloomberg's huge mistake here.

Phil Schiller has stepped in for Steve Jobs this year at the Macworld conference.

Apple just announced a price change for iTunes. Currently all songs cost .99 cents to download. The new iTunes prices will be .69 cents, 99 cents and \$1.29. The newest releases will cost \$1.29 while older and less popular songs will drop to .69 cents. Apple also announced that in the next few months all 10 million songs purchased from iTunes will be DRM free. Starting January 6th Apple has made 8 million of the songs DRM free. DRM is Digital Rights Management. iTunes going DRM free will allow users more liberty with their song purchases.



Apple 3G iPhone users can download iTunes purchases without WIFI. If you have an original non 3G iPhone you are out of luck for now.

One thing that is for sure Apple could make anything and millions of people would wait in line for hours just to buy it. Apple you make it and they will come.



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