The South Bay Mug

MACINTOSH

MAChinations

### A personal view from Bob

I ♥ FireWire

I'm not an expert on external FireWire drives but I've put together four of them, three with IDE hard drives and one with a DVD drive. I'll pass along some of what I've learned. They're not expensive. You can buy a FireWire enclosure kit (about $40) and install your own drive (an easy 10-minute job) or buy one already assembled with a drive installed. The latter may also come with backup software. Aluminum enclosures provide better heat dissipation, whereas the cheaper ones have plastic cases with a sheet metal interior. Most have fans. The heart of the unit is the "bridge board" a small circuit board that connects the drive's IDE connector to one or two FireWire cable connectors. Several companies make the bridge chip. A popular one is the Oxford 911 (the 922 is for 800 MHz FireWire). The power supply can either be inside the enclosure or an external power adapter.

Enclosures come in two flavors, FireWire and USB 2.0. Some have both connectors. Although FireWire drives costs a little more you can boot from them, but not from USB. Enclosures come in various sizes, depending on what's inside.

- The hard drives used in most desktop computers are 3.5-inch and fit in 3.5 or 5.25-inch enclosures.
- 5.25-inch enclosures come with a removable front panel to fit CD/DVD drives. They usually have a built-in power supply.
- Laptop drives are 2.5-inch and use different connectors. Because they need little power they can be "bus powered", taking power from the FireWire or USB cable.
- The iPod has an even smaller drive and can serve as an external FireWire drive.

IEEE 1394
FireWire

Unless you buy a drive pre-configured for the Mac, it will be formatted for the PC, but it's simple to reformat it. Open Apple's Drive Utility, select the drive, select the Erase tab, and format it for Mac OS Extended. You can also select the Partition tab and divide the drive into two or more partitions. The figure above shows a drive with three partitions.
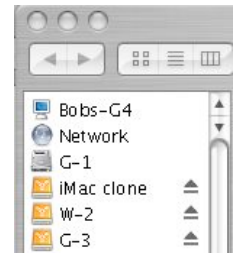
To use an external drive, turn it on and then connect its cable to your Mac. After a few seconds the drive will mount and show up along with your other drives. To remove a drive, first close all files and unmount it; then remove the cable and finally turn off its power.

You can shut down and start up your Mac with a FireWire drive turned on and connected. With a System installed you can start up from it. Hold down the option key while starting up and you'll see the volumes you can boot from. This is a big advantage of the Mac, not shared by our PC brethren. With a System on the external drive you've got a handy backup that you can start from in case of trouble.

You can also mount the drives of a second FireWire Mac using the "FireWire Target Disk" mode. Start up the second computer while holding down the T key. You'll then see a giant, yellow, bouncing FireWire symbol on the screen, indicating that it's in the target mode. Then connect a FireWire cable between the two computers and the drives in the second Mac will show up on the first Mac, as if they were external drives. In fact, they are. This is a great way to transfer files from one Mac to another and it's very fast.

Welcome to
SOUTH BAY APPLE MACINTOSH USER GROUP

You and your friends are invited to attend our next meeting. Our membership dues are only $35 per year, entitling you to this newsletter each month and many more benefits. If you would like to become a member or get more info on SBAMUG, feel free to check out our web site at:
www.sbamug.com

P. O. Box 432
Redondo Beach, CA
90277-0432

310-644-3315
Email: info@sbamug.com

Meetings are held at the
Redondo Beach Community Center
320 Knob Hill, Redondo Beach
(see map & directions on page 11)

Officers & Volunteers:

President.............................Glen Terry
Vice President......................Bob Brooks
Secretary.............................Wayne Inman
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                                    Bob Brooks
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Program Chairman...............George Kiefer
Newsletter Editor.................John Bernardo
Raffle Chairman...................George Griffiths
Refreshment Crew..............The Apple Blossoms

Membership Report:
(You may notice your name is in larger letters on your card. That is so it can be used as a name tag at the meetings.)

Current Membership - 187

Welcome New Members -
Amy Wasserzieher & David Johnson.

Thank You Member Renewals -
Glen Terry, Gerry Suzuki, Grace Nixon, Eugene Todd, Don Myers, Frank Davis, Andrew Reynoso, John Kier, John Gebhard, Robert Griffith, Ellen Colopy, Billy Peightal, Hector Ayala, James Stewart & Dwain Tollison.

MONTHLY CALENDAR

1st Wed - SBAMUG Core Group Mtg @ announced locations, 7:30 pm
1st Thur - LB Mug @ Emerson School, Palo Verde & Willow, Long Beach, 7 pm
1st Sat - Orange Apple UG, Orange Coast College, Chem Bldg, Costa Mesa, 8am-1pm
3rd Sat - Adobe Tech Exchange Toyota Bldg on Grammercy near 190th, 9 am; $10
Last Wed - SBAMUG Monthly Meeting
Last Tues - WOCMUG @ Emerson School, Palo Verde & Willow, Long Beach, 7 pm
Last Sat - TRW / Northrop Ham Radio & Computer Swap Meet, 7 am - 11:30 am

SBAMUG OCTOBER 2005 PD CD

Back up to a full nine programs this month.

DiskCatalogMaker356.dmg
Big discussion on the E group about programs to catalog and search volumes. For 10.2.6 or better. Good search capabilities, and you can drag and drop volumes onto the program window.

FinancesOSX
Program to calculate loans, investments, deposits, or withdrawals. Know any four of the five parameters, and this will calculate the fifth. For OS 10.2 or better

hp15c-v1.sitx
Virtual HP15c Scientific virtual calculator. Excellent graphics, looks like the real thing. Has speech, "paper"tape. RPN input style, just like the original.

gc571x.dmg
I did skip a version or two, honest! Again a great shareware picture viewer, converter, and manipulator. OSX version.

Package Tracker.wdgt
First of two widgets this month, and 10.4 only. Lets you track packages with DHL, Fedex or UPS.

Pongmini
Widget version of this old arcade game. Lets you mute the sound or pause the game.

SJI.dmg
Program for searching Scientific journals. Search only, can't retrieve text. Search by title, ISO title, web site, etc.

tex-edit-plus-X.dmg
Latest version of this versatile text editor. This version updated for Tiger 10.4. Added automator support in this version too.

Word_Counter.sit
Application to count words and characters with a TextEdit, plain text, RTF or Word document. Paste text into window. Preferences let you ignore words less than a given number of characters, and other such criteria. Great for the 1000 word essays, couldn't hand in something more than 1002 words now could you, oops flashing back to my school days. OS10.2 or better.

CD for this month will be at the October meeting as the September-October 2005 CD.

Catch you at the next meeting,
Jim Pernal, PD Editor

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA MACFAIR 2005 RETURNS NOVEMBER 4-5 AT CERRITOS COLLEGE.

Southern California MacFair 2005, the region's largest Macintosh event returns for it's fourth year at Cerritos College in Norwalk, CA for two huge days, Friday and Saturday, November 4-5. Over 40 companies are participating at the event including, Lynda.com, Provue Development, MacAlly, Other World Computing, R/com networks, Recosoft, PhotoshopCAFE.com and many more.

An extremely popular feature at the SoCal MacFair 2005 is our world-class hands-on and classroom training workshops in state of the art Macintosh labs. Some of the top instructors in the world will be teaching at this year's event including: Michael Ninness, Beverly Houwing, Colin Smith, Bruce Nazarian, Frank Rohmer, Scott Immerman, Karen Fasimpaur, David Barrett and Michael Levin. Over 18 workshops are being offered including most of the Adobe Creative Suite products including Photoshop, InDesign and Illustrator, many of the Apple Pro Products including Final Cut Pro and DVD Studio Pro. There will also be workshops in Mac OS X Server and Client, Digital Photography, FileMaker Pro and a special hands-on Palm training curriculum. The full and half-day classes taught by world-renowned instructors are very reasonably priced starting as low as $89. Due to limited Macintosh stations in each lab, space is very limited. Advance registration is encouraged.

Keith Mueller, the show's organizer notes, "The support of the Mac community has been incredible. In 2004, more than 1,000 attendees and 40 vendors made last year's event the largest Mac get together in the Southwest! We're thrilled to once again to be adding more world-class training at the Southern California MacFair 2005."

The Southern California MacFair 2005 is centrally located for all southern California residents at Cerritos College - just a short drive from all major California freeways.

Hands-on workshops and classes are scheduled Friday- and Saturday November 4-5. The vendor expo and presentation seminars are Sunday November 5th from 10a-5:30p. One day advanced online registration for the vendor expo, presentation seminars and door prize entry is only $15, credit cards accepted ($20 cash at the door, save $5). Please use priority code SB-1. Parking is free on Saturday.

Complete details including a growing list of participating companies, presentation seminars, training workshops and online advance registrations available at www.macfair.org.

ADOBE CREATIVE SUITE 2 PREMIUM
Reviewed by Elsa Travisano ~ MUG ONE

Juicy new features in all its component applications make Adobe Creative Suite 2 Premium an alluring (if expensive) purchase for anyone who designs for print, the web or the latest hot market, mobile publishing.

But Creative Suite 2 is more than the sum of its impressive parts. CS 2's common interface of palettes, tools and menus make for a more intuitive work environment – a big improvement over hopping between dissimilar applications. With the new Adobe Bridge visual file browser serving as a hub, finding and managing files and images and sharing them between applications is significantly easier than before. Best of all, CS 2 makes re-purposing your designs to different formats and performing global changes to those designs as straightforward as possible. If you produce a newsletter (print or PDF) and maintain a website for your organization, Adobe Creative Suite 2 is just what the doctor ordered.

The suite's flagship application, Photoshop CS 2, has gained several new image-editing features. The most impressive is Vanishing Point, which lets you paint, clone or paste image elements that automatically match the perspective of the surrounding area. By mapping a grid on the perspective you want to match, then drawing or editing on that grid, can make a building taller, extend the line of a wall or use the Clone tool to remove distracting elements, all while maintaining perfect perspective.

Photoshop CS 2 also adds Image Warp, which lets you wrap an image around a shape, one click Red Eye correction and a Spot Healing brush; the latter borrowed from Photoshop Elements 3. The new Smart Objects command (chosen in the Paste dialog box) lets you resize, rotate and warp raster and vector graphics without losing detail.

Illustrator CS 2's most exciting new feature is Live Trace, which automatically traces a pixel-based scanned image and turns it into a vector-based, editable Live Trace object. The object remains linked to the pixel-based image, so if changes are made to the original, the Live Trace object "knows" and can be updated. Live Trace fulfills the promise of Streamline, Adobe's discontinued raster to vector application, and should be a huge boon for artists who sketch by hand and then scan in their work. It also makes it easy to tap the vast resource of free public domain artwork. Other additions to Illustrator CS 2 include custom workspaces, an enhanced Control Palette, and new Live Paint tools for working with paths to adjust colored areas of artwork dynamically. Having trouble visualizing what Live Paint does? Go to Adobe's Creative Suite 2 New Features web page for QuickTime videos of this and other new CS 2 enhancements: http://www.adobe.com/products/creativesuite/ newfeatures.html#nf2

In InDesign CS 2, the suite's page layout application, you can now designate a collection of attributes – text formatting, background, drop shadow – and save them as an Object Style that can be applied to any text or graphics frame in your document. Object Styles can be loaded from other documents, sparing you from the task of recreating a style's characteristics. Objects can be exported as Snippets and dragged into a new layout, retaining their formatting and positioning on a page. Objects can also be anchored to text, so graphics and pull quotes stay with the appropriate text when changes are made. InDesign CS 2 also lets you display a Photoshop file's layers and layer comps, so you can toggle among versions of a design saved in different layers of a single Photoshop file. Other welcome features include an improved Story Editor, better support for Microsoft Word and RTF, and backwards compatibility with InDesign CS.

GoLive CS 2's improvements are mostly under the hood. The web design application gains improvements for creating and editing CSS (Cascading Style Sheet) web pages, adds support for creating content for mobile devices, and offers better live rendering for previewing pages. The enhanced InDesign Package for GoLive feature lets you drag and drop elements from InDesign to GoLive, as well as flow content into CSS templates.

Acrobat Professional 7 features better performance and better attachment handling. Acrobat 7 Professional-created PDF documents can now have comments added by anyone with the free Adobe Acrobat 7 viewer allowing documents to circulated for review without requiring each team member to own the professional version of Acrobat.

Version Cue 2 handles sharing and tracking file versions in a collaborative work environment. It works with all the CS 2 applications, making sure that the most recent version of a file is available and preventing one team member from accidentally overwriting another's work.

Clicking on the seashell icon in the Control Palette of any Creative Suite 2 application takes you to Adobe Bridge, the nerve center of CS 2. Based on the File Browser first introduced in Photoshop 7, Adobe Bridge is a smart visual file browser which displays images and their metadata, allows you search by keywords, ratings, labels and a number of other criteria, and lets you add frequently used files and folders to a Favorites pane. The Bridge Center tracks recent folders, recent files and saved file groups and includes RSS feeds and tips and tricks if you're connected to the internet. Stock photo users in particular will rejoice at the convenient Adobe Bridge-based service for finding, managing and buying stock photos, Adobe Stock Photos.

How do you come to grips with Creative Suite 2's massive feature set? In addition to the tutorials and extensive Help offerings in each application, the boxed software comes with a 108 page printed Design Guide, two discs of Resources and Extras, and a bonus training CD from Total Training. The Design Guide gives a handy overview of new features, as well as sample projects which demonstrate how the components of the suite work together. Additional resources for learning are listed on the Guide's inside cover and also can be found at www.adobecsguide.com

The excellent Total Training Video Workshop CD offers more than an hour of video instruction and includes bonus lessons that can be unlocked when Creative Suite 2 is registered with Adobe. Two Resources and Extras discs include full manuals in PDF format, along with fonts, clip art, stock photos, color swatches scripting guides and sample scripts.

If you're currently using the first version of Creative Suite, Creative Suite 2 Premium is a worthy
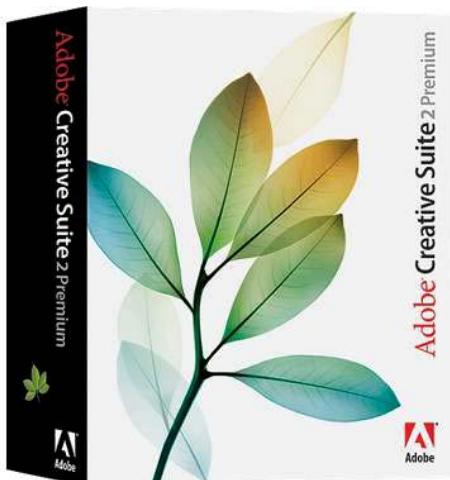
upgrade. If you're using two or more of the suite's applications in their previous, individual versions, moving to Creative Suite 2 will gain you the significant advantages of program integration and Adobe Bridge. (You can purchase an upgrade to Creative Suite 2 Premium from any previous licensed version of Photoshop as long as it's on the same platform). And if you need CS 2's powerful features and are eligible for academic pricing, the $399 academic cost (more than 60% off) makes the purchase almost a no-brainer. Those whose needs don't include web or PDF design should consider Creative Suite 2 Standard, which omits GoLive and Acrobat and is available for $899.

A free 30-day Creative Suite 2 evaluation DVD can be requested at: http://www.adobe.com/products/ creativesuite/cs2eval.html. Note that the DVD does not contain the Macintosh version of Acrobat 7.0 Professional.

For anyone who works with images or design in print or on the web, Adobe Creative Suite 2 is as good as it gets. Most highly recommended.

Includes Photoshop CS 2, Illustrator CS2, InDesign CS 2, GoLive CS 2, Acrobat 7.0 Professional, Adobe Bridge, Version Cue CS 2 and Adobe Stock Photos. Adobe Systems: http://www.adobe.com $1,199; Educational price $399

Adobe Creative Suite 2 Premium requires PowerPC G4 or G5 processor, OS X 10.2.8 through 10.4 (10.3.4 through 10.4 recommended; G5 requires v.10.3 or later), Java Runtime Environment 1.4, 384MB of RAM required to run any one creative application with Adobe Bridge and Version Cue Workspace, additional RAM required to run multiple applications simultaneously (512MB to 1GB recommended), 4GB of available hard-disk space to install all applications (installation of common files requires at least 1GB on primary hard disk), 1,024x768 monitor resolution with 16-bit video card (24-bit screen display recommended), CD-ROM drive.

For Adobe PostScript printers: PostScript Level 2 or PostScript 3. Internet or phone connection required for product activation. QuickTime 6.5 required for multimedia features. Broadband Internet connection required for Adobe Stock Photos and additional services.

Show of hands: How many of you Macites use Safari, Apple's Web browser, to surf the vast network of cookie recipes and rebate deals known as the Internet? I'd say a good 90% of you are quite comfortable with its slick brushed-metal interface and its speedy rendering of picture-full pages, as well as its tabbed-browsing and darned-good pop-up blocking. (The other 10% is probably stuck in OS 9, using Netscape or Internet Explorer -- my heart goes out to you fine, unfortunate folks.)

After polling some of my friends and random strangers by the bus-stop, I was alarmed to see that so many people use Safari, but have so little experience with other, more mature browsers (sans IE).

Cue the collaborative gasp: "What? There are other browsers? Nahhh."

On contraire, friends, there are several other browsers -- several other good browsers -- that deserve a pat on the back and a free lunch at Portillo's. Let's take a look at 'em, shall we?

Firefox
Firefox is the open-source Web browser that's gettin' a whole lotta press these days as being the #1 alternative to Internet Explorer -- at least on Windows. See, them Windows folks are having problems with Bad People doing Bad Things to their computers, all because of Microsoft's policy allowing (encouraging, demanding) its programmers to drink on the job. (Disclaimer to Microsoft lawyers: Joke! Ha! Ha…) Because IE is so susceptible to viruses and hackers -- (I once wrote that using IE is kinda like leaving your door unlocked and opened widely with a sign that says, "Steal Things") -- everyone with half a brain and a desire to help -- or at least a reluctance to harm -- others is adamantly promoting the use of Firefox instead.

Firefox on the Mac may not be the bastion of secure browsing as it on Windows, but only because the Mac is just as secure as-is. What Firefox does offer, however, is expandability that, when the two browsers are placed side-by-side, causes doctors to mistake Safari as a tuberculosed lung. Firefox enables users to install a wide array of plug-ins that can make the browser dance on its head while effortlessly juggling motor saws and flaming breadsticks. For example, a plug-in called miniT enables you to reorder the position of your browser tabs; AdBlock removes those flashy punch-the-monkey ads right from web pages; ForecastFox provides access to a one-click weather forecast right in the browser toolbar. The list goes on…

Firefox also supports various "themes," so if you're a closet artist and you're looking for a way to express your buried anguish and suppressed teen angst, you can customize your browser's appearance to best represent that emotional distress. Or if you just, you know, get bored with Firefox's default theme, and you're easily impressed by shiny colors and glowy buttons. Whatever floats your boat.

You can download Firefox for free from www.getfirefox.com.

Camino
I hesitated to add this one. There was a time when Camino was the bee's knees, the cat's pajamas, the eel's ankle, and the skunk's stripe -- but since Safari made its debut and Firefox stole the spotlight, Camino has been slowly losing its already-isolated importance in the Mac world. However, I came to realize that if I didn't mention it, I'd be e-mailed bombed by every Mac Fanatic who has been a Camino fan for so long but doesn't have the will -- or the power -- to let go; so I figured I'd save us all a little headache and put it in…for old time's sake.

Camino is the proficient (but sadly under-loved) son of the Mozilla Foundation; the B-student brother of the straight-A, Heisman-winning Firefox. Camino has basically one strength that Firefox and Mozilla lack: it's made by a Mac developer solely for the Mac community. There is no Windows or Linux port, and that gives the developer the rare opportunity of tinkering with Mac OS X-specific features, allowing him to optimize it in ways that Firefox can only dream of. (The supposed effect of that, of course, is better performance.)

Unfortunately, that's all Camino really has going for it. Those who stick with it seem to do so because of an unexplainable loyalty to the platform: it was around before Safari, and it touted superior features that Safari later adopted. But the gap has closed, and Safari has caught up -- and passed -- Camino in terms of features and, from my experience, speed and performance.

Camino is free from www.caminobrowser.org.

OmniWeb

I beat my brain for hours trying to think of a suitable analogy for OmniWeb, but the best I could come up with was along the lines of, "OmniWeb is as great as the thing that's so great. You know...the thing."

While that may not be thoroughly descriptive, it certainly makes the point. OmniWeb is the Toyota Prius of Web browsers; it has so many features, it makes the newspaper seem lackluster. The Omni Group took the basic, boring-ol' concept of a Web browser and refined it to a point of unprecedented superiority, adding functionality up the ying-yang. OmniWeb has a suite of features that take Internet surfing to the next level of Awesomeness, expanding the concept of browsing beyond "Type address, hit enter, click link."

Take, for example, their dazzling implementation of the famed tabbed-browsing. In other browsers like Firefox and Safari, "tabs" are just that: tabs under the address bar above the page contents. In OmniWeb, however, tabs are actually thumbnail images of the page itself,

conveniently placed in a drawer on the side of the browser window. As if that isn't enough to convince you of the divinely-blessed nature of OmniWeb, consider what you can do with the tabs: If you have multiple windows open, you can actually drag tabs between the various windows. You can also take one window and place it in the tab drawer of another, or take a tab and separate it into its own window -- features that Safari users resort to dubbing as "witchcraft" so as to stifle off embarrassment.

Want more? Well how about a nifty aspect of OmniWeb called "Workspaces," which "enables you to save browsing instances -- what pages are open, what tabs are open, and even the browser window's position and size -- so they can be loaded later with a single click." Not useful, you say? Well…you're wrong. Workspaces are great for people who visit a wide array of related Web sites at once, eliminating the need for them to manually open the pages (in the way they prefer) each and every time they're interested in viewing them.

A bonus to this is a feature called "Auto-save while browsing," which remembers the characteristics of your browser as you surf the 'Net and immediately loads it after you quit and reopen OmniWeb -- so, for example, if your browser somehow crashes, relaunching it will return you to the state you were in right before the crash, saving you the headache of having to find the pages all over again.

OmniWeb has a boatload of other ingenious features: Web site-specific preferences, Web form-enhancers, an advanced and customizable search box, the ability to highlight a link by typing its first few letters, sophisticated bookmark and history management, a cure for cancer, cheap gasoline, and a waffle iron that IHOP would be jealous of.

OmniWeb, unlike most other Mac browsers, isn't free -- but it's one of the few in the world worth paying for. You can purchase it for $30 from www.omnigroup.com.

Dan Pourhadi is a freelance technology writer from the Chicago suburbs. Aside from writing for Passages, he has contributed to MacAddict Magazine and writes a weekly column for Macteens.com. He maintains a fitfully updated, though semi-interesting blog at: www.pourhadi.com.

This article first appeared in The NorthWest of Us MUG (www.nwou.org) and Northwest Passages. Reprinted with permission.

READIRIS PRO 9

By Marty Powel ~ NCMUG

I am a computer user and do not delve deeply into any software except to learn to do what I need. I have applied this to my use of Readiris. I have been working on the genealogy of the family for many years and have a huge collection of material. I felt the need to copy many of the documents on to disk as a four-drawer file cabinet was nearing the full stage. Thus the aquisition of Readiris Pro 9 was to get me started in the reduction of the massive paper collection.

Before I made the acquisition I went on line to see what it offered and found that a number of reviews had been made by others. I was particularly impressed by a review done in "Law Office Computing" where the reviewer, David Saraceno, went into detail about how to set up the work and what it would actually do. All the reviewers said that if you need an OCR program, this is the best one to get.

What does it claim to do?

It will reproduce documents at a speed of 1,600 words a minute in over 100 different languages. It will even recognize Oriental languages with an add-on that is available. It will open and read PDF documents. It will save and output documents in text, RTF, PDF, WYSIWYG, HTML document formats to both Appleworks and Microsoft Word. It will also import digital camera images and store them in the normal formats necessary with a Photoshop plug-in. It has excellent button commands and a learn or ignore feature so it will not make the same mistakes twice.

What has it done for me?

I loaded the software on my G4 1.25GHz iMac running Panther. I fired up the software and it had me identify my Epson 2580 Scanner and had me touch the acquire button. My scanner will only do one page at a time but the software can handle over 50 pages if a multi-page scanner is available. It divided my document into zones and separated the text and graphic zones easily. I tried saving the scans to Appleworks and to Word. I am still trying to find the Appleworks scans but the Word material jumped up immediately.

With Word I was able to then go into the documents and make changes at will. That was good where there are places that I want to make parenthetical comments in some of the material. I would prefer to be using Appleworks but still have to easily find the documents first.

The claim that Readiris does well with high quality documents is very accurate but some interesting things happen as the quality of the original declines. The Macworld reviewer said that the built in spell check was overactive which I found to be true. As the quality of the document declined the spell-check got more involved. It has a real problem with recognizing the difference between S and 5. That immediately sets the spell check into action. I was very happy until I really challenged it with a document that had been sent to me in a business envelope. The folds in the paper caused some major misinterpretations by the OCR engine. Just the fact that the fold went through the printing gave it enough distortion so that it came out slightly illegible. That put the spell check into orbit. All the OCR has to miss is one letter and the spell check flags it. When a whole line has problems, the spell check gets all excited.

With Word the grammar check fired up and got into the act also. There were green and red underlines everywhere. Some documents took a long time to make all of the corrections. That was particularly true if I neglected to set up the program to duplicate the form of the original document, which is only one of the formatting choices.

Readiris is by no means perfect but even with its flaws it is still a very useful tool.

Readiris Pro 9 OCR software for Mac OS X
http://www.irisusa.com
Mac OS 9.x or OS X: Supports Mac OS X up to version 10.4, 110 MB of free hard disk space.
(800) 447-4744, $130.00

BOOK REVIEW:
POWERBOOK FAN BOOK - LOVE AT FIRST BOOT

By Derrick Story
*Reviewed by Stephen Henry ~ NCMUG*

Five by five - this is your new manual form factor. If you look around, you'll find this new dimension everywhere in manuals. The new manuals shipping with Apple computers, the new iLife and iWorks software manuals and now O'Reilly's Fan book series all seem to follow the 5-inch by 5-inch dimensions.

The "PowerBook Fan Book - Love at First Boot" one of the books in the "Fan Book" series, is 100 pages of features, tips, help and cool accessories for your Apple PowerBook.

"Darling you look marvelous!" the book's introduction starts out with an overview of the difference between the PowerBook models. Followed by a quick tour of the hardware such as the keyboard features, (who can't love backlit keys), and ports.

Once you get your hands on one of those beautiful aluminum PowerBooks and view the gorgeous LCD screen, you will want to protect your investment from scratches, fingerprints, and other mishaps. From cases to screen cleaners, some of the best products for your PowerBook care are reviewed.

Even if you're an old OS X hand, you can pickup some good tips in the chapter that explains the system setup, preference panes, connecting to the Internet and the value of a .Mac account. Once you get connected to the Internet, the author shows you how to configure and use the included Safari web browser and the Apple mail email application.
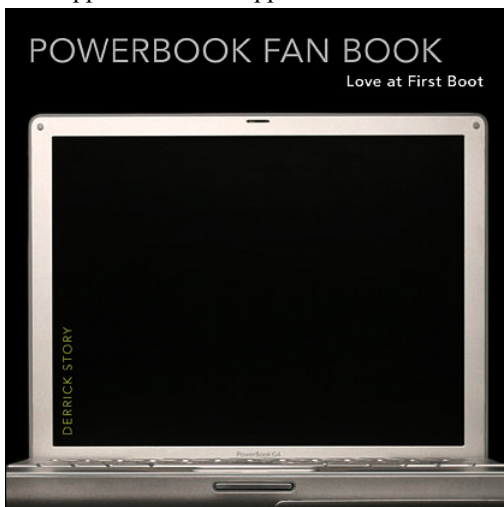
These are free applications included with every Macintosh, but there are options and the author discusses some of the other applications. If you want to keep up with one of the latest technology fads, then you'll want to learn about how to setup iChat and start instant messaging with your co-workers in the next cubicle or a friend on the others side of the world. But don't stop there; the author gives you a brief look at the options of voice chat or video chat with an Apple iSight camera.

Part of the attraction of Apple computers and OS X is the collection of incredible applications that are included. From the Address Book application, which seamlessly integrates with the Mail application, iCal calendar, iTunes, for managing your digital music library, to iPhoto which manages your digital photo albums, no other group of applications help you organize your digital life in such a easy manner. A good portion of this book discuses these applications and how to use them effectively. The author, who is a managing editor at O'Reilly Media, is good at making technology an easy read and when necessary, step-by-step procedures are provided.

The chapter on transforming video to exciting movies will give you an overview of how to use iMove with your PowerBook to share your digital creations with others. The author also presents some additional accessories to help in your production.

The final chapter on the book shows you how to make your life on the go with your PowerBook a bit easier with a shopping basket of accessories that you shouldn't leave home without. A must read for the road warrior.

The reader is directed to web sites with printed web addresses for additional information or products. The Fan books are not intended to be a manual or a complete source of information, but they do fill a purpose of familiarizing the owner with their equipment and how to enhance your computing experience.

With Christmas coming up or for a gift for a new PowerBook owner, this book is a perfect companion for those new to an Apple PowerBook. Besides, it will fit in most Christmas stockings.

Author: Derrick Story
Publisher: O'Reilly Media, Inc.
ISBN: 059600817
Retail Price: $14.95

MAKING THE JUMP FROM A PERFORMA TO A NEW IMAC WITH TIGER

By Gene Knepprath ~ MacNexus

A few weeks ago my wife, Kay, and I became the owners of a new iMac G5. The trip for us through computerland to this point began in 1968 when I undertook a project to analyze political speeches using some computer programs developed by a group of researchers from Harvard University and the University of Chicago. I learned how to do key punching so that I could reduce the speeches to the long-forgotten IBM cards and attended some short classes to learn the basics of how computers operated and what they could do. Later on when time-sharing came along and desktop terminals could be used to access mainframe computers, I gladly gave up on keypunching. In the early 80's when desktop computers were becoming common, we got a Kaypro II (64K ram and floppies for permanent storage) for Kay's lobbying work and a Kaypro 10 for home.

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When Kay began lobbying for a nonprofit, her office was selected, along with a number of other non-profits in California, to receive a Macintosh SE and two days of training in Cupertino as part of Apple's charitable contributions for that year. That was the first Mac in our family. Soon we got a Classic at home so that she could do some work from home. The Classic was replaced by a Performa a few years later, when the Internet began to pick up steam and we didn't have enough Ram to accommodate the Net.

When the Net kept expanding and demanding more capability, we learned from longtime MacNexus member Paul Harriman that our Performa was also expandable both as to Ram and processing power; we upgraded to G3 and 128 MB of Ram. That machine could do everything we wanted from it: simple word processing; basic spreadsheets; straightforward data bases; some photo tweaking; and the internet. We were happy with that machine and were not envious of faster operating systems, 512 megs of Ram, or hard drives of 100 gigs.

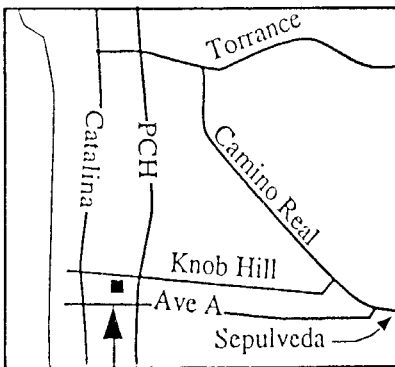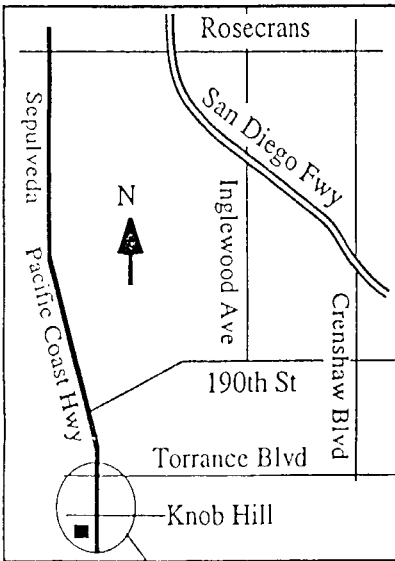Slowly, however, the web began to demand things of our computer that it couldn't do, and OS 8.6 would not support features of the web so that it became impossible for us to do online banking and other things that required security features we couldn't provide. Thus, the iMac.

So, how does one go from OS 8.6 to Tiger, you ask? Gingerly and with trepidation. We got it just a few days before a short trip to New Mexico, so we decided to set it up but not try to work with it before we came back. We were disappointed to find on our return that the elves had not come and moved everything from the Performa to the iMac. When I first turned it on, I found many unfamiliar symbols and icons, and things in different places than I expected. What is that orange and green balloon in the upper-left corner of a window? I finally figured out that the long strip of icons on the bottom of the screen is the "dock" and works like my old Launcher. And everything has "preferences." I never did know what many of them were for on the Performa, and almost never had to be concerned about them, but now every application seems to expect me to tell it my preferences for how it should work.

Change is not easy, and since I didn't want to have to buy a new computer, I resisted. But once I accepted the fact that if I want to use the new computer—and I do—I have to "do it its way," things have gone much smoother. And I like it! AppleWorks converts all our old Clarisworks documents without a change and imports our data base records from Filemaker Pro. Our old Eudora mail client won't let us export its address book, but the Mail application on the iMac is efficient about transferring e-mail addresses from its inbox to the OS X Address Book. Safari accepted our Netscape bookmarks. The "Help" features are the best I have seen on any computer, comprehensive and clearly written. And it is FAST; so fast that we continue with our dialup Internet service. So, we are up and running, as they say.

It is not that there have been no problems: the Internet Connection inexplicably forgot my connection settings after two weeks of smooth access; "somebody" inside the CPU asked me for my password when I tried to trash Classic following instructions from Bob Studer and Bill Davies, but I didn't have a password because Kay and I share everything on the computer, so, I'm working on that. Every new thing has bugs; we'll survive.

The iMac and Tiger are very complex and have many "things" that we will never use. My heart goes out to the user who gets an iMac for her first computer. The learning task is enormous. And Kay and I still like our 1992 Toyota Corolla; it takes us every place our son can go in his 2004 Lexus.

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Attention Members!

It's time for our club's annual election!
Paid members will receive in this month's newsletter a Proxy Vote Ballot. Please take a few minutes to fill out and mail back to us. Directions are on the ballot.

After we've received all the ballots we will tally up the votes and inform all members. As an added incentive we are giving away a gift certificate for $50 at CompUSA! One lucky winner will be drawn from the ballots we receive by mail or in person at the October meeting. The drawing will be held in December and we will contact the lucky winner!

THIS MONTH'S MEETING
Wednesday Oct. 26th, 2005 7:30PM
320 Knob Hill, Redondo Beach
(see map at left for directions)
Come early (6:30) for beginners class!

This Month's Topic:
Digital Photography with Doug Ness.
See details below:

The presentation at our October 26th meeting will be "Digital Photography & Image Enhancement" by Dr. Doug Ness. A former aerospace engineer, business owner and entrepreneur, Doug now lectures and teaches this subject on cruise ships.

The presentation will first explore the reasons why digital cameras were the number 1 gift request for 2004 and then give practical information and hints on how to pick a DC to fit ones needs and budget. Desirable camera features will be described and explained – from simple point-and-shoot models to cameras with increasingly sophisticated user controls. Sample cameras will be shown with illustrative digital pictures depicting sports and nature subjects as well as the capabilities of the "optical super zoom" cameras now available.

The real fun begins when one downloads the digital images from the camera to the computer. Using the relatively inexpensive program Photoshop Elements 3, Doug will explain and demonstrate how to correct and enhance your images, including removing undesirable objects from and inserting new objects into your pictures. You will definitely see why you can't trust a picture anymore… The final example will follow the procedure used to combine two pictures of a static-display aircraft at the CA Science Center with a picture of the sky above Manhattan Beach to produce an in-flight-photo ready for the title slide of the presentation.

Please join us on October 26th and bring a friend to enjoy an entertaining and informative presentation on the brave new world of digital photography and image enhancement.

Next Meeting
November 30th:
Working with iMovie & iDVD!

GREAT RAFFLE PRIZES TOO,TICKETS ONLY $1 EACH!

SBAMUG Membership Application

South Bay Apple Macintosh User Group provides Mac owners and users with a local source of shared knowledge and experience through monthly meetings, training seminars and our monthly newsletter.
Individual and family membership is $35 per year payable to SBAMUG.

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