

SSMUG NEWSLETTER

May 2008

Meeting Notice

All meetings, June through November, will be at the Grande Prairie Library at 3479 W 183rd St., Hazel Crest. The December meeting will be held at the Homewood Public Library.

REQUEST

What do you want to see in the newsletter? I'm trying to gather information and clippings for you and I need to know what you want to know about. My email is editor@ssmug.org.

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NEW SOFTWARE

www.apple.com

www.versiontracker.com

www.macdownload.com

Software Suggestion from Apple

The License type is listed in parenthesis following the description. For more details visit www.apple.com and look in the 'Downloads' section.

Dejumble 1.0...

4/23/2008

The fast, simple way to organize your tasks.

(Shareware)

FarFinder

4/23/2008

Remote access to your files by web browser and iPhone.

(Shareware)

Dialectic 1.0.1

04/23/2008 System-wide address book menu and scriptable dialer.

(Shareware)

Squirrel 0.5

4/21/2008

Simple personal finance application that helps you track and plan your finances.

(Shareware)

Peak Pro 6.0.1

04/23/2008

Audio editing, processing, and mastering.

(Demo)

Afloat 2.0r4 | Staff Pick

04/23/2008 Afloat adds useful window management & eye candy to most Mac applications.

(Freeware)

CheckUp 1.1

04/23/2008

Monitor the health of your Mac with an innovative user interface.

(Demo)

Tiffen Dfx D...

4/21/2008

Offers something for everyone, whether photographer, cinematographer or editor

(Demo)

HotBox 1.0

4/18/2008

Make anything on screen become full screen

(Freeware)

Today 1.0

4/22/2008

Today is a desktop utility for managing your personal schedule.

(Shareware)

CheckUp 1.1

04/23/2008 Monitor the health of your Mac with an innovative user interface.

(Demo)

DeJumble 1.0

4/23/2008

The fast, simple way to organize your tasks.

(Shareware)

Business Card Composer 4.5

04/23/2008

Design and print business cards, calling cards and badges.

(Shareware)

Sublime 1.4

04/23/2008

A program to edit, spot, and render subtitles for DVD Studio Pro and Final Cut Studio.

(Demo)

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NEWS

Brain-Reading Headset to Sell for \$299

Wednesday February 20, 5:25 PM EST

NEW YORK (AP) — Hands cramping up from too many video games?

How about controlling games with your thoughts instead? Later this year, Emotiv Systems Inc. plans to start selling the \$299 EPOC neuroheadset to let you do just that.

The headset's sensors are designed to detect conscious thoughts and expressions as well as "non-conscious emotions" by reading electrical signals around the brain, says the company, which demonstrated the wireless gadget at the Game Developers Conference in San Francisco.

The company, which unveiled a prototype last year, says the headset can detect emotions such as anger, excitement and tension, as well as facial expressions and cognitive actions like pushing and pulling objects.

The headset will be sold with a game developed by Emotiv, but it can also be made to work with existing PC games, the

company said. Users will also be able to access an online portal to play more games, chat or upload their own content such as music or photos.

Emotiv plans to work with IBM Corp. to explore applications beyond video gaming. The "brain computer interface" technology could transform not only gaming, but how humans and computers interact, said Paul Ledak, vice president of IBM's Digital Convergence business.

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Switching

The following is an excerpt from an article from InfoWorld about Macintoshes entering the business world. The article itself is part of a special section on Macintoshes.

The Mac in business: it's easier than you think

From: InfoWorld

More users are demanding Macs in the enterprise. Thanks to key computing shifts, supporting their appetite for Apple is now a straightforward option for IT

By Galen Gruman

April 21, 2008

Once confined to marketing departments and media companies, the Mac is spilling over into a wider array of business environments, thanks to the confluence of a number of computing trends, not the least among them a rising tide of end-user affinity for the Apple experience.

Luckily for IT, many of those same trends are making it easier for tech departments to say yes to the Mac by facilitating IT's

ability to provide enterprise-grade Mac management and support.

"We're seeing more requests outside of creative services to switch to Macs from PCs," notes David Plavin, operations manager for Mac systems engineering at the U.S. IT division of Publicis Groupe, a global advertising conglomerate. There are so many requests that Plavin now supports 2,500 Macs across the U.S. -- nearly a quarter of all Publicis' U.S. PCs.

And Plavin is less of an anomaly than you might think. Buoyed by increased interest in the consumer arena, Macs are cropping up in more and more organizations, in large part because end-users are pushing for them.

According to NPD Research, Apple's share of the retail market has climbed to 14 percent as of February 2008. Gartner and IDC report that the Mac's share in the U.S. as of March 31 was 6.6 percent.

Perhaps a better barometer of the trend is the effect increased Mac sales are having at outsourcing firms, which have traditionally been reluctant to support the platform due to a perceived lack of market in the past.

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Couple this increasing attention to services with the falling away of another knock on the Mac, price, and you can see why even the federal government -- which has pockets of Mac users in a diverse set of agencies, including NASA, the U.S. Army, and the National Institute for Standards and Technology -- is prepping for increased use of Macs in business environments, having put together an official guide to implementing Mac security to conform to federal requirements.

<http://www.infoworld.com/>

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Apple Third Quarter Financials

On April 23, Apple posted revenue of \$7.51 billion and a net quarterly profit of \$1.05 billion, or \$1.16 per diluted share,

for its fiscal 2008 second quarter, which ended March 29. "We're delighted to report 43 percent revenue growth and the strongest March quarter revenue and earnings in Apple's history," said Steve Jobs. During the quarter, Apple shipped 2,289,000 Mac computers (representing 51 percent unit growth and 54 percent revenue growth over the year-ago quarter), sold 10,644,000 iPods, and reported quarterly iPhone sales of 1,703,000.

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Apple announced that iTunes is now the number two music retailer in the US, trailing only Wal-Mart.* The iTunes Store — now with over 50 million customers — has sold over four billion songs. In fact, it sold an incredible 20 million songs on Christmas Day 2007 alone. And with over six million songs from all of the major and thousands of independent labels, it offers the world's largest music catalog. * Based on the latest data from the NPD Group.

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April 11, 2008
PBS on iTunes University

From The War: A film by Ken Burns and Lynn Novick to The Jewish Americans: A Series by David Grubin to Meet the Author, featuring more than 40 interviews with top children's book authors and illustrators, WETA — Washington D.C.'s Public Broadcasting Station — delivers a rich assortment of educational programming for students, teachers, and parents alike. And they're not alone. Educational programming from four other PBS stations, including KQED, WGBH, thirteen, and ideastream can also be seen and heard on iTunes U. Take a look. And enjoy.

(APPLE RSS CAST)

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NEW HARDWARE



Updated iMac Introduced on April 28

The updated all-in-one iMac introduced today offers the latest Intel Core 2 Duo processors and the most powerful graphics ever available in an iMac. The ultimate all-in-one desktop computer includes faster processors with 6MB L2 cache, a faster 1066 MHz front-side bus across the entire line, and 2GB of memory standard in most models. And the 24-inch iMac now offers a 3.06 GHz Intel processor and the high-performance NVIDIA GeForce 8800 GS graphics as options. Available immediately, the new iMac starts at just \$1,199.

(from Apple)

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THE NEW, MORE-TO-LOVE MACBOOK



Faster is just the beginning. The new MacBook features the latest Intel Core 2 Duo processors, larger hard drives, and up to 2GB of memory standard. Best of all, MacBook still starts at \$1099. It's the same does-everything-you-want notebook but better.

Fast gets faster.

The new MacBook picks up considerable speed — up to 2.4GHz — with Intel's next-generation Core 2 Duo processor. Run your applications faster than ever before.

Two-finger scroll.

With two-finger scrolling, the trackpad becomes a fast track to wherever you want to go. And if you come from a right-click

world, it's easy to make the MacBook fit in your comfort zone. There are shortcuts for right-click functionality, forward delete, and more.

(from Apple)

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TIPS

Warning: Your Millage May Vary

(What people say will happen may not happen when you try it – be careful!)

I use the standard of “neat, I didn't know that” or, “I had better watch out for that” to select items for this section.

Booting in Safe Mode

A refresher from MacFixit (www.macfixit.com) on a topic discussed at the April meeting.

(To) boot in Safe Mode -- accomplished by holding down the Shift key while your Mac is starting up. After the safe boot, restart normally. A number of maintenance tasks are performed during the safe boot, and you might not need to perform any additional troubleshooting. You might receive a message indicating that the update has finished installing after performing the safe boot.

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QUESTION:

We have our son's old eMac and an old keyboard with the key to open the CD drawer (in the upper right corner).

How do we tell the eMac to open the CD drawer so we can insert a CD?

(We have a newer keyboard on the other computer, but I'd rather not

have to switch keyboards.)

ANSWER -- From TS

Try the F12 key. If it calls up Dashboard instead, try this:

1. open System Preferences under the Apple icon on the menu bar
2. select Keyboard & Mouse
3. select the Keyboard Shortcuts tab
4. scroll down to F12
5. uncheck the box if it shows Dashboard
6. close the window
7. try F12; it should open and close the CD drawer to open/close.

Good luck. Let me know if it works.

Todd

You could also see if any of these pieces of software will open the tray if a disk is not in there.

(The following URL will create a VersionTracker Search that locates software that opens the CD tray without a CD in the tray.

<http://versiontracker.com/php/qs.php?mode=basic&action=search&str=eject&srchArea=macosx&submit=Go>

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On the speed of Ethernet and Firewire

“Most Ethernet connections today are 100 Mbps. Firewire is 400 Mbps. On a 50' run, you shouldn't have any data loss, especially if the Macs are connected directly to one another.

However, if both your Macs have Gigabit Ethernet connections that run at 1000 Mbps, switching to Firewire will more than halve your throughput.”

Dave Markowitz

there's NO data or speed loss through a 50' Ethernet cable (length limit is 330').

Scott Ribe

(Mbps: Megabyte per Second)

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Q: How does one convert a URL to that “tinyurl” that I sometimes see?

A: You can download the system service here: <<http://tinyurl.com/2kymhm>>
Run the installer, restart your system, and you will have a new "system service" installed. Highlight the URL you want to shrink, and select [application name] --> Services --> Shrink URL to Clipboard. You'll find a similar device here: <<http://www.snipurl.com>>

Drag the "Snip!" bookmark to your toolbar. In some ways easier to use, in some ways not so much --- more mouse-clicks, and it's only good for the browser.

(The Safe Mode, cable speed and the TinyURL articles are from an email list I belong to: MacLaw – for Macintosh using Attorneys, with a few developers thrown in. In my experience their ‘listmind’ is very reliable.)

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MISC.

(Maybe I should re-title this section “SECURITY”)

The following article concerns a topic I think we might want to be aware of. I almost published a similar story in the February newsletter, but cut it. I am publishing this because the story did not go away right away.

Electronic gadgets latest sources of computer viruses

CNN 3 13 2008

(AP) -- From iPods to navigation systems, some of today's hottest gadgets are landing on store shelves with some unwanted extras from the factory: pre-installed viruses that steal passwords, open doors for hackers and make computers spew spam.

Computer consultant Jerry Askew says a digital photo frame tried to infect his computer with four viruses.

Computer users have been warned for years about virus threats from

downloading Internet porn and opening suspicious e-mail attachments. Now they run the risk of picking up a digital infection just by plugging a new gizmo into their PCs.

Recent cases reviewed by The Associated Press include some of the most widely used tech devices: Apple iPods, digital picture frames sold by Target and Best Buy stores, and TomTom navigation gear. In most cases, Chinese factories -- where many companies have turned to keep prices low -- are the source.

It's the digital equivalent of the recent series of tainted products traced to [China](#), including toxic toothpaste, poisonous pet food and toy trains coated in lead paint. But sloppiness is the simplest explanation, not the only one. If a virus is introduced at an earlier stage of production, by a corrupt employee or a hacker when software is uploaded to the gadget, then the problems could be far more serious and widespread.

(This only the first part of the story. A search of CNN's website should produce the rest, or email me at editor@ssmug.org and I will be happy to email it to you.)

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From AppliInsider



Friday, April 18, 2008

PayPal may block Safari users

By Aidan Malley

As part of a multi-tiered approach to guarding against online fraud on its site, PayPal says it will block the use of any web browser that doesn't provide added validation measures, potentially restricting the current version of Safari from the e-commerce site.

The money transfer service's Chief Information Security Officer, Michael

Barrett, makes the new policy clear in a white paper (PDF) posted this week, which highlights the browser as a key means of putting an end to phishing (false website) scams alongside such steps as blocking fraudulent e-mail messages and criminal charges.

When addressing web access, Barrett argues that any user visiting a financial site such as PayPal should know not only that their browser will block fake sites meant to steal information, but also that the browser can properly indicate a legitimate site. Without either precaution, visitors may not only be victims of scams but may lose all trust in an otherwise safe business. This doubly harmful outcome is likened to a car crash without protection.

"In our view, letting users view the PayPal site on one of these browsers is equal to a car manufacturer allowing drivers to buy one of their vehicles without seatbelts," the expert says.

To that end, PayPal is said to be implementing steps that will first provide warnings against, and eventually block, any browser that doesn't meet these criteria.

Most modern web browsers, including Firefox and newer versions of Microsoft's Internet Explorer, are able to support at least basic blocking of phishing sites. The newest, such as Internet Explorer 7 or the upcoming Firefox 3, also support a new feature known as an Extended Validation Secure Socket Layer (EV SSL) certificate. The measure of authenticity turns the address bar green and identifies the company running the site, letting the user know any secure transactions are genuine.

Safari, however, lacks either of these features and so could fall prey to the blocks and warning messages. Barrett doesn't mention the browser by name but notes that any "very old and vulnerable" software would ultimately be blacklisted from the future update to PayPal's service, placing Safari in the same category of dangerous clients as Microsoft's ten-year-old Internet Explorer 4.

Apple's approach to browser security has so far been tentative. The Mac maker has briefly incorporated Google's database of fraudulent sites into a beta builds of Mac OS X Leopard this past fall, only to pull the feature in later test versions. Release builds of the stand-alone browser for both Macs and Windows PCs have also gone without the anti-phishing warnings, but notably leave code traces inside the software that raise the possibility of improvements through a later update.

Apple hasn't responded to the white paper but is likely to face pressure as PayPal and similar institutions ask for an all-encompassing approach to fighting scams that involves EV SSL and other software techniques. ...”

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FEEL GOOD

MARCH 3 2008: 9:40 AM EST

What makes Apple golden

By Betsy Morris, senior editor

NEW YORK (Fortune) -- The mass market is supposed to be dead, but you would never know it from Apple. In February the iTunes Store became the second-largest music retailer in the U.S., right behind Wal-Mart. The iPod is to music players what Kleenex is to tissue or Xerox is to copiers. Almost everything Apple makes transcends gender, geography, age, and race. An Apple Store is a demographic melting pot, with computer games for kids and a Genius Bar for their parents and so much cool stuff to touch that it's a magnet for teens and twentysomethings.

Apple scoffs at the notion of a target market. It doesn't even conduct focus groups. "You can't ask people what they want if it's around the next corner," says Steve Jobs, Apple's CEO and cofounder. At Apple, new-product development starts in the gut and gets hatched in rolling conversations that go something like this: What do we hate? (Our cellphones.) What do we have the technology to make? (A cellphone with a Mac inside.) What would we like to own? (You guessed it, an

iPhone.) "One of the keys to Apple is that we build products that really turn us on," says Jobs.

With that simple formula, Apple not only has upstaged the likes of Microsoft but has set the gold standard for corporate America with an entirely new business model: creating a brand, morphing it, and reincarnating it to thrive in a disruptive age. Now, just seven years after it unveiled the first iPod, fully half of Apple's revenues come from music and iPods. Interest in the iPod and iPhone has rubbed off on the Mac, whose sales growth outpaces the industry's. Apple has demonstrated how to create real, breathtaking growth by dreaming up products so new and ingenious that they have upended one industry after another: consumer electronics, the record industry, the movie industry, video and music production.

The decade coincides exactly with the return of Jobs as Apple's maestro, bringing his particular mix of genius and obsession, as well as a tendency to play by his own rules. His utter dedication to discovery and excellence has created a culture that has made Apple a symbol of innovation. You won't find that word on a placard or a piece of propaganda at One Infinite Loop, Apple's headquarters in Cupertino, Calif. There innovation is a way of life. But it isn't like creating new variations on Crest toothpaste. At Apple, every endeavor is a moon shot. Sometimes the company misses, but the successes are huge. Apple's goal for iPhone sales this year is ten million units, up from 3.7 million during its six months on sale in 2007.

Apple requires a special kind of workforce. The place is divided by product but also by function along what COO Tim Cook calls "very faint lines." Collaboration is key. So is a degree of perfectionism. Apple hires people who are never satisfied. A designer has to be a borderline fanatic to care about the curve of a screw on the underside of a MacBook Air or the apparent eightlessness of the tiny door that hides its connectors. You don't get a foot in the door here unless your eyes light up when you talk about your Mac. The place is

loaded with engineers, but it's not just the skills that are important, it's the ability to emote. ("Emotive" is a big word here.)

Here there is no such thing as hedging your bets. Apple's philosophy goes like this: Too many companies spread themselves thin, making a profusion of products to defuse risk, so they get mired in the mediocre. Apple's approach is to put every resource it has behind just a few products and make them exceedingly well. Apple is brutal about culling past hits: The company dropped its most popular iPod, the Mini, on the day it introduced the Nano (a better product, higher margins why dilute your resources?).

Apple might look like a high-wire act. But while success is never guaranteed, it's not random either. Ownership of its operating system gives Apple an unusual degree of control over its ability to design, change, and adapt. That allows Apple to follow the product - with no preconceptions about where it will end up.

"Apple's DNA has always been to try to democratize technology," says Jobs, in the belief that if you make something "really great, then everybody will want to use it." Who would have thought that a cult brand like Apple would be resuscitating a mass market? Jobs and his true believers have proved that if you're bold enough to build it, they will come.

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EDITORIALS

Beware the Law of Unintended Consequences

Macheads: The Movie is currently in production. (www.macheads.com) It is not about Macintosh computers, but about us – Mac owners. The concept is reported to be in much the same vein as Trekkies, which was about Star Trek fans.

Many of us will probably see Macheads and enjoy it. However, I doubt that people like the SSMUG membership will be colorful enough for any movie. I suspect that the focus will be on those who are (more than) a bit off-center, like the

stalker mentioned above. Windows maniacs will almost certainly use it for ammunition to call us 'cultists' like they already do. Forewarned is Forearmed.

SWITCHERS

I saw an email from a Yahoo email group concerning the care and feeding of switchers the other day and I think the concerns expressed should be passed on.

It seems that a person had 'converted' a nephew from Windows to Mac. The nephew was angry and swore off Macs forever more because he took it out of the box and it wasn't working right.

Clearly his aunt had been enthusiastic and had raised his expectations beyond what was reasonable. Macs are reliable, more reliable than Windows computers, but they, as we all know, are not perfect. Seemingly, he had been lead to expect perfection and now felt let down.

We are all (?) happy with our computers and use Macs in spite of all the external barriers involved. Let's not get carried away and create unreasonable expectations.

For example, the subject of computer reliability came up recently when our son was home for a visit. I mentioned to him (Windows person) that Macs were more reliable than Windows boxes because Apple controlled both the software and the hardware and let it go at that.

I also had a service call from Comcast that involved internet service not so long ago. This involved using the computer to test the connection and, of course, the service person was not Mac familiar. He mentioned the "high cost of Macs" I countered with the fact that all Macs for at least the past fifteen years had built in microphones and the newer ones had a built in TV camera as well. And dropped the subject. His response was "Sweet".

Will either of these people buy a Mac? I have no idea, but at least I did not set up expectations that can never be met.

Editor