



# South Bay Apple MUG Macintosh

February 2015

Monthly CUPFUL for South Bay Apple Mac User Group Members

## Office for iOS goes freemium by [Jason Parker](#) [@jparkerCNET](#)

Standalone versions of Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint were [announced today for iPhone](#), bringing better editing and creation tools to the small screen. The apps, which are an extrapolation of the previous apps for [iPad](#), are free to download and universal, which means one download will now work on both your iPhone and iPad. It's important to note these apps aren't just a port from the iPad versions, but an update that gives you more features across both devices, and now each app is optimized for the device it's running on. The apps all let you edit docs on the go, but also offer more advanced features for subscribers of Office 365.

Before today's announcement, there was only Office for iPhone, a single app that let you connect with your OneDrive, but it didn't have any of the document creation features of the new suite. The other problem was you needed to be a subscriber to Office 365 to do anything more than read documents in the app. The launch of these apps changes all of that.

You can download all three apps later today from the App Store for free and all come with basic editing features to get up and running on your Word, Excel and PowerPoint projects right away. But if you want advanced features, you're still going to need a subscription to Office 365.

To give you a few examples of the difference between free and paid, here are some everyday scenarios. In Word, you can receive a document from a subscriber in landscape view and make edits to words, fonts, font sizes and font color, but you won't be able to switch the document to portrait -- that's an Office 365 premium feature.

Likewise, if you receive a document that organizes text into columns, you'll be able to edit the text, but you won't be able to change the column format. In Excel, you can edit cells with new data or text, but to create custom tables with different colored rows and columns, you'll need the subscription. Like Word, if you receive a table that's been customized in these ways, you'll be able to edit data, but you won't be able to change these options.

There are several limitations just like these across all three apps. So what you're getting with the free version is the ability to edit text and data in Word, Excel and PowerPoint, but you can't make major formatting changes without a subscription. Still, while you're limited in the free version, it's much better than the previous Office for iOS because you at least can make changes to documents, where before you could only read them without a subscription.

Now that there are standalone apps for Word, Excel and PowerPoint, you get a lot more creation tools with each app on your iPhone. And what's interesting here is that it works great on the smaller screen; the iPhone gets a Ribbon-like interface (known to desktop Office users) that's easy to use with one hand to fit with the iPhone form factor.

Where on the iPad you have tabs across the top for Home, Insert, Layout, Review and View, you now have the same selections as a dropdown menu on the iPhone. You can scroll through all the options for each type on the lower portion of the screen then make your selections.

The iPhone version also gets a separate view called Reflow to make documents easier to read on the small screen. Say you're looking at an average 8.5 by 11 document with images and charts

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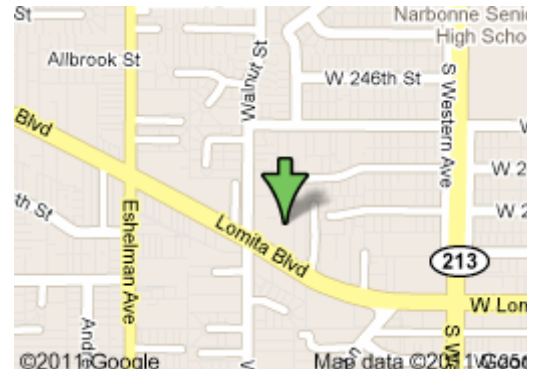
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Meetings: Lomita Veteran's Hall,  
1865 Lomita Blvd, Lomita  
Mail: PO Box 432, Redondo Beach, CA  
90277-0432  
Phone: (310) 644-3315  
Email: [info@sbamug.com](mailto:info@sbamug.com)  
Website: <http://www.sbamug.com>

## Welcome to the SBAMUG South Bay Apple Mac User Group

Members, friends and colleagues are invited to attend our monthly meetings. 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 website.



Lomita Veteran's Hall,  
1865 Lomita Blvd, Lomita

## SBAMUG Monthly Calendar

Jan 28: Table Topics - Preview, iOS, Office & Backups  
Feb 25: TBD

### SBAMUG Meeting Format:

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

**7:30—7:45 p.m.** "iSocial" – shoot the Mac breeze with others over a cookie

**7:50—9:00 p.m.** Announcements and Program

*\*\*Refreshments provided; donations appreciated!*

Submit suggestions for topics or speakers, or articles, ideas & original artwork for this newsletter by the last Wednesday of each month. Articles may be edited to fit space. Submit to: [pjmyerz@gmail.com](mailto:pjmyerz@gmail.com)

### Officers & Volunteers:

President: Clarence Baisdon VP: Kent McDonald  
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Programming: Kent McDonald Greeter: Vacant  
Server Director: Dave Nathanson  
Newsletter: Pete Myers, Bill Berks  
USPS Liaison: CW Mitchell  
Refreshments: Member contributions

### Other Meetings:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Wed each month – SBAMUG Core Group, 7:30 pm. Join Google+ SBAMUG community, or email: [info@sbamug.com](mailto:info@sbamug.com).
- Special interest groups (SIGs): Ask at the meetings or email: [info@sbamug.com](mailto:info@sbamug.com)
- 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., <http://www.lapug.org/>

### Membership Report – 117 members!

*Please wear membership card as your name tag*

**Welcome New Members:** Bill Lee

**Thank You Member Renewals:** Del McCulloch, Don Baggett, Ellen Marie Colopy, Lynne Handy, Al Tucker, Richard Zigrang, Jerome Ginsburg, Kathleen Spearman, Marie Cooper, Joan Beth King, Louise Polsky, Wayne Arnold, John Kells, Joan Kraus, Hyim Levy, James Pernal, James Vaccaro, Kazuo Ogawa  
If your name is not spelled right or your expiration date is wrong, contact [cwmitchell@sbamug.com](mailto:cwmitchell@sbamug.com) for correction. Or contact CW for everything membership, dues and benefits. Please watch for your renewal letter, then sign it and return it with \$35 check or bring letter with payment to meeting.

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## SBAMUG Dec 2014/Jan 2015 PD CD

I'm seeing more and more programs with Intel 64 bit as a requirement, so again if you have an older Mac with an Intel Core solo or core duo, you have only a 32-bit chip and these programs won't work. However if you have an Intel Core2 duo, an i3, i5, i7 or a Xeon chip Mac, these are 64 bit chips and the programs will work.

**Acorn-4.zip** Latest version of this bit map image editor. Designed to be simple. Has layers and this version can remove the alpha layer from PNG files if it detects no transparency. OSX 10.8+ Intel 64 bit Shareware. \$29.99

**Click** A utility to create automatic screen shots. Set time from one-second to 10 minutes. OSX 10.6. Free.

**FindEmptyFolders.zip** This is a free program to find empty folders. It will find those even with the invisible .DS.Store file type inside. You can reveal or trash the folders you find. OSX 10.6 Intel. Free

**LabelsAddresses.dmg** This is a label and envelope printing tool. The program import from Apple's address book, excel, numbers, Now Contact, Vcards, tab delimited text and more. This has hundreds of label templates, for example Avery. OSX 10.6+ Intel Shareware. \$49.95

**PDF-to-Excel-Converter-350.dmg** This utility will convert tables in a PDF file to an editable excel file. Shareware \$19.99. Intel 64 bit 10.6 +

**Pixelmator-3.zip** This is the latest version of this image editing software. Designed to take advantage of the new 10.10 Yosemite look. Adds iCloud drive support. Shareware \$29.95. OSX 10.9.5 and 10.10 only.

**Quadratic** Free solver and visualizer for quadratic math equations. Will give an warning if there are no real solutions for the equation. Intel OSX 10.7+

**SKIM** Final program this month is a PDF reader and note taker. Aimed at scientific papers, it will work with any general topic. You can highlight text, draw red circles, and add bubble notes. Has thumbnails for multi page PDFs. Free. Intel OSX 10.6

**DefaultFolderX-4.6.12.dmg** Enhances open and save dialog boxes. Keyboard shortcuts. Set a default folder unique to each application. OSX 10.6+ Intel Shareware. \$34.95

**loads-of-folders.zip** A utility to create sequentially numbered folders. Choose folder name, spacer, and how many, and where. OSX 10.7 or greater. Intel 64 bit. Shareware \$4.20

**IPScanner\_latest-3.zip** This is a free (up to 6 only) program to find devices on your network. It will find machine names, users, IP addresses. You can sort the results. The upgrade to more than six devices is \$29.99. OSX 10.7 Intel

**MacGourmetDeluxe-3.dmg** This is the latest update to this recipe manager program. Import from websites. Scales recipes. Create shopping lists. Share on email or Facebook. OSX 10.7+ Intel. Shareware \$49.95

**Quicksilver\_\_16401.dmg** This program is a keyboard based application launcher. Type in a few letters to find an application or file and hit return to launch. Tab will let you quit, trash, or email. Free. Intel 64 bit 10.8 +

**TextWrangler\_4.5.12.dmg** This is the latest version of this text editing software. General purpose but tailored towards programmers. Transform text and manipulate. Free. OSX 10.6.8 +

**TimeMachineEditor.zip** Free utility to change the default one hour interval of time machine backups to something you prefer. Intel OSX 10.8+

See you at the January meeting. The first 8 programs were on the Nov-Dec PD CD. The last 7 will be the combined Jan-Feb one, available at the February meeting.

Jim Pernal PD Editor

Freemium, from p1 added in. With the Reflow button you can make the whole document fit better on your screen so it's easy to find the places you want to edit or change. The free apps, while useful, don't give you all the same features, so it's going to come down to how much you use Office. If your only interest is in making small edits while on the go or creating basic documents, you probably don't need a subscription.

But if you want to create complex brochures with custom colors in Word, customize Pivot Tables in Excel, or use the Presenter view from PowerPoint on your iPhone, you're going to need to pay.

If you do want to pony up for more features, there are a few different pricing tiers for Office 365 subscriptions. For \$9.99 per month, you can get Office for five computers and five mobile devices that include downloadable desktop apps, the mobile apps described here, and free Web-based versions of Office. If you just want a subscription for yourself, you can spend \$6.99 per month for the desktop and mobile versions for one device each, and the free Web-based version. There are also several [subscription plans for businesses](#) depending on the size of your organization.

With a free Microsoft Live account, you automatically get 15GB of free space on OneDrive -- Microsoft's cloud service -- where you can save and open documents across your devices. This latest version also adds Dropbox support to all devices, so between the two services, those who want to make basic edits can easily get by on storage space using the free versions of each service.

Though the free versions are limited, the separate iPhone Office apps are welcome additions. They let you do more than you could with the previous Office for iOS app, and they're free for basic edits without having a subscription. They're also optimized for iPhone with menus and features built for navigating and reading documents on the smaller screen. By breaking out the apps and offering free versions for iPhone to add to the iPad apps, Microsoft has effectively made the Office apps a viable alternative to Apple's iWork suite, giving you another option for productivity on the go. Whether you get a subscription to unlock all the power features is up to you, but if you download the free apps and see how flexible and easy they are to use, you just might pull the trigger.

## Get To Know Your New SBAMUG Officers

### Clarence H Baisdon, SBAMUG President

I am a retired (Twenty-two years) widower with 33 years at Rockwell. I started in 1959, as a Data processing trainee operator and left operations as a shift supervisor. I then become a Systems Analyst, Project Manager, Wang Manager, Administrative Manager, in charge of Hardware (communications, moves of all Wang and telephone equipment, desk top computer support).

My experience with Apple started with my appointment as Project Manager of the LISA beta test. As a result, I became the Apple coordinator and the IBM coordinator, started the Information Center, and conducted requirement studies for all desk top computers. My love of Apple continued thru the years that I was involved in Data Processing. I hope carry on the same tradition that created the SBAMUG.

### Robert Kent McDonald, SBAMUG Vice President

I am a California native, although I went to MIT to study Electrical Engineering. With a BSEE in hand, I hired in at Hughes Aircraft in Culver City on their fellowship program and attended USC to get a MSEE degree while working half time. I began my full-time job at Hughes doing design of airborne digital computers. We were pleased to be building computers based on the integrated circuit NAND gate which facilitated very compact designs; the computer was the size of a shoebox. One of them was the guidance computer in the Polaris missile. I spent the rest of my 38-year career at Hughes, working on very challenging projects involving satellites and supercomputers for the Department of Defense. Our secretaries were eliminated in the 1990's when Mac computers were installed to provide email and a way for engineers to type their reports themselves.

When I retired in 1996, I bought my own PowerMac 7500 to use at home. I upgraded to a 17 inch Flat Panel iMac in 2003, then upgraded to a 27 inch iMac Core i5 in 2009. Now I also own an iPhone 5 and an iPad Air.

When our children were no longer at home, my wife and I moved 14 years ago from our home in Westchester to a new home in Sun City Palm Desert. There, I became involved with the Computer Club which had 1100 members (12% of the residents). The Club had a lab with 25 networked computers (Macs & PCs) used for teaching the club members hands-on classes, as many as 85 per month. I served on the Board of Directors for 12 years, acquiring and maintaining all of the lab equipment. To keep current, we replaced all computers every three years. Also, the software was always kept current. The \$25 per year dues paid for everything; the teachers and officers were unpaid volunteers.

A year ago, we moved back to the South Bay so we would be closer to our children. Now we live in a condo in El Segundo. I joined SBAMUG in September and look forward to interacting with all of the club members. I am attending the Core Group meetings in order to better understand how SBAMUG operates.



*More* **Stuff** by Terri Anderson, CMUG

**Some folks apparently** aren't happy with iTunes 12. Chris Breen in MacWorld has a good step-by-step instructions in Mac 911 from October 29th. Read the full story here <[http://www.macworld.com/article/28397\\_97/unhappy-with-itunes-12-heres-how-to-revert-to-itunes-11.html](http://www.macworld.com/article/28397_97/unhappy-with-itunes-12-heres-how-to-revert-to-itunes-11.html)>

**Rich Mogull has written** an article explaining the ins and outs of Apple Pay, and why it was blocked by Rite Aid, and other retailers recently. You can read full article here: <http://tidbits.com/article/15192>

**A beautifully done TED** talk on The Magic of Truth and Lies (and iPods) [http://www.ted.com/talks/marco\\_temp\\_est\\_the\\_magic\\_of\\_truth\\_and\\_lies\\_on\\_ipods](http://www.ted.com/talks/marco_temp_est_the_magic_of_truth_and_lies_on_ipods)

**Apparently Yosemite** users are having problems with wifi dropping out. It ranges from slow connections to being dropped out continually. Hopefully Apple will find the source of the problem and have a fix soon. Read the Macrumors article here: <http://www.macrumors.com/2014/10/30/yosemite-wi-fi-connection-issues/>

**Before traveling** to an area that might not have cell service, open the area you are traveling to in Google maps. In the search bar, type "ok maps" and the map will be cached for offline use. This is also great for iPads that are only Wi-Fi enabled.

**Find My iPhone** is great as long as the battery is charged. There is a feature to send the location of your iPhone to Apple when the battery is critically low. Go to Settings>iCloud>Find My iPhone to turn it on.

## **A Little Abracadabra on the Phone, App Smart** By [KIT EATON](#)

THOUGH few of us will ever be as deft at prestidigitation as Penn and Teller, or as slick at illusion as David Blaine, most of us already possess a tool for performing impressive conjuring tricks: a smartphone. With the right apps and a bit of practice, your smartphone can help you learn classic magic and even play a part in some 21st-century sleight of hand.

iForce by Rostami Magic, \$3 on [iOS](#) and [Android](#), demonstrates that some of the best magic tricks are the simplest. With nothing more than a bit of chatter, some pretend dabbling on the screen and a good memory, iForce can trick someone into thinking you have psychic powers. The setup is classic: You ask your targets to think of something, then you pretend to guess the answer, and finally show them the correct answer from a prearranged set. iForce's main interface pretends to be a simple

drawing app, and you demonstrate a sketch to your targets to fool them into believing you. For the trick, you ask them to, for example, think of a number from one to four, and pretend to draw it on the screen. Then you put your phone down on its face, ask them the number they have been thinking of, and then pick up the phone to show them that you correctly "drew" the right answer. The trick is how you flip your phone over. The app uses your phone's sensors to detect how you are turning it over (flip up from the right, for example, or flip up from the left), and shows a number that correlates with your action. If you're chatting with your target and are deft with flipping the phone over, that person will be fooled, though probably only once and only if the person has not read this article. The interface makes it easy to activate the setup. You can make a number of psychic "guesses," including world foods and predicting heads-or-tails coin tosses. You select the right answer for each category by turning your phone over a certain way and at a certain speed. It takes practice, but it can be amazing.

iSensorMagic is \$1 on [iOS](#) and does a similar trick, but only with one set of symbols. It's limited, but good for a laugh or two. If you're more interested in learning some classic magic routines, then my choice is Magic Tricks Pro. It's free on [Android](#) and on [iOS](#), but you have to pay for some extras. Magic Tricks Pro offers a long list of the classic card and coin tricks you probably have seen close-up magicians perform. You get an indication of the trick's complexity, and videos to demonstrate the tricks. In the first video, you watch the trick being performed; the second video walks you through how to perform the trick, including the skills you will need to learn, like how to hold your props properly. With the help of one of the videos and just five minutes of practice, I was able to make a salt cellar "travel" through a table. The app is straightforward, and the videos are effective teaching aids. But not all the tricks are stunning, and you have to pay as much as \$3 each to view many of the videos. This could become expensive.

Fans of card tricks may prefer the free [Android](#) app Magic Card Tricks by Montysmagic. Like Magic Tricks Pro, this app also teaches you classic close-up routines, focusing on card tricks. But instead of videos, it uses text-based instructions and lots of diagrams. The illustrations are good, but I found it easier to learn from videos. Your experience may be different.

For a close-up card trick that involves using your phone, look no further than Magic Trick #1 by Mikael Montier, \$1 on [iOS](#) and \$2 on [Android](#). This is another "guess the card" trick, but the reveal involves rubbing your phone's screen to uncover the correct card. You won't need much practice or memorization, and if you follow the video instructions closely you will look very clever indeed. I won't tell you how it works, but you will love its simplicity. The same maker has other apps on Google Play and in Apple's store, all with similar great-looking design. Just remember to practice first.

## Being Your Own Trash Collector

by Jeremy Holt in Tech Tails #911, weekly newsletter of Small Dog Electronics

subscribe at <http://www.smalldog.com/newsletters/subscribe-to-our-fun-informative-newsletters>

The trash feature of any operating system is quite vital. Sure, we all take for granted the fact that we can delete files as quickly as we create them, but what if you couldn't move a file to the trash or, worse, empty the trash successfully?

Well, I'm happy to inform you that there are ways to resolve this issue, one that, if it goes unresolved, can create a space limitation on your hard drive. Think of it this way, simply because you put trash in a garbage can doesn't mean the trash collector is going to come each week. Here are a few tips/tricks that can resolve your trash-can issue. In the case of owning a computer, **you** are essentially the trash collector who's responsible for emptying your trash. This might seem like common sense, but you'd be surprised how many people operate on an "out of sight, out of mind" mentality when it comes to file organization.

Hopefully the following tips and tricks help provide you a resolution:

In Mac OS X, each user account has a separate, invisible Trash folder that is in the home folder. When you view contents of the Trash, you see only items you placed there and not the Trash folder of any other accounts. If other writable volumes are present, you may also have individual Trash folders on these volumes.

How to delete a file:

1. Drag an item's icon to the Trash (in the Dock), or select the item and press

Command-Delete. [PS from Richard: Or right-click or ctrl-click on it to bring up a contextual menu, from which you select "Move to Trash".]

2. Choose Empty Trash from the Finder menu. [PS from Richard: Or use the key-board shortcut combo  $\uparrow$   $\mathbb{A}$   $\mathbb{X}$ .]

Note: If you're trying to delete a file that wasn't completely downloaded or copied, you may get a warning message that it wasn't possible to empty the trash.

Tip: In Mac OS X v10.3 or later, you can **securely** delete items by choosing Secure Empty Trash from the Finder menu. That doesn't merely delete its listing in the index, it completely overwrites the part of the disk where the file was stored. Naturally, this takes longer.

If you change your mind about deleting the item before you choose Empty Trash:

1. Click the Trash icon in the dock.
2. Drag the item out of the Trash.

If you can't empty the Trash or move a file to the Trash:

For example, this message might appear when you try to empty the Trash: "The operation could not be completed because "[item name]" is locked."

First, try holding the Option key as you choose Empty Trash from the Finder menu. If that fails, check for these conditions:

Is the file locked? To find out if the file is locked, select the file you are trying to move, then choose Get Info from the File menu. If the "Locked" box is checked, deselect (click it to uncheck) it, then try moving the file to the Trash again. (For more advanced help, see [http://support.apple.com/kb/TS1402?viewlocale=en\\_US&locale=en\\_US](http://support.apple.com/kb/TS1402?viewlocale=en_US&locale=en_US)).

B) Do you have correct permissions to modify the file? Every file and folder in Mac OS X has some permission settings to help define what you or other users can do with the file or folder, for example whether you may modify it or not. If see an alert box with a message that says you do not have "sufficient" privilege or permission, use the Disk Utility to "Repair Disk Permissions",\* and then try again. (For more advanced help, see <http://support.apple.com/kb/HT2963>)

C) Does the file or volume have special characters? Usually, Mac OS X can delete files whose names contain special characters, but sometimes you might need to follow this advice.

1. Note the name of the volume which the files are being deleted from. If you are not sure of the item's location, you can verify that by selecting it then choosing Show Info from the File menu. If the name of the volume contains any special ASCII characters, such as a bullet or trademark character, temporarily rename the volume so that it does not contain these characters.
2. Example: If you cannot delete files from a volume named ".Dox", rename the volume to "Dox". After the Trash is empty, restore the volume's original name as desired.
3. Examine the name of the files or folders you cannot delete. They should not contain a solidus ("slash", "/") character or any other special ASCII character such as a trademark, quotation mark, or copy-right symbol. If the file does, remove the special character or slash from its name, then delete it.

*Example:* If you cannot delete a file named "Things/stuff.", rename the file to just "t", then delete it.

Remember to always delete your Trash, as the files/data that can accumulate in there are still taking up space on your hard drive.

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\*For Mac OS X 10.2 or later, open Disk Utility (/Applications/Utilities/). Select your Mac OS X startup volume in the column on the left of the Disk Utility window, then click the First Aid tab. Click the Repair Disk Permissions button.

*Reprinted from Southern Wisconsin Apple Group  
September SWAGger newsletter*

## Retina 5K iMac: Powerful Proof of the PC Renaissance, by Farhad Manjoo, NY Times

About a year before he died, [Steve Jobs was asked](#) at a conference to predict the future of the market for personal computers. Back in the late 1970s, as the chief executive and a co-founder of [Apple](#), Mr. Jobs had presided over the birth of the PC industry, but then, after blockbuster sales of the iPhone and the iPad, he had taken to describing the tech business as entering the “post-PC” era. Did he really believe that desktop and laptop computers were going extinct?

He reached for an analogy. “When we were an agrarian nation, all cars were trucks, because that’s what you needed on the farm,” [Mr. Jobs said](#). But as farming died off and people in urban areas began to buy automobiles, the auto market split into distinct categories. There were easy to use, relatively maintenance-free cars for everyday drivers, and powerful, specialty vehicles like trucks for people who needed to get stuff done. Laptops and desktops “are going to be like trucks,” Mr. Jobs predicted. “They’re still going to be around. They’re still going to have a lot of value. But they’re going to be used by one out of x people.”

Four years later, Mr. Jobs’s predictions have pretty much panned out. It is estimated that the number of smartphones and tablets in use around the world [surpassed two billion](#) in 2014, eclipsing the number of laptops and desktops in use. But just as Mr. Jobs argued, the rise of mobile devices has not led to the death of desktops and laptops. In 2014 the once-sharp decline in PC sales [began to level off](#). In some ways this year was a renaissance for the personal computer as our laptops and desktops acquired fantastic new powers that made them better than ever.

We saw the rise of [Chromebooks](#), the [Google](#)-powered laptops that run an operating system based on the Chrome web browser, which often sell for around \$200. Because they’re inexpensive and easy to maintain, Chromebooks [began to cut into the low end of the computer market](#) in 2014, and they’ve [proved especially popular in education](#), where teachers and parents appreciate their simple design. Responding to the potential threat posed by Chromebooks, Microsoft released a version of its Windows operating system that manufacturers began to include in inexpensive machines. Hewlett-Packard, for instance, released the [Stream 11](#), a Windows laptop that sells for \$200 and comes with a free subscription to Microsoft Office apps and one terabyte of online storage. You can think of Chromebooks, inexpensive Windows machines, mobile phones and tablets as the cars of the tech business. And this year, low-priced Chromebooks and Windows machines helped the PC industry hold steady against the rise of phones. But there’s a question of long-term viability. How long can PC makers survive by selling cut-rate devices?

Enter [Apple](#) and the [new iMac](#) it unveiled in the fall, an expensive desktop with a beautiful, high-resolution screen. If Chromebooks are cars, the new iMac is the world’s best truck. It’s a device optimized for professionals, not casual

users, and it blazes a path forward for the once-beleaguered PC industry. As phones and tablets become more powerful and useful, and as they begin to occupy more of our time, PC manufacturers will have to create computers that take advantage of PCs’ shape, size and power. They’ll have to find new features that can’t be mimicked by smartphones. With a display unmatched by any other computing device you can buy today, the new iMac does just that. That’s why, of the dozens of new tech devices I tried this year, it was my favorite.

Playing the high end has proved lucrative for Apple. It may be that the ubiquity of smartphones had increased the appeal of Macs. Because people are shifting more of their computing to mobile devices, they’re waiting longer to replace their PCs. The longer ownership period helps people justify buying Apple’s high-end machines. The new iMac has a 27-inch, Retina 5K display, meaning that its screen has about 5,000 lines of resolution horizontally and nearly 15 million pixels across the entire display. That’s about seven times as many as you’d find on a high-definition television set. All those pixels make for a luxuriously sharp picture. Text sparkles and images pop, and when you switch back to a computer with a normal screen, your eyes beg you to reconsider. At least, mine did. Years of staring at bad screens has turned my eyes into ruined orbs, but now, finally, I’d encountered a computer display that was good to them. When it was time to return the review model that Apple sent me, I hated to part with it. So I did something crazy: I bought a Retina 5K iMac of my own.

These machines aren’t cheap. The Retina 5K iMac starts at \$2,500, which is \$700 more than the non-Retina 27-inch iMac, and thousands more than you’d pay for a run-of-the-mill desktop computer. Still, for what you get, it’s not all that much. Last year Dell introduced a stand-alone 5K monitor that it planned to sell for \$2,500 — the same price as Apple’s entire computer, for just the screen. Shortly after the iMac was announced, [Dell reduced the price of its display](#) to \$2,000. But when you pair that display with a computer powerful enough to handle it, you’re bound to spend more than what you’ll pay for Apple’s all-in-one machine. If you’re looking for a desktop with a screen this good, Apple’s desktop is the way to go. Apple is unlikely to sell the new iMac in high volumes. It’s a computer intended specifically for a small niche audience of photographers, video editors, animators, digital producers and Web-addled writers like me — people who spend a lot of time on their machines and are willing to pay for high-end tools. Still, even if Apple doesn’t sell millions, the new iMac is an object lesson. If you’re a casual computer user — looking only to surf the web, check email and do other light tasks — you don’t need much more than a Chromebook or a tablet these days. You could probably get by with just a phone. But as the low end of the PC business is swallowed by cheap devices, the only people left in the market for traditional PCs will be professionals. Apple’s recent success shows that professionals still love PCs, and they’ll even pay large sums for them. Some people will always need trucks.

# PERIODICALS

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