

WAMUG



Whittier Area Macintosh Users Group

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Apple News

Mac turns 25!

25 years ago, Apple's Macintosh was introduced. Its graphical user interface changed the industry. I remember when I first saw one, it was love at first sight. You could actually draw on them! They were even WYSIWYG (What you see is what you got). What you saw on the screen, printed on the printer.

I spent a lot of money on that MacPlus and the Imagewriter printer you had to buy to print out that beautiful screen. It was a huge improvement over the green phosphor screens on the Apple IIs and DOS machines. Thinking back, it was really hard to get things to print out the way you wanted before Macs came on the scene. I remember this one Excel spreadsheet, I spent hours trying to get it to print out right using DOS. Don't miss those days at all. When the Macintosh was introduced, and Pagemaker came out, desktop publishing was born.



If you want a "blast from the past" go to <http://www.virtualapple.org> to see and use programs from the Apple II days. If you want to use the Apple II's programs though, you have to use a Windows machine! Can you believe it? The Apple II programs work with a Mac. See the story below. Teachers that had the Apple IIs in their classes will get a smile out of this.

Google Earth 5.0 Adds Oceans, Mars, and Time Travel

If you haven't yet had the chance to check out Google Earth, version 5.0 offers some great reasons to do so, including 3D ocean floor terrains, historical imagery, and even the surface of Mars.

iPhoto '09 Adds Faces and Places

by Doug McLean TidBITS.com

As our photo collections grow into the tens of thousands of photos, Apple is working on ways to make it easier to find particular photos, adding face recognition and geotagging support to iPhoto '09.

In the same way iPhoto '08 enabled users to sort and tag their photos by events, iPhoto '09 makes it possible to search, sort, and tag by faces. Face detection technology, once you've taught the program properly, can identify friends or family members from your larger collection based on their facial features. Once the program believes it has found the person, it will ask you to confirm and tag the photo with their name.



The tagging process is similar to tagging photos in Facebook. Clicking a top-level Faces collection in the sidebar shows all the people you've identified.

Unfortunately, face tags are not exported with photos, although it may be possible to assign a keyword to a person easily, and export that. It's also worth noting that the face recognition technology is unique to iPhoto and isn't more generally available in Mac OS X for other applications, which is a shame.

Additionally, with Places, users can sort and tag by the location the photograph was taken. Cameras with geotagging capabilities mark your photos with the longitude and latitude of the location they were taken. iPhoto interprets this information and correlates the spot to a Place in its database, showing pins on a map generated from Google Maps. If you don't have geotagging capabilities, you can instead manually tag photos or groups of photos with locations listed in iPhoto's location database.

Other than the iPhone, only one consumer-level camera, the Nikon Coolpix P6000, makes it trivial to match GPS coordinates with photos. More are on the way, but as Glenn Fleishman explained in an Ars Technica article, it's not a trivial problem due to how quickly cameras are turned on and off, leaving insufficient time to get a satellite lock.

iPhoto '09 also now includes useful Facebook and Flickr syncing capabilities. You can click a button to sync your photos to your Facebook or Flickr accounts, complete with name (for Facebook) and location (for Flickr) tags.

You can even perform the reverse function, sending photos from online collections to your iPhoto library with tags in place.

Additional changes include more advanced slideshow customization and new themes that can all be synced to your iPhone and iPod touch. Finally, the new version includes enhanced Travel Book options including more themes, better printing, and geotagged maps.

iMovie '09 Seems to Fix Everything from iMovie '08

When Apple introduced iMovie '08, the video editor was nothing like previous versions. Completely rewritten and boasting a new interface, it lacked features that iMovie users had grown accustomed to: audio editing lost capabilities that had been gradually added to iMovie over several versions; themes were removed; iDVD chapter markers disappeared (as well as the capability to send a project directly to iDVD); and more (see "New iLife '08 Revealed, .Mac Upgraded, 2007-08-13). iMovie '08 had its upsides - support for importing AVCHD footage and making easy color adjustments come to mind - but it was very much a 1.0 application.

Based on what Phil Schiller presented during the Macworld Expo keynote, iMovie '09 looks to be the program we were expecting last year. A new Precision Editor lets you fine-tune edits in an expanded visual way. When you drag and drop a clip from the Event library onto a clip in your movie, a new action pop-up menu appears with options to replace the existing clip, insert the new clip in the middle of the existing one, or

just add the audio from the new clip. (Other options include green-screen and picture-in-picture.)

Video stabilization is a welcome new feature that can take the shake out of handheld footage, something that will be especially useful for owners of small Flip camcorders that lack built-in image stabilization features. (iMovie also improves compatibility with the Flip MinoHD.)

iMovie's engineers have clearly spent some time traveling (or thinking about traveling), because several features are ideal for travel videos. Animated travel maps, available in a few different themes, let you specify locations on a map or globe and create Indiana Jones-style markers that extend from place to place. Themes have also made a reappearance in iMovie, and at first glance they seem more interesting and flexible than those that appeared in iMovie HD.

Other welcome improvements include the return of iDVD chapter markers and direct-to-iDVD exporting, iPhoto Event matching, an intriguing new archive feature for making copies of tapeless footage, multi-touch gesture support, the capability to adjust multiple clips at once, and, at last, the return of fast and slow motion. Still missing are support for exporting footage back to tape and the capability to adjust volume levels within a clip. A full list of new features can be found on Apple's Web site.

iMovie '09 is part of iLife '09, which will ship in late January 2009 for \$79 or \$99 for a family pack. Also available then will be the Mac Box Set for \$169, which includes iLife '09, iWork '09, and Mac OS X 10.5 Leopard. New Macs will continue to ship with iLife

for free. If you purchase a new machine between 06-Jan-09 and 31-Mar-09 that does not include iLife '09, you can upgrade it for \$9.95 through Apple's iLife Up-to-Date program.

Virtual Apple - A Web Site Review

<http://www.virtualapple.org>

by Phil Shapiro

In the beginning was the Apple II. Woz and Jobs looked down upon the Apple II. And it was good.

Those of us present to witness this miracle of computing will fondly enjoy traveling back to those days via the Virtual Apple web site, which lets you run many Apple II and IIGS programs right within your browser. Collected on the site are over 1,200 Apple II disks that play virtually in a browser. You'll need to use a Windows computer (and ActiveGS Firefox plug-in) to play the Apple IIGS games. If you run Windows on your Mac, you can play Apple IIGS games via that route, too.

As an educator I was particularly happy to see that Number Munchers, my all-time favorite educational game, is sitting right there in the Virtual Apple collection. Number Munchers is a Pac-Man like game where students munch (i.e. "eat") numbers on a grid while avoiding the trolls that come into the grid from any of the four sides of the grids. I've seen kids play this game for hours and not get tired of it. Used wisely, with some supervision from adults or older siblings, Number Munchers can be very helpful for 3rd and 4th graders (i.e. 8 to 10 year olds).

Some younger and older children will enjoy this game, too.

Some other educational favorites of mine are:

MECC-ESTIMATION QUICK SOLVE I

MECC-ESTIMATION QUICK SOLVE II

As I recall, these are most suited to upper elementary and middle school students. In its day, the MECC Communi Keys typing tutor was the best typing tutor on the planet. It's still excellent.

If you are a true Apple II archaeologist, check out Breakout, a single player version of the classic computer game Pong. Use the Option (or Alt) key to start the ball coming down towards use. Use your mouse to move the paddle left and right. Best as I can recall Woz himself wrote Breakout in 1977 using Integer BASIC, which he himself also created. This is the source. This is the essence. All goodness flows from this.

Kudos to the good people at Apple Puget-sound Program Library Exchange for making the Virtual Apple site happen. This site is not only a vital historical landmark, it provides real value in the educational realm. There are hundreds of just-for-fun games here, too, if that's what you enjoy.

Don't forget to listen to some late 1970's music (or 1980's music) when visiting this web site. That will give you the complete historical experience. Virtual Apple brings a tear to my eye. It really does. In the history of technology, the Apple II is right up there with the Wright Flyer. When Woz designed the Apple II, that's when our imaginations first took flight.

(The reviewer is an adjunct professor of education at American University, in Washington DC. During the early 1990's he designed educational software for Apple II's that was sold to elementary schools and families nationwide.)

<http://www.his.com/pshapiro/briefbio.html>