# The South Bay Mug

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A personal view from Bob

iWork '08

I Work '08 now comprises three programs, Keynote, Pages and a new entry, Numbers, and sells for $79. I've been using iWork since Keynote was introduced four years ago, but have only used iWork '08 for a few weeks. It's definitely the best yet. Although very similar to earlier versions, it sports many new features, making it a worthwhile upgrade. All three programs are very easy to use and include a large number of templates or themes and share a similar interface. Operations are invoked using the Inspector, Text and

podcast. Presentations export as QuickTime, Powerpoint, PDF, a set images, a Flash movie with sound, HTML or to your iPod. Files created by the new version can't be read with earlier versions, but you can save a presentation as a Keynote '05 or '06 file.

Pages is a word processing program that I use for my newsletter articles. When opening a new document choose between word processing and page layout. The latter is like the draw module in AppleWorks with linked text boxes and graphics. Control-click any word to correct spelling or look it up in the Dictionary, Thesaurus, Spotlight, Google or Wikipedia. Export as a PDF file, Word document, or text. It opens, but doesn't save AppleWorks 6 files. You can send it to iWeb but I didn't see any way to create an HTML page.
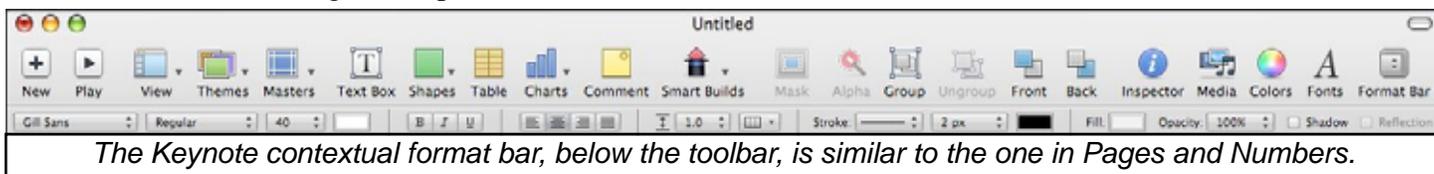
The Keynote contextual format bar, below the toolbar, is similar to the one in Pages and Numbers.

Color palettes. New in iWork '08 is a contextual format bar (see above), saving a trip to the Inspector. There's now an image adjustment palette for graphics (see below and think iPhoto).

Keynote is what I use for my presentations. I prefer it to Powerpoint because of it's powerful graphics capability. It's easy to mask an image, add a picture frame, make a background transparent and add text shadows and reflections. Create charts from a table of numbers. I even use it as a drawing program. Making slide transitions, text and object animations, and object builds has been simplified. Add audio narration and make a self-running slideshow or video
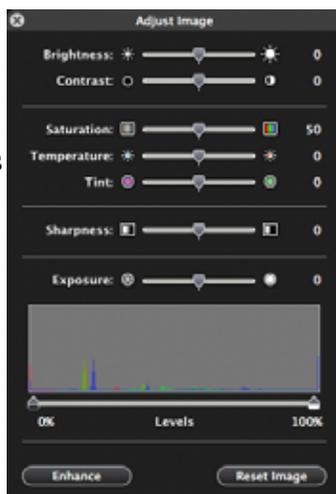
Numbers (spreadsheet) is the new kid on the block, rounding out the iWork suite. Most spreadsheets are boring pages of rows and columns. Numbers is a freeform page-layout program that includes resizable spreadsheets along with photos, text, charts and drawing elements to make a gorgeous presentation. Numbers is not for accountants or spreadsheet jockeys, but rather for the home or small business user. Numbers has 168 useful mathematical functions (100 less than Excel), fewer graph types and no macros, but is very easy to use. It opens and saves in the Excel format, including the new file format in Office 2008. I opened a couple of large, uncomplicated, Excel documents and they converted flawlessly.