

The South Bay Mug

MACINTOSH

A Monthly Cupful For South Bay Apple Mac User Group Members, Jan. 2004

MACHinations

A personal view from Bob

One Cool Cat

Panther, Mac OS X, is out and it's pretty cool. Cool enough to spend \$130 is a personal decision. I've seen it for under \$100. It's faster

and there are many subtle improvements. So, what do I think are the best new features. Here's three of my favorites — with more of my biased opinions in upcoming months.

1. The Finder has been greatly enhanced by adding a resizable sidebar on the left listing all your drives and favorite folders. Even better, Open and Save dialog boxes now sport the new Finder look making it easy to move to a desired folder. Put aliases to your favorite places inside the "Favorites" folder. Click on it to go immediately to these locations. Also on the sidebar is "Network" that shows other computers you may be connected to.



2. Exposé. Cut the clutter. A lot has been written about this feature since it's brand new. Press a hot key (F9 is the default) or put the cursor in a designated corner of the screen and all open windows shrink to fill the desktop. Click on one window and it pops to the top. Click another hot key or corner and all windows pertaining to the active application fill the desktop with everything else grayed in the background. Click a

third key or corner and only the desktop is visible.

3. Preview. This application is a universal graphic viewer bundled with OS X. The new version lets you select, crop and export an image in many formats (except GIF). It opens PDF files and is much, much faster than Acrobat Reader. It has a great find feature that is fast and lists all instances of a search in a sidebar. Preview is now my default PDF viewer.

Beginners Q&A

Come at 6:30 for an informal session

Mac OS X: The Missing Manual, Panther Edition.

Now that Panther is here, the latest version of THE BOOK, published by O'Reilly, was not far behind.



Grab this baby. It's \$21 on Amazon (use our shopping link) or check Fry's. Its 750 pages are jam-packed with everything you need to know about Panther. If you're using Jaguar (10.2), there an edition for that. Both are written by David Pogue and his team in a humorous and non-intimidating style. Panther introduces oodles of

new features but the only help you're going to get from Apple is its undernourished Help system. The authors introduce everything in a very easy-to-understand manner that a new user or Windows refugee can appreciate, yet it has chapters for the geeks among us who are interested in OS X's UNIX core and Terminal. The book covers the operating system as well as over 50 programs and utilities included with Panther, and reveals many subtle tricks and shortcuts. There's a Dictionary for Windows and OS 9 users who wonder where their features went.

Unfortunately there are a few unresolved issues with Panther, e.g. Firewire, that hopefully will be ironed out. Check MacInTouch.com and MacFixIt.com.



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MIDI

eMedia Piano & Keyboard Method

Would you like to learn to play the piano? The program from eMedia <emediamusic.com> walks you through over 300 lessons, starting with the basic basics and progressing to a collection of tunes that use both hands. If you're serious you're going to eventually need a piano teacher, but



this is an inexpensive way to get started and save the cost of beginning lessons. The program sells for about \$50 street. You'll need an electronic keyboard that supports MIDI. eMedia also sells a Learn to Play Keyboard Bundle for \$200 that includes a high quality 49-key full-size touch-sensitive MIDI keyboard, a USB to MIDI adapter and A/C adapter. You can play each tune either through your Mac's speakers, or through a synthesizer at a tempo you choose. Play the music on your keyboard, either solo or along with the program, and it will give you note-by-note feedback on any mistakes. The program comes on a CD that also includes over 70 instructional videos, and a digital metronome.

What is MIDI?

MIDI = Musical Instrument Digital Interface. It lets you record, store and play back music in a very compact way. Instead of storing the audio waveform as you do with audio files, you store only the note value, its duration, loudness and instrument name. Each note is a MIDI "event" and together make up a sequence, a text file, that is the tune. It's similar to the old fashioned piano roll, where a hole in the paper corresponds to a primitive MIDI event. A typical 5 minute tune takes only 40-50 KB. You can download thousands of MIDI files from the internet and quickly amass a large music library.

Let's try it out. Download some MIDI files from one of many sites, e.g. <www.harmony-central.com>.

Select a MIDI file in the Finder (OS



X) and you'll see a little QuickTime player (above). Double-click the file to open it in QuickTime Player. You can also play it in iTunes, an advantage being that you can add many MIDI files to your iTunes collection for convenient access. A MIDI sequence is converted to audio sounds by QuickTime which has a large, built-in collection of musical instruments.

Don't get me wrong. MIDI is not going to make digital audio obsolete. It works well with keyboard instruments, piano, organ, harpsichord and percussion, but is not very good at capturing the nuances of string, wind and brass instruments, not to mention your favorite singer.

So far you haven't spent any money to play MIDI files. QuickTime does an great job at synthesizing the sounds, but if you want higher sound quality you need to invest in a software or hardware synthesizer.

Keyboard and Keyboard/Synths

Connect a piano keyboard controller to input MIDI to the computer, to record MIDI sequences and interact with programs like eMedia's Piano & Keyboard Method. Many MIDI keyboards have built-in hardware synthesizers. The figure right shows my keyboard/synth connected to a MIDI Interface, that in turn connects to a USB port. Some keyboards, including the one Apple sells with GarageBand have the MIDI Interface built in. (GarageBand keyboards are only controllers and use software synthesis to create sounds.)



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The Cool Cat continued

In the January newsletter I wrote about what I thought were the best new features of Panther, OS 10.3. The top three, in my opinion, were the new, enhanced Finder, Exposé, and the new, faster Preview.

Here's my picks for numbers 4 - 8.

4. Help now uses the Safari engine to display its pages. It's much faster than before. By the way, there's a new version of Safari 1.2 (Panther only) that allows interrupted downloads. If you're disconnected during a download you don't have to start over. click the refresh icon  and the download picks up from where you left off.



NUDCm452.sit
5.6 MB of ? — stopped



5. When you print you can select and print to your printer, save as PDF and now send as a fax. I've used the Fax feature a couple of times to send faxes. It's a nice addition, but pretty basic. You don't get much feedback. It uses fax numbers stored in Apple's Address Book or you can type in the number.

6. Zip. If you don't have StuffIt Deluxe but want to compress a file. Select the file, Control-click and select "Create Archive".

It quickly creates a Zip file, the compression format used on PCs, so you can send it to a PC friend without worry. Apple puts an Action Menu in each Finder window that lets you do the same as Control-click. Better yet, get a two-button mouse with a scroll wheel. Try it and you'll never go back. Even though Apple doesn't make a two-button mouse (shame on them) it is thoroughly supported in OS X.

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7. Labels are back. Control-click or use the Action Menu and select

a color label for a file or folder, just like the good old days.

8. TextEdit is more like MS Word. It opens basic Word documents (no tables or graphics) and saves in Word format. It supports tabs and indents, but no multiple columns. I haven't figured out how to change the page margins. And you can use OS X's built-in spell check.

With TextEdit, you can view HTML documents as they appear in a web browser, or you can view and edit the HTML code. By default, TextEdit displays HTML documents as you'd see them in a browser.



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Ya Gotta Have It

I'm always on the lookout for nifty free-ware programs. Here's a couple of OS X gems that I find invaluable.

wClock from <http://www.wolfware.com>.

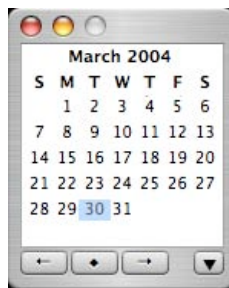
I miss not having the date in my menu bar. wClock puts it back in one of dozens of different formats, ranging from full

Tuesday, 30 March 2004 7:43:46 AM

to minimal.

Tue, 3/30 7:27

Better yet, click on the date/time and a floating calendar pops up. wClock requires Panther. It's cool.

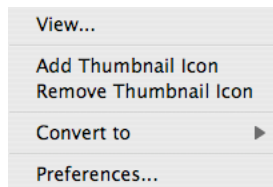


QuickImage CM from <http://www.pixtore.com/>

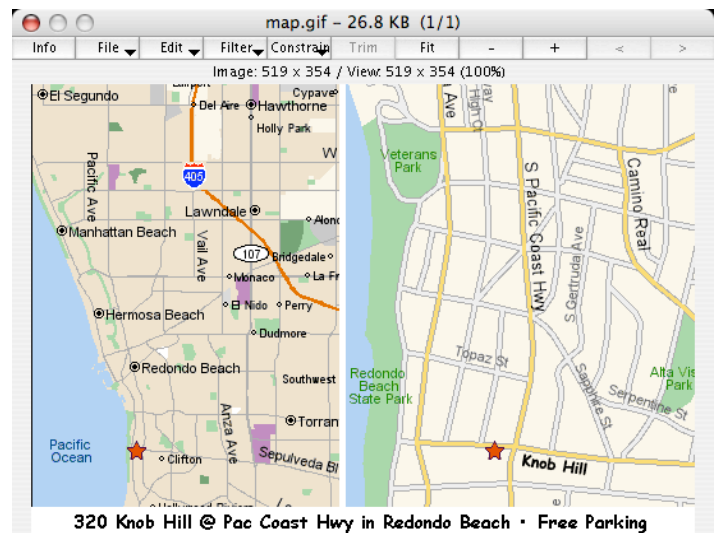
I've written before on contextual menus (CM). These are operations available when you control-click (or right button click) something. They are contextual since the options you get depend on the context — i.e. what you are clicking.

QuickImageCM 2.2 is a contextual menu module for Mac OS X that lets you view image files without launching any application. It also has many other features like trimming, scaling, filtering (effects), printing, adding/removing thumbnail icons and converting images to different format. I have several image editing applications, but sometimes I just want something quick and simple. QuickImage fills the bill.

Control-click an image file in the Finder. QuickImage appears in the list of CM items and you'll be presented with the options on the right. I usually select View, which opens the image for viewing and editing. See the example. It's not Photoshop, but you can do some simple editing and save as a JPEG, PNG, PSD



(Photoshop), TIFF, PICT and BMP file. I'm amazed how much is crammed into this little one-click CM.



An example of a gif file viewed with QuickImage

The people who brought you QuickImage have several other free contextual module offerings.

QuickPlayCM 1.0 plays movies and other multimedia files that are supported by QuickTime without launching any applications.

PhotoToolCM 1.0 manages JPEG photos images taken by a digital camera. Displays EXIF information (date, exposure, etc.), allows lossless rotation/flipping and batch renaming.

PDFViewCM 1.2 displays PDF file(s) quickly without launching any applications. It support multiple page PDF files and it has most of the popular features in other PDF viewer.



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Web-Authoring Software with or without the web

A web site is a collection (folder) of web pages and graphic files. To create one you need a way to build web pages. These are just text files and all you need is a text editor like SimpleText or TextEdit, but you have to know how to use HTML (Hypertext markup language) tags. It's not difficult, but takes some learning. Taco HTML Edit (free) and PageSpinner (\$30 shareware) are text editors that help you with the HTML code. This is an excellent way to learn HTML. View the finished pages with a web browser to see what they look like.

Tex-Edit, AppleWorks and MS Word can export their pages to HTML. This can save a lot of time but it's not perfect and you may need to clean up the pages in an HTML editor afterwards.

Many people only want a web site to post photos and captions for friends and relatives. iPhoto does this and will even upload them to your dot Mac web site. Galerie (free) is another program that works with iPhoto to create photo galleries and gives you a lot of control over the result. The genealogy program, Reunion (\$100), lets you export your family history as a web site.

If you want more than photo pages and don't want to learn HTML you need a WYSIWYG web-authoring program that works like a page layout program. In the good old days of OS 9 there were several moderately priced programs — Adobe PageMill, VisualPage and HomePage. These are gone and out of date, but you may still find them. Netscape Composer, part of the Netscape Communicator package, is a free WYSIWYG web-authoring program.

Freeway Express (\$89 download) from softpress.com is a full-featured web-authoring program for OS 9 and X to create, manage and upload a web site. Unlike other web-authoring programs it doesn't let you edit the HTML code and importing existing web pages is

not easy. If there's interest I may review it in the future. SoftPress gives SBAMUG members a 25% discount using the code AMUG-2003_4KkfpSe

Our SBAMUG web site is created and maintained using Adobe GoLive. Like Macromedia's DreamWeaver, it's a professional program (\$400) and takes a while to learn but has an enormous number of features.

You'll probably want an image editor to optimize your graphics for the web — adequate quality and small file size for fast loading. iPhoto can help, but there are much better programs, such as GraphicConverter (\$30), PhotoShop or PhotoShop Elements.

Now What? Once you've created your web site you need a place to park it (a server) and a way to get it there so the world can find and see it. If you have a dot Mac account, Apple makes it easy using iPhoto or iDisk. Otherwise you have to find or buy space on a server. Many Internet providers give their members free space. geocities.com and tripod.com offer free web space, web page creation tools and uploading, although with limitations and ads unless you pay for a premium account. SBAMUG gives it's members free space.

Some web-authoring programs have built-in FTP (file transfer protocol) capability that lets you upload the files to the server. Otherwise you may need an FTP program like Fetch, Interarchy or Captain FTP.

No Web Space? You don't have to have web space or put your web site on the Internet to enjoy it. E-mail the site to friends, PC or Mac, or put it on a CD. They can view it with their web browser. Many help files, including Apple's Help, are really web sites on a disk.

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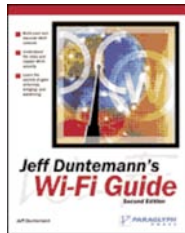
MACHinations

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Anybody Out There?

I'm very jazzed about networking. Apple pioneered it on the personal computer and it is reaching new heights. You can network with wires, wirelessly and over the Internet. I feel a bit self-conscious writing about it since I'm still learning but found the following book to be very useful.

If you are serious about networking, get Jeff Duntemann's book, "Wi-Fi Guide, Second Edition", published by Paraglyph Press and distributed by O'Reilly books, www.oreilly.com. I got it to learn more about wireless networking (Wi-Fi) but found that it gives a good understanding of networking in general. His book (nearly 500 pages) treats Wi-Fi in depth. Networking is a complicated subject with it's own jargon but Jeff makes it quite comprehensible. It's not a dummies book, but he does a good job in introducing the material so that beginners can understand it and then leads into more advanced areas — Wi-Fi communities, security, powerful antennas and wardriving. The only negative for Mac users is that his discussion of hardware and software is limited to Windows (and a bit of Linux) with no mention of Apple-specific hardware.



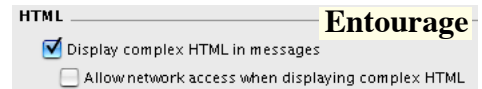
Email Spies When you're reading your email do you realize that someone may be looking over your shoulder to see what you're doing? When email only contained text you were safe, but with HTML (formatted) mail the sender may include a secret "web beacon" in the message that notifies them when you've read it, your location, your IP address and software you're using.. The sender does this by embedding a hidden, remote image in the message. It may be innocent — to send a return receipt — but it also lets spammers know "you're home" and confirms your email address. An effective way to thwart it is to read your messages off-

Beginners Q&A

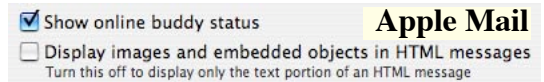
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line — not always easy. The sender can't gather information if you're not connected. Or use a non-HTML mail reader like Claris Emailer or MailSmith.

Some email programs let you block remote access. In Entourage you can uncheck a preference box that allows network access. Apple Mail has something similar, but as I don't use Apple Mail I don't know much about it.

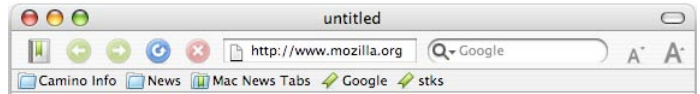


Eudora has something similar. Experiment!



To screen your email messages before downloading to your computer, get the \$20 shareware program, Mail Siphon from www.maliasoft.com. Try it for free. It's a mail program that lets you inspect both headers and content and delete mail and/or attachments directly from the server so they never reach your computer.

Safari and Camino 0.8b I love the Safari browser but a new version of Camino has just appeared and it looks, feels and acts very much like Safari, down to the Google search box. See the toolbar below. A nice



feature is the way it handles tables in a web site. If you copy a table in Safari and paste it into a text editor or spreadsheet it's no longer a table. Copy it from Camino and paste and it's a tab-delimited table, the way you'd expect. Camino is free and you can get it at www.mozilla.org. It's a beta version and still under development so there are some bugs and quirks. Still, use it when you want to capture table data.



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Cocoa. It's hot.

Two classes of applications in OS X are "Carbon" and "Cocoa". Although you can also open older, OS 9 applications in "Classic", this is NOT the future. With any new operating system, like OS X, you must make changes gradually or developers and users are not going to tag along. Carbon programs are basically OS 9 programs that have been tweaked to work under OS X but still run under OS 9. This was an easy, early path for developers with an investment in OS 9 software, but the future lies with Cocoa.

Cocoa programs are developed from scratch for OS X. They take advantage of many of its features and I'm told are easier to write. Mail, Safari, TextEdit, iCal, and most new software are written in Cocoa.

Cocoa programs can use the system-wide spell checker and the font panel and take advantage of the Services menu. What the heck is that? For a long time I wondered what the Services menu (under the application name) was good for. In Carbon apps it's grayed out but in Cocoa it opens up a new world.

My favorite service lets me save content from web pages. In Safari, select some content that you'd like to save. Open Safari>Services>TextEdit>New Window containing Selection. TextEdit will open and the selection is pasted in, including graphics and links. Save it to your disk. The links are hot. Click on a link and Safari opens the page. This is a great way to save all or part of a web page. You can also drag or copy additional content from Safari into the document.

TextEdit lets you open and save simple Word documents and you can view HTML documents as they appear in a web browser.

Spam. I hate it, it's getting worse, and it's a frequent complaint. Here how I fight it.

- Only give your email address to trusted friends.
- Set up a disposable, forwarding email addresses or get a free yahoo email account for others.
- Don't reply to a spammer or ask to get off their list.
- Use Spam Siphon or other programs to screen headers and delete spam before downloading.
- If you can, set your Mail preferences to not allow network access when displaying complex HTML mail. As an alternative, don't read mail while on-line so you won't accidentally reply to the spammers. This may be a problem for users who are always connected.
- Set up a rule to color mail headers from senders who are NOT in your address book. Then be suspicious of colored mail.
- Spammers are getting sophisticated and are devising ways to out fox spam filters and appear to be innocent. Be suspicious of mail with simplistic subjects and from unknown senders.
From: Sally Rodgers
twughja@msn.com
Landon Merrill
Robert
Re: Your Order.
Halloween
<no subject>
infantrymen
Your mor[t]g@ge
- If there's no subject, it's gobbledygook or from a foreign or strange address I delete it. I'm very suspicious of mail whose size is about 41K since these usually have a virus attachment.
- To make sure your email is recognizable, use an identifiable name. AKA345@aol.com looks too suspicious. Make the subject meaningful and personal, like "See you for lunch at Cocos". Fortunately our mail list messages all have [SBAMUG] in the subject.
- When you email a group, put the email addresses in the bcc: box so they don't show.

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The Big Mix

Apple is very big in audio, but their software is geared to the professional and is expensive. I've been looking for inexpensive audio programs that work in OS X. The champ, of course, is iTunes but, as good as it is, it doesn't do everything.

Aladdin Software, www.aladdinsys.com, sells nine programs in a bundle, called "The Big Mix". It's \$60, well under the cost of the programs purchased separately. All work in OS X and a few in OS 9. With any bundle only a few may be of interest to you. Still, a couple of useful ones can justify the price. I've organized them in order of my personal interest.

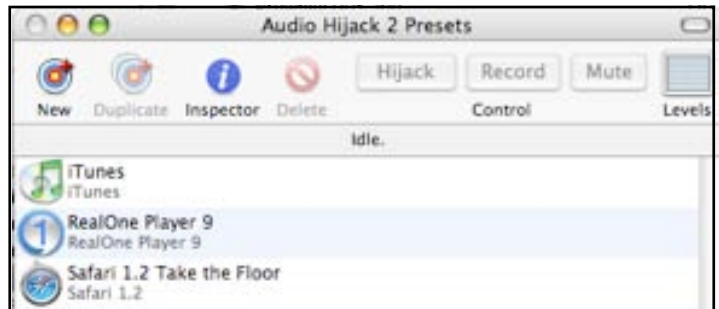
- Spark™ LE
- Audio Hijack 2™
- Disco™
- iTunes Publisher™
- MP3 Rage™
- Doggiebox™
- Making More Music™
- GrooveMaker® 2.5 LE
- iPodRip™



Spark LE. Spark LE is a full-fledged audio recording and editing program with an expandable architecture that supports plug-in tools, many of which are included. It has more flexibility and features than entry-level programs like Coaster, Spin Doctor, GarageBand and Audacity, but it takes longer to learn. The documentation, a 60 page PDF file, seems a bit sparse. Spark LE is no longer sold separately, so the Big Mix is the only way I know to get it.

Audio Hijack let's you save audio from almost any audio application. If you are listening to an Internet radio program you can save it to disk, import it into iTunes and convert it to MP3. Configure an Audio Hijack preset for each application, as shown below. Click Hijack to launch a preset, open the application and go to a URL, if one is referenced. Hijacking a selected application insures against accidentally

recording sounds generated by the system or other programs that are running.



Disco is designed for the DJ who wants to mix different audio sources. It has a mixer, two players, music library and playlist editor in a single window. I'm not a DJ but I use it to slow down and speed up playback of my MP3 files. It has a metronome to determine beats per minute.

iTunes Publisher sorts, formats, and exports playlists from iTunes into different formats: HTML (to put on a web page or share with friends), text or tabbed-text to import into a spreadsheet or make CD labels. It's also a free download.

MP3 Rage is a collection of 20 applications for managing your MP3 files and ID3 tags. ID3 tags are data embedded in MP3 files that contain a wealth of information — tune number, name, artist, composer, genre and album art. Unfortunately it doesn't handle AAC files, the format used by Apple's Music Store.

Doggiebox is a cool and easy-to-use program to create drum tracks.

Making More Music is an educational program to compose music by drawing notes with a mouse.

GrooveMaker remixes studio-quality loops to create dance tracks with it's massive library.

iPodRip copies tracks from your iPod to your iTunes library.



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You've Got Mail

I changed my Internet Service Provider (ISP) last month. I'll bet few people know since none of my e-mail addresses changed. That's because I use aliases. Send an e-mail to me@sbamug.com and it gets forwarded to my ISP. If I change ISPs I keep the address but change where it's forwarded. I have many addresses. If I start getting a lot of spam on one, I can dump it. There are several ways to get addresses:

- SBAMUG members can get an e-mail account and address with mail forwarding.
- Many alumni and professional groups offer e-mail forwarding.
- Get a .Mac account (\$100/yr.)
- Register a domain name (\$\$)
- Open a premium (\$\$) Yahoo or Hotmail account

Use different addresses for different purposes — one for SBAMUG business, one for your web site, one for friends and some disposable ones for Internet commerce. When a message comes in, the address that's used may tell you how they know you.

POP Mail When you get an Internet account you usually get a POP (post office protocol) mailbox on the ISP's server where your mail is stored until you retrieve it with a mail program, e.g. Apple's "Mail".

Web Mail Your ISP may also provide a way to access your mail using a web browser. I call this Web mail. It's handy when you want to retrieve mail at a friend's house or an Internet cafe in Costa Rica. Besides your ISP there are other places to get and use a web mail account.

- The SBAMUG mail server
http://www.sbamug.com:9001/
- Yahoo, Hotmail and Gmail — free but supported by advertising
- .Mac

The free ones may offer additional features, such as mail forwarding, for a fee.

Web mail involves more steps than POP mail, particularly if you have a lot of mail. You have to log in with your name and

password and you can only read and compose mail online. Be sure to log out when you're done so no one else can access your account. Web mail is slower and you can often see only a few message headers at a time. When you check mail you'll get a list of headers — From, Subject, Date — and, on the spot, you can delete spam and mail with large, unwanted attachments. Many of the services use a spam filter to automatically divert suspicious mail to a spam folder.

Other uses for web mail Travelers can use it to store important documents, such as a passport. Scan it, compose a message, attach the scanned file and put it in the web mail "Draft" folder. If I'm in Tunisia and my passport is stolen I can probably find a public computer, log into my account and print the attachment.

I recently got a Google Gmail account (still a beta project) with some unique features. Google gives each account 1 GB of storage that can be searched using their famous search engine. Their motto is, "Don't delete it, just archive it". It's paid for it with advertising and a controversial feature is that their robots comb your mail messages and display advertising based on content. If you have a lot of mail about your trip to Paris, you're likely to see ads from travel services. (In response to Google's huge storage, Yahoo has recently increased their mail storage to 100 MB.)

There are mail services other than those I mentioned here. Take a look around.

Welcome to sbamug.com, please log in below.:

Username:

Password:

[Mailing Lists](#)
[Directory](#)

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You've got Photos

With film cameras life is easy. Buy film, take pictures and give the film to a photofinisher. That's it. With digital cameras there are many more options. You're back from the big trip with a bunch of digital photos. What's next?

- Connect the camera to a TV for a quick view. Many cameras support this and supply a cable.
- Some printers can print directly from a camera.
- Connect to your Mac with a cable or a memory card reader and import the photos with:
 - iPhoto (OS X)
 - Apple's Image Capture (OS X), or
 - Drag and drop with the Finder

Once they're in your Mac you have many choices. Make prints, view as a slide show, email them, create a web site on the Internet or on a CD, burn a DVD slide show that works on a DVD player or create a Keynote, AppleWorks or PowerPoint presentation.

First you'll probably want to discard the bad shots and edit the good one. If you use OS X and have Apple's iLife software suite (free with new Macs) you have iPhoto, the best photo software on the planet.

iPhoto has many features and options in one program



— importing, editing, cataloging, archiving, viewing, printing, web site creation and uploading and DVD burning (with iDVD). After importing, delete duplicates and the bad ones, crop and edit the good ones and arrange them into albums. Editing in iPhoto is fast and easy, but basic. You can augment it with an image editor such as GraphicConverter (\$30) or Photoshop Elements. When you're happy, share them:

- Print, send them to a photo service to get prints or albums or post them on the Internet with a photo service for relatives to see and order. Glen uses www.clubphoto.com, but there are many others.
- Display as a slide show on your Mac.

- Create a web site. Post it directly to your iDisk (dot Mac members), or export as a web site or QuickTime movie to any web site.
- Create a DVD if you have a burner and iDVD.

Galerie is my favorite (free) program for creating a photo web site. It has more features than iPhoto and works directly with iPhoto or photos on your hard disk. You don't have to know anything about HTML. It comes with dozens of attractive templates and does the whole job. It creates a web site (in a folder) that is a slide show with an index page and thumbnails. Your ISP probably gives you some web space where you can put a photo site. Galerie has built-in file transfer (FTP) capability, or with a dot mac account, simply drag the folder into the Site folder on your iDisk. You can also burn the site to a CD and give it to friends. Go to: <http://homepage.mac.com/sbamug/> to see a simple web site I posted using iPhoto and Galerie.

Switch iPhoto Libraries You can have more than one iPhoto library on your Mac and switch them using the free "iPhoto Library Manager" or "iPhoto Buddy".

iMovie With a little more work you can bring photos into iMovie. This give you much more flexibility and can vary the time and transitions for each photo and add text and a voice commentary along with one or more music selections. Export it to a digital video camera and thence to a VHS tape, or burn a DVD, or export as a Quicktime movie.

Keynote, AppleWorks or PowerPoint If you want to get fancy you can create a presentation. You need the program and a computer to view it, but you can export it as a PDF or QuickTime file for those not having the program.

The Mac is a wonderful multimedia computer and with the iLife software you've got everything you could want, except there's no manual — but "iLife '04: The Missing Manual" has just been released by O'Reilly publications. See my review on another page.



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The South Bay Mug

MACINTOSH

A Monthly Cupful For South Bay Apple Mac User Group Members, Nov. 2004

MACHinations

A personal view from Bob

Search Me!

I've been having fun this month checking out some new Internet toys. We all know and love Google, but there are other ways to search.

Cluster by: Topics

- MUG (246)
- ☐ Coffee (54)
- ☐ User Group (30)
- ☑ Macintosh User (12)
- Software (8)
- Conference (3)
- McIDAS (2)
- Analytical, Computing (2)
- Other Topics (5)
- ☐ Photo (31)
- ☐ Search (10)
- ☐ Mug Shots (11)
- ☐ Pottery (9)
- ☐ Beer (10)
- ☐ Tea, Cup (8)
- ☐ Promotional (14)
- ☐ Reviews (7)
- [More...](#)

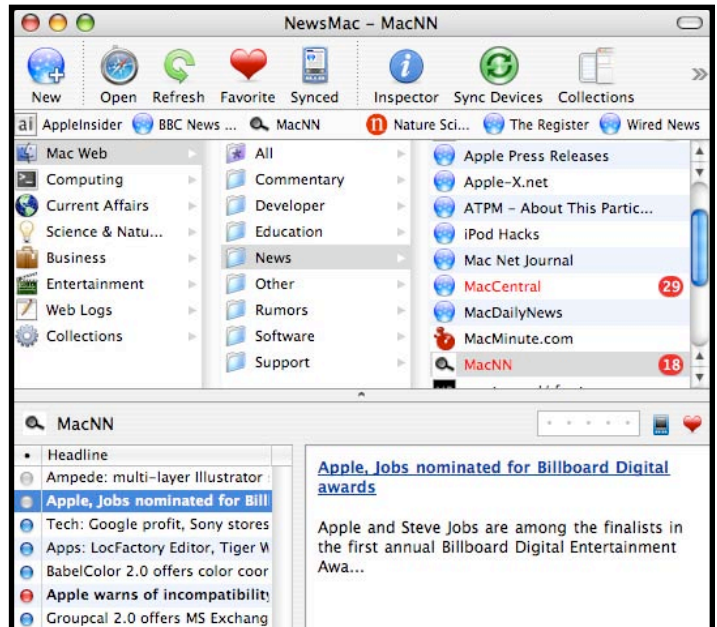
Clusty, at www.clusty.com, groups search results into "clusters," that appear on the left-hand side of the search results page. The idea is that, by grouping similar results, Clusty helps you get more out of a search and may allow you to find a search result that would be buried in a long list on Google.


I did a search on MUG, admittedly a very general topic. It found over a million results and displayed the top 246 in a set of folders in the left hand column. Expanding the User Group folder reveals more topics and folders. Click a topic and the results appear in the right hand pane. Entries have a spyglass icon in the search result that opens a small, scrollable window, right in the search page, that shows a page preview. It's very cool.

My Yahoo Search: mysearch.yahoo.com from Yahoo looks a lot like Google, but lets you personalize your searches. You can save and sort sites as a collection to form the basis of future searches, add notes, share search results and sites with others and block sites you don't want to see. You can use My Yahoo to search, but to use the personal features of My Yahoo Search, you must have a free Yahoo membership.

Really Simple Syndication (RSS)

Web sites supporting RSS present headlines and some of content in a way that can be viewed by an RSS reader. There are many readers, but one I really like is the free (donation-ware) NewsMac 3.1.



The beauty of RSS is that you don't have to open each page to see the headlines and they can be updated manually or automatically at specified intervals. You can quickly browse many web sites and scan the headlines to see what interests you. Home in on those of interest without the clutter of others. To see if a web site supports RSS look for a little tag like . It's a hot link to the RSS address.

In NewsMac the upper pane shows a hierarchical grouping of RSS sites. NewsMac comes with a load of RSS sites to which you can add your own. Put your favorites on top. Select a site and the headlines appear in the lower left. Select a headline and the content shows at the right. Some content is very brief and some can be very wordy. Click on the link above the content to open the full page in your browser. You can specify a set of keywords and any headline containing them is preceded by a red dot. The dot turns grey when it's been read.



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From old Mac to new

You just got a new Mac, but have a lifetime collection of files on your old computer. How do you get them onto your new machine? This is a difficult question since it depends on the computer models you have and how comfortable you are digging around inside.

Old Macs prior to the G-series, iMacs and beige G-3 Macs, generally had SCSI, serial and Ethernet ports (connectors). Depending on the model they may use SCSI and/or IDE drives, along with a floppy disk drive. When Apple introduced the G-series 6-7 years ago they changed many of the ports. New Macs have FireWire, USB and Ethernet ports and use IDE hard drives. The picture has gotten even more complicated with the new G-5 models that use serial IDE drives instead of the older parallel drives. The PCI slot has also changed, precluding the use of older cards. Run "Apple System Profiler" to see what you have.

Here's some transfer methods that may or may not work.

- Floppy disk — Painfully slow.
- Zip disk or flash drive — Faster than floppies.
- Transfer via iDisk or online server. It's slow even with broadband Internet.
- Transfer via Ethernet — a good choice with older Macs, although a little slow with older Ethernet.
- Burn a CD.
- Use FireWire target mode — Very fast.
- Put the old IDE drive into the new computer
- Put the old IDE drive into a FireWire enclosure

To use floppy disks you need to buy or borrow a USB floppy drive for the new Mac. It's a bit faster if you have Zip drive(s) for both computers. It's faster still to use a flash drive if both computers have USB ports or you can install a USB card in the old Mac.

All, except very old Macs, have Ethernet, or can take a card. Network them using an Ethernet cable (\$3-5) and turn on file sharing to transfer files. If your Macs

are connected to an Internet router (cable or DSL) this acts as a hub or switch and you're already networked. Without a hub or switch you may need to use a crossover cable, although newer Macs have auto-sensing that adapts to either cable.

Record your data on CDs if you have, or can borrow, a CD burner that works on the old Mac. This is a great way to archive your old data and transfer it.

On newer computers with FireWire ports you can put the new Mac into "FireWire target mode" by holding the T key while starting up. You'll know you're there when you see a bouncing FireWire icon on the screen. Start up the old computer in the normal way and connect the two with a FireWire cable (\$5-10). The new Mac's drive will show up on the desktop of the old Mac. You can open it and drag files between the two. It's VERY fast. If your old computer doesn't have FireWire but has a PCI card slot and runs OS 9 or X you can install a FireWire card (\$10-50).

If the old computer has an IDE drive and you're willing to get under the hood you may be able to remove it, although it's very difficult and not advised to get into an old iMac, eMac or laptop. If the new computer accommodates two drives you can install the old one inside (except a G-5). If not, buy a FireWire enclosure (\$30-50), install the old drive in it and connect it to the FireWire port. An external FireWire drive makes a nice backup storage system.

If the old computer has a SCSI drive you're probably out of luck, although you might be able to pick up a SCSI card that will work with the new computer. With it and a SCSI cable, you can even connect the two computers in a "SCSI target mode", although I've not tried it so I can't comment.

I've covered a lot of options without much detail. Hopefully this will get you thinking about what may work in your particular situation.



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