The *GAB'er*

The Newsletter of the Greater Albany Apple Byters

Steve Jobs Takes Fortune CEO of the Decade Title

Apple head Steve Jobs has been chosen as Fortune's CEO of the Decade. The magazine claims that "the past decade in business belongs to Jobs," not only because of his personal and corporate wealth, but the way he has "radically and lucratively reordered three markets," specifically movies, music and cellphones. His impact is also said to extend to computers, though it is less pronounced.

Jobs is described as one of the few genuine celebrities amongst CEOs, with natural salesmanship, an "anticorporate" dress style and friends like U2's Bono. In reality however he is believed to be a micromanager and perfectionist, obsessed with Apple's operational and market metrics, not so much out of a desire for profit but because he wants to dictate cool, and exert general influence on the world. Publicity efforts are said to be strictly controlled by Jobs, to the extent that only a handful of fellow executives are allow to speak on particular topics.

The executive is however criticized for at times having an unlikable personality, and being involved in several scandals, such as stock backdating and the questionable secrecy surrounding his own health. Despite reviving Apple as a whole, he is moreover said to be responsible for some failures, such as the G4 Cube and the Apple TV. Jobs is thought to disregard customer research in favor of his own views on what the public wants.

Coordinator's Corner
by John Buckley

The October meeting never got to the demo because we spent a lot of time answering questions and viewing videos on how to do things such as replacing a hard drive in a laptop. This made for a very good meeting even though we never had the demo.

Our website has been redone with some great new additions. You will find a map and aerial photograph showing how to get to the new location as well as much current information from Apple and other resources.

Again, we will try to do the meeting over a videoconference connection for those members who are not able to make the meeting. I will be sending out an e-mail about this as we get closer to the meeting.

At the November meeting we will set the schedule for the remaining demonstrations. So far we have had requests for the following:

Photo Shop Elements 8-December
Working with pdf's-January
Google Apps-February

Next GAAB Meeting
November 11, 2009

Concrete5 (take 2)
7:00 p.m.

St. Mary's Hospital, Troy
Leonard Board Room

Featured in this Issue

Serving the Apple Computer User Community Since May 1984

Officers & Special Interest Group Leaders

Program Coordinator
John Buckley
272-7128

Membership Director
Cecilia MacDonald
872-0823

Treasurer
Cecilia MacDonald
872-0823

Public Domain Librarian
Bill Shuff
393-9753

Newsletter Editor
Roger Mazula
466-7492

Education SIG
John Buckley
272-7128

Internet SIG
Lou Wozniak
465-2873

Apple Ambassador

by John Buckley

We will be discussing the new products from Apple at our meeting. However, we who do not have a new Mac or those getting a new Mac and have no money left for software, here are some free programs you may be interested in downloading.

Free Is Good!

The best free open-source software for Mac OS X
If you live and work on a Mac, you'll want to try these 10 killer open-source apps
### by Peter Wayner

October 14, 2009 (InfoWorld) Most Mac lovers love the Mac for the carefully wrought user interfaces and the crisp design, and never pay attention to the open source at the heart of the operating system. But underneath this beautiful facade is a heart built upon the rich -- if often chaotic -- world of open-source software.

If you want to go through the pain and joy of building the OS yourself from scratch, you can even download the open-source core of Mac OS X known as Darwin. That's just the foundation. There are thousands of open-source tools available for the Mac, some built for the Mac alone and others that are translations of software created for other operating systems. Some are aimed at a niche of programmers or scientists, but a good number are supremely useful tools for everyone.

This list includes just some of the most essential open-source applications for a Mac, all precompiled, polished, and ready to run. Downloading the software is just the beginning because many of them have yet another layer of openness hidden inside. Several of the applications have their own built-in environment for extending the software. Some accept plug-ins, some have pop-up windows for writing short extensions, and some have both -- so you have even more options for customization. In many cases, you're not just getting an open-source tool; you're getting a range of options to add to that tool.

Internet SIG

Publish Your Own Book for Fun and Profit
by Kim Komando
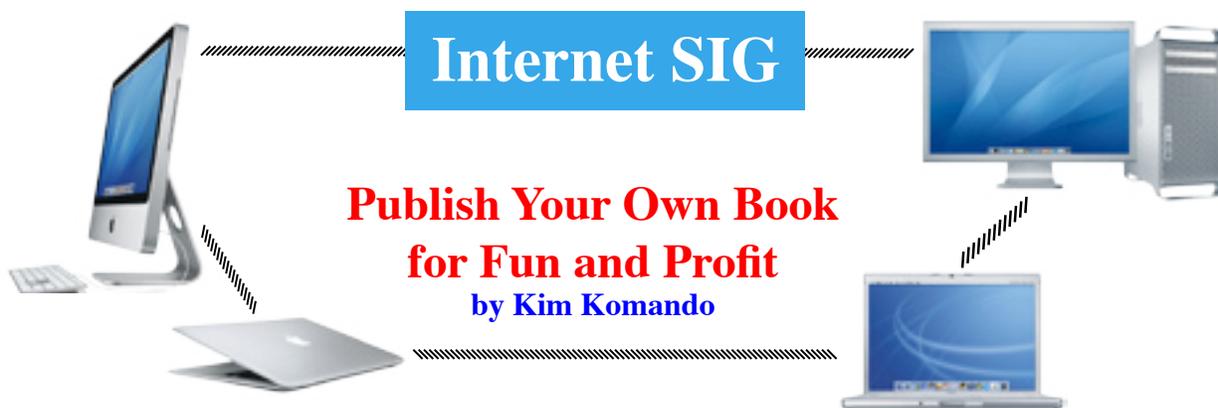
Everybody has a story to tell. And November is National Novel Writing month. So, you may be working hard to pen your novel. Next up: landing a publisher.

Interesting a traditional publisher is no small feat. In the bad old days, years of work often resulted in nothing. Not any longer.

More and more writers are choosing to self-publish. Using online services, books can be published inexpensively and easily. And you can make money along the way too!

Here are some options available.

Amazon.com

Amazon's CreateSpace prints books as they're ordered. Authors upload books for free. ISBNs (International Standard Book Numbers) also are free.

You should order a proof copy of your book. Check for errors and see how your book will look. Proof copies start around $4.

You set your book's price. But you need to figure in CreateSpace's charges. You'll pay for the printing; this starts around $4. Amazon also takes a percentage of the list price.

For books listed on CreateSpace, the commission is 20 percent. For books on Amazon, commission is 40 percent.

CreateSpace also offers a Pro Plan for $40. It costs $5 each subsequent year. You'll pay slightly less to have your books printed. Amazon offers paid editing and layout services.

Lulu.com

Lulu offers a variety of sizes and bindings for your book. You pay for the binding and then a per-page fee. Bindings start at $2.50; per-page fees start at less than two cents.

Your book will be listed in the Lulu Marketplace. Or, you can manufacture books to distribute yourself. Prices for these books are different. Bindings start at $1.50, and per-page fees start at two cents.

An ISBN is available for $100. Lulu also offers a variety of paid services for editing and layout.

Electronic distribution

You should also make your book available digitally. E-book readers are gaining rapidly in popularity. You'll want people to be able to read it on computers, the Kindle and other e-book readers, and the iPhone.

Amazon's Digital Text Platform helps you publish your book for the Kindle. It is free to upload your book. It will appear in the Kindle store.

You set the list price for the book. You'll get 35 percent of list price. Amazon may discount your book; this won't affect your earnings.

The Kindle uses a proprietary format. You should make your book available in other digital formats also. This means you'll need to visit other sites.

Scribd.com is one of the most popular destinations for document sharing. It has become popular for sharing and selling book-length works.

Education SIG

San Diego's Vision Aligns with Obama's Plans for School Transformation

An article about reinventing education in San Diego in the latest eSchoolNews describes a total rejuvenation of the education process highly centered on the use of technology.

San Diego's plan to reinvent teaching and learning mirrors many of the key focal points of the Obama administration's plan for advancing school reform across the country. These include the adoption of common, rigorous standards that prepare students for college and the workforce; recruiting and retaining outstanding teachers; turning around low-performing schools; building statewide data systems to track students from kindergarten through the workforce; and promoting excellence and innovation in U.S. schools.

Statewide data systems

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act directs $250 million to the creation of statewide data systems, and the proposed FY2010 federal budget includes a request for nearly $690 for the Institute of Education Sciences, the research division of the U.S. Department of Education (ED), to fund a longitudinal study of teachers and an international assessment of adult competencies. ED also will launch a national survey to examine preschool students' participation in learning, as well as parental and family involvement in education.

Teachers need to know how well students are performing, and data can help reveal exactly what teachers need to focus on in the classroom, as well as how to teach those subject areas, Education Secretary Arne Duncan said. ED will examine whether data on student achievement can be linked to teacher effectiveness.

"Obviously, technology is the basis of all—the back-bone of everything we're talking about, so it's extremely important, both in creating strong data systems and giving children the chance to learn about technology from the earliest of ages," Duncan said of creating data systems and using that data in the most effective manner possible.

Duncan says data systems should inform education policies that will improve teaching practices.

Teacher quality

Recruiting and retaining effective teachers, especially math and science teachers and teachers in low- income classrooms, is another focus of Obama's education reforms.

In a July speech at the National Education Association's annual convention, Duncan said teacher unions should relax contract rules in order to recruit, reward, and retain highly effective educators, especially in low-performing schools that are in need of improvements.

"If we agree that the adults in these schools are failing these children, then we have to find the right people—and we can't let our rules and regulations get in the way," Duncan said.

"Children have only one chance to get an education."

He also encouraged the NEA to consider allowing student achievement data to factor into the process of evaluating teachers and deciding their compensation.

"Test scores alone should never drive evaluation, com-pensation, or tenure decisions," Duncan said. "That would never make sense. But to remove student achievement entirely from evaluation is illogical and indefensible."

Rigorous academic standards

Duncan's proposal to have rigorous, common academic standards has attracted much attention from education groups.

At the 2009 Governors Education Symposium in June, Duncan told governors that education reform starts locally, and ED's job is to support the need for common standards.

Duncan said his background as a local educator makes him sensitive to the concern that common standards for each state would amount to federal overreaching.

"Education is a state and local issue. You pay 90 percent of the tab—and our job is to support leaders like you," he told the governors.

And while federal law does not mandate national standards, Duncan said, it does empower states to decide what students need to learn, and how to measure that knowledge.

"But common sense also tells you that kids in big cities like Newark and San Francisco—or small towns like Tarboro, North Carolina—are no different from each other. Standards shouldn't change once you cross the Mississippi River or the Rocky Mountains. Kids competing for the same jobs should meet the same standards," he said.

Turning around underperforming schools

Both Duncan and Obama have been vocal about turning around underperforming schools, and Duncan has cited data showing that roughly 5,000 schools nation- wide are characterized as underperforming. About half are in large cities, one-third are rural, and the rest are in suburbs and medium-sized towns.

"At a minimum, for a turnaround to succeed you have to change the school culture. In most cases, simply replacing the principal is not enough," he said. "We want transformation—not tinkering."

Duncan said the administration has four school-reform models in mind; some will work better in large cities, and others are more suited for smaller communities.

The first option, which Duncan did when he was superintendent of the Chicago Public Schools, is to award planning grants to schools in the fall, so that principals and teachers can develop and adapt curricula to serve students better. The children stay, but staff leave; teachers can reapply for their positions and some will be rehired, but most go elsewhere.

"In our view, at least half of the staff and the leadership should be completely new if you really want a culture change—and that may very well be a requirement of the [planning] grants," Duncan said.

The second option involves replacing school staff and leadership and turning the school over to a charter or for-profit management organization.

A third reform model keeps existing school staff, but establishes a rigorous evaluation and training system, changes and strengthens curriculum and instructional programming, increases learning opportunities for children during afternoons, weekends, and in the summer, and gives principals and leadership teams more flexibility with budgeting, staffing, and school calendars.

The final option for reform would close underperforming schools and enroll students in better schools.

"This may seem like surrender—but in some cases it's the only responsible thing to do. It instantly improves the learning conditions for those kids and brings a failing school to a swift and thorough conclusion," Duncan said.

Encouraging innovation

U.S. schools will have a chance this fall to compete for part of $650 million in new "innovation" funds that are intended to reward districts that have designed and tested effective, scalable systems for boosting student achievement, improving failing schools, and increasing graduation rates.

The Investing in Innovation Fund (i3) is intended to expand programs that work in advancing the administration's goals, while at the same time investing in programs that show promise.
ED's programs to promote innovation have been "modest at best," said Duncan. He noted that President Obama has called for the United States to have the highest proportion of college graduates in the world—an ambitious but attainable goal, he said.

"To reach that finish line, we need transformational change—the islands of excellence that exist in school districts have to be come the norm,"Duncan said.—LD

San Diego explores effective ed-tech integration through TPACK
New professional development model focuses on the intersection of technology, pedagogy, and content knowledge

The San Diego Unified School District (SDUSD) has embraced a concept called Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) in its professional development model, to ensure that the smart use of technology drives every aspect of classroom teaching and learning.

TPACK is based on the work of Punya Mishra and Matthew Koehler, both associate professors of educational technology in the College of Education at Michigan State University.

At the center of the concept is how those three knowledge areas—technological knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and content knowledge—interact with one another. Mishra and Koehler believe that true technology integration occurs when educators can understand and use these relationships fully.

The concept is built on Lee Shulman's idea of Pedagogical Content Knowledge, which examines the relationship between what an educator knows, and how he or she then transfers that knowledge to students in ways they will understand, even if the subject matter is quite complicated.

Instead of emphasizing either teacher subject knowledge or pedagogy in isolation, Pedagogical Content Knowledge recognizes that the intersection between the two is important. When examined, that relationship can reveal which teaching methods are most appropriate for the content—and how the content can be re- structured for better transfer of information.

TPACK takes this concept of Pedagogical Content Knowledge one step further, adding technological knowledge into the mix.

During a November 2008 webinar with the International Society for Technology in Education's Special Interest Group for Teacher Educators, Mishra and Koehler described the potential for technology's impact in the classroom.

Simply including technology in a classroom doesn't mean student learning will improve, Mishra said. That depends largely on the teaching approaches used. The technology and the way it's used to teach must be linked. "[Technologies] don't become educational technology just by virtue of being there," Mishra said. "Giving a student an iPod Touch or a laptop doesn't mean it becomes educational technology, it means that we have to repurpose the technology for education, [such as using] a GPS and Google Earth to teach aspects of math.

"TPACK is a conceptual framework that helps teacher-college faculty members understand technology integration. The framework can be used to plan professional development that helps educators learn to integrate technologies into their teaching," said Judi Harris and Mark Hofer, who work extensively with TPACK as professors in the College of William and Mary's School of Education.

But it's not something that, for instance, a teacher educator would ask a classroom teacher to read about and apply in their instruction.

"TPACK describes a form of knowledge; it's not an approach in and of itself, but it describes knowledge that teachers need to have to connect technology with their curriculum," Hofer said.

Harris added: "You can't 'do' TPACK or teach TPACK." Instead, she said, teachers can learn to integrate technologies into the curriculum so they enhance teaching and learning, and in such a way that it becomes almost second nature to do so. The focus should be on students' learning, and not on the technology itself.

For instance, Harris and Hofer use taxonomies of curriculum-based learning activity types to help teachers integrate technologies into their instructional planning. Their approach helps teachers first choose among particular types of instructional activities based on students' learning needs in a given content area, such as group discussion or class presentations in social studies, then choose among subsets of technologies that are recommended to support each type of learning activity selected.

While districts have spent considerable time and money installing technology into classrooms, many have not seen corresponding improvements in student learning outcomes. Although the technology is present, many teachers don't know how to integrate it in ways that emphasize student learning, Harris said.

Added pressure from the federal No Child Left Behind Act for students' content-based learning to be measurably demonstrated has reduced the leeway that technology instructors and teachers once had to experiment with new techniques, tools, and resources.

"It's the right time for people to start thinking in terms of curriculum-based learning activities that are assisted by technologies, rather than ways to use technologies in different curricula," Harris said.

"In retrospect, it's almost a no-brainer: For most teachers, their content and their pedagogy are their comfort zones and where they have the most passion, so we start with that and then show them some potential technologies that might help," Hofer said.

Hofer and Harris said they believe many teachers' hesitation about incorporating more technology in the classroom comes from the tool-focused ways it is introduced.

When teachers start with students' learning needs in mind, and then add technologies according to which tools they can use to enhance the curriculum-based activities they have designed, much of that hesitation will diminish.

And when teachers focus on why they are using technology, as opposed to how, student learning reaps the benefits.

Apple Ambassador
Continued from page 2.

Fix your Mac with AppleJack

Why is one of the simplest ways to mend a sluggish Mac is to "fix the permissions"? Who changes the permissions on my files? Shouldn't I know? Shouldn't I -- what is that word? -- give permission for the change? What good are permissions if some gremlin can just come in and change them without asking me?

One way to fix the permissions and perform a host of housekeeping chores is to run AppleJack, an open-source tool that triggers many of the standard housekeeping scripts like disk repair and cache cleanup. The only limitation is that you need to run it in Single User mode (hit Command-S at startup).

AppleJack can resurrect a dead Mac by cleaning up the detritus left by system crashes.

AppleJack won't ask you how you want to set the permissions because, well, that would shatter the myth by letting you, the system owner, know what's going on. So don't worry your pretty little head. The permissions will all be fixed and your Mac will run faster and smoother. If you ask too many questions, you'll end up burning the time you've saved by making your Mac more efficient -- so don't.

Learn the power of plug-ins with Firefox

Firefox is an essential browser for Mac users because it's a simple way to get some PC compatibility without running Windows in a separate virtual machine. Many Web sites are tested first on Internet Explorer, then on Firefox, and finally on Safari if the developer has time. Using Firefox on the Mac is almost the same as using Firefox on the PC.

There are deeper advantages. Firefox is often the first place that Web developers see their creations because there are so many useful additions that help programmers. For instance, Firebug and Web Developer turn any version of Firefox into an amazing tool for diving into the behavior of a Web page.

Add-ons like these are some of the 5,000-plus reasons why the Firefox browser isn't just an open-source tool, but an open-source ecosystem. The browser's source code is open, downloadable, and forkable, but the real openness lies with the plug-ins and extensions. The developers added a simple API that lets anyone write a small block of code to reconfigure practically any part of the user's experience.

Add-ons like FastestFox speed up the browser by increasing the number of download streams, while Personas contribute new skins. And then there's Greasemonkey, which accepts simpler JavaScript plug-ins in case the main Firefox API is just too difficult. You can write JavaScript that acts upon the DOM as the page comes in, effectively giving you more control over the behavior of a Web page.

There are deeper forks too. A number of other browsers like Flock and XeroBank marry Firefox's core rendering engine with other features. Flock combines a social network layer to the browsing so that you can share your click stream more easily with your friends. Xerobank incorporates Tor, a proxy tool that blocks your location from the Web sites.

Escape from Photoshop with GIMP or Seashore

There is only one problem with Adobe Photoshop: the price, close to $1,000 for the extended version and more than $2,000 for a big bundle with other tools. But there's GIMP, the GNU Image Manipulation Program, which costs nothing. It's built mainly for the GNU/Linux world, so you can't use it without installing X11, a task that's not too hard if your original Mac OS X installer disks are handy. But it does almost everything that Photoshop can, and there's even a skinning function that makes it look like Photoshop.

Like Firefox, much of GIMP's value comes from the wide variety of plug-ins built by programmers and artists. Some tagged "script fu" are amalgamations of GIMP operations linked together by the built-in scheme programming language.

Stick it to Microsoft with OpenOffice.org

Long ago, everyone had to buy Microsoft Office because everyone else already used it and you couldn't work with them on documents without it. If someone sent you a file, you would need Microsoft Office to read it. That time is long past, thanks to OpenOffice.org, an open-source project nurtured by Sun. The software reads all of the major document types, including text, spreadsheet, presentation, and drawing. There's also a database like Microsoft's Access.

Is the compatibility perfect? No, it's not. Text may move, tables may lose their formatting, and charts and drawings may end up in entirely different places, but the documents are often quite close to the original. That's good enough for most relationships, although it might be tough for tight collaboration with strong aesthetic requirements.

You can edit most Microsoft Office documents with OpenOffice.org, although the results are occasionally a bit askew.

Set your e-mail free with Thunderbird

The Mozilla foundation spends the ad revenue checks it receives from Google on more than Firefox. Thunderbird is a mail reader that is open source in two ways, just like its browser cousin. First, the code itself is available under the Mozilla license. Second, the developers have built the same sort of add-on mechanism for Thunderbird as they created for Firefox.

There's a wide range of plug-in applications available for Thunderbird. Leet Key will translate your e-mail into either L337 speak, ROT13, or several other useful formats. Russ Key takes Russian words typed phonetically with a roman alphabet keyboard and translates them into proper Cyrillic. Enigmail handles all of the OpenPGP encryption so that you can scramble your communications.

Play any video with VLC

Sure, QuickTime is a great system, but it's a bit limited. It doesn't come with every codec, and you have to purchase QuickTime Pro to get the features you really need to work with video. This isn't a big limitation, but it can be a pain if all you want is to play some files.

A friend of mine in the video codec business set me straight. The best all-purpose video playback tool that he could find came from a group of open-source programmers in Europe, not from the professional developers working for the codec creators. He was so baffled when he saw how well VLC could handle everything he threw its way that he started calling it the Swiss Army Knife for video. VLC displays almost every video format known on all of the major operating systems and even some long-forgotten favorites like BeOS. I often reach for it instinctively because it knows how to deal with some of the Ogg Vorbis files I have laying around.

My friend went on to offer a theory about VLC that seems entirely plausible to me, although I often wonder whether it could really be true. VLC, he said, was written by people who never went to the industry conferences and meetings. They never made friends with the big players, and they never had tight relationships. The only information they had were the public specs for the standard, so they followed them scrupulously. The arm's-length relationships kept their code free of the kind of assumptions that come when a programmer hears another programmer say, "Ah, we're only using integers. I don't know why floating-

point is in the spec." So when the next revision comes along with floating-point numbers, VLC is ready while the codecs from the insiders never bothered to anticipate that possibility.

Maybe he's right. VLC has never given me a reason to doubt him. You'll have a hard time finding a video format that VLC can't handle.

Money for nothing

In the great tradition of open source, there's no charge for using any of these packages. Just download and go. But that doesn't mean you shouldn't be sensitive to economic realities. The best open source has a sponsor, and sometimes that sponsor should be you. Some packages like Firefox make their money selling advertising through Google. Others don't have that option -- so give when you can. Most of the packages have donation buttons, and some even make it possible to give to the developer of a plug-in (for instance, ScrapBook for Firefox). That's innovation.

This story, "The best free open-source software for Mac OS X," was originally published at InfoWorld.com. Follow the latest developments in open source, the Mac, and Mac OS X at InfoWorld.com.

Internet SIG
Continued from page 3.

There's no charge to get up and going on Scribd. You can upload your book in a variety of formats. The ePub format works with many e-book readers and iPhone book apps. Unfortunately, Scribd has temporarily suspended the ePub format due to formatting issues.

Another option is the PDF format. Many e-readers accept PDF files. PDFs can also be read on the iPhone. However, this isn't ideal.

You set the book's price. Scribd keeps 20 percent.

Lulu also distributes e-books in its Marketplace. You set your price. Lulu adds a commission of 25 percent or 19 cents, whichever is greater.

Finally, most self-published books are sold to the writer's friends and family. Don't expect your book to become a best seller. Nor should you expect to see it in bookstores. Most won't carry self-published books.

Apple Magic Mouse Hands On

The Apple's Magic Mouse doesn't have anything on its surface. It's an aluminum base topped off with a smooth multitouch panel. It felt weird to use, but leagues ahead of the Mighty Mouse. I may go back to mice.

The strange thing about the Magic Mouse is not how it works. It is that you have different gestures than on a standard Macbook Pro trackpad.

One obvious example: Since you move the cursor by moving the whole mouse with your hand, there's no point in also using one finger to move the cursor, like on the trackpad. Moving your finger on the surface of the Magic Mouse allows you to scroll in all directions, 360 degrees around.

You can also scroll with two or three fingers, if you move them up and down. But if you swipe them from side to side while using a web browser, your browsing history moves forward or back.

Physically, the mouse is beautiful, and feels nice. The top is made of white polycarbonate that matches the keys on Apple's keyboards. It is one seamless touch surface, and, logically, there is no Mighty Mouse scroll nipple.

The surface can also simulate the left and right buttons. Unlike in previous Apple's mice, the two buttons work perfectly. This time they also added physical feedback, so when you click the buttons, you actually get the entire surface to click—like the original clear Apple mouse.

The mouse runs on AA batteries, and Apple claims 4 months of use per set. You can get it with the new iMac or pay $69 separately.

There was a small thing I noticed, though: the mouse would sometimes move when I tried to scroll — I can maybe get used to this, but it was a thing that happened to me and my presenter who definitely had more time with the mouse. The other reason why Apple went with fewer fingers for swipe and scroll gestures, besides the issue of pointing already being taken care of by the mouse's table action, was because you need your ring finger to hold the mouse properly or the thing slides on your desk.

Also, the mouse will be software configurable for lefties.

Program Coordinator
Continued from page 1.

This month I will take a look at how to set up the Mac Mail Program and then look at Concrete5 the Content Management System we are using for our new website.

To find out what's happening, GAAB is the place to be. So be sure to be at our September meeting and every meeting to find out the best information about the Mac.

The November meeting will be held at St. Mary's Hospital in the Leonard Board Room on Wednesday, November 11, 2009. The meeting will begin at 7 p.m. St. Mary's Hospital is located at 1300 Massachusetts Avenue in Troy NY.

However, the best route to take from the Northway is the following:
1. Merge onto NY-7 East from the Northway.
2. Follow Route 7 to Troy where it becomes Hoosick Street.
3. Turn left on Oakwood Avenue (10 Street/NY-40) which is the first light after the bridge and bare right.
4. Turn right on Sausse Avenue. Turn left onto Lindenwood Court. When you come to the first entrance to the hospital parking lot, turn left and park.

Apple to Launch Verizon iPhone in Q3 2010
by Prince McLean, AppleInsider

A new report citing sources in the Taiwan handset supply chain says Apple has contracted to produce a UMTS/CDMA hybrid iPhone due in the third quarter of next year that will enable the company to sell a single global handset to all carriers, and specifically to Verizon Wireless in the US.

The report by OTR Global, provided to AppleInsider by an industry analyst, says the new "worldmode" iPhone will gain compatibility with CDMA2000 networks (including Verizon's US network, which is currently incompatible with existing iPhone models) while retaining compatibility with UMTS 3G networks globally using a new hybrid chip produced by Qualcomm.

According to OTR's sources, Asustek subsidiary Pegatron will build the new hybrid phone devices for Apple rather than Hon Hai, the iPhone's current manufacturer. This decision was reportedly made to prevent the company from being "constrained by a single-source assembler."

A smaller body

The research note also identified the new phone as having a 2.8" screen, which is significantly smaller than the current iPhone's 3.5" display.

Last summer, component pictures indicating the development of a smaller 2.8" iPhone model appeared on the web next to the standard 3.5" parts currently in production, and a Chinese-language newspaper reported that an upcoming model of the iPhone would be smaller and lighter.

Without any mention of both larger and smaller versions in OTR's report, it appears but has not yet been confirmed that next year's iPhone will scale down in size while also gaining compatibility with all major mobile networks.

CDMA vs. WCDMA

The American technological rift between CDMA providers (including Sprint and Verizon) and GSM/UMTS providers (T-Moblie and AT&T) was widely expected to remain in place until Verizon moved to LTE, the next generation of UMTS service.

In other countries, CDMA providers have either shut down their networks and moved entirely to UMTS service (as Telstra did in Australia) or added a UMTS overlay to their existing CDMA service (as Bell and Telus just recently did in Canada). In the US, Verizon decided to do neither, and instead will only be investing in a new next generation LTE network that won't be completed for years.

This appeared to leave little opportunity for a Verizon iPhone before 2011, but Qualcomm's "worldmode" hybrid component enables Apple to continue offering a single iPhone version that can be sold by both AT&T and Verizon in the US, and on virtually every carrier outside the US.

UMTS is the 3G service associated with GSM providers, but it uses radio carrier technology (Wideband Code Division Multiple Access) similar to but incompatible with Qualcomm's CDMA2000/EVDO used by Verizon. Despite the technical similarities, CDMA2000 and UMTS/WCDMA are competing, non-interoperable 3G technologies. With nearly all mobile carriers having announced plans to shift to UMTS or LTE in the future, CDMA2000 represents a dead end.

It still remains widely deployed in various markets however, including the US, where Verizon's CDMA2000 3G network is widely regarded as having wider reach and providing better data service than AT&T's newer UMTS 3G network. AT&T's 3G service is rated particularly poorly in San Francisco and New York City, where coverage holes have been exacerbated by a huge influx of data-hungry iPhone users. AT&T has yet to introduce its 3G MicroCell to enable users to solve their own dead zones at home or work.

Qualcomm's new hybrid CDMA/WCDMA chip offers the potential for a single, global iPhone that users can take to any major carrier, solving the network fractionalization problem. It also solves other issues that had served as roadblocks, including the issue of user confusion that

would result from Apple selling separate CDMA and GSM/UMTS versions of the iPhone.

With one phone that works on both types of networks, any differences between the two (such as in features like conference calling and simultaneous voice and data, unique to UMTS) will be more apparently tied to the provider's network rather than to an iPhone model itself.

Verizon's DROID, cancelation fee launch

Verizon's merciless attacks on AT&T's 3G network coverage in ads spoofing the iPhone's "there's an app for that" slogan were another factor which left some observers to think that Verizon could not possibly be in talks with Apple to sell the iPhone anytime soon, but the OTR report indicates that Verizon and Apple have already hammered out an agreement to sell the new iPhone model within the year.

Verizon recently launched two smartphones aimed squarely at the iPhone: the BlackBerry Storm 2 and Motorola Droid. At the same time, the provider also announced a new cancelation policy that charges users a hefty $350 when they attempt to back out of contracts involving "advanced devices."

Last year, the company found little lasting enthusiasm from users who assumed that the original Storm would be closer to the iPhone in terms of features; whether the new fee is an attempt to penalize unsatisfied users or to profit from switchers next year, it may result in users rethinking their purchases right now.

With reports breaking the news that Verizon will be selling the iPhone within the year, sales of the Storm 2, Droid, and next year's Palm Pre may end up repressed if customers decide they'd rather wait for the iPhone to arrive instead of facing the prospect of a major cancelation penalty and the loss of their subsidy credit by buying an alternative device now.

Droid reviews have largely described it as a second place alternative for users who want to stick with Verizon. That being the case, the prospect of a Verizon iPhone appears poised to deflate Droid sales this holiday season.

End of AT&T exclusivity

The news might not be good for AT&T either, considering that many users have switched to AT&T solely because they wanted to get the iPhone. The availability of a Verizon iPhone may cause AT&T buyers to hold off on new purchases until they see what kinds of competitive deals AT&T and Verizon will offer once the iPhone's exclusivity with AT&T ends next summer and the new "worldmode" iPhone appears.

It does however give AT&T a year to improve its 3G network and roll out the 3G MicroCell before being hit with mass defections from iPhone users irate over service issues. AT&T can still advertise that its 3G network is faster than Verizon's CDMA2000 coverage, and that it offers some features that CDMA2000 does not, including simultaneous voice and data and easy to use, multiple party conference calling.

AT&T has struggled to keep up with the pace of iPhone development, failing to immediately implement iPhone 3.0's MMS and tethering features, and remaining unable to take advantage of the faster 7.2 Mbps HSPA data potential of the iPhone 3GS. The threat posed by a "worldmode" iPhone should push AT&T to deliver a year of high priority network upgrades, and potentially result in more competitive service plans.

Mac Tips

The Immaculate Desktop

Are you the sort of neat-freak who abhors Desktop clutter? Who keeps all apps and docs in carefully organized folders? Consider diving deeper into onscreen clean by making your mounted drives and discs disappear from the Desktop and accessing them instead via Finder windows.

Here's how to try it: From the Finder, pull down the Finder menu and select Preferences — or just press Command-comma from within the Finder. Click the General tab and uncheck Hard disks; CDs, DVDs, and iPods; and Connected servers.

Next, click the Sidebar tab and check the boxes next to all the items you unchecked under the General tab.

When you want to access a drive, disk, or server, just open a Finder window by pressing Command-n from within the Finder. And when you close the Finder windows, your desktop will be spotless. (Remember, Command-w [w] closes a Finder window, and Command-Option-w closes all Finder windows at once.

Using Mac OS X Zoom for Demos

If you're a trainer or you need to demo a technique in front of a group of people, there is nothing worse than losing your audience because they can't see your cursor or the detail you're pointing at. Fortunately, Mac OS X has a built-in solution for this problem: screen zoom.

To enable screen zooming, open System Preferences, click on Universal Access, and click On in the Zoom area. You are immediately ready to zoom: Press Command-Option-= to zoom in and Command-Option-hyphen to zoom out. If you click the Options button in Universal Access, you can fine-tune how Mac OS X displays the zooming effect – for example, you can set how far the screen should zoom in.

Zooming in and out is a great way to draw your audience's attention to just what you want them to see.

While Zoom was originally designed for visually impaired users, it is also very useful for people who need to demonstrate Mac OS X applications.

Super-Clean Screenshots

In Mac OS X Leopard, you can capture an image of your entire screen by typing Command-Shift-3. Typing Command-Shift-4 lets you choose a specific part of your screen to save as a screenshot: Click and hold to place the small cross-hair cursor at one edge of the area you want to capture, then drag horizontally and/or vertically to select. When you release the cursor, the screenshot is saved to your desktop.

But creating screenshots this way often means you need to crop or clean up the edges of the image later. That's especially true if you're planning to use it as a graphic element in a document or presentation. Fortunately, Mac OS X Leopard offers a way to save clean screenshots of individual elements on your desktop — such as Finder windows, menus, icons, or the visible portion of an open document — without capturing anything else in the background.

Hold down the Command, Shift, and 4 keys, then press the Spacebar. Instead of a cross-hair cursor, a small camera icon appears. When you move this camera icon over the element you'd like to capture, that element is highlighted. Click your mouse or trackpad, and you've captured a screenshot of just that element — no further cleanup required.

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