



The *GAB'er*

The Newsletter of the Greater Albany Apple Byters

Volume 23, Number 9 - March 2007

Mac Rumors

6th Generation iPod Tracking For Late 2007? Early 2008?

Users hoping for a refreshed widescreen iPod (without cellular capabilities as in the iPhone) will get their wish as early as the third calendar quarter of this year if a report from AppleInsider holds true. However, the site does note that the timing is dependent on the iPhone rollout and could be put off until early next year.

Among the potential challenges believed to be facing Apple ahead of its sixth-generation iPod launch is a required margin of differentiation between the player and iPhone, both of which are expected to carry relatively similar price points upon availability.

The site also mentions the possibility that lower NAND flash prices could pave way for Apple to deliver a 32 GB flash-based iPod with increased battery life and even sleeker design. The claim is similar to one in early February by analyst Jesse Tortora, who said that Apple would be moving to a totally flash-based lineup by the end of 2007.

MacRumors Analysis: While the addition of a flash-based iPod is a very real possibility, we think it is very unlikely for Apple to decrease the storage capacity in their high-end iPods and thus cut out users that have larger music/movie libraries. A speculative solution would be to have one model be flash based and a higher-capacity model be HDD based.



Coordinator's Corner

by John Buckley

What is a Wiki?

We will try again to look at Wiki's and hopefully the weather will cooperate.



Many may be familiar with Wikipedia, the online free encyclopedia, but exactly what is a Wiki and how can we use them,

A Wiki can be thought of as a combination of a Web site and a Word document. At its simplest, it can be read just like any other web site, with no access privileges necessary, but its real power lies in the fact that groups can collaboratively work on the content of the site using nothing but a standard web browser. Beyond this ease of editing, the second powerful element of a wiki is its ability to keep track of the history of a document as it is revised. Since users come to one place to edit, the need to keep track of Word files and compile edits is eliminated. Each time a person makes changes to a wiki page, that revision of the content becomes the current version, and an older version is stored. Versions of the document can be

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Next GAAB Meeting
March 14, 2007

Wikipedia

7:00 p.m.
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

Here is some of the latest news about Apple Macintosh Computers from different news services on the web.

Apple may use flash memory for notebooks: analyst
Philipp Gollner, Reuters
Published: Thursday, March 08, 2007

by Philipp Gollner

SAN FRANCISCO (Reuters) - Apple Inc. may sell zippy notebook computers later this year that use the same type of fast memory as music players and digital cameras, driving down prices of hard-disk drives, an analyst said on Thursday.

The maker of the popular iPod music player and Macintosh computers hopes to introduce so-called flash memory in small computers known as subnotebooks in the second half of 2007, Shaw Wu, an analyst at American Technology Research who has a "buy" rating on Apple shares and does not own any stock, said in investor notes on Wednesday and Thursday.

A shift to flash memory in place of much slower hard-disk drives would eliminate one headache for consumers: lengthy start-up times when turning on computers.

Apple of Cupertino, California, already uses flash memory in its iPod Nano and iPod Shuffle music players. Flash memory is lighter, uses less power and takes up less space than hard-disk drives.

Wu, who was among the first analysts to forecast the unveiling of Apple's iPhone music player/phone earlier this year, cited unnamed industry sources as the basis for his report.

"The time is right for the flash makers to make a move" as flash memory prices decline, Wu said by telephone. "Apple, from what we understand, is pretty much ready. The ball is in the flash vendors' court."

Apple spokeswoman Lynn Fox said the company does not comment "on rumor and speculation." Apple shares were

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HD Radio technology has been around since 2002. But American radio stations and manufacturers are finally pushing it. You may have heard the advertisements.

If you're considering HD Radio, there are some things you should know.

Promise of clearer sound

Many people assume that the HD stands for "high definition." In reality, though, HD Radio is simply a trademarked brand name of iBiquity, which invented and manufactures the broadcast equipment.

HD Radio does deliver clearer sound than traditional radio. FM stations are broadcast in CD quality. AM stations are broadcast in FM quality. You can definitely hear a difference between HD and regular radio.

HD Radio is transmitted with a digital signal. It is carried within the existing AM or FM signal, much as FM stereo is carried with the original FM mono signal. The HD Radio signal is completely free of static, pops, fades and crackles. Also, HD Radio is less prone to drops and reflections from interference.

Satellite vs. HD Radio

Satellite radio requires a subscription. But with HD Radio, there is nothing to pay. Programming will always be free.

Satellite radio offers hundreds of stations. HD Radio, on the other hand, is broadcast by current local over-the-air stations. And, unlike satellite radio, HD Radio stations are subject to FCC indecency regulations.

But HD Radio allows local stations to introduce new programming. FM stations retain their current analog broadcasts. But they're also able to carry two digital audio

channels. AM stations have their current analog channel and a new digital audio channel.

This means that an FM station could have a top 40 broadcast on one audio channel and an all-news or sports broadcast on the other. The broadcasts would occur simultaneously. The frequency of the FM station might be 98.1. The station's new HD channels would appear on the HD radio as 98.1-1 and 98.1-2.

HD Radio also allows broadcasters to transmit information about what's playing. Radios can display the song title and artist name.

Or, HD could provide financial quotes and traffic information. This would appear on a scrolling screen on the radio.

Analog broadcasts

With an HD Radio, you can still pick up traditional non-digital, analog broadcasts, just as you can watch black and white programs on a color television. That's because many broadcasters have not yet converted their stations to HD Radio.

When a station adds HD Radio, the digital signal is automatically received by your HD Radio receiver. The station's dial position remains the same. The digital signal will be broadcast with the analog.

The radio will initially pick up the analog signal. After a couple of seconds, the HD signal kicks in. You can hear the switch.

Not all stations are HD Radio

Eventually, there will be thousands of HD radio signals across America. In the meantime, if you're considering an

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Education SIG

Bill Gates Calls for Ed-Data Center

from eSchool News staff and wire service reports

Also needed, he tells Senate lawmakers: Redesigned curriculum, more-challenging standards, and stronger math, science, and technology education

America needs a Center for State Education Data to aggregate student information and identify what works and what doesn't in our schools, Microsoft Chairman Bill Gates told Congress on March 7.



The world's richest man also reiterated his call for an overhaul of the nation's schools and asked lawmakers to revamp immigration laws to keep jobs from going overseas and to maintain American competitiveness in the new global economy.

"The U.S. cannot maintain its economic leadership unless our work force consists of people who have the knowledge and skills needed to drive innovation," Gates told the Senate committee that oversees labor and education issues.

Gates, whose charitable foundation has given away more than \$3 billion since 1999 for educational programs and scholarships, noted that about 30 percent of U.S. ninth-graders fail to graduate on time. "As a nation, we should start with this goal: Every child in the United States graduating from high school," he said.

Gates challenged lawmakers to push for higher educational standards and to make more challenging coursework available to students.

A federal study released last month showed about a third of high schoolers fail to take a standard-level curriculum, which is defined as including at least four credits of English and three credits each of social studies, math, and science.

Besides higher standards, school leaders also must understand how well their schools and students are performing relative to these standards, Gates said.

"Data collection systems must be transparent and accurate so that we can understand what is working and what isn't and for whom," he said. "Therefore, we need data by race

and income. I urge this committee to support the creation of a Center for State Education Data, which will serve as a national resource for state education data and will provide one-stop access for education research and policy makers, along with a public web site to streamline education data reporting."

But it's not enough just to collect data. "We also need to use the data we collect to implement change, including by personalizing learning to make it more relevant and engaging for students—and thereby truly ensure that no child is left behind," Gates said.

He also called for an overhaul of the curriculum and pedagogy in America's schools to better reflect the realities of today's digital society.

"Our current expectations for what our students should learn in school were set fifty years ago to meet the needs of an economy based on manufacturing and agriculture. We now have an economy based on knowledge and technology," Gates told the panel.

"Despite the best efforts of many committed educators and administrators, our high schools have simply failed to adapt to this change. As any parent knows, however, our children have not [failed to adapt]—they are fully immersed in digital culture. As a result, while most students enter high school wanting to succeed, too many end up bored, unchallenged, and disengaged from the high school curriculum—"digital natives" caught up in an industrial-age learning model."

The nation's schools must take steps to ensure that curricula are engaging and relevant to students' current needs, he said. A model for this is the Partnership for 21st Century Skills, of which Microsoft is a member.

"This unique partnership of education, government, and business leaders seeks to help schools adapt their curricula and classroom environments to align more closely with the skills that students need to succeed in the 21st-century



economy, such as communication and problem-solving skills,” Gates explained.

Gates also called on lawmakers to give more resources and attention to improving the teaching of math and science—knowledge essential to many of today’s jobs. Another recent federal study found 40 percent of high school seniors failed to perform at the basic level on a national math test. On a national science test, half of 12th-graders didn’t show basic skills.

“We simply cannot sustain an economy based on innovation unless our citizens are educated in math, science, and engineering,” Gates said.

The economy’s need for workers trained in these fields is “massive—and growing,” Gates said. He said the U.S. Department of Labor has projected that, from 2004 to 2014, there will be more than two million job openings in the United States in these fields. Yet in 2004, just 11 percent of all higher-education degrees awarded in the U.S. were in engineering, mathematics, and the physical sciences—“a decline of about a third since 1960.”

Recent declines are most pronounced in computer science, he said. The percentage of college freshmen planning to major in computer science reportedly dropped by 70 percent between 2000 and 2005.

“In an economy in which computing has become central to innovation in nearly every sector, this decline poses a serious threat to American competitiveness,” Gates said. “Indeed, it would not be an exaggeration to say that every significant technological innovation of the 21st century will require new software to make it happen.”

The problem begins in high school, he said: Too many students enter college without the basics needed to major in science and engineering.

Legislation moving through the Senate, backed by Democratic and Republican leaders, seeks to get more people to become math and science teachers and would improve training for them. The bill also seeks to get more highly trained teachers in poor schools and would offer grants to states to better align their teaching with what kids should know to succeed at a job or in college.

“High schools are emerging around the country that focus on math and science, and they are successfully engaging students who have long been underrepresented in these fields,” Gates said—“schools like the School of Science and Technology in Denver, Aviation High School in Seattle, and University High School in Hartford, Connecticut.

These schools have augmented traditional teaching methods with new technologies and a rigorous, project-centered curriculum, and their students know they are expected to go on to college. This combination is working to draw more young people, especially more African-American and Hispanic young people, to study math and science.”

Schools also are teaming up with the private sector to strengthen high school math and science education, Gates said, and he cited the Microsoft Math Partnership—a public-private initiative designed to focus new attention on improving middle-school math education for schools in Washington state—as a good example.

Gates also said the nation’s economy depends on keeping the country’s borders open to highly skilled workers, especially those with a science or engineering background. Federal law provides 65,000 H1-B visas for scientists, engineers, computer programmers, and other professionals every budget year. High-tech and other employers say that’s not enough.

“Even though it may not be realistic, I don’t think there should be any limit,” Gates said, adding that Microsoft hasn’t been able to fill approximately 3,000 technical jobs in the United States because of a shortage of skilled workers.

Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, D-Mass., chairman of the Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions, said the issue would be addressed when Congress takes up broad immigration reform legislation this session.

President Bush has expressed support for raising the visa cap.

Gates—who is No. 1 on Forbes magazine’s list of richest Americans—also told the committee in response to a question that he opposes repeal of the federal estate tax. Current law will phase out the tax by 2010, but without further action by Congress it will be restored at a 55 percent rate in 2011.



Program Coordinator

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compared side-by-side, and edits can be “rolled back” if necessary.

We will look a Wiki’s and how to use them and some of the pitfalls in using this type of software online.

As with all meetings, we will have a good Open Question period during the first hour. This part of the meeting is especially 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. So bring your questions and get ready to get your hands clicking a mouse and hitting the keys.

Also be aware that our website is available at <http://www.applebyters.com> as well as at <http://homepage.mac.com/applebyters>.

The March meeting will be held at Troy High School in room 212 on Wednesday, March 14, 2007. The meeting will begin at 7:00 p.m.

Apple Ambassador

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up 60 cents, or 0.7 percent, at \$88.32 in early afternoon trading on Nasdaq.

A transition to flash memory for computers could put pressure on makers of traditional hard-disk drives including Seagate Technology , the largest U.S. hard-disk drive maker, Wu said.

Apple, known as a technology innovator, would be among the first personal computer makers to use flash memory for storing data in computers, a step that some chip memory makers, including Micron Technology Inc., have said is inevitable as prices for flash decline and storage capacity increases.

Flash memory chips have solid state circuitry that uses no moving parts, making them less vulnerable to damage than hard-disk drives. Prices of flash memory have been declining rapidly but are still higher than those for hard-disk drives, Wu said, meaning early flash-based computers would be more expensive.

Apple would use a miniature version of its Mac OS X operating system in the flash-based subnotebook computers, Wu said, again citing unnamed sources. The computers could be introduced in the second half of this year, he said.

Apple Fixes for QuickTime, iTunes

Techtree News Staff, March 6, 2007

According to reports, Apple Computer has released 8 security fixes for the OS X and Windows versions of its QuickTime media player software. The company also released a security update for its iTunes software.

The company said that the QuickTime security update, version 7.1.5, delivers numerous bug fixes and addresses critical security issues. The fixes are for 8 flaws, all of which affect current versions of QuickTime for Windows Vista, XP, and 2000. And, seven of the vulnerabilities also affect OS X versions 10.3.9 and later. Besides, the update is recommended for all QuickTime 7 users.

In the security alert, Apple says the vulnerabilities in QuickTime expose both Macs and Windows PCs to cyber attacks. And, in all cases, an attacker could craft a malicious file which, when opened with QuickTime, could give the miscreant full control over a computer running the software.

Apple also pointed out that the problems lie in the way QuickTime handles a number of formats. The security update repairs problems in the way the software handles QuickTime, MIDI, 3GP, PICT, and QTIF files. And along with the fixes, QuickTime 7.1.5 also includes some functionality improvements.

The company has also released an update to iTunes with version 7.1, allowing users to enjoy their favorite iTunes movies, TV shows, music, and more with the upcoming Apple TV, which is due for release later this month. This update also supports a new full screen Cover Flow, and improved sorting options to let users decide how iTunes should sort their favorite artists, albums, and songs.

Meanwhile, iTunes 7.1 and QuickTime 7.1.5 are available for download from Apple’s Web site, or via the software update mechanism in Mac OS X.



Mac Tips

The Ultimate Customize Toolbar Shortcut

If you want to customize the items in your toolbar (and there's nothing wrong with that), just Command-Option-click the little white pill-shaped button at the top right of your window's title bar, and the Customize Toolbar dialog will appear, right there in your window. Now you can just drag-and-drop icons onto the toolbar.



Become the Ultimate Menu Master

Want to really speed things up? How about jumping right to the Apple menu without even clicking the mouse? Just press Control-F2, press Return, and the Apple menu pops down (if you're using a MacBook, press Function-Control-F2). Oh, but there's more! Now that you're in the Apple menu, press the Right Arrow key on your keyboard to move to the other menus (Finder, File, Edit, View, etc.) and the Left Arrow to move back. Once you get to the menu you want, press Return, then type the first letter of the command you want in the menu and it jumps right there. Now press Return again to choose that command (and you did it all without ever touching the mouse).



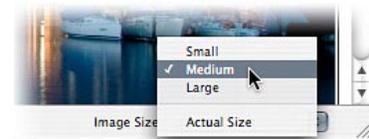
Creating Aliases Without the Word "Alias"

Do you find it as annoying as I do that Mac OS X adds the word "alias" every time you create an alias? (I know, previous versions of the Mac OS did that as well, and it annoyed me there too.) Well, you can bypass the "adding-the-word-alias" uglies altogether by holding the Option and Command keys and clicking-and-dragging the original file outside the Finder window it's currently in (I usually just drag mine to the desktop). This creates an alias without the word "alias" attached. (Note: Don't worry, you'll still know it's an alias, because its icon will have a tiny arrow at the bottom left-hand corner.)



Resizing Photos for Emailing

Have you ever noticed how freaked out relatives get when you email them high-res photos from your six- or eight-meg digital camera? For example, your grandmother in Minnesota may not have Photoshop CS2, and so dealing with that 26MB, 41-inch-wide photo you shot with your eight-meg camera might put a strain on her system. That's why you might want to reduce the size of those photos you're about to email. You don't even have to launch Photoshop — because you can do the resizing right within Mail.



After you attach a photo to your email message (you can just drag-and-drop the image into the New Message window), take a look in the bottom-right corner of your email message window, and you'll see a pop-up menu where you can choose the Image Size you'd like to send. As soon as you choose a size (other than Actual Size), the image is immediately scaled down right within the email message window so you can see the exact size of the photo you're sending.



The Redmond Copying Machine?

by David Pogue, New York Times

My recent video, which tweaked Microsoft for crowing about its “innovation” in Windows Vista (without acknowledging its huge debt to Mac OS X), triggered plenty of reaction. It probably comes as no surprise that your comments quickly devolved into “which is better” bickering, which will probably never end.

Some of you claim, with much anger and swearing, that Apple steals from Microsoft just as much as the other way.

My response to one such response: “You’re right—very few things were actually invented wholesale by Apple. The mouse, menus, overlapping windows, the CD drive, Wi-Fi wireless, and so on—all of these things were developed elsewhere.

“But Apple *standardized* them. Chose them, recognized their potential, perfected them, made them over in its own way, and brought them to the masses.

“In Vista, on the other hand, Microsoft did not select unrecognized features, did not have any particular vision in knowing what would work and what wouldn’t, did not put its own stamp on anything. It simply waited for Apple to recognize and perfect good technologies, then duplicated them bit for bit. Oh, and then claim to be a leader in innovation. That’s quite a difference!”

Then this e-mail message, which arrived today from a guy who says he worked as a Microsoft temp employee from 2003 to 2004. I’ve agreed not to publish his name.

“Dear David: In your article on December 14, 2006, you stated: ‘You get the feeling that Microsoft’s managers put Mac OS X on an easel and told the programmers, ‘Copy that.’

“[When I worked at Microsoft,] I was given a badge that allowed me entry to all but a few of the Microsoft buildings. One of the things that caught my eye was a large grid on the wall of a hallway in the building that housed the engineers that worked on Windows Media Player—building 50, on the 2nd or 3rd floor.

“The grid was labeled across the top with A, B, C, etc., and down the left with 1,2,3, like a game of Battleship. The grid was made of 8.5~11-inch pages, landscape

orientation, showing color screenshots from Apple’s iTunes software. Each sheet was a different screen of the application: each tab of a preference panel, each info window, everything.

“Around the corner was another grid, showing the RealPlayer application. This grid was the same: grid A1 was the front user view of the application, mirroring what was on the iTunes wall/grid.

“Around the next corner was *another* grid, this one showing Windows Media Player version 9 !! This one was missing a few tiles in the grid, but you could actually see the progress as each feature [of iTunes and RealPlayer] was copied, square for square.

“Amazing. New software is put out, a manager sees it and decides that the creative part of their day is making color screen captures of the software and presenting it to the copying—er, engineering team.”

I doubt you’ll have any reactions to THIS (evil grin), but thought I’d share it with you just the same. Could it be legit? Or are we being put on by yet another fanner of the flames?

Internet SIG

Continued from page 3.

HD Radio receiver, check that your favorite stations are using HD Radio.

The HD Radio Web site lists stations that are broadcasting HD Radio.

You’ll need a new radio

The HD Radio Web site also lists HD Radio receivers available. Expect to pay about \$200 for a car unit. Eventually, HD Radio receivers will probably be standard in most vehicles.

Home receivers vary widely in price. Expect to pay \$300 or more. Some include docks for your iPod. Others allow you to add tuners for Sirius and XM satellite radios. Many have built-in CD players.

Polk Audio, Boston Acoustics and Cambridge Sound Works all make HD Radios.



