



The *GAB'er*

The Newsletter of the Greater Albany Apple Byters

Volume 21, Number 2 - October 2004

Introducing Two New Jam Packs

No need to cruise the local clubs looking for your band's new bass player. Not when you have hundreds of professional backup musicians at your disposal in the three GarageBand Jam Packs now available. Each package offers more than 2,000 Apple Loops and dozens of playable software instruments. An invaluable enhancement to GarageBand, Jam Packs can also be used by Logic Pro 7 and Logic Express 7, allowing amateur and professional musicians alike to stretch their musical creativity with Apple Loops.

Jam Pack 1: Instruments, Loops, and Effects

More sounds. More instruments. More fun.

Open a new door to musical creativity with this diverse set of additional software instruments, loops and audio effects for GarageBand. Whether you're laying down tracks for your next hit single or creating your own party grooves, Jam Pack 1 gives you new ways to enhance your music projects.

Find the perfect tone for your guitar riffs (heavy blues, grunge, surf) using one of the 15 new vintage or modern amp sounds in Jam Pack 1.

Continued on page 5.



Coordinator's Corner

by John Buckley

Last month we took a look at MS Office 2004 with a very broad brush. This month we will bore down into a small part of one of the programs in Office, the Insert Menu in MS Word. There is a lot you can add to documents to make your much more interesting and functional. In addition, we will look at the Reference Tools menus.

We also will plan meetings for the remainder of the year.

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

The October meeting will be held at Troy High School in room 212 on Wednesday, October 13, 2004. 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 the old closed Dunkin Donuts. 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
October 13, 2004
7:00 p.m.

Office 2004 Reference Tools

Room 212, Troy High School
Burdett Avenue, Troy, NY

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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

AP Says iMac G5 Comes Up Short On Extras

MacDirectory (<http://www.macdirectory.com>) is one of the leading sources of Apple Computer news. They issue an electronic newsletter, eMac Weekly, with links to stories about Macintosh computers and products. The following is from that website and the Associated Press.

AP Says iMac G5 Comes Up Short On Extras (9/23/2004)

by MATTHEW FORDAHL, AP Technology Writer
For six years, iMacs have set the standard for the PC industry with eye-popping designs, clever utilization of space and leaps forward in usability. Lately, though, Apple Computer Inc. seems to be making more waves with iPod music players than its venerable consumer PCs.



But fear not, Apple fans and design aficionados.

The iMac line whose debut machine looked like a giant egg, and that later morphed into something resembling a table lamp, now has a third generation. It looks sort of like an oversized iPod.

Continued on page 6.






Internet SIG



Downloading Movies Made Easy by Kim Komando

Like to watch movies? Whether your favorite star is Clint Eastwood or Jackie Chan, several video-on-demand Internet sites let you legally do just that from the comfort of your computer chair. But it pays to do your homework first before signing up.

For starters, some services charge a monthly fee for unlimited access to movies. Others require you to pay a rental fee for each movie.

This isn't something dial-up users should attempt. Downloaded movie files are quite large (500 - 800 megabytes, depending on length) and streaming video takes a lot of bandwidth. That's why this is a niche reserved for only broadband connections, such as cable or DSL.

Currently, four major sites are competing to win movie buffs' hearts. All are different in selection and how you watch them.

1) CinemaNow (<http://www.cinemanow.com>) offers a number of payment options but not many recognizable titles. A \$9.95 monthly subscription gives you access to several thousand titles—mostly “B” films. For \$29.95 per month, you'll gain access to over 5,000 movies, including adult films. There are no usage restrictions, so you could theoretically watch movies 24 hours a day.

Popular and recent films, such as *Mystic River*, are not included in the subscription and can cost up to \$3.99 per title. A subscription is not necessary for these rentals. Rented movies can be watched an unlimited number of times for 24 to 48 hours. When the rental time has expired, the file stays on your hard drive. It will automatically delete itself after a specific amount of time (usually 30 days).

You have the choice of downloading the movie or streaming it. Downloaded movies look slightly crisper. Streamed movies still are better than videotape. It takes less than 30 seconds to start watching a streaming film. It took less than a half hour to download a 90-minute movie over broadband.

2) MovieFlix (<http://www.movieflix.com>) is the only service that both Mac and Windows owners can use. All others are

Windows-only services. You can register for the free basic service, which gives you access to some old movies and television shows, such as *Dragnet* and *Dick Tracy*.

Access to over 3,000 films costs \$6.95 per month. MovieFlix appeals primarily to classic-movie lovers. Although there are some newer releases, they mostly consist of obscure independents or documentaries.

All movies are streamed. The quality isn't the best. The images are a little blocky and there is noticeable ghosting.

3) MovieLink (<http://www.movieblink.com>) is a rental-only service with over 800 movies in its catalog. Newer releases such as *50 First Dates* cost \$4.99 per film. You get a price break on older releases, such as *To Kill a Mockingbird*, at \$1.99 or less. Students with a university e-mail address get a 25 percent discount.

It took less than 30 minutes to download a one-hour, 45-minute movie. If you don't want to wait, you can start watching within two to 10 minutes after starting the download.

Once you click play, you have 24 hours to watch it as often as you wish.

4) STARZ! Ticket on Real Movies (<http://www.real.com>) provides access to over 150 movies for \$12.95 per month. The movie selection rotates with titles being added and removed on a regular basis. The selection is a good mix of recent and old titles. All are recognizable.

It took only 20 minutes to download a one-hour, 55-minute movie. Subscription to STARZ! Ticket also includes a streaming feed of the STARZ! cable channel.

All of the subscription services have trial memberships. Try them to see if they have the movies you want. Some services allow you to download movies onto laptops and watch them later. That's ideal for business travelers or college students in dorms.





Education SIG

Teaching in the Digital Age at the College Level

When we talk education, sometimes we forget higher education. Many exciting programs are taking place at this level and many of these activities are transferable to the secondary and elementary level. The following is from the Apple Education website area (<http://www.apple.com/education/>).

Faculty members are faced with a new generation of students that live and learn in a digital habitat. They are challenged to deliver compelling learning environments that are both instructionally meaningful and richly engaging to these digital students. Part of the problem with integrating a digital learning experience into teaching and research is that the content creation and collaboration tools have not traditionally been accessible to faculty. Or, if these tools have been available, their use has involved a steep learning curve.

Apple has always believed in intuitive products and tools that empower digital expression for everyone. Faculty using a Mac will find powerful solutions that enable new modes of curriculum delivery, better ways of conducting research, and exciting opportunities for professional development that keep them abreast of industry-leading technologies.

Teaching and Learning

Today's ever-changing teaching and learning environments require new approaches to technology. Tools like iLife and iChat AV, included with every Mac, address the curriculum needs of faculty today. Seeing is believing. But watching a video transforms belief into comprehension. Such is the theory behind a Mac-based program at the University of Michigan (UMich) Medical School. To supplement the traditional lecture-exam teaching model, medical students now watch videos of anatomical dissections via the Web, then complete their own procedures. Edited on iMac computers with iMovie and QuickTime, the videos have

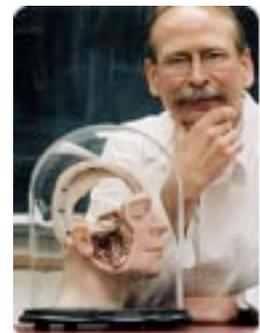
helped the most recent class of UMich students record the highest average grades achieved in the last ten years.

In the Division of Anatomical Sciences, instructors used to demonstrate gross anatomy procedures to 37 separate groups of students, semester after semester. Then the medical school faculty hit on the idea of filming the dissections, so that students could watch them at their own pace on the university's website. It was all part of a move towards creating a more active learning environment, says UMich's Dr. Thomas Gest.

"Over the past three years, we have been reducing the length of lectures delivered in our first-year medical gross anatomy course," notes Gest, an associate professor of anatomical sciences. "The purpose of decreasing the lecture time was to make more laboratory time available, and to change the focus of the course from teacher-centered, passive learning to student-centered, active learning. We also wanted to make more class time available for peer teaching, so that individuals could learn their anatomy in the best possible way, by teaching others."

Adds Gest: "The theory was that students could look at the movies before they came to the lab, then they'd be up to speed on what they had to do when they got there. Instead of doing these demonstrations 37 times, we'd just make one movie, then everyone could watch it at their leisure and review it in lab during dissection. In this way, we felt that everyone would get the same knowledge base, because the information would be standard across the board."

Gest and his colleague, Dr. William Burkel, a professor of anatomical sciences, hired a team



Summary

Challenges

- Demonstrate gross anatomy procedures to medical students
- Reduce traditional lecture time, increase active learning
- Track students' research data in easily searchable fashion

Solution

- 32 iMac computers
- iMovie-based streaming videos on university website
- QuickTime and QuickTime Virtual Reality
- Canon XL-1 digital camcorder*, Kodak DC 4800 still camera

Benefits

- Students can view dissections at any time
- Professors are saved from repetitive demonstrations
- Student achievement is highest reported in past decade



of UMich medical students to head up the production effort. The crew used a Canon XL-1 digital camcorder to capture the dissection footage. A Kodak DC 4800 still camera grabbed additional shots of the procedures.



Gest worked closely with the students, frequently pitching in during the postproduction phase (Burkel even lent his voice as the narrator on the tapes). Fortunately, iMovie made the editing task painless for all.

“We chose iMovie because it was so easy to use,” says Gest. “It was a product that both the faculty and students could grasp and master quickly. With iMovie, even if Bill and I weren’t around, the students could still work pretty much autonomously.”

Along with the videos for the web-enabled courseware, Gest and Burkel helped organize the collected findings from students’ dissections into an online research database. With just a few keystrokes, students now can call up a wealth of medical histories via the UMich website. And, thanks to the iMac computers placed at each dissection station, students can also record, share, and search on each other’s data as they perform their own procedures. Gest says the database offers invaluable details about each cadaver used in the dissections.

“Let’s say a student doing a dissection discovers that the cadaver used to have a specific heart abnormality,” explains Gest. “He or she would enter that information into the database via the iMac. Then if students were researching that type of condition, they could search the database and see which cadaver had it, then they could examine the cadaver themselves. In that way, any of the 170 students could view whatever variations in anatomy might have been found.”

Since Gest and Burkel have introduced the Mac-based tools into the curriculum, student achievement and enthusiasm have increased in equal measure. Gest reports that anatomy students have posted their best scores on record, while giving

the course the highest approval rating ever. Student evaluations of faculty also have been extremely positive — the instructors recently received the highest average evaluations in the history of the program.



To date the anatomy professors and the student production crews have captured the entire first-year anatomy course on video. Production in the summer of 2002 yielded a QuickTime Virtual Reality (QTVR) tour of the anatomy facilities and digital videos of common surgical procedures. And, say Burkel and Gest, all of their courseware is delivered via the Internet, so students can learn in the manner best suited to them.

“Our hope is that at some point, every student can get by with nothing more than what we offer on the Web,” Gest says. This will make it possible for students who are visual as well as those who are auditory learners to get at the information on their own terms. Working with the various Apple technologies has enabled us to put all of the knowledge in one place, yet offer lots of alternatives. Long-term, I think that will affect the quality of students’ lives.”

New Jam Packs

Continued from page 1.

Jam Pack 2: Remix Tools

From hip-hop to electronica and beyond.

Jam Pack 2: Remix Tools provides you with everything you need to motivate people onto the dance floor. Whether you’re into hip-hop or house, R&B or trance, you can create your very own dance-floor grooves with this complete set of beats, bass lines, synth hooks and keyboard riffs.

An assortment of playable synth instruments, basses, pads, filters and sweeps, plus such turntable effects as scratching and needle drops.



Apple Ambassador

Continued from page 2.

The iMac G5 is Apple's most streamlined and polished design yet, squeezing all the innards into a white plastic flat-panel display. It distances Apple even further from the bulk of Windows-based PC world, where variations of gray, beige and black are all too common.

Still, style alone does not a great computer make. Though Apple uses its most capable processor ever, it skimps on memory and other extras. Out of the box, a new iMac is an incomplete masterpiece.

You can finish the job, but it's going to cost you.

The default configurations range between \$1,299 for an iMac with a 1.6 gigahertz processor and \$1,899 for a 1.8 GHz system. To finish the job, you'll have to shell out \$75 to double the memory to 512 megabytes; \$80 for Apple's Wi-Fi card; \$50 for Bluetooth; and \$70 each for a wireless keyboard and single-button mouse.

Only after it's fully accessorized and unsightly cords have been replaced by wireless connections does the iMac G5 fulfill its promise of an uncluttered, zippy 21st century computer object d'art.

And it's something to behold.

The entire unit, available with screen sizes of 17 or 20 inches, consists of a 2-inch thick display that's about 4 inches longer than the screen itself. An attached aluminum stand supports its weight and allows easy up-or-down maneuvering.

Surprisingly good speakers stream rich sound from the display's foot. Compact discs and DVDs load into a slot in the side. The display itself is bright and crystal-clear.

The power cord, the only cable that can't be replaced with wireless, snaps unobtrusively into the rear and is neatly obscured as it threads through a hole in the base.

Setup is as simple as it gets. Just plug it in and turn it on. After a few questions, the Mac OS X (news -web sites) desktop appears, ready to launch included software ranging from Apple's own suite of music, video and photo programs to a trial version of Microsoft Corp.'s Office for Macs. There's also the standard Safari Internet browser, Apple's excellent e-mail program and Quicken (news -web sites) for personal finance, among other software.

Once the iMac is set up, however, some users might notice a few gaps in the grand vision.

The included keyboard and mouse, for instance, must be plugged into a universal serial bus port on the back of the machine. Because there no built-in Wi-Fi capability, an Ethernet cable or telephone cord is required for Internet access.

Still more wires all strung from the back of the unit connect the computer to printers, music players (even an iPod) and any other cabled peripheral. So much for a clutter-free computer.

The solution, of course, is to have Apple add support for Bluetooth, a technology that connects devices wirelessly at short range. The peripherals also have to be Bluetooth-capable, of course. (Apple does offer a \$99 kit, available only at the time of order, that includes built-in Bluetooth support as well as its wireless keyboard and mouse).

A wireless connection to the Internet is yet another purchase, though Apple's AirPort card doesn't have to be added at the factory. Installation is as easy as loosening three screws at the bottom of the iMac, lifting off the cover and popping in the card.

The most egregious omission by Apple was the decision to ship the iMac with a paltry 256 megabytes of memory.

The loaner I got arrived with an extra 256 megabytes something I discovered while exploring the "About this Mac" menu. Because that's not what's included in the base prices, I pulled out a screwdriver and removed the extra RAM.

The remaining 256 megabytes handled simple tasks like surfing the Web and reading e-mail, but didn't suffice for listening to music while editing a movie and running a word processor. While I tried that, a song playing in the iTunes jukebox software stuttered while I was rendering video in iMovie.

Microsoft Word's auto-correction feature, which on my PC quickly highlights or fixes typing mistakes, could not keep up. It highlighted suspected errors only after I had typed a half dozen words. The machine could not keep up.

Microsoft's Virtual PC, which lets Mac users run Windows programs, was so slow that it was unusable. It dramatically improved after I reinstalled the extra 256 megabytes of RAM.

Still, the maximum memory is just 2 gigabytes (it costs \$1,125 if you buy it from Apple). That's odd because one of the selling points of the IBM-built G5 processor is its ability to handle much more than the 4 gigabyte maximum of most of today's PCs.



A look at Mac OS X 10.4 Tiger's powerful underpinnings — Darwin 8.0

<http://www.opensource.apple.com/darwinsource/WWDC2004/> details the various projects which comprise the current Darwin 8.0 Beta, and their versions as of 8.0b1.

Darwin has made “huge strides already,” say Apple sources familiar with Tiger development.

But as with the more visible upper layers of Mac OS X 10.4, those sources are fond of saying “you ain’t seen nothin’ yet” when it comes to Darwin 8.x.

Darwin won’t see as many new, as-yet unannounced projects as the front end of Tiger, but the numerous advancements already seen in 8.0b1 will be built upon in many of those projects.

Nearly every Mac OS X application will be significantly faster on Tiger, but as-is, not always noticeably.

Minor code tweaks/optimizations/re-writes for Tiger and Darwin 8.x will have huge gains, however — one source provided some interesting benchmarks (embargoed for at least the next few weeks, but we can say they were pretty impressive and will probably be future Tiger marketing fodder) that show huge benefits from only a few minutes of Tiger-related code updates.

Recompiling with the Tiger version of Xcode once these changes are made, using the new optimized GCC libraries, can have drastic performance and feature benefits for OS X application developers.

Of greatest benefit are Darwin 8’s very robust database, scripting, and extensibility features. SQLite and MySQL will be fully implemented in the Client version of Tiger — and as with the myriad other new “UNIX Layer” services in 10.4, made easy for developers to adopt into their applications.

Darwin 8.0’s 64-bit G5 support could, in fact, pave the way for x86-64 support on the Darwin-x86 side as well, if Apple sees fit to shape its code with that goal in mind....

Darwin 8’s greatest wild card is, without a doubt, its rumored greater adoption of Linux APIs and other compatibility technologies (read: Transitive’s QuickTransit, easier “cross-compiling” from Linux/other UNIXes, etc).

Once the situation with Transitive is clarified, it will be easier to tell just where Apple may be heading with its Linux/BSD/UN*X Assimilation projects....

Weekend Rumor Quick Takes

It’s been a busy week for rumor-mongers as September (which saw the introduction of the iMac G5) comes to a close, and October — which could very well see several major Apple product releases/updates — has begun with a bang. Here’s the latest recon from our internal boards, in summary format:

New Powerbooks probably won’t use PowerPC 7448 We appear to have named the wrong Freescale PowerPC that is expected to be at the heart of new Powerbooks due out in a matter of weeks; the 90-nanometer PPC 7448 won’t ship until some time in early to mid 2005.

Right now it appears that our previous reports naming a separate, 130-nm “PPC 7447B” with 1.6GHz top speed were correct. We are still attempting to confirm whether this 7447B would support the same 200MHz frontside bus as the 7448, or the slower 167MHz bus used in current G4’s.

No major external changes in next ‘Book updates So far, it looks like the Powerbook and iBook updates predicted to occur later this month — or at the latest some time in November (before the holiday buying season) — won’t include any display size/resolution or significant enclosure changes; those will wait for the Powerbook G5.

Tiger Server to use Apache 2 by default? According to developer sources seeded with a recent, semi-private build of Mac OS X 10.4 Server, Apple is testing a new version of its default server suite that employs Apache 2.x as well as a number of cutting-edge Apache 2 modules.

Apple sources cautioned that there will still be means to switch back to Apache 1.x and still use the Server Admin toolset...but were optimistic that the upgrade to Apache 2 will bring big performance, stability and security gains.

An open iPod platform? The grapevine has been abuzz recently with renewed speculation (after a long drought of skepticism) that Apple might provide third party developers with easy to use, officially supported tools for deploying applications that run on the iPod.

Apple sources were quick to state that there will probably never be unlimited access to the complete capabilities of the iPod through official channels, because Apple is worried that too large a hacking community might develop and Apple’s own branded services/features might be watered down or drowned out entirely.

However, more than one confirmed that better third-party developer tools for the iPod will be made available in the near future.



