

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.

MacWorld Expo 2003

Every year, during the second week of January, the center of the Macintosh world becomes the *Mosconi Convention Center* in San Francisco. Here Apple Computer and more than 100 other hardware and software manufacturers and publishers, show off their wares with emphasis on the new and original.

Enter the MacWorld exhibit floor and sensory overload happens almost instantly. After several hours my mind is reeling with all of the wonders that I have seen, so I take lots of notes. Here are a few highlights from my notes taken at MacWorld Expo 2003.

The BIG and the small.

Apple showed off two new Powerbooks that take the awards as the biggest and the smallest laptops ever.

The 17" Powerbook G4 features the largest screen ever used on a laptop. It has the same case styling as the current 15" model and is similarly slim and light in weight. As with the 15" Powerbook, the 17" version sports a super fast 1GHz G4 processor, a CD/DVD player/recorder and long battery life (about 4 hours).

Unique to the 17" PB are Airport Extreme wireless networking (5 times faster than current wireless), Bluetooth connectivity (allows the Powerbook to connect wirelessly with Bluetooth enabled devices like cell phones, PDAs and printers, making most cables obsolete), Firewire 800 (twice as fast as current Firewire and almost 3 times faster than USB 2.0) and a fabulous light sensor that sees when you are working in a darkened room and automatically adjusts the screen brightness and lights up the keyboard based on the available ambient light. At \$3299, the 17" Powerbook is less expen-

sive than my original 15" Powerbook G4 and much less expensive than any laptop made by anyone with similar features.

The 12" Powerbook G4 looks like a silvery iBook but it is actually smaller, thinner and lighter than the iBook. With its 867Mhz G4 processor, the 12" Powerbook is almost 1.5 times as fast as the top-of-the-line iBook.

The 12" Powerbook is the smallest, fully-equipped laptop made by anyone. It shares many features with its 17" sibling including Firewire 800 and Bluetooth (Airport Extreme

and the new CD/DVD Superdrive are optional

add-ons). Battery life is an amazing 5 hours. The 12" Powerbook G4 costs only \$1799.00, making it a value champion as well. Both new Powerbooks should be available in quantity in about two months.

New Powerbooks are very cool, but what really got the computer industry experts excited was Apple's new software announcements.

Safari is Apple's new, free web browser and it is the fastest and smallest web browser around. Fully based on internet standards for compatibility, Safari has been installed on over 1 million Macs in the 2 weeks of its existence. If you are currently using *Internet Explorer* for your web browsing, Safari will impress you with its speed and the attractive, easy to read way it displays web pages. During install, Safari will automatically import your *Internet Explorer* favorites. Unfortunately, Safari is not able to import favorites (bookmarks) from Netscape's browsers (or their *Mozilla* and *Chimera* cousins). Safari requires Mac OS X 10.2 (Jaguar) and can be downloaded for free from Apple : <http://www.apple.com>



Keynote is a presentation creation application. Steve Jobs had Keynote created specifically for his legendary public appearances.

The presentation software category has been badly under-represented for several years since Adobe *Persuasion* and Manhattan Graphics *Ready, Set, Show* were discontinued. That left only the lame Microsoft *PowerPoint* and the bare bones presentation module in *AppleWorks 6*. Keynote brings style and choice back to the market.

Keynote is already receiving rave reviews for its superior graphics and animation capabilities. Keynote can also open and save *PowerPoint* presentations. As most folks will never use the more advanced capabilities of Keynote, the most compelling reason to buy Keynote is price. Microsoft *PowerPoint* costs \$369.00. Keynote only \$99.00!

iLife. We're all familiar with Apple's free, award winning iApplications (*iTunes*, *iMovie*, *iPhoto*, *iDVD*), but many of us don't realize that the four iApps can work together. You can use *iTunes* to manage music for your *iMovie* that you will burn to disk with *iDVD* while you use *iPhoto* to put that special picture on the DVD label. The iLife suite contains new versions of the iApps that have been modified to work together better than before. The iApps can still be downloaded for free, but if you'd like them conveniently packaged on one disk with the new integration, iLife costs \$49.00.

Apple isn't the only exhibitor at MacWorld. All of the industry heavyweights come to play: Adobe, Macromedia, Hewlett Packard, Canon, Epson, even Microsoft. But, there are many small companies there too. Here are a few highlights.

MacWireless makes unique wireless networking products for Mac. They specialize in adding wireless networking to older Macs that until now couldn't join the wireless party. I bought a wireless cardbus card for my ancient PowerBook 190 bringing the old guy into the 21st century and making it useful again. MacWireless PC card \$79.98 at <http://www.macwireless.com>.

MYOB has a new product in FirstEdge which is a light version of their *AccountEdge* accounting package. FirstEdge is aimed at small business owners with average accounting needs. This appears to be a better product than the newly released Mac OS X version of *QuickBooks* at a much lower price. FirstEdge is \$99.00.

EazyDraw showed its namesake product. If you need a solid, basic drawing package for charts, brochures, drafting and design and you want more power than *AppleWorks'* draw module, EazyDraw is a great choice. Free demo available. EazyDraw is \$99.00 at <http://www.eazydraw.com>.

Alsoft and Micromat both demonstrated Mac OS X compatible versions of their mar-

velous diagnostic and repair utilities. The new apps are scheduled for a Spring 2003 release. *DiskWarrior* and *TechTool Pro 4* will be in my tool kit as soon as they are available and tested.

DiskWarrior \$69.95

TechTool Pro 4 \$129.00.

January Tip—

SCAM ALERT!

I've been receiving frequent spam emails offering *Symantec* and *Adobe* products at really good prices. If you are receiving these offers, too, beware! The offers are not from *Symantec* and *Adobe* or any legitimate retailer; they are bogus. At best, you'll receive illegal, pirated copies of the software you order. At worst, these unscrupulous bums will steal your credit card numbers. As usual, if the offer looks too good to be true, it probably is.

Please be careful.

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