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Take Back Your Inbox

Faster Browsing
Fewer Clicks, Better Results

Easier Organization
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Macworld

June 2005  www.macworld.com

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120 Hot Stuff
Check out our favorite new stuff.
"MY LAST PROJECT MADE PEOPLE SWEAT."

- Sandra, art director
  last project: small-space ad for wasabi peas
"PEOPLE DROOLED OVER MY LAST DESIGN."

- Kimberly, designer
  last project: root canal post-operative checklist

There's a reason award shows don't have "painful dental procedure" categories — at least there was. With QuarkXPress 6.5, you just might be able to change all that.

How? Can you say featureama? Out of nowhere, even a how-can-I-design-a-bang-tail-if-I-don't-know-what-one-is becomes a whole new creative opportunity. With QuarkXPress 6.5, you can fudge, nudge and completely redesign your way to perfection.

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QuarkXPress 6.5.
What will you use it for?
Charity begins at home.

And being that our home is planet Earth, we at Small Dog Electronics believe it benefits us all to act responsibly. To that end, we have recently begun our new eWaste initiative that allows our customers here in Vermont to conveniently drop off their old electronics for safe recycling.

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Next time you visit smalldog.com, we invite you to browse our huge selection of new and factory-refurbished Apple products and related gear. Together, we can all make a difference.
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Back when Apple Computer promised Apple Records that it wouldn’t switch from computers to the music industry, the idea that the two companies would ever be in the same business seemed silly. Yet today there’s no telling where computers stop and music, movies, and television begin. The result is a potentially cataclysmic clash over your rights as a consumer—and Apple is right in the middle.

The Fight for Your Rights

The most recent battle is being fought in the U.S. Supreme Court, in the form of *MGM v. Grokster.* (A ruling is expected not long after this issue comes out.) The movie studio is attempting to hold the creator of file-sharing software responsible for the illegal activity of its users. Under some interpretations, a win by MGM could make devices like the iPod illegal, because they can be filled with illegally downloaded music.

It’s legal to record TV shows on a VCR or a TiVo. You can legally copy CDs to iPods. So far, the courts have ruled that you’re free to move your stuff from device to device and enjoy it wherever you like.

Unfortunately, the studios and record labels are working hard to roll such freedoms back. The *Grokster* case is just the latest example: the Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA) of 1998 is another. Under the guise of fighting piracy, it made an end run around your freedom to move your stuff, by making it illegal for anyone to create ways for you to exercise that freedom.

Innovation at Risk

Like any good company, Apple wants to serve its customers by creating new technologies. But Apple must also stay on good terms with music companies if it wants the iTunes Music Store to survive (no tunes, no iTunes). And if there’s ever going to be a handheld Apple video player or an Apple Movie Store, Apple has to be on good terms with the movie and TV industries.

To see how this conflict plays out, just look at iTunes. Load up your iPod at home and bring it into work. Using iTunes, can you drag your music out of your iPod and onto the hard drive of your work computer? No, because Apple is worried that the music industry will see the iPod as a piracy-enabling device.

Or consider Apple’s iTunes Sharing feature. Ever since Apple introduced it, it has gradually become less useful. You can share MP3s with anyone, but you can’t share files you download from the iTunes Music Store. In previous iterations of the software, you could share your music with anyone on the Internet, but then a software update crippled that feature.

Apple isn’t alone. Several companies offer CD- and DVD-burning utilities, for example, but those programs can’t copy commercial Hollywood DVDs—that would be illegal under the DMCA. Want to make a backup copy of your *Finding Nemo* DVD because you’re worried that your three-year-old will scratch the original beyond repair? You’re out of luck (unless you want to use illegal DVD-copying software).

Arr, There Be Pirates

Of course, the studios and record companies aren’t really worried about iTunes sharing and DVD copying. They’re afraid of piracy. Music, movies, and TV shows are traded illegally at an alarming and accelerating rate.

But piracy is nothing new. People have been copying movies, TV shows, CDs, and records since the dawn of recordable media. Worrying about college kids pirating music and movies is like worrying that they’ll stay up late and drink beer—these things are given. But they grow out of it. And most adults, if given the opportunity, will be honest and buy their music, movies, and computer software.

Meanwhile, the crusade against piracy is trampling the rights of everyday users, and useful features are disappearing from products. Does this stop the pirates from pirating? No, but it does make life less convenient for the rest of us, and it makes creating compelling products tougher for companies like Apple.

Give Peace a Chance

In my dreams, the Supreme Court will rule in *Grokster’s* favor, the DMCA will be ruled unconstitutional, and Congress will stop favoring the needs of media corporations over consumers’ rights. Oh, and I also want a pony.

In reality, we’ll likely continue living with compromises. Sometimes consumers’ rights will be reduced, but at a level we can live with, as with the iTunes Music Store. Sometimes media companies will win, and new technologies will be crippled.

In the meantime, enjoy your iPods and your TiVos. Let’s just hope that we live in a world where there’s more where they came from.

What side of the rights divide do you stand on? Let us know at macworld.com/0504, or send an e-mail to jason_snell@macworld.com.
Outspring has solutions for all of your email needs. Our easy-to-use QuickMail Client is available for Mac OS 9, OS X and Windows.

Our powerful QuickMail Server allows you to easily administer accounts, mailing lists and more.

To fight the ongoing war against spam, we’ve created the new Spamcaster line of products. Spamcaster gives you a hassle-free way to stop spam and other unwanted email without training or configuration nightmares.
Let the PC world come to you.

Copy and paste. Drag and drop. Switch between Mac and Windows® applications as easily as clicking between documents. Microsoft® Virtual PC for Mac Version 7 lets you run PC programs on your Mac like a pro — sans the suit and tie. See it work at www.microsoft.com/mac
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Only Macworld combines objective product testing with 20 years of market experience to give readers the perspective, advice, and inspiration to get the most out of their Mac. Each issue is loaded with authoritative product reviews, expert hints and tips, in-depth feature articles and more!
The Xerox Phaser® 7750 network printer gives you color so vivid, you’re naturally drawn to it. And at 35 color ppm, it’s sure to make your heart flutter. **Xerox Color. It makes business sense.**

The color is truly stunning, and the speed simply breathtaking. That sums up the Xerox Phaser 7750 tabloid color laser printer. It not only prints 35 ppm in black and white, it prints just as fast in color. And it can deliver up to an incredible 1200 dpi. Its single-pass laser technology prints up to 11x17 full bleed. Color is Pantone-approved, too, for accurate proofing. What’s more, Phaser Match™ 3.0 color management software ensures the colors you want are the colors you get. For more about our full line of Xerox network printers, digital copiers and multi-function systems, just call us or visit our website today. We’ll be happy to provide you with the stunning details.
Is Your Mac Safe?

Ask Mac fans why we prefer the Mac to the Windows PC, and you'll likely get long lists of reasons. Most of those lists will have one item in common: we don't have to worry about viruses, spyware, and other digital pests that plague our PC-using counterparts. But is that sense of security really warranted? That was the question we set out to answer in March's "Mac Security: Fact and Fiction" feature. Judging by the responses to that story, many of you aren't feeling so complacent.

Security Insecurities

JOHN HALE

Your article on Mac security ("Mac Security: Fact and Fiction," March 2005) is the kind of thing I subscribe to Macworld for. However, the section on antivirus software missed the mark. Security software should follow the medical dictum "First of all, do no harm." But that's exactly what many Mac antivirus utilities do—something the article did not address. As a visit to almost any Mac forum will confirm, the biggest offender appears to be McAfee's Virex, but Symantec's Norton AntiVirus and Intego's VirusBarrier can also cause problems. Protecting your Mac without creating even more problems is a real dilemma.

ANDY PETERS

I don't get it. In "Mac Security: Fact and Fiction," you say, "No virus outbreaks affected Mac users in 2004." But then, in "Select Your Shield," you tell your readers that "the programs did a good job of finding viruses" on your test drive. If there are no Mac viruses, what exactly did these programs find? Maybe they found a Windows virus attached to an e-mail message in your Junk folder—but that virus can't do anything to your Mac, so who cares? You conclude, "Any of these programs will provide the basic protection every Mac user needs." Seems to me that not buying any of these programs will do the same thing. What do I get if I spend $60 on a highly rated Mac antivirus program?

Windows colleagues a big favor by keeping workspaces free of viruses.—Ed.

MAC CARTER

As a longtime user of Virex and Norton AntiVirus, I think both programs are ineffective at best. So I was elated to see that Intego's VirusBarrier was your Editors' Choice for virus protection. But when I bought and installed VirusBarrier, I discovered that in addition to the $60 price, Intego charges $30 a year for virus-definition updates after the first 12 months. Your article makes no mention of this extra fee.

You're right: the effectiveness of antivirus apps depends on having current virus definitions. And every antivirus vendor charges for those definitions, typically after the first year.—Ed.

Mini: How Sweet Is It?

MANOLIS KROUSSANIOKAS

I just want to add my two cents on the Mac mini and its installed RAM ("Small Miracles," March 2005). Based on my experience with my iBook, 256MB of RAM is enough for most of the applications I use—Adobe Photoshop and Apple's Mail, Safari, AppleWorks, Preview, iCal, and iPhoto, usually all open at once. Sure, Photoshop and iPhoto sometimes take a few extra seconds to complete some actions, but you can't have instant gratification all the time.

LINDA WINNER

I was at first really excited about the Mac mini. I thought it would be perfect for me—until I read the specs. How can Apple put only 256MB of RAM and one slot into this machine? It's insane! The price for RAM upgrades, the difficulty of adding AirPort networking and Bluetooth, and the slow 4,200-rpm hard drive add insult to injury. Do you really think you are fooling anyone, Steve? When we do the math, we can figure out the final cost. No, I don't think I will be buying a mini.

Mellel versus Nisus

DR. RON RHODES

You should reconsider your ratings of Mellel 1.8 (####; March 2005) and the significantly more expensive Nisus Writer Express 2.1 (####; March 2005). As the author of over 30 books, I've tested all the word processors for the Mac, and I've found that while Mellel performs flawlessly, Nisus has so many bugs that it's impossible to use. For example, if you double-space footnotes in Nisus and then close the document, those footnotes appear single-spaced when you reopen it. If you try to reorder paragraphs that have endnotes by selecting and dragging those paragraphs, the endnote numbers and their content at the end of the document vanish into oblivion and won't reappear until you close and restart the program. I could go on. Nisus is not ready for prime time.

So Long, AppleWorks?

BRIAN SMITH

As a longtime AppleWorks user, I was intrigued by the announcement of the new iWork suite ("Sweet Software Suites," Mac Beat, March 2005). After having a closer look, though, I have to say that Apple may have a winner here—but iWork ain't AppleWorks, that's for sure. Gone is the spreadsheet, gone is the database, gone are the paint and draw sections—all sacrificed for the sake of Apple's competition with Microsoft PowerPoint. Fortunately, I can still use AppleWorks for my accounting and membership-mailing routines—for as long as it will run on whatever new OS Apple foists on us. But how long will that be?
Picking on Eddy

MATTHEW MIGNAU LT

I recently purchased an iMac G5, and now I understand why Apple users have always been such a proud group: the G5 is an elegant machine, and I can’t see myself going back to a PC. But I’m disappointed by the amount of fan noise the G5 emits. Take a look at the discussion forums on Apple’s own Web site, and you’ll find plenty of documentation of the problem. So I was surprised to read in “The 20th Annual Editors’ Choice Awards” (February 2005) that the iMac G5 system is “whisper-quiet.” Who are you kidding? The G5 is not a quiet computer—let alone whisper-quiet—by any stretch of the imagination.

The iMac G5s we reviewed had fans that were commendably quiet. But you’re right—there have been many reports to the contrary since then. We’re looking at those reports now to see whether they merit coverage.—Ed.

SIMON RINGSMUTH

The computer held up by the Editors’ Choice figurine (February 2005) appears to be a Mac SE. Why the SE? Macworld doled out the first Eddy Awards in 1985, when the hottest Mac around was the 512K. The SE didn’t debut until 1987. The 512K or the original 128K would be a better choice.

It’s Just a Tool

RAY SCHOCH

A Harley-Davidson is only a motorcycle, and a computer is only a tool, folks. Sure, I prefer the Apple version to the Microsoft version of this particular tool, but that shouldn’t mean I have to spend a month’s income every year to replace it. It makes neither economic nor ecological sense to toss aside expensive and perfectly serviceable tools simply because they’re not the latest and shiniest.

Stop Your Sobbing

SCOTT BROWN

What is it with your Feedback column? In every issue, it’s mostly complaints. For example, in the March issue, 11 of the 12 letters were negative in tone, if not outright complaints. I don’t want propaganda, but I’d like to see some balance in the column. Otherwise, you should call it “Whine Bar.”

CORRECTIONS

In “Reviewed: iLife ‘05 and iWork ‘05” (April 2005), we incorrectly state that AppleWorks is free with all new Macs. In fact, the suite is not bundled with Power Macs and PowerBooks.

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Apple’s Uphill Climb

When Apple released its sales numbers for the last three months of 2004, it gave market research firm IDC the chance to compare Apple’s place in the computer market with the big PC vendors’ shares. So is Apple gaining ground or falling behind? Turns out it’s doing a little bit of both.

BY JIM DALRYMPLE

According to IDC, Apple’s share of the desktop market continued to rise at the end of 2004, while its laptop position slipped. Over the course of the year, Apple gained nearly 1 percent in the U.S. desktop market and about 0.5 percent in the world market (the numbers don’t include the Mac mini). After a rise during the year, Apple’s U.S. laptop market share dropped back to roughly what it was one year before, and its world market share fell a bit. Why are laptop sales down when desktop sales are up? Apple declared 2003 the “Year of the Notebook,” but it hasn’t pushed laptops as hard since then. Also, rumors of a G5-based PowerBook debuting at Macworld Expo in January 2005 may have kept many customers from purchasing a new PowerBook.

The Mac Mini—Will It Help?

While the desktop numbers are positive for Apple, they don’t take into account what could be one of the most significant moves Apple has made with its desktop computers in recent years—the release of the $499 Mac mini.

The Mac mini could potentially be one of the best-selling Macs that Apple has in its arsenal. By giving the mini a price tag that even the most price-conscious consumers find affordable, Apple has set up the new desktop as a wonderful first Mac for switchers or students, or as a second Mac for the home.

Not many consumers would consider adding a $1,299 iMac to their $99 iPod shuffle purchase, but a $499 computer is a much easier sell. And Windows users
accustomed to purchasing relatively inexpensive hardware can now replace a PC with the Mac mini and not suffer the sticker shock that's normally associated with buying a Mac.

Analysts also see the mini's potential. "The luster that the brand currently has because of sales of the iPod, combined with what is perceived as a very affordable product carrying the prestige of the Apple brand, is definitely going to help them," says Jupiter Research analyst Michael Gartenberg.

Apple is known for having a strong, identifiable brand that people are willing to pay more money for. So does that prestige wear off when you pay only $499—instead of $1,000 or more—for the computer? Not with a desktop computer that you can sling under your arm and walk away with.

"The fact that Apple is priced within reach of the rest of the market is psychologically very important. And, of course, it's a beautiful design—people look at that computer and they break out into a smile," says Gartenberg. "They are not saying that about Dell's machines."

Does Market Share Matter?

As much as any company would like to boast of having the highest market share in the industry (as Apple can do easily with the iPod), does market share really matter? After all, Apple reported its highest quarterly revenue and net income in the company's history with a $295 million profit for its first fiscal quarter of 2005.

Apple has been fighting market-share numbers for many years. Of course, the company can't ignore the numbers altogether, but it's more important for Apple to have a strong overall strategy—keeping the iPod and Mac names on the tips of people's tongues—that to chase numbers that mean little to regular consumers.

According to Ross Rubin, director of industry analysis for NPD Techworld, which provides sales and marketing information to technology companies, "market share is kind of a moot point in the evolution of the Mac."

iPod: Apple's (Still) Rising Star

There is no question that the iPod has lifted Apple's profile from that of a niche computer company to that of a market-leading powerhouse in the music realm. Apple has used the popularity of the iPod to market other products in its lineup—including the Mac. Once people take a look at Apple as the maker of the iPod, they start to see the bigger picture of what the company has to offer.

Apple's naysayers have been waiting for the competition to drop the hammer on Apple and wrench away both music-store and MP3-player market share. But even with names such as Sony, Napster, and Microsoft targeting Apple, the iPod's success has only increased.

"What's interesting is that people have been saying from day one that the iPod is great, but just wait until the competitors come up with equivalent models and Apple can't compete. Well, it's been three and a half years, and it hasn't happened yet," says Gartenberg.

In fact, there are other flash-based MP3 players on the market that boast more features than Apple's recently introduced iPod shuffle, but evidence suggests that they aren't as popular as the shuffle.

Jupiter's Gartenberg concludes that "we are past the discussion point of 'Will Apple be in business next year? Will the Mac be around next year?' Only the foolish among us are still debating that question."

Although Apple will never catch up in the computer game, the popularity of the iPod and the iTunes Music Store make for a pretty large target on the company's back. To continue its popularity, Apple must continue to innovate, and to force the competition to follow in its footsteps.

Macworld.com News Editor IBM DALRYMPLE covers, among other things, Apple financial reports.

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### U.S. Desktop Market Share

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### U.S. Portable Market Share

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www.macworld.com
APPLE EXPANDS iTUNES CUSTOM CARDS

Take My Single, Please

At 2005's Grammy Awards, artists including Bono, Norah Jones, Brian Wilson, and Stevie Wonder came together to perform a version of the Beatles' song “Across the Universe.” The next day, the recording went on sale at the iTunes Music Store, with all proceeds going to tsunami-relief efforts in Southeast Asia. Apple also created 500 iTunes Custom Cards for the charity recording and sent them to major radio outlets to generate buzz around the single. Each instantly collectable card featured a picture of the song's star performers on the front and a special download code on the back, which let the card's owner download the song from the iTunes Music Store for free.

The cards were so successful that Apple expanded the program: bands participating in March's South By Southwest music conference (www.sxsw.com) in Austin, Texas, could promote a single by passing out as many as 200 numbered copies of their own cards. The cards featured original artwork and a code for a specific song. Bands such as Calexico, Aimee Mann, Fat Boy Slim, and Elvis Costello handed them out. Chris Bell, Apple's director of iTunes product marketing, says the program will continue: “We have some other promo-only programs similar to SXSW coming up. Stay tuned.”

Custom Cards are designed to replace traditional promotional CDs—they're a lot easier to lug around than stacks of CDs and can be more cost-effective—and, of course, they drive people to the iTunes Music Store. —CHRISTOPHER BREEN

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE DIGITAL MUSIC WORLD?

Listen to the Music

It's time once again to bring you up-to-date on some of the recent news in the digital music realm.—JONATHAN SEFF

Creative Drops Prices

Claiming that it would “further drive our momentum” in the digital music-player market, Creative Technology dropped prices of its Zen Micro MP3 players. Although CEO Sim Wong Hoo says Creative is “putting our competitors on the defensive,” the new prices came six days after Apple announced its updated iPod mini line—and almost exactly match Apple’s new pricing (www.creative.com).

Billboard Counts Digital Downloads

Although Billboard, the 111-year-old music-industry publication, has been tracking digital music downloads from places such as the iTunes Music Store for the past year, digital sales have been relegated to their own sections. Billboard recently began integrating digital track purchases into its “Hot 100” chart and added a new “Pop 100” chart—both track airplay, retail single sales, and digital track sales (www.billboard.com).

Sony Goes Flash-Based

For the first time in the history of the company's Network Walkman, Sony is releasing seven digital music players that use flash-based memory instead of hard drives. The music players will support MP3 and Sony’s ATRAC3 files (www.sonystyle.com).

DVI Booster, from Gefen (www.gefen.com): Unit extends the length of a DVI connection between a Mac and its display by 30 to 50 feet ($249).

FastMac G4, from FastMac (www.fastmac.com): Processor upgrade for CRT-based iMacs with slot-loading optical drives replaces the existing CPU with a Motorola 7410 processor running at 550MHz with 1MB of Level 2 cache ($200).

NuPower replacement batteries, from OtherWorld Computing (www.macsales.com): Higher-capacity batteries for 14-inch iBook G3 and iBook G4 models are rated at 59 watt-hours and 71 watt-hours, 12 percent and 29 percent more than Apple's stock battery, respectively (59-WH battery, $120; 71-WH battery, $140).

TDP-525U, from Toshiba (www.toshibadirect.com): Portable projector features Digital Light Processing technology; 2,000:1 contrast ratio; 1,800 ANSI lumens; and native SVGA 800-by-600 resolution ($999).

Tempo-X eSATA 8, from Sonnet Technologies (www.sonnettech.com): PCI-X host controller for Power Macs provides eight external Serial ATA ports ($300).

VX924, from Viewsonic (www.viewsonic.com): 19-inch LCD shipping in May features 1,280-by-1,024 native resolution and delivers 4-millisecond video response time across the entire color scale ($499).

27dBm Base Station Transceiver, from QuickerTek (www.quickerTek.com): Transceiver boosts wireless networking output of Power Mac G4s and G5s to 500 milliwatts, the maximum output allowed by the FCC ($160).

Timbuktu Pro 8.0, from Netopia (www.netopia.com): Update enhances remote-control software’s security by offering an integrated Secure Shell client that encrypts and compresses data streams ($100; contact Netopia for upgrade pricing).
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OREGON PUBLIC BROADCASTING TURNS TO MACS FOR PLEDGE DRIVES

Members Like You

If you’ve ever watched a local public television station’s pledge drive, you’ve probably noticed that the fundraiser isn’t a very high-tech operation. Volunteers answer calls and then fill out slips of paper with donor information. The slips are collected and tallied by hand, and the data is entered into a system. So I was pleasantly surprised when, during a recent volunteer session at Oregon Public Broadcasting (OPB), each volunteer was greeted by a shiny white iBook, instead of a pen and slips of paper.

Each iBook runs a custom OS X application called OPB Pledge, an elegant program that turns the tedium of hand-completing pledge paperwork into a simple and time-efficient task. Completed pledges are held in a queue on the iBook and then transmitted wirelessly to the database server, which sits on an Apple Xserve. The database server and its administration interface run on open-source software, so there aren’t any licensing fees.

The pledge system has eliminated manual data entry from the OPB fundraising drives, and it has helped reduce the turnaround time between taking a pledge and collecting the money—a process that used to take six to eight weeks. Like Macs in general, the system just works.—ROB GRIFFITHS

APPLE FURTHERS ITS INROADS INTO THE SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY

The Science of Macs

As Apple produces faster computers, and as OS X’s Unix core makes the operating system an even more viable option for researchers, Macs continue to make strides in the scientific community. Adding another notch to its belt, Apple recently made the shortlist of five companies that are “the best qualified to implement new technologies that will advance genomics research,” according to a report published by market research firm Bionformatics (www.gene2drug.com). The survey asked 600 genomics researchers which technology company they prefer.

“We are really pleased about it,” says Liz Kerr, Apple’s director of science and technology markets. “It’s nice when you know that you have a great solution, but then to see it broadly reflected in a piece of research like this is really gratifying.”

News of the research hasn’t changed Apple’s approach to the science market, but the company has begun taking its message on the road. At the end of March, it launched a national road show focusing on high-performance computing in the sciences. The road show visited San Diego, San Francisco, Boston, New York, and Cincinnati. Kerr says that hardware releases like the Xserve G5 and the Xsan storage-area-network file system demonstrate Apple’s commitment to the high-performance–computing market. But Apple’s success in the sciences isn’t just about the hardware. OS X has played a large role in converting scientists, and it will continue to do so. Kerr is a featured speaker at the upcoming Bio-IT World Conference + Expo, where she’ll talk about the benefits of OS X 10.4 (also known as Tiger).

On May 18, Kerr will present “Apple and Mac OS X 10.4 Tiger: Energize Your Workflow,” a session dedicated to an overview of Tiger and its relevance to the “discovery process.” Kerr will focus on Automator, a technology that helps streamline repetitive tasks; Xgrid-based distributed computing; and other Apple software relevant to scientists and IT managers.

“Clearly, with OS X we stopped being a niche player,” says Kerr. “That’s one of the reasons we are seeing so much success—this is the market that gets that more than any other.”—JIM DALRYMPLE

CREATIVE BEAT

Canvas X, from ACD Systems (www.acdsystems.com): Cross-platform workflow system for people who create, edit, present, and distribute technical illustrations and other graphics files supports more than 100 file formats and features annotation, markup, and redlining tools ($400; upgrades, $50–$200, depending on version).

Poser 6, from Curious Labs (www.curiouslabs.com): Updated 3-D tool for creating realistic human figures adds revamped user interface, OpenGL hardware acceleration, cartoon-outline rendering effects, and better support for Flash ($269; upgrade, $129).

Quark Publishing System 3.5, from Quark (www.quark.com): Workflow-management software features integration with QuarkXPress 6; edit tracking with redlining capability, QuickConnect for tracking and managing applications, and support for Mac OS X Server and Xserve; at press time, no ship date had been announced (contact Quark for pricing; upgrade, free).

STORAGE BEAT


Forensic BayDock, from WiebeTech (www.wiebetech.com): External FireWire desktop storage system for file recovery adds Serial ATA support in both Dual BayDock and Quad BayDock configurations (SATA Dual BayDock, $1,100; SATA Quad BayDock, $1,800).

Impression 2.7, from Babel Company (www.babelcompany.com): Backup software features redesigned user interface, the ability to disable file segmentation in file-copy mode, and an automatic-burn option for unattended backups to optical media ($50; upgrade, free).
Wanted: Control Freaks!

**DiskStudio™** allows you to create and remove disk partitions on the fly! Want to create a new partition for games or photos? No problem. Want to get rid of that old OS 9 partition without backing up and reformatting your drive? It’s easy.

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Micromat is dedicated to bringing you cool and useful utilities for your Macintosh and iPod. Our flagship product, TechTool® Pro, has helped thousands of Macintosh users keep their Macs running at their absolute best. TechTool Pro can even recover lost data and resurrect faulty disk drives. Learn more about Micromat products by visiting our website.
BIOMETRIC SECURITY OPTIONS EXPAND FOR MAC USERS

Put Your Finger Here

Biometric devices—which analyze biological traits—have long been seen in sci-fi movies: voice identification to trigger secret doors or retinal scans to open private vaults. This technology has been somewhat slower to make it into everyday life, and even more so for Mac users than for PC users.

Sony was the first company to come out with a consumer-level biometric device that’s compatible with OS X. The $100 FUI600/M Puppy fingerprint-identification device (macworld.com/0457) lets you turn your fingerprint into your OS X login password. The USB device can also work with multiple users, with different fingerprints acting as passwords for different users.

At the CeBIT trade show held in Hanover, Germany, in March, SanDisk (www.sandisk.com) unveiled another Mac-compatible biometric device. The company’s Cruzer Profile is a USB 2.0 flash drive with embedded fingerprint-identification technology. About the size of a pack of gum, the 512MB ($100) and 1GB ($200) drives began shipping in April.

The Cruzer Profile is made up of two tethered parts: the drive itself; and the identification hardware, which stores fingerprint images and activates the drive when the user presents a matching print. As with Sony’s Puppy, the Cruzer Profile processes the fingerprints internally without using your Mac—making it more secure. Mac users aren’t on an even footing with the Cruzer Profile—the drive includes three Windows-only utilities—but iPod shuffle users will feel right at home: SanDisk’s drive also comes with a lanyard.—BRAD COOK AND JONATHAN SEFF

IS INCREASED RAM THE START OF SOMETHING GOOD?

Thanks for the Memory

Apple’s last round of PowerBooks introduced a lot of features worth getting excited about—faster processor speeds, 8x SuperDrives, a new trackpad, and Bluetooth 2.0. But one addition to the PowerBook line is particularly important in my book, and it could have a far-reaching effect on Mac users: more RAM.

Apple finally made 512MB of RAM standard on every Power Book model. Previously, only the high-end PowerBooks—the faster 15-inch model and the 17-inch model—shipped with that much memory. The other three configurations came with a paltry 256MB (unless, of course, you ordered more as part of a build-to-order option).

Anyone who has added additional RAM to a Mac has surely noticed the benefit of such an investment. As Macworld has noted on multiple occasions—most recently in our reviews of the Mac mini (macworld.com/0508) and the iMac G5 (macworld.com/0509)—512MB of RAM is necessary to enjoy the smooth, peppy performance of OS X.

Apple’s move seems to indicate that the company recognizes this fact, at least when it comes to computers aimed at pro users. In addition to the PowerBook line, Power Mac desktops also ship with 512MB of RAM. The consumer products—the iMac, iBook, eMac, and Mac mini—ship with only 256MB. Although users of these products can add more memory, Apple’s memory prices are noticeably higher than what other RAM merchants charge, and buyers of consumer machines are not always inclined to install upgrades themselves (especially in harder-to-upgrade models such as the iBook and the Mac mini). As Apple tries to attract more switchers, it needs to make sure that the out-of-box experience is a good one—instead of making things unnecessarily difficult for people the company is trying to win over with appeals about ease of use.

The costs of boosting installed RAM (without raising prices for consumers) would be outweighed by a better user experience and the amount of goodwill that Apple would generate.—PHILIP MICHAELS
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SAVE EVERYTHING.™
RISK NOTHING.
NEW SOUNDS KEEP APPLE’S MUSIC APPS FRESH

Thrown for a Loop

Apple’s GarageBand has made it fun and easy to create songs made entirely out of loops—snippets of instrument recordings that you can layer and repeat for as long as you want. Start with a drum loop, bring in a bass line, add some punctuating percussion, and drop in a horn section, and you’ve got yourself a homemade, royalty-free song to post on the Web or use as a soundtrack in your latest iMovie. Although Apple includes a lot of loops, it’s easy to get bored with the same content after a while—and all the people out there with the same music apps are overusing the same sounds. To spice up your songs, here are some companies that offer Apple Loops—formatted sounds ready for use in GarageBand, Logic, Final Cut Pro, or Soundtrack.—JONATHAN SEFF

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<td>Apple Computer</td>
<td><a href="http://www.apple.com">www.apple.com</a></td>
<td>$99</td>
<td>Jam Pack 4: Symphony Orchestra: more than 2,000 strings, brass, woodwind, keyboard, and percussion loops</td>
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<td>BandmateLoop.com</td>
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<td>Beta Monkey</td>
<td><a href="http://www.betamonkey.com">www.betamonkey.com</a></td>
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<td>Alt and Modern Rock 1: 1,000 grooves—everything from slower ballads to frantic power pop</td>
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<td>M-Audio</td>
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<td>PowerFX</td>
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<td>SessionLoops</td>
<td><a href="http://www.sessionloops.com">www.sessionloops.com</a></td>
<td>$50</td>
<td>Drum Foundations Volume One Multi-Track: hundreds of rock loops from drummer Simon Phillips</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ultimate Sound Bank</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ultimate-sound.com">www.ultimate-sound.com</a></td>
<td>€1.99 (about $3.33)</td>
<td>SonicBoomBox: 4,000 loops including hip-hop sounds, acoustic-guitar riffs, brass phrases, and more</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zero-G</td>
<td><a href="http://www.zero-g.co.uk">www.zero-g.co.uk</a></td>
<td>£170</td>
<td>Pro Pack For GarageBand: 11,000 loops with collections including Cuckooland Unhinged, Nu House, Pure Mayhem, and Voices of Africa</td>
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Mick, meet Keith.

Say hello to iFi, your iPod's sonic soulmate - power, detail and emotion unapproached by any other iPod speaker system. Perfect in your bedroom, as your primary home audio system, or even for pre/post production monitoring. Controlled by a long-range RF remote, the iFi docking station fits all dockable iPods and charges them as well. Satellites are self-standing or wall-mountable. Satisfaction, indeed. Get yours at an Apple store, apple.com or select Klipsch retailers. Or check out klipsch.com.
iPod Mini
Second-Generation iPod Offers Improved Battery but Lacks Extras

BY CHRISTOPHER BREEN

In the computer world, when a new version of an existing computer offers modest improvements in processor speed, more hard-drive space, more built-in RAM, and perhaps a better graphics card, the update is sometimes referred to as a "speed bump." The machine is enhanced in ways that make it more desirable, but there's nothing earth-shakingly different under the hood.

Although we don't refer to the iPod's speed, "speed bump" could fairly describe the new iPod minis, the latest generation of Apple's wildly popular midsize music player. Like speed-bumped computers, these iPods include no new features. However, the new minis—available in capacities of 4GB ($199) and 6GB ($249)—do offer vastly improved battery life. The new 6GB model holds more music than the original 4GB iPod mini (★★★★; May 2004) but has the same price. In addition, the pink, green, and blue models sport more-vivid hues than the original mini, thanks to a metal-flake coating on the case. (The silver model looks the same as the original. The gold model found in the first generation of minis has been discontinued.)

All Charged Up and Ready to Go

While the new colors and greater storage capacity of the 6GB model are the new minis' marquee features, the latest generation of Apple's iPod minis is their play time. The original mini's play time is rated at eight hours, and that's pretty close to the mark. In my tests of a first-generation iPod mini, I found that when you shuffled songs on a fully charged unit and didn't touch it after pressing play, the iPod would play for a little more than nine hours.

The current minis are rated at 18 hours of play time. Under the same "press play and walk away" conditions, my green 6GB iPod mini played for an astounding 26 hours and 16 minutes. This hints that Apple's specification of 18 hours of play time is a real-world figure—that you can expect the battery charge to last for a good 18 hours (and possibly longer), even when you perform such actions as switching on backlighting for short periods of time, searching through contacts and calendars, adjusting the iPod's volume, and jumping from one song, album, or playlist to another. If you need an iPod that plays for long stretches of time between recharges, this longer battery life alone makes the second-generation minis worth your serious consideration.

Missing in Action

These new minis are also notable for what Apple leaves out of the box. Although you'll find a cable for transferring music via USB 2.0, the Apple iPod Dock Connector to FireWire Cable that was once bundled with every iPod is now an optional $19 accessory. Likewise, the power adapter that accompanied the original iPod mini must be purchased separately for $29.

In the past, when fewer new Macs shipped with USB 2.0 ports, the absence of a FireWire cable would have been more than a minor inconvenience. With earlier iPod models and versions of iTunes, transfer via USB 2.0 was noticeably slower. Apple appears to have made improvements that bring USB 2.0 transfers into line with FireWire. In my tests, a dual-2GHz Power Mac G5 filled a 6GB mini in 15 minutes and 17 seconds over a USB 2.0 connection. Using a FireWire cable shaved a scant 18 seconds off that time.

Apple might argue that by omitting these items, it has been able to deliver a 4GB mini for $50 less than the original and a 6GB model for the same price as the first mini. Add the value of the minis' enhanced play time, the fact that USB 2.0 is found on all current Macs, and the reality that for some people it's no more of a chore to plug an iPod into a computer to charge it than it is to hook it up to a power adapter, and Apple's decision makes sense.

But as a veteran iPod user, I am disappointed. I often charge my iPod at night so it's fresh in the morning, and, like me, my computers sleep at night. An iPod won't charge from a sleeping computer, so if you lack a power adapter and want to charge your iPod overnight, your computer must remain awake. Also, while most of my computers have a FireWire port, few of them include a USB 2.0 port. People with similarly middle-aged computers who are considering buying one of the new iPod minis must figure in the cost of the FireWire cable (or a USB 2.0 PCI card or PC Card).
30GB iPod Photo
Fewer Accessories, Lower Prices Distinguish Smaller Model

BY CHRISTOPHER BREEN
When Apple released the second-generation iPod mini, it also tweaked the iPod photo line. It did so not by updating the interface or adding new capabilities to the colorful music and picture player, but rather by slashing $150 off of the price of the 60GB model and replacing the 40GB version with a 30GB iPod photo. This new, smaller-capacity iPod photo costs $349 and holds approximately 7,500 songs or 25,000 photos.

Apple removed some previously bundled accessories: the FireWire and AV cables, the iPod photo dock, and the carrying case.

In my tests, the 30GB iPod photo had the same battery life as the 60GB model, exceeding Apple's promised 15 hours of play by 93 minutes (backlighting, EQ, and Sound Check were turned off for these tests). When connected to a TV by a now-optional AV cable, the new 30GB iPod photo projected a slide show for about two hours. This iPod charged as quickly via USB 2.0 as it did via FireWire. And its colorful interface still looks great.

The 30GB iPod photo is thinner than the 60GB iPod photo but just slightly thicker than the fourth-generation 20GB iPod, so it fits nicely into cases, docks, and speakers designed for earlier iPods.

Macworld's Buying Advice
This new iPod photo is slimmer and more affordable than the previous 40GB model. This, in addition to the iPod photo's bright, colorful display, may take the sting out of losing necessary extras.

RATING: ****
PROS: Good play time; beautiful, bright screen; more attractive price than previous model; fits in older iPod accessories.
CONS: No bundled FireWire cable, AV cable, or dock.
PRICE: $349

CHRISTOPHER BREEN is the editor in chief of Playlistmag.com and the author of Secrets of the iPod and iTunes, fifth edition (Peachpit Press, 2005).

Photoshop Plug-ins
Helper Applications Expand the Photoshop Platform

BY JAY J. NELSON
In the world of image editing, Adobe Photoshop has become a platform unto itself—it's certainly much more than a single application. A thriving cottage industry of plug-ins, filters, and actions has emerged around Photoshop's architecture, and today there are supplemental plug-ins or actions for nearly every need, interest, and user level.

In this review, I look at a variety of Photoshop plug-ins: Alcvis's Enhancer 2.0, which reclaims detail in shadows and highlights; Alien Skin Software's Eye Candy 5: Nature, a plug-in that lets you add naturalistic special effects to objects; and nik multimedia's Color Efex Pro 2.0, a set of tools that mimic—and in some cases surpass—traditional photographic lens filters.

These products are designed to work within Photoshop, but they also work with a variety of other imaging programs that adhere to Photoshop's plug-in standard, such as Adobe Photoshop Elements 3.0 and Macromedia Fireworks MX 2004.

Enhancer 2.0
You can't always be in the perfect position to shoot a photo, and sometimes you also don't have enough time to choose the proper camera settings for the available light. Too often, the disappointing result is that either the important part of your photo is in a shadow or the whole picture looks hazy. Alcvis's Enhancer 2.0 fixes it.

Bad Positioning It was impossible to avoid standing in a shadow when taking this photo, and the shadow obscures much of the beautiful detail on the front of the building. With minor tweaks to Enhancer's default settings, the shadow areas were lightened and much of the detail was restored—without blowing out the sky or the lit courtyard.
these problems by revealing detail in both shadow and highlight areas without blowing out highlights or plugging up shadows. Amazingly, it works.

Akvis says that Enhancer intensifies color transitions, thus strengthening the difference between adjacent pixels in color gradations. That means you can dramatically improve most photos, especially those in which strong light falls behind your subject, casting a shadow.

Besides enhancing shadow and highlight detail, Enhancer can also improve details in a photo’s midtone areas, making it an effective tool for sharpening an otherwise well-exposed photo. In my tests, it provided an added punch that was especially beneficial for photos of industrial objects such as buildings, bridges, and vehicles.

Because of the algorithms Enhancer uses, it’s also extremely effective at removing the haze that sometimes shows up in a photo (haze is usually the result of nonoptimal camera settings).

Enhancer’s preview window provides just three slider bars in an easy-to-use interface; you can quickly improve a photo through simple trial and error. Unfortunately, since you can’t type values directly into the dialog box, and you can’t save settings for future use, you’ll wind up doing extra work if you cancel out of the dialog box or if you want to use the same settings on multiple pictures.

While the program’s Before and After buttons are handy for quickly viewing the effect of your changes, the preview window is not resizable, nor can you zoom in. Sometimes this forces you into a few rounds of applying and reappling Enhancer’s effects.

In my tests, Enhancer seemed to produce shadow and highlight adjustments similar to what an experienced user could achieve with the Shadow/Highlight command in Photoshop CS, CS2, and Elements 3 (see “First Look: Adobe Creative Suite 2,” page 58, for more on Photoshop CS2). Enhancer’s ability to also sharpen midtones is unique, making it useful for sharpening details in well-lit photos. For users of earlier versions of Photoshop, Photoshop Elements, Macromedia Fireworks, or any other application that doesn’t have Photoshop CS’s Shadow/Highlight feature, Enhancer is a valuable tool. For Photoshop CS or Elements 3 users, its greatest value is in sharpening midtones.

Be sure to check out Enhancer’s manual; it’s helpful for understanding which settings to use for common problems. I had some trouble installing the upgrade from version 1.3 to 2.0; however, Akvis is working on the problem and it will likely be solved by the time you read this. Tech support was somewhat slow to respond and not too helpful.

**Color Efex Pro 2.0**

Fully equipped professional photographers carry a carefully chosen array of lens filters and light reflectors to make the most of the lighting conditions in any situation and to add artistic flair to images. This is a viable approach in digital photography, though software can often produce similar effects.

The plug-ins in nik multimedia’s Color Efex Pro 2.0 provide up to 75 professional-quality filters that let you reproduce or go way beyond traditional lens effects. For example, the red filter enhances skin tones, the blue filter improves blue colors and brightens skies, and the green filter makes foliage much greener—all without affecting the rest of the photograph.
Color Efex Pro divides the filters into two categories: Traditional and Stylizing. The Traditional filters include effects such as B/W Conversion, Classical Soft Focus, Vignette, Darken/Lighten Center, Fog, Remove Color Cast, Graduated Blue (and other colors), Polarize, Silver and Gold Reflectors, and White Neutralizer. The Stylizing filters include artistic effects such as Indian Summer, Midnight, Monday Morning, Old Photo (both color and black and white), Pastel, and Solarization.

Sunshine is one of the most amazing filters in this set—it transforms the dull colors in a picture taken on a cloudy day into the colors you’d see on a bright summer day. In effect, it frees you to take photos under cloudy conditions, because you can adjust the lighting later if you want to.

All the filters can be applied to 8- or 16-bit images, in RGB, CMYK, Lab, or Grayscale color modes. If you have a Wacom graphics tablet, you can even paint the filters onto your image using various pressure-sensitivity settings.

The filters are available in several different collections. The $80 Rick Sammon Edition includes 12 filters chosen by photographer Rick Sammon, as well as four interactive lessons showing how he uses them. The $100 Standard Edition includes 19 filters; the $160 Select Edition adds 26 more filters for a total of 45; and the $230 Complete Edition includes all 75 filters.

Color Efex has been evolving for more than five years, with constant input from professional photographers. In the Pro 2.0 version, the brilliance of its programmers, and their attention to the needs of pro photographers, is obvious. I recommend it highly.

**Eye Candy 5: Nature**

Sometimes the subject matter of an image screams for a special effect, such as smoke, rust, water ripples, paint drips, or icicles. When you want to reinforce a marketing message in an image, these tricks can be very effective but also very difficult to produce.

Eye Candy 5: Nature is a set of ten filters that add natural effects to objects or text. My favorites are Drip, which either melts things Salvador Dali-style or adds paint drips to text and other objects; Icicles, which makes any object look as though it had been hit by an ice storm; Rust, which can add realistic corrosion or moss, mold, or mildew; Smoke, which creates smoky effects ranging from volcanic eruptions to steaming coffee; and Ripples, which makes your object appear to be underwater, with many options for surface ripples. Other effects include Fire, Corona, Squint, Water Drops, and Snow Drift.

Nature is the second of three upgrades to Eye Candy 4000—Textures was released in 2004 (=00, March 2005), and Impact will ship sometime this year.

Nature’s filters work on any nonwhite or nontransparent area of a layer, such as an object you’ve copied, a drawing you’ve pasted from Adobe Illustrator, or some big text.

Each filter’s interface is slightly different, but they all have one pane for Settings (presets) and one or more panes for controlling the filter’s variables. Each filter includes dozens of presets you can use for instant effects; this is necessary because these filters have more controls than most people could master. Fortunately, when you discover a
DLO TRANSPOD
The Only iPod Accessory Your Car Will Ever Need

DLO TRANSPOD ➔ CHARGE + TRANSMIT + SECURE = ALL IN ONE WIRELESS SOLUTION
You live in your car. Your music lives in your iPod. Connect the two with the DLO TransPod. It broadcasts iPod's music through FM radio in crystal clear stereo sound. It also charges your iPod's battery while holding it securely near your dashboard for super easy access. There are no cables, batteries or separate pieces to get in the way - just attach the all-in-one DLO TransPod to your cigarette lighter and your iPod and car will be in perfect harmony. The DLO TransPod fits all dockable iPods including iPod photo & iPod mini
Ripples

Eye Candy 5: Nature offers 43 preset ripple effects and lets you create and save your own.

All of the filters support 8-bit and 16-bit images in RGB, CMYK, and Grayscale modes. The 16-bit support is valuable because effects rendered in 16 bits per red, green, and blue channel can have finer gradations, and therefore greater realism, than effects rendered in 8 bits per channel. (You won’t see the difference on your display, but the printed result will be superior.) Some of the filters can also create a new layer and save their effects to it, resulting in a separate layer containing just the effect of the filter without the original selection. And if you want to be really efficient, you can use Photoshop actions to automate the process of applying Nature effects to a batch of images.

Most of the effects that Nature produces are photo-realistic, though some seem to be more inspired by nature than truly natural. For example, Snow Drift looks like a painted illustration, and the drops in Water Drops are a bit too uniform.

Macworld’s Buying Advice

For photographers, nik Color Efex Pro 2.0 is a professional lens-filter factory, with dozens of filters that are useful right out of the box. The biggest challenge is deciding which version of this product you want to buy. If your work involves commercial art or marketing, Eye Candy 5: Nature’s creative possibilities and ease of use make it a bargain. Enhancer 2.0’s ability to sharpen midtones is good, but because the Shadow/Highlight feature in Photoshop CS and CS2 and Photoshop Elements 3 can do much of what Enhancer does, that plug-in is most valuable for users of other image-editing applications. You might consider buying Photoshop Elements 3, which costs just a bit more, instead.

JAY J. NEILSON is the editor and publisher of Design Tools Monthly (www.design-tools.com), the executive summary of graphic design news.

Kerio MailServer

A groupware alternative to Exchange that syncs calendars, contacts and email with Entourage and Outlook. Integrated anti-spam and McAfee virus filtering provide secure, junk-free email for users on any platform.

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MINIDV CAMCORDERs

Optura 40 ($999), from Canon (www.canon.com):
The Optura 40 produces excellent video and respectable still photos, supports a true 16:9 mode, smooths the effects of a shaky grip, and is easy to use (November 2004; macworld.com/0130).

DCR-PC109 ($899), from Sony (www.sony.com):
This camcorder requires a docking station but has excellent image stabilization. It also has a spot-focus feature, headphone and mike jacks, and a hot-shoe (November 2004; macworld.com/0130).

FIREWIRE HARD DRIVES

PORTABLE HARD DRIVES

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<th>Rating</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Contact</th>
<th>Capacity</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LaCie</td>
<td>Mobile Hard Drive by F.A. Porsche</td>
<td>5 stars</td>
<td>$319</td>
<td><a href="http://www.lacie.com">www.lacie.com</a></td>
<td>100GB</td>
<td>Low cost per gigabyte; not very fast.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G- Technology</td>
<td>G-Drive-mini</td>
<td>5 stars</td>
<td>$279</td>
<td><a href="http://www.g-technology.com">www.g-technology.com</a></td>
<td>60GB</td>
<td>Complements Power Mac G5 design; great performance; very fast; a bit expensive.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DESKTOP HARD DRIVES

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<tr>
<th>Company</th>
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<tr>
<td>OWC</td>
<td>Mercury Elite 800 Pro</td>
<td>4.5 stars</td>
<td>$450</td>
<td><a href="http://www.macsales.com">www.macsales.com</a></td>
<td>400GB</td>
<td>Great performance; not great design details.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LaCie</td>
<td>d2 Hard Drive</td>
<td>5 stars</td>
<td>$219</td>
<td><a href="http://www.lacie.com">www.lacie.com</a></td>
<td>200GB</td>
<td>Attractive; competitive price; supports FireWire 800 and 400, as well as USB; slow FireWire 800 transfers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Go to macworld.com/0314 for more hard-drive reviews and specifications.

MACS DESKTOP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product</th>
<th>Processor</th>
<th>Display</th>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Go to macworld.com/</th>
<th>Best Price*</th>
<th>Speedmark Score*</th>
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<tr>
<td>iMac</td>
<td>G5/1.6GHz</td>
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<td>5 stars</td>
<td>0172</td>
<td>$1,240</td>
<td>150</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>G5/1.8GHz</td>
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<td>0173</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>17 inches</td>
<td>5 stars</td>
<td>0174</td>
<td>$1,800</td>
<td>163</td>
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<tr>
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<td>G4/1.25GHz (Combo drive)</td>
<td>17 inches</td>
<td>4 stars</td>
<td>0167</td>
<td>$789</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>G4/1.25GHz (SuperDrive)</td>
<td>17 inches</td>
<td>4 stars</td>
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<td>Mac mini</td>
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<td>0316</td>
<td>$479</td>
<td>117</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>G4/1.42GHz</td>
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<td>5 stars</td>
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<td>$2,198</td>
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<td></td>
<td>G5/dual-2.5GHz</td>
<td>not included</td>
<td>5 stars</td>
<td>0156</td>
<td>$2,697</td>
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</table>

DUAL-LAYER DVD BURNER

d2 DVD+RW 16x FireWire, with Double Layer ($189), from LaCie (www.lacie.com):
This DVD burner can burn 8.5GB of data to dual-layer DVDs. Although it has a relatively slow read speed, its performance is very good overall. Its excellent Mac compatibility includes OS X and iLife support, and it comes with the full version of Roxio's Toast Titanium (macworld.com/0313).

COLOR LASER PRINTER

LaserJet 2550Ln ($600), from Hewlett-Packard (www.hp.com):
This inexpensive, networkable color laser printer offers crisp text and very good color fidelity, and it supports Apple's Ren dezvous. But its paper capacity is only 125 sheets, so you might consider paying the extra $100 for the optional 150-sheet paper tray (macworld.com/0083).
DIGITAL CAMERAS

7.1-MEGAPIXEL DIGITAL CAMERA

PowerShot G6 ($699), from Canon (www.canon.com):
This digital camera takes photos with excellent color quality and clarity. It also has easy-to-use menus, Raw-format support, a live histogram, and the fastest lens (f2.0) of cameras in its class (macworld.com/0206).

ALSO RECOMMENDED:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Product</th>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Contact</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Epson</td>
<td>PhotoPC L-410</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>$200</td>
<td><a href="http://www.epson.com">www.epson.com</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

COLOR INK-JET PRINTERS

Photosmart 8450 ($250), from Hewlett-Packard (www.hp.com):
This network-capable ink-jet printer uses eight inks to print excellent-looking photos (macworld.com/0280).

ALSO RECOMMENDED:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Product</th>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Contact</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Epson</td>
<td>PhotoPC S200</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>$249</td>
<td><a href="http://www.epson.com">www.epson.com</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FLATBED SCANNERS

MIDRANGE SCANNER

CanoScan 9950F ($400), from Canon (www.canon.com):
This CanoScan raises the bar for midrange scanners by offering high optical resolution, improved scan quality, and more-intuitive software controls (macworld.com/0188).

LOW-END SCANNER

CanoScan 8400F ($150), from Canon (www.canon.com):
The 8400F has limited film and transparency support but is a great all-around scanner with some high-end features and a low-end price (macworld.com/0187).

NEW: DISPLAYS

21-INCH DISPLAY

321 LCD Monitor ($1,599), from LaCie (www.lacie.com): It’s pricey, but this 21.3-inch LCD, with its 10-bit color support and antiglare hood, delivers accurate color (macworld.com/0384).

19-INCH DISPLAY

MultiSync LCD 1960NX ($729), from NEC (www.necmitsubishi.com); October 2004; macworld.com/0081

17-INCH DISPLAY

SyncMaster 172X ($539), from Samsung (www.samsung.com); October 2004; macworld.com/0081

DESKTOP FIREWIRE HARD DRIVE

ToughTech 800 250GB (TIB-250) ($300), from WiebeTech (www.wiebetech.com): The ToughTech may cost a bit more than most drives, but it has great FireWire 800 performance, a USB 2.0 connector, and a very sturdy case (macworld.com/0314).
More Reviews

For complete reviews of the products listed here, visit www.macworld.com/reviews.

- Popcorn $50), from Roxio (www.roxio.com);
- DVDZoneX 1.4.1 $50 (about $68 at press time), from DVDZone (www.dvdzone.com);
- Copying DVDs, even just to back them up, is a legal landmine, but these two programs will do the job. DVDZoneX 1.4.1 has very fast encoding and additional options, but it's rather pricey. Popcorn, though slower to compress content, is easier to use and includes disc-burning capabilities (macworld.com/0406).

- GyazMail 1.2 $18), from Gyaz Square (www.gyazsquare.com): This e-mail program gives you many advantages that Apple's Mail doesn't. For example, it can queue messages or send them immediately, it can check different accounts on different schedules, and it lets you control whether mail rules (or filters) are applied to outgoing mail, applied to incoming mail, or applied manually. It also has a powerful custom search feature and much more (macworld.com/0414).

- Acrobat 7 Professional $449), from Adobe (www.adobe.com): This is a very impressive update that comes at a fair price. This version of Acrobat Professional eliminates the need for some expensive third-party plug-ins, gives you enhanced preflight functionality, adds commenting support in version 7's free Reader application, and has an improved Review Tracker (macworld.com/0415).

- Cubase SX 3.01 $799), from Steinberg (www.steinberg.net);
- Logic Pro 7.01 $999), from Apple Computer (www.apple.com);
- Digital Performer 4.52 $799), from Mark of the Unicorn (www.markoftheunicorn.com);

These applications give you tons of audio-editing power for less than $1,000 each. MOTU's Digital Performer is the best choice if you have Digidesign (or external DSP hardware), is perfect for film scoring, and is the easiest to use. Steinberg's Cubase has fallen behind somewhat on the Mac; its plug-ins are limited, and it doesn't support AU, but it remains powerful for MIDI editing and external hardware. Logic wins out with its sheer volume of instruments, effects, and tools. It covers all bases, from guitar amps to drum machines to physical modeling, as well as CD mastering and burning (macworld.com/0407).

- QuickBooks Pro 2005 $200), from Intuit (www.intuit.com);
- AccountEdge 2005 $300), from MYOB (www.mymob.com):
- Intuit's QuickBooks still has the advantage over MYOB's AccountEdge when it comes to ease of use. But if you're looking for an application that's packed with features, that can grow as your business grows, and that's continuously updated and enhanced to make managing your business finances easier, AccountEdge is clearly the better choice (macworld.com/0408).

- PDF2Office 2.0 Professional $129), from Recosoft (www.recosoft.com): Converting basic PDFs that include primarily text, images, and some formatting is uncomplicated with PDF2Office, which does the job quickly and effectively. But as the complexity and size of a PDF increases (with many pages and with tables that have hidden borders), you'll need to strategize to get acceptable results (macworld.com/0417).
Suitcase Problems?

PDFpen 2.0.1 ($50), from SmileOnMyMac (www.smileonmymac.com): PDF files are a simple and elegant way to distribute forms, instructions, and other information. But manipulating PDF files and filling out or creating new forms can be difficult unless you're using a straightforward utility like PDFpen (macworld.com/0416).

NewsFire 1.0 ($19), from David Watanabe (www.newsfirerss.com): NewsFire is an excellent application, and we highly recommend it. It’s a great value compared with other RSS news readers in its category, and we expect that it will only continue to improve. It has a few minor hitches, but none of them are deal breakers (macworld.com/0419).

Grammatica 6.1 ($30), from Ultralingua (www.ultralingua.com): This fast application gives you a consistent interface for checking your spelling and grammar from within many different programs, and it provides more-detailed information about grammar than Microsoft Word’s grammar checker. However, Grammatica could stand some improvement, so we don’t recommend shelling out the money for it just yet (macworld.com/0418).

Kid Pix Deluxe 3X

 fours from Software MacKiev (www.mackiev.com): The latest version of the famed children’s art program goes beyond simple drawing—it also includes a host of background images, stickers, animations, and prerecorded sounds that will help kids get started. Its iLife integration allows children to import photos from iPhoto and to use music from an iTunes library as a soundtrack for artistic creations. Kid Pix Deluxe 3X keeps it simple and fun (macworld.com/0413).

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Colin Smith, PhotoshopCAFE.com Perfect 5/5

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The Sims 2

We all know that if only the people around us took our advice, they’d be happier, healthier, and generally better human beings. But while you won’t get any thanks for meddling in the lives of your friends and coworkers, you can have the smug satisfaction of directing the destinies of virtual friends, with Aspyr Media’s The Sims 2—the much anticipated successor to what may just be the best-selling computer game of all time. The new version, which is set to be released in June, has all the voyeuristic thrill of the original, improved graphics, and long-term challenge: your decisions—both good and bad—affect entire generations.

Like the original game, The Sims 2 puts you in control of people called sims, who live, love, work, and play in a virtual world. You can create your own sims or choose from premade sims and sim families. Although sims live independently of your actions, you help direct them to get jobs, develop friendships, pick places to live, decorate their homes—everything people do in the real world. How successfully you help your sims do these things determines how well the game goes.

While the general mechanics of playing will be familiar to fans of the original game, this version’s look is a welcome improvement. The Sims 2 features an entirely new 3-D graphics engine that lets you zoom in on your sims with amazing detail. It also puts a significant load on your Mac—if you haven’t upgraded since you bought The Sims, you may need a new computer to play.

The preliminary system requirements call for a 1GHz G4 or faster, running OS X 10.3.4.

The game’s changes are more than skin-deep, though. These sims are also a lot more independent. For example, you don’t need to fuss over them to make sure they’re fed, entertained, or put to bed. You’ll focus instead on bigger goals. You spend entire lifetimes with your sims, from youth all the way to old age and death. And families of Sims can pass down DNA to their kids, affecting generations to come.

The game also gives more depth to your characters’ personalities. For example, they retain memories—both good and bad. They also have aspirations. By helping them achieve their aspirations, you’ll earn points you can cash in on furnishings, appliances, and other niceties.

If you really can’t get enough of your virtual friends, you can record the action and play back your sim films whenever you want.

The original Sims spawned a multitude of expansion packs. They won’t work with the new version, but there’s plenty here to keep you busy.

The Bottom Line The Sims 2 keeps what was fun about the original while offering a huge amount of new challenge.

BETA TESTED

PROS: New 3-D engine; support for genetics and aspirations adds to the challenge.
CONS: Higher system demands than the original; old expansion packs aren't compatible.
PRICE: $50
COMPANY: Aspyr Media, www.aspyr.com

Golf Season
Aspyr Media is planning to release the 2005 edition of its best-selling golf game, Tiger Woods PGA Tour, in June. The new version features even snazzier graphics than the impressive 2003 version, along with Tiger Proving, an editor that lets you alter the course by changing fairways, greens, bunkers, and more.

Space Pilot
If you are intrigued by Guild Software’s Vendetta Online but don’t want to pay the monthly online fees, check out Freeverse’s X2—The Threat. This new single-player game puts you in the cockpit of a spaceship as you explore, raid, or trade. It’s a bit like Ambrosia Software’s Escape Velocity, but in 3-D.

The Force Is with You
June should also see the release of Aspyr Media’s Star Wars Battlefront. This crossbreed of Battlefield 1942 and Star Wars franchises lets you participate in your favorite Star Wars battles as infantry or from the cockpits of famous vehicles.
This is the Tip of America's Military Spear.

You're on Point.

You are the First to Fight – a US Marine on the front lines of urban combat in Beirut. Lead a 4-man fire team that executes authentic Marine tactics. Move aggressively, knowing your team gives you 360-degree security, and devastate your enemies with precise air and mortar attacks. Experience a first-person shooter so realistic, the Marines use it as a training tool.

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Help shape the future of online poker, join our beta team.

This software is being provided free of charge for your entertainment purposes only
Don’t Fence Me In You’ll have to block alien bugs to win at Cosmo Bots.

PUZZLE
Cosmo Bots

RATING: 
PROS: Fast pace; easy to pick up.
CONS: Repetitive music; no traditional save feature.
PRICE: $20
COMPANY: Cornerstone TSP Games, www.ctspgames.com

If you were a fan of the arcade classic Qix or Ambrosia Software’s Barrack, you should consider Cosmo Bots, by Cornerstone TSP Games, a must-have. The game offers retro arcade action that’s more addictive than a bag of potato chips.

In the game, creepy little alien bugs have infested your space station. The only way to eradicate the menace is to shoot beams that fill the empty space around a framed perimeter. Pressing the spacebar or clicking on a right mouse button reorients the shooter vertically and horizontally. To win, you must fill up 85 percent of the frame. If the bugs touch the beams emanating from your shooter, you die.

When you fill a portion of the board that contains one of your myriad foes, that buggie is blasted to smithereens. Occasionally, doing so will also spawn power-ups—such as fast shot, slow motion (which slows your enemies down), score multipliers, and time bombs. You’ll also run into power-downs, which may slow your shooter, speed up everyone else, or do other nasty things. You can collect bonuses if you finish each level in enough time.

Despite its simple rules, Cosmo Bots gets relentlessly difficult fairly quickly. It will certainly keep you on your toes. The lush graphics and pumping techno soundtrack help as well—though you may find the music repetitious after a while and choose to turn it off.

With more than 500 levels, there’s a lot of game to play. The levels are divided between nine worlds, which also serve as starting points for new games. Although it’s not as convenient as being able to save at each new level, this means that you don’t have to start at the very beginning each time you play.

The best part is that you won’t need anything fancy to enjoy the game. Cosmo Bots supports OS 8.6 and later.

The Bottom Line Cosmo Bots is easy to learn but hard to master. It’s sure to please gamers who are looking for addictive arcade-style fun.

continues

Top Downloads | Kill Monty

Kill Monty, by Freeverse Software, is an homage to classic arcade shooters such as Robotron: 2084 and Smash TV—and a useful reminder that games don’t have to be complex to be a lot of fun.

Freeverse’s plucky heroine Jen finds herself in a room with doors on all sides. Through the doors come marching hordes of evildoers: suit-wearing monkeys, decks of playing cards, sharks, and more. Your goal is to blast them before they can do her any harm.

Along the way, you can grab power-ups. The more accurate you are with your firepower, the higher the Carnage meter rises—increasing the rate of power-ups and extra lives. As you progress through the game, you’ll unlock new difficulty levels, stages, and playable characters.

Controlling the game is fairly simple: you can move with the keyboard and aim with the mouse, or you can use keyboard controls for both actions. That said, I wish the game supported game pads.

The Bottom Line Kill Monty proves that good games don’t need a lot of sophistication to be really fun. This addictive twitchfest is worth checking out.

RATING: 
PROS: Simple controls; unlockable features.
CONS: No game-pad support; more violent than typical Freeverse games.
PRICE: $13
Think of them as a reprieve from the world around you. Whether it’s the engine roar inside an airplane cabin, the hustle of the city or the distractions in the office, Bose QuietComfort® 2 headphones help them fade softly into the background. And they do it with the flick of a switch. You can savor the delicate musical nuances without disturbing others. And when you’re not listening to music, you can slip into a tranquil haven – where you can relax and enjoy peace and solitude. Clearly, these are no ordinary headphones. It’s no exaggeration to say they’re one of those things you have to experience to believe.

Reduce noise with Bose technology. Our headphones were designed primarily for airplane travelers. But owners soon started telling us how much they enjoy using them in other places to reduce distractions around them. QuietComfort® 2 headphones incorporate patented technology that electronically identifies and dramatically reduces noise, while faithfully preserving the music, movie dialogue or tranquility you desire. Technologyreview.com reports, “It’s as if someone behind your back reached out, found the volume control of the world, and turned it way, way, down.” Perfect for listening to music, whether you’re on the go, at home or in the office.

Enjoy your music with our best headphone sound quality ever. CNET says “All sorts of music – classical, rock, and jazz – sounded refined and natural.” In fact, our QuietComfort® 2 headphones deliver audio that’s so crisp and clear, you may find yourself discovering new subtleties in your music. Travel & Leisure Golf simply says, “Forget ‘concertlike’ comparisons; you’ll think you’re onstage with the band.”

“The QuietComfort 2 lives up to its name, enveloping you in blissful sound... It’s easy to forget they’re on your head.” That’s what columnist Rich Warren says. To enjoy peace and tranquility, simply turn them on. To add Bose quality sound, attach the included audio cord and connect them to a home stereo, laptop computer, portable CD/DVD/MP3 player or in-flight audio system. When you’re done, their convenient fold-flat design allows for easy storage in the slim carrying case.

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Really, though, it's easier to let Kang be the bad guy he obviously wants to be. He's rude, treats his coworkers like dirt, and is generally a very unlikable character. Nick Kang isn't an antihero—he's just a jerk. It's tough to care about what happens to him.

Kang has a wide variety of martial-arts and cop moves at his disposal, but learning your way around the keyboard to master them is more difficult than it should be. (Despite the game's console roots, it doesn't support game controllers, which would make fighting easier.) Hand-to-hand combat—though fun at first—grows tiresome quickly; it's rarely more challenging than just button mashing until your opponent drops.

The game does offer some good fun with destructible environments. While beating up bad guys in restaurants, warehouses, and other locations, you'll lay waste to tables, chairs, boxes, and other objects. It also features an impressive soundtrack chock-full of commercial hip-hop, hard rock, and metal, and voice acting from an A-list cast.

Unfortunately, the actual script leaves a lot to be desired. Nick Kang's dialogue is rife with trite one-liners. Also, the game takes a weird turn midway through, with some supernatural mishmash that doesn't really fit in with the rest of the plot.

Internet and LAN-based online play helps extend the game beyond the single-player story. However, you're limited to challenging other Mac players.

By the way, True Crime really deserves its Mature rating—the game is filled with sex, violence, and strong language.

**The Bottom Line**

It's no Grand Theft Auto, but if you like third-person shooters and are looking for a game that lets you explore your thug side, True Crime: Streets of LA might fit the bill.

---

Taking its cues from the popular (though sadly Mac-incompatible) video game Grand Theft Auto, Aspyr's True Crime: Streets of LA lets you explore what it's like to walk on the bad side.

In the game, Russian and Chinese gangs are threatening to take over the streets of Los Angeles. As Nick Kang—a renegade undercover cop with a penchant for kung fu—you must find out what's going on and put an end to it. But whether you do this by following the rules or by shooting first and taking names later is entirely up to you.

The game features 240 square miles of Los Angeles, re-created with impressive detail—except perhaps for the absence of traffic and smog.

Everything you do as Nick Kang affects his rating as a good cop or a bad cop. That rating in turn determines how the True Crime story line branches. If Kang uses deadly force and causes mayhem on the streets during high-speed chases, his badcop rating will increase. If he uses his badge and sends a warning shot when apprehending a perp, he'll earn brownie points. Shooting on sight will send Kang's rating into the red.

You can help Kang earn extra points—and let him flex his skills—by having him answer unrelated calls from police dispatch while driving around town. The crimes range from humorous (two rival sushi chefs in a knife fight) to serious (a pimp beating a hooker in the street).

The game does offer some good fun with destructible environments. While beating up bad guys in restaurants, warehouses, and other locations, you'll lay waste to tables, chairs, boxes, and other objects. It also features an impressive soundtrack chock-full of commercial hip-hop, hard rock, and metal, and voice acting from an A-list cast.

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**The Bottom Line**

It's no Grand Theft Auto, but if you like third-person shooters and are looking for a game that lets you explore your thug side, True Crime: Streets of LA might fit the bill.
immerse yourself in all that is Macintosh and be one of the first to domo the latest products from the big and small companies that are developing your next Mac solution at the #1 event for the Macintosh community.

learn from our world-class faculty who will be leading you through technical discussions, tips and techniques and thought-provoking discussions.

discover the world of learning awaiting you at Macworld Conference & Expo/Boston 2005 Conference programs.

join Macintosh professionals, power users, IT managers, musicians, graphic artists, videographers and industry watchers as we present the state of the art in Macintosh computing.
Sticky Mess  GooBall lets you climb up walls and jump over platforms to reach your goals.

slime serves as both propulsion and protection as you collect points and wend your way through mazes on platforms floating high in the air. Cartoonish and colorful, GooBall is a fast-paced and vertigo-inducing thrill ride.

You’re not all goo. At the click of a button, you can change the composition of your goo ball from sticky to hard and back again—making it easier to jump, circumambulate, and even climb walls. This is useful because your goals—gems, aliens, and the like—are often just out of reach. Some platforms are separated by a distance that can be traversed only by building up momentum and timing your jump just right. Luckily, you can switch to sticky mode midflight to recover from a badly judged trajectory.

GooBall takes you through six worlds, each more difficult than the last. To play, you’ll need a G3 running OS X 10.3 or later. The game lets you choose your system settings, including resolution, volume, windowed mode, and difficulty. However, even owners of new Macs may notice sluggish performance when playing at high resolutions with all the graphics settings turned up.

**The Bottom Line**  GooBall is an interesting twist on the classic rolling-marble platform game—and quite a lot of fun. But don’t expect to get top-notch graphics and speedy performance.

### ACTION

**Tennis Titans**

**RATING:** •••

**PROS:** Unlockable characters; varied game play.

**CONS:** Windows resize in full-screen mode; slow even on fast hardware.

**PRICE:** $20

**COMPANY:** Skunk Studios, www.skunkstudios.com

If you’re looking for some casual fun that doesn’t involve death and mayhem, check out Tennis Titans, by Skunk Studios. This lighthearted game puts you in control of adorable, big-headed cartoon creatures as you test your mettle on the tennis court.

The game’s action is broken into two basic challenges: Classic mode, where you play a three-round match against your opponent; and Rings mode, a two-minute race to collect as many rings as you can by winning the rally. You’ll unlock new characters and locations by winning matches. Four courts will bring you to the woods, a tropical island, a modern arena, and a Greek temple. A one-round Exhibition mode lets you return to courts you’ve already conquered to compete against the character of your choice.

Tennis Titans is easy to pick up and play. However, to take advantage of special shots—such as topspin, lobs, driving power shots, and sneaking drop shots—you’ll need a multibutton mouse.

I ran into a few trouble spots along the way: playing the game in full-screen mode resized the windows of other applications I had open. The game also left a cursor visible on screen. Despite claims that the game supports 500MHz systems, performance was slow on my 1.5GHz G4. You can download the game and play it for an hour without paying for it. I recommend doing so and giving it a try on your system before you buy.

Tennis Titans isn’t meant to be a hardcore tennis game. It’s relaxing and enjoyable fun. Though it doesn’t offer multiplayer support, it does let you compare your high scores with those of other Tennis Titans players online.

**The Bottom Line**  Tennis Titans is a cute, inexpensive sports game—and a fun way to pass the time.

If MacCentral.com Senior News Editor PETER COHEN really drove the way he does in True Crime, he’d be behind bars.
Mac Gems

If you have Apple's AirPort Express, then you probably know you can use iTunes to wirelessly send your music to speakers connected to the Express. But this technology, called AirTunes, has several drawbacks, the most significant of which is that it can broadcast only audio playing through iTunes. If you want to listen to RealAudio or Windows Media files, or audio being played in a Web browser, then you're out of luck.

But never fear, for the folks at Rogue Amoeba can help. The company's $25 Airfoil 1.0.1 (www.rogueamoeba.com) lets you stream audio from any application to an AirPort Express. And it couldn't be easier to use.

In Airfoil's main window, you choose the application providing the audio you want to transmit. You can pick a running or recently used application, or you can navigate to any application on your computer. If you have more than one AirPort Express, you then pick which one to transmit to. Click on the Transmit button, and your chosen application's audio will begin playing through the speakers connected to your AirPort Express. You can control the volume level of the signal via Airfoil or link the volume level to your Mac's volume control.

Since it works with any program, Airfoil is a great way to listen to Webcasts of sporting events (or any other streaming audio) on your home stereo. However, keep in mind that just like with iTunes, there's a slight delay between when a sound is produced by an application and when it's played through your AirPort Express.

Airfoil even offers advantages for people who are simply broadcasting iTunes audio. For example, whereas AirTunes mutes local audio when broadcasting, you can set Airfoil to play audio on the local computer while it's being played via your AirPort Express (although the two signals may be slightly out of sync). And audio-effect plug-ins that don't work with AirTunes—such as the popular Volume Logic, for example—will work via Airfoil. Just tell iTunes to play locally—not via AirTunes to your AirPort Express—and let Airfoil send the audio.

One Airfoil quirk has to do with how it interacts with running applications. If you elect to install Airfoil's Instant Hijack component, clicking on the Transmit button commences the transmission immediately. However, Instant Hijack uses Unsanity's Application Enhancer—which some people don't like using. The workaround is to either select the desired audio program in Airfoil before it's launched, or allow Airfoil to relaunch it if it's already running when you begin transmission.

Bright Light! Bright Light!

I recently bought a great 20-inch wide-screen LCD—but I didn't buy it from Apple. Sadly, I couldn't justify the $1,000 (plus tax) that the shiny aluminum model I'd been eyeing for so long would have cost. Instead, I turned to a third party and found a display with the same 1,680-by-1,050-pixel resolution as Apple's display for a little more than half the price. It's got one major problem, however: it's too bright.

I don't mean that it's a little bit too bright; I mean that it's "staring at the sun" bright. During the day, in a well-lit office, it's almost bearable, but in the evening I pretty much need to break out the welder's helmet. I've used the display's controls to lower the brightness as much as I can, but on this particular model, if a level of 0 means "prison tower spotlight," a level of 0 is still "police car floodlight." And no amount of OS X display calibration has helped.
The first is that you need to know how to format the non-Apple displays. Scavenging the Net for a solution, I was fortunate to come across Splasm Software’s free Brightness Control 1.0.3 (www.splasm.com). The latest entry in my library of one-function wonders, Brightness Control’s claim to fame is that it provides a slider control for dimming your display’s screen. Somewhere between the black screen and full brightness is the pleasant “just right” that made my new monitor’s light levels tolerable for unshielded use. (A Smooth option makes the transitions between brightness levels, well, smoother.)

If you accidentally set your brightness to 0, don’t worry—just press the escape key to restore full brightness. (Or press ⌘+Q to quit Brightness Control; its setting applies only when the application is running.)

Because it’s simply dimming the screen, Brightness Control doesn’t offer increased contrast to compensate for a lack thereof at the lowest brightness levels. Being able to dim multiple displays independently would also be helpful, although I understand why that would be technically difficult. And since its purpose is to adjust a systemwide setting, I wish it worked as a preference pane or a menu item instead of as an application that remains open (in the Dock and on screen). But those quirks aside, it has made my brand-new monitor usable, and for that I’m extremely grateful.

SMB Made Easy

With OS X 10.3, Apple made the Mac a full citizen on Windows networks. For many Mac users, the biggest advantage of this move was the ability to connect to shared volumes on Windows computers (and other computers providing SMB/CIFS shares). Unfortunately, there are a couple of problems with OS X’s built-in connection methods, which involve using the Finder’s Connect To Server dialog box. The first is that you need to know how to format the SMB URL of the target computer. (If you click on the Browse button in the dialog box, you may be able to see the desired Windows share, but only if it’s on the same network subnet—and even then it’s not guaranteed, due to a slightly buggy Network

Two of my favorite OS X features are the ⌘-tab Application Switcher and Exposé. But I wish there were a way to combine them—a way to use the former’s keyboard control to navigate directly to a particular window. Luckily, my colleague (and Macworld contributing editor) Rob Griffiths pointed me toward Peter Maurer’s Witch (www.petermaurer.de), a prerelease version of a utility that fits the bill.

Pressing and holding a keyboard shortcut (option-tab by default) brings up an overlay showing a vertical list of open applications along with each’s windows. Pressing the tab key repeatedly, or holding it down, lets you choose the window you want to switch to; releasing the option key brings that window to the front and makes its application active. As with OS X’s Application Switcher, applications and their windows are listed in the order of recent use—the current program first, then the next most recently used program, and so on. The list even includes minimized windows, which makes Witch the only way to use the keyboard to access minimized windows.

Witch provides many additional features for working with windows. Pressing Z while a window’s name is highlighted zooms that window (the equivalent of clicking on the window’s green zoom button), thus providing one of the only ways to access this feature via the keyboard; pressing M minimizes the window to the Dock; pressing V closes the window. All of these actions happen without the window actually being brought to the front, so you can modify every open window from within Witch without having to switch to those windows individually.

You can also set up different keyboard shortcuts that restrict Witch’s overlay to subsets of windows (only minimized windows or only those belonging to the currently active application, for example). Witch also lets you set up keyboard shortcuts for window-related features that function all the time—not just when Witch’s switcher overlay is on the screen—such as the ability to close all minimized windows.

Finally, Witch provides a number of options for customizing the appearance of the switcher overlay, including transparency, background and text color, shadows, and whether or not to display application names next to window names.

Witch is still in development, but I’ve found it to be one of the stabler pieces of beta software I’ve tested—and it’s one that I’ll be using regularly.
Fantastic Plastic Plasticsmith's range of Mac mini accessories includes (from left to right) the mini Tower, the mini Grandstand, and the mini Skirt.

Browser implementation.) The second is that many users find that they have to type in their password every time they connect—for some reason, no matter how many times you select Add To Keychain in the password dialog box, it doesn't work. Great for security; bad for convenience.

You can make an alias of a mounted Windows share and then double-click on that alias to initiate the connection in the future; you still need to provide your password, but at least you don't have to remember and type the URL format. Or you can create an AppleScript to mount a Windows volume without having to enter your password. But if you connect to a number of Windows volumes, it's a pain to create one of those scripts for each share.

All of this is a long-winded way to say that I'm glad I came across Supinfo's free SMB Manager 1.5 (@@); macworld.com/0395), which saves your login information and lets you quickly connect to frequently accessed Windows shares. Enter information for as many favorites as you like, give each one a descriptive name and even a custom icon, and never enter a password again. (If you've been using the Finder's Connect To Server dialog box for a while and have added a number of favorite servers, SMB Manager can even convert them to SMB Manager Favorites.)

Once you're set up, the application's Easy mode lets you choose the favorite to which you want to connect (via a pop-up menu), and you then click on Connect. You can bring SMB Manager to the front by pressing a systemwide keyboard shortcut, so it works much like the Finder's Connect To Server dialog box. (You can even set SMB Manager so that it doesn't show up in the Dock.) And if you frequently connect to the same shares, you can tell SMB Manager to connect to those particular shares at launch.

If you often connect to Windows SMB shares, forget the Finder; SMB Manager will make your connections much easier.

Accessories Mini

When Apple announced the new Mac mini, I knew it wouldn't take long before companies started making accessories for it. The first products came from Plasticsmith (previously known for its Lapvantage laptop stand). Easily the most interesting product in Plasticsmith's range of Mac mini accessories includes (from left to right) the mini Tower, the mini Grandstand, and the mini Skirt.

THE CONQUEST

DiskWarrior is Now OS X Native

It's the indispensable utility that repairs problems such as disks that won't mount, files you can't trash, and folders that have disappeared. MacUser magazine said, "It's the fastest and safest data recovery utility you can buy."

Macworld magazine said, "DiskWarrior is by far the best disk utility available for the Mac; it can repair virtually any disk problem you may encounter...and it is likely to become the only tool you'll want to keep with you at all times."

David Coursey, ZDNet AnchorDesk, agrees in an article comparing disk utilities. He used it to fix a disk that no other utility could. "DiskWarrior is a great product, not just because it fixed a pretty serious screw-up, but because it showed me what it planned to do in minute detail before doing it."

But disk damage isn't the only threat to your data. As hard drives get older, the drive mechanisms
smith’s mini lineup is the $50 mini Tower (www.plasticsmith.com). If even the Mac mini’s tiny 6.5-inch-square footprint is too big for you, the mini Tower lets you turn the Mac mini on its side in a stand that takes up only 7.25 by 2.75 inches of desktop space.

But that’s just the functional side of the mini Tower—it also happens to be quite attractive. The stylish stand is made of a pair of polished acrylic slabs connected by another piece of acrylic, just over 2 inches wide, that wraps around three sides. (The fourth side is open to allow you to slide your Mac mini inside.) Each narrow edge has two long slits; the ones on the front accommodate your mini’s optical-drive slot—so you can insert the mini with its top facing either left or right—and the others provide ventilation. (My initial concerns about ventilation were put to rest when, in my testing, the Mac mini’s fan turned on no more often when in the case than when out of it.)

Another useful Plasticsmith product is the $40 mini Grandstand (www.plasticsmith.com). Available in either laser-cut steel (the mini Grandstand steel) or the same polished acrylic as the mini Tower (the mini Grandstand clear), the Grandstand is a monitor stand that’s just tall enough to fit over the top of your Mac mini, and that supports displays as heavy as 60 pounds—it’s an effective use of space. The clear version is more eye-catching, but the steel model looks a bit more professional and hides cables and such.

The final product in Plasticsmith’s Mac mini accessory trio, the mini Skirt (www.plasticsmith.com), just may take the award for best accessory name of 2005. On the other hand, it won’t win too many awards for functionality, since it doesn’t really do anything—it’s just an acrylic base for the Mac mini. But it looks cool, and Plasticsmith has done a great job of making the Skirt a perfect fit for the Mac mini: I give it plenty of aesthetic props.

The $25 standard mini Skirt is outdone only by the $40 mini Skirt glo, which features a built-in blue or white LED and frosted, nonpolished edges (which diffuse the light). Plug the glo’s USB cable into one of your Mac mini’s USB ports, and you’re glowing (a power switch lets you turn this effect off when you get tired of otherworldly illumination). Unfortunately, the Mac mini’s two USB ports leave little room for luxuries such as a glowing computer stand, but the company promises that a USB hub version is in the works.

If you have a Mac mini and want your desk to hold it in the most space-efficient manner possible, the mini Tower and mini Grandstand are both great accessories. If you just want people to stop and look, slip on a mini Skirt. It’s all form and little function, but it’s nice to look at.

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begin to malfunction. Eventually, the malfunctions become so severe that the drive simply stops working. DiskWarrior can automatically test for hardware malfunctions, giving you the chance to back up your data before it’s too late.

Be prepared. Don’t wait until after you have a disk disaster to buy your copy of DiskWarrior. Bob LeVitus, aka Dr. Mac, said, “I feel naked without DiskWarrior.” You can believe MacHome magazine when they said, “DiskWarrior is a quick, one-click solution to faster, more stable hard drives.”

CONTINUES
We are all creatures of habit. But sometimes those habits aren't doing us any good.

Take the way we use our Macs. All too often, we figure out a way to do something—surf the Web, handle e-mail, or any other little computing chore—and then keep doing it that way forever.

How often do we take a critical look at the way we do things, figure out a better method, and change our habits?

Well, here's a chance. We asked some of the most knowledgeable users we know to let us in on a few of the secrets that help them make the most of their time and get the most from their Macs. Specifically, we wanted to know about their computing habits—not just keystrokes and commands (though we got those, too), but comprehensive approaches to using applications efficiently.

For example, Merlin D. Mann has some advice for handling your e-mail inbox. He also explains how he uses Entourage to implement the ideas of productivity guru David Allen. Dan Frakes suggests some AppleScripts that make quicker work of e-mail chores. Kirk McElhearn offers tips on using your browser's newer features for nimbler surfing. Troubleshooting ace Ted Landau lists the first six things you should do when your Mac gets balky. And some Macworld contributors explain which utilities they couldn't work without.

None of our experts' suggestions are exactly revolutionary. While all of us could be doing these things, few of us are. But it's never too late to break a bad habit—and adopt some good ones.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY JONATHAN CARLSON
By now, you may think you know pretty much everything you need to about surfing the Web. But as browsers and Web sites continue to evolve, our surfing habits don't always evolve with them. Here are seven habits that any self-respecting Safari user should have right now. (If you're not a Safari fan, don't worry: most of these tricks work, with slight variations, in the other major browsers, too.)

1. OPEN SEARCH RESULTS AS NEW TABS Tired of the Google two-step—that tiresome toggling between a long list of search results and the corresponding Web sites? It may be better to first open up all the sites in their own tabs and then browse them. In Safari, the easiest way to do so is to first make sure you've enabled Tabbed Browsing: in Safari's preferences, click on the Tabs icon and select the Enable Tabbed Browsing option. Once you've done that, hold down the Control key when you click on any link you want to open; the page will appear in its own new tab, with the Google results page still in the foreground. (You can press Control and click on the link if you want it to appear in the foreground.) Once you've opened all the results you want, press Control-left arrow or -right arrow to navigate through the tabs.

2. SAVE INSTANT BOOKMARKS FOR QUICK ACCESS When you know you'll need to go back to a specific page repeatedly for a couple of days but never again thereafter, don't add it to your list of bookmarks, where it'll stay until the end of time. Put it on the Bookmarks Bar instead. To do so, just drag the URL from the address box to the Bookmarks Bar. Give the resulting bookmark a name and click on OK. From then on, a single click will take you to that page. When you don't need the bookmark anymore, just drag it up and off of the bar, and it'll disappear in a puff of smoke.

3. ONE-CLICK SEARCHING If you want to find out more about something you see on a Web page, you can do a quick Google search on it by selecting the phrase, holding down the control key, clicking on the text, and then selecting Google Search from the resulting menu. Safari will jump to Google and return search results for the phrase (see “Controlled Search”). Note that this won't work on link text.

4. ALPHABETIZE YOUR BOOKMARKS If you have lots of bookmarks, you know how much of a headache it can be to scroll through your Bookmarks menu to find the one you want. Save yourself time by keeping your bookmarks in order. Jerry Krinock's SafariSorter (free [donations accepted]; macworld.com/0435) will sort your bookmarks alphabetically; it'll also weed out duplicate bookmarks and make the menu more manageable. Each time you add a bunch of new bookmarks, run it again. A couple of seconds once in a while will save you plenty of time in the long run.
5 CENTRALIZE YOUR BOOKMARKS If you've ever used a browser other than Safari, you probably have two different sets of bookmarks on your system. Safari automatically imports bookmarks from other browsers the first time you run it, but after that you'll need a third-party application such as Gordon Byrnes's Safari Enhancer (free [donations accepted]; macworld.com/0436), which lets you import bookmarks from other browsers or from a flat HTML file. After you've corralled all your bookmarks, use an app such as SafariSorter to get rid of the duplicates.

6 TURN OFF THE CACHE The cache is useful for dial-up connections (it stores previously viewed pages, letting you skip a new download). But Safari may actually display pages faster over a broadband connection if you turn the cache off. Instead of wasting time searching for previously viewed pages and images on your hard disk, Safari just downloads everything. You can also speed up browsing by deleting the cache of favicons (those tiny icons that many Web sites display in front of their URLs in the address box). Safari Enhancer can do both.

7 LET HISTORY REPEAT ITSELF You probably know that you can use the History list to find pages you've viewed recently. But to make using the History list easier, don't just scan it. Search it. Press ⌘-option-B to display the Bookmarks window; then click on History in the Collections list. Press ⌘-F and type a word you think is in the title or URL of the page you're looking for. Press return to go to the first page with that word, and press ⌘-G to go to the next. Once you've found the page you're looking for, just double-click on it to view it again (see “Historical Search”).—Kirk McElhearn

Stash the Cache Safari Enhancer lets you turn off caching; doing so speeds up Web-page display over a broadband connection.

SOFTWARE WE CAN'T WORK WITHOUT

Butler As a launcher, Peter Maurer’s Butler is similar to both LaunchBar and Quicksilver. Just press control-spacebar and start typing the name of an application, folder, Web shortcut, or file—Butler shows you the matches as you type. Press return to launch the selected item. But Butler does much more than that. It can also control iTunes and enable Fast User Switching without taking up space on the menu bar, and it supports simple but useful macros and multiple clipboard items. Butler isn’t the friendliest application around—it’s user interface takes work to master. But once you’ve done so, it’s a hard tool to live without ($18; www.petermaurer.de/butler).

MenuMeters To keep an eye on my system’s inners without opening and dosing something like Activity Monitor, I use MenuMeters, from Raging Menace. Its space-efficient graphics on the menu bar let me keep an eye on CPU usage, disk activity, memory utilization, and network activity, and each module can be individually enabled, disabled, and customized. CPU-hogging processes become obvious, excess disk activity is easy to spot, and I can monitor upload and download speeds—all with nothing more than a glance at the menu bar (free [donations accepted]; macworld.com/0452).

Print Window Sometimes I need to know—or show someone else—what's in a folder on my system. But OS X doesn’t make it easy. There's no File: Print Window command, and while I could drag and drop a Finder window onto a printer in the Printer Setup Utility, the output isn't pretty. But when I drag and drop that same Finder window onto the Dock icon of SearchWare Solutions' Print Window application, I can specify what I want printed, how I want it sorted, whether I want icons included, and whether I want to include and expand any subfolders. The Advanced, for-fee version adds even more control to the process ($15 [free version available]; macworld.com/0453).—Rob Griffiths
Each e-mail message in your inbox demands your time and attention. Filters and rules are great for reducing some of that demand, shunting easily defined mail such as e-newsletters and personal notes to their appropriate folders. But important e-mail messages are often hard to define and organize with automatic, rules-based management. They require filters and rules that reside only in your brain.

The key to managing these important messages is to evaluate each one for the response it requires and then quickly convert that evaluation into action. What follows is one such system (based in large part on an approach suggested by productivity guru David Allen in his excellent book Getting Things Done [ww.davidco.com]). Your particular work and e-mail volume may dictate some changes to these basic ideas, but they're a great place to start.

**Setup**
Start by stripping your e-mail directory structure down to seven basic folders, each defined by the action that its messages require (see "Reduce Your Folders"):

> **Inbox** For unread and unprocessed items only.
> **Respond** For messages requiring only short responses that can be ticked off in five minutes or less. You'll periodically go through this folder and send off those quick responses.
> **Action** For e-mail that requires anything beyond a quick response—work, research, or a detailed answer.
> **Hold** For items—such as new login information and package-tracking URLs—that you'll want close by in the next few days; prune weekly.
> **Waiting** For mail that's likely to require action when its sender gets back to you.
> **Archive** For anything you want to save for future reference. This is where you can put all those subfolders for particular projects or topics that you're probably using now. But with all the search tools available in today's e-mail clients, you may even be able to do without those.
> **Trash** For spam, junk, and anything you'll never need again.

**Triage**
With those folders in place, going through your inbox means focusing on the action each message requires. If it requires action, either do it now or put it in the right folder for deferred action. If not, archive it or delete it.

Whenever you're in doubt about where to file something, ask yourself whether you can just respond or act immediately. Like a short-order cook, you want to stay focused on making sandwiches, not
on putting the orders into pretty piles.

If you can knock off a reply the first time you see a message, do so. But if you accumulate items that need a bit more attention, concentrate on getting them all in the right place, and then go back to your work—return only when you have time to start chipping away. Above all, don't let unprocessed mail live in your inbox; this is a lazy habit that invites procrastination, guilt, and inaction.

**Timing**

A surprising number of people set their e-mail programs to check for mail every minute. That's building 300 interruptions into each workday. As a quick experiment, look back over your last two weeks of e-mail and count the messages that absolutely required a response in less than sixty seconds. My guess is that you won't find too many.

The key, then, is to retrain yourself. First, adjust your e-mail program to check for new mail once every hour. (In Mail, that setting is in the General preference pane; in Entourage, it's in Tools: Schedules.) If an hour is just too long, you can try something like every 15 or 30 minutes (see "Adjust Your Timing"). Then start batching your e-mail work into hourly "dashes" of 8 to 10 minutes at a go. You can use that time to sort new messages, send the replies you can, and then get out.

**Keep It Short**

Finally, when you do respond to your mail, keep your answers as concise as possible. Don't sit on old mail because you dread crafting a long response. Just keep the ball in motion by clarifying, asking questions, offering help, or even saying "I don't know." You can always write more later.

The point of all this is to stay focused on doing just the work each message requires. That, in turn, means less time treating e-mail as an end in itself and more time using it as the tool that it is.—MERLIN D. MANN

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**THE BEST APPLESRIPSC**

FOR E-MAIL

Apple's Mail and Microsoft's Entourage 2004 are powerful e-mail clients, but they can't do everything you might want. Thankfully, both apps support AppleScript, so clever scripts can provide you with downloadable scripts that add features. Even better, you can assign keyboard shortcuts to these scripts for quick execution.

**Entourage**

There's a thriving community of scripters for Entourage. If the scripts I've listed here aren't enough, check out ScriptBuilders (macworld.com/0437) and The Entourage Help Page (macworld.com/0438) for more. All Entourage AppleScripts should be installed in your user folder/Documents/Microsoft User Data/Entourage Script Menu Items.

**Category Duplicates Contacts**

Do you sync Entourage to a PDA? Do you end up with duplicate contacts? This Allen Watson script finds dupes and assigns them to a new Duplicate category; you can then decide what to do with that category's entries (free; macworld.com/0439).

**File Msgs in Folder**

If you've got lots of folders and subfolders, filing them by dragging them to a folder or clicking on the Move button can be a hassle. File Msgs in Folder, another Allen Watson script, lets you file messages by pressing a keyboard shortcut and then typing the first few letters of the desired folder's name (free; macworld.com/0440).

**Insert Notes**

This script from Barry Walworth lets you place frequently typed text in Entourage Notes, which you can insert into e-mail messages (free; macworld.com/0441).

**Send Complex HTML with Inline Files**

Complex HTML—tables, CSS, or anything other than basic formatting—is rarely necessary in e-mail. But when it is, Rob Buckley's Send Complex HTML with Inline Files not only lets you send such content but also embeds images and other files referenced by the HTML in the message (free; macworld.com/0442).

**Sync Entourage—Address Book, Sync Entourage—ICal**

Even if you're a big Entourage fan, you may want to use it with Sync and other software that takes advantage of OS X's Address Book and iCal data. These handy scripts from Paul Berkowitz synchronize your Entourage Contacts and Calendar with OS X's personal information applications ($19 each; macworld.com/0443).

**Mail**

Mail doesn't have the same scripting enthusiasm behind it as Entourage does, but there are still some great scripts out there. Mail scripts belong in your user folder/Library/Scripts/Mail Scripts.

**Built-in scripts**

Apple provides a slew of useful scripts with OS X; they're available from Mail's Script menu and documented at www.apple.com/applescript/mail/ (free, already installed).

**Show Flagged Messages, Show Unread Messages, Show All Messages**

Ever wish you could view just unread messages in Mail? Or just flagged messages? In Tiger (OS X 10.4), Mail will have smart folders that let you do both. But you can get these features in OS X 10.3 now, thanks to MacOSXHints.com: the Show Flagged Messages and Show Unread Messages scripts do just what their names say; Show All Messages restores the standard view (free; macworld.com/0445).—DAN FRASES

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Thanks, Apple. Don't ignore the scripts that come built right into Apple Mail—they include tools for importing addresses from other e-mail clients and for configuring remote mailboxes.
When something goes wrong with your Mac, all you care about is getting it fixed fast. Maybe you're on the road with your PowerBook and you need to give a presentation in an hour—you don't care why something went wrong, or even what the best long-term solution may be. You just want to get your Mac working well enough to see you through the meeting; you'll worry about the rest later.

For such stress-filled times, here are the quick-and-dirty troubleshooting steps you need to follow. (For more ideas, see Working Mac, page 66.)

1 **RESTART** If your Mac's performance has slowed to a crawl, or if your applications are freezing, restarting is often all you need to do to get back on track.

2 **LOG IN WITH STARTUP ITEMS DISABLED** Log out of your account and log back in—but hold down the shift key when clicking on the Log In button. Continue to hold it until the desktop background appears. You've now disabled your Startup Items, the applications that load automatically when you log in. If one of these items was causing a conflict with the software you were trying to use, you should now be good to go.

3 **SWITCH TO A CLEAN ACCOUNT** Log in to a separate account, ideally a test account set up in advance for just such occasions. To make this go as quickly as possible, use Fast User Switching (enabled from the Accounts preference pane). If the problem does not occur in the test account, it's likely due to a file that affects only your Home account. You can appear.

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**SOFTWARE WE CAN'T WORK WITHOUT**

**DragThing** When I configure a new Mac, the second thing I install (after the latest version of Mac OS X) is James Thomson's DragThing. With this palette-based launching utility, I can create any number of palettes that can hold anything I like—applications, documents, URLs, folders, and more. I can then assign hot keys, view the contents of folders, quit and force-quit applications, switch applications while hiding others, and move items to the Trash ($29; www.dragthing.com).

**You Control** Much like the old Now Menus, You Software's You Control lets me pack a load of helpful utilities into menus conveniently hidden in the corners of my Mac's desktop (or invoked via a hot key). My You Control menu includes a weather module, a news reader, an iTunes controller, a calendar, a list of recent items, a list of mounted volumes (with hierarchical menus), and a list of the users I've created on my Mac ($20; www.yousoftware.com).—CHRISTOPHER BREEN

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**A Clean Break** If restarting your Mac doesn't help, try logging in to a "clean" account—but first turn on Fast User Switching.
LET ENTOURAGE
MANAGE YOUR PROJECTS

While a lot of Mac users rely on Microsoft Entourage 2004 for e-mail and simple calendar management, many ignore its Project Center. That's too bad, because the Project Center is a powerful project-management tool. Here are some of the ways I use it (as with the advice in "The Inbox Makeover," much of this advice was inspired by David Allen's book Getting Things Done).

Set Up Filters
Entourage 2004's Project Center is where you collect appointments, tasks, e-mail, notes, and other documents, grouped by project, in one convenient location. The key to making it work is to use Entourage's automatic filtering tools.

When you create a new project, you can define filters that tell Entourage to automatically associate specific e-mail messages, contacts, documents, and tasks with that project. Once you identify the key attributes for each project (contact information, likely e-mail subjects, and so on), those tools will automate a lot of your project maintenance, giving you more time to focus on the real work at hand.

I like to create a new Entourage project early in a project's planning stages, because the Project Center's filtering can come in especially handy during a project's ramping-up period, when my task assignments and e-mail messages are typically in a flurry. It helps to be as aggressive as possible about using consistent e-mail subjects for each project (for instance, begin the subject for all "XYZ Corporation" project e-mails with the letters XYZ)—this is especially necessary when you work with the same people on different projects, and therefore can't just file all messages from one colleague as part of a single project. Even if others don't adopt your nomenclature, at least their replies to your messages will contain your disciplined subject lines and be filtered accordingly.

Create New Categories
You might find Entourage's preloaded Categories (Work, Personal, and so on) useful, but I don't. I prefer using categories for the specific purpose of identifying where or how each of the tasks in my to-do list needs to be performed.

So I use my own categories, such as Errand, Office, Home, Online, and so on. That way, I can quickly identify all the tasks I need to be doing at any given time. If I'm in the office, I need to do the Office tasks and can safely ignore the Home ones. (You can assign more than one category to a given task.)

Customize Views for Current Tasks
If you have more than a few items in your Tasks list, you may find it hard to locate all your high-priority tasks. You can remedy that by using a handy Entourage search trick that finds matches by determining what they are not.

In my Tasks area, I created a custom view called Important Today (by selecting File: New Custom View). After selecting Match Unless Any Criteria Are, I chose these criteria: Due Date Is Greater Than 1 Day From Now, Is Complete, Priority Is Low, and Priority Is Lowest (see "A New View").

You could add other criteria—for instance, to filter out projects that aren't related to work (Jamie's Soccer Team or Costa Rica Vacation)—but that's the general idea.

Custom views like this are useful throughout Entourage: the time you spend creating a good one will save you countless hours of manual searching and make sure that nothing falls between the cracks.

Link to Text Files
A lot of folks (including me) like to maintain information in simple plain-text files. (For example, I keep a list of the questions and issues I want to discuss with someone the next time we meet.) These files are small, efficient, and extremely portable, and you can create and add to them from many different apps.

Entourage supports this habit: it lets you quickly attach any kind of document to tasks, appointments, and other Entourage objects. So I can link my list of questions to the appointment when I'll need to ask them, for instance.

Just pull up the appointment, task, or contact you want to attach your document to. Go to Tools: Link To Existing: File, and then locate and select the text file you want to link to (see "Stay Connected").

Now you're never more than a couple clicks away from your important text-based information—and that information is always in the appropriate context.—MERLIN D. MAINE
diagnose that later. If you'll need access to a specific document (such as a Keynote file) while in the test account, copy the file to your Public folder before switching accounts.

4 DO DISK REPAIRS VIA SINGLE-USER MODE To fix a corrupt directory, the common recommendation is to use Disk Utility’s Repair Disk option. The only problem is that you can’t repair the current startup volume with Disk Utility. Instead, you need to start up from a Mac OS X Install CD and run Disk Utility from there. But what if you don’t have an Install CD handy, or what if you don’t have time to use one? The quicker alternative is to boot up in single-user mode by holding down *S at startup. When the text prompt appears, type fsck -f y. This is almost identical to using Disk Utility. When you’re finished, type reboot to restart the Mac.

5 REPAIR DISK PERMISSIONS If you’re seeing error messages that say you don’t have permission to do whatever you’re attempting, select Repair Disk Permissions from Disk Utility. You can (and, in fact, should) do this when you boot from the startup volume that is giving you trouble.

6 CLEAN UP CACHES A variety of third-party software can help speed up your recovery time. Having printing problems? Use Printer Setup Repair ($20; macworld.com/0447); start with its Temp & Preference File Management options. Problems with fonts? Use Font Finagler ($10; macworld.com/0448) to delete potentially corrupt font caches. Other mysterious symptoms? Use TinkerTool System ($9; macworld.com/0449) to perform tasks such as rebuilding the launch-services database and deleting all system cache files. To be on the safe side, download the software right now so you’ll have it when trouble strikes.—TED LANDAU

Neat Type Font Finagler can speed up your system by cleaning up your system’s font cache files.

SOFTWARE WE CAN’T WORK WITHOUT

WireTap Pro I admit it, I have a weakness: I’m a radio junkie, the kind of guy who will sit in his car until a program is over rather than turning off the radio and going in to work. Unfortunately, sitting in the car for hours isn’t exactly productive. So I use WireTap Pro, from Ambrosia Software. Like TiVo for the Web, this little app can record my favorite audio streams. It’ll record audio on schedule and, once the recording is done, save the results in one of several audio formats. It can even save the audio into an iTunes playlist ($19; macworld.com/0455).

Keyboard Maestro Call me a heretic, but I think OS X’s *tab application switcher stinks. It’s poorly designed, poorly implemented, and ugly as sin. My favorite program—switching app? Stairways Software’s Keyboard Maestro. With a simple, user-customizable interface, it lets me switch among open apps and windows, launch or close applications, and kick off time-saving macros ($20; www.keyboardmaestro.com).

iSeek Google, Foogle, Dictionary.com, the weather in Maine: No matter what kind of Web search I need to do, Ambrosia Software’s iSeek lets me run it and grab the information from a single search field in my menu bar. If I want to run any other searches—say, first-edition books at BookFinder.com—I can create my own iSeek search modules or download any of dozens more from Ambrosia’s Web site ($15; macworld.com/0456).—JEFFERY BATTERSBY

Clicks well with others

AirClick
Remote Control for iPod
- Control your iPod, iPod mini, or computer from up to 60 feet away
- Uses RF signals that travel through walls for remote control use anywhere in the house
- Tiny remote attaches to backpack, bike, steering wheel - anywhere for on-the-go control

iTalk
iPod Voice Recorder
- Internal microphone and laptop quality speaker
- Connect external microphone or headphones
- Passthrough jack for headphones or additional speaker
- Automatic level control for perfect recordings

LapelMic
Multi-use Stereo Microphone
- Self-powered microphone with stereo-quality sound
- Swivel clip for easy attachment
- Connects directly to iTalk, iMic, or PowerWave

iTrip
FM Transmitter for iPod
- The only FM Transmitter designed exclusively for the iPod & iPod mini
- Powered from the iPod - no batteries necessary
- Choose any empty station from 87.7 to 107.9, and change your iTrip stations directly from the iPod

TuneJuice
Battery Backup for iPod and iPod mini
- Provides up to 8 hours of additional power to iPod
- Uses any disposable or rechargeable 9-volt battery
- Carry emergency iPod power wherever you go
- Works with any dockable iPod or iPod mini
Adobe (www.adobe.com) is doing two things with its brand-new Creative Suite 2. First, all of the suite’s applications—Photoshop, InDesign, Illustrator, and GoLive—have gotten major upgrades, with promising interface tweaks and new tools for handling the latest graphics technologies. Second, Adobe is attempting to make CS more of a suite, integrating the apps more tightly and providing a new, centralized tool—Adobe Bridge—for managing projects. (Match that, Quark and Macromedia.) We got an early look at the new suite, and here’s what we saw.

ADOBE’S REVAMPED CREATIVE SUITE SPORTS UPGRADED APPS, TIGHTER INTEGRATION, AND NEW PROJECT-MANAGEMENT TOOLS

ILLUSTRATIONS BY GLENN MITSUI
Photoshop CS2 includes a bunch of powerful new filters and editing tools, tighter integration with Illustrator graphics, support for 32-bit images, and improved handling of the Camera Raw format.

Image Warp
The new Image Warp feature lets you easily wrap flat graphics around three-dimensional objects in your images and then tweak the results directly to make them look natural.

Reduce Noise
Noise reduction often produces some blurring. This new filter removes digital camera noise and JPEG compression artifacts while preserving photographic detail—especially helpful if you shoot in low-light conditions. You can also control noise in each color channel separately.

Spot Healing Brush
This retouching tool lets you remove objects from photographs without having to first sample from a source point. Just select the Spot Healing brush, select a brush size large enough to encircle the object, and click—and the object disappears.

Optical Lens Correction
This new filter allows you to adjust and correct a broad range of camera-lens imperfections—barrel or pincushion distortion, chromatic aberration, vignetting, and perspective problems in all three dimensions—and lets you monitor your progress with a live preview on an alignment grid.

Vanishing Point
The new Vanishing Point filter allows you to define perspective planes in your image and then lets you paint, clone, transform, or drag objects onto them. The objects will automatically fit the perspective, no matter where on the plane you place them.

32-Bit High Dynamic Range (HDR)
The new Merge To HDR command lets you combine several exposures of the same shot to get the broadest possible tonal range, from dark shadows to bright highlights. The previous version of Photoshop introduced more-advanced editing of 16-bit images; Photoshop CS2 doubles that, to 32-bit images. Not all editing capabilities are available in 32-bit HDR mode, but you can convert an image to 16 or 8 bits once your images are combined.

Smart Objects
The new Photoshop’s Smart Objects feature lets you scale, rotate, warp, and transform raster and vector objects on layers of a Photoshop image without losing image quality. Illustrator vector graphics that you integrate into a Photoshop document remain live and scalable, and if you edit an image in Illustrator, your changes will automatically appear in the Photoshop file. For linked duplicates of embedded graphics, just edit an image once—all linked copies will update at the same time.
Multiple-Image Camera Raw
Photoshop CS2 handles raw images more flexibly and productively. With the new Camera Raw workflow, you can select and batch-process multiple raw image files at once (while continuing to work on other images), and then export them to the format of your choice, including the new Digital Negative format (DNG). You can now automatically adjust exposure, shadows, highlights, and contrast; you can also preview shadow and highlight clipping. The program also offers dynamic or preset tone-curve adjustment; cropping and straightening tools; and multiple-color sampling.

Menu Customization
Photoshop now lets you choose from among new preset task-based workspaces for different kinds of jobs—prepping images for the Web, painting and retouching, prepress, and more. When you choose a preset workspace, the program highlights the menus you’ll need for that job. You can also create and save your own custom menu sets with color-keyed menu commands, and then select them at will.—JACKIE DOVE

Smart Sharpen
Until now, the Unsharp Mask filter was a photo retoucher’s best friend. But Photoshop CS2’s new Smart Sharpen command lets you choose which kind of blur you want to control—motion, Gaussian, or lens.
Object Styles
Object styles are designed to save you time and help you avoid design inconsistencies. Say you lay out a weekly newsletter with sidebars that always have the same paragraph styles, text wraps, and drop-shadow settings. Make this combination of settings an object style, and you can apply the entire combination at once to every future sidebar. You can also use the Object Style palette to create, delete, copy, and edit the styles. Those styles can include transparency, drop shadows and feathering, text-frame options, text wrapping, fill and stroke colors, and stroke and corner effects. You can base an object style on another object style, so when you change the original, all related styles reflect the change. If you don’t want changes to the parent style to affect child styles, you can break the link between them.

Text Handling
The new InDesign lets you drag and drop text between paragraphs, frames, views, layout windows, Story Editor windows, and documents. You can even drag text from another application into an existing InDesign text frame. The program can also correct text as you type. In addition, Adobe has refined the way it handles styles in imported Microsoft Word and RTF documents: you can rename imported styles to avoid conflicts with InDesign style names, you can overwrite InDesign styles with Word and RTF styles, and you can map Word and RTF styles to existing InDesign styles.

Anchored Objects
Usually, it’s best to have images, sidebars, and callouts near the point where they’re referenced in the main text. But as text flows change, it can be hard to

Snippets
InDesign’s new snippets are small XML files that let you save, reuse, and share objects. You could, for example, save a highly formatted table as a snippet—just select the table (whether created in InDesign or imported) and either drag it to another location or export it. The resulting file will be small enough to e-mail—no need to send the whole InDesign file or to delete extraneous material and save just the table page. When you place a snippet on an InDesign page, it appears in the same relative location as on its original page, with all the metadata (including thumbnails, fonts, and color swatches) intact.

“Efficiency” and “productivity” may not turn heads. But what about “fewer keystrokes to accomplish repetitive tasks” or “fewer nights in the office”? That’s what Adobe is aiming for with InDesign CS2.
Reveal Layers  Adobe continues to integrate the suite’s applications by giving you greater control over layers in native PSD files. You can now hide or show a PSD file’s layers and layer compositions. While before you might have saved five variations of one image as separate TIFF files and then placed them one-by-one in an InDesign layout, you can now keep all five versions in one PSD file and test their suitability by toggling layers on and off. (You can see and manipulate adjustment and PSD layers in QuarkXPress 6.5, but not transparency.) You can also display layers in an Illustrator file, but you must first save it as a PDF 1.5 or 1.6 file and opt to include layers.

keep track of those reference locations. With the new version of InDesign, you can anchor an object to a point within a text frame. If the point in the text frame moves, the anchored object goes along for the ride.—TERRI STONE

What Else Is New

> Footnote support, including ability to import from Word.
> Ability to export multiple pages as separate JPEGs.
> Can now place all or a range of pages from multipage PDFs.
> WYSIWYG font preview.
> Better support of XML, including attribute-based mapping and linking of InDesign files to XML files.
> Can replicate transformations, such as scale and skew, from one object to another.
> Ability to convert objects from one shape to another with just one click.

Bridging the Suite

When Photoshop CS debuted in 2003, the fleshed-out File Browser was my favorite feature. I used it to quickly scan folders full of image and PDF files (searching visually and via metadata and keywords) and to prioritize images with the Flag command. Creative Suite 2’s Bridge is the File Browser writ large.

You can summon Bridge from Illustrator, InDesign, GoLive, and Photoshop. It lets you view PDF, PSD, .ai, .indd, and Camera Raw files, as well as the image formats File Browser already handled so well. There are several view modes, but Filmstrip and Slideshow are especially useful when you need to zip through a big batch of files.

Once you locate a file, you can add keywords and metadata, label it, and give it a star rating from one to five. (The latter two abilities help you manage files, as you can filter by label and star rating.) And if you choose Compact mode, which shrinks Bridge to a floating palette, you can drag and drop any file from Bridge into a document created in CS2. Or just double-click on the thumbnail preview to open the file in the original application.

Bridge is also the jumping-off place for Adobe Stock Photos, where you can browse and buy royalty-free photos from several large stock agencies, including Photodisc, Comstock, and Digital Vision.

If you install the entire CS2 suite, you’ll also get Bridge Center, Help Center, and Version Cue access. Bridge Center is where you synchronize color-management settings, so on-screen colors (including spot colors) look the same across all suite programs; it also includes an RSS news reader and tips for using Adobe programs. Help Center brings information for every suite component into one location. And Version Cue lets you create new Version Cue projects, as well as search and preview existing ones.—TERRI STONE

Bridge Preview  In the new Bridge Preview window, navigational and informational panes run down the left side, and thumbnails use up the rest of the space on the right side.
Illustrator CS2 packs some excellent new drawing tools, as well as an updated Control palette that makes the program much easier to use but doesn’t alter any of the previous version’s palettes or keyboard commands.

Living Color
Click on an enclosed area with the Live Paint tool, and Illustrator—just like a bitmapped paint program—will automatically fill the area with the current color. Live Paint can even fill areas that aren’t completely enclosed, thanks to a user-customizable gap detector that lets you automatically close paths that have gaps, or simply ignore the gaps and fill anyway.

Automatic Tracing
Adobe has finally updated Illustrator’s auto-trace tool. The new Live Trace feature provides incredibly fast autotracing (black-and-white or color), as well as a unique interactive interface. After importing a bitmapped image and telling Illustrator to autotrace it, you can tweak any number of tracing parameters, and your tracing will be automatically updated. You can change tolerances, thresholds, and tracing methods, and save these configurations as tracing presets. Tracing remains “live”—even across sessions—until you tell Illustrator to expand the tracing into normal Illustrator paths and fills.

Taking Control
Just like the toolbars in Photoshop and InDesign, Illustrator’s new Control palette spans the top of the screen. But it works more like an object inspector: Click on any object in your document, and the Control palette will fill with simple controls for that object. For example, if you click on a path, the toolbar will offer Fill and Stroke pop-up menus, Brush and Style controls, and dimension and position fields. The full palettes can be instantly popped out of the Control palette, for quick access to secondary parameters.

Teamwork
The new Live Trace feature converts grungy bitmaps (left) into vectors almost instantaneously. Afterward, the Live Paint tool can make short work of dropping in color and gradient fills (right).

What Else Is New
> Workspaces, which let you define custom window and palette layouts that you switch between using a simple menu.
> Ability to align strokes to the inside, outside, or center of a path.
> Automatic printer tiling for printing out large images.
> Expanded support for mobile graphics formats.
> PDF/X support and general PDF enhancements.
> Improved Macromedia Flash (SWF) export.
> Better support for Wacom tablets.
> Simple type enhancements.

Better Integration
When opening or placing a Photoshop file, you can now choose from among any layer compositions that may be included in the document. You can apply Photoshop filters to placed images using the standard Photoshop Filter Gallery and remove or change these filters later. You can also now tint images within Illustrator to create duotone effects.—BEN LONG
Building on GoLive's designer-friendly interface and Site Window-based site management, GoLive CS2 moves fully into the age of Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) and mobile devices.

CSS Everywhere
It wasn't hard to link style sheets in the previous version of GoLive, but now you can set a default style sheet for new pages. You can also now use your Web page's CSS button to link to a style sheet. And you can create, assign, or edit styles in multiple ways—such as applying a class to a table row from the Table palette or editing a style by double-clicking on it in the CSS palette.

Interface-lift
The CSS document interface has matured. There's now a split-window code view, which has an Info column preview, makes the preview optional (you can turn it off and use the new Inspector preview instead), and lets you double-click on a property to jump to its editing tab. You can also "collect" a set of properties and then apply them to another style later. And you can now change the order of fonts. The toolbar and menus are all more CSS-oriented. You can now use buttons in the Style menu to add the proper structural tags—<strong> and <em>—instead of the deprecated bold and italic tags, <b> and <i>.

Tighter Integration
Integration with Photoshop and Illustrator was already good, and now it's better. JPEGs can automatically generate Smart Objects. PDF exporting includes Mobile PDF (optimized for mobile devices) and security options that restrict copying, printing, and more. Improved InDesign-to-GoLive flow makes it easier for print designers to move their work to the Web.

New Default Doctype
The default doctype (or document-type declaration) changes from HTML 4 Transitional to XHTML 1 Transitional. With this, uppercase tags are flagged red, and you can use Rewrite Source with its improved options to make them lowercase.—DEBORAH SHADOVITZ

What Else Is New
> Better color management—you can open multiple swatch palettes and build your own palette, and then share it across the suite.
> Improved file versioning.
> Improved collaborative workflows with Version Cue.
> More-secure FTP, with support for FTP via SSL (FTPS) and SSH tunneling.
> Support for better extensions through changes to the software development kit (SDK); extensions can also communicate with other CS2 applications.
> Paste Special menu that gives you control over how you paste from Word.
> Windows Media objects.
> Support for popular blogging software.

Grid Work
Layout Grid now writes CSS, so you can easily create <div> tags, which let you create pages of columns and rows without tables—the currently preferred technique. Just drag a CSS layout from the new CSS tab; then start adding content. To format the layout, assign attributes to the autocreated classes.
Monitor Misbehaving Macs

What's the best troubleshooting tool you already own but have probably never used? Activity Monitor, a utility tucked away in OS X's /Applications/Utilities folder. Most users can ignore its geekier features and focus on its straightforward ability to resolve mysterious freezes, open unopenable applications, and diagnose performance slowdowns.

**Force-Quit Anything**

If you've ever had an application freeze—and who hasn't?—you probably know about the Force Quit command (Apple: Force Quit or ⌘-option-escape). It brings up a window from which you can shut down even frozen-solid programs. What you may not know is that many programs (technically referred to as processes) aren't listed here, even though they're running.

**Hidden Processes** For instance, the Dock has no Quit command, and it doesn't even appear in the Force Quit window's list of active programs. If the Dock won't budge, here's how you can get its motor running again:

1. Launch Activity Monitor and select My Processes from the pop-up menu at the top of the main window.
2. Look for the Dock in the Process Name column. To find it quickly, type Dock in the toolbar's Filter field. Select the Dock item.
3. Click on Quit Process at the top of the window.
4. In the dialog box that appears, click on Force Quit. The Dock should briefly vanish from your screen; when it reappears, it should work as usual.

**"In Use" Documents** Activity Monitor can also help when you can't delete a document because your Mac claims that it's in use. This means the document is linked to a currently running process, typically the application used to open it.

To delete the document, you first need to quit the application. But what if the app isn't listed in the Dock or anywhere else you'd normally look? Turn to Activity Monitor for help.

For example, Microsoft Entourage uses database files to store your e-mail messages (the files can be found in /your user folder/Documents/Microsoft User Data). Normally, you wouldn't want to delete these; if you did, you'd lose all your e-mail. However, if you have two Macs, you may want to delete the files on one Mac and replace them with the newer files on the other Mac. This is the case for me whenever I go on a trip; I want to transfer the latest versions of the files on my desktop Mac to my PowerBook. That way, I start the trip with all my latest e-mail messages and appointments at hand.

The problem is that Microsoft Office's Database Daemon constantly uses these files. This hidden process allows appointment reminders to pop up on your screen even when Entourage isn't running. The solution is to use Activity Monitor to locate the process and quit it before you try to delete the files. After replacing the deleted files with updated ones, relaunch the Microsoft Database Daemon. It's located in /Applications/Microsoft Office/Office.

**Quit Applications That Other Users Opened**

The Fast User Switching feature in Panther (under Login Options in the Accounts preference pane) is a fantastic time-saver. It lets an additional user log in to an account without making other users log out. That's as handy for a computer lab as it is for a home computer on which every family member has an account. The problem is that some applications work only for one account at a time.

Say a user with another account has iDVD running. If you want to launch iDVD, the other user must quit the application. But what if he or she isn't around? If you're the Mac's administrator, you can use Activity Monitor to manage this:

1. From the pop-up menu in Activity Monitor's main window, select Other User Processes.
2. Locate iDVD in the list and select it.
3. From the toolbar, click on Quit Process; then click on the Quit button.
4. Enter your administrator password when

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**Quit with Care**

In these examples, I generally recommended selecting My Processes from Activity Monitor's pop-up menu. Why not select All Processes instead? If you do, Activity Monitor includes administrative processes in the list. Quitting these processes can cause unstable behavior (also known as system crashes). Unless you're confident in your knowledge of what is safe to quit and what isn't, don't mess with administrative processes.
Check for CPU Drain
Your Mac's performance has gradually slowed to a crawl. When you type a letter in your word processor, it takes several seconds for the character to appear on screen. True, restarting or quitting all open applications would probably solve this problem. But if you'd rather avoid that hassle, give Activity Monitor a try:

1. From Activity Monitor's main window, select My Processes from the pop-up menu.
2. Click on the % CPU column header—this reorganizes the list to show you what's taxing your Mac's CPU the most. Make sure the triangle next to the column header points downward. If it doesn't, click on the header again.
3. All of your open processes will appear in descending order—that is, the ones using the greatest percentage of your CPU's power start the list.
4. In general, most processes will stay under 20 percent—often well under, although they may briefly spike higher. If one application shows a consistently higher percentage, especially if it's much higher, it's the likely cause of your Mac's slowdown.

Note: Activity Monitor itself can significantly drain the CPU, mainly because it scans your Mac every two seconds. You can calm it down by shifting this value to every five seconds (go to Monitor: Update Frequency).

5. If you find a culprit application, quit it.

The last time I had this problem, I found that Safari's % CPU was over 90 percent. I quit Safari, and my Mac's performance returned to normal. Whatever the cause, it was a temporary glitch. When I relaunched Safari, the slowdown did not return. Perhaps a Web page had triggered the CPU drain.

Check for a Memory Leak
For leaks this way:

1. In Activity Monitor's main window, select My Processes from the pop-up menu.
2. Click on the Real Memory column header. Make sure the triangle next to it points downward. If it doesn't, click on the header again.
3. All of your open processes will appear in descending order, with the ones using the greatest amount of your memory at the top of the list. If you suspect that a rotten application is slowing down your Mac? Watch Activity Monitor's list of all open applications in descending order of memory usage. The pie chart shows you how much memory is in use and how much is free.

4. Activity Monitor updates these values every few seconds, so watch for a process's memory value that's heading skyward. That process is your leak.
5. If you find a culprit, quit it. If you don't, check again, this time looking at the adjacent Virtual Memory column.

If your Mac returns to normal speed, you may still be able to use the application. With some luck, the leak may not recur—but if it does, contact the app's developer to report the bug.

Underappreciated Troubleshooting Tool
Activity Monitor can be a powerful ally in your quest to keep your Mac running smoothly and at top speed. The next time you run into a problem you can't figure out, pull out Activity Monitor and try some of these tricks.

Contributing Editor TED LANDAU is the author of Mac OS X Help Line (Peachpit Press, 2004) and the director of support services for Doctor Mac Direct (www.doctormacdirect.com).
Faking Your Focus

To draw attention to an important part of a scene—for example, an object in front of a cluttered background—many photographers will shorten the image’s depth of field. This narrows the camera’s focusing range and leaves anything outside of that range blurred. But many point-and-shoot digital cameras have trouble taking these artistic shots.

In that situation, you’ll need to resort to a bit of digital trickery. With Adobe Photoshop Elements 3.0 ($90), you can manipulate your image’s focus to create the illusion of a shortened depth of field.

Blurring Large Areas

Whereas sharpening increases contrast along color boundaries, blurring reduces contrast to create the illusion of softer focus. When you want to blur a large area, apply the Gaussian Blur filter (see “Faux Focus”).

Step 1 To select the area of the photo that you want to blur, choose the Selection Brush tool and set the Mode to Mask. Paint over any areas that you want to remain in focus—in my image, this was the garden statue. Elements turns these areas red for easy detection. If you mess up, hold down the option key while painting over the unwanted section of the mask. When you’re done, change the brush’s Mode to Selection to generate a selection outline around the background.

Step 2 Copy the selection to a new layer by pressing ⌘-J.

Step 3 Apply the Gaussian Blur filter to your selection by choosing Filter: Blur: Gaussian Blur. Use the Radius control to set the amount of blurring (I set the value to 4.0 for this image). Select the Preview option so you can preview the effect in the image window. When you’re done, click on OK to close the dialog box and apply the blur.

Step 4 The one hang-up with this and most blurring filters is that the effect often spills a little beyond the boundaries of your selection outline. To remedy the problem, use the Eraser tool on the blurred layer, dragging over areas that shouldn’t be blurred. For example, I dragged the Eraser along the border between the background and the statue’s jacket to bring the sharpness back to the fringes of the flowers. Use a very small, soft brush for this bit of cleanup work. If the blur effect missed some pixels that you want to be soft, use the Blur tool (discussed later) to touch up those areas.

Step 5 Merge the blurred layer and the underlying layer by pressing ⌘-E.

Creating a Gradual Blur Effect

In the previous example, all the leaves in the background are about the same distance from the subject, so you can apply the blur consistently throughout the selected area. Suppose, though, that the background contains objects at varying distances—as seen in my photo of a lavender field (see “Distance Viewing”). To realistically mimic the effect of a shortened depth of field, the blur needs to become stronger as the distance from that focusing point increases.

Step 1 Duplicate the Background layer by dragging it to the New Layer icon in the Layers palette (or press ⌘-J). This step assumes that your image contains just one layer; if not, duplicate the layer that contains the area you want to blur.

Step 2 Select the Gradient tool (see “Gradient Options”). In the options bar, click on the arrow next to the Gradient Picker and select the Foreground To Transparent gradient. Next, click on the Linear Style icon. Note that the icon in the Gradient Picker will fade from the current foreground color to transparency; in the figure, the color was black, but you can use any color.

Step 3 In the Layers palette, create a new empty layer above the layer you want to blur by clicking on the New Layer icon.
Tip To quickly adjust the Strength value for the Sharpen and Blur tools, press the number keys. Press 0 for 100 percent, 9 for 90 percent, 85 for 85 percent, and so on.

Step 1 Create a new empty layer to hold the sharpened pixels. (It shares a fly-out menu with the Sharpen and Smudge tools.)

Step 2 Select the Blur tool. (It shares a fly-out menu with the Sharpen and Smudge tools.)

Step 3 Set the brush options. If you need a precise edge between the blurred and sharp areas, select a hard brush. If you want the blur to fade at the edges of your strokes, use a softer brush. (The options bar doesn’t offer you a precise hardness control for the Blur tool, but you can press shift-] [right bracket] to raise the hardness by 25 percent, or press shift-[ left bracket] to reduce the hardness by 25 percent.)

Step 4 Set the Mode option to Normal, and set the Strength value to 30 percent. The Strength value determines how much change you produce with each click or drag. Start low—you can always apply the tool multiple times to the same pixels if necessary.

Step 5 Select the Use All Layers option. It enables the Blur tool to see through your new layer, which will hold the blur information, and access pixels on underlying layers.

Step 6 Return to your image and click on or drag over the pixels you want to blur. It’s a good idea to zoom in when you’re working on the borders of the areas you want to blur. As you work, adjust the Strength value as needed to create more or less blurring with each swipe of the tool. To reduce the blur effect throughout the entire image, reduce the opacity of the blurred layer.

Softening Focus with the Blur Tool
Sometimes you may want to make focus adjustments only to small areas of your image. Or your image may be so intricate that creating a selection would be too difficult. In these cases, use the Blur tool. When you click or drag with the Blur tool, you blur pixels underneath your cursor. Blurring the background also makes the foreground appear sharper.

Step 1 Create a new empty layer to hold the blurred pixels by clicking on the New Layer icon in the Layers palette.

Step 2 Select the Blur tool. (It shares a fly-out menu with the Sharpen and Smudge tools.)

Step 3 Set the brush options. If you need a precise edge between the blurred and sharp areas, select a hard brush. If you want the blur to fade at the edges of your strokes, use a softer brush. (The options bar doesn’t offer you a precise hardness control for the Blur tool, but you can press shift-] [right bracket] to raise the hardness by 25 percent, or press shift-[ left bracket] to reduce the hardness by 25 percent.)

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Distance Viewing To increase the strength of the blur in the areas farther from the focusing point, I used a fading selection outline.

Start Your Own Podcast

Imagine running your own radio station—but without the hassle of transmitters, expensive hardware, or training. With Podcasting, it’s that easy. Podcasting is amateur radio at its best: people from all around the world are recording their own broadcasts on topics ranging from technology to religion. Listeners subscribe to the broadcasts, which are downloaded to iTunes or to an iPod for listening on-the-go.

Podcasts let you interact with audiences in a way that blogs can’t. Last December I started my own Podcast, The Wanderlust Geek (www.wanderlustgeek.com), to share my travel stories from around the world. Writing down the same stories would have taken a lot longer. And sharing my tales verbally added a level of intimacy that written words couldn’t have achieved.

It’s surprisingly easy to join the ranks of Podcasters. In fact, you probably already have most of what you need. Once you’ve recorded your broadcast, you simply put it online and distribute it to others through an online syndication technology called RSS (Really Simple Syndication). Think of RSS as a beacon that announces when new online content is available. Listeners use an RSS reader, such as Thunderstone Media’s iPodderX ($20; www.ipodderx.com), to find available podcasts and download them to iTunes (for more on how to find and listen to Podcasts, see “Are You Listening?”).

What You Need

To record a Podcast, you need a few basic pieces of equipment:

Microphone Most iMacs, laptops, and eMac’s have internal microphones. But I’ve found these mikes a bit lacking in both range and sound quality. I recommend going with an external computer mike instead. You can pick up a simple one from Radio Shack for around $30. It’s definitely worth the investment.

The latest PowerBooks and desktop Macs (excluding the Mac mini and the eMac) offer audio-in jacks, so you plug the mike right into the computer. If your Mac lacks this port, you’ll need to plug the mike into a USB audio interface such as Griffin Technology’s iMic ($40; www.griffintechnology.com). To get the best performance, Griffin recommends plugging the iMic into a self-powered USB hub instead of directly into a Mac.

If you have an iPod, you can use Griffin’s $40 iTalk voice recorder to record Podcasts while you’re out and about. The iTalk plugs into the top of your iPod and records audio as a WAV file, which you can later download to iTunes or import into editing software. You can even go hands-free with the help of a clip-on mike such as Griffin’s $15 Lapel Mic.

Headphones You’ll also want to plug a pair of headphones into your Mac so you can monitor your voice as you record. This allows you to hear your voice as others will hear it, and to detect background noise your ears might not otherwise pick up.

Software If you’re recording directly to your Mac, you’ll need special software to capture the audio as you speak. There’s a wide range of options to choose from. If you have the iLife ’05 suite, for example, you can use GarageBand 2 for these tasks. However, I’ve found that the simplest—and least expensive—option is HairerSoft’s Amadeus II ($30; www.hairersoft.com) for recording and the free Audacity (audacity.sourceforge.net) for editing.

Recording Your Podcast

To begin recording in Amadeus II, go to Sound: Characteristics and set Number Of Channels to Mono, Sampling Rate to 44100Hz, and Sampling Size to 16 Bit. Under the Sound menu, select Record. A new window containing a volume meter will appear (see “Hitting the Mark”). Practice reading your text at the volume you’d be using if you were recording. If you have a naturally quiet voice, you can boost the levels by moving the gain sliders, which are located underneath the volume meter. For a clear, full sound, the volume levels should occasionally peak into the red but usually remain in the green and yellow areas.

Tip Place your mike at a 45 to 90 degree angle relative to your mouth. This will reduce the plosive sound that words beginning with the letter p can cause.
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Are You Listening?

If you’re not quite ready to start your own Podcast, you can still get in on the craze by subscribing to other people’s Podcasts. The first thing you’ll need is a Podcasting client, such as iPodderX, which regularly checks various preset sites to find new content for download. Once you’ve launched your client, you can use its built-in directory to add new podcasts. If iPodderX doesn’t list the podcast you’re looking for, you can add it by going to Podcasts: Add A Podcast Feed. Then copy the RSS feed address (it usually ends in .xml) and paste it into the Podcast Feed URL field.

You can have iPodderX check specified feeds for new content to download. It will add the podcasts to a new iTunes playlist. If you have your iPod configured for an automatic update, all you have to do is plug in your iPod; iPodderX will do the rest.

Here are some podcasts to get you started:

- Daily Source Code (www.dailysourcecode.com)
- The Dawn and Drew Show (www.dawnandrew.com)
- Reel Reviews (www.mwgblog.com)
- MacCast (maccast.blogspot.com)

When you’re pleased with the levels, click on the record button and start talking. If you’re alone, imagine that you’re speaking to someone else in the room and ignore the fact that you’re being recorded. You want to make your podcast as intimate and conversational as possible. When you’re done, save the recording as an AIFF file.

Editing Your Podcast

After you’ve recorded your voice track, you can use Audacity to combine multiple takes (getting the best from each one), to delete awkward pauses, or to add embellishments. For editing ideas and instructions on using Audacity, go to macworld.com/0472.

To give your recording a more professional touch, consider adding a short musical intro. But remember to stick to noncommercial music that doesn’t require a license from the Recording Industry Association of America. You can create your own clips with programs such as GarageBand. Sites such as FindSounds (www.findsounds.com) and Opuzz (www.opuzz.com) offer free or inexpensive royalty-free music clips for download.

Once you’re satisfied with your recording, export it as an AIFF file.

Uploading Your Podcast

To prepare the exported audio file for the Web, drag it into iTunes and then open that program’s Importing preference pane. From the Import Using pull-down menu, choose MP3 Encoder. From the Setting menu, choose Custom. Then set the Stereo Bit Rate to 128 Kbps, the Sample Rate to 44.100 kHz, and Channels to Mono.

Return to the library and select the newly imported track. Under the Advanced menu, choose Convert Selection To MP3. Open the song information window (at the top of the song in this case, your Podcast entry), Artist, and Album fields. Then press for to bring up the file in a new Finder window, and change the file’s name to better reflect its contents—for example, samplepodcast-2005-06-01.mp3.

Once that’s complete, upload the file to a Web server. Many ISPs offer free Web space for customers. If yours doesn’t, you can usually pay a small fee to have someone host your audio file. Got a .Mac account? Just upload the file to your Sites folder.

To make your audio file easily accessible to others, you need to create an RSS feed for it. The easiest way to do this is to create a Weblog. Although you can use any blogging software, Blogger (www.blogger.com) is the easiest to set up.

When the blog is up and running, go to www.feedburner.com and type in your blog’s address. If you use Blogger, you’ll type something like this: myblog.blogspot.com.

On the next page, scroll to Additional Services, select the SmartCast option, and then click on the Hide Details link. Enable the ping audio.weblogs.com option at the bottom of the section. Now when you update your blog with new Podcasts, audio.weblogs.com will add them to its list.

Return to your Blogger page and create a new entry. You may want to add a little message with details about your Podcast, as well as any technical information, such as file size. In the entry, add a link to the audio file on your Web server. The link will look something like this:

|<a href="http://www.example.com/example_podcast.mp3">Download my podcast here</a>|

Promote Your Podcast

You can publicize your Podcast at Podcast Alley (www.podcastalley.com) and in the iPodderX directory (ipodderx.com). At Podcast Alley, click on the Add A Podcast link at the top of the page and type in the appropriate information: the title of the Podcast, the feed address, and so forth.

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Brilliant Playlists

As our iTunes libraries swell to gargantuan proportions, it can become difficult to manage the music we listen to (or would like to listen to if we could only find it). Thankfully, iTunes offers a leg up with the Smart Playlists feature, which lets you create dynamic playlists containing exactly the kind of music you want in iTunes and on your iPod. But to do their job well, smart playlists need your help.

New Music All the Time

iTunes' Play Count feature keeps track of how many times you listen to individual tracks. If you're sick of hearing the same old stuff and want to start exploring the deeper recesses of your music library, start by creating a smart playlist that reads Play Count Is 0 (see "Explore Your Library"). Then you can limit the number of songs in the playlist or the playlist's length (in either hours and minutes or by the amount of space the playlist consumes). In the Selected By pop-up menu, you can further narrow your choices by telling the playlist to pick songs by Album, Artist, Genre, Song Name, Highest or Lowest Rating, Most or Least Often Played, or Most or Least Recently Played (although the universe may implode if you choose Play Count Is 0 and then select Most Often Played). Be sure to enable the Live Updating option, so iTunes will check to see what you've played (in iTunes or on the iPod) when you next sync your iPod. It'll then replace any listened-to songs in the playlist with ones you've never played.

Be Exclusive

In iTunes 4.5, Apple enhanced the Smart Playlist feature in an important way. Previously, there was no easy way to keep sections of your library from appearing in a smart playlist. For example, let's say you've digitized all your old records for the sake of posterity but you don't want any of the songs on them to ever appear in a smart playlist. Sure, you could add a "vinyl" comment to each archived song and tell the smart playlist not to include any song with that comment, but wouldn't it be easier if you could simply tell the smart playlist to exclude all songs within certain playlists? Well, with iTunes 4.5 and later, you can.

In this example, just place all the songs you've ripped from vinyl into a playlist called From Vinyl. Then configure a smart playlist so that it reads Playlist Is Not From Vinyl. From there, you can further narrow down your choices by including or excluding other playlists.

Shuffle Along

The Autofill feature Apple created for the iPod shuffle works more intelligently than a "how about I fill up your iPod with whatever I like" solution—but it could be smarter. For example, I like Brian Wilson's "Barnyard" as much as the next guy, but I prefer that my iPod be filled with songs that are more than seconds-long musical appetizers. Likewise, I don't want to pack my shuffle with songs contained in large WAV files (the one uncompressed format it supports), with holiday music during the summer, or with comedy routines when I'm heading to the gym.

So I built a smart playlist made up of tracks that were longer than two minutes (and shorter than eight minutes), that were not WAV files, and that were not tagged as Holiday or Spoken Word (see "Keep It Small"). By limiting the playlist to 490MB, I was able to see exactly what was going to go on the shuffle (if you leave the Limit To option disabled, Autofill will choose a subset of tracks from a potentially much larger playlist of songs). As with my other smart playlists, I left the Live Updating option enabled.

Once you've created a smart playlist you like, select the iPod shuffle in iTunes' source list and choose the new playlist from the Autofill From pop-up menu. To refresh the contents of the smart playlist, just select everything in it and press the delete key. Because Live Updating is switched on, the smart playlist will automatically repopulate with music.

View Your Purchased Music

Although the Purchased Music playlist that iTunes creates the first time you buy something from the
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CHECK IT OUT

iPod Protection

Having recently lost my 60GB iPod photo, I looked into a few things I should have done. So do as I say—and not as I did—by following these iPod-protection tips:

Mark It Apple offers free engraving on new iPod and iPod photo models—take advantage of it. It’s tough to pretend that an iPod reading “I Belong to Bubba. Hands Off!” is the property of anyone but Bubba.

Track It Inspice’s SmartProtec (www.inspice.com) can assist in the recovery of stolen personal electronic devices. You protect your items by registering your gear’s serial numbers with the service (at no cost). Anyone—the police or a potential buyer, for example—can check with the service to see whether you’ve reported it stolen.

Cloak It When I travel for business, I often place data files on my iPod as a backup. To protect those files, Micromat (www.micromat.com) offers the $40 PodLock—a utility that creates an invisible password-protected partition where you can store your data. It won’t secure your music and photo libraries, and there’s nothing in it that will stop someone from reformating the iPod, but it can help prevent thieves from accessing your private documents.

Keep It Small The iPod shuffle’s Autofil l feature is nice, but you can do better with a smart playlist.

Music Store should contain all your purchased songs, it doesn’t always. Reinstalling iTunes or reconfiguring your music library can confuse the playlist and make it forget that you bought those songs. However, you can create a smart playlist that never forgets. Configure the top row of pop-up menus in a new smart playlist like so: Kind Contains Protected AAC. Give it a name such as Backup Library, and click on OK. All the purchased music files in your library are now in one playlist.

The iPod Mini Playlist

Many people—especially those who own iPod minis—wish that the iPod shuffle’s Autofil l feature worked with other iPod models. If your iPod is set to update automatically, and if your iTunes library contains more music than your iPod can hold, iTunes will create a playlist of music to fit—but iTunes isn’t discerning about what it puts in that playlist. It’s just as happy to copy huge AIFF, WAV, Apple Lossless, and audiobook files to your iPod as it is to grab the tiniest MP3 and AAC files. If you want to pack as much music as possible onto your mini, you need something smarter.

With that in mind, create a series of Kind Does Not Contain conditions for AIFF, WAV, Apple Lossless, and QuickTime files—which take up a lot of storage space. Then, to avoid packing the mini with songs encoded at high bit rates (the higher the bit rate, the larger the file), limit your playlist to songs that weigh in at less than 192 Kbps. You’ll certainly want to exclude the Audiobooks genre as well. Finally, be sure that the top of the playlist reads Match All Of The Following Conditions.

If you rate your music, consider adding a rating condition that reads My Rating Is Greater Than number of stars. Be sure to limit the size of this playlist with the Limit To option at the bottom of the Smart Playlist window. For a 4GB iPod mini, this option should read Limit To 3500 MB (you must use megalbytes rather than gigabytes because the GB field won’t accept decimals, as in 3.5GB).

Once you’ve created this playlist, select your mini in the Source menu and click on the iPod Preferences button. Now enable the Automatically Update Selected Playlists Only option, select the smart playlist you created for your mini, and click on OK. Now the mini will update with your playlist.

In the Mood

Unless you’re the kind of person for whom the party never ends, you’re going to want to listen to a far different kind of music on Sunday morning than on Saturday night. A great way to do so is to use iTunes’ Comments field to create smart playlists.

As you trapse through your music collection, find songs for particular situations—mellow sounds for hungover Sunday mornings, or energetic tunes that will get your heart pumping while you exercise. Select multiple songs and choose Get Info from iTunes’ File menu. In the resulting window, click on the Info tab and enter an appropriate word in the Comments field (Exercise, for example).

When you’re ready to compile your playlist, configure the top row of pop-up menus to read Comment Contains whatever, where whatever is the mood or situation you’d like a playlist for—Comment Contains Exercise, for instance. Because of its limited storage space, mood playlists are great for the iPod shuffle.

The Audiobooks Playlist

The fourth-generation iPods, iPod minis, and iPod photos place audiobooks in their own special playlist. If you have an earlier iPod, you can fake an audiobooks playlist. Just configure the top row of buttons to read Genre Contains Audiobook.
iPod is already your essential music companion when you're on the move. With the i-Station, an ultra-portable docking and 2.1 speaker system from Logic3, you can now play your favorite tracks out loud in the comfort of your home. With its stylish design, compact size and its powerful sub-woofer speakers (12 Watts RMS), turn your iPod into a powerful and convenient sound system for every occasion.

The dock, which fits the iPod, iPod mini & iPod Photo, even charges the iPod battery while it plays, leaving you to enjoy your music. i-Station can be synchronized with your PC or Mac via USB or FireWire (cables included) and can also be used with other portable audio devices such as iPod Shuffle, MP3, Minidisc and CD players.

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How to Use Hotspots

You’d have to be living far, far away from a Starbucks not to know that Wi-Fi hotspots are everywhere these days. Since we last looked (“Hop on a Hotspot,” Mobile Mac, March 2004), thousands of new hotspots have come online. Just about every U.S. metropolis is now a wireless hot zone. Even the smallest burgs seem to have one or two hotspots—sometimes down at the local Dairy Queen.

But using those hotspots to get online isn’t always easy. Some spots are free, some charge a fee, and the choice between the two isn’t as obvious as the pricing might make you think. And then there’s the whole issue of how to use a hotspot without letting that guy in the corner snoop through your e-mail messages with his handy wireless packet sniffer.

Find Your Spot

Your first option for finding a hotspot is to guess. These days, you’re likely to find free Wi-Fi just by strolling down the street with your laptop and periodically checking for available networks with free software (such as Alf Watt’s iStumbler; www.iStumbler.net). Here are some likely bets:

> Coffee shops and restaurants: Starbucks isn’t the only national chain offering Wi-Fi. Schlotzsky’s Deli, for example, provides wireless access in its company-owned stores. And Panera Bread has opened hotspots in several hundred of its bakeries nationwide; it plans to eventually turn all its shops into free hotspots.

> Libraries and universities: In locales ranging from tiny towns in Colorado to sprawling metropolises like Los Angeles and Seattle, an increasing number of public libraries now offer free Wi-Fi in every branch. Many universities—such as Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland—have added guest access to their wireless networks. (Check the guest policy in advance: some organizations require that you have some sort of affiliation, or that a patron or a staff member vouch for you; others require a library-card number or an academic ID for access.)

> City streets: Several cities—including but by no means limited to New York; San Jose, California; and Portland, Oregon—now offer free wireless access in downtown areas and public parks or squares.

If you’d rather not rely on the hit-or-miss method, there are several good online directories, such as the Wi-Fi-FreeSpot Directory (www.wififreespot.com), WiFinder (www.wifinder.com), and the Wi-Fi Zone Finder (www.wifizone.org).

But such directories won’t do you much good if you can’t get online. JiWire (macworld.com/0478) now offers the only downloadable OS X-compatible directory, and it’s updated monthly (see “Hotspot Finder”). The company also provides the underlying technology for the hotspot locators used by Intel.com, USA Today.com, Yahoo, and many other sites. (Disclaimer: JiWire sells advertising for my Web site, Wi-Fi Net News [www.wifinetnews.com], and I write articles for its site.)

Mile-High Wi-Fi

Wi-Fi has sprouted in some pretty odd locations in the past year, including the Washington State Ferries (in the waiting areas and on board); several airlines (for example, on Scandinavian Airlines and Lufthansa, thanks to Connexion by Boeing); and the Hampton Jitney, a shuttle service that takes Long Island residents from the Hamptons to Manhattan (and vice versa).

The ferries use a complex antenna system to connect to Wi-Fi stations at ferry docks; the planes employ phased-array antennas pointed at satellites, which relay traffic to and from ground stations; and the Hampton Jitney relays network traffic via a cellular data network.

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But using those hotspots to get online isn’t always easy. Some spots are free, some charge a fee, and the choice between the two isn’t as obvious as the pricing might make you think. And then there’s the whole issue of how to use a hotspot without letting that guy in the corner snoop through your e-mail messages with his handy wireless packet sniffer.

**Find Your Spot**

Your first option for finding a hotspot is to guess. These days, you’re likely to find free Wi-Fi just by strolling down the street with your laptop and periodically checking for available networks with free software (such as Alf Watt’s iStumbler; www.iStumbler.net). Here are some likely bets:

> Coffee shops and restaurants: Starbucks isn’t the only national chain offering Wi-Fi. Schlotzsky’s Deli, for example, provides wireless access in its company-owned stores. And Panera Bread has opened hotspots in several hundred of its bakeries nationwide; it plans to eventually turn all its shops into free hotspots.

> Libraries and universities: In locales ranging from tiny towns in Colorado to sprawling metropolises like Los Angeles and Seattle, an increasing number of public libraries now offer free Wi-Fi in every branch. Many universities—such as Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland—have added guest access to their wireless networks. (Check the guest policy in advance: some organizations require that you have some sort of affiliation, or that a patron or a staff member vouch for you; others require a library-card number or an academic ID for access.)

> City streets: Several cities—including but by no means limited to New York; San Jose, California; and Portland, Oregon—now offer free wireless access in downtown areas and public parks or squares.

If you’d rather not rely on the hit-or-miss method, there are several good online directories, such as the Wi-Fi-FreeSpot Directory (www.wififreespot.com), WiFinder (www.wifinder.com), and the Wi-Fi Zone Finder (www.wifizone.org).

But such directories won’t do you much good if you can’t get online. JiWire (macworld.com/0478) now offers the only downloadable OS X-compatible directory, and it’s updated monthly (see “Hotspot Finder”). The company also provides the underlying technology for the hotspot locators used by Intel.com, USA Today.com, Yahoo, and many other sites. (Disclaimer: JiWire sells advertising for my Web site, Wi-Fi Net News [www.wifinetnews.com], and I write articles for its site.)

**Mile-High Wi-Fi**

Wi-Fi has sprouted in some pretty odd locations in the past year, including the Washington State Ferries (in the waiting areas and on board); several airlines (for example, on Scandinavian Airlines and Lufthansa, thanks to Connexion by Boeing); and the Hampton Jitney, a shuttle service that takes Long Island residents from the Hamptons to Manhattan (and vice versa).

The ferries use a complex antenna system to connect to Wi-Fi stations at ferry docks; the planes employ phased-array antennas pointed at satellites, which relay traffic to and from ground stations; and the Hampton Jitney relays network traffic via a cellular data network.
**Pay for Play**

If you travel regularly for business, free hotspots may not work for you. Constantly shuttling from airport to airport, hotel to hotel, and convention hall to meeting center doesn’t leave much time for searching out the nearest wireless coffee shop.

It’s true that many hotels now offer free broadband access. But all too many still charge guests a fee for the service. If you’d rather not pay $10 to $15 extra per night at the hotel, or $8 to $15 for a couple of hours of access at the airport, then consider a monthly service plan from a dedicated hotspot service.

While there has been a bit of a shakeout over the past couple of years, dozens of hotspot operators remain in the game in the United States. Only a few have networks big enough to provide truly useful nationwide coverage, but many offer no-fee roaming, which lets you use the same account name and password to access different networks.

T-Mobile and SBC are now the two largest hotspot operators in the United States. T-Mobile, the cellular company, has more than 5,400 wireless locations around the country, including Starbucks, Kinko’s, and Borders stores, as well as some airports and hotels. SBC Communications has more than 6,000 hotspots in its basic network, including UPS Store, Mail Boxes Etc., and Barnes & Noble locations.

Both providers offer two plan types (see “How They Compare”): a monthly, all-you-can-surf service and a pay-as-you-go hourly or daily plan. These day passes allow unlimited access for 24 hours from the time you activate them and are good throughout the provider’s entire network. Not surprisingly, you’ll pay a higher rate for the short-term plans. (Other providers offer similar arrangements but rarely let you roam across an entire network for 24 hours.)

Just to make things trickier, SBC offers plans with and without roaming. Its own network includes locations that T-Mobile operates directly; strangely enough, it also includes McDonald’s restaurants. (Note that if you live on Big Macs while you’re on the road, you can buy McDonald’s only service at $2.95 for two hours; see macworld.com/0477 for details.)

If you’re an SBC customer, you can’t currently use any hotspots on the T-Mobile network, and vice versa. But everyone in the Wi-Fi industry expects that to change in the near future.

In contrast to T-Mobile and SBC, which operate their own hotspots, Boingo doesn’t own any hotspot equipment or locations itself. Instead, it gives you a piece of software that lets you connect at 16,000 locations (worldwide) belonging to dozens of networks, and you don’t have to set up an account for each one. Boingo just released an OS X version of that software.

**HOW THEY COMPARE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SERVICE</th>
<th>LOCATIONS</th>
<th>DAILY FEES</th>
<th>MONTHLY FEES</th>
<th>URL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boingo Wireless</td>
<td>16,000 (including airports, and SBC and Waypoint locations (excluding McDonald’s))</td>
<td>$7.95 for 24 hours</td>
<td>$21.95 (no cancellation penalty)</td>
<td>macworld.com/0410</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBC FreedomLink</td>
<td>6,000 (including UPS Store, Barnes &amp; Noble, and McDonald’s locations; airports; session minimum)</td>
<td>$8.33 for 24 hours (unlimited access at all locations; three- session minimum)</td>
<td>$19.95 for home network; $39.95 for home plus roaming (one-year commitment; $100 early cancellation penalty)</td>
<td>macworld.com/0411</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T-Mobile HotSpot</td>
<td>5,400 (including Starbucks, Kinko’s, and Borders locations)</td>
<td>$9.99 for 24 hours (unlimited access at all locations) or $6.00 per hour (one-hour minimum)</td>
<td>$19.99 for subscribers to T-Mobile cellular service; $39.99 for nonsubscribers (one-year commitment; $200 early cancellation penalty; $39.99 for a flat, no-commitment plan (no cancellation penalty))</td>
<td>macworld.com/0412</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Striking a Balance**

It’s always hard to pay for something you can get for free—but it’s wise to remember that you get what you pay for. The paid sites offer reliability and easy availability, while the free sites offer the obvious bargain. But with the growth of unlimited monthly service plans that cap your expenses at in-network locations, there’s no reason not to opt for both: use a free site when you can, and use a paid site when you have to. Combining the best of both worlds means you’ll never have to worry about finding a connection.

GLENN FLEISHMAN is the author of Taking Control of Your Airport Network (Peachpit Press, 2005) and a frequent contributor to Macworld.

**Hotspot Security**

When you connect at a Wi-Fi hotspot, all the data you send and receive—every password, e-mail message, and Web page—moves entirely in the open over the network. Any other user on the same network can extract information about you with free and easy-to-use software. But you can take some simple steps to secure your data.

- Use SSL (Secure Sockets Layer) to send and receive e-mail. This will protect your password and the contents of your messages. Not every ISP offers SSL, e-mail, but most corporate systems and all the popular OS X e-mail apps—Apple’s Mail, Qualcomm’s Eudora, Bare Bones Software’s Mailsmith, and Microsoft Entourage—support it. To implement SSL in your particular client, check its Help menu. The dedicated mail service FastMail also offers SSL e-mail, as well as secure Web mail.
- Secure your Web browsing. Secure-Tunnel (www.secure-tunnel.com) offers an OS X-compatible service that, for $3 a month, lets you browse the Web through an encrypted tunnel to its servers. Note that you don’t need this additional layer for already-secure pages.
- Employ a virtual private network (VPN), which encrypts all data traveling between your machine and a remote server. You can rent VPN service by the month from HotSpotVPN (www.hotspotvpn.com), or buy the Buffalo Secure Wireless Gateway ($160; macworld.com/0427), which lets you set up a VPN server on your own network.

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- Use SSL (Secure Sockets Layer) to send and receive e-mail. This will protect your password and the contents of your messages. Not every ISP offers SSL e-mail, but most corporate systems and all the popular OS X e-mail apps—Apple’s Mail, Qualcomm’s Eudora, Bare Bones Software’s Mailsmith, and Microsoft Entourage—support it. To implement SSL in your particular client, check its Help menu. The dedicated mail service FastMail also offers SSL e-mail, as well as secure Web mail.
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3 Cool AppleScripts

AppleScript has been around since the days of System 7. Despite its maturity, snooty Mac programmers often look down on AppleScript for being too simple, too easy to learn, and too much like English. Of course, those are precisely the traits you want in a computer language. Here are three cool things AppleScript can do for you.

1 Slim Images Down in a Jiffy
Photoshop is the embodiment of pro image editing, but it's a memory and processor pig. If you'd like a very simple graphics program—one that works completely in the background—OS X has your ticket. It's called Image Events.

For example, if you take pictures on a digital camera or use a scanner, then you've probably got a bunch of bloated TIFF files that are far too big to e-mail or post on a Web page. So what should you do? Convert your files using AppleScript.

If you look in Image Events' dictionary, you'll find that the save command lets you specify exactly what format to save an image in. (To see the dictionary, open Script Editor in your /Applications/AppleScript folder, select File: Open Dictionary, select Image Events from the list that appears, and click on Open.) Here's a script you can use to convert any image files to space-saving JPEGs. In Script Editor, type the following:

```
-- Part 1:
on run
display dialog "Please drag image files to this script to turn them into JPEGs"
end run
-- Part 2:
on open draggeditems
repeat with currentFile in draggeditems
    tell application "Image Events"
        set openedFile to open (currentFile as alias)
    end tell
    set filelocation to the location of openedFile
    set fileName to (file name of openedFile)
    save openedFile as JPEG
    close openedFile
end tell
-- Part 3:
tell application "Finder"
    set the name of file fileName of file location to (fileName & "->.jpg")
end tell
```

Save this script as an application by selecting File: Save As and choosing Application from the File Format pop-up menu. Give it a memorable name (such as Convert2JPEG.app). Now when you drag a bunch of files onto the script's Finder icon (known as a droplet because it runs an AppleScript when you drag and drop files or folders onto it), you'll transform your once-big images into compact JPEGs. Here's how the script works:

> Part 1 handles what happens if you simply double-click on the droplet: the script presents a dialog box telling you to drag and drop files instead.
> Part 2 tells AppleScript to iterate through the files you dropped one at a time, and to set the openedFile variable to the currently open file.
> Part 3 sets two other important variables: filelocation (the folder that contains the current image) and fileName (the name of the current image).
> Part 4 converts the image to a JPEG and saves it.

Unfortunately, Image Events isn't smart enough to rename your file with a .jpg extension. That means if your original file was called horses.tiff, your new JPEG file will still be called horses.tiff. This is a recipe for massive confusion when you try to open the file in Adobe Photoshop or Apple Preview, since your image's extension (.tiff) won't match its actual format (JPEG).

> Part 5, therefore, tells the Finder to rename your file with the correct .jpg extension. The Finder does this by finding the file you want to rename (fileName in filelocation) and then appending ->.jpg to the end of the file name, producing a fully working JPEG file with the correct extension.

2 Shave a Page Off Your Document
If you write letters and e-mail messages—or computer books, for that matter—you've probably experienced the dreadful one-page-too-long problem. It goes like this: you're typing your document, but when you come to the end, you realize your document is just one page longer than you want it. And if you're like most people, you sigh deeply and then
get to work on shrinking the individual fonts in your document. The trouble with this approach, of course, is that it can take a long time to select blocks of text and change their font sizes, especially if you need to modify multiple fonts on dozens of pages.

Microsoft Word provides an AppleScript command that takes care of all this text-squeezing business for you: `fit to pages`. The trouble is that Word has hundreds of different commands in its dictionary. Does Microsoft really expect you to spend several minutes scanning all the entries in the left pane to find the `fit to pages` command? Yep.

Never fear. To open Word’s dictionary, launch Script Editor, select File: Open Dictionary, find Microsoft Word in the list, and click on Open. Choose Edit: Find: Find and type `Fit to Pages` in the Find field. Click on Next twice.

The definition of the command tells you that it’s meant to squeeze your fonts “just enough so that the document will fit on one fewer pages.” The light-blue document text indicates that you have to tell `fit to pages` which document you want it to work with.

Armed with this information, you can write your script in Script Editor:

```applescript
tell application "Microsoft Word"
activate
display dialog "Shrink document by a page?"
fit to pages (front document)
end tell

To shrink a document, open it in Word and then run the script from Script Editor (click on Run). The script will bring Word forward and then display a confirmation dialog box, asking if you want to shrink the document by a page. You're left with two options:

> If you click on OK, the script proceeds with the next statement (fit to pages) and squeezes the front document down by one page.

> If you click on Cancel, the script ends.

After you click on OK, Word finds out what it’ll take to knock one page off your document and adjusts the font sizes throughout the document.

3 Automatically Tell iChat That You're Away

One of iChat’s coolest features is that it lets you notify your friends as to whether you’re around. When you’re at your computer, you set your iChat status to Available; when you’re out, you set your status to Away. Conveniently for you, AppleScript can do the same thing automatically.

Of course, that's nothing really unique. To add real power, you can have your script set your status to Away only if your screen saver is running.

Here's how:

```applescript
--Part 1:
on idle

--Part 2:
tell application "System Events"
if (the name of every process) contains "ScreenSaverEngine" then
--Part 3:
tell application "iChat"
set the status to away
end tell
end if
end tell

--Part 4:
return 10
end idle
```

Before your script will run properly, you have to select File: Save. For File Format, choose Application. Select the Stay Open option, so your script runs in the background all the time. Save the file somewhere accessible, because you can run it only by double-clicking on its icon in the Finder.

Here's how the code works:

> Part 1 is an `idle handler`. To AppleScript, that means “run the following code whenever this script isn’t busy doing something else.” To you, it means the script will run constantly.

> Part 2 tells System Events to get a list of all currently running programs on your system. Then the script checks to see whether that list contains ScreenSaverEngine—OS X’s screen-saver program. In other words, part 2 checks whether your screen saver is running. If it is, the script proceeds to part 3.

> Part 3 sets your iChat status to Away if your screen saver is running. That way, your friends won’t try to chat with you.

> Part 4 tells the idle handler to check back again in 10 seconds. The result is that your script checks every 10 seconds to see whether your screen saver is running.

When your screen saver isn’t running, the only indication you’ll have that your script is running is that its icon will appear in the Dock. Because you turned on Stay Open for the script, the code continues checking your screen saver forever (or at least until you control-click on the script’s icon in the Dock and choose Quit).

Mac OS X Hints
The Insiders’ Tips You Won’t Get from Apple

Clean Up Text Using Summarize Service
Have you ever come across a selection of text you’d like to keep—for example, a how-to on a Web page or an article on your local paper’s site? You may have tried copying it and pasting it into TextEdit or Stickies, only to end up with the text and all its distracting formatting, links, and spacing. Here’s a quick and easy workaround.

If the program you’re using supports OS X’s Services feature (as is the case for most Apple apps, as well as The Omni Group’s products and Bare Bones’ BBEdit), you can use the Summarize service to clean up the text for easy saving. Start by selecting the text within the source application, and then choose application name: Services: Summarize.

A new window will open, and you’ll see a cleaned-up version of your text. Next, move the Summary Size slider to the 100% mark; this will force the service to show every word in your original selection. Then press ⌘-C to copy the text to the Clipboard (it’s already all selected by default), switch to your final destination (a Stickies note, a Word document, or whatever), and press ⌘-V to paste.

If the text isn’t in a Services-aware application, drop it into TextEdit as your first step. If you have TextEdit in Plain Text mode (go to TextEdit: Preferences), doing so will get rid of almost all the formatting. Using the Summarize service will then remove any remaining excess line breaks and other oddities.

Enter URLs Quickly in OmniWeb 5
Autocompletion of URLs can be a real time-saver in browsers. If you’ve visited www.cnn.com before, for instance, you’ll probably only have to type cn before your browser figures out that you’re heading there again, and it will complete the URL for you. Most browsers complete starting from the front of the URL only, but The Omni Group’s OmniWeb 5 ($30; www.omnigroup.com) also autocompletes from the end of the URL. So if you often visit a deeply buried page on a large site (www.example_bank.com/balances/checking/ jun05/), for instance, you can type only the end of the URL (jun05), and OmniWeb will fill in the entire address for you.

Preview Multiple Fonts with Font Book and Expose
Do you work with a large number of typefaces and often add new ones to your system? Do you wish you had an easy way to preview a number of them simultaneously without first installing them? You can preview a font without installing it by double-clicking on it in the Finder, or by dragging and dropping the font onto Font Book’s icon (either in the Dock or in the Applications folder). Drag and drop multiple fonts at the same time, and Font Book opens a new preview window for each one. Unfortunately, Font Book cascades these windows, so you can see only one at a time.

Using Expose, though, you can easily review all the previewed fonts at one time. Just press F10, the Expose Application Windows keystroke, and the windows will arrange themselves across your screen. As long as you haven’t opened more fonts than your monitor can fit, you’ll be able to see enough detail to determine which fonts you want (see "Line ‘em Up"). To install a font, just click on its window to make it come to the foreground, and then click on the Install button. Press F10 again, select the next font, and repeat.
Quick-Access Encyclopedia

Wikipedia (www.wikipedia.org) is a large, community-driven encyclopedia. Anyone can add new records or modify existing ones. The idea is that over time community members correct each other, and you'll wind up with a very detailed collection of facts. It may not be the Encyclopædia Britannica, but it's a great starting point for learning.

However, loading the Web site, entering your search terms, and clicking on the search button can be time-consuming. Lo and behold, by writing a simple script, you can run your queries from a Terminal window instead.

Unix holds executable programs in a folder called bin, so go ahead and create a bin folder in your Home directory, at the same level as Documents, Pictures, and so forth. You can do this via the Finder or type mkdir ~/bin in Terminal.

Once you've created this folder, make sure Unix knows about it when it looks for programs to run. In Terminal, create a file named .bash_profile in your home folder (or edit that file if it already exists). Start by typing pico .bash_profile.

Next, add the line export PATH=~/bin:$PATH. Now press control-O (for Write Out) and then press return (to save the file). Then press control-X to exit the pico editor. Close and reopen your Terminal window, this will read the newly created .bash_profile file, telling Unix to look in your local bin folder for executable files.

All that's left to do is to create the Wikipedia script. Type cd ~/bin, press return, type pico wp, and press return again. You're now editing the new script. Enter the following two lines:

```bash
#!/bin/bash
open http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Special:Search?search=$@ | sed 's/ /+/g')
```

When you're done, the entry should look like the image in “Wild Wiki Ways.” As before, press control-O, return, and then control-X to save the file and quit the editor. The final step is to turn your script into an executable file. To do this, type chmod +x wp. Press return to turn those two lines of text into a simple program.

To use your new script, just type wp some text to search for and press return. Replace some text to search for with your search topic. Short phrases—wp racehorse or wp macintosh, for example—will probably lead to broader results.

When you press return, your default browser will open and load the Wikipedia results page for your search terms.

Here's a short bonus tip: If you've already installed a text-mode browser such as links or lynx (link.sourceforge.net), then modify the above script so that the results display directly in your browser. Just replace the second line of the script with this text, replacing lynx with links if appropriate:

```bash
lynx http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Special:Search?search=$@ | sed 's/ /+/g')
```

Wild Wiki Ways: With this simple two-line script, you can use Terminal to browse entries quickly on the community-built encyclopedia Web site known as Wikipedia.
Sidebar Savvy

As of OS X 10.3, Apple added something new to the left side of every Finder window: the sidebar. You can activate items in the sidebar with one click, as opposed to the double-click required in a normal Finder window. In its stock form, the sidebar contains useful time-savers, but if you customize it to fit the way you work, it can become a truly useful tool.

Take a look and you'll see that the sidebar has two halves, separated by a light gray line. (Can't see the sidebar? Double-click on the small dot located on the left side of your Finder window.) The upper half contains icons for your computer; hard drives and partitions; and any connected servers and removable media, such as CDs or your iDisk. You can store pretty much anything you like in the lower half, but by default it contains shortcuts to your main user folders, including Desktop, Documents, Movies, Music, and Pictures. It also contains a shortcut to the systemwide Applications folder.

To make your sidebar more useful, go to the Finder: Preferences menu, select the Sidebar tab, and deselect any of the items you don't want to see. Alternatively, you can remove shortcuts by dragging their icons off the sidebar and dropping them. You can add anything to the bottom portion, including files, folders, and applications. For example, if you have a particular file you use regularly, such as your Quicken data file or a presentation you reference often, consider giving it a spot on the sidebar. Deeply buried folders are also good candidates. Instead of opening a whole bunch of folders to reach the depths of your filing system, jump to the right spot with one click. Likewise, store frequently used applications in the sidebar, and you won't have to make a trip to the Dock to activate them.

If you're choosing between the sidebar and the toolbar, here are a couple of things to keep in mind: The relative size and position of shortcuts in the sidebar will change with the window size, but they will stay put in the toolbar. Shortcuts in the sidebar support pop-open folders, but those in the toolbar do not. You might want to consider keeping your application and document shortcuts in the toolbar, and your folder shortcuts in the sidebar.

For more advanced sidebar tricks in previous Mac OS X Hints, see the tip on viewing paths when using folders from the sidebar (July 2004); the advice on using a superskinny sidebar (November 2004); and the very cool but very advanced tip on colorizing the sidebar's background (January 2005).

Places, Everyone!

Adding an item to the sidebar is easy: simply drag and drop it from a normal Finder window into place. You can store files, folders, and even applications here. When you want to remove an item, just drag it off the sidebar and watch it disappear.

Skip Clicking on Samples in the iTunes Music Store

Listening to 30-second song snippets at the iTunes Music Store is a great way to get acquainted with a new band. Just search for an artist's songs and then click on each song in turn to get a sense for the artist's sound. But all this clicking just to get an earful can be a pain.

The following AppleScript takes care of that problem. Open Script Editor (in Applications/Utilities), and type in the following code:

```
on idle
    tell application "iTunes"
        next track
    end tell
    return 29.5
end idle
```

Select File: Save, give your new script a name, and select Application from the File Format pop-up menu. Choose the Stay Open option. It doesn't matter where you save the script; you just want to store it where you can get to it quickly. (Consider dragging it to the Dock, the sidebar, or the toolbar for truly fast access.)

Now visit the iTunes Music Store and search for something. In the results box, double-click on the first sample. Before the clip ends, switch to the Finder and launch your saved script. When you do, iTunes will jump to the next sample, play it for 29.5 seconds, and keep going until all samples have played.

Yes, you'll miss the last 0.5 seconds of each one, but there's a good reason this figure is set below 30 seconds. If you set the script at 30 seconds, iTunes will reach the end of the first sample and stop. By using a value just below 30 seconds, iTunes doesn't quite finish playing, so it jumps to the next sample. Since you selected the Stay Open option, this script will keep working until you quit it.
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Mac 911
Solutions to Your Most Vexing Mac Problems

Cross-Platform PowerPoint
I’ve been using Microsoft PowerPoint v. X for some time, and I’ve had only one problem. When I need to present my files on a Windows computer, minor incompatibilities often arise. For example, text that is white on my Mac is black on the PC. I’ve learned to anticipate this and always check my presentation first on a PC when I won’t be using my own laptop. What gives?

Aaron F. Kopman

Though Macs and Windows PCs share better than they once did, they still don’t always see eye to eye. With that in mind, you should take certain precautions when you use a Mac to create a PowerPoint document that your audience will be viewing on a Windows PC. Those precautions include the following:

Use Common Fonts If you choose a font on the Mac and the PC doesn’t have it, the PC will substitute a font you may dislike. To avoid trouble, stick to fonts that are present on both platforms, such as Arial, Times New Roman, Courier, and Symbol. If you’re sure the presentation will appear on a PC that has a full version of PowerPoint installed (not just the PowerPoint Viewer application), you can also use the fonts that Office installs on both platforms. These include Century Gothic, Copperplate Gothic, Tahoma, and Verdana.

Use Common Graphics and Video Formats As a Microsoft product, PowerPoint prefers graphics and video formats commonly found on PCs. For graphics, that means saving images in the PNG, JPEG, or GIF formats. PowerPoint for Windows is not hip to QuickTime, so if you must include video, use Windows’ AVI format.

Use File Extensions File extensions tell Windows what kind of file it’s dealing with. If those extensions are missing, your presentation won’t work on the PC. When you save a PowerPoint presentation on your Mac, make sure to enable the Append File Extension option in PowerPoint’s Save dialog box. Without that extension, the Windows machine won’t identify the file as a PowerPoint document, and the person sitting at the PC will have to add the .ppt extension to the file’s name in order to open it.

Consider Upgrading Office 2004 includes a new feature that you might find helpful—Compatibility Report. When you produce a presentation in PowerPoint 2004 and save it, by default PowerPoint checks the document to see whether it’s compatible with other versions of PowerPoint. If it isn’t, you’ll see a message indicating that there are compatibility issues. Click on the Compatibility Report button in the Save dialog box, and you’ll learn what the problems are (see “Windows-Friendly Presentations”). If PowerPoint can fix a problem, the Fix button will become active. If PowerPoint can’t fix the problem, it will offer ways to work around it (for example, using an AVI movie rather than a QuickTime MOV file).

AutoUpdate Doesn’t
After I installed Microsoft Office 2004, the Microsoft AutoUpdate application launched and wanted to get the Service Pack 1 update. Everything seemed to go fine until AutoUpdate simply announced that the update did not complete successfully. Repeated attempts failed. How can I make it successfully apply the patch?

Markus Mock

Microsoft’s AutoUpdate might itself be in need of updating. To do so, download the latest version at macworld.com/0346. If that doesn’t do the trick, toss AutoUpdate’s preference file: select Go To Folder in the Finder, type ~/Library/Preferences, and delete the file named com.microsoft.autoupdate.plist.

If AutoUpdate remains uncooperative, put it aside for a moment and download the Service Pack update directly from macworld.com/0357. If the update installs as it should, run Disk Utility (/Applications/Utilities) to repair your Mac’s permissions. If AutoUpdate still won’t work, you need a fresh start. Run the Remove Office app (/Applications/Microsoft Office 2004/Additional Tools/Remove Office) and then reinstall Office.

Selective Searching
I have a list of several Web sites I want to search for information or images. Do you know any way that I can limit a search to a list of Web sites?

David Workentin
Google lets you limit searches to a single Web site or a group of Web sites. The trick is to phrase your query correctly. You need to use a combination of site: the site you want and the OR variable.

Travel to www.google.com (or type directly in Safari's Google search field) and enter something like this in the Search field: grunion site: stanford.edu. This limits your search for the noble fish to Stanford University's domain. Or you can enter grunion site: stanford.edu OR site: pepperdine.edu OR site: ucsd.edu. Now you and the grunion are really off and running—this query searches the sites of all three universities for information on your piscine pal.

Killing the Messenger
In Apple's Mail, is there any way to block the messages from a specific sender?
Sid Koss

Your ISP is the only one that truly has the power to block messages, and few ISPs offer such a service. You can, however, create a Mail rule that deletes messages from particular individuals. Go to Mail: Preferences and click on Rules. Click on Add Rule and type a name (for example, Get Lost!) in the Description field. Then use the pop-up menus to create a mail rule that reads:
From Contains joe@example.com
Delete Message
Note that applying this rule isn't such a hot idea if you've recently had a spat with your significant other and have sworn that you'll never speak to him or her again. Such a rule could easily delete the groveling make-up note that person sends your way. A better option is to create a new mailbox—called Sniveling Worm, say—and create a rule that moves mail from your ex into this folder (see "Ruling the Unruly"). To do this, create a rule that reads as follows:
From Contains joe@example.com
Move Message To Mailbox: Sniveling Worm
When you want to let bygones be bygones (or want to revel in your former sweetie's despair), fling open this mailbox and read the messages you've diverted.

Mining for Movies
Is there a way to save QuickTime movies from the Web to my Mac for future viewing, so I don't have to return to the original Web site when I choose Save As in Internet Explorer, all I get is a link.
Fred Schneider

If you can't save a file with the Save As command, it's because that file's owners don't want you to save it. But that doesn't mean you can't.

The simplest way to do this is with Djodjo Design's free iGetMovies (macworld.com/0489). Another way is to do it yourself, by following these steps:

Open the QuickTime preference pane, click on the Plug-In tab in the resulting QuickTime window, and make sure the Save Movies In Disk Cache option is selected. Now play the QuickTime movie you want to save until it has fully downloaded to your Mac. (You'll know it's done when the gray progress bar fills the timeline.) Next, download a copy of Marcel Bresnik's free TinkerTool (macworld.com/0296) and launch it. Click on TinkerTool's Finder tab, enable the Show Hidden And System Files option, and click on Relaunch Finder.

Double-click on your startup volume's icon and then follow this path: /private/tmp/501/Tem•
porary-Items. Once you're in the Temporary-Items folder, switch to List view and click on the Size column. The large file that rises to the top of the list—the one whose name begins with QTPluginTemp and contains a string of numbers—is what you're after.

Drag this file to the desktop and rename it, giving it a .mov extension—My Cool Borrowed Movie.mov, for example. You'll be asked to confirm that you really want to add the .mov extension. Do so with my blessing, return to TinkerTool, undo your past actions to make invisible files disappear again, and enjoy.

Nix the Nagging
I'm out in the sticks and still have a dial-up modem. I'm on a Power Mac G4, running Panther, and using Microsoft Entourage. Every five minutes, an Internet Connect alert pops up reminding me that my connection is still active and asking whether I wish to remain connected. How can I keep this box from appearing?
Heather Lose

Open your Mac's Network preference pane, choose Internal Modem from the Show pop-up menu, select continues
TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Hard-Drive Helpers

I recently upgraded my Mac. I'd hoped to take advantage of Apple's Setup Assistant, which allows you to transfer data from one Mac to another via FireWire. Alas, Setup Assistant failed to recognize the hard drives attached to my old Mac's PCI host adapter card. What to do? I found the following tools helpful.

Mike Bombich’s Carbon Copy Cloner (donations accepted; www.bombich.com/software) clones one bootable volume to another. Shut down the new Mac with the T key held down; it’ll boot into FireWire Target Disk Mode. Launch Carbon Copy Cloner on the old Mac and choose the volume you want to clone. Select a volume on the new Mac as a destination. (Cloning a large volume can take several hours.)

Shirt Pocket’s SuperDuper ($20; www.shirt-pocket.com) is a handy (and fast) tool for making a straight bootable clone of a drive. It can also back up your user files and create something called a Safety Clone. Through symbolic links and aliases, this bootable clone of a volume shares your personal documents and data with the original volume. Should you install something on the Safety Clone that makes your Mac go bloop, it’s a simple matter to boot from the original system.

ProSoft Engineering’s Drive Genius ($99; www.prosofteng.com) can create an exact duplicate of a hard drive—right down to partitioning the target drive so the resulting cloned volume is exactly the same size as the original. Unlike Carbon Copy Cloner, Drive Genius doesn’t allow you to clone the active startup drive to another volume—you must boot either from another volume or from the Drive Genius CD.

Instead, the file contains instructions that tell a music synthesizer (including the one built into Apple’s QuickTime) what notes to play and how long to play them. When you drag a MIDI file into iTunes and click on play, QuickTime’s built-in synthesizer plays the notes that the MIDI file tells it to. Unlike your Mac, an iPod doesn’t have a synthesizer, so it can’t play MIDI files. To prevent you from even trying to make this happen, iTunes simply tells you that the file format is incompatible with the iPod and refuses to copy it to your portable pal.

But you can play your MIDI tune on your iPod if you first convert it to an audio file. You have a couple of options for doing so. The easiest is to select the file in iTunes and, from the Advanced menu, choose the Convert Selection To command. iTunes will create an audio file using QuickTime’s synthesizer sounds and the encoder chosen in iTunes’ Importing preference pane (the AAC Encoder is chosen by default).

If you don’t care for the sounds QuickTime uses, you can drag the file into Apple’s GarageBand 2, where the various MIDI tracks open as separate Software Instrument tracks (see “Import Business”). Once in GarageBand 2, you can change the instrument sounds, as well as alter each track’s volume and panning (its position in the stereo field). So, for example, a bagpipe version of “Amazing Grace” can quickly become a rousing steel-drum one.

When you’re done, choose File: Export To iTunes to export the track as an AIFF file. In iTunes, you can leave it as is or convert it to MP3 or AAC before moving it to your iPod.

On the Go-Go-Go

How do I create multiple On-The-Go playlists on my iPod?

To create an On-The-Go playlist on your iPod, select a song, genre, artist, composer, or album, and then press and hold the iPod’s center button until you see the entry blink. Travel to the Playlists screen, select the On-The-Go entry at the bottom of the screen, and press the center button. Scroll to the bottom of the resulting On-The-Go screen, select Save Playlist, and press the center button again. Finally, in the Save screen that appears, choose Save Playlist and press the center button once more.

This saves the playlist as Playlist 1. The numbers in the names of subsequent playlists created in this fashion will rise in increments of one—Playlist 2, Playlist 3, Playlist 4, and so on. You’re now ready to create a new On-The-Go playlist and save it in the manner just described.

Contributing Editor CHRISTOPHER BREEN is the editor in chief of Playlistmag.com and the author of Secrets of the iPod and iTunes, fifth edition (Peachpit Press, 2005).
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- 1GB model holds up to 240 songs; 512MB model holds up to 120 songs
- Skip-free playback
- Provides up to 12 hours of playback per charge
- Weighs less than 1oz!
- High-speed USB 2.0 transfers
- iTunes® for Mac® & Windows

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NEW! iPod shuffle!
- 1GB model holds up to 240 songs; 512MB model holds up to 120 songs
- Skip-free playback
- Provides up to 12 hours of playback per charge
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FREE! FREE! FREE! FREE! FREE!
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June 2005 MACWORLD 93

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- 5.0 MegaPixels
- 3x Optical Zoom
- $299

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- 2.7 LCD Screen
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- 2.5 LCD Screen
- $429

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- 3.4 MegaPixels
- $259

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- 3x Optical Zoom
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SONY DSC-T5
- 3.1 MegaPixels
- $299

CANON DIGITAL REBEL XT
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- 12.2 MegaPixels
- 2.7 LCD Screen
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- XGA
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- $399

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- 37" LCD
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**Upgrade $749**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Upgrade Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indesign CS2</td>
<td>$169</td>
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<tr>
<td>Photoshop CS2</td>
<td>$149</td>
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<tr>
<td>GoLive CS2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Illustrator CS2</td>
<td>$169</td>
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<td>Acrobat 7.0</td>
<td>$149.99</td>
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**New Cinema Displays**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sony DSD-593 19” LCD</td>
<td>$409</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apple 23” LCD DVI Cinema HD Display</td>
<td>$1794</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apple 30” LCD DVI Cinema HD Display</td>
<td>$2994</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Apple Mac mini**

Everything you ever wanted nothing you don't need.

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- Faster PowerBooks!
- Scrolling TrackPad, Sudden Motion Sensor, Built-in AirPort Extreme, Enhanced Bluetooth 2.0
- 8x SuperDrive! 19th 1.67GHz PowerPC Processor!

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- Engineers for the Creative Class
- Up to Dual 2.5GHz!
- Liquid Cooled

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Enjoy Uncertainty. Load it up. Put it on. See where it takes you. Pocket size S12MB or 1GB Models.

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Up to 15,000 songs and Full-Color Album Cover Art

Models Starting at **$344**

### New Cinema Displays

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Price</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LaCie Electronblue 19” JV 1600X1200 76Hz</td>
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<td>Sony DSD-593 19” LCD</td>
<td>$409</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apple 20” LCD DVI Cinema Display</td>
<td>$991</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apple 30” LCD DVI Cinema HD Display</td>
<td>$1794</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apple 30” LCD DVI Cinema HD Display</td>
<td>$2994</td>
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</table>

### New Apple Mac OS X 10.3

**$1099**

### Digital Cameras and Printers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Price</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canon Powershot S50 Digital Camera</td>
<td>$369</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nikon D70 Digital SLR 18-70mm VR Nikkor Lens</td>
<td>$1096</td>
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<tr>
<td>Canon EOS 20D Digital SLR Camera</td>
<td>$1485</td>
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<td>Canon Powershot S410</td>
<td>$309.99</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nikon D70 Digital SLR 18-70mm Zoom-Nikkor Lens</td>
<td>$1096.95</td>
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### Panasonic

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<th>Model</th>
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<td>QS94121 Sony DSC-V2 Digital Camera</td>
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<td>QS94121 Sony DSC-V2 Digital Camera</td>
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<td>QS94121 Sony DSC-V2 Digital Camera</td>
<td>$369.99</td>
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### GVP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
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<tr>
<td>GVP Wireless Camera</td>
<td>$249</td>
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<tr>
<td>Epson Stylus Photo R800</td>
<td>$399</td>
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### Canon

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Model</th>
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<tr>
<td>Canon PowerShot S60 Digital Camera</td>
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<td>Canon PowerShot S50 Digital Camera</td>
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</table>

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<th><strong>FULL COLOR PRESENTATION FOLDERS</strong></th>
<th><strong>ENVELOPES OR LETTERHEAD</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1000 for $99</td>
<td>500 for $999</td>
<td>1000 for $399</td>
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<td>2000 for $169</td>
<td>1000 for $1160</td>
<td>2000 for $473</td>
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<tr>
<td>5000 for $325</td>
<td>2000 for $1548</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>FULL COLOR POSTCARDS</strong></th>
<th><strong>FULL COLOR 18 x 24 POSTERS</strong></th>
<th><strong>FULL COLOR 8.5x11 BROCHURES</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1000 for $149</td>
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<td>2500 for $294</td>
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<td>5000 for $537</td>
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<th>2&quot;x3.5&quot; 4/4 14 Pt. C2S UV Coated Both Sides</th>
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<td>1,000 $59</td>
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<td>2,500 $89</td>
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<td>5,000 $279</td>
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**Postcards**

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<tr>
<th>4&quot;x6&quot; 4/0 or 4/1 14 Pt. C2S UV Coated</th>
<th>4&quot;x6&quot; 4/4 14 Pt. C2S UV Coated Both Sides</th>
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<td>2,500 $189</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5,000 $279</td>
<td>5,000 $299</td>
</tr>
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**Brochures**

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<tr>
<th>8.5&quot;x11&quot; 4/4 100# Gloss Book</th>
<th>11&quot;x17&quot; folded to 8.5x11&quot; 4/4 100# Gloss Book</th>
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<td>1,000 $379</td>
<td>1,000 $599</td>
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<td>2,500 $399</td>
<td>2,500 $699</td>
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<tr>
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<th>Postcard</th>
<th>8.5x11 Sales Sheet</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1000</td>
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<tr>
<td>$49.00</td>
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<td>4/4 10pt Cardstock w/ UV</td>
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Remember what happened to Greg Brady (www.tikimac.com)?—JAMES GALBRAITH

**Disctop Pro**

Sure, my Mac can play DVDs and audio CDs, but when I insert a disc in my optical drive, all I see on the desktop are generic icons. So I tried Disctop Pro, a free preference pane that displays the disc on my desktop as if I were peering into the drive. With Disctop Pro, you not only see the disc with cover art (thank you, Amazon.com)—when you insert or eject a disc, you see it move onto or off of the screen from a specific position, depending on which Mac model you have. You can even control playback from the icon and set the icon's opacity so it doesn't obscure too much of your lovely OS X desktop (www.mekentosj.com).—JONATHAN SEFF

**LaunchBar 4**

If you ask me, every Mac user should use Objective Development's $20 LaunchBar, a productivity-enhancing utility. I mean, why would you not want to type the first three letters of a song, press enter, and listen to it immediately? Why drill down four folder levels to get to a document when you could type two letters of the file name and press an arrow key? And the latest version has a much more OS X-like configuration pane, lets you scan more parts of your system, and lets you specify the types of information you want to search for—by typing the abbreviation ea for e-mail addresses or it for iTunes, for example (www.obdev.at).—JENNIFER BERGER

**WHAT'S HOT**

Brought to you by John Molz of the Crazy Apple Rumors Site (www.crazyapplerumors.com)

1. The Mac increased its share of the desktop market in the fourth quarter, and analysts predict that the trend will continue. Mac users vehemently denounce this report before saying, "Wait. Did they say increased?"

2. An iPod shuffle knockoff—the Super Shuffle—that was touted at a German trade show turns out to be a publicity stunt. Unamused, Apple chastises Germany—"No David Hasselhoff Special Edition iPod for you."

3. Apple settles a suit against a 22-year-old developer who posted Tiger online for download. Details are sketchy, but suffice it to say that someone's going to be writing "I will not post Tiger online for download" a lot.

4. PyMusique, which lets users download DRM-free songs from the iTunes Music Store, is released, killed by Apple, re-released, and then killed again. Fittingly, sources indicate the app's code name was Rasputin.

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If you enjoy tinkering—or if, like me, you enjoy fantasizing about tinkering—O'Reilly Media's new quarterly magazine Make offers all the geek inspiration you could possibly crave. The $15, 192-page premier issue features beautifully photographed step-by-step guides to many cool projects—including creating a kite rig for aerial photos, boosting the signal of your AirPort Express, building an inexpensive video-camera stabilizer, and constructing your own magnetic strip reader. If the term do it yourself excites you, this magazine will have you drooling (make.oreilly.com).—KELLY LUNSFORD
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