

printout

Keystone MacCentral Macintosh Users Group ❖ <http://www.keystonemac.com>

iPhoto '08

by Gary Brandt

We will continue with the iPhoto '08 Essential Training DVD at our June meeting since we did not have time to review everything on the DVD in May. We still have to cover working with RAW files and metadata in iPhoto. The DVD also covers sharing photos online, printing photos, and backing up your photos.

KeyMac will go on summer hiatus after the June meeting with no meetings scheduled for July or August. We will be back to our meeting schedule on the third Tuesday of the month beginning again in September.

Meet us at

Gannett Fleming
Gannett West Building
209 Senate Ave ❖ Camp Hill

Tuesday, June 17, 2008, 6:30 p.m.

Attendance is free and open to all interested persons.

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Keystone MacCentral is a not-for-profit group of Macintosh enthusiasts who generally meet the third Tuesday of every month to exchange information, participate in question-and-answer sessions, view product demonstrations, and obtain resource materials that will help them get the most out of their computer systems. Meetings are free and open to the public. The *Keystone MacCentral Printout* is the official newsletter of Keystone MacCentral and an independent publication not affiliated or otherwise associated with or sponsored or sanctioned by any for-profit organization, including Apple Computer, Inc. Copyright © 2008, Keystone MacCentral, 305 Somerset Drive, Shiresmanstown, PA 17011.

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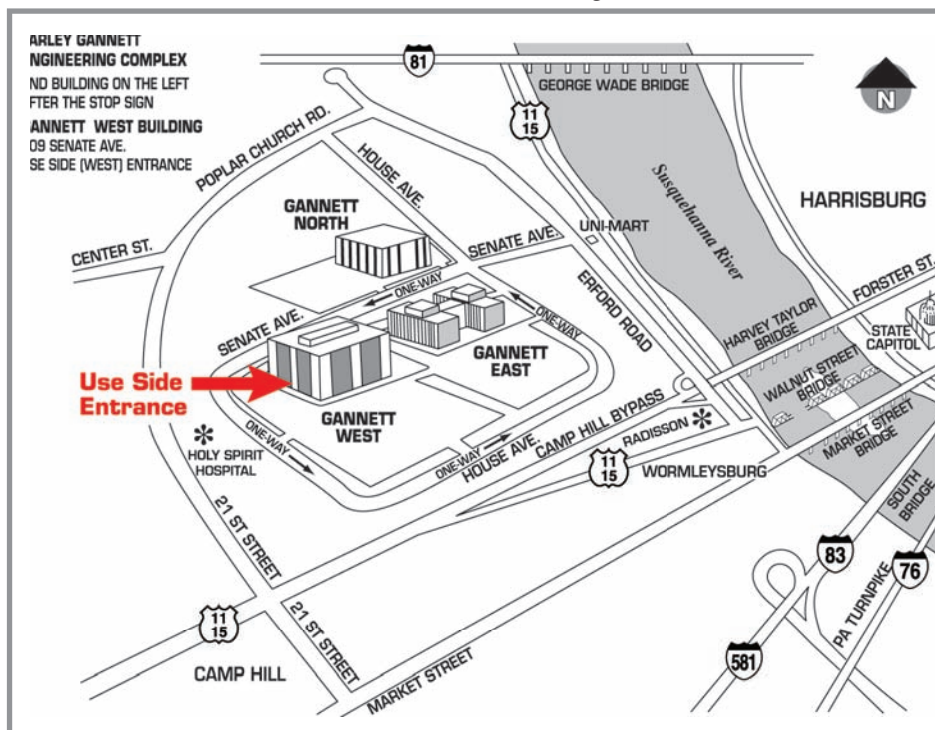
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President's Corner

Wow, I can't believe that it is already June and that school, for the students anyway, is now out. I guess it really is true that "time flies when you're having fun," because this was another good year for me and, I hope, for my students. We followed the usual 9th and 10th English curriculum and while doing so also made frequent use of the MacBooks that were part of the Classrooms for the Future grant in 2006-07. Naturally, as a teacher and a techie, I fully support this technology initiative and believe that integrating technology into the curriculum is essential since today's schools must produce the workers of tomorrow. Many adults see school-aged kids with their ubiquitous cell phones and believe that all kids are skilled in the use of technology. This is not true. Most kids are very good with cell phones, not only talking on them but also text messaging because they have the phones and want to use them to stay in close contact with their friends. There are two keys elements here: they have the phones and they want to use them. This is not always the case with computers, even in relatively affluent suburban districts like West Shore. True, most families have a computer in the house but some of those computers are rather old and don't have internet connections. Others are high-end machines that parents use for work and thus don't allow their children to access. Others don't have any word processing application beyond Note Pad that comes with PC's and lacks many necessary features when trying to format the Works Cited page for a research paper. Most of the computers are Windows machines, and when anything goes wrong, it seems that neither the students nor the parents can fix the problem themselves, requiring a trip to the repair shop. I have suggested reinstalling the program or the operating system to both students and parents when it seems like the problem is software based, but most seem intimidated by the process and prefer taking the Windows computer to the repair shop. (See the advantage we Mac users have? Most of us can troubleshoot our own machines, and we have the popular Q&A section of our monthly meetings to ask for help when needed!)

Of course, **wanting** to use the computers is the other factor. As far as applications that allow students to exercise their creativity to produce iMovies or the Windows' equivalent MovieMaker, those are few and far between. Thus, if students are to learn how to use computers for more than email and word processing, technology in the schools is essential. My students can now plan and create iMovies,

learning how to conduct an effective, interesting interview in the process and can also plan, film, and create a Comic-Life production to tell the story of Romeo and Juliet or Julius Caesar. Both projects were fun but were also very educational. Not all education can be fun (Remember memorizing the multiplication tables?) but when learning is fun, students are more likely to do it. Some of my students have Macs at home and thus are "ahead of the curve," and able not only to create great projects themselves but also to help others. While my Mac experts were finishing their own projects and providing some quick solutions for classmates who needed just a little guidance, I was able to work individually with some 9th and 10th grade students who were new to Macs and who were using a computer to do something creative for the first time in their lives. These students were not from WSSD since we have been a Mac district for many years; some were from parochial schools or other states, while one had been home-schooled. All of the Mac newbies thought Macs were fun to use once they learned how to use iMovie and ComicLife and were pleased with their projects, while still wishing that they had been able to match the excellent projects of their more experienced peers. I told them, "next year" and they enthusiastically agreed. I believe that all students deserve the chance to see how they can expand the curriculum through the use of technology and thus urge all of you as taxpayers to support the governor's Classrooms for the Future initiative. Even if you just think of your own self-interest, today's students will be paying taxes in the future, and they will be able to contribute a lot more to our social security as well-paid professionals than as entry-level service employees.

Although school is out, learning still goes on. I am looking forward to three days of computer training during summer academies since teachers must keep learning if we are to continue coming up with new ways to integrate the curriculum and technology for our students. As a KeyMac member, you too can continue to learn. While we won't be getting together during July and August, our June meeting will offer another chance to expand your knowledge and our excellent website will continue to provide links to multiple sources of information. Who knows-you may even win the donated MacPro Video certificate that will provide you with free online training for your choice of applications! So please join us for our June 17 meeting and keep on learning and enjoying your Mac while enjoying a wonderful and well-earned summer vacation! ☺

Keystone MacCentral Minutes

May 20, 2008

Business Meeting

President Linda Cober brought the meeting to order and announced that the election of officers would be held later in the evening so late arrivals could vote. Gary Brandt mentioned that the newly elected board would meet on June 2, 2008. Webmaster Linda Smith was working on a new pick of the month for the web site. She got it posted during the meeting. Her pick was the freeComics widget which can retrieve more than 100 comic strips from the web.

Q&A & Comments

Someone reported having a problem with a Maxtor 1 TB USB hard drive. One day, the drive's icon did not appear on the desktop despite his best efforts. He reported that Maxtor replaced the drive with minimal hassle. Tucker Hill also has been having a problem with a hard drive. He has about 20 GB of files backed up but the drive is reporting having 200 GB on it. Someone suggested that his drive might need to be reformatted in HFS+ format. That comment led to a suggestion to reformat a new hard drive before using it.

Linda Cober mentioned a five year old iMac that still starts up but the screen remains black. To tell whether it's a video problem or software related, an attempt to start up from a CD or DVD should be made. Linda can hook up the iMac in question to a projector at school to check if she can see the screen that way. She wants to back up some files from the iMac.

We talked a little more about backup strategies. Jim Carey said he backs up only his user folder. Of course, he has also been diligent in backing up his applications along with serial numbers onto a DVD so they can be reinstalled when necessary. After reinstalling any applications, Jim checks online for any updates. After he has the System and applications installed, he then can reload his latest backup of his user folder.

Election

The election of board members to serve a two year term was held at the conclusion of the Q & A period. Linda Cober said we would welcome any member being nominated for any board position. The currently serving Key-Mac board had all agreed with one exception to run for the same positions they were in. Abigail Schearer had decided not to run for Corresponding Secretary so that position was open. Tucker Hill nominated Sandra Cober for the Corresponding Secretary position. Jim Carey seconded and Sandy agreed to the nomination. No other nominations were made from the floor so a vote to elect the slate of candidates as listed in the May newsletter along with Sandy as Corresponding Secretary was held. The full slate was voted in by a majority voice vote.

Program Notes

At the May meeting, we watched portions of the iPhoto '08 Essential Training DVD. At various times during the viewing, our resident photog Jim Carey offered some additional editorial insights. Jim prefaced the program by giving his recommendation for the *iPhoto '08 - The Missing Manual* book. This book, written by David Pogue, offers some tips and tricks that you might not find anywhere else. Jim recommended two photography related podcasts as well. The DVD's narrator Derrick Story posts regular podcasts at thedigitalstory.com and the TWIP podcast can be found through iTunes. In iPhoto '08, photos are stored in Events, which are grouped by creation date. Before we began with the DVD, Jim demonstrated scrolling through an event by scrubbing the cursor left and right over the event's key frame.

We started the DVD with the section giving an overview of new and improved features in the latest version of iPhoto. Edit mode was demonstrated with its much improved Adjust palette. Import is also better. You can now see all of the photos on your memory card before you decide which

ones you want to import. You should set the Events preferences to set an event's length before importing.

Derrick opened his .mac Web Gallery to demonstrate its features. He showed how to use the Adjust palette which has some new features in iPhoto '08. If you have a series of photos shot under the same lighting conditions, you can copy the adjustments you have made to the first photo and apply them to the rest of the series. Both automatic and manual red-eye adjustments can be made. The Retouch tool has also been improved.

We jumped to the Organizing Your Photos section of the DVD where Derrick went into more detail about setting Events preferences. You have choices when auto-splitting an event; one event per day, one event per week, or two or eight hour gaps. You can also create a new event from the Events menu after selecting the photos you want to include. If you decide to change an event after importing, iPhoto '08 offers options for splitting or merging events.

The key photo for an event can be changed. Derrick demonstrated two ways. Control-clicking on a photo will bring up a popup menu with this command. The Events menu also has the command for changing a key photo. Jim demonstrated a third way to change the key photo. He selected an image and dragged it to the top of the Events thumbnails window.

Jim prints from iPhoto but before doing that, he makes certain to set his print settings to have iPhoto handle the color correction, rather than having his printer do it. Jim also described how he uses a GPS unit synced with his camera as we waited for disk two of the DVD to load.

We watched portions of the Basic Editing Tools section, beginning with the Straighten tool. This tool overlays a grid over your photo which can be used to straighten it both horizontally and vertically. It will also crop the resulting uneven corners. Clicking the Enhance tool will correct an image using iPhoto's best guess. You can hold down the Shift key to toggle back and forth between the corrected image and the original. Automatic or manual red-eye adjustments can be done. In manual mode you control the tool diameter. Derrick suggested enlarging an image when working on red-eye. In edit mode you can press the **1** key to enlarge 100% and the **0** (zero) key to fit the image in the frame. New in iPhoto '08 is the ability to adjust the brush size with the Retouch tool. This tool picks up pixels from the circle so the circle needs to be large enough so it does not pick up pixels from the area you are trying to correct. The Effects palette has thumbnail views of the various effects you can use on a photo. These effects can be used in combinations which Derrick demonstrated in the video.

We also watched the section on advanced editing techniques. Derrick explained the Command-Option-F

key combo to go to full screen mode. When editing in full screen mode, you can use keyboard shortcuts to access the adjustment tools. Derrick explained how to adjust levels. The histogram should normally span the whole width for most photos. Increasing contrast in a photo will spread out the histogram toward both ends. Highlight and shadow recovery are new to iPhoto '08 and Derrick showed how to use those sliders. These adjustments work with high resolution JPEGs. Low resolution photos don't have enough information for adjustments. Derrick used his sample photos to demonstrate adjusting temperature and tint. He explained that these adjustments are more of a personal preference. Adjusting sharpness can introduce noise into a photo. The Adjust palette also has an automatic correction button that you can try.

Jim brought in some of his photos to give us a live demonstration of some of the adjustments available in iPhoto. He opened a RAW file to show us how a RAW file needs to be adjusted. Jim also explained how to upload to a .mac Web Gallery. He showed us several sample albums he had uploaded using KeyMac's .mac account. Jim demonstrated the download process from a Web Gallery. You can choose to allow downloads and limit access to a web gallery.

Jim won't be at the June KeyMac meeting to share his expertise with us but Derrick will return (on the DVD, of course) as we continue learning about iPhoto '08. The DVD has sections on sharing and printing photos and tagging them for easier searching. We hope to see you there.

Raffle

We had several raffle winners at the end of our May meeting. Tom Owad won an iKlear cleaning kit. Sandy Cober was the winner of a gift certificate for a free download from macProVideo.com's web site. 🗑️



Backscatter Spam

New type of spam attack is growing exponentially

We reported two weeks ago that the User-groups.net and graphic-design.com was pounded and pounded for several days by thousands of Backscatter Spam. To guard ourselves, I deleted ALL the e-mail addresses to both domains, switching exclusively to SpamCop. Now, my e-mail was bouncing back to them. The problem is, it was bouncing good mail too. Hundreds of contacts had to be notified of the switch. Fortunately, I caught it early enough and was able to avoid the fate of another site, freedom-to-tinker.com, which was hit last week, and as of today, has still not come back up.

In Backscatter Spam the spammer grabs your e-mail address, using it in the from-line of a mass-spam. The rest of the spam is the same as usual. Since the "sent from" line looks legit, e-mail filters intercept the spam. If it hits a dead address then the mail bounces back to — guess who? You — that's who. Or, in our case, ME!

A recent ComputerWorld.com article reports that this type of spam attack is growing exponentially.

Backscatter Spam Tips from Fred:

You can stop sending mail about this problem. Since I first reported on the spam slam, I've received over 100 e-mails from other users having the same problem. So far, it cannot easily be reported to SpamCop or the other automated spam reporting systems. So, if you're one of the unfortunate e-mail users to be hit by 'backscatter spam' (See article #2 above) here is an easy way to deal with it immediately:

- 1) Create a folder: in your e-mail program, set up a new folder called "bounces"
- 2) Filter "Subject": set up a filter which parses the "Subject" line for the following:
 - undeliverable
 - deliver
 - failed
 - undelivered
 - failure
 - blocked
- 3) Filter "Sender": set up a filter which parses the "Sent By" field. (Some filters will allow multiple criteria. If yours does, you can add this to the "Subject" filter too.)
 - postmaster
 - MAILER-DAEMON
 - localhost

Set the filter to move these e-mails into your newly created "bounces" folder. From there you can search for the "good"

bounces, if there are any. Usually, you'll remember people you e-mailed to in the past 24 hours or so, and you can visually check those out in the Bounces folder listing. Once you're satisfied no good mail has been filtered, you can simply delete all the spams. For a very small measure of pleasure, Mac users can just select all, and click the "bounce" button to bounce the mail back to the senders. But I didn't advocate that.

Isn't it a true travesty that good people have to put up with this garbage from the bad people in the world. Too bad IPv6 is not fully implemented.

For now, there's a solution for Windows users:

Astaro Corporation has deployed Astaro Security Gateway, which can detect and block what is known as backscatter.

Astaro Security Gateway implements an open source solution called BATV, which stands for Bounce Address Tag Validation, in order to combat this type of spam. This program embeds an encrypted signature into the hidden header of every outgoing mail message. Every time a bounce e-mail comes into the Astaro product, it checks for this code. "If the signature is not there," says Astaro Product Evangelist Angelo Comazzetto, "we know with great certainty that the message did not originate from someone behind our device, and the message can thus be disposed of."

Spammers use backscatter to target e-mail recipients by means of creating false "bounce" messages to them. Due to the legitimate-looking nature of this type of message, it has a very high open/read rate compared to normal spam. Further, many inferior mail-filters automatically pass bounce messages through their various anti-spam checks in order to ensure delivery of the notification-style message to the user. The spammer has therefore met his objective and delivered his message to the intended recipient through a third party mail server, and the user is highly likely to read it.

BATV is enabled by default in Astaro Security Gateway and can be toggled by way of a single check box.

Comazzetto explains further, "While rare, administrators of those domains that have any issues with BATV can make use of a granular exceptions list that can be used to remove senders, recipients, or entire domains from BATV and/or our other checks."

Astaro Corporation is headquartered in Burlington, Massachusetts and Karlsruhe, Germany. The Astaro Security Gateway, simplifying e-mail, Web & Network Security,

has won numerous industry awards and is protecting over 30,000 networks in 60 countries. Astaro products are distributed by a worldwide network of nearly 2,500 solution partners who offer local support and services. For more information, please visit www.astaro.com. Burlington, MA (May 08,2008)

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by Adam C. Engst

Extend the Functionality of Canon Point-and-Shoot Cameras

I'm always a little depressed when someone beats me to writing a cool article, and this one was on my list. In this case, however, Adam Pash at Lifehacker has done a [fine job of explaining a neat hack](#) for many consumer-grade Canon point-and-shoot digital cameras. [CHDK](#), for Canon Hacker's Development Kit, is a non-destructive firmware enhancement that adds six categories of features:

- Enhanced ways of recording, including support for raw format images, longer video times, and additional video compression options.
- Additional data on the camera's LCD, including a histogram, battery life indicator, depth of focus, and more.
- More photographic settings, such as longer exposure times, faster shutter speeds, and automatic bracketing of exposure.
- Scripts that can automate various camera functions. Scripts are written in a version of BASIC. With these scripts, you can do things like take multiple photos with different exposures, or even take a picture when the camera detects motion.
- Remote control of the camera (either taking a picture or running a script) via the camera's USB connection.
- Various new capabilities for the camera, such as a file browser for the memory card, games like Reversi, and so on.

CHDK works with a number of Canon models, though not all of them, so you'll need to check [the compatibility list](#) before going any further (and no, as far I can tell, no other manufacturer's cameras have any CHDK-like hacks). What's especially nice about CHDK, apart from all the useful functionality it provides, is that it modifies the camera's firmware only when you explicitly load it, and everything is back to normal when you next power up the camera.

Have fun hacking! 📄

by Joe Kissell

Getting to Know the Nabaztag Internet Rabbit

Shortly after I moved to France last year, Glenn Fleishman offered to introduce me to his contacts at a company called [Violet](#) that's based here in Paris. (And thus, by the way, it's pronounced "vee-oh-LAY.") Violet is best known as the developer of the [Nabaztag](#) Internet-enabled rabbit, and this product sounded sufficiently wacky that I was delighted to pay its creators a visit. It turned out they're located just down the street from me, about a ten-minute walk away, and I'd unknowingly passed their offices dozens of times already. So I set up an appointment, and Morgen and I met with Rafi Haladjian (one of the Nabaztag's inventors) and Jean-François Kitten (yes, apparently his real name) for a personal, hands-on demo of the Wi-Fi bunny.



That was more than seven months ago. Ever since, I've intended to write about the Nabaztag and the philosophy behind it, but every time I've started pondering what to say, I've gotten profoundly stuck. Even now, I'm not entirely sure what to think of it. I believe I could argue with

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Getting to Know the Nabaztag Internet Rabbit

equal conviction that this device is surprisingly useful or a ridiculous waste of \$165. In any case, there's certainly more to this gadget than meets the eye. Luckily (or unluckily, depending on your point of view), little appears to have changed in the Internet rabbit arena since last fall, so I believe my observations are still pertinent.

Nabaztag Basics — First things first: how does one pronounce this strange word? I wrote it phonetically in my notes the way its designer said it — roughly, “NAB-us-tag,” where the stress is on the first syllable and the middle vowel is a schwa. It's the Armenian word for “rabbit,” and it seems to make as little sense to French-speaking people as it does in English.

In case you've not kept up with the news in rabbit technology over the past few years, let me give you a quick description of the Nabaztag. It's a rounded conical hunk of plastic about 9 inches (23 cm) tall (including the two protruding ears), with eyes and a nose painted on front, a belly-button microphone, and a single button on top — but no other visible user interface. You plug in the AC adapter (it doesn't work with Energizer batteries, sorry) and it connects to the nearest open Wi-Fi network. (There are provisions to use password-protected networks, too, though they require a bit of fiddling to set up.) When the bunny powers on, several multicolored LEDs glow from behind the plastic case, and the motorized ears spin around in a manner that would surely be quite painful for a real rabbit.

Then you go to a Web page to register your adopted rabbit — yes, they say “adopt” to mean “buy” — and specify a bunch of preferences and personal information such as where you live and what kinds of news and music you're interested in. From then on, your Nabaztag becomes an interactive network appliance that can do any or all of a long list of things. For example, various combinations of lights (solid or blinking, in different configurations and colors) could indicate:

- The current or predicted weather
- The status of stocks or other financial indices of interest to you
- The air quality outside
- How many new e-mail messages you have in your inbox
- Whether someone has left you a voice message

The built-in microphone and speaker extend the list of capabilities much further. To mention just a few examples, the Nabaztag can:

- Read headlines from your favorite RSS feeds in a synthesized voice
- Play Internet radio stations or podcasts
- Announce the current time periodically
- Act as a non-real-time intercom with another Nabaztag — press the button, record a message, and it's sent to someone else's rabbit for playback
- Respond to spoken commands (a recording of your voice is sent to Violet's servers, where it's run through a speech recognition algorithm and the resulting command is sent back to your Nabaztag)

Oh, and let's not forget the ears! Normally they spin at various times without any particular meaning. But you can configure them in arbitrary positions and send them to your friend's Nabaztag (alone or along with a voice message) — and your friend's Nabaztag's ears will assume the same positions. (For example, point both ears down to mean “I'm sad” or whatever.) Hey, who needs video, voice, text, or even flashing lights when we have digital semaphores! For some reason, this capability tickled me more than anything else the little bunny can do. (Oh, and if you pair your Nabaztag with someone else's to “hard-wire” messages like ear positions between the two rabbits, that's called marrying them. Yep. To the best of my knowledge, though, they only reproduce within Violet's factory.)

Last but not least is a built-in RFID reader. The idea is that you buy special RFID tags called “Ztamps” to stick on your keys, glasses, and other objects. When these objects come into proximity with your Nabaztag's nose, it notices they're there and can take whatever action you want, such as playing a sound or sending a message. As far as I can tell, the Ztamps aren't yet available separately, but Violet does sell a variety of Ztamp-equipped children's books (in French only, for now). When your child holds one of these books up to the Nabaztag, the rabbit reads the book aloud. That's right: your robot rabbit can relieve you of the tedium of bonding with your kids by reading them their bedtime story. (I have yet to see a child interact with a Nabaztag in person, and I'm thinking it's possibly best that way.)

Although the Nabaztag comes pre-configured to deliver certain kinds of information right out of the burrow — um, box — the company expects and encourages extensive personalization and even hacking; they also offer an API for third-party developers to create their own applications and services. (Some Nabaztag services are free, by the way, while others require a paid subscription.) There's even a healthy aftermarket for replacement ears in a variety of colors and patterns.

By the way, I should mention that the current generation of Internet rabbit is called “Nabaztag/tag” — I guess that’s Armenian rabbit-speak for “rabbit 2.0” — the original Nabaztag, which is still available for about \$95, doesn’t include the microphone or RFID reader, and doesn’t support WPA encryption or streaming MP3 audio. The company representatives I spoke to said that future generations would be designated with additional “/tag” endings. Perhaps they’ll come with a selection of RFID Nabaztag/tag/tag tags.

Down the Rabbit Hole — All right, so you can buy this groovy little bunny appliance thingy that can do a million and one things, but who really needs one? The candid answer, according to Violet’s Haladjian, is no one. He’d be the first to admit, he says, that Internet rabbits aren’t going to change the world, that he’s not looking to build the future of his company on plastic bunnies. The Nabaztag is simply the first example of a larger idea Violet is trying to promote — that of leveraging the power of ubiquitous wireless Internet access to turn ordinary objects into smart objects. We’re accustomed, he explained, to having a computer screen (or, at least, some kind of screen) mediate our experience of the Internet. But although computers make good all-purpose tools, there’s life beyond the PC — and there are other, simpler and more direct ways to use that near-universal connectivity. So think of the Nabaztag as a rather elaborate proof of concept for a future in which lots of friendly little objects can do lots of useful things by virtue of being connected to each other and to a global source of infinite data. Violet’s ambition is to connect everything in the world, and they’re starting by connecting small, familiar-ish objects.

That word “friendly,” by the way, is key. As an example, Haladjian cited home automation systems, which have been around for decades, but which, he says, are still complex and intimidating enough to scare away many people. A little rabbit with funny ears and a single button, on the other hand, isn’t intimidating. You interact with it in natural ways like talking to it and holding objects in front of it rather than by connecting wires and looking at a screen and typing or mousing. So it hints at a more user-friendly future of [invisible computing](#) in which much simpler objects with embedded computers replace many of the functions for which we currently rely on full-blown desktop or laptop computers.

This idea, of course, is not unique to Violet or the Nabaztag. For example, a company called [Ambient](#) offers a number of small Internet-enabled devices, such as the \$150 [Ambient Orb](#), which glows in different colors to indicate information like traffic, weather, and stock prices; and the \$124.99 [Ambient Umbrella](#), whose handle glows when rain is expected. You can buy standalone devices to stream Internet radio, and even the [Apple TV](#) is a type of Internet appliance. (There’s also the \$179.95 [Chumby](#), a little Wi-Fi-connected gadget that can serve up the time, weather, traffic,

news, music, and so on — though unlike the others mentioned here, it still relies on a conventional LCD screen to display data, making it more like a keyboard-less computer than an appliance; see “[Chumby: The Beanbag Computer](#),” 2007-12-14.) In any case, the Nabaztag is the only one I can think of with anthropomorphic (or, uh, kuniklomorphic) characteristics.

The question is why someone might find a Nabaztag (or any other such appliance) worth buying when their existing, conventional computer can do almost all the same things (though I’ve never seen a Mac with motorized ears). The Violet reps suggested that the Nabaztag is especially good for applications that aren’t worth your full attention — for providing information in the background, perhaps even while you’re focused on some other task on your computer. I think that’s on the right track. I can attest that as an introvert, I’d be much less distracted by unobtrusive glowing lights on a device over on the table than by something popping up on my screen all the time, and I might even be more inclined to report my status or mood using rabbit-ear semaphores than typing a tweet or changing my iChat status (see “[Instant Messaging for Introverts](#),” 2008-04-04).

Multiplying Like Bunnies — Apparently enough people have seen past the weirdness of the Nabaztag’s design to make it quite a successful product. In fact, according to Violet, when the original Nabaztag was introduced in 2005, their first 5000 units sold out in 10 days, even though it was the middle of the summer and the device had been advertised only by word of mouth.

However, I must confess that I am not myself a Nabaztag owner. Though I left the Violet offices fully convinced of the coolness and usefulness of the Nabaztag, it didn’t meet my “can’t-live-without-it” test, and I’m not inclined to collect toys just for their conversation value. (Plus, you know, \$165 buys a lot of French pastries. Gotta have your priorities.)

My sense, from looking at the activity level of various blogs and forums devoted to the Nabaztag, is that the device’s earlier popularity is waning. Violet has been slow to release promised improvements (such as the Ztamps, which had been scheduled for delivery last October), and I’ve seen no sign of the impending arrival of a Nabaztag/tag/tag. But that may be a moot point, because Violet’s stated intention is not to put a Nabaztag in every home. They’ve got loftier goals, and for all I know, they may be well on their way to meeting them.

As for me, I can certainly get behind the concept of invisible computing, and I can see the value of having lots of smart objects in my home. They may even enhance my communication with others in a way that ordinary computer software never could. The Nabaztag in particular may not quite scratch my itch, but I’ll be watching future developments in this area with great interest. ☺

Help! I'm Being Held Captive, and All I Have Is a Wi-Fi Network!

Two weeks ago, a remarkable Mac owner — a teenaged Apple Store employee — led police to her stolen Mac laptop through the clever use of a Leopard feature; see [“Back to My Mac Leads to Recovery of Stolen Mac,”](#) 2008-05-10. The recovery was so clever it was used as a question in the [rapid-fire round](#) at the end of NPR/Chicago Public Radio's “Wait Wait... Don't Tell Me!” show on 17-May-08.

This incident led several readers to ask via e-mail how they could accomplish a similar feat; one person's Mac had already been pilfered. Back to My Mac can be tricky to work without controlling all network circumstances, but it's not a bad place to start. I found two other methods and offer some rumination on other ideas.

Get My Mac Back, Back to My Mac! If you'd like to be as smart as 19-year-old Kait Duplaga, you can enable Back to My Mac even if you have just a single Macintosh. The feature, built into Mac OS X 10.5 Leopard, requires a .Mac subscription — either a regular subscription or one that's part of the five-user family pack. An e-mail-only subscription available as a less-expensive extra won't work.

In Leopard's .Mac system preference pane, use the Account tab to log into .Mac, and then click the Back to My Mac tab to start up that service. Back to My Mac requires your .Mac user name and password to be accessible from another computer running Leopard. It automatically updates the .Mac servers with your computer's information whenever network information changes.

If your computer is stolen, you could set up your .Mac account and Back to My Mac on another computer — Duplaga was tipped off because a friend saw her identity appear on iChat — and then access the remote machine. Your stolen computer will appear in the Shared list in a Finder window's sidebar. Select it, click Share Screen or Connect As, and you'll have access to the remote screen and remote files. Duplaga launched Photo Booth from the Applications folder, snapped some shots, and quickly copied those to her computer along with some other photos on the machine.

The thieves, if they'd been savvy enough, could have kept the computer off a network, logged out of .Mac, or even used Back to My Mac to share Duplaga's screen.

Because Back to My Mac requires a networked router that uses one of two automated port mapping protocols to be

enabled — Apple's NAT-PMP or the more broadly used UPnP — it's likely that a stolen computer won't wind up accessible via Back to My Mac, even though it may appear in the Shared list in the sidebar.

Conceivably, you could pull the IP address that Back to My Mac registers with the .Mac service, and then give that to the police, who, if they had a cybercrime division, could use it to track down the appropriate ISP, and then ask or subpoena that ISP for details on the IP's location (if static or assigned). I've tested different means of retrieving an IP address for Back to My Mac machines, but Apple wraps Back to My Mac inside IPv6 (next-generation Internet addressing) tunnels, and I've unable to figure out if the IPv4 (the current addressing scheme) address is also made available.

Going Deep Undercover — Orbicule's [Undercover](#) software and service is a nifty little package designed to keep track of your computer with minimal resource usage. The \$49 application, a universal binary updated for Leopard, must first be installed to generate a unique ID that you retain and keep private. Once installed, Undercover contacts the company's servers every 6 minutes with a very lightweight request — 500 bytes — to check whether the computer is in Orbicule's database of stolen machines. The company says no ID information is passed during this request.

If your computer is stolen, you use an online form to notify Orbicule using your private ID code. This updates their database, and the next time your computer comes online, the Undercover process — which runs at boot regardless of whether a user is logged in — discovers its host machine is stolen, and goes into a reporting mode.

Undercover then starts to take screenshots of the desktop and, if there's a built-in or external iSight, snapshots through the camera. The software continually transmits this information to Orbicule. The company will contact the ISP through which the laptop thief has connected, as well as work with local law enforcement to deliver the information.

After a period of time you define, Undercover will pull a trick from the old handbook of Macintosh practical jokes and pranks: it starts gradually dimming the screen in an attempt to trick the thief into trying to get it repaired or sell it. (You might ask, Which book? I can't recall if it's [“Stupid Mac Tricks”](#) by Bob LeVitus, or [“The Macintosh Joker”](#) by Owen Linzmayer. Both came with floppies, and could

perform such pranks as progressively shrinking the effective screen size by one pixel on each side after each restart.)

Orbicule has assembled a database of Apple Store and repair shop IP addresses: should the computer be powered up on one of those networks, your computer displays a full-screen message that, if dismissed, reappears with the fact that the computer has been stolen, offering a finder's fee (paid by the company), and any custom text you provide.

Here's perhaps the best part: Orbicule clearly has a sense of humor. Your computer will also use its text-to-speech capability to yell the same information, setting the volume level to its highest setting.

The only fault I can find in Orbicule's software, which I have not yet installed nor tested, is that if your computer isn't connected to the Internet for 60 days, this second phase ("Plan B") is automatically invoked. So if you go on vacation for three months, leaving your computer behind — heaven forbid! — when you return, it will start yelling at you about being stolen. You have to contact the company with your private ID code to disable Plan B; the company is looking into ways to allow the interval to be changed.

Orbicule has a variety of prices for its software, which requires no annual fee. A single-user commercial license is \$49, a household license (up to 5 Macs) is \$59, and a site license for up to 25 Macs is \$249. Full-time students pay \$10 less for a single-user license and \$5 less for a household license. Educational institutions pay \$8 per Mac for 100 copies or more.

Get Back to Where You Once Belonged — BAK2u makes theft-tracking software for a variety of platforms and devices; its Mac offering, [Verey I for Mac](#), is somewhat simpler and comes with no recovery service. The software costs \$39.90, is a universal binary, works with Leopard, and has no recurring fees.

Verey I requires that you enter a password whenever it connects to a network. If the password is entered incorrectly, Verey I starts recording audio and video with a built-in iSight, if available, and sends you alerts that include network information and a scan of nearby Wi-Fi networks through a variety of services (via instant messaging, e-mail, Twitter, and on a Web page).

Verey I doesn't use or require any corporate intervention in recovery, instead letting you handle everything. That may or may not be a plus, depending on your situation and preferences.

There's also the cleverly name-checked [Computrace LoJack for Laptops](#), which has nothing to do with the car theft-prevention and recovery service except a name licensed by its maker Absolute Software. As far as I can tell from the minimal information on the company's Web site, the software regularly contacts the company's servers, and when you alert Absolute Software that your computer is stolen, they work with you and law enforcement to track it down

via network access. It's a subscription package, and costs either \$49 per year or \$99 for 3 years.

Distributed, Decentralized Identification — I learned about a very low-tech solution used by many police departments around the United States and Canada from Cornell University's Oliver Habicht ([pictured here with a super-cool laptop etching](#)), a friend of the Engsts. Called Operation ID, the program lets individuals, academic institutions, and companies engrave or etch a unique identifier in some indelible fashion onto objects that need to be protected. (This Operation ID is not to be confused with programs of the same name in North America used to educate retailers about under-age alcohol and cigarette sales.)

The ID is a left-to-right, geographically largest-to-smallest human-readable code. It starts with the state or province abbreviation or a corresponding number (like MN or NY), followed by numbers that identify the county and then police department. The final digits are a unique number assigned by the police department that can be assigned to an individual or to an organization. In some places, police prefer that the ID is the simpler formula of the state or province's two-letter postal abbreviation followed by a driver's license number.

Oliver researched the program before committing laptops purchased by Cornell to be labeled with Operation ID numbers, but neither of us could find any centralized authority, Web site, or canonical information about it. I've come to the conclusion that Operation ID is a meme — a kind of mind virus — rather than an actual program.

Visiting dozens of local Web sites that describe the program, there's no reference to any official centralized source or even references to how the program started. On one site, it's described as being 30 years old. I expect that it's a combination of useful bureaucracy, in which police departments are used to being assigned numbers within state hierarchies, and someone's bright idea in the 1970s that was simply passed along, almost as a form of oral history crossed with procedure — police myth!

The relatively standardized form in which the ID is used means that it's perpetuated itself, and means that many officers and precincts should be familiar with it. If you pair a Google search of "Operation ID" with your town or college, you can typically find out if your local law enforcement system offers the loan of an engraving pen or help with engraving, and whether they register your ID. Minnesota State University has a good explanation of [their rendition of the program](#). Some departments will hand out Operation ID stickers that you put in your window, ostensibly to deter thieves.

Oliver noted that Cornell's [Operation ID policy](#) says property can be traced "by computer back to the university." He contrasts this with the fact that the number assigned to him was written on a piece of paper and placed in a filing cabinet.

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Help! I'm Being Held Captive, and All I Have Is a Wi-Fi Network!

In Recovery — Clearly, there's room to provide more association of stolen gear with those who own it. Given that Macs, like most electronics of any kind, have unique serial numbers, and, unlike most electronics, [can read those serial numbers within the operating system](#) means that there should be a way to connect a uniquely numbered Mac, its owner, and the computer's location.

I would think that there's room for a Mac developer to work on a theft-recovery service with Skyhook Wireless,

which can compute a set of location coordinates using a scan of nearby Wi-Fi networks and their signal strengths. Skyhook already has an API that allows external access to their systems via a Web page, and partners with companies like Apple on the iPhone (alongside a Google cell-triangulation system) to provide GPS-like results. Skyhook already has a deal in place with The CyberAngel for [Windows-based theft-recovery services with Wi-Fi positioning](#).

It seems like a short step for a stolen Mac to phone home and say, "Help! I've been stolen, and I'm being held in a warehouse in Santa Rosacruz!" Then it's just a matter of convincing the police that no psychics were involved in determining the system's whereabouts. 🗑

by Tim Sullivan

Rumors and Reality

Around Apple

The next version of OS X is named Snow Leopard. It will probably run only on Intels. We're thinking maybe Macworld 2009. Look for improvements in performance, speed, and stability, otherwise no major changes nor innovations.

Ghost in the machine: Here's an idea. You're far from home, maybe at the library. You need the use of a computer to do some computing — not just surf the web. How about a virtual computer?

There's a group of people who plan to offer just such a service. The group is comprised of Israelis and Palestinians. Considering the current state of politics, they do a lot of video conferencing although the two groups work 13 miles apart.

G.ho.st <<http://g.ho.st/>> wants to give users a free, Web-based virtual computer that lets them access their desktop and files from any computer with an Internet connection. G.ho.st, pronounced "ghost," is short for Global Hosted Operating System.

A test version of the service is available now, and an official introduction is scheduled for Halloween. After the users sign on they will have access to 5 GB of storage and a suite of office programs.

More on internet congestion: In our March issue we talked about a few users who monopolize the bandwidth by loading movies. In some places 5% of the users take up 50% of the capacity. This can seriously impact the other 95% of users.

Time Warner Cable Inc. is testing a surcharge system in Beaumont, Texas. New subscribers will be given a monthly allowance for the amount of data the download and up-

load. Data transfers in excess of the allowance will be charged \$1 per gigabyte.

No big deal for average users who will never come close to downloading a gigabyte of data. However a standard-definition movie can take up 1.5 gigabytes, and a high-definition movie can be 6 to 8 gigabytes.

The Zac browser for autistic: John LeSieur has an autistic grandson Zackary. Aside from the usual concerns of "adult themed" sites, John wanted to provide a usable internet experience for Zackary, who finds too many choices overwhelming.

John, who has experience in the software business, developed a browser for his autistic grandson. The browser does not respond to key clicks that would be counterproductive. It doesn't recognize a right button click. Flashing distractions such as advertisements are not displayed. Instead it presents a hand-picked slate of choices from free, public Web sites, with an emphasis on educational games, music, videos and visually entertaining images, like a virtual aquarium. Choices are made by selecting large icons.

One sign of success is that Zac doesn't take out his frustrations on the computer as he does with the TV.

The browser targets Zac, that is to say, it probably won't work with all autistic children. The autism spectrum is so wide that a particular pattern of abilities or impairments experienced by one autistic person might be reversed in another.

One huge advantage is that the browser is free.

The Zac Browser can be downloaded or run directly from <http://www.zacbrowser.com> 🗑

June Software Review

Two of my favorite programs for transcribing records and tapes:



Audio Recorder 3.2

<http://homepage.mac.com/benshan/>

Requires OS X 10.4 or greater. Universal binary. Freeware

This little gem will record from any default input device directly to an AIFF, Apple Lossless (M4A and MOV), MP3, MP4 (M4A and MOV), or WAV file.



The controls are very simple.

- The slider controls the recorded volume. Slide it to the right if you want to crank up the volume.
- Check the Monitor box if you want to hear the music while recording. Probably a good idea so you know when to stop recording.
- The first drop down list is where you select the input source.
- The second drop down list is where you choose the format of the saved file.
- The buttons are pretty obvious. The “Stop” button saves the file.

The only real choice is in deciding which format to use when saving. My choices would be AIFF or WAV. AIFF is the way to go when you need to touch up the file — remove clicks after copying records or trim the track. WAV is the for when we need to save Richard Simmons’ “Sweatin’ to the Oldies” on my wife’s phone, using Parallels and Windows XP.

And to remove those annoying clicks, we have:



ClickRepair 2.3.1

http://wwwmaths.anu.edu.au/~briand/sound/software_download/

Requires OS X 10.2.6 or later. \$40.

ClickRepair finds and repairs clicks and crackle in audio files obtained by capturing vinyl and shellac (78) records to digital CD format. It is not a filter; it searches the file sample-by-sample, and only changes those identified as being suspect. It is possible to operate automatically, or to intervene manually as required. Favorite detection and repair settings may be named and saved.

ClickRepair is an application for cleaning clicks and crackle from audio files produced by digitizing vinyl (LP) and shellac (78) records. This kind of intermittent noise is typically the result of damage due to scratches, dust specks, and other things.

It is important to understand the following points:

- It is impossible to distinguish music from damage, with absolute certainty.
- Repairing damage without a high degree of automation is very time consuming.
- Filtering the file with a “noise filter” degrades the musical content whilst merely reducing intermittent noise such as clicks and crackle.

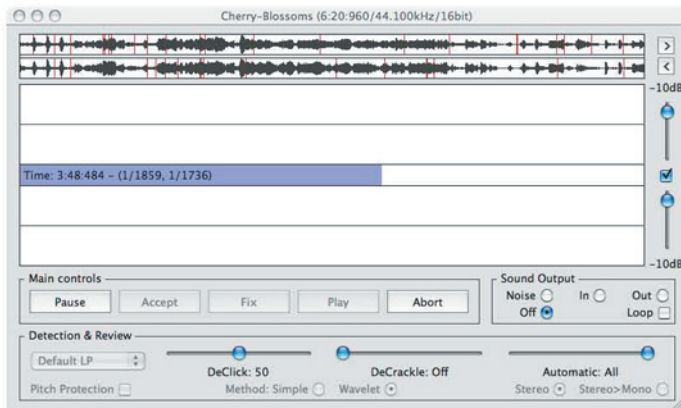
ClickRepair is not a noise filter; it searches for, and repairs, localized damage. For records in reasonable condition, this means that 99.5% or more of the audio is unchanged. If the source material is an LP record in good condition, captured on good equipment, it is quite possible that the 99.5% sounds at least as good as a typical CD. The underlying philosophy of ClickRepair is to preserve that 99.5% and use it to find and replace the damage. It is indeed surprising

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June Software Review

how annoying and disturbing a sprinkling of clicks and dust specks can be to the listening experience.

Click Repair is obviously a labor of love for Brian Davies who wrote the program. If you want to really delve into what's going on, check out the web site or the 48 page manual included with the program. There are some good how-to tips included.



If not, here's the short course. The top "sound bar" displays the track and some red lines. The red lines are where corrections are applied. The more red lines, the worse the recording. The "DeClick" slider is set at 50 by default. I found this worked well for all but a few of my records. In those few cases I ran the program on the original file a second time, increasing the "DeClick" value.

Apple Updates

Security Update 2008-003 (PPC)

05/28/2008

System Requirements

- OS X 10.4.11 or later

Security Update 2008-003 is recommended for all users and improves the security of OS X. Previous security updates have been incorporated into this security update

Security Update 2008-003 (Intel)

05/28/2008

System Requirements

- OS X 10.4.11 or later

Security Update 2008-003 is recommended for all users and improves the security of OS X. Previous security updates have been incorporated into this security update.

Digital Camera RAW Compatibility Update 2.1

05/28/2008

System Requirements

- OS X 10.4.11 or later
- OS X 10.5.2 or later

This update extends RAW file compatibility for Aperture 2 and iPhoto '08 for the following cameras:

- Canon EOS Digital Rebel XSi/Kiss Digital x2/450D
- Epson R-D1
- Leaf AFi 7
- Leaf AFi 6
- Leaf AFi 5
- Pentax K200D
- Pentax K20D

Logic Express Update 8.0.2

05/28/2008

System Requirements

- OS X 10.4.9 or later
- Logic Express 8.0

Logic Pro 8.0.2 addresses specific customer and compatibility issues of Logic Express 8.0.

This update is recommended for all Logic Express 8.0 users.

OS X 10.5.3 Combo Update

05/28/2008

System Requirements

- OS X 10.5 or later

The 10.5.3 Update is recommended for all users running OS X Leopard and includes general operating system fixes that enhance the stability, compatibility and security of your Mac.

OS X 10.5.3 Update

05/28/2008

System Requirements

- OS X 10.5.2 or later

The 10.5.3 Update is recommended for all users running OS X Leopard and includes general operating system fixes that enhance the stability, compatibility and security of your Mac.

Logic Pro 8.0.2

05/20/2008

System Requirements

- OS X 10.4.9 or later
- OS X 10.5 or later

Delivers everything a musician needs to write, record, edit, mix, and perform in the studio and on the stage. With three applications, instruments, effects, and a massive sound library, Logic Studio puts powerful music creation and production tools in one comprehensive package.

This Logic Pro 8.0.2 update addresses specific customer and compatibility issues of Logic Pro 8.0. It includes Waveburner 1.5.2 and Impulse Response Utility 1.0.2, which

Under the Magnifying Glass The Lonely Dynamic Duo

Valley Mystery (11), “ There is nothing more deceptive than an obvious fact” (12). Therefore, it was time to experiment. After all, I do call my macCompanion column, Under the Magnifying Glass, or as dear old Sherlock would say, “Here is my lens. You know my methods” (12).

I discovered that TextEdit has a hidden talent which you might not expect or may not discover without experimenting. Remember my admonition a few months ago to investigate the trifles (13). Again, I encourage you to explore your Mac for the unmitigated joy of discovery. This is precisely what I did and, oh, the hairs on the back of my neck stood on end, dancing the jig.



TextEdit, similar to an e-mail document, allows you to embed audio files in documents, the same way you include photos and graphics. Just drag and drop the file into the document where you wish to hear the text read back to you. You can even include video clips in the document, if you wish.

When you drag the audio file into the TextEdit document, you will have the opportunity to either copy the file itself, or add an alias.

Now, you know. The secret is out. The mild mannered TextEdit can transform into a superhero ... OK, maybe I am taking the metaphor a bit too far, but how can I help but be amazed. After all, TextEdit can handle audio files!

Automator’s Super Powers Tamed

The next trick is to convert the text of your document into an audio file.

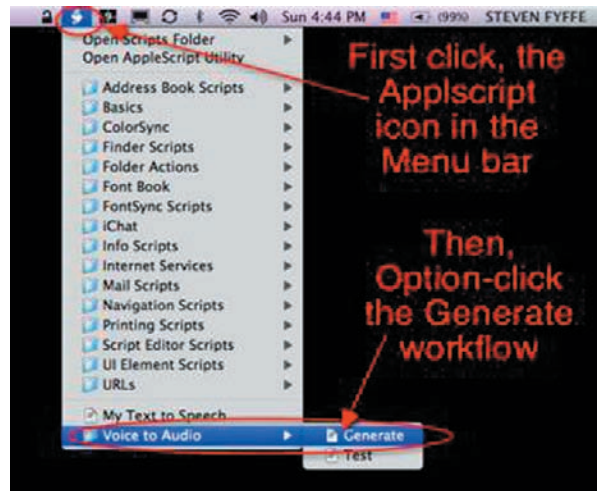
If you have not “tugged on Superman’s cape”, you are past due to give it a try. Automator is sitting in the applications

folder waiting for you and if you are still afraid, I’ll loan you my kryptonite ring. You can create a Text-to-Speech Automator workflow in about 10 minutes.

The details for building the workflow is clearly described in “Creating Podcast Narration Tracks” at Automator.US (14), Sal Soghoian’s (15) personal web page. Sal is AppleScript Project leader at Apple and often appears in Automator video tutorials (16) and podcasts (17).

I won’t repeat the information you can read for yourself, but I’ll share how I customized the workflow.

In the paragraph “Testing the Text”, you are first instructed to download (18) and “run the installer containing the workflows used to generate the audio clip.” Go ahead and do that, while I wait ... Back already? Great!

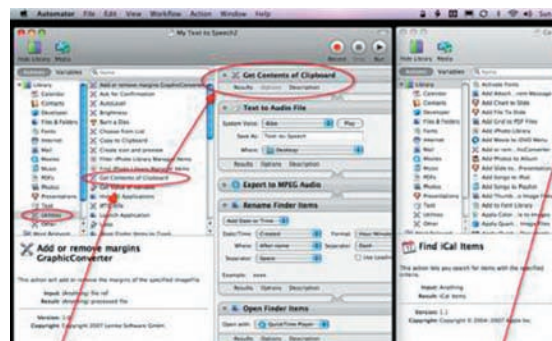


After doing this, I modified the “Generate” workflow. To do that, I made one change in Sal’s instructions, “While holding down the Option key, select the GENERATE workflow from the Voice to Audio sub-menu in the system Script Menu located at the right of the menu bar.” This allowed me to open and edit the “Generate” workflow.

I just saved it with a name of my own “My Text-to-Speech” ... how clever.

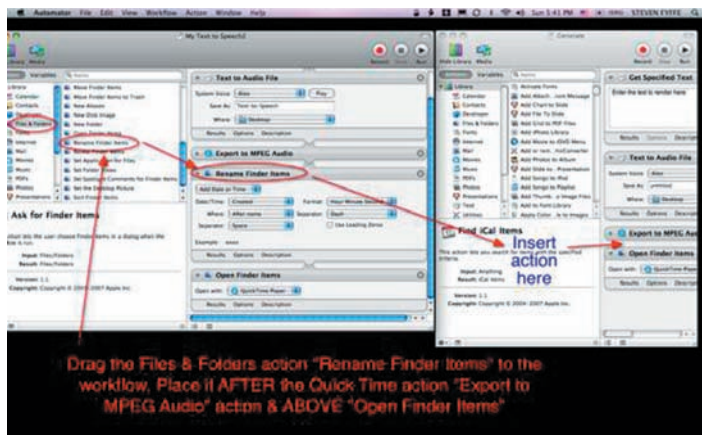
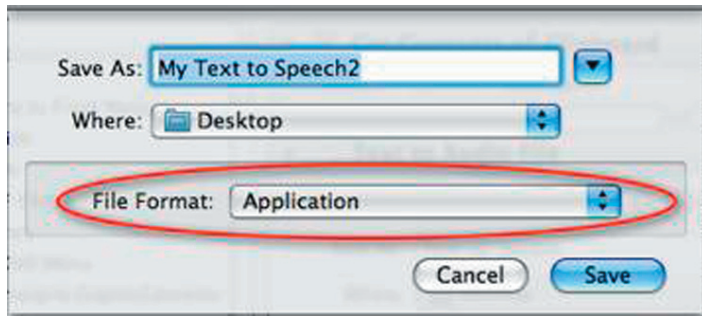
Instead of typing the text or cut & paste the text into the Automator action “Get Specified Text”, I wanted to be able to simply copy the text in to the clipboard. Therefore, I needed to change the first action and replace it with a different one.

I replaced the TextEdit action “Get Specified Text” with the Utilities action “Get Contents of Clipboard”.



Then, I changed the System Voice to “Alex” the new voice in Leopard.

In order to customize the name of the audio file, I needed to have the name changed automatically. This was easy to do. I just dragged the Files & Folders “Rename the Finder Items” action to the workflow. I placed it after the Quick Time action “Export to MPEG Audio” and above the “Open Finder Items” action.



The last step was to save the workflow. Under File, click Save As and change the File Format to Application.

All you now need to do is select the text you wish to listen to, copy it to the clipboard (Command-C), and click your new application “My Text to Speech”. Your text is now saved on the desktop as an audio file. Just drag it into your TextEdit document to give it the power of speech.

If you are interested in listening to my Night Photography TextEdit document read to you or wish to have my modified Automator workflow, I have placed them in my .Mac Public Folder (10).

By the way, notice that Alex’s voice sounds deeper. I used Amadeus Pro (19) to lower the pitch and increase the reading speed.

I hope you enjoyed your “guided discovery” (20) of this dynamic duo. They should not be lonely applications on your Mac any more. Try them out for yourself! Investigate the power of Automator and familiarize yourself with the full range of TextEdit’s capabilities. I would like to encourage you to continue on our journey together, putting OS X and other Macintosh software Under the Magnifying Glass.

Now, with Leopard our journey down the yellow brick road has more the 300 new discoveries (21) to add to our golden collection.

Laughter Productivity - Photo Booth

Before you jump up and leave, I want to remind you of another cool application. Photo Booth, now available with Leopard, which can give you and your family many productive hours ... productivity measured in smiles and laughter. Jared and his Papa guarantee loads of fun.



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by Christopher Breen

Mac 911

Sending iCal invites to the many

Reader C wishes to communicate with several people at once. The initialed one writes:

Can I make iCal e-mail an event to more than one user?

Sure. It wouldn't be much of a calendar application if it couldn't. It can do this in a couple of ways.

In Leopard's version of iCal, just click on the event and press Command-E to edit it. Click the Add Attendees link and in the field that appears, type the name of a person you'd like to invite. If that person appears in Address Book (and has an e-mail address), iCal will autofill the e-mail address for you. If they aren't in Address Book, just type the e-mail address.

To enter another address, type a comma and type the new name (if they're in Address Book) or address. Repeat as necessary. When you've finished entering addresses, press the Return key and then click the Send button. Mail will launch and your invitations will be sent to the addresses you entered in the Attendees field.

You can also add multiple attendees by dragging several selected contacts or a group directly from Address Book onto the Add Attendees link. This is useful when you want to quickly add all the members of your platoon, bridge club, or extended family.

Mail and its hidden headers

Like many people, reader S. B. is concerned about spam. He writes:

Mail's junk mail filters work pretty well for my use, but sometimes I need to open a message in the junk mail folder to determine if it is really spam or if it is coming from a new contact. I always keep the preview pane closed. In older programs I could view long headers or the raw source without opening the actual message. But in Mail, that is not an option, as these menu items are grayed out until you open the message. Is there a way around this? I realize that the junk mail filter does not initially load images, but I don't know if it still pings the spammer's server.

As you've observed, Mail doesn't offer that option. Microsoft Entourage lets you view both long headers as well as the message's raw source in a separate window. And Mozilla Thunderbird, while it won't show headers with the preview closed, it will display the message's raw source.

But before you dash off to install a different e-mail application, let's examine the real threat here. And that threat is HTML links – particularly links to graphics that, when loaded, send a little “yoo hoo!” message to the spammer, letting them know that they've found a live one. To keep these images at bay in Mail, choose Mail -> Preferences, click the Viewing tab, and make sure that the Display Remote Images in HTML Messages option is unchecked. This should keep you safe.

All you have to do from this point on is to be careful about loading images or clicking links in your messages. If you don't trust or don't know the source, take what you can from the text and leave the links and potential graphics alone.

If you're still spooked by the idea of viewing headers along with a preview of a message – even without HTML turned on – you can follow this little tip from Macworld's

Gemmeister, Dan Frakes: Give Limit Point Software's MailCM a try. This is a contextual menu plugin/pref pane that, among other things, lets you copy a message's headers without opening or previewing the message. Of course you'll have to then paste that header into a text document or empty e-mail message in order to examine its contents, which seems like an incredible pain in the neck to me. But then, I'm not easily spooked.

The search-by-label blues

Despite his elders' admonition that labeling just isn't cool, reader Jon Co would like to put Leopard's labels to good use. He writes:

In Leopard is there a way to search by label? It seems the new Command-F search has dropped it as an option and I have about a thousand pictures labeled blue so I can keep them in a smart folder. Now when I open that folder, it's a collection of everything. Is there some hidden way to search by label or am I missing something?


It is hidden and therefore, yes, you are missing something.

When you choose File -> New Smart Folder and, in the New Smart Folder window, click the Plus (+) button, you

can be forgiven for thinking that Leopard is pretty miserly about what it allows you to search for. Click the pop-up menu labeled Kind and you see just Kind, Last Opened Date, Last Modified Date, Created Date, Name Contents, and Size.

Ah, but take a look at that promising Other... entry at the bottom of the list. Choose that and a rich, searchable world opens. Specifically, when the search attribute sheet appears, you want to enter Label in the Search field. Do so and you'll find that File Label appears as the sole entry. Select it and click OK. The first condition in your search now reads File Label followed by Leopard's array of label colors. Click the blue color and all items you've labeled blue will appear in the window. Click the Save button and you've got a smart folder that contains all blue-labeled items.

[Macworld Senior Editor Christopher Breen is the author of Secrets of the iPod and iTunes, fifth edition, and The iPod and iTunes Pocket Guide (both Peachpit Press, 2005).

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