

South Bay Apple MUG Macintosh

May 2017

A Monthly CUPFUL for South Bay Apple Mac User Group Members

26 Mac Apps You Didn't Know You Had, by AllisterJenks

Often when Allison puts out a call for material for the show, I'll take a look at my installed Mac apps via Launchpad to see if there's anything relatively new that's worth a review. Faced with the prospect of sourcing an entire show, I did the same thing, but what I noticed was not something new. In fact, it's a whole lot of somethings and they're all quite old.

There's a folder on the default Launchpad configuration called "Other" which contains all 17 applications from the Utility folder that lives inside your Applications folder, plus 9 other applications that aren't usually featured in Apple promotional materials.

I thought it might be useful to listeners if I quickly ran through what's in there and maybe you'll discover something useful you didn't know you had.

First up, I'll cover those applications that reside in the Utilities folder. We've come across some of these before, but I'm sure there will be at least one you didn't know about.

Activity Monitor can be useful if you want to figure out what's happening on your Mac. In the days of spinning hard drives (OK, that's still today for some) you'd sometimes hear your drive crunching away constantly and notice your system performance degrade. Looking in Activity Monitor can tell you what applications are reading from and writing to the drive. You can also see what's using up your CPU cycles, your memory, your network bandwidth, and gauge which apps are consuming the most energy and therefore battery life if you are using a laptop.

Airport Utility is the tool you need to set up your Apple AirPort router or Time Capsule device. Of course you'll be familiar with this because you're always installing updates when those blinking orange lights appear, aren't you?

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April 26 Meeting Affinity Photo (by Allison Sheridan via Screencastsonline)

Last November, Allison introduced us to Affinity Photo, a terrific alternative to Photoshop. She focused on the wide range of Apple Photo Extensions provided as part of Affinity Photo. In this second episode, she'll take a look at using Affinity Photo as a standalone application. Don't miss the meeting! See page 2 for details.

Chatroom

You can block a caller on your iPhone by selecting a caller in "recents", then selecting the "i" symbol, then scrolling down to "block this caller", and finally confirming your decision. To add further blocking capability, there are apps that identify callers as scammy and optionally block them automatically. These apps can also provide caller id lookup. Some of these apps are free, others require a one-time payment or a subscription. With one or more apps with callblocking or Caller ID lookup features installed, you can selectively turn them on and off via Settings > Phone > Call Blocking & Identification. Numbers in your Contacts list will not be blocked.

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Meetings: Lomita Veteran's Hall, 1865 Lomita Blvd, Lomita Mail: PO Box 432, Redondo Beach, CA 90277-0432

Phone: (310) 644-3315 Email: info@sbamug.com

Welcome to the SBAMUG South Bay Apple Mac User Group

Members, friends and colleagues are invited to attend our monthly meetings (usually the last Wed of the month). The \$35 annual membership dues entitle you to receive this monthly newsletter by mail or online, plus many more benefits (page 8). To become a member or get more info please check our websiite.



SBAMUG Meeting Format:

6:30—7:30 p.m. Questions & Answers and Sharing: *Everyone* is welcome, beginners encouraged

7:30—7:50 p.m. 'iSocial' – shoot the Mac breeze with others over a cookie*

7:50—8:00 p.m. Announcements

8:00-9:00 p.m Program

*Refreshments provided; donations appreciated! Submit suggestions for topics or speakers, or articles, ideas & original artwork for this newsletter to <u>pimyerz@gmail.com</u> by the last Wednesday of each month. Articles may be edited to fit space.

Officers & Volunteers:

President: Kent McDonald VP: open Secretary: Wayne Inman Treasurer: CW Mitchell Directors at Large: Dave Nathanson, Margaret Wehbi, Arnold Silver, George Wilde, Joan King, Clarence Baisdon, Pete Myers PD Disk Editor: Jim Pernal Membership: CW Mitchell Member Development: Pete Myers Programming: Kent McDonald Greeter: open Server Director: Dave Nathanson Newsletter: Pete Myers, Bill Berks USPS Liaison: CW Mitchell Refreshments: Arnold Silver/member contributions

SBAMUG Monthly Calendar

April 26: Affinity Photo, part 2 May 31: TBD

Other Meetings:

- •1st Wed each month SBAMUG Core Group, 7:30 pm. Join Google+ SBAMUG community, or email: info@sbamug.com.
- 2nd Sat. each month SMOG, 9AM in Costa Mesa, ocmug.org
- •Last Sat. each month Northrop Grumman-Ham Radio & Computer Swap Meet, 7--11:30 a.m. Meet at SE corner of Marine/Aviation Blvd, Redondo Beach
- Los Angeles Portable Users Group: Mac OS X, iPhone, iPod, MacBook, etc., .lapug.org/
- •Find more: http://www.apple.com/usergroups/

Membership Report – 100 members!

Please wear membership card as your name tag - you may notice your first name is in larger letters on your card - so it can be used as a name tag at the meetings.:) Welcome New Members:

Renewals: Harry Squires, Paul Curry, Margaret Wehbi, Milan Korach, Paul Walesky, Tim Desmond, Gundula Schneider, Carol & Norm Simoes, Steven Barryte, George Kiefer, Herbert Epp.

If your name is not spelled right or your expiration date is wrong, contact cwmitchell@sbamug.com for correction. Or contact CW for everything membership, dues and benefits. Please watch for your renewal letter, then sign and date it and return it with \$35 check (in enclosed self-addressed envelope) or bring letter with payment to meeting.

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SBAMUG April 2017 Shareware

This is the April shareware article. Six items this month. Two are from the Mac App store. The other four I have provided links to download and/or purchase.

Browser ChooserX If you have multiple Internet browsers on your Mac, this app will let you choose which browser will launch when you click on a link outside of a browser. You must choose Browser Chooser X as your default browser. OS X 10.10+ Free <u>https://bdevapps.com/</u> 2016/11/29/browser-chooserx/

FinCalc 2.0.1 This freeware is a simple to use calculator for interest and loans. OSX 10.12 required. At the Mac App store.

Garden Planner 3.5.3 Garden and landscape design tool. OS X 10.6+ \$34.00 http://smallblueprinter.com/garden/

GrandPerspective 1.9.0 Utility to see what is taking up space on your hard drive. The bigger the file size, the larger the displayed tile is. Free OSX 10.9+ <u>http://</u> grandperspectiv.sourceforge.net

Path Finder 7.4.6: Finder alternative. Sync folders. Dual Windows. \$39.95 OSX 10.10+ https://cocoatech.com

Trail Runner Mini 3.5 Route planning for hiking, biking etc. Elevations, calories burned, etc. Maps with street names. OS X 10.10+ Free, but requires in-app subscription after a few days. \$24.99/ year. At the Mac App store.

See you at the April meeting. No physical PD CD will be made for it has been discontinued. However I will bring the box of older CD's (2016 and earlier) to the meeting for the next few months.

Jim Pernal PD Editor

Dumping a Bad App? Tips for a Painless Breakup, Brian X Chen

EVERYONE is familiar with this scenario: An app you once loved no longer brings the same joy. It's gotten buggy over time, or an update transformed it to the point it became unusable.

Chances are you thought about calling it quits. But after years of sharing your personal data with this app, you probably gave up and stayed in this stale relationship. You put up with the productivity-killing bugs and odd design changes because moving to a new, potentially better app felt harder than sticking with the bad one.

Take Evernote, the note-taking app. After nearly a decade attracting millions of users, the company last year severely restricted free use of its software while raising prices for its plans by as much as 40 percent. This month, Evernote also released a redesign for its mobile app, which users <u>complained</u> was bloated with unnecessary features that have made note taking too complex.

Even so, people have stuck with Evernote partly because taking their notes elsewhere is hardly easy. "We understand those kind of changes don't make everyone happy," said Greg Chiemingo, an Evernote spokesman. "In fact, we've seen continued growth of paying customers over the last two years."

People deserve better than this. Every day you stay with a bad app is time you could be spending with a superior product that will make life better. Here are my tips, based on interviews and personal experience, for a clean break.

No app is perfect, but you have to draw the line somewhere. The problem is, you may be in such a rut that you can't recognize the warning signs. An obvious one is when an app stops working reliably in a way that affects your life. For instance, I called it quits on <u>Apple</u>'s Calendar app when I was planning a dinner with friends last month and the software sent a calendar invite in Greenwich Mean Time rather than Pacific Standard Time. As a result, one person thought we were meeting on Saturday instead of Friday and didn't show up. (It wasn't the first time this happened, either.)

Brian Fitzpatrick, a former manager at Google who led a team that developed tools to help people move their data to and from Google, said he dumps an app when it has stopped improving. "It's still functioning, but you don't see any changes in it for a very long time," he said. "It's sort of a zombie app, I would call it at that point."

Another sign that it's time to move on is when you have nobody to talk to. Many popular apps for tasks like note taking, photo management and word processing are connected to social networks, or people you can share data with. If an app's audience is a ghost town — like <u>Yahoo</u>'s photosharing app, Flickr, which sank in popularity after mobile photo-sharing services like Instagram emerged — then it's probably time to leave.

Brian Chen goes on to discuss "getting out" and "finding a new app". Read the full article at <u>https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/25/</u> technology/personaltech/dumping-a-bad-app-tips-for-a-painlessbreakup.html

26 Apps, from page 1

Audio MIDI Setup is something most people won't ever need, but has some of the more powerful options of macOS audio for you to fiddle with. It has three sections: Audio, MIDI, and Network. The Audio window is most useful as here you can create aggregate audio devices that combine audio from more than one physical device into a single one - useful for apps like GarageBand which insist on using only a single device. There are also fine grained controls of audio quality, volume and channel balance. The MIDI window will be useful for those who have MIDI devices attached. I'm actually not sure what the Network window does - presumably there are such things as network audio devices.

Bluetooth File Exchange is probably of limited use today. With it you can send any file to another device over Bluetooth. I guess it could be useful for older style feature phones, but I'm struggling to see the utility of sending a file to my Magic Mouse.

Boot Camp Assistant is where you go if you want to set up a dual boot copy of Windows on your Mac. It's a wizard-style app which will take you through all the necessary steps.

ColorSync Utility is a collection of tools for managing colour profiles on your Mac. For the most part these are best left alone, but for some professions, such as print design, color management is vital. For the layperson, there are a few interesting aspects. You can click on each installed color profile and see a 3D model of the colour space it covers, and there's a "color calculator" which you can use to convert, for example, RGB values to HSV values.

Console is the tool for looking at the numerous log files that reside on your Mac. If you're having serious or recurring problems with your Mac and don't quite know what to blame, having a look in Console can sometimes give you a clue. Although, be prepared for a LOT of gibberish to go flying by!

Digital Color Meter is a simple but useful tool if you're trying to use colors in your documents or designs that are present in other places. It provides a small window that magnifies the screen area under your mouse pointer and shows you the color values of either the single pixel or averaged across a larger square.

Disk Utility is one many will have used to reformat a hard drive or SSD, or figure out why you're getting errors about them and trying to fix them.

Grab is a screen capture utility. It's of limited use because there are keyboard shortcuts to do most of what it offers, however you can also do a full screen grab after a delay of 10 seconds. This can be useful when you want to capture transient items on the screen like a drag in progress.

Grapher is a real gem but will only appeal to some people. It is a simple graph plotter which will plot an equation in 2D or 3D space. In the case of 3D you can use your mouse to rotate the graph.

Keychain Access gives you a view into all those secure items that macOS is keeping for you. Any time you ask macOS or Safari to remember a password, this is where it goes. It's useful to open Keychain Access if you're having troubles with a particular login so you can see exactly what has been remembered. It's also the home of encryption and authentication certificates.

Migration Assistant is the process you normally run on a new Mac during setup, but if you elect to skip it when prompted, you can always relaunch it to get assistance migrating data from one Mac to another.

Script Editor is a text editor that specializes in editing scripts. While traditionally used only for AppleScript, since OS X Yosemite, it has also supported Javascript. All the Javascript skills you've developed through Bart & Allison's Programming By Stealth series can be used in automating your Mac workflows.

System Information is also available from the "System Report..." button in the "About this Mac" window. It is a detailed, hierarchical list of all of the hardware features of your Mac along with many software settings in a simple text-based output. If you want to know how fast your Thunderbolt and USB ports are, this will tell you. It'll tell you what RAM you have installed, your optical disc burning capabilities, your native display resolution, and even list every USB device connected to your Mac.

Terminal should be very familiar to you if you've been listening for any amount of time. The command line interface to macOS is not scary, now, is it? Now that Bart has tamed it for us in the Taming the Terminal series.

VoiceOver Utility gives you an enormous amount of control over the wonderful VoiceOver technology in macOS.

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Now I'll cover the additional applications that appear in the *Other* folder in Launchpad.

Automator is the very approachable way to automate stuff on your Mac. It uses a simple drag-and-drop interface to build workflows that can do anything from adding calendar items, to downloading images from a web page, to starting a Photos slideshow, and much, much more. This is worth having a play with.

Chess is a pretty decent 3D chess game. It doesn't have a lot of options, but you can play against your Mac or via Game Centre against anyone remotely.

DVD Player is the basic DVD player app that by default launches when you insert a commercial DVD video.

Font Book is the tool to manage all your installed fonts. You can see all of the font names, whether there are any issues (some third party fonts may be incomplete for example), delete them, install new ones, and see a sample of any font by selecting it.

Image Capture allows for importing images from cameras and scanners. This is very much an Apple minimum viable application and you're generally better off with with a dedicated photo management app, such as Photos, or the software that came with your scanner. But it does serve well as a backstop when you just need the basic functionality.

QuickTime is Apple's video player. It has limited support of different video types, but does have the incredibly useful ability to record your Mac screen, or a section of it, as a video. Again, it is a very limited application, but it has its uses.

Stickies is a digital implementation of Post-It[™] Notes. Try it!

TextEdit is one you've probably all come across at some point, perhaps in the early days of following the Programming By Stealth series. Once again, it is a basic app that is useful up to its limitations.

Time Machine is the app that lets you go through your Time Machine backups to locate and restore old files.

Hopefully you found something of interest in that list. All of the mentioned apps are installed on every Mac by default, so your wallet is not at risk.

Wireless Charging

Qi (the Chinese word for "energy flow", pronounced like the "chee" in "cheese") is the universal standard for wireless charging of battery operated devices like cell phones, iPods, MP3 players and cameras.

The wireless power transfer occurs through electromagnetic induction. With inductive charging the required power reaches the device not through a traditional cable but rather wirelessly through the use of electromagnetic fields. The principle is very simple: the Qi Sender (Charging Station) transfers the required energy to the Qi receiver (the mobile phone).

The biggest advantage of Qi Wireless Charging technology is that cell phones and chargers from different manufactures are compatible. The only requirement is that both parts – the sender and the receiver – fulfill the Qi specifications.

Therefore, every <u>Qi enabled device</u> is compatible with every Qi charging transmitter, regardless of the manufacturer or make of the device. Numerous cell phones can therefore be charged by any <u>Qi Charging Station</u>. This allows you to charge your various battery operated electronic devices with just <u>a single charging station</u>.

Wireless Charging isn't really a completely new product. Electric toothbrushes have been using the principles of inductive charging for many years. A test signal is sent by the sender to check for a capacity or resonance change, telling the Qi enabled charger base that a qi compatible phone is present. The sender modulates the charge and checks for compatibility to the Qi standard.

Once Qi compatibility and the energy requirement have been calculated, the charging through induction begins. During the charging the sender and receiver remain in contact and switch into standby mode as soon as the battery is fully charged. Another advantage of the Qi charger base is that it only activates and transfers energy when an enabled device requiring charging is placed upon it.

With this technology, the electromagnetic coils that send and receive the charge are especially shielded to reduce electromagnetic rays. The only requirement is a <u>Qi</u> <u>compatible device</u> or the use of a Qi receiver. (Current iPhones require the receiver, a built-in receiver is rumored for the iPhone8.

With Qi, if you want to charge a phone or another gadget without plugging it in, you'll need to place it directly on (or very close to) a charging pad. Several companies are working on solutions that will eliminate that proximity requirement by beaming power through the air so that you

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can charge any compatible gadgets as long as they're in a room. Now Disney Research says it's <u>built a prototype of</u> <u>a system</u> that does just that. Researchers say their system uses quaqsistatic cavity resonance, or QSCR to fill a 16' x 16' room with magnetic fields "that safely deliver kilowatts of power to mobile receivers" placed in that room.

In other words, all you need to do is walk into the room to start charging your phone. Efficiency is said to range from 95 percent to 40 percent, depending how close you are to the center of the room (where a copper pole is placed).

Right now the technology depends on a specially constructed room with metal in the ceilings, floors, and furniture... and that aforementioned copper pole. So it's not clear how practical it would be to add this sort of wireless charging system to your home. But eventually the researchers say it might be possible to deliver similar results with "modular panels or conductive paint" added to an existing space.

Disney has been an innovator in the use of wearables like the <u>MagicBand wristband</u>, and while that particular device has a battery that dies after a year or two of use, it's not hard to imagine a scenario where Disney provides visitors to its parks with wearables or other gadgets that can be automatically charged when you're in a hotel room, restaurant, or other location.

As for consumer-oriented wireless charging systems? Companies like <u>uBeam</u> and <u>Energous</u> have been promising that it's on the horizon for a while, but neither company has managed to bring a room-scale system to market just yet.

Simultaneous Onsite-Offsite Backups with Amazon Duet from Seagate, by podfeet

With Time Machine on the Mac and File History for Windows, it's pretty easy to just plug in a drive and the OS does the rest to keep you backed up locally. They've pretty much gotten rid of all the excuses not to do a local backup. We've also got offsite backup services like CrashPlan and Backblaze that work without us thinking about them.

For nerdballs like us, we could leave it at that, but we go out of our way to complicate things. If you're like me, you have stuff stashed away on Dropbox, Google Drive, iCloud Drive, OneDrive ... the list seems endless. I can't tell you how much time I waste poking around in the different services trying to remember where I put something.

We can also talk about your Uncle Elroy. He knows he should do backups, but he hasn't quite gotten around to it. You hesitate to even suggest that he should do offsite backups; that would blow his head off. But you also know he's the one with the family archives on his computer.

What if you could buy one device that gave you simultaneous onsite AND offsite backups? Amazon and Seagate have worked together to create a backup drive that's also an offsite backup. For <u>\$100, the Amazon Duet</u> is a 1TB drive that comes with unlimited Amazon Drive storage. The real magic isn't a drive plus storage, it's how it keeps the two in sync.

When you first plug in the Duet drive, it shows you two options, "Start_Here_Mac" and "Start_Here_Windows". I haven't tested the Windows installation but on my Mac it launched an installer that gave me a menubar app called Amazon Drive. Once you log into your Amazon account and agree to let this app modify your cloud drive, it asks you to log into your Amazon account. Yeah, you heard me right, it asks you twice. No clue why.

You're then given a screen to add a new drive (which it has found connected to your Mac). And that's all you do for setup.

Now simply drag files to your Duet drive and instantly they start uploading to your Amazon Drive. The easiest way to test this is to use the menubar app to pull down to Amazon Drive and it opens your web browser to your Amazon cloud storage. And guess what happens? It asks you to log into your Amazon account. I like security as much as the next guy but three times for the same account seems a bit excessive.

I hadn't seen Amazon drive before so it was new to me. In addition to a drive called Seagate-Duet, I had folders for "my Send-to-Kindle Docs", plus folders for Videos, Pictures and Documents. This folder structure hi-lights what Amazon unlimited really can do. It's just inviting me to put up videos and more documents and even photos. I wonder what they would do if I put my 400GB Photos library up there?

I dragged a few files from my desktop to the Duet and saw the Amazon Drive menubar app briefly turn blue. I refreshed the web interface and sure enough the files were all there online. It was pretty magical, I have to admit.

Onsite-Offsite, from page 6

For grins and giggles, I used the web interface to upload a file into the Duet drive folder, and again I saw the menubar app turn blue. I checked the physical Duet Drive and the file had downloaded.

I spoke up front about how this could be a backup drive. Since it's cross platform, Seagate formatted this drive as ExFAT. This is a proprietary format developed by Microsoft that allows it to be used on both Macs, Windows and Linux machines. The old FAT32 system had a file size limitation of 4 GB while the ExFAT format will support up to 16 Exibytes, which is 16,000 petabytes, or 16,000,000 terabytes. That's probably not a limit you're likely to hit any time soon. Especially on a 1 TB drive.

Amazon does limit their cloud syncing to 50 GB files so you'll hit that limit first.

I tell you all that stuff about ExFAT because it means you can't use it as a Time Machine drive. Time Machine requires the drive be formatted as Mac OS Extended. If you format the Duet, it would become a dumb drive and would no longer do the tricky syncing with Amazon Drive.

But you could use something like SuperDuper! or Carbon Copy Cloner. These backup utilities are simply making copies of your file structure and don't care about the drive format. <u>According to Apple</u> you won't be able to boot from an ExFAT drive.

So here's the scenario. You set up the Duet Drive to connect to your Amazon cloud drive, and also as your clone backup using SuperDuper! or Carbon Copy Cloner. Then you've always got onsite and offsite backups. Could not be easier. I'm not sure about Carbon Copy Cloner but SuperDuper! will let you do a full clone for free.

Some of you can already tell what the catch is here, but it's not much of a catch. The \$100 up front buys you the drive, but only one year of unlimited Amazon cloud storage. And here's why it's not a bad deal. For additional years, you'll pay \$60/year, which is exactly what the offsite backup companies charge. I checked BackBlaze and CrashPlan and they're both \$60 for one year for one computer.

I thought it might be interesting to see if I could write to the drive from two computers, and it works perfectly. I plugged the drive into a second Mac, ran the same installer from the Duet and I was able to drag and drop files from that Mac as well. I didn't try doing a SuperDuper! backup from both Macs (especially since my storage needs exceed 1TB) but I think it could work. That would make the deal for \$60/year even better than the CrashPlan or BackBlaze pricing.

If you've got bandwidth limitations, you can pause syncing using the menubar app, but you can't do any kind of selective sync like you can on Dropbox. This might be a bad deal for some people, and definitely something to watch when you're tethering from your phone!

One of the things I like about many of the cloud services, including CrashPlan, is that I have access to my files from iOS. I haven't needed it often but every once in a while it has saved my bacon. <u>Amazon's free Drive app for iOS</u> works perfectly to access anything you put on your Duet Drive. It's pretty much exactly like using Google Drive or Dropbox on your phone or tablet. Pretty cool though if it was an entire backup of your Mac or PC.

One thing that is different from using other cloud services: things can live on the Duet Drive and not on your local drive. For the second Mac solution for example, you don't get synced down versions of everything in Amazon Drive, because they only live on the Duet Drive.

About the only thing I can find not to like about the Duet Drive is its persistence in asking me to log in. After a reboot, I had to log in via the menubar app yet again and once I asked to see inside the cloud drive, it made me log in there too. Sure wish it would ask once, or even have an option to stay logged in. Maybe it's dumb to stay logged in but that should be my choice. I lied, there's one more thing to not like - the Duet drive is only available in the US. Hopefully they'll expand that option in the future.

The Amazon Seagate Duet drive is available at a <u>link in the</u> <u>shownotes</u> for \$99 and you'll be shocked to hear I gave you my Amazon Affiliate Link. Get one for yourself. And Uncle Elroy.

PERIODICALS

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SBAMUG Membership Application

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