

# California Computer Care

News,  
Views,  
Tips and  
Cool Techniques  
for CCC Members

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We  
speak  
Geek,  
so you  
don't  
have to.

## iMac Observations

by Curt Stoddard

When I first saw the picture and specifications of the new iMac, I was unimpressed. Kind of ugly, modestly powered and limited customizability. The price, however, was interesting.

After installing and working with one my opinion has radically changed. I am very impressed.

### No Challenge

The iMac was designed with the new user, home user, schools and small businesses in mind. Do these people want to be challenged by their new computer? Of course not. Do they customize their hardware? Almost never.

Open the shipping box, remove the packing, grab the carrying handle (iMac weighs less than 40 lbs.) plop it on the table, unpack the keyboard and mouse, plug them in, connect the provided standard, modular telephone cable and plug in the power cord (don't forget to use a surge protector on a properly grounded and polarized outlet as with any computer); setup is done.

### Power up

There are two power buttons, one on the front panel below the screen and one on the keyboard. Press either and iMac springs to life. It starts up very quickly. Here is iMac's best technical innovation: ROM in RAM.

All computers store their startup and basic operating instructions permanently programmed on a special circuit board called a ROM (**Read Only Memory**) chip. All other Macs have very big ROM chips that take time to read. iMac has a tiny ROM chip that tells the computer to load its needed instructions from the hard disk drive. Because it is faster and easier to read such instructions from the computer's thinking memory, iMac runs very fast. Although rated at a 233MHz speed, it runs faster than my 266MHz G3! Very impressive.

### OS 8.1

iMac runs the standard *Macintosh Operating System version 8.1*. If you are familiar with *System 8*,



*The new Apple iMac from above. \$1299.00!*

nothing new here. The *Setup Assistant* leads you quickly through the setup process and the *Internet Assistant* gets you easily online.

Pre-installed software includes *ClarisWorks 5.0*, *Quicken Deluxe 98*, *Williams-Sonoma Guide to Good Cooking*, some fun adventure games and a huge slug of internet software and utilities. All ran perfectly, though I've got to figure out what to do with the eggs in *Nanosaur!*

### USB

Other Macs connect accessories through a variety of confusing and mutually exclusive sockets. iMac has only five: standard, modular phone for the built-in 56K modem, ethernet for connecting to other computers or high speed internet (cable modem, ADSL), microphone, speaker/headphone and USB. All of these can be safely plugged in and out with the iMac running. No fear of damaging the computer or accessory with a badly timed plugging in! All plugs and sockets are unique so nothing can be plugged in improperly. The one problem is that you will need USB adaptors to use older printers, scanners, hard drives and such with iMac. This is no concern for a new user who has no older equipment or schools and businesses that use networks to connect computers and printers to each other.

### Summing up

Easy, easy, easy and fast. Solid feel, super sharp 15" screen and fast CDROM. After meeting iMac in person, I even like its looks.

For more information visit <http://www.apple.com>.

# Seybold Publishing Conference

Once a year this trade show takes place in San Francisco. It's aimed at the publishing and printing trades. In years gone by you could see the latest printing presses, plate makers and papers. Because of our Macs, today almost everything published is designed and managed on computers. Seybold has become focused on computer publishing in both trade show and seminars.

Now another change is taking place. Paper-based publishing is being challenged by the internet and the World Wide Web. The Seybold Conference is now almost as concerned with the internet as it is printing.

I attended this year's Conference (September 1-4) and found that the tools used by publishers are undergoing evolutionary improvements, but little innovation. Attendance and excitement were low. Perhaps the internet itself may be the villain. The audience for this show includes the most technically proficient computer users. They can easily get information and training from the World Wide Web. There's little reason to attend a trade show.

Well, maybe a trip to San Francisco.

## PDF was everywhere

Of interest to the average user was the proliferation of PDF. Many, many vendors were

touting their software and hardware compatibility with PDF.

**Portable Document Format** was invented ten years ago by Adobe (of *Illustrator* fame) as a way to create documents that anybody could read on their computer. You've probably been frustrated by receiving a document created using software that you don't own. When you double-clicked on it, the document complained about the application not being found. PDF solves this problem.

A document converted to PDF is readable by and will look exactly the same to everyone. That is everyone who has the reader application: *Adobe Acrobat Reader*. But since everyone has a free copy, no one is left out.

Yes, you do (or should) . . .

Apple has been including *Acrobat Reader* with every Mac for the last five years. And, Adobe has been giving it away free for almost ten. If you don't have a copy, get one! We'll be happy to help.

PDF is already a popular format for providing online software manuals and distributing reports and papers. I'll bet you have a dozen or more PDF documents on your hard drive right now. This is only going to become more common. At Seybold, Adobe was pushing PDF as a solution in all stages of paper and internet publishing. Universality is al-

ways a good thing. When you want to communicate or receive information, its best if you can read and be read without limitations.

*Acrobat Reader* (as the name implies) will only *read* PDF documents; it can't make them. To make your own, you'll need the full *Adobe Acrobat* package. The current version is 3.01 and costs a whopping \$189.95. Now you know why the Reader is free! If you'd like to start using *Adobe Acrobat* to make your PDF documents, California Computer Care would be happy to help you buy, install and use it. Just give us a call.

## September Tip—

Have you ever wanted to record the way your Mac's screen looks? It's easy to do and is built into every Mac. Here's how:

- 1) On your keyboard, hold down the *Command* key (the one with the Apple logo or four-leaf clover thingie) and *Shift* key.
- 2) With your other hand, type the number 3 key (use the 3 that is above the W key). You'll hear a crackly sound.
- 3) Open your hard drive icon and look for an icon called *Picture 1*. Double click on it and there's your screen snap shot.
- 4) You can do up to 10 snap shots. They will be named *Picture 1, 2, 3,* and so on.



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