



The *GAB'er*

The Newsletter of the Greater Albany Apple Byters

Volume 22, Number 6 - February 2006

iLife '06



iLife '06 is the easiest way to make the most out of every bit of your digital life. Use your Mac to collect, organize and edit the various elements. Transform them into mouth-watering masterpieces with Apple-designed templates. Then share the magic moments in beautiful books, colorful calendars, dazzling DVDs, perfect podcasts, and attractive online journals. All starring you.

iPhoto - Share photos in a whole new way.

The easiest way to import, organize, edit and share your digital photos, iPhoto 6 offers support for up to 250,000 of them. New book templates, Photocasting, photo blogs, and custom calendars and cards guarantee no one will miss a single smile.

iMovie HD - Turn video into home cinema.

Give yourself the green light with new Apple-designed movie themes. Create Hollywood-style movies using cinematic titles, new audio tools, and real-time Mac OS X Core Video effects, then share them in a video podcast or save them to iPod.

iDVD - Create stunning DVDs.

Author and burn movies, photos, and music to widescreen DVD. From instant gratification with Magic iDVD to next-generation themes and an enhanced Map View, iDVD 6 makes it easy to make beautiful DVDs of your latest photos and movies.

Garage Band - Record your next hit show.

The best way to create music on a Mac is now the best way to create podcasts, too. The podcast recording studio in GarageBand 3 puts you in the control room of your own full-featured radio station. Get your voice on the Internet in just a few minutes.

iWeb - Put your life on the web.

Use iWeb to create websites and blogs complete with podcasts, photos, and movies. Start with a template, add your content via the iLife Media Browser, customize your pages, and build a great website in minutes. Then publish live to .Mac with a single click.



Coordinator's Corner

by John Buckley

In December we looked at **iWork 05**, a presentation and desktop publishing package from Apple. Since then Apple has come out with **iWork '06** and **iLife '06**. Because of the upswing in the use of Podcasting, we will look at part of iLife '06 which is **Garage Band 3** and specifically that program's Podcast authoring tools. We will also look at some other programs that fit into **iLife** and make it easier to use in a predominately Windows world.

Hopefully this month we will also plan meetings for the remainder of the year

To find out what's happening in the world of Macintosh Computing, GAAB is the place to be. So be sure to be at our October meeting to help chart our future.

The February meeting will be held at Troy High School in room 212 on Wednesday, February 8, 2006. 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 which is now a liquor store. This is Burdett Avenue. Turn right and travel past Samaritan Hospital for about two blocks. Troy High School will be the second school on your left. The name is on the front of the building. You can park in the front lot. Come in the main entrance, go up the main stairway to the second floor, turn left and go to room 212.

Next GAAB Meeting
February 8, 2006
7:00 p.m.

iLife'06

Troy High School
Room 212

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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

Mac Users 'Too Smug' over Security

By Bill Thompson

Technology commentator Bill Thompson is worried about the lack of herd immunity among his fellow Apple Mac users.

(<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/technology/4609968.stm>)

The first known computer virus, the Elk Cloner, is 25 years old. Since its appearance we have seen hundreds of thousands of malicious programs and their impact on our computer use has been immense.



Apple Mac computers are not immune from attack

Millions of people have lost work, had their private information stolen or simply had to waste precious hours cleaning up their computers after infection.

A small number of companies have grown rich on the sales of anti-virus software, while organised crime is believed to commission many of today's viruses as a money-making venture, selling services to spammers or using them to blackmail websites.

That first virus was specific to the Apple II computer and spread by inserting itself into the operating system files that were installed on every boot floppy, since this was in the days before hard drives in personal computers and few of us had network connections.

Slipped disk

Those halcyon days when you only had to remember to scan every floppy disk for infection are long gone, of course.

Now the broadband internet connection that keeps me always online leaves me always vulnerable, and regular virus scans are the order of the day.

And viruses are only one of the ways that malicious software spreads. Worms and Trojans are just as dangerous, and often harder to protect against.

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Not getting the flow of potential new customers that you'd like at your Web site? You're not alone. Here are four ways to increase your site's ranking at the search sites and, in turn, traffic.

1. Check the coding. Search sites are constantly crawling the Internet and indexing Web sites. Once a site is indexed, it is ranked based on complex algorithms.

Each algorithm is different. But generally, they incorporate such factors as encoded keywords, written content on your site and links from other sites.

Work with your Web designer to ensure keywords, such as the title, meta tag and meta description, are carefully worded. The more specific, the better. Or, if you built your own Web site, include this information between the <HEAD> tags.

For more information, read each search engine's help page. Start with the top three search engines. According to Nielsen//NetRatings, those are Google, Yahoo! and MSN.

<http://www.google.com/webmasters/>

<http://help.yahoo.com/help/us/ysearch/indexing/index.html>

<http://beta.search.msn.com/docs/siteowner.aspx?FORM=WMDD2>

2. Link with others. The more sites that link to yours, the higher your page will be ranked by search sites. There are many link exchanges that will get hundreds of Web sites to link to your site. But don't register with them, because this method can backfire.

Search engines look at not only the number of links to your site, but the quality as well. If you are linked by sites with questionable or zero content, your page ranking can actually go down.

Handpick the Web sites that you would like to link to yours. Look for sites that are complementary, not competitive. Link to a site before you request a reciprocal link. Then e-mail the Webmaster with a short note explaining why his site should link to yours.

3. Advertise your site. A quick way to get noticed is to purchase advertising on a search engine's site. These short ads can be seen immediately above and to the right of search results. You pay only when someone clicks on your ad. And the cost-per-click rate can range from less than five cents to over \$100. However, you set the per-click rate. You can also set daily spending limits so you don't break your budget.

Google AdWords (<https://adwords.google.com/select/>) feeds ads to the Google search engine as well as the Google Network. The Google Network includes AOL, Ask Jeeves, Netscape and others.

Google AdWords uses a Traffic Estimator that will suggest a cost-per-click rate, estimate the number of daily clicks and the average position you'll likely receive. There's a \$5 activation fee and no monthly minimum budget.

Overture (<http://www.content.overture.com/d/>) provides advertising to AltaVista, MSN, Yahoo! and other sites. You must spend at least \$20 monthly, and the minimum cost-per-click rate is 10 cents. For a one-time service fee of \$199, you can sign up for the Fast Track program. That entitles you to extra assistance in maintaining and optimizing your ads.

Don't forget free advertising. Your Web site's address should be on e-mail, stationery, t-shirts and anything else that will be seen by others.

4. Hire a consultant. Search engine optimization consultants will evaluate your Web site's design, content and ease of use and make necessary changes. Expect to pay several hundred dollars for an initial analysis. After that, you'll be charged an hourly rate or a flat fee for monthly or quarterly monitoring.

Look for consultants that belong to affiliations like the Better Business Bureau and SeoPros.org. Take a look at consultants' client lists. Ask for a code of ethics. And be wary of anyone who guarantees a specific ranking. They cannot control rankings.

Search engine optimization software is available. But I think this job requires the human touch. There are just too many subtleties involved.





Education SIG

The Educational Podcast Network

So you have heard about Podcasts and are probably wondering how does it fit into the education picture. With the addition of Podcast authoring to Garageband, a free program included on every new Mac and available in iLife 06, Podcasting has become easier than ever. How do teachers use this new technology to improve the educational process? A good place to go is the Educational Podcast Network (<http://www.epnweb.org>).

About EPN

The Education Podcast Network is an effort to bring together into one place, the wide range of podcast programming that may be helpful to teachers looking for content to teach with and about, and to explore issues of teaching and learning in the 21st century.



Most of the producers of these programs are educators, who have found an avenue through which they can share their knowledge, insights, and passions for teaching and learning and for the stories that they relish and teach. The directory will grow as more people come forward with their stories and ideas, and we hope that you will start to share your ideas with the larger education community by producing your own program.

Warning: Due to the nature of the Internet, the provider of this service cannot assure the appropriateness of the programming that is available beyond this web site. Therefore, neither David Warlick, nor The Landmark Project are responsible for content that does not originate with The Landmark Project. This web site is intended for professional educators and all audio content should be previewed by the teacher before being made available to students.

What Is a Podcast?

The best way to understand podcasting is to imagine a merger between blogging (*regularly posted articles of news, insight, fun, grips, literature, and more*) and radio (*an established broadcasting medium that people have listened to for news and entertainment for generations*).

Podcasting is essentially radio programming that can be produced with a standard computer, microphone, free software, and a web site for posting your programming.

Podcasting can be listened to with any computer connected to the Internet and able to play standard MP3 audio files.

In the purest form of the term, Podcasts are published as RSS feeds (most blogging software features RSS feed generation). Listeners are notified of new programs by their aggregators, which then download the programs and then transfer them to the listener's MP3 audio player, such as an iPod. Get it? *Podcasting!*

There are thousands of podcast programs available on the net, and their numbers are growing daily. Teachers, lawyers, doctors, housewives, children, and even classrooms podcast. *In the future, everyone will be famous for fifteen people.*¹

How Do I?

How do I find a Podcast on EPN?

EPN is a directory of Podcast programs. The best way to find a podcast in the area that you work is to go to the directory listing in the left panel of the web page and click the subject area that is most related to your interests. A list of podcasts programs in that area will spread down. To view a list of individual shows, click the program title. After a moment, the show's listing will appear in the middle panel. From this listing you can:

- Click the program title to access the web site for the podcast program,
- Click the show title to access the web page for a particular show,
- Click the podcast icon to listen to the show, or
- Use the RSS clicklet to subscribe to the program.



How do I subscribe to a Podcast Program?

Most podcast programs publish themselves as RSS Feeds. An RSS feed is a file that is updated each time the podcaster publishes a new show. This file contains information that describes the program and each show that has been published for the program. The information is formatted with a language called XML that makes the information easy to understand by other computers. This is very important and is going to have an enormous impact on how we use information in the future.

To subscribe to a podcast, you need an aggregator. This is a web site or software program that helps you to organized podcast programs, blogs, and other syndicated (RSS) feeds. In order to subscribe to a podcast, all you need to do is to tell your aggregator where the RSS feed file is. The aggregator does all of the rest.

Here are steps for subscribing to a podcast using iPodder, a free podcast aggregator.

Download and install the iPodder program. Go to the iPodder web site (<http://ipodder.org/>) and then click Download iPodder in the menu to the right.

Several folders will appear for various computer platforms. iPodder is currently available for Windows, Macintosh, and Linux computers. There are also other podcast aggregators available for nearly all platforms, but these instructions will apply only to iPodder.

Open the folder for your computer, Windows or Macintosh, and then click the download link for your computer platform. The SourceFORGE download page will appear. Click the file icon to the right of the location that is closest to you, though any of them will do (unless the Moscow version is written in Cyrillic).

After the file has downloaded to your computer, double-click it to install iPodder.

Run iPodder. There will be a number of tabs at the top of the application, including: Downloads, Subscriptions, Podcast directory, and Cleanup. Click the Subscribe tab to add a podcast to your iPodder.

Return to EPN and select a podcast, to which you would like to subscribe. When you click the podcast from the directory, a listing of shows will appear in the middle panel with an orange "RSS" clicklet image will appear to the right of the program description. Right-click on this image and select "Copy link location" from the popup menu in order to copy the feeds URL address into your clipboard. The wording in the menu may vary depending on the browser that you are using.

Return to iPodder, and click the green plus (+) button to add a new program. A small dialog window will appear. Paste your copied URL into the URL textbox, then click the Save button.

You can schedule download times by clicking the scheduler button. This will allow you to set specific times for iPodder to check for new podcast shows. You can have it check at regular intervals, say every two hours.

The magic happens when you drop down the File menu and select Preferences. Here you can click the Player tab and select "Windows Media Player" to have all downloaded shows forwarded to a WMP playlist, or to "iTunes" for iTunes playlists. If using iTunes, the next time you connect your iPod, the shows will automatically be transferred to your mobile media play. *Podcasting.*

How do I create a Podcast Program?

There are a number of pieces of software that enable people to produce podcasts. Probably one of the easiest is the new version of Garageband that comes on all new Macs. We will take a look at this feature at our next meeting.

GarageBand 3

GarageBand 3 takes your podcasts beyond mere audio, letting you add a podcast artwork track so listeners can see what they're hearing. Add to your podcast artwork track by dragging in images from the iLife Media Browser. Drag in a title card with the name of your podcast and a picture of you. Or use GarageBand to set a few podcast chapter markers — complete with links to any relevant websites — and drag in different images that correspond with each marker, so listeners can see visual cues as they follow along on their iPods. Just position images on the artwork track so they sync up with your vocal track and chapter markers.

Say, for example, the latest episode of your technology podcast features reviews of the best new mobile phones. Just drag in photos of the each phone so your listeners know exactly which one you're reviewing. Or add some mouth-watering, step-by-step visuals to your weekly cooking podcast.

And since attracting new fans is half the fun of podcasting, GarageBand lets you create podcast episode tags with title, author, and description to help identify your podcast in iTunes Music Store searches, so you can find an instant audience.



Apple Ambassador

Continued from page 2.

These days Apple users are almost unbearably smug when the subject turns to malware. I was invited to appear on Radio Four's You and Yours this week to talk about viruses and other malware and our focus was on issues with Windows since it is the most commonly used operating system.

After the show we got dozens of e-mails from complacent Mac users pointing out that they were safe and suggesting that people simply abandon Windows if they want to be secure

It would certainly be wonderful if the Macintosh computer and its operating system were immune to attack but this is just wishful thinking. Mac OS is certainly a lot better than Windows, but being better isn't nearly enough.

Mac OS may not have the gaping holes that let viruses spread, but worms, spyware and even keyloggers are out there.

They can't spread as easily, and most would only be installed by a careless user clicking "Accept" on a dodgy install dialog, but the regular stream of security fixes from Apple's software update service makes it clear that there are real dangers.

After all, Mac OS is built on top of the Unix operating system and it, like its close relative Linux, has many well-known security problems that can allow it to be compromised.

Owner occupier

Sometimes Apple make things worse. For example, widgets, small programs that can do things like search online dictionaries or let you listen to streamed BBC programs, can be installed without your permission when you visit a website using the Safari browser, just like Windows does with ActiveX controls. It took Apple weeks to fix this.

Windows gets most attention from virus writers

And though Microsoft's tribulations over the recently-discovered vulnerability in the way Windows Meta File images are handled made the papers, accompanied by howls of protest from those who wanted the company to rush out

an untested fix, a similar flaw in Apple's own QuickTime received very little publicity.

Any Mac user who believes they are totally safe is being reckless with their files and personal information. What's worse, they are also being reckless with mine.

One reason why there aren't many malicious Mac programs is that there are fewer Mac users out there, but the fact that some have been written shows that they are possible in principle.

If the millions of internet-connected Macs are left open to attack then this increases the chance that an effective Trojan or piece of spyware will reach critical mass and spread rapidly, and it also increases the incentive for a bright programmer to write Mac-specific malware that could affect me.

It's exactly like the spread of infectious diseases, and one of the reasons why we vaccinate our children against many illnesses that are now uncommon. If we maintain what is called "herd immunity", then even if there is an outbreak, it will not spread and become an epidemic.

There may not be any Mac viruses at the moment, and the way the system handles user accounts and security means that they are unlikely, but we need to take steps to safeguard ourselves against other malicious software.

As things stand, the Mac community has no herd immunity because most users seem to assume that they don't need to take preventive action.

Although the risk of a malicious Mac program spreading as quickly as any Windows one is very low, it should not be ruled out. After all, the very first internet worm, back in 1988, affected Unix systems with a security model very similar to Mac OS.

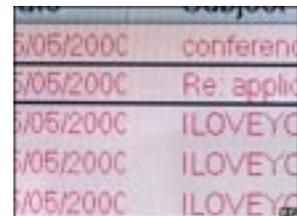
The Mac ships with a good firewall, and it should be used. There are tools to scan your system for known malicious programs or to check whether it has been hacked into, and they should be used too.

Mac users demonstrate an indefensible smugness when it comes to the dangers of having their systems compromised by malicious software and opened up to exploitation by others. It's time they started behaving a bit more responsibly.

Bill Thompson is a regular commentator on the BBC World Service programme Go Digital



Mac users demonstrate an indefensible smugness when it comes to the dangers of having their systems compromised by malicious software and opened up to exploitation by others



Tiger Tips

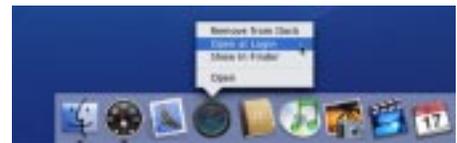
Faster Than Slide Show for Finding a Photo

By now you've heard that if your search results contain photos, you can see a slide show of those photos (by pressing Enter or clicking on Show All in the Spotlight menu once you've entered a search term, and then in the Spotlight dialog that appears, you can click on the little Play button to the right of the Images category). The slide show thing is handy, no doubt, but you can also use it to get to a particular photo you want quickly. Here's how: Start the slide show (click the little Play button), and then immediately click the Index Sheet icon in the slide show controls that appear along the bottom of your screen. This tiles thumbnails of all the photos in your slide show onscreen (giving you an Index Sheet view), so you can jump right to the photo you need, saving you the frustration of slowly wading through a slide show when you just want to quickly find one particular photo.



Super Shortcut to Having an App Load at Login

If you'd like a particular application to open every time you log into (or start up) your Mac, now all you have to do is Control-click (or click-and-hold) on the application's Dock icon and choose Open at Login from the pop-up menu. Now restart your Mac and the application will launch automatically. If you want to hide the application after it automatically launches (so it stays hidden from view until you click on it in the Dock), here's how: Go under the Apple menu (or to the Dock) to System Preferences. In the System Preferences pane, click on the Accounts icon, then in the Accounts pane, click on the Login Items tab. Now click on the Hide checkbox next to the application's name. Close the dialog and your application's set.



Drag-and-Drop Desktop Printing

Want the ability to print a document right from your desktop (without opening the application first)? Go under the Apple menu, under System Preferences, and choose Print & Fax. When the preference pane appears, click on the Printer Setup button, and when the Printer Info dialog appears, press Command-L to show the Printer List dialog. Your printer will appear in this dialog. Click on it, then go up under the Printers menu (in the menu bar) and choose Create Desktop Printer. A standard Open/Save dialog will appear asking you where you want to save it (I save mine on the desktop). Click Save and an icon for your printer will appear on the desktop. To print a document, just drag-and-drop it on this icon. Some documents, such as TextEdit files and PDFs, will go straight to the printer. Other files will launch their default application and open the Print dialog.



Narrowing Your Search by Giving Spotlight a Hint

If you want to narrow your search right off the bat, you can add a category when you type the term in the Search field. For example, if you're looking for a song named "Vertigo" (by the band U2), there's no sense in having Spotlight bring you a list of email messages from your ear doctor, right? So if you give Spotlight a hint as to what you're looking for, you can get just songs as your Spotlight search results. Here's how: Type "kind:music" (with no space in between or quotations), then add one space and type "Vertigo" (again, you don't need the quotes). So your search will look like this: kind:music Vertigo. Now it will only search songs, and you'll only get song results. Schweet!

