

GET # INFO

Upcoming Programs

April 2006

Spotlight on Spotlight

Learn how spotlight can find anything on your Mac instantaneously. This presentation actually covers two features:

- getting the most from spotlight
- taking a look at training materials from *Discover Your Mac*.

Of course we will have a lively and fun Question and Answer period and maybe even take a look at shareware, freeware, tricks or tips from members. We also have door prizes and a fun raffle planned.

Come and join in the fun, get more out of your Mac. TMUG meetings are always free and open to the public

Member Favorites are short presentations by members on their favorite freeware or shareware application, game, script, tool, trick or tip. Members are invited to step forward to present; there is plenty of room on the schedule.

If you wish to be included on the schedule please contact Allen Emory at aemory@earthlink.net.

PREZ SEZ



tmug President Allen Emory

Apple turns 30 — TMUG turns 20.

Hard to believe that Apple Computer has now been around for 30 years. Just as amazing, TMUG has been around for 20 years. (Or at least that's our story and we are sticking to it.) As Duane mentioned last month in this column, TMUG is the only hardware-based user group left in the Triangle. I find that pretty amazing.

As you know, TMUG elected a new executive committee at the March meeting. I would be very remiss if I didn't take time to thank the outgoing executive committee members. So, hats off to Duane Reaugh, Melanie Crain and Ruth Landa. The executive committee will miss you.

Also a big welcome to Chips Chapman, Alec Whittaker and Cort Boylan, as they have been elected and accepted positions on the committee. Finally, thanks go to Stefan Jeglinski for agreeing to continue on the board.

OK, as I'm writing this, I am hoping that Apple was going to make this big 30th anniversary announcement and give me a break on what to write about. Well, a few days have gone by and nothing big, but there have been a few interesting small things happen.

Apple has upgraded the performance on the 30" Cinema Display—both the brightness and contrast have been improved. Also, some of the pro applications' universal binaries have been released. Final Cut Studio (Final Cut Pro, Soundtrack Pro, Motion and DVD Studio Pro). Apple has some pretty attractive cross-grade pricing. As you might know, these application are no longer available individually, but only as a suite. So, the cross grade pricing can be very attractive. From what I've heard, if you have Final Cut Pro 5, you get to cross grade to the entire suite for \$99. If you have Motion 2, cross grade for \$199. Not a bad deal.

Is it me, or do these releases make me think the desktop/PowerMac replacement is on the way?

Oh, and, of course, thanks to our listserv and other places, looks like you will be able to downgrade your Mac to running Windows. Good luck to those wanting (needing) to do that. Looks like BootCamp and a copy of Windows XP are needed. I guess this is the end of the road for VPC.

See you at the next meeting!

— Allen

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Now, here's a sign you
don't see every day!



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TMUG NEWS

From the Treasurer

New members:

Linda & John Fisher of Apex
Don Cox of western Orange County

Renewals:

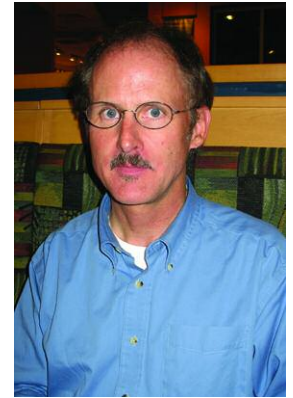
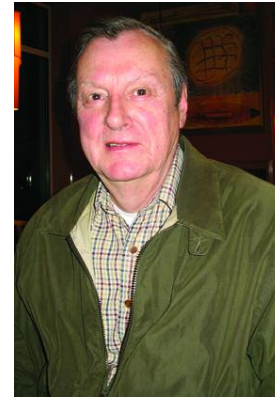
Melanie Crain renewed her membership.
Thanks Melanie!

Congratulations to our new officers, and many thanks to our previous crew!

Alec Whittaker, *right*, is our new 1st Vice President and **Chips Chapman**, *far right*, is our new 2nd Vice President.

Note the changes in the TMUG Officers list to the left.

Thanks to Cort Boylan for the photos of our new officers, here and on the 1st page.



REVIEW

Keep Your Mac Running Smoothly with *Take Control of Maintaining Your Mac* review by Adam C. Engst, ace@tidbits.com

Everyone agrees that regular maintenance is the best way to avoid nasty problems and to ensure your Mac runs at peak performance, but it's hard to know what you should do and when to do it, and even harder to fit it into your schedule. If that describes you, check out Joe Kissell's newest ebook, *Take Control of Maintaining Your Mac*. In it, Joe applies his commonsense approach to the task of maintaining your Mac. You'll find out how to start on the right foot; what you should do daily, weekly, monthly and yearly; and how to prepare for Mac OS X updates. Joe's suggestions are based on hard-won experience, so he covers not only what you should do but also what you should know about commonly suggested panaceas that seldom actually help. You'll also learn how to monitor your Mac's health so you can detect problems before they cause trouble, and find out where to turn if trouble does raise its ugly head. Of course, opinions vary on some of these tasks, so the ebook contains conversations with experts about what they do in particular situations. The ebook even includes a one-page checklist you can post near your computer to remind you of maintenance tasks. Also, don't miss Joe's interview with Chuck Joiner of *MacVoices* for additional maintenance tips and utility advice.

<http://www.takecontrolbooks.com/maintaining-mac.html?14!pt=TRK-0032-TB820-TCNEWS>

<http://www.macvoices.com/archives/2006/641.html>

Melanie Crain: I bought a copy of this eBook and have been impressed with it from the start. With the book's advice and with some self-discipline, anyone can treat themselves to a Mac which has no self-inflicted problems.

From iPod to MacBook Pro: A Switcher's Tale

by Robert Movin, rmovin@gmail.com

By now most of you have read numerous MacBook Pro reviews filled with technical specifications, startup times, benchmarks, battery life, and counts of how many times an icon bounced on the dock when an application is launched. This is not that review. Rather, this is a tale of high drama, low comedy, anticipation, disappointment, and wonder. It's the tale of a switcher succumbing to Apple's vaunted "halo" effect (and not the one with the Master Chief). It's the tale of how someone generally satisfied with that "other" operating system running on a very nice corporate laptop found himself refreshing live Jobsnote transcripts every 30 seconds, breathlessly clicking through the Apple Store, and dropping several thousand dollars on a shiny, new, aluminum, Intel-based laptop. This is my tale.

Well, perhaps it's not that dramatic, but hopefully I can provide an interesting perspective on the role of Apple in today's technology world, how great product design can overcome the little annoyances that make switching far more difficult than it should be, and how the MacBook Pro may not be perfect but is absolutely worth the investment despite a few key shortcomings. Before delving into the story and review I'd like to thank Adam for allowing me to write this article under a pseudonym. My job in the IT industry ties my name closely with my employer, and a pen name allows me the extra freedom to express personal opinions safely.

Early Days

I've never been overly religious about my operating system of choice. In the third grade I started on Commodore PETs, used my best friend's Apple (mostly to play Wizardry), and owned a Commodore 64. We loved that you could open up the Apple and see the intestinal circuitry, but back then we were far too timid to touch anything. I still remember the excitement when the original Macintosh finally appeared in our school and I delighted in explaining to the uninformed masses that the little 3.5-inch disk was, in fact, still a floppy (not a hard disk) despite the lack of flop. Needless to say, I never dated until college.

It was back in college that Apple lost me. Even with the educational discounts, Apple's products were out of my price range (as were many food items). The operating system was no longer the bastion of usability it once was, application support was diminishing, and the enterprise world was slowly slipping into the clutches of the boys and girls from Redmond. Worst of all, my freshman roommate insisted on playing games on his Mac late into the night. With the sound on.

When I started working in IT at a university I learned to hate Macs—they were far more difficult to manage and integrate into our existing network than other options. It was fine if you went all Apple, like some of the labs did, but Macs back then didn't fare well in a mixed environment. Still, I admired Apple's early laptops, lusted after a Newton, and still held a soft spot for Apple as a company.

Enter the iPod

Flash forward nearly a decade. I had just left my nice Archos MP3 player on a flight back from Japan and it was gone for good. I'd recently purchased a new desktop PC from Dell despite pressure from Chris Pepper, a frequent TidBITS contributor and close friend. We discussed how I just couldn't justify the thousands of dollars for a Mac with less processing power than a \$600 Dell, despite the Mac's superior design. I was happy with the music and image editing software available for Windows, and due to careful management didn't suffer the performance or security issues that bedevil many home users. Then I bought a third-generation iPod to replace the Archos and started down the path that lead to the MacBook Pro.

The design of the iPod amazed me. I'd turn the lights off so I could see the cool orange glow of the backlit keys. This is when I realized that Apple created unmatched consumer experiences. I had used every gadget and operating system available, but the iPod experience was something I hadn't felt since experimenting with that first Macintosh. It was clean, usable, and didn't feel like a bunch of parts and standards cobbled together in whatever plastic case was lying around. I was hooked, and the halo effect started. I also started a new long-distance relationship and added an AirPort Express to my arsenal to support my new multi-home lifestyle. Next came a Mac mini, priced lower than my last car repairs and passing the future spouse test with its diminutive size. Apple had finally produced a Mac I could afford and easily integrate at home.

But what really surprised me was that Mac OS X blew me away. You just can't get the full feel of Mac OS X playing with it at an Apple Store; it's only when you use it every day that you really appreciate its benefits. Stability was good, but not that unusual for me since my Windows systems are pretty stable. It was the feel of Mac OS X, the tight integration across applications (especially the iLife suite), the Unix command prompt, and the wonders of AppleScript that finally sold me.

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A Switcher's Tale *continued from page 3*

I propped that little Mac mini on top of my Dell tower and never looked back. It became our primary system. I started programming in AppleScript. And next thing I knew it became my home intranet server, managing our calendars, providing local weather and traffic, distributing music, and even enabling me to dabble in home automation. But the Mac mini always felt a bit crippled—video conversion wasn't worth the effort, iPhoto crawled, and Microsoft Office lagged. It was time for something better, but how could I justify yet another computer? As I was no longer single, this wasn't just a rhetorical question.

Switching Chips

Intel was the answer. First came the announcement of Apple's move to using CPUs from Intel, which meant far more than just a performance boost. The enterprise world is rapidly moving towards large-scale virtualization, abstracting an entire operating system, configuration, and applications and running them within another operating system, even on incompatible hardware. Consider Microsoft's Virtual PC, which makes a "virtual" Windows system (called a "virtual machine") think it is running on a PC when it is in fact running on a Mac. If you're not familiar with the inner workings of large IT shops, the virtualization revolution is just starting to hit, and the benefits are immense. On the server side, virtualization enables better segregation, simplified management, and improved licensing (imagine running four different servers, each configured separately, each isolated from the other, on a single hardware system). On workstations, virtualization will enable enterprises to install a locked-down, secure image on pretty much any piece of hardware while still allowing employees to destroy the rest of the operating system with bad behavior. The enterprise is protected, support costs remain manageable, and users still have the freedom to download spyware-laden weather applications without causing problems. We're not there yet, but it's close.

As I'm sure many of you know, virtualization across hardware platforms seriously degrades performance. There's an extra translation layer where every instruction needs to be converted from one chipset to another. That's why Virtual PC struggles on even the fastest Power Mac G5. But with a consistent hardware base—x86-compatible processors—virtualization becomes a better option by reducing the number of translations needed to get to the CPU. Using VMware (a Windows and Unix virtualization product like Virtual PC) on that Dell of mine, I can comfortably run two virtual machines and expect reasonable performance. Apple was excluded from the virtualization game because all versions of Windows and most versions of Linux are

locked onto Intel hardware. But with Macs also using Intel CPUs we can expect equal or greater performance than running virtual machines on Windows. The practical upshot? I'll be able to use a Mac for all my personal computing needs while running a virtual image of my corporate system—with all my corporate applications—in a little window in the corner of my screen. Unless you rely on some odd heavy client-server application, you'll be able to run Microsoft Outlook or Lotus Notes natively in that virtual window, without compromising corporate security or increasing support. In fact, support becomes easier since that corporate image can be locked tighter than the average user desktop and easily reset. Not that my company supports any of this yet, but there's always a way.

Switching to the MacBook Pro

And thus the last barrier to switch crumbled under the stomp of the Intel bunny-suit. I started having problems sleeping. I felt crippled when on the road and isolated from the elegance of Mac OS X. Then came the Jobsnote with the MacBook Pro as that "one more thing." But could I justify it? With an impending wedding (every geek gets his day!), a couple of grand is no small commitment. I hemmed and hawed until my fiancée asked if it was tax deductible. That was probably a mistake on her part, as I slammed the Buy button so hard I poked a hole in my mouse. Weeks of anticipation passed, and finally the slim MacBook Pro box arrived at my door.

Despite its clumsy name, the MacBook Pro is an excellent piece of design and engineering. Unlike many TidBITS readers, this is my first Apple laptop, and I love the PowerBook design. The keyboard is compact yet easy to navigate, the ports are well positioned, and it has a solid feel. The backlit keys and ambient light sensor are a very nice touch (okay, so I'm a sucker for cool lights), as are the small LED on the Caps Lock key and the charge indicator on the MagSafe power connector. The built-in iSight camera is barely noticeable yet provides solid image quality in a variety of lighting conditions. MagSafe works exactly as advertised and is easier to plug and unplug than a regular power cord. It's just a good looking and good feeling machine. But it isn't perfect.

On the hardware side there are some definite shortcomings. The MacBook Pro runs hot; it's the hottest system I've ever used. This morning the power key was uncomfortably hot to the touch. The AC adapter is big, larger than an AirPort Express. (All this makes me wonder a bit about Apple's performance-per-watt claims; all that heat has to be coming from

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somewhere.) The ExpressCard slot will undoubtedly be useful in the future, but at the moment I have a stack of wireless cards I can't use (and still need to use). I hear a slight buzzing when the LCD is turned on, although it's usually not very noticeable. Battery life is reasonable, but not exceptional; I get only about 3.5 hours of normal use with wireless turned on and the display slightly dimmed. Coming from the dual-button PC world as I do, the single-button trackpad is a real annoyance and needs that second button, but two-finger scrolling works much better than I expected.

Again, the MacBook Pro's hardware isn't perfect, but it's far superior to anything in the PC world that's similarly priced. In terms of raw bang-for-the-buck, it will be hard to beat the MacBook Pro, and it's great to see an Apple laptop that's more competitive than the over-priced systems from just a few years ago.

Software-wise, the MacBook Pro is nicely responsive—I won't go into benchmarks. It boots in less than 30 seconds and comfortably handles whatever I've thrown at it so far. While I'm writing this article in Mail, I'm also listening to iTunes, have iMovie and iPhoto running in the background, and have both Firefox and Safari active. Despite that, I don't feel like anything is lagging, which wouldn't have been true on my Mac mini. The iSight works far better than I expected it would—iChat video chats work just like those video chats in the movies, even all the way to Australia (I checked). You know, the kind of quality you never get on your expensive corporate system.

Not everything has been sweetness and light. On my very first day with the MacBook Pro, I discovered the risks of jumping onto a new platform. The custom VPN client for our corporate network doesn't run on Intel-based Macs, so I can't use Entourage to check my work mail. Fink is still updating to be a universal binary; KiSMAC isn't quite universal yet; I can't get Tor running; and I had to download a special version of Firefox (Deer Park). All these compatibility nits will fade in time, but it's frustrating that I might still have to lug my ThinkPad around when traveling for work. Virtualization sounds close using QEMU, but it's not available yet. Some applications are fine with Rosetta, but others can be painfully slow at times. Microsoft Office runs faster than on the Mac mini, but I use RapidWeaver for managing some personal Web sites and it can crawl painfully when dealing with photos.

<http://fink.sourceforge.net/>

<http://kismac.binaervarianz.de/>

<http://tor.eff.org/>

<http://www.mozilla.org/projects/deerpark/>

<http://fabrice.bellard.free.fr/qemu/>

<http://qemu.dad-answers.com/viewforum.php?f=6>

<http://realmacsoftware.com/rapidweaver/>

Despite these hardware and software shortcomings, I highly recommend the MacBook Pro for most users. It's one of the best systems I've ever used, and it's a pleasure to work on. Pro users (the Adobe crowd) or system geeks needing specialized applications might want to wait until the tools they need are universal binaries, but for most users there will be few limitations. I don't have another PowerBook to compare it to, but compared to my 1.42 GHz Mac mini, it's like jumping into a Corvette after years in a sturdy VW Bug (the old Bug). There is a lot of talk on the Web about dual booting these machines, but dual-booters might consider virtualization instead. Unless you have special needs, you should be able to run your Windows desktop inside Mac OS X as a virtual machine within six months. Personally I don't care about dual-booting; I'd rather work in the superior look and feel of Mac OS X and just open that Windows window when needed.

A Big Leap

Overall, switching was a positive experience, but one filled with small frustrations that would stymie the average user. As much as I'd like to, I can't even completely leave Windows for my personal computing, much less work. You see, I'm one of those users who falls between the elegant, yet totally closed, aspects of the Mac OS X experience and the powerful, open-source Darwin core.

On the proprietary side, Apple provides a clean, usable experience without the complexities normally involved in personal computing. The operating system just works. The applications just work, and more than that, they work together seamlessly. Most of the consumer features (music, photos, video, chat, email, calendar) are built in and easy to use, which helps maintain stability and security. On the open side, Apple gives us the power of the Unix command line along with shipping versions of open-source stalwarts like Apache, Samba, PHP, and various programming languages. Drop to the command line in Terminal, and you're in the world of consoles and scripts, which, while it might not be easy or intuitive, offers unparalleled power in knowledgeable hands.

But it's in the middle where Apple fails, and where switching becomes daunting. Mac OS X is all or nothing. Either you turn yourself over to Apple completely or gain the skills of a

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COMING OUT OF THE DARK

A Switcher's Tale *continued from page 5*

sysadmin. For example, I have yet to figure out how to convince my Epson R200 to print borderless photos from iPhoto, so I print all my pictures on my Windows box. My wireless settings are lost between sessions, and although I know there must be a way to store my home settings, it's not readily apparent. To print from my wireless print server I must use the command line. Mail and iCal stubbornly refuse to accept or send Outlook-compatible meeting invitations, so I had to write a custom AppleScript work. While .Mac has a Web-enabled email interface, it lacks an interactive calendar, I can't choose what operating systems we use at work. I'm sure I will figure out ways around these problems, but I could never explain them to my parents over the phone.

What I've learned is if you go Apple, you better go all Apple, all the time, unless you're a power geek and willing to spend plenty of time on the details. Everything from Apple or built for Mac works perfectly and easily, but be prepared for pain if you fall into the middle. I agree with Steve Jobs's mantra of simplification, but not when simplification increases complexity. Every Windows user is used to two buttons on a mouse, so stop trying to change those habits if you want us to switch. Let us use Outlook/Exchange at work and still exchange appointments with iCal at home. Let us use Control-C to copy if we want, right during setup.

I'm slowly converting my entire family to Mac, but it's hard to

move past their preconceptions. I'll probably have to pay for their machines all myself. Luckily, my family members want to use their computers for only a few activities, and these happen to be the tasks the Mac excels at: music, photos, email, calendars, Web browsing, and general family communications. I live over 2,000 miles from my family, and the Mac will be the tool that erases that distance. Video chats with the nephew who (right now) barely knows me. Photocasting with my Mom. Sleeping soundly at night knowing their computers aren't infected twelve ways to tomorrow. Even knowing my sister can still play World of Warcraft with her gaming-addicted husband. The just-released Intel-based Mac minis might be just the ticket, despite the slightly higher price, especially if I can find some cheap iSights.

As for me, I'm firmly in the camp, if not the cult, of Mac. I know I can work through most of the restrictions that frustrate me so. Once I can get a virtual PC running my corporate life in a window and after I can connect to my IR-enabled heart rate monitor I'll be totally satisfied. As it is, I see myself leaving the ThinkPad at home, even knowing it cuts me off from the corporate lifeline. What the heck, I still have my Blackberry, and maybe on that next flight I can edit a movie of our last vacation deleting old email messages or watching a stuttering DVD.

Switching is good. But it could (and should) be easier.

BOOK REVIEW

FileMaker Pro 8, the Missing Manual

by Geoff Coffey and Susan Prosser
736 pp., Pogue Press/O'Reilly, 2005
ISBN 0-596-00579-2

Reviewed by Elsa Travisano

After bobbing along for years in the stream of incremental updates to FileMaker Pro, I suddenly found myself washed into the rapids by the sweeping changes introduced with FileMaker 7 and 8. Time for this old dog to learn some new tricks. Thank goodness Pogue Press/O'Reilly has come to the rescue with their first book on FileMaker, Filemaker Pro 8, the Missing Manual. The book's chapters take you from creating your first database to database design, creating basic and advanced lay-

outs and reports, working with multiple tables and relationships, working with calculations, scripting, dealing with security, importing and exporting data, files and formats, sharing a database and available developer utilities. Two very useful appendices cover sources for getting help and a list of Filemaker error codes. Filemaker Pro 8, the Missing Manual removes the "grit your teeth" element of approaching database design by using lively examples and real-world descriptions and situations. The writing style is enjoyable throughout, and illustrations are ample and well chosen. Highly recommended.

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This article originally appeared in Newsbreak, the newsletter of MUG ONE, Macintosh User Group of Oneonta, NY.

Solutions to the Most Vexing Mac Problems

by Christopher Breen

Cursing the cursor

I just purchased my first Mac after using Windows for many years. I would like to replace my arrow cursor with something bigger and perhaps with a different picture. How do I do this?—Joe Robertson

Joe, better that I break it to you than a passing stranger in a Wi-Fi coffee shop: most Mac users would no more replace Apple's elegant black arrow cursor with some pixelated sparkler than we would slap rouge and lipstick on the Venus de Milo.

But que será, será. You can change your Mac's cursor with the help of *Unsanity's Mighty Mouse* (\$10). This haxie, or small bit of code written to tweak OS X, allows you to customize the Mac's built-in cursors, turning your wait cursor into a wiggling mermaid or a purple bouncing alien, for instance. *Mighty Mouse* lets you choose additional cursor images from sites such as *ResExcellence*. You can even import cursors designed for Windows XP.

If, after reflection, all you want is a big cursor, change it by going to the Universal Access preference pane, clicking on Mouse, and adjusting the Cursor Size slider.

Mail time

How do I make Apple's Mail display a 24-hour format for messages that appear in my inbox?—Brian Shin

On the Clock, give an American Mac a 24-hour clock by using the International preference pane's Customize option.

You can make this happen through System Preferences. Open the International preference pane, click on the Formats tab, and click on the Customize button next to Times. In the resulting sheet, select Short from the Show pop-up menu. Click on the hour numeral in the text field below to reveal a pop-up menu that begins with 1-12 (see "On the Clock"). Choose 1-24 and click on OK. You've now created a Custom region. When you next open Mail, you'll find that message times are in the 24-hour format.

Maintenance must-haves

After many years of using Symantec's Norton Utilities, I've got to find another diagnostic tool for Tiger. The company's Web site says that Norton Utilities for Macintosh 8.0.3 is the last version Symantec will release, and that it will not revise the suite for

OS X 10.4. What other application has features most like Norton's?—Dave Brady

There are a variety of diagnostic and repair tools for the Mac, including OS X's First Aid (part of Disk Utility in /Applications/Utilities), Alsoft's \$80 *DiskWarrior 3*, Micromat's \$98 *TechTool Pro 4.0.1*, and Prosoft Engineering's \$99 *Drive Genius 1.0.1*. *DiskWarrior* is completely unlike Norton Utilities, but that's not a bad thing. *TechTool Pro* and *Drive Genius* offer features similar to some of Norton's components. The comparison shakes out this way:

Disk Utility's First Aid is free, and free is good. You can boot from your Mac OS X installation disc and run *Disk Utility* to try to repair your startup drive. Doing so isn't always effective, but it can't hurt.

DiskWarrior does one thing, but that thing is crucial: the program repairs low-level hard-drive corruption with a skill no other utility can match. Every Mac user should have a copy of it. *TechTool Pro*, on the other hand, performs many services. It tests your Mac's hardware components—RAM, processor, and FireWire and USB ports, for example. It also performs many of the tasks Norton Utilities does—repairing corrupt volumes, protecting files from accidental deletion, and recovering data if the drive goes kablooy.

Drive Genius also performs a variety of chores, many of which focus on disk functions. For instance, you can use it to optimize your drive, much as you could do with Norton's *Speed Disk*. You can use it to expand or shrink disk partitions without reformatting your hard drive. *Drive Genius* will also clone volumes and check the integrity of your hard drive. As for Norton Utilities-style repair, in addition to repairing permissions, *Drive Genius* will attempt to rebuild one of a volume database's trickier objects, the Catalog B-tree (something Norton never did well). And like Norton, *Drive Genius* allows you to edit data sectors, something other utilities won't do.

I wish I could say "Get this one and you're done," but I'd be doing you a disservice if I did. All of these utilities have something to offer. If I had to prioritize their helpfulness, I would recommend *DiskWarrior* for its one really good trick, *Drive Genius* for its all-around drive- maintenance and data-repair goodness, and finally *TechTool Pro* for its repair and data-recovery charms.

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Solutions *continued from page 7***Making your (Power)Point**

I need to create a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation that includes QuickTime videos for someone who uses Windows. More than one person will use the presentation, so I don't want to assume they all have QuickTime Player for Windows. What's the best way to handle this?—Jan Bobbett

Wonderful as Apple's QuickTime is, it's not on every Windows PC. To make sure Windows users get the most from your presentations, convert your QuickTime movies to either AVI or MPEG-4 format—both of which will play within a PowerPoint presentation on a Windows computer. Then embed those movies in your presentations.

To convert the movie files, open them in QuickTime Player Pro (\$30) and choose File: Export. In the resulting Save Exported File As dialog box, choose either Movie To AVI or Movie To MPEG-4 from the Export pop-up menu.

Movies exported at the default AVI export setting don't look all that great. To improve their appearance (although you'll also increase their file size in the process), click on the Options button in the Save Exported File As dialog box, and then click on the Setting button in the Video portion of the AVI Settings window that appears. In the resulting Compression Settings window, move the Quality slider up to High or Best.

Be kind to your PC-using colleagues. When creating PowerPoint presentations, export embedded QuickTime movies in a format that's compatible with Windows PCs.

If you're using MPEG-4 instead and are unhappy with the look of the default export, click on the Options button in the same Save Exported File As dialog box. In the MPEG-4 Export Settings window, make these changes: choose MP4 from the File Format pop-up menu, and select MPEG-4 Basic from the Video Format pop-up menu (see "Special Export"). If the movie's frame is too large to fit your presentation, use a smaller image size when you export the movie—change it from 640 by 480 to 320 by 240 for standard QuickTime movies, for example, or to 320 by 180 if it's a DV movie (DV movies have a different aspect ratio). Doing so will reduce not only the movie's dimensions but also the amount of storage it requires (thus making your PowerPoint package a little more easily transportable). Set the Frame Rate pop-up menu to Current and the Key Frame option to Automatic.

By default, the Data Rate field is set to 64 Kbps, which is really low if you want to maintain the quality of the original video. You may need to play with settings in this field to get it right. I've found that a setting of 1,000 Kbps or higher gives me quality that closely matches the original movie's. I wouldn't use such a high rate if I were streaming video across the Internet, because all but the fastest connections would choke, but for a PowerPoint presentation on a hard drive, it's fine.

Offline site seeing

Is there an easy way for me to download an entire Web site so that I can view its contents even when my Mac is not connected to the Internet? That way, I could jump on my next flight, launch Safari, and then browse the fully downloaded pages.—Tyler Moynihan

Second Site. Want to catch up on your reading when you don't have Internet access? To view just a single Web page offline, use your browser's File: Save As command.

There are several ways to suck out the contents of a Web site and store it locally. If you simply desire a single page, use your browser's File: Save As command to save it as a Web page, or a Web archive in Safari-speak (see "Second Site"). Once the page and its contents download, you can read it when your Mac's not connected to the Internet.

If you'd like to grab more than just the page you're viewing, you must turn to other tools, such as Microsoft's free Internet Explorer. Use this to navigate to the site you want. Then choose File: Save As and make sure Web Archive appears in the Format pop-up menu at the bottom of the Save window. Click on the Options button, select the Download Links option, and tell the program how many levels deep you'd like it to save. For example, two levels would save the home page and any pages on that specific site to which the home page links. Click on OK and then on Save. Internet Explorer will download the Web site. To read it later, just open the Web archive.

Rick Cranisky's SiteSucker (free [donations accepted]) is another good option. In addition to allowing you to set the number of levels it downloads, SiteSucker lets you queue up sites so you can easily grab a number of them. And then there's Limit Point Software's Blue Crab (\$25). It offers more-extensive options than Internet Explorer or SiteSucker—for example, you can instruct it to download HTML files only, to skip images, or to grab pages exceeding a certain number of kilobytes. You can

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even configure it to enter login information for protected sites.

If you want an even more complete solution and are willing to pay for it, check out Soft Chaos's \$80 Webstractor ()—a utility that, among other things, can automatically capture Web pages as you browse.

Ready for the worst

One day, you just might waltz up to your computer, press the power switch, and stare in dumb horror as your Mac displays a flashing folder, offers a plain blue screen, or does little more than whirl. It makes sense, then, to have a troubleshooting drive at the ready that can help you repair your ailing machine.

Your System Discs The good news is that you already have an emergency boot disc: the Mac OS X CD or DVD that you bought or that came with your Mac. Insert one of these and hold down the C key at startup to make your Mac boot off the disc. Then use the disc's copy of Disk Utility. (If you're using the Tiger installation disc, choose Utilities: Disk Utility and then click on the First Aid tab when Disk Utility launches.)

Commercial Troubleshooting Utilities If you own a utility such as DiskWarrior, TechTool Pro, or Drive Genius, these also come on bootable discs. Use them as you would your system disc.

FireWire Drive You can create a bootable troubleshooting device that, because it can hold multiple repair utilities, exceeds the capabilities of an OS X installation disc. For instance, if you have a FireWire hard drive, it can probably do the job. (Not all FireWire drives can boot OS X; see our review of FireWire hard drives)

If the drive has enough capacity, duplicate your Mac's current startup drive using Mike Bombich's Carbon Copy Cloner (\$5). Any troubleshooting or repair utilities you have on your startup drive will work from the FireWire drive. On the other hand, you can create a fresh emergency drive by installing a clean copy of Mac OS on the FireWire drive and then installing your troubleshooting or repair utilities on it.

When choosing an emergency FireWire drive, consider one that you can easily slip into a pocket or pack in a computer case—for instance, LaCie's \$240 Mobile Hard Drive or Other World Computing's \$250 Mercury On-the-Go (both ; see our latest review of portable FireWire drives). Such a small drive will prove a useful companion both in your office and on the road.

Older iPod Do you have an older iPod (first through fourth generation)? It can also boot a Mac when attached to that Mac's FireWire port. (Sorry, current iPod models can't.) If the iPod has about 5GB to spare, you can install a bootable version of Tiger on it, as well as our troubleshooting utilities. This is a very handy way to lighten your carry-on bag when traveling: all you need is your iPod for both tunes and emergency protection.

Note that the iPod was not designed to be a primary startup drive. It has no vents, and the heat buildup from running its drive constantly will likely shorten its life. But I've successfully booted an iPod to quickly repair a misbehaving Mac without apparent mishap.

Tip of the month

Bring bookmarks into Firefox: Your review of Web browsers (November 2005) firmly convinced me to switch from Microsoft's Internet Explorer to Mozilla's Firefox. However, the Import wizard in Firefox 1.0.7 will not import bookmarks from Internet Explorer. I finally found a quick way to do this crucial task.

Choose Bookmarks: Manage Bookmarks, and then choose File: Import. Make sure that the From File option is enabled, click on Next, and in the resulting Import Bookmark File window, navigate to the Explorer folder (/ your user folder/ Library/Preferences/Explorer). Select the Favorites.html file and click on Open to import the bookmarks.—Henry Francis

You can also use this technique to import your Explorer History file as bookmarks. Simply choose History.html rather than Favorites.html in the Import Bookmark File window.—Ed.

Senior Editor Christopher Breen is the author of Secrets of the iPod and iTunes, fifth edition, and The iPod and iTunes Pocket Guide (both Peachpit Press, 2005).

Find Chris' books at www.amazon.com and www.peachpit.com. Get special user group pricing on Macworld Magazine! <http://www.macworld.com/useroffer>

Burning Down the Disc

by Adam C. Engst, *ace@tidbits.com*

Sometimes easy things turn out to be more involved than you initially anticipated. Recently I wanted to burn a few CDs containing the full Take Control library for a user group raffle. Pop a blank CD into my Power Mac's SuperDrive, let it mount in the Finder, drag the files over to it, and click the Burn button in that window. What could be easier?

Not much, if—and it's a big IF—I didn't care about user experience, in particular, what the window looks like when the user double-clicks the CD icon on the Desktop. Obviously, if the user views my CD in a column-view Finder window, I have no control at all, and that's fine. But in the event that someone does double-click my CD's icon in the Finder, I'd like it to open to a well-laid out window. And heck, why should users have to open the CD manually? If they insert it, it's a pretty good chance they want to open the window. All this, reasonable as it might seem, turns out to be easier said than done.

With 31 ebooks and 3 folders for the Dutch, German and Japanese translations, icon view doesn't work well, leaving list view as the best option. But with 34 items in the folder, the default window is nowhere near large enough, and since some of our ebooks have fairly long titles, the name column isn't wide enough either. It's trivial to adjust the window size and column widths appropriately, but that's where the fun begins. Follow along with my quest for the perfectly burned disc to learn the ins-and-outs of some common tools and approaches.

Just Burn It

The first and most obvious technique, as I noted before, was simply to pop a writable disc into my SuperDrive, drag the files and folders over to it, arrange the window as desired, name the CD, and click the Burn button in the Recordable CD row at the top of the window. The only problem is that the Finder ignores the layout of the window entirely, resorting instead to the default window size and icon view. Utterly useless. I've filed a bug with Apple.

Hot Folders

In Mac OS X 10.4 Tiger, there's another way: the burn folder. Choose File > New Burn Folder, and the Finder creates a special burn folder that makes it easy to burn multiple identical discs (in fact, when you burn a single disc, the Finder asks if you want to create a burn folder to simplify the task of making more). I thought that perhaps giving the burn folder the prop-

er layout would transfer that layout to the eventual CD. I was wrong. Burn folders work in exactly the same way as burning one-off discs, and they ignore any changes the user may have made to the window size or layout. To my mind, this is even more problematic, since the entire point of a burn folder is to ease the process of making multiple copies, and once multiple copies are involved, it seems all the more likely that window layout would become important.

Disk Utility

Clearly, I needed another way. My next thought was to create a disk image (a file that can be mounted by Mac OS X as though it were a real disk of some sort) containing my files and with its window laid out the way I wanted. Using Apple's Disk Utility, I created a disk image of roughly the right size, mounted it, copied the files to it and set its window layout appropriately. Then I selected it in the lower part of the drive pane in Disk Utility, and clicked the Burn button in the toolbar. A minute or two later, Disk Utility reported success, and indeed, when I opened the window, it looked just the way I wanted. Yay! Now if only there was a way to make it open automatically. After asking some smart friends, I learned that the following Unix command, properly modified for the name of the disc (the quotes are necessary if there are spaces in the disc name) and invoked before burning, twiddles things such that the CD window opens automatically. Success!

```
pseudo-bless folder "/Volumes/discName"-openfolder  
"/Volumes/discName"
```

But as much as the process worked, it was a bit clumsy to perform, what with blessing the mounted disk image so it would open its window automatically. Also, I need to add new ebooks to the disk image periodically, so it has to be large enough to hold them. When creating disk images, it didn't seem to matter if I chose a normal read/write image, or a sparse image. Sparse images are more interesting, though, since they can be any size virtually, but take up only as much space on disk as data is contained within them. In other words, I could create a 650 MB sparse image, copy 62 MB of data to it, and have the disk image file take up only 62 MB on my hard disk. The unfortunate downside is that even when burning the sparse image, Disk Utility must still burn the entire 650 MB, which takes a long time. Given how much longer it takes to burn 650 MB instead of 62 MB, it's worth recreating the disk image every

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so often when I run out of room instead of using a large sparse image.

Nonetheless, I had a full workable solution that could perhaps be automated somewhat with iKey, and one that used only free tools. But perhaps there was an even better way.

Toast 7 Titanium

Next, I looked to Toast 7 Titanium, the popular disc-burning software from Roxio, to see if it would provide a better answer, since data CDs are almost the least of its capabilities. The most obvious way of using Toast was an improvement over the Finder, but not quite there. I dragged my files into the Data tab, selected the Auto-Open Disc Window checkbox in the Formats drawer, clicked the More button in the Formats drawer to access additional options, selected List View, and then burned the disc. I couldn't see how Toast could possibly know what size to make the window, and indeed, it wasn't the size or layout that I wanted.

<http://www.roxio.com/en/products/toast/>

My next thought was to try a disk image. Toast can make its own disk images. Just choose File > Save as Disk Image after you've dragged the files and folders you want into the Data tab, but burning the disk image ran into exactly the same problem as before—the correct view, but no memory of window size or layout.

While perusing Toast's online help I ran across mention of temporary partitions, which I could create by choosing Utilities Create Temporary Partition. Once created and named, I was able to copy the files I wanted to it, arrange the window the way I wanted, and burn it to a CD successfully using the Copy tab, selecting the CD/DVD Copy radio button, and choosing the temporary partition from the Read From pop-up menu. Yes! The only slight downside was that Toast didn't provide the Auto-Open Disc Window option, as it had for creating a Data CD.

The Unix command above worked fine when burning via Toast as well, but I turned to Toast expert John Acree at Roxio to see if Toast had a better approach. John told me that once I had created my temporary partition I should, instead of using Toast's Copy tab, switch to the Data tab, drag the mounted partition into the Data tab, select the Mac & PC radio button in the Formats drawer, make sure the Auto-Open Disc Window checkbox was selected, and then burn. It worked like a charm, and even better, although I had made my Toast tem-

porary partition 650 MB (roughly the size of a CD), the disc that Toast burned contained only the 62 MB of actual data.

But if the temporary partition was truly temporary, it wouldn't do me any good, since I didn't want to recreate it each time. Toast has an answer to that as well. By default, upon quitting, it asks if it should delete the temporary partition, and when I clicked the Don't Delete button, I was left with a Toast disk image in my Documents folder. (Toast's preferences provide a setting for the location of these "converted items"; oddly, my copy of Toast ignored that setting and always stored them in my Documents folder.) And indeed, double-clicking this Toast disk image file opened it in Toast's Copy tab, where I could click the Mount button to mount it, then switch to the Data tab, drag the mounted volume in, and burn. Toast can also install a Mount It contextual menu item that mounts disk images directly.

So my Toast solution was slightly better than my Disk Utility solution at this point, since it didn't require dropping into Terminal to invoke a Unix command. But I was still going to be wasting 650 MB of hard disk space to store Toast's disk image, even if I had only 62 MB of data. I could make the temporary partition smaller, but after all, saving space on disk is what sparse image files are for. On a hunch, I created a 650 MB sparse image file in Disk Utility, mounted it normally in the Finder, adjusted it as I wanted, and then dragged the mounted disk image to Toast's Data tab and burned. Perfection at last! Now I had a small disk image that I could mount easily in the Finder by double-clicking, add to any time, and, with a quick drag-and-drop, burn quickly and exactly as desired in Toast.

Parting Thoughts

The Finder turns out to be fairly poor at remembering window layouts for disk images. To get a window to retain its layout, I had to set it, close the window, open the window again, set the layout again (the window had always shrunk slightly) and close and re-open again. It's not a big deal, but it would be nice if the Finder could remember a disk image window layout in one step. I filed another bug with Apple.

I also looked at FileStorm, from MindVision, which simplifies the task of creating discs for distribution; it has a slew of options for background images, icon positioning, automatic window opening, and so on. I couldn't use FileStorm for my CD, since my 34 items really needed to be shown in list view, and FileStorm is designed for icon view.

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<http://www.mindvision.com/filestorm.asp>

Lastly, it's entirely possible that this whole problem is merely additional evidence of my obsessive-compulsive battle with window positioning. Back in 1996, I wanted to include a CD of software with the fourth edition of my "Internet Starter Kit for Macintosh" book, so I bought a CD burner to make the CD. The only problem was, as you might expect, that I couldn't get the window position and layout to stick the way I wanted, and in fact, they were different every time. This happened right at the deadline of a project that had been fraught with

troubles from the very start, and after hours of failed attempts, I grew so angry at the entire situation that Tonya called our friend Chad Magendanz (author of the late ShrinkWrap disk image utility) to come calm me down before I broke something. At the time, Chad was working on Microsoft's CD titles—Encarta, Cinemania, Music Central, and so on—and he had lots of experience with mastering CDs. Although he wasn't able to solve my problem, he did manage to help me cool down and finish off the disc. We've come a long way since then, but it seems that some problems have managed to survive all the changes.

TIP ABOUT USING INTERNET ARCHIVE'S FREE WEB HOSTING

Do you have some videos you've created that you'd like to make available for the world to see? Do you own all the rights to the video? (i.e. Are the music and images in the video not copyright by someone else?)

Then the free web hosting on the Internet Archive is a good choice. <http://www.archive.org>

As an example, here is a 52-minute (400 megabyte) QuickTime file that VMUG member Phil Shapiro recently uploaded to the Internet Archive using Cyberduck.

<http://www.archive.org/details/multimediasstorytelling>
<http://cyberduck.ch/>

Using a cable modem, this 52-minute video took about 3 hours to upload to the Internet Archive. If you have Verizon's fiber optic service, you could probably upload this video in about an hour (or less.)

Using a dual-processor G5 PowerMac, this video took about 40 minutes to export from iMovie, using Share on the File menu.

All this is to say that it's entirely possible to shoot a video, edit it and upload it to the Internet Archive all on the same day. It takes about a day for the Internet Archive to release videos that have been uploaded.

You can always go back and edit the description of the video from a link at the bottom left of the screen describing your video—after you are logged in to the Internet Archive. Phil missed seeing that link and added a public comment to his video to add some extra information he forgot to include.

If you have ideas for some group video projects that VMUG members can work on, you might bring them to the VMUG Multimedia special interest group (SIG.) See the Multimedia SIG blog for further information.

<http://web.mac.com/haly2k1/iWeb/Site/Blog/Blog.html>

Are you curious to learn a bit more about Brewster Kahle, the visionary who created the Internet Archive? Search for his name in the Internet Archive. You can view a video of a speech he gave at the Library of Congress in December, 2004. (Scroll down about 5 items in the search results.)

If Brewster Kahle has given the world this immense gift, what's the most appropriate way of thanking him? Use the gift.

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<http://www.digitaldivide.net/profile/pshapiro>
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