WAMUG

Apple News

Fortune Magazine has put Apple at the top of its America's Most Admired Companies list, ahead of Google (#4) and Microsoft (#16). (Apple also topped the Global Top 20 list, which included companies from other countries.) In the Computers category (which includes hardware manufacturers like IBM, HP, and Dell), Apple ranked first in innovation, people management, and quality of products/services, fifth in social responsibility, and third in the other attributes. More impressive was that Apple took the top ranking in innovation in the entire survey, beating out firms like Nike, Herman Miller, and Walt Disney.

The iPhone Software Developer Kit was finally released. This allows third party software developers to write programs for the iPhone and iPod Touch. This increases the appeal of these platforms for business use and the average consumer. The new programs will be available through Apple at a new online store they are developing. The iPhone and Touch are in reality– palm sized computers.

My iPod Touch
by Alan Webster
I recently bought a refurbished iPod Touch from Apple. With the recent release of software, that provides more features including mail, maps, notes, it pushed me to buy. I am happy I did. It amazes me how much technology is crammed into something this size.

I wanted something portable to play podcasts, music, videos, and photos. Plus, it can get on the internet through WiFi. It has Safari and Mail built in. The Touch is the same as an iPhone, without the phone. I do not use a cell phone enough to pay $70 a month for service.
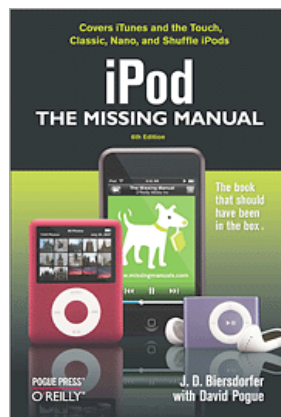
The screen is sharp and bright, but you better have your reading glasses on to use the internet. The text on Safari's web pages is tiny. To make it useable, you double touch the area you want to read and it zooms in. The onscreen keyboard takes some practice to get your fingers to touch the right area to get the correct letter.

Some compromises have to be made, to have a computer this size. Make no mistake, these are computers. With their touch screens, upgradeability with software updates, the future abundance of programs, complete portability and internet access—the iPhone and iPod Touch are the beginning of a new market category, where laptop PCs will be replaced, in many instances, by these palm-sized wonders.

iPod the Missing Manual
Reviewed by Elsa Travisano

The sixth edition of iPod, the Missing Man ual is a perfect starting place for owners of current-generation iPods – beginner-friendly, but equally useful to more experienced iPod owners who want to quickly learn the features of their newest iPod.

The book begins with the basics of using the iPod Classic, Touch, second generation Shuffle and video Nano, then delves into iTunes and the iTunes Store, the power of playlists, adding and playing videos and photos (on all but the Shuffle, which lacks a screen), using the calendar, address book, stopwatch and other features, and connecting to your car's or home theater's audio system. There's a full chapter on browsing the web with the iPod Touch, and a final (and much- appreciated) chapter on troubleshooting for when things go wrong.

Most topics are covered on one or two pages, and the tone is folksy and not intimidating. Inviting color photos and plentiful Mac and PC screen shots make the book a pleasure to browse. I found the light sans serif typeface somewhat hard to read, but that's probably a middle-aged eyes issue – it passed the eighteen-year-old daughter test with no problem.

Of special interest to me were the tips on using the iPod Touch, including how to customize the four icons at the bottom of the Music screen (my choice was to swap in Audiobooks, which was previously buried on a sub-screen) and how to quickly pause or adjust the sound of a song when you're not on the Music screen (tap the Home button twice to bring up an adjustment dialog box). In the Touch's version of Safari I also learned that a two-fingered flick lets you navigate a scrolling window inside a frame, and that tapping the menu bar in zips you to the top of that page with no scrolling - a real time- and finger-saver.

iPod, the Missing Manual, 6th edition makes an excellent gift for the owner of a new iPod,

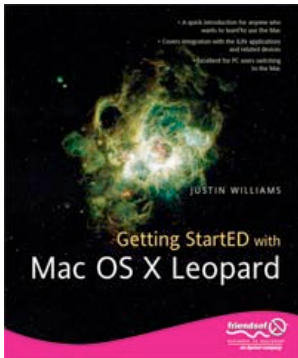but you'll want to be sure to keep a copy for yourself. Highly recommended.

6th edition, J.D. Biersdorfer with David Pogue. 278 pp. Pogue Press/O'Reilly, 2008. $19.99 ISBN 978-0-596-51491-4

Getting StartED with Mac OS X Leopard

by Dave Greenbaum

Apress and the freindsofed division is a fairly new player to the Mac book industry, having focused in the past on heavier topics for programmers and hard core web designers. They are a welcome addition to the Mac Family.

Justin Williams wrote a very first-person account of his adventures with OS X Leopard. This should not be considered a beginners book, especially given the family this book is in. The book is designed for Tiger or other OS X users wanting to know what is new in Leopard. The book is a great effort, but at points I got annoyed that he was stating the obvious things a OS X user knows. Williams writing however was spot-on: easy to understand with plenty of screen shots and detailed examples. He also includes the basics of iLife '08, which is a bonus, though makes the title a bit misleading and leaves the reader with the assumption Leopard in-

cludes iLife '08. Unless you upgraded to iLife '08 and Leopard, 30% of the book isn't applicable to you. Even with the iLife '08 the book is refreshingly short and can't be used a child's booster seat like so many technical books can be.

Though I'm an experienced Leopard user, I even learned a few tricks from this book, based on Williams personal experience with the operating system. This would be a good book to give a experienced Mac user that wants to know "what's new" in Leopard. It was quick, straightforward and to the point: a good book for people who don't like to read manuals.

Pros: Excellent tips, easy to understand for a experienced OS X user new to Leopard

Cons: Covers iLife '08 which adds unnecessarily to the book, covers thins many in the target audience would consider obvious

Three out of Five DogCows

Originally published and written for the Lawrence Apple Users' Group 2.0 http://www.laugks.org/news and published by the author at http://www.clickheretech.com.

Leaving the Past Behind

Chris Breen

Reader J.T. is having a hard time letting go of the past. He writes:

I have a Microtek ScanMaker X6EL flatbed scanner ,which I want to connect and use with my iMac PowerPC G4, 800 MHz computer. Since this scanner is no longer sup-

ported by Microtek, their Tech Support advised that I should try the software program VueScan.

He then goes on to list a pile of adapters he'd use to allow the scanner's SCSI interface to connect to the iMac's FireWire port. He concludes:

The estimated total cost of this hardware/software bundle is $200+. Is there a simpler, less costly, way to connect and operate the Microtek ScanMaker X6 EL scanner with the iMac computer under Mac OS X, v. 10.4.11? Will the listed hardware/software above work? Any other suggestions, other than purchase a "new, modern" scanner and start over?

J.T., the danger of asking for help from others is that they'll occasionally offer advice that you don't want to hear. Example: When you ask, "My girlfriend has threatened to poison my chowder the next time I sneeze and I believe she's quite serious about it. Other than dumping her, what can I do?" a person who truly cares about your welfare will suggest that you back up a step and reconsider your commitment to this modern-day Borgia.

This is one of those cases. Although you don't want to hear it, it's time to let go of that old scanner and get a new one. Here's why:

Those connectivity and driver issues are a biggish deal. Once upon a time I tested some FireWire to SCSI adapters and I have to say I found them problematic. (But things may have improved since then--commenters, feel free to offer your experiences). And while VueScan is an impressive piece of engineering, wouldn't it be nicer if your scanner just

worked with your Mac--and continued to work with the next major Mac OS update?

Also, your scanner offers 1200 dpi resolution. You can get that same resolution from a scanner today for $50. For that $200 you'd spend cobbling together a solution for your current scanner you can have a new scanner that offers 4800 x 9600 resolution. It's likely that this new scanner will also handle slides (though not to the extent of a dedicated slide scanner) and include a modern copy of Photoshop Elements.

To sum up: Honestly, unless your old scanner is the reincarnation of a beloved ancestor, I see no reason to hang onto it.

I understand the pain of discarding a perfectly good scanner. It's not broken, it's simply outdated for your current setup. You can help alleviate some of that pain by donating the scanner to a group that can still use it--a school, Macintosh users group, church, or senior center. Someone will surely find a use for it. This way you get a scanner that works, someone else gets a scanner that works, and you've kept another hunk of plastic, metal, and glass out of the local landfill. .

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).

Find Chris' books at www.amazon.com and www.peachpit.com. Get special user group pricing on Macworld Magazine! Subscribe today at http://www.macworld.com/useroffer.]