



SMUG NEWSLETTER

MAY 2015

SSMUG NEWSLETTER

Meetings are the Second Tuesday of the month.

Time: 7:00 pm

Place: Flossmoor Station

SIGS meet at Grande Prairie Public library at 7:00 per meeting announcements.

This issue is going to be skimpier than usual. Your editor and his wife will be out of town, visiting Boston, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C. I will post an update after WWDC.

CORPORATE NEWS

Comcast and Time-Warner have called off their proposed merger. The new company would have controlled a huge percentage of the market. Thus, it was clearly anti-competitive. Companies say they want free enterprise but try to eliminate competition as fast as possible. If the market place is such a great and preferable regulator why do they try so hard to limit it?

APPLE WATCH

By the time you read this, the Apple Watch will have been out and some of the SSMUG membership will have theirs, some as early as April 24. Already, the rumor mill is cranking up for Apple Watch 2.

The Apple Watch 2 is rumored to have additional sensors to monitor such things as blood glucose. How that will be done without a jab is a marvel of technology. (Meaning your editor does not have a clue how this could be done.) It is said that the band will also have sensors. That sounds like blood pressure monitoring to me. I can imagine blood oxygen being monitored using an LED, but Blood sugar would be a poser.

The Apple Watch has been tested by early adopters and is waterproof for at least fifteen minutes.

The plastic bands on the Apple Watch plastic and leather bands over time. (Comment: If you know how to stop deformation of leather over time, many people would like to know how. Of course, leatherworkers would rather you keep this information to yourselves, or tell us - you can count on it not going any further.)

MACBOOK (AIR)

The consolidation of the MacBook line continues. The only non-MacBook Air is the MacBook Pro as of this writing.

The current 13 inch MacBook Pro does not have a unibody case, so it can be upgraded.

The new MacBook Airs are thinner and have a variable pressure mouse pad. This gives software more non-typing, non-mouse options.

(I should take this opportunity to point out that the inventor of the mouse was ashamed of his invention. It took the computer world by storm, but “hands on, hands off” is a problem and he admitted it.)

The bigger news is that Apple is adopting yet another connector. This is more of an industry standard than previous efforts (Thunderbolt, Lighting).

USB C allows for the transmission of either power or data through a single port. There is only one port, so adaptors, which are already available, are needed. This will probably be introduced on iMacs although there is no word of this.

WARNING WARNING WARNING

Many of us have bought a Mac with minimal memory with the intention of installing more memory as needed. If you have a “Retina” device then the memory is soldered in and what you buy in the beginning is all the memory it will ever have. Nor can the internal hard drive be “swapped out” for a larger one or a new one if it fails. It would behoove us all to be extra careful about backups.

YOUTUBE REDUCES SUPPORT

YouTube has begun dropping support for older devices.

The Verge reports:

“So far, the list of devices that the update puts out to pasture includes older TVs and Blu-ray disc players from Sony and Panasonic, Google TV devices running version 3 or 4, game consoles without support for Adobe Flash or HTML5, along with iOS devices running anything less than iOS 7. The update also impacts the second-generation Apple TV, requiring users to start videos on their iPhones, iPods, and iPads then stream them using AirPlay.

The change is likely to have the biggest impact on anyone who hasn't purchased a

dedicated streaming device in the past three years, and that relies instead on apps built into Smart TV sets. Considering [most people only update their TV sets every eight years or so](#), that's potentially a lot of Smart TV owners. For its part, YouTube [telegraphed the move early last month](#), giving developers on some of those devices about six weeks to make changes.”

NORWAY TO ELIMINATE FM RADIO IN 2017

The Norwegian government has decided to eliminate FM radio in Norway in January 2017. The new standard will be Digital Audio Broadcasting, which provides more bandwidth and maybe more range. FM is famously short range which is an important consideration in a country Norway's distances.

RUMORS

It would seem that the 12 inch iPad, the iPad Pro may be introduced at the upcoming WWDC next month. Other than its larger size (and traditional improved camera), the interesting feature may be that it might have two USB ports – one “vertical” and one “horizontal”. Apple may have noticed that people to use their iPads in ‘landscape’ orientation as well as ‘portrait’ orientation.

Now for a far-out rumor that has turned out to be not so far-out. Apple may be developing a car. A few months ago cars with odd gear on top were seen driving around San Francisco. A reporter did their homework and it turned out that they were all regeed to Appl e-red company. More work on Apple Maps? Maybe, but hiring and corporate acquisitions going back several years indicates Apple seems to be designing an automobile.

There are several thoughts here

Apple has seemingly conquered the digital world. Short of biological implants, there

seems to be nowhere else to go. (Remember – SONY bought a movie studio)

Aren't cars hard? Elon Musk, Google Alum, is launching rockets. Cars are more computerized every year- a process which has gone on for thirty years. Electric motors are much simpler than internal combustion engines.

I should warn you that Apple has worked on many projects over the years that have not resulted in a finished product.

HBONow vs HBOGo

Both are HBO streaming services from HBO. "Go" is for portable devices, while "Now" is something else.

From HBO watch:

HBO Go has evolved into a product (HBO Now) that anyone, anywhere can subscribe to for access to downloads of Game of Thrones, True Blood, True Detective, Girls, The Newsroom, even HBO's latest: The Leftovers and all of their other hit series. We know that a subscription can cost up to 25 dollars per month but when you think about the access you get to past shows it might just be worth it and you can always try HBO Now for free!"

Both are digital (computer-based) services.

SIRI

If you ask "Who does the iPhone belong to?" Siri will tell you. If you ask "Whose iPhone is this?" it will send you to an Apple website.

You can use Siri in the App Store without problem. Siri will search, download, "close group" and "close row".

WEATHER APP WATCH

About a year ago I mentioned Intellicast as my favorite weather app and several other have agreed. A few months ago, I started getting a notice that Intellicast is going away

and is being replaced by Storm from the Weather Underground. I find that WeatherStation is better – especially if you are the kind who likes charts and graphs. It has a map function, but it is kind of weak.

Intellicast was a free standing, for profit, weather forecasting service. I suspect that Intellicast was bought by The Weather Underground (at least the app) (Storm's developer), which is owned by Turner Broadcasting's Weather Channel.

A quick check of the App Store and web tell us that Intellicast, the company/website is still around with no corporate change listed. WSI (The Weather Company) is listed as the developer. Intellicast, the app uses Intellicast, the company's logo.



Note: "Our affiliate, The Weather Channel" above. Intellicast for android and Storm for iOS. It would appear that The Weather Underground, Intellicast, and WSI are owned by the Weather Channel. That seems a bit non-competitive.