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KEYSTONE MacCentral

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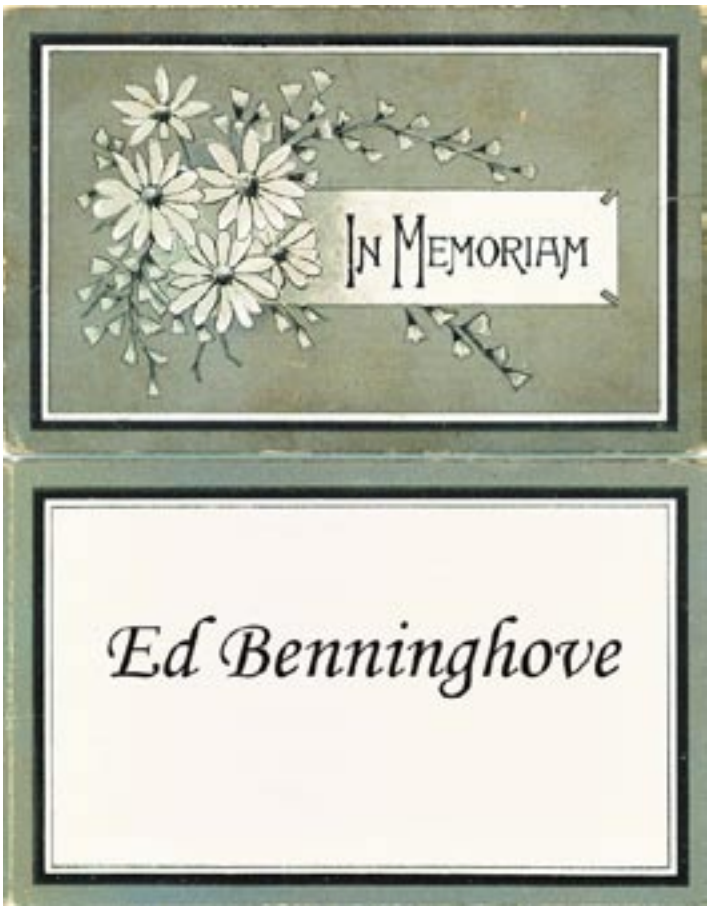
Keystone MacCentral Macintosh Users Group ❖ http://www.keystonemac.com

Basic Photography 101 Part 2

The March meeting of Keystone MacCentral will feature part two of Jim Carey's Basic Photography 101 presentation. If you were there for part one in February, you got a good review of the basics and you will want to return. You might also consider inviting a friend – doesn't have to be a Mac user – who would enjoy the program.

The meeting will be held on March 16 at the Community Center of the Giant Store in Camp Hill.



Meet us at

Giant Food

Corner of Trindle Road & 32nd St (Route 15)
3301 East Trindle Road, Camp Hill, PA 17011

Tuesday, March 16, 2010, 6:30 p.m.

Attendance is free and open to all interested persons.

Contents

Board of Directors

Keystone MacCentral Essentials

Meeting Place
Giant Food (upstairs)
Corner of Trindle Road & 32nd St (Route 15)
Camp Hill

Web Site
http://www.keystonemac.com

Mailing Address
305 Somerset Drive
Shiresmanstown, PA 17011

by Linda J. Cober

President's Corner

March 16 will see us once again in the upstairs Community Room of the Camp Hill Giant with Jim Carey presenting the second part of his photography lessons. If you were with us at our February meeting, you know what a good job Jim did then. Even if you weren't there, you can still benefit from the second part of the presentation, so please join us. You are welcome to bring a friend who has an interest in photography as well. Remember, Giant has a large selection of ready to eat dinners in their deli and restaurant area, so you can buy your dinner and/or soft drinks and snacks downstairs and then have dinner during the meeting. Several of us did that last month and it was fun, not to mention easy!

As you know, April 20 is KeyMac's famous yearly auction. While our website will soon start listing donations from generous vendors, I want to give you an early tip-off about a donation that already arrived from our friends at TekServe in New York (www.tekserve.com). Thus, I am reviewing a book called *My iPod Touch* by Brad Miser. Published by Que Publications, the book includes 45 days of free online access to its contents when one purchases the book itself. That way, one can have the book available for reference at home while having easy access to it on a laptop or mobile device such as an iPod Touch. Safari Books Online allows one to search for answers to specific questions, cut and paste code, and download chapters. If you are the high bidder for TekServe's donation, you may find this book quite useful!

I am now continuing the book review after that brief aside to pique your interest in our auction. ;) As one might expect, the first chapter covers getting started with your iPod Touch, including using iTunes, setting up a MobileMe account, and typing on the Touch. Subsequent chapters cover connecting to the internet; moving audio, videos and photos onto the Touch; synching information; listening to music and podcasts; watching movies, and TV shows; surfing the web; managing contacts; using email; managing calendars and time; using maps and tracking stocks; customizing your iPod Touch; maintenance and troubleshooting. I found the book to be well written by someone who obviously knows his iStuff. Brad Miser is no newcomer to the tech writing field, having previously authored books about the iPhone, and iPod, as well as ones on Leopard and the MacBook Air and Pro. His step-by-step instructions and colorful graphics make the directions clear and easy to follow, allowing a reader to either read through the whole book or to zero in on specific topics. For instance, I wondered about viewing my photos as a slideshow on the iPod Touch as I do on my laptop. I looked up the information and discovered that while it is possible to view a slideshow complete with music, it is not possible to associate music with the slideshow the same way it is on the laptop. Instead of the music playing automatically as it does on the laptop, on the Touch, one must first use the Music application to start the music playing and then go back and start the slideshow. This workaround is typical of the book. If the iPod Touch lacks a specific feature, Miser often knows a workaround and provides that to his readers, saving them a lot of time experimenting on their own.

Thus, if you own an iPod Touch or want to own one, *My iPod Touch* by Brad Miser and KeyMac's April 20 auction should be in your future!

by Gary Brandt, Recorder

Keystone MacCentral Minutes
February 16, 2010

Business Meeting

President Linda Cober welcomed members to our new meeting site. We met in the Siebert Room of the Community Center at the Giant Store in Camp Hill. Board members gave their reports, with Eric Adams noting that requests to vendors for our April auction would be going out later in the week. Eric asked for any vendor suggestions that might not be on his list and several were offered.

Gary Brandt mentioned our upcoming elections for board positions. Tucker Hill will serve on the Nominating Committee. He immediately sought to get volunteers to fill the board positions that will be open. The election will be held at the May meeting with board members beginning their duties at the June board meeting.

Tim Sullivan experienced some difficulty sending out e-mails to members in February. Members might receive some test e-mails as Tim tries to solve this problem. Jim Carey noted that Verizon might be limiting the amount of e-mails Tim can send out at one time.

Q&A & Comments

A member described a problem he was having with the wireless modem he uses with his Verizon DSL service. It does not always connect after his Mac wakes from sleep. He needs to turn it off and back on to reconnect. Jim Carey had a similar problem and he mentioned that changing channels on his AirPort might clear up interference. Jim noted that a neighbor with a new cell phone could cause interference.

Someone mentioned that they were looking for help working with Aperture 2. Jim Carey noted that Aperture 3 had recently been released. He mentioned Lynda.com as a site with a good class on Aperture. Another place to look would be iTunes podcasts.

Gary Brandt mentioned a problem with battery usage in his Apple Magic Mouse. Batteries were lasting about a month and after replacing a second set, the mouse worked for only one day before failing to connect. Sandy Cober has started to use "super batteries" with her Magic Mouse and wireless keyboard to get much longer battery life. Sanyo makes rechargeable eneloop batteries that could be an option. They do require a special charger unit. Energizer Lithium batteries were also recommended. (Gary later discovered that restarting his iMac solved the mouse connection problems.)

Linda Cober is still having trouble in Safari with web e-mail. If you had a similar problem and have found a solution, Linda would like to hear from you. We talked about e-mail sending limits for personal accounts. SMPTit was a Filemaker plugin (no longer supported) that worked in early versions. Filemaker 9 allows you to send e-mail by moving the e-mails to your chosen mail program.

KeyMac Vice President Tom Owad has opened a retail store selling new peripherals, cables and used Mac equipment. He said he might be setting up an e-mail server that could help members overcome e-mail sending limits.

Eric Adams mentioned LogMeIn.com that allows you to access your Mac from anywhere. Eric has used it to work from home. Tom emphasized the need to use very secure passwords.

Program Notes

Jim Carey began his program on Basic Photography 101 by noting the price differences in Point & Shoot, Prosumer, and Professional cameras. Compact cameras are a compromise between a larger DSLR and mobile device cameras. Part of the difference lies in the megapixels they can capture, with 6 being good, 8 better, and 10 to 12 the best for producing enlargements. Anything over that might be overkill, unless you plan on enlarging to billboard size. On high end DSLRs, the image sensor captures the full frame. Sensors in compact cameras do not capture the full range. APS sensors are considered midlevel and they can handle 12 megapixels. Larger sensors allow you to shoot in lower light conditions.

Jim said there were other features to consider when camera shopping. An optical zoom lens that can go from 3X to 10X is one. A camera capable of shooting in a wide range of ISO is another. Cameras with an optical viewfinder are better

than ones with only LCD viewfinders. Jim noted that most optical viewfinders do not let you view 100% of the scene so you will need to allow for that. GPS might be another feature you want. Most cameras don't yet have it built in. External GPS devices might be a consideration.

Image stabilization is a must feature for Jim. Nikon and Canon put it into their lenses while Sony puts it in their cameras. A feature useful in point & shoot cameras is face recognition. This feature uses the assumption that focus should be on the face. Prosumer and better cameras can save in RAW format, saving all available data gathered by their sensors. The RAW format is not yet an open standard, meaning editing programs would need to be updated to handle any updates to RAW. Saving as JPEG or TIFF results in some loss of data from the sensors. A newer option has come from Adobe. Their DNG format is an open standard. DNG stands for digital negative. If you are shooting in RAW, you might want to also save the file as DNG for future compatibility. Storage requirements for saving in RAW are largest. RAW processing takes place in the computer. After RAW files have been adjusted, the printer has to create a JPEG to print.

If you want to save as JPEG, you should probably take the picture using the highest settings of your camera. One advantage of saving to JPEG is that burst mode might allow you to capture more images in a sequence. If you want to print directly from a memory card to your printer, you will have to use JPEG as printers do not directly handle RAW. You can also print using local retail stores or at online sites. These services use JPEG files to make their prints. Quality should be much better than using a home photo quality printer.

Jim stressed backup as a very important part of your working environment. You can use CDs, DVDs, and hard drives or a combination. Online storage sites have proliferated and these could present another backup option for those with high bandwidth.

The presentation explained the terminology of photography. ISO (formerly ASA is the speed of the sensor or film – that is, how fast it accepts light. ISO speed settings are on a scale that doubles with each increase. Most point & shoot camera have a range between 50 and 400. ISO of 100 or 200 is used for shooting outdoors. Higher ISO is used to shoot indoors. With the higher ISO settings comes an increase in digital noise. If you choose to use an automatic ISO setting, it will be set to the maximum of what your camera can use. This could end up being higher than what is optimal for your shooting conditions.

The shutter speed controls how long light strikes the film or sensor. It is expressed in fractions of a second: 1/15, 1/30, 1/60, 1/125, 1/250, 1/500, and 1/1000. Faster shutter speeds will stop motion in a picture. Jim demonstrated by showing a photo shot at slow shutter speed to show motion and one at a faster shutter speed that stopped motion. Some compact cameras might allow you to control shutter speed using their scene mode menus.

Aperture controls the amount of light striking the film or sensor. Expressed as F-stops f/2.0, f/2.8, f/5.6 and so on, aperture and shutter speed work together to create an exposure. Jim's presentation showed how different combinations of aperture and shutter speed settings combine to create the same exposure.

Exposure metering measures light and calculates the exposure needed for best results. Metering can be performed through the lens or by a handheld device. Handheld light meters measure both reflected light and incident light while through the lens metering only measures reflected light. Reflected light metering averages light over the entire scene. Matrix metering uses built-in algorithms that are used to compare the scene to scenes in the processor's database.

Jim explained depth of field as what part of the picture is sharp or fuzzy. Focus field can be shallow or extended. Wide angle lenses will have extended depth of field while telephoto lenses have shallow depth of field.

Most cameras have controls to set aperture and shutter speed. Many also have scene modes for various shooting conditions. Using a scene mode will set the aperture and shutter speed for a particular condition. They could be called by alternate names on your particular camera, but some popular modes include portrait, landscape, scenery, macro, motion, and night mode. Portrait mode will enhance flesh tones. Scenery mode captures a large depth of field. Your camera might have other modes, such as ones for children, pets, or sports with fast shutter speeds. Jim offered a tip for taking photos of pets – shoot from eye level if possible. He also showed the difference in taking pictures of water with different shutter speeds. Some cameras might have the ability to save custom modes if you find a combination of settings you would like to save for future use. Scene modes should be a consideration when shopping for a camera.

Cameras also have shutter priority mode, aperture priority mode, auto everything mode, or manual mode. Jim explained the differences for us. He talked about white balance. White balance is corrected well by cameras about 95% of the time. The other 5% of your photos can be corrected in post processing.

Jim ended part one of his presentation by answering a few more questions. One dealt with digitizing slides. ScanCafe.com offers this service. Note that your slides are sent to India for scanning. A 20% off coupon for Photofocus.com services was mentioned. See the web sites for details.

We came away from Jim's program well versed in the basics of photography and look forward to part two in March. Some of us were probably inspired to experiment a bit more with the scene modes available in our cameras.

by Adam C. Engst

The iPad Arrives

At a media event on 27 January 2010, Apple announced the iPad, the tablet-sized computing and communications device that has generated more bits of industry speculation than any previous product in memory. Featuring a 9.7-inch display and an optional keyboard dock, the iPhone OS-based iPad will be available for prices ranging from $499 to $829, depending on storage capacity and 3G data capability. Wi-Fi-only models will go on sale in March 2010, with Wi-Fi+3G data models following in April.

During the announcement, Apple CEO Steve Jobs led up to the revelation of the iPad by pointing out that there are already two well-defined markets for mobile devices: the smartphone, which used to be too expensive and complicated for all but serious business users, and the laptop, which may offer more than many users need while having a relatively large form factor.

Jobs noted that any new mobile device has to fit between those two form factors and must perform key tasks better than one or the other. He then pointed out that products in the popular netbook category fail that test. "The problem is, netbooks aren't better at anything," he said, noting that they're generally slow, have low-quality displays, and, well, run Windows. The price may be right, but that's all that's right about netbooks in his opinion.

Apple sees the iPad as sitting between the iPhone and the MacBook, and competing directly with - and outshining - the entire netbook category. Certainly, the iPad's screen looked far better than any netbook we've seen, and the responsiveness of the demoed apps was impressive.

Apps — Based on the iPhone OS, the iPad's core apps offer similar functionality to their iPhone equivalents, but have been rewritten to provide more capable interfaces that take advantage of the iPad's larger display. Honestly, they're impressive - whereas it was always neat how well Apple made use of the limited display space on the smaller devices, increasing that display real estate enables much more fluid interfaces and fewer separate screens.

iPhone apps run unmodified, either with pixel-for-pixel accuracy within a black box, or with a pixel-doubling technique that trades some crispness to zoom up to the larger size of the iPad screen. A tiny 1x/2x button appears in the lower right of the screen in this mode, and tapping it swaps between the modes instantly, even with video or animation playing.

Needless to say, this level of compatibility with "nearly all" of the 140,000 apps in the App Store is huge, because it means that not only will the iPad be useful from the moment it's available, but also that users accustomed to the iPhone and iPod touch will be able to continue using their favorite apps. (Developers must have been overjoyed to know that good iPad sales wouldn't cause a commensurate drop in revenue from unmodified programs.)

That said, apps will be able to take advantage of the iPad's unique screen size and other capabilities, and to that end, the iPad SDK is available for download at Apple's Web site. Developers have access to an iPad emulator on the Mac, just as they have an iPhone emulator.

Apple showed not only the core iPad apps for browsing the Web, playing music, and flipping through photos (complete with support for events, Faces, and Places if syncing with iPhoto), but also a version of the iWork suite for the iPad: Keynote, Numbers, and Pages. Each app will be available for $9.99, so you don't need to buy the suite if you need only one app. For these apps, Apple had to rewrite the user interface completely, switching from a mouse- and keyboard-based interface to the multitouch approach used by the iPhone OS.

The inclusion of iWork, and the extended time spent describing its functionality during the announcement, is a clear nod toward attracting the business traveler. But the iWork demonstration raises a number of important questions and shows some of the potential limitations of a device that bridges between a smartphone and a laptop.

Apple didn't address file format or storage issues, but described the capability to "import" iWork '09 files, which could be a problem for business users exchanging files, especially in Microsoft Office format, via email or cloud services like Dropbox. It also remains to be seen how cloud-based Web apps like Google Docs, which are often

unusable on the iPhone and iPod touch, will work on the iPad.

Like Apple's other iPhone OS-based devices, there's no support for Adobe's Flash in the iPad, which is more glaring, given the iPad's larger screen, longer battery life, and (presumably) more capable processor. This is the only gaping hole in Apple's "the whole Internet" claim, as some media sites offer Flash-based players for video or audio. Steve Jobs pointedly showed a missing Flash movie on the New York Times home page when using the mobile Safari browser at one point, to some laughter.

Publishing — Not surprisingly, Apple is setting the iPad against Amazon's Kindle, both for reading newspapers and magazines, and for full-length books. The New York Times demoed a new app that attempts to capture the essence of reading a newspaper, with skimmable pages and the capability to dive deeper into articles. The app offers the look-and-feel of the New York Times, and features color pictures and even inline video. We expect to see similarly rich media apps from other publications as well.

But more interesting yet was Apple's demo of the iBooks ebook reader app, which provides a Delicious Library-like bookshelf interface for displaying your books and linking to an iBookstore that enables you to discover, purchase, and download ebooks right on the iPad. Titles will initially come from Penguin, Harper Collins, Simon & Schuster, Macmillan, and Hachette Book Group. No mention was made of how other publishers - or independent authors - will be able to get into the iBookstore, though Apple did say that the iBooks app relied on the EPUB format. Apple also made no mention of PDF support, though the iPhone and iPod touch can handle PDF and various other formats, so it seems likely that the iPad will have similar capabilities.

Of course, the burning question is how the iPad will compete with Amazon's Kindle DX, which costs $489 and beats the iPad in only one respect - battery life. Thanks to its E-Ink screen (which is the same 9.7-inch size as the iPad's), the Kindle DX can run for a week, even with its Whispernet wireless connectivity turned on, whereas Apple claims 10-hour battery life for the iPad.

In every other respect, though, the Kindle falls far short. The Kindle's screen is grayscale rather than color and is slow to refresh; the Kindle relies on an awkward joystick for navigation versus the iPad's multitouch interface; and the just-announced "active content" for the Kindle stands no chance of comparing to the 140,000 apps in Apple's App Store (see "Amazon Opens Kindle to Developers, Changes Royalties," 21 January 2010).

Amazon's main consolation is that the Kindle iPhone app should work just as well or better on the iPad as on the iPhone and iPod touch, so the iPad may help push ebook sales through Amazon for titles that aren't yet available on the iBookstore, or that are less expensive through Amazon.

Hardware — The basic specs for the iPad are as follows: It's 0.5 inches (12.7 mm) thick, weighs 1.5 pounds (680 g), and features a 9.7-inch IPS display (a type of active-matrix LCD display). The capacitive multitouch screen offers 1024-by-768 resolution at 132 pixels per inch.

Since the iPhone and iPod touch, Apple has typically shied away from providing detailed processor specifications, but in this case Jobs did reveal the iPad is based on Apple's own A4 chip, running at 1 GHz. Although it's impossible to compare directly against the iPhone 3GS's quite different 600 MHz processor, Jobs said with regard to the A4, "it screams." We presume that the A4 is based on technology from P.A. Semi, a fabless semiconductor company that Apple purchased in 2008. The A4 is not just a CPU, but a full system-on-a-chip, including the processor, graphics processor, I/O handler, and additional core functions.

Depending on the model, the iPad will come with 16, 32, or 64 GB of flash memory for storing apps and data - Apple has not said how much RAM the iPad will have for app execution. All models will include 802.11n Wi-Fi plus Bluetooth 2.1+EDR. Apple claims that the iPad will have a 10-hour battery life in active use, though that will undoubtedly drop depending on network usage, and the battery will reportedly last 30 days in standby mode. Other features will be familiar to iPhone users - an accelerometer, electronic compass, speaker, microphone, and dock connector.

Jobs was careful to note that the iPad is a good environmental citizen, being free of arsenic, BFRs, mercury, and PVC.

Perhaps the most significant hardware-related announcement was the iPad Keyboard Dock, which holds the iPad in portrait mode and provides an Apple aluminum keyboard (with a slightly modified key layout)

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The iPad Arrives

that you can use instead of the iPhone OS's standard virtual keyboard. Although we don't yet know if the keyboard dock will work with the iPhone and iPod touch as well, that would be ideal, since all these devices could be used far more effectively for writing with a keyboard. We suspect that editing may still be somewhat cumbersome, given the iPhone OS's interface for copying and pasting text and lack of drag-and-drop.

In the same vein, we're pleased to see that the Bluetooth support in the iPad enables use of the Bluetooth Apple Wireless Keyboard, a feature that's often been requested for the iPhone and iPod touch. Unfortunately, Apple representatives at the event, when asked, said that Bluetooth keyboard support is not currently planned for the iPhone and iPod touch.

Other accessories include an iPad Case that protects the iPad and holds it in a variety of positions, a small iPad Dock that lets you charge and sync your iPad to a computer, an iPad USB Power Adapter that lets you charge your iPad from a wall outlet, and the iPad Camera Connection Kit. This final accessory enables you to import photos and videos from digital cameras either by connecting them via USB to the iPad, or by inserting the camera's SD card into the SD Card Reader. We expect this to be a popular accessory with travelers looking to offload images from their digital cameras while on vacation, though many digital photos from a modern high-megapixel camera could overwhelm the iPad's relatively limited storage space.

Speaking of which, the most notable omission in the iPad is a camera - it's surprising that Apple didn't add one, as on the iPhone, for still images and video, since it seems as though the iPad could be an ideal video-chat device if the problem of camera shake could be solved with image stabilization capabilities. Another part of the problem might be where to put it, since the back is ideal if your subject is in front of you, and the front is ideal if you want to appear in the video yourself; we can imagine Apple meeting both needs in a clever way in a future device.

Pricing and Availability — Jobs thoroughly enjoyed discussing the iPad's pricing, noting that industry pundits (hey, we resemble that remark!) thought it would have to sell for $999. (We never said anything of the sort.) Instead, the iPad comes in six different models, three that are limited to Wi-Fi for networking, and three that combine Wi-Fi with 3G cellular data connectivity.

The Wi-Fi models cost $499 (16 GB), $599 (32 GB), and $699 (64 GB), while the Wi-Fi+3G models are more pricey at $629 (16 GB), $729 (32 GB), and $829 (64 GB). The Wi-Fi-only models will reportedly become available in March 2010, with the Wi-Fi+3G models following a month later in April.

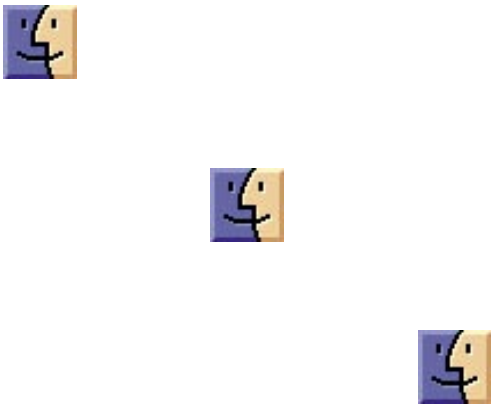
Of course, for the 3G models, you also need a 3G data plan, which will cost $14.99 for 250 MB per month, or $29.99 per month for unlimited data. Both plans are available only through AT&T in the United States, which will no doubt cause much consternation among those who dislike AT&T's coverage and network capabilities. Apple said the iPad would be available internationally, but cell data details will undoubtedly vary by carrier.

iPad data subscribers also get free access to all of AT&T's Wi-Fi hotspots, much as iPhone users do (for more on this deal and on finding Wi-Fi in general, see "Find Free and Inexpensive Wi-Fi," 23 December 2009). Apparently, all the rumors about the iPad working with Verizon Wireless were wrong.

We're pleased that the data plans don't require a contract, meaning iPad owners with 3G-capable models can activate this feature a month at a time when they're going to be traveling, and needn't pay for a data plan for months when they and their iPads will mostly be around home, work, and Wi-Fi-enabled coffee shops.

Padding the Numbers — At first glance, and while we are admittedly still within the Reality Distortion Field, the iPad looks like a winner. The hardware looks sufficiently capable, the use of the iPhone OS means that it will have a huge app library from day one, and the price is far more reasonable than many feared.

Many in the Apple world will undoubtedly be ordering iPads as soon as they're available, but the real question is if the iPad will continue to extend Apple's reach to those who didn't previously own a Mac or an iPhone.



by Jeff Carlson and Glenn Fleishman

Hands-on Impressions of the iPad

To give you an idea of what it's like to use Apple's new iPad, we need to jump past Apple's media event announcing the tablet and go to lunch. (What can we say? Food and information go hand-in-hand in our world, and Glenn was getting faint.)

Over the course of 10 minutes determining where to eat in San Francisco, there were a handful of moments when we thought an iPad would be better than our iPhones: searching for restaurants on a map; jotting a few notes from our conversations about the device; checking Twitter to see if anyone we knew had restaurant suggestions; looking on the Web to see if the first TidBITS article was online yet; checking the calendar for our return flight information.

In each case, nothing about the iPhone prevented us from doing these things. But after handling the iPad following Steve Jobs's announcement, our fingers wanted more room to type, more of a document-style grasp of the device instead of cupping it in the hand, and faster performance. Our still-shiny iPhone 3GS units suddenly felt small and slow.

The iPad is something to be held and experienced, because so many of its advantages are tactile: how it feels in the hand, of course, but also how the software responds. (Where our opinions differ, we break them out.)

Speed and Smoothness — We definitely noticed the speed. Even after minutes of using the iPad, the performance was still surprising. Web pages load in Safari ridiculously fast. Full-screen video plays as smoothly as it would to a TV set from a DVD or Blu-ray player - often better than our experience on some Macs. The animation for moving between pages in the iBooks app provides a neat interactive scrolling page-turn effect that keeps up with the finger if you keep it pressed against the screen as you move. (You can also simply tap the left or right side of the screen to turn the page.)

Perhaps the best term for how the speed and smoothness combine is immediacy: there's no wait for something to happen, and no delay in following a finger or gesture. Even the seemingly most complicated and arbitrary activities have the same fluid sense of something happening in the real, not virtual world.

For instance, the Photos app on the iPad lets you see photo groups by albums (and also by events, Faces, and Places if you sync with iPhoto on the Mac). Use two fingers on a stack of photos in the events view to stretch the photos apart and back together, like you had just randomly spread out and restacked pictures. No matter how many times Glenn did this, it still seemed remarkable.

The Screen — Once we found a suitable lunch spot, we joked about the many "artists' renditions" of Apple tablets that appeared before the introduction, because the iPad turns out to be what we expected from a design standpoint: a large iPod touch. Most of the front face is a beautiful, high-resolution color LCD screen. A black bezel surrounds the 9.7-inch screen to give you someplace to put your thumbs (otherwise you're activating the multitouch sensors). The 1024-by-768 pixel size is enhanced by its 132 ppi resolution. Items onscreen are crisp and clear, and even resized objects such as current iPhone app icons and upscaled graphics aren't painful to view.

The upscaling of iPhone apps is noticeable (when you tap the 2x button to fill the screen instead of running at actual size), especially in games such as Bejeweled where most everything is bitmapped. But apps that rely on the iPad's graphics engine to render resizable items such as text appeared to cope well. We couldn't tell whether the operating system is cleanly changing the size of text or just doing a great job of doubling the pixel counts, but we suspect the former.

The screen has the same oleophobic fingerprint-resistant coating as the 3GS, but it definitely smears up fast. The cheerful and informative Apple employees assisting us in trying out the iPad devices would regularly ask to clean the screens - although that was to keep them fresh for the tens of thousands of photos being taken, too.

Of Transitions and Polish — We expect excellence from Apple when it comes to visual styling, but the iPad surprised us. Subtle animations abound, imparting the sense that the iPad is a single cohesive, consistent design. For example, tapping an iBook to read it doesn't just immediately fill the screen with the text. The "book" opens and moves toward you; it's a very quick animation, so it doesn't feel like the designers tacked it on to be cool or burn CPU cycles. When you switch from portrait to landscape orientation in the Mail app, the Inbox list appears as if it were a piece of paper that had been folded behind the current message.

Then there are visual cues that work to integrate the iPad into the real world. When the keyboard is visible, the F and J keys appear with the "bumps" typically used as guides for touch typists. It's silly to put them there, because the screen is a flat piece of glass, but it makes the keyboard seem more "real" for people who use keyboards all the

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Hands-on Impressions of the iPad

time. Or, consider the List view in the Calendar app. When viewed in the iPad's landscape orientation, an event selected from the list appears to the right, and if you look closely you see little clumps of torn paper where previous days' entries appear to have been removed.

The surprise comes not just in the level of detail that Apple has created, but that the company is adhering to images of physical, real-world objects to make the iPad experience more believable. It's not necessary for the iPad's functionality, but it will likely go a long way toward making the experience more comfortable for people who want to bring it to a couch or on vacation.

Size and Weight — We spent about 30 minutes holding and using an iPad, and came away with distinctly different feelings about the weight and heft of the iPad.

Glenn: I worry that the iPad is a bit horsey. The 1.5-pound weight doesn't sound like much, and I don't have weak wrists or forearms, but I found it tiring to hold the iPad in one hand for more than a few minutes. I'd definitely want to prop it somewhere. During Steve Jobs and Phil Schiller's demonstrations, they sat in a chair and propped on a knee or in a hand supported by a knee.

Jeff: Glenn is criminally insane. Not because he thinks 1.5 pounds is too heavy, but because he seems to be envisioning that he'll be holding the iPad at arm's length for hours at a time. When reading, I always prop a book on a table, my lap, or other surface. Maybe I have minimal muscle mass, but I don't foresee weight as a problem.

We both found the curve of the back surface to be subtle and comfortable in the hand. Unlike the iPhone or iPod touch, the edges aren't completely rounded: the back curves up, and then squares away to create a flat edge around the device.

It also feels sturdy, no doubt thanks to the solid aluminum processes developed for the MacBook Air and MacBook Pro. The glass screen makes us unwilling to throw the iPad into a bag unprotected, but we're not worried that it will bend or otherwise feel flimsy. Cases and slipcovers will undoubtedly be available well before the iPad itself.

The Handwriting Is on Some Other Wall — At no point did we wish we could write on the iPad with a stylus and have it recognize our handwriting. Although handwriting recognition has improved significantly since the days of the original Newton, it's just not a good computing input mechanism. Just because you're holding something that roughly resembles the shape of a notepad doesn't mean it needs to be treated like one.

What's funny, though, is that the Notepad app on the iPad goes to great lengths to look more like a notepad, especially in landscape orientation.) Instead of asking the iPad to attempt to decipher swirls and loops (which are nearly incomprehensible to us, and we're the ones doing the writing), using the iPad's onscreen keyboard ensures that the data you input is legible and searchable.

Minor Nits — We did find some annoyances and outstanding questions, some of which may be eliminated by the time the shipping versions appear. It was clear that the software on the demo models were still being baked; some features had non-functional controls (like the search capability in the iBooks app), many preferences were missing, and Glenn managed to crash the iPad by trying to access Wi-Fi network settings. None of the iPads on display included 3G networking (which is due to arrive in April 2010 in the United States).

The icons on the home screen seem too small and too widely spaced. Given that all iPhone app icons must be delivered to Apple at 512 by 512 pixels, we would think the home screen on the iPad could display more of them and make better use of the space. The iPhone can hold a 4-by-4 grid of icons on each home screen, plus the 4 icons on the home row. In comparison, the iPad appears to have a 6-by-4 grid, plus only 4 spots on the home row, but it could easily increase that to an 8-by-6 grid and 6 spots on the home row.

The iBooks app has a problem with page numbers. When you change the font size or type face, iBooks repaginates the book silently and without any noticeable slowing of the interface. However, it makes using page numbers for academic reference impossible, something about which fiction readers and most non-fiction readers won't give a fig. However, we hope Apple will think more about this before the release, given its obvious utility for schools and universities. One suggestion: use a reference edition, perhaps hardcover, to allow the optional display of absolute page breaks in that edition.

The iPad works fine in either portrait or landscape mode, featuring an accelerometer that detects changes and rotates accordingly. However, there's only one dock connector, below the Home button in portrait position. This is sensible from a feel and production standpoint, but we can envision many circumstances, from using it with a keyboard to watching videos, that you'd want to dock it lengthwise. The optional iPad case lets you stand it on end, but that prevents you from connecting a cable - if you don't opt to spring for the dock - for charging.

The revised Photos app provides better organization, a better interface, and better integration with iPhoto in Mac OS X. You can even import pictures from cameras (using a $29 USB dock adapter) or SD cards (via a $29 dock card reader). But you seemingly can't organize photos once imported, nor upload photos en masse to a storage location, a service like Flickr or Facebook, or even a MobileMe gallery - it's limited to just one photo at a time. (You can email multiple photos simultaneously, but that's hardly the same thing.) The Flickr app for iPhone OS lets you upload multiple photos, and third-party apps will likely fill this gap.

Also, photos currently do not reveal any metadata, even basic items such as date, title, and caption (a characteristic shared by the current version of the iPhone OS). Given the new feature to use the iPad as a slideshow viewer when docked (a button on the lock screen enables this mode), as well as the capability to import photos directly from a camera or SD card using an optional adapter, we'd like to see some method of exposing that information.

The room in which we viewed the iPad was crammed with journalists, so we couldn't tell whether audio from the built-in speakers was acceptable. However, there's just one speaker port on the bottom. Jeff attempted to listen to the output and noticed that the bass response made the back of the unit vibrate, so perhaps there's more oomph than was discernible during the event. Our suspicion is that you wouldn't want to rely on the built-in speakers as the main source of audio when playing music.

(As an amusing side note, photographer Justin Sullivan captured a shot of Jeff listening to the iPad, which, in addition to looking as if he's caressing the device, ran on the front page of the paper edition of USA Today (PDF), in the Wall Street Journal, and online at the Huffington Post.)

Whether Apple will be successful at selling the iPad, no one can predict. But the firm has certainly built a remarkable device, and one that sets a new bar for mobile device performance, even if it were to sell just a handful. (Seriously, does anyone think Apple will sell just a handful given the $499 price?)

by TidBITS Staff

Cool Products at Macworld Expo 2010

The mood of Macworld Expo 2010 was vigorous and crowds were larger than expected, despite the lack of many new products - the kind that usually compel attendees to spread the word and seek out a company's booth. Most of the offerings were existing versions or incremental updates to products already familiar to us.

Many of those products that were new weren't yet released, such as DocMoto, a full-featured document management system that may prove highly attractive to design businesses, architectural offices, legal firms, and any other organization that creates numerous document-based projects. We would have bought some things on the spot if they were available, such as the stylish and functional iKit AutoCharge Dual USB Car Charger.

Still, among the few new things that were shipping, those that are still forthcoming, and existing products we weren't yet familiar with, we found some that merit attention.

Kanex HDMI connector for iMac — When Jeff pointed out Kanex's latest offering, it took a few tries before Adam saw just what he was gesturing at. The Kanex XD is a little gray box that takes advantage of the Mini DisplayPort connection on the back of the 27-inch iMac and lets you hook up a Blu-ray player, PlayStation 3, Xbox, or other HD devices and use the iMac as an HDTV. (This feature is available only on the 27-inch iMac model.) The Kanex XD also makes it possible to connect computers using DVI video output to Apple's 24-inch LED Cinema Display. The Kanex XD costs $149.99 and is expected to be available in April 2010.

FastTrac — It takes some level of obsession to be a programmer, but the folks at Juicy Development have taken their obsessions to a new level with FastTrac. The iPhone app attempts to optimize your visit to Disneyland by cutting the time you spend waiting in line for the park's attractions. Using years of data about rides, crowds, holidays, and maintenance schedules (culled by Disney veterans and fans, since Disney itself doesn't release such data), FastTrac plots an optimized schedule of the rides you want to hit. It can take unexpected ride closures into account, knowing the average repair time of each ride, and generate new schedules within the park. According to Juicy Development, testing during the busy spring break yielded 27 rides at Disneyland, more than double the typical 12 rides. The company is working on adding restaurant information to the app, as well as support for Disney's California Adventure, Walt Disney World, and SeaWorld parks. FastTrac is available from the App Store for $4.99.

iPhone Gloves — Although Californians at Macworld Expo were scratching their heads, attendees arriving from colder climates were excited about several offerings of gloves that can be used with the iPhone and iPod touch. Dots Gloves and Telefingers showed off their warm wares, but iTouch Gloves impressed us (and lots of attendees) with their capacitive-leather gloves that don't rely on active fingertip areas to work. A patented TouchTec process makes it possible to swipe a touchscreen using any part of the glove. iTouch's offerings sell for between $99 and $195, and they look good, too. We're still trying to figure out how they make capacitive leather... do they start with capacitive cows? (In South Korea, sausages are substituted.)

U-Socket — We're all tired of power bricks, even smaller ones. If FastMac has its way, we'll be able to charge many devices with just a cable. The company's U-Socket is a new kind of dual-socket 110 volt power outlet you can swap out for any standard one in your home - or, in an ideal world, in every airport and hotel in which you stay and need

power. The U-Socket adds two powered USB ports offset vertically and horizontally between the two AC jacks. The USB ports draw energy only when a device like an iPhone or iPod is plugged in. The U-Socket costs $19.95 and is currently awaiting UL approval before shipping in the first quarter of 2010.

Trexta iPhone Case — Looking for an iPhone case that you can really customize? Instead of waiting for a manufacturer to come up with something you like, simply grab some pens and draw yours. Trexta showed off a line of iPhone cases covered in drawing paper, ready for your own doodles and other creations. They come in packs of five, but as far as we can see, they aren't yet available for purchase. Trexta doesn't yet have photos posted, but GeekSugar has plenty.

Personal Scanners Everywhere — Looking to create the paperless office? You'll need a scanner of some sort, and three different exhibitors had scanners to show off. Fujitsu debuted the $295 ScanSnap S1300, which provides multi-page, double-sided, color scanning in a mobile device that can even operate from USB bus power. Just two booths away, The Neat Company was demoing their Neat scanners and associated software.

And Apparent, makers of the IntelliScanner barcode readers, introduced the $129 Doxie, a svelte mobile scanner with a "feminine" character hammered home by the pink hearts on the case; it comes with six "skins" - alternate stickers - if you're not a teenage girl. Similarly, if you can't stomach clicking a big heart button in the software to scan, an "International Business" theme will bring the interface back to earth. Along with support for local applications, Doxie's software can also send scans to Google Docs, Scribd, Backpack, Flickr, Evernote, and other Internet-based services. Our only question - did Apparent ever look up the meaning of "doxie?"

Pulse Smartpen — If you're a student or a journalist, you spend much of your life taking notes, and the Pulse smartpen from Livescribe could be a boon. Bringing new meaning to the word "convergence," the Pulse smartpen records audio as you take notes on special paper, enabling both the transfer of notes to a special application and time-syncing of the notes to the audio. Adam was on the interviewee side of the equation during the show, and it was seamless for the Brazilian journalist asking the questions to take notes in normal ink while recording everything Adam said for future reference. Prices range from $149.95 to $249.95 depending on storage capacity.

Canson Papershow — Working along much the same lines as Livescribe's Pulse smartpen was Canson's Papershow, a $199.99 kit composed of a camera-equipped Bluetooth pen, special paper, and software (both Mac and Windows) that transfers everything written on the paper to appear on a computer screen. It would be ideal, for instance, for annotating the slides in a presentation in real time. Annotated slides can be printed or exported as PDF, so meeting attendees can focus on the presentation rather than on taking their own notes.

ScreenGuardz Privacy — Having an iPhone handy is great for accessing all of your important information whenever you want, but often you're doing so in public. If you'd rather not reveal the email message you're composing to the person next to you on the bus, consider applying a ScreenGuardz Privacy screen cover. The protective film for the iPhone 3G or 3GS limits viewing from four angles, which means you can switch between horizontal and vertical positions; typical two-way privacy film makes one position difficult to view. The ScreenGuardz Privacy film includes one protector and costs $19.95.

Microvision ShowWX Laser Pico Projector — Imagine a small device, about the size of an iPhone, capable of projecting high resolution video as large as a 100-inch television set. The Microvision ShowWX projector uses scanning lasers to project colorful images on any surface. By using laser projection instead of alternative technologies like LCDs, the images are always in focus with a wider color range than other pico (extremely small) projectors. The projector includes a number of connectivity options, including an iPhone/iPod cable, and runs between 90-120 minutes on battery. It's not hard to imagine the day when these are included in our mobile devices, although the lack of flat, white surfaces in the world might be a little limiting. It's due in March 2010.

by Tim Sullivan

March Software Review

SiteSucker 2.2.4
http://www.sitesucker.us/mac.html
Requires OS X 10.4 or greater. Universal Binary. Donationware.

SiteSucker is a Macintosh application that automatically downloads Web sites from the Internet. It does this by asynchronously copying the site's Web pages, images, backgrounds, movies, and other files to your local hard drive. Just enter a URL (Uniform Resource Locator), press return, and SiteSucker can download an entire Web site.

SiteSucker can be used to make local copies of Web sites. It can download files unmodified or "localize" the files it downloads, allowing you to browse a site offline. Generally, unmodified means with all of the languages included, while localized means using a single language.

You can save all the information about a download in a document. This allows you to create a document that you can use to perform the same download whenever you want. If SiteSucker is in the middle of a download when you choose the Save command, SiteSucker will pause the download and save its status with the document. When you open the document later, you can restart the download from where it left off by pressing the Resume button.

NOTE: There are several limitations. The program cannot query databases and will not work on any web site that asks for user input and then builds pages "on the fly," based on the input. That leaves out many genealogy databases, as well as eBay and others.

SiteSucker totally ignores JavaScript. It will not see any link specified within JavaScript. (If the Log Warnings option is on in the download settings, SiteSucker will include a warning in the log file for any page that uses JavaScript.)

I can imagine Sitesucker would be invaluable for roadwarriors. And here's an example where it saved a lot of time:

"My uncle recently posted about 300 family photos that he had scanned in to his computer. They were pictures of my grandparents in their younger days. I wanted to have the photos in my own collection.

Sitesucker came in handy. I could have downloaded each photo separately, but instead I put the URL in SiteSucker and sucked them all down at once. This is great software for reading full sites offline."

Apple Updates

Digital Camera Raw Compatibility Update 3.1
February 25, 2010
System Requirements
- OS X 10.5.8
- OS X 10.6.2

This update extends RAW image compatibility for Aperture 3 and iPhoto 09 for the following cameras:
- Hasselblad H3DII-50
- Leica M9
- Leica X1
- Olympus E-P1
- Olympus E-P2
- Panasonic Lumix DMC-GF1
- Pentax K-7
- Pentax K-x
- Sony Alpha DSLR-A500
- Sony Alpha DSLR-A550
- Sony Alpha DSLR-A850

Aperture 3.0.1
February 24, 2010
System Requirements
- OS X 10.5.8
- OS X 10.6.2

This update improves overall stability and addresses a number of issues in Aperture 3, including:
- Upgrading libraries from earlier versions of Aperture
- Importing libraries from iPhoto
- Importing photos directly from a camera
- Memory usage when processing heavily-retouched photos
- Face recognition processing
- Adding undetected faces using the Add Missing Face button
- Printing pages containing multiple images
- Printing photos and contact sheets with borders and metadata
- Editing photos using an external editor
- Display of images with Definition and Straighten adjustments applied
- Zooming photos in the Viewer and in the Loupe using keyboard shortcuts

• Accessing Aperture libraries on a network volume
Selecting and moving pins on the Places map
• Adding and editing custom locations using the Manage My Places window
• Switching between masters when working with RAW+JPEG pairs.

Mac Pro Audio Update 1.0
February 11, 2010

System Requirements
– OS X 10.6.2

This update is for Mac Pro (Early 2009) computers running OS X v10.6.2. This update reduces processor utilization during audio activities, such as playing or recording music.

2009 Aluminum Keyboard Firmware Update 1.0
February 10, 2010

System Requirements
– OS X 10.5.8
– OS X 10.6.2

This firmware update improves battery performance of the 2009 Aluminum Apple Wireless Keyboard when used in combination with other Bluetooth devices (example. Magic Mouse, Bluetooth headsets).

Digital Camera Raw Compatibility Update 3.0
February 09, 2010

System Requirements
– OS X 10.5.8
– OS X 10.6.2

This update extends RAW image compatibility for Aperture 3 and iPhoto 09 for the following cameras and formats:
• Canon PowerShot S90
• Canon sRAW
• Canon mRAW
• Leica D-LUX 4
• Panasonic Lumix DMC-G1
• Panasonic Lumix DMC-GH1
• Panasonic Lumix DMC-LX3

Aperture SlideShow Support Update 1.0
February 09, 2010

System Requirements
– OS X 10.6.2

This update addresses an issue affecting the playback of video clips used in Aperture 3 slideshows on Snow Leopard.

The update is recommended for all users of Aperture 3.

iTunes 9.0.3
February 01, 2010

System Requirements
– Mac OS 10.4.11 or later

iTunes 9.0.3 provides a number of important bug fixes, including:
• iTunes no longer ignores your "Remember password for purchases" setting.
• Addresses problems with syncing some Smart Playlists and Podcasts with iPod.
• Resolves a problem recognizing when iPod is connected.
• Addresses issues that affect stability and performance.

27-inch iMac Display Firmware Update 1.0
February 01, 2010

System Requirements
– OS X 10.6.2

Updates the display firmware on 27-inch iMac systems to address issues that may cause intermittent display flickering.

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