Flip Video

Pure Digital Technologies' Flip Video™ is a new line of digital camcorders designed to revolutionize how everyday consumers shoot and share video. These remarkably simple and affordable devices feature a major advance in video sharing technology combined with an ultra-portable design and easy video capture and editing. Developed with Internet video sharing software integrated into the device, Flip Video (www.theflip.com) is the first camcorder to seamlessly upload directly to YouTube and other online video sharing sites. Available today at major retailers nationwide — in time for giving gifts to moms, dads and grads — Flip Video camcorders capture life's spontaneous moments, no matter where or when they occur. The camcorder retails at $119.99 for the 30-minute model and $149.99 for the 60-minute model.

"With Flip Video, Pure Digital has created a brand new category of camcorder that puts the power to instantly capture, edit, and share video in the pocket of everyday consumers," said Jonathan Kaplan, Chairperson and CEO of Pure Digital Technologies. "Flip Video has the potential to forever change the way people use this increasingly popular medium."

Flip Video's built-in software allows people to share videos as easily as they would digital photos. In addition to instant emailing, the program allows videos to be uploaded directly to popular Internet video sharing sites, including YouTube. Creative users can also edit their clips, make custom movie mixes, add their own music, capture still photos from video, and even design video greeting cards.

Coordinator's Corner
by John Buckley

Last month we were going to look at Flip Video and it snowed. So we will combine a quick look at Flip Video as well as the new version of iPhoto '08, which will be presented by Linda Rackliffe. This will be the last meeting for Linda because she will be moving away. As with all meetings, we will have a good Open Question period during the first hour. In addition, Macworld San Francisco is over and we can look what rumors came true and which ones did not.

This meeting is for all those new Mac owners out there who are not exactly sure how things are supposed to work. Those of us who have had a Mac for a while will also most likely learn something new. Also be aware that our website is available at http://www.applebyters.com .

The March 2008 meeting will be held at Troy High School in room 212 on Wednesday, March 12, 2008. The meeting will begin at 7 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 on your right. 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.

Next GAAB Meeting
March 12, 2008

Flip Video/iPhoto '08
7:00 p.m.

Troy High School
1950 Burdett Avenue, Troy

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

Apple Store Mac Genius ignores woman customer; talks to husband instead
Monday, March 03, 2008 - 04:49 PM EST

We try to present both good and bad in this column. While some of you may have seen the letter cited in the article below, you may want to check out the MacDailyNews article below.

Apple Online Store

Consumerist reader Anjela wonders if "a certain employee of the Apple store has a rare disorder that makes women invisible to him. That might explain why the employee spent the entire AirBook shopping excursion talking to her husband instead of Anjela—the actual customer," The Consumerist reports.

Dear Apple:

Today (2/28/2008, at approximately 4:00pm) I walked into the Bellevue Square Apple Store (in Bellevue, WA) intent on buying a MacBook Air. I am delighted by the MacBook Air. I am the geek for whom the MacBook Air was invented. I am a lifelong PC user, and until now the leap to a new, unfamiliar operating system was a roadblock, but for a machine with a full-size keyboard and monitor that comes in at three pounds, I was not just willing to make the switch, I was genuinely excited. (The fact that I don't want my next laptop to run Vista doesn't hurt, either.) I've been waiting to get one since the day they were announced.

I had a horrific customer service experience in your Bellevue Square store that has me rethinking this idea. I will certainly never set foot in that store again, and I hope I never have to deal with any of your Apple Store employees in person, if this is how they're trained to treat customers.

Internet SIG

Find Bargain Real Estate Online

by Kim Komando
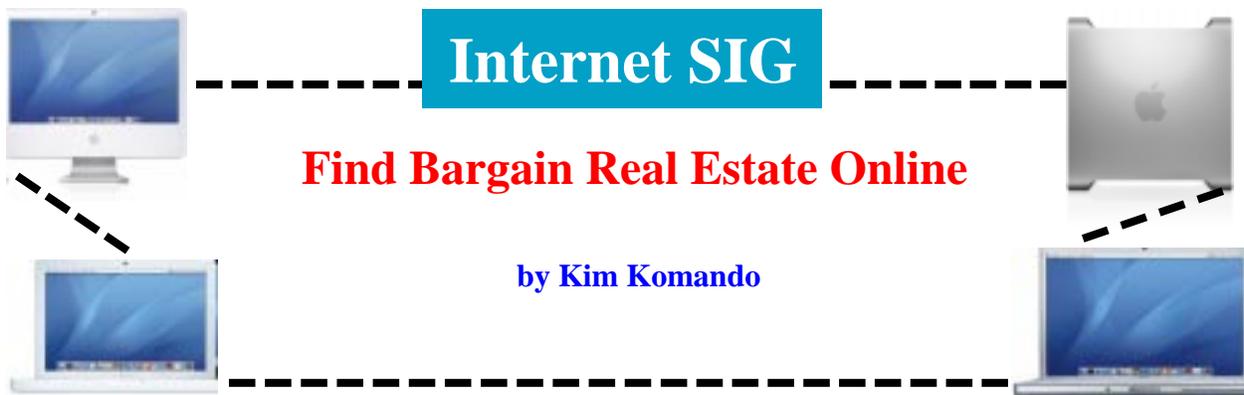
The national foreclosure rate is at a 22-year high. And it is expected to climb. But, despite the downturn in the market, real estate sites are going strong.

Maybe you're looking to pick up a bargain. Or maybe you want to know how market changes are affecting your home's value. Real estate sites can help.

Finding a house

Your first stop should be Realtor.com. This is the National Association of Realtors' official site. Realtor.com provides access to the MLS (Multiple Listing Service) for free. You'll see houses listed for sale in your area.

But, if you want to find foreclosures, you'll need to dig deeper. Your county's Web site probably lists foreclosures. You'll find details on houses involved in foreclosure proceedings.

If your county's Web site doesn't list foreclosures, there are alternatives. RealtyTrac.com, Foreclosures.com and BargainNetwork.com list foreclosures and other bargains.

The sites offer seven-day free trials. After that, RealtyTrac charges $50 monthly. Bargain Network and Foreclosures.com charge $10 per week.

You should also visit HomeSales.gov. It lists homes that the U.S. government is selling via auction. Many of these are HUD homes.

Determining a house's value

If you find a house you like, you'll need to determine its value. Yahoo! Real Estate helps you calculate the value of a house.

Simply enter an address to see a house's value range. You'll see a list of recently sold houses in the neighborhood. You'll also see the date the houses sold, along with the houses' sizes.

Zillow.com's Zestimate also helps calculate the value of a house. Like Yahoo!'s site, it lists comparable recently sold houses. You can also compare the houses' price per square foot.

You'll see the price for which a house last sold. But pay close attention to Zillow's charts. These show how a house's value has changed over the past one to 10 years.

Staying current

Even if you're not buying or selling a home, it's important to stay up-to-date. Fortunately, real estate sties provide innovative ways to do that.

At Trulia.com, you can search for houses in your area. Save the searches or sign up for e-mail alerts. You'll be notified when new listings match your criteria. Or, find out when similar houses are sold.

The alerts are designed to help buyers find new listings as soon as possible. But homeowners can use the alerts to keep current on the market.

Zillow provides a wealth of information on the housing market. For example, it offers a heat map. The map shows you values in square feet for particular neighborhoods. At a glance, you can see how your neighborhood stacks up.

Zillow also offers a comprehensive real estate guide. Find answers to questions about mortgages, refinancing and more. There's also information on remodeling and working with contractors.

Of course, everything has a price. So check out Zillow's "Make me move" feature. List your home on the site. Then enter the price that you're willing to accept for your house. Someone might make you an offer! You're not obligated to accept an offer.

When buying or selling a house, Web sites are a good starting point. However, no Web site can replace the expertise a real estate agent provides. A real estate agent can help you navigate the buying and selling process.

An Enterprise PC Shopp's Move to Apple Isn't As Easy as Expected
by Juyia King (Computerworld

The following is a follow-up about switching from PC's to Macs at the business level. School districts should be aware of some of the problems and can take comfort in the solutions Auto Warehousing Co. took as illustrated in this article from Computerworld. This is the second in a series of articles as Computerworld *follows AWC's transition to Apple over the course of a year. The first article is "Mac Attack! An enterprise PC shop switches* to *Apple."*

Hindsight, as they say, is always 20/20. Less than five months after going public with plans to immediately start replacing its Windows-based PCs with Macs, Auto Warehousing Co. was forced to push back the project by more than a month. That was last December. The reason was not a lack of money, manpower or executive support. Rather, what stymied the project were protests from workers and objections from customers who perceived the technology switch as unnecessarily costly.

"I didn't see this coming at all," says Dale Frantz, CIO of the Tacoma, Wash.-based company. "We never before had any of the workforce question our technological initiatives." But with the Mac project, "there was a perception that the equipment was much more expensive than traditional Windows PCs and that we were purchasing Lamborghini-level equipment with the company's profits," he says.

AWC's customers had similar concerns, raising questions about whether the technology migration might trigger increases in service rates.

In fact, Frantz says, within hours after a July 16, 2007, *Computerworld* story about AWC's technology migration plans was published, both he and CEO Stephen Seher received a flood of phone calls and e-mails with questions, positive and negative comments, and even an anonymous death threat.

"Because of the breadth and scope of the project, our customers, workforce and financial institutions had a lot of questions," Frantz says.

Employees wanted to know whether money that could go toward salary increases or other benefits was being diverted to what they perceived as a pricey high-tech project. Customers worried that the cost of the project would be passed on to them. AWC's bankers wanted more details to determine whether switching to a new technology made sound business sense.

Customers' and suppliers' reactions didn't really surprise AWC Chief Financial Officer Dennis Matteo. His biggest surprise had come earlier, when Frantz first expressed a serious interest in switching to Apple technology.

Related Content

From Skeptic to Believer Licensing Math

"Dale is a very savvy CIO [and] was a committed Microsoft advocate. So when [he] started to look at Apple in a very serious way, it implied he had seen some fundamental changes in the business services direction of Microsoft and Apple," Matteo says. "Obviously, he likes the direction Apple is moving."

On all fronts, the concern was widespread enough that AWC executives decided to push back the rollout of the client computers and instead build support for the project.

Full Disclosure

As Frantz saw it, fully disclosing costs was the best way to do that. He spent the next month explaining to everyone who would be affected the many reasons for the technology swap. Among those is the more than $1.82 million the company calculates it will save over the next three years. That's what it would cost to upgrade software licenses if the company remained on PCs; in contrast, the total cost of switching to Macintoshes is $335,000. The real kicker, though, is that AWC would continue to do business on the upgraded software in the same way had always done business with the software already in place.

Frantz set up "town meetings" with about 450 workers on all three shifts and laid out the licensing math. "I talked about the fact that Microsoft requires up to five client licenses for just one PC, just so we have the legitimate right to attach to

the network. With Apple, that's all included," Frantz notes. "Yes, it looks like the equipment is more expensive — until you stack on all the client licenses to run Microsoft [software]."

According to Frantz, AWC workers are aware that 2008 is going to be a very tough year in the auto industry, given the housing crisis and a looming recession. Disclosing the licensing details to workers helped them understand that "we weren't [spending] millions of dollars on new computers when we could have instead put the money into employee benefits or their payroll," he says.

Frantz also brought a Mac to the shop floor and demonstrated AWC's main Vehicle Inventory Processing System (VIPS) on its 20-in. screen — which was noticeably larger than the existing 16- and 17-in. PC screens. And he demonstrated the iChat feature in the Mac OS X operating system. Using iChat, an AWC tech-support staffer took remote control of the Mac on the shop floor to show how computer problems there could be quickly fixed by an IT person located remotely. "That was a real 'wow' factor," Frantz says.

But not everyone was sold. "We knew we were going down an entirely new road," Frantz says, "but we didn't anticipate the huge emotional response that we got back." "People are passionate on both sides of the aisle," he says. "There's a lot of talk about the cult of Macs, but there's just as strongly a cult of Microsoft. It's just not as widely publicized."

A few key people were very anti-Apple, though they couldn't articulate why. "They just didn't want to switch," Frantz says.

Executives and IT staffers worked with the dissenters to win them over. On the customer front, Frantz met one on one with various port managers and manufacturers' representatives in Tacoma and Detroit, again explaining the licensing math. "Customers just wanted to know how this was going to affect their rates," he says. He showed them that switching to Macs would result in lowering AWC's costs, which over time would result in lower rates. Frantz says AWC had calculated "significant savings" associated with migrating to Apple software during the proof-of-concept testing last summer. "We knew we would have sufficient ROI for the change based on some broad generalizations, and the savings were enough to green-light the project," he says. But the real focus of the early testing was to make sure VIPS could continue to run on Microsoft SQL Server on the back end with Macs on the client side. "The SQL server runs well; it's a solid product. There's no business case to change that," Frantz says.

Moving Ahead

Once the interoperability issue was resolved, Frantz's team began integrating Apple servers into AWC's Windows-based network. As of Feb. 1, of a total of 40 non-SQL servers that will ultimately be converted to Mac servers, 14 had been changed over. The remainder will be swapped out according to AWC's three-year equipment-refresh schedule.

AWC has also finished migrating from Microsoft's Active Directory to Apple's Open Directory for controlling the network. This is especially significant, Frantz says, because the controlling operating system architecture determines licensing costs. "By getting off of Microsoft Active Directory and onto Open Directory, each individual server becomes
separate and Microsoft can no longer view [and charge for] a broad enterprise network. This was a very significant change," Frantz says.

AWC has completed migrating to a Mac OS X mail server and is currently migrating users from Exchange to Mac OS X's Mail application. "This requires a little bit more [time and effort], because we have to convert each user's mailbox, one at a time, making sure that all folders and calendar items import properly," he explains. The project is about 50% completed.

AWC's in-house IT team has been working alongside five consultants from Apple's professional services unit to work through networking, security and other engineering issues, Frantz says.

Running two different mail systems in parallel is especially complicated. "We didn't want to do a wholesale swap in a weekend, because that would require getting IT people to every facility to help assist users with the migration, and that wasn't possible," Frantz explains.

Working with the Apple consultants, Frantz says, AWC's network administrator devised an "elegant solution" to continue using a single mail domain, even though the users are temporarily on two different mail platforms.

On the client side, AWC has so far installed 25 of 28 Macs to run its mainstay VIPS application on the shop floor at its Tacoma facility. The other three clients remain on PCs because the Macs don't fit into the weatherproof cabinets on AWC's outdoor lots — "a little pain point" that's being resolved, Frantz says.

By December of this year, all VIPS client software will have been rewritten from PowerBuilder to Java 6.0 so it can run at the front end on Macs. The rewriting project is about 10% complete at this point, Frantz says. Over the next year, "we'll upgrade to Macs on a shop-by-shop basis, because it doesn't make sense to sunset brand-new PCs," Frantz says. He estimates that by 2010, all 28 of AWC's facilities will be completely switched over to Apple technology. By then, all remaining PCs will be fully depreciated and will be able to be cost-effectively replaced with Macs.

Apple Ambassador
Continued from page 2.

The Apple Store 'genius' — and I'm offended that he was called that, given the stupendous idiocy he exhibited today — was named Bill. Bill was called over when my husband and I came into the store; I had told the concierge that I was interested in buying a MacBook Air.

Well, first of all, Bill DID NOT LOOK AT ME. He did not greet me. He greeted my husband, introduced himself, and shook his hand... and completely ignored me. He didn't ask my name, what we were there to buy, or who the new computer was for. He did not make eye contact. He simply behaved as though I were not there, and steered my husband through the crowded store — ignoring me and leaving me behind...

MacDailyNews Take: If this is true, today's probably not a good day to be Bill, the Bellevue Square Apple Store Mac Genius (we're checking to see if there is a Bill serving as Mac Genius at that store) and Apple owes this customer an apology. Overall, we've received some of the best service of any retail establishment in Apple Stores (of course, we always go in wearing our MacDailyNews shirts... just kidding, that's the last thing we'd ever do as we can't spy and pry at all in those things. And, before you all go accusin' - here's the MacDailyNews Women's Tee.)

[UPDATE: 10:29pm ETS: According to our sources, no "Bill" has ever worked in Apple Store Bellevue Square as a Mac Genius. It is possible that a "Bill" has been or is currently on staff in another capacity.]

Mac to the Future - OC's Mobile Learning goes Apple
Oklahoma Christian University
Saturday, March 01, 2008

We try to present both good and bad in this column. This article was original found on MacDailyNews and is taken from the Oklahoma Christian University website.

In 2001, Oklahoma Christian launched a mobile computing initiative. This campus-wide 1-to-1 mobile computing program was the first in the state of Oklahoma and one of very few throughout the nation. Over the last six years, this program has helped to ensure that students have the technology necessary to combine digital fluency with the strengths of a liberal arts education.

Today, Oklahoma Christian University continues to look toward the future and the role of technology in teaching and learning. Understanding the technology needs and expectations of students and faculty continues to be the key to the success of this mobile learning initiative.

This summer, all faculty and all new students attending New Student Orientations will be issued a new Apple MacBook. Current students also will be given the opportunity to trade in their PC laptop for an Apple MacBook. This MacBook mobile learning initiative and the reliable campus-wide wireless infrastructure will allow OC to continue to provide opportunities for anytime, anywhere access to media-rich distributed course content.

In addition to the MacBook, the University will be able to offer students an option of either an Apple iPhone or iPod touch. The University is providing this option with the understanding that some students will not want to activate the iPhone with the associated service contract and costs, while others will prefer the iPhone and the added capabilities. The student will be responsible for the activation of the iPhone with the service provider.

The vision of incorporating instructional technology tools into teaching and learning is critical to our future success and the success of our graduates. We are excited about this new phase of mobile learning at Oklahoma Christian University and will continue to search for ways to enhance teaching and learning.

Mac Tips

The Instant Email Slideshow

Have you come to dread a certain type of email? You know—the "what we did on our vacation" letter comprising a brief message and a jumble of attached photos?

Here's how to make quick sense of such missives in Apple Mail, using one of Leopard's new Quick Look functions.

First, click the Quick Look button in the email's header.
Screenshot

All attached images now appear in a convenient and attractive slideshow. The icons along the lower edge of the slideshow screen let you play the slideshow, step through the images one at a time, view them simultaneously in a photo grid, expand them to fill your screen, and add your favorites to your iPhoto library. You can also scroll through the images using your left- and right-arrow keys.
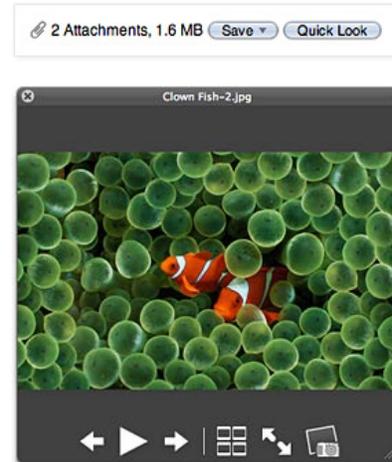
Create Custom Email Stationery

Leopard's enhanced Mail program has a cool new feature: a set of professionally designed stationery templates you can use to spiff up your email.

But you can also create your own custom stationery templates. Here's how.

Create a new email message. Add the elements you'd like to appear each time you load the template, like a signature line. You can also add dummy text to delete later, if you wish.

Under the Format menu, choose Show Fonts and Show Colors and use the Font and Color palettes to specify fonts, text size, colors, and type effects to suit your taste. (Note that the colors you choose for backgrounds might not show up until you've saved your stationery and opened a new message.)

Use the Format menu to set text alignment and styles. You can even add graphic elements, such as photos or logos. When you're satisfied with your work, choose Save as Stationery from Mail's File menu. The program will prompt you to name your creation.

When you want to load your template, create a new message and click the Show Stationery button. You'll see the Apple templates, organized in folders. (You may need to scroll down to see all the folders.) At the bottom of the list is a new folder, Custom, where your template resides. Any additional templates you create will be stored in the Custom folder as well.
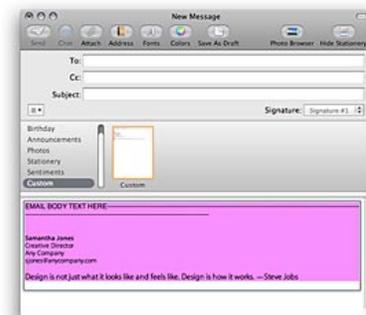
Make the Most of Quick Look

One of the biggest time-savers in Mac OS X Leopard is the Quick Look, which gives you an instant preview of any file. It's great for finding the right document, image, or mp3 when you're not sure which is which, or choosing the correct version from a series of files with similar names.

To use Quick Look, simply select an item in the Finder and press the Space bar, or type Command-Y. An image of the selected item appears. (In the case of mp3s, the sound file also plays.) You don't even need to open the document's usual application. If it's a photo, for example, you can see it without waiting for iPhoto or Preview to open.

To close the Quick Look preview, simply press the Space bar again, or click the x in the preview window's upper-left corner. Alternately, you can type Command-Y or Command-W to close the image.

A few more tips to help you get the most from this amazing feature:

   * If you want to preview additional items, don't close the preview window. Just highlight a new file in the Finder, and the open preview window displays the newly selected object.
   * Quick Look lets you view multiple-page documents. For longer files, a navigation scroll bar appears along the preview window's right margin. It even works with PDFs and Keynote presentations.

   * You can preview multiple items simultaneously. Just select several items in the Finder by lassoing them with your cursor. Or open one item in Quick Look, then use the up- and down-arrow keys to display other files in the same folder.
   * You can combine searches and Quick Look. Simply type keywords into a Finder window's Search Box to reveal files whose names or contents match the search terms. Select some or all of the results, open Quick Look via space bar or Command-Y, and use your up- and down-arrow keys to switch between the selected previews.

Get Instant Maps

In Leopard, your Address Book doesn't just tell you where to go—it shows you!

To get an instant map to any address, just control-click on the address field of a contact card (or right-click if you have a two-button mouse). Then select Map Of. This command opens Safari (if it's not already open) and reveals the address in Google Maps.

This trick isn't just confined to Address Book: Leopard can detect street addresses within Mail as well. When your cursor hovers over a street address in an email, a dotted rectangle surrounds it and a small gray triangle appears. Click on the triangle and select Show Map... to see the address in Google Maps.
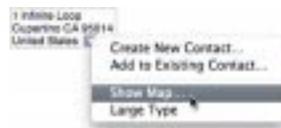
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