

WAMUG



Whittier Area Macintosh Users Group

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Apple News



Apple has released its last update for OS X Tiger. Leopard must be coming out soon. This update (10.4.9) contains patches for 45 security holes, mostly for other applications. There haven't been reports of any of these "holes" being actually used in the "real world" to corrupt a Mac.

Apple came to an agreement with Cisco to let Apple use the name "iPhone" for their upcoming cell phone. No concrete info. on what the agreement was.

Solving the Bandwidth Problem at Apple Stores

by Phil Shapiro >

Apple, Inc. has a knack for solving bandwidth problems, but there is one bandwidth problem it has yet to solve: customers waiting for long times at the Genius Bars. Apple is a victim of its own success. People are buying its products in record numbers. Those same people need service and support.

While waiting for the Genius Bar, nerves fray. Tempers flare. The goal then becomes to

try to get out of the store before ripping someone's throat out.

The stress on the people working at the Genius Bars is also unfair. Those people do an incredible job working under very tough conditions. Their work conditions and the treatment of Apple customers waiting in long lines has to improve.

Several years ago Apple moved to dual-processors, so the time is right to move to dual Genius Bars in every Apple store. This is a design decision. Apple can have pretty looking spacious stores, or it can have customers with more smiles on their faces.

Apple no longer needs stores which attractively display its merchandise. Almost everyone walking into an Apple store is there to buy Apple products. People don't travel to an Apple store when they're thinking about buying an Apple product. They go to an Apple store when they're ready to buy.

We no longer need spacious, pretty stores. We need to stores with greater bandwidth for tech support.

Dual Genius Bars won't be enough, though. At some time Apple needs to create stores whose sole purpose is tech support and training. Tech support is itself a product. Sure, basic level tech support is owed all paying customers. But there are people whose time is valuable enough that they would gladly pay for Executive tier tech support at \$300/year (or more.) Those people currently have few options, although ProCare is a step in the right direction.

With Executive tier tech support taking place in a different (nearby) store, the dual Genius Bars each would have greater bandwidth. Do you get the picture? Happier customers creating greater bottom line sales and profits.

Bandwidth problem solved.

The author is the former president of the Virginia Macintosh Users Group. He has given Mac training to about two thousand people in the past 10 years. He can be reached at pshapiro at his.com

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Keeping an Eye on Kids' Computing

*If we didn't stop them, our children would play online games such as World of Warcraft endlessly. I've seen a program called Time Boss for Windows that allows parents to set time limits on the use of certain programs. Is there an equivalent program for the Mac?--
Kerry Fisher*

You bet. Luma Code's Mac Minder (\$30) can provide the service you seek (see "Minor Minder"). It allows you to set time limits for single applications or groups of applications (all games or all browsers, for example). Just choose a user account, pick an application or a group of applications, and create either a simple schedule (one that limits the user to, say, one hour a day for applications in the Games group) or a custom schedule (which lets you specify how much time your kids can use a given app or group of apps each day: an hour between 4 and 8 p.m., Monday through Friday, for example).

The program requires that the administrator (a parent or teacher, for instance) enter a master password to create or edit schedules. Switching accounts won't crack it--you need to know that master password to work with schedules. Version 2.5 lets you administer Macs remotely. You can also log and graph

use by day and user and track user logins and logouts.

Note that if you can wait, Mac OS X 10.5 (Leopard) will have far more extensive parental controls than the current Accounts preference pane provides. We'll just have to wait and see whether these new features will exceed what you get from Mac Minder and similar apps.

Amateur Digital Photographer's Toolkit

As enthusiastic as I am about digital photography, I'm hardly a professional. But I'm getting better--largely because I've finally stuffed the right collection of accessories into my camera bag. Maybe the following items will help you, too.

Extra Media Card My camera's pixel count is high enough, and storage prices are low enough, that I'm now shooting uncompressed raw images. I've also learned about the wonders of bracketing to capture images at different exposures. This eats up memory in a big way. Don't be caught with a camera that's too full to capture the perfect image.

Lens Cloth Camera lenses get smudged. Stop by the local spectacles emporium and pick up a cloth for cleaning a dusty or smudgy lens.

Extra Batteries If you run out of space on your media card, you can always make room by dumping images you know you won't want. But if your battery dies, there's no such easy fix. No power on earth except a freshly charged spare will make your camera work again.

The Manual Because I'm a Mac user, I don't generally read manuals. But my camera is a complex device, and having the manual is useful when I want to know how to make the camera jump through an obscure hoop.

Small Tripod I drink a lot of coffee and therefore don't have the steadiest hands. If you're like me, pick up a small tripod that you can pack in your pocket. When the light is low, you'll be glad you did.

Card Reader When shooting in the field, I sometimes bring a laptop for previewing images. Having a card reader that plugs into my PowerBook's PC Card slot is a godsend. Unlike using a USB cable strung from camera to computer, transferring images through a card doesn't pull power from my camera's battery. No PC Card slot on your laptop? A USB card reader works just as well.

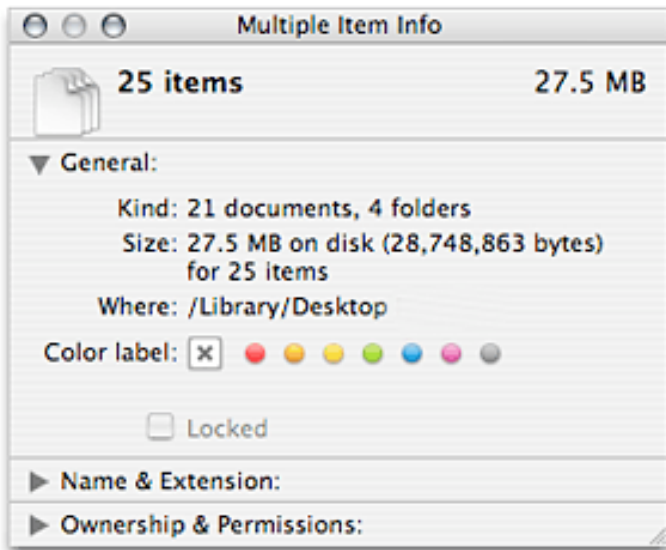
Picture Rescue If your camera's media card becomes confused or corrupted, you'll need a utility to help retrieve your precious images. Prosoft Engineering's Picture Rescue (\$59) is the tool to use.

*[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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Finding the Combined Size of More than One Document

Let's say you have several files on your desktop, and before you copy them all onto your jump drive, you want to find out their combined size. Here's how it's done: Select all the files for which you want the combined size, then press Command-Option-I, which brings up the Multiple Item Info dialog, complete with a list of how many files are selected and their combined size.



Get to Your Top Hit Fast

If you do a search and notice that the file it chose as your Top Hit in the Spotlight menu is actually the file you were looking for (hey, it could happen), just press-and-hold the Command key to jump right to the Top Hit, then press Return to open that document (or song, email, etc.), which closes the Spotlight menu. See, it even tidies up after you. So basically, just press Command-Return to instantly open the Top Hit. Easy enough.

