

# 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 2006

The yearly Mac-stravaganza is over. Looking at my piles of product literature and notes, there is much too much to outline more than the high-lights. So, here are some things that caught my attention.

The big show stoppers were the new iMac and MacBook Pro. When Apple announced the switch to Intel processor chips, they promised that we would see the new Macs by June of this year. Well, they are six months early. And, instead of taking a year and a half to transform all Macs, the change-over will be complete before the end of this year.

The new iMac, called *Core Duo* after its new technology, Intel processor, comes in the same 17" and 20" sizes and has the same design and features, at the same prices, as previous models (still available).

Steve Jobs, in his keynote speech, said that the new machines are "two to three times faster" than the iMac G5. Though that speed increase will not be noticeable to most users as the G5 models were pretty darn fast to begin with. Performance felt comparable to the G5 iMacs even when running Power PC software (see *Rosetta* mention below).

The 17" model sells for \$1299. The 20" for \$1699. Available now.

The new Powerbooks, *oops, I mean MacBook Pros* feature Intel dual-core processors as well. Jobs claimed that they are four to five times faster than the Powerbook G4; "fastest Mac notebook ever."

There is one size, 15.4" widescreen, and it's just under 1" thick (a little thinner than the Powerbook G4). An "iSight" camera is built into the top of the screen. It also has an IR sensor and an Apple remote, like the iMac. The light sensor, sudden motion sensor, scrolling trackpad and DVI video out are similar to the G4 Powerbook, as is the case design.

Missing from the MacBook Pro are FireWire 800, S-video out and the PC card slot. In its place, the MacBook Pro sports an Express Card slot. This is another new technology that eventually will provide the MacBook Pro with expansion capabilities. *Belkin*, who already has prototypes of several, was showing its Express cards off, under glass, in its booth. However, there is nothing available today.

A troubling omission, is the lack of a modem in the MacBook Pro. While wireless connectivity (802.11G and Bluetooth) is built-in, there are still many places where the old fashioned telephone modem is the only way to access the internet. An external USB modem is available for \$49.00, but the hassle of carrying it with you is less than ideal.

A very cool addition is the MagSafe power adapter connector. This connector is magnetic, so tripping over the power cord will disconnect the cord from the MacBook instead of crashing the Mac to the floor.

The 1.67GHz MacBook will be \$1999 and the 1.83GHz model will be \$2499. Both should be available next month. The current 12" and 17" Powerbooks are still available. No timetable was announced for their change over to Intel Core Duo.

The new Intel processors are not able to run any current PowerPC software (see <http://www.calcompcare.com/files.html>; click on *Why Apple is going to be making Macs with Intel processors* for more information). That's every bit of software that you own. To bridge this gap, both new Macs come with a technology called *Rosetta* to seamlessly run the old, Mac OS X software. It works very well. I experimented with *Microsoft*



IntelliScanner  
Kitchen Companion

*Word, Excel, Photoshop* and others. All ran at normal speed compared with current G5 iMacs. The average user wouldn't notice anything odd or out of the ordinary.

Apple's own software has been re-written to equally support the PowerPC and Intel processors, so *iPhoto, Safari*, et al run perfectly using either. Most software developers are upgrading their software as we speak.

**Lots of goodies.** The best part of MacWorld is seeing the new goodies. Here are a few, fun highlights:

- **iPod Radio Remote.** A \$49 FM tuner/remote control that fits inline with your *iPod* ear buds. Unfortunately, it is only for *iPod Nano* and 5th-generation *iPods*. This is a convenient way to skip tracks, adjust volume with the *iPod* safely in your pocket. It adds a tuner for listening to FM radio stations while displaying station and song information on the *iPod's* screen.
- **Mac OS X 10.4.4,** a new update to *Tiger*, available now, but, as yet, untested by me.
- **iLife 06,** the most inevitable upgrade. \$79 (free with new Macs), brings a new *iPhoto* version, higher speed, greeting card and calendar functions. Up to 250,000 photos! Also, new versions of *iMovie, iDVD* and *GarageBand* (now creates PodCasts). Plus a new web site creation application called *iWeb*.
- **iWork 06** updates *Pages* and *Keynote* to '06 by adding a new tables tool with spreadsheet-like calculations, better image control and much improved three-dimensional charts using realistic wood grain, metal and marble textures. *iWork 06* is available now for \$79.00 (no upgrade discount).

- **Quark Express** lost many users to Adobe's *InDesign* by being slow to support Mac OS X. They learned their lesson and are making available a beta version of *Quark Express 7* that already supports the new Intel Core Duo chips.
- **Microsoft** promised (real soon now) and showed off a beta of *Microsoft Office* for the Core Duo. As a show special they are offering a 50% discount on *Microsoft Office* when you buy it with a new Mac.

Also, there's an official agreement between Apple and Microsoft for a "minimum of five years" to continue providing *Office* for Mac. Hmm, I wonder who made concessions and what kind?

- **IntelliScanner.** How about a hand-held device, about the size on an iPod, that can scan the retail barcodes on your store-bought groceries and then, using the bundled grocery, nutrition, and recipe management software, create shopping lists, manage nutrition, catalog recipes, and more? How can you live without it? <http://www.intelliscanner.com>
- **Belkin** showed off a wireless (sort of), four port USB hub called *Cable Free*. You can connect up to four printers, scanners, media card readers, etc., to the hub which then wirelessly communicates with your Mac. This will be great for laptop users. No pricing was announced. Available soon.
- **endicia,** allows you to print your own perfectly legal postage stamps, shipping labels, customs forms and more. Software and service are included for a \$15.95 monthly fee (plus postage at regular USPS rates). You manage your account online and never need to go to

the post office for stamps again. No more getting caught by postage increases (grrr...). <http://www.mac.endicia.com>.

- **Avery.** Speaking of printing labels. Avery has new banner and sign kits. All the stuff you need to design, print on your printer and assemble colorful indoor and outdoor signs and banners. Works surprisingly well.
- **I.R.I.S** presented the *IRISPen* in *Express* and *Executive* models. Use *IRISPen* to scan text into your word processor and save hours of typing. Uses the *Readiris Pro 11* application which also works with most flat bed scanners. Worked very well in their booth. Real world??? *IRISPen Express* \$129.00.
- **iPod accessories,** everywhere. Virtually everyone was showing off *iPod* cases, arm bands, speakers (portable and not), media centers, wireless adapters, headphones, *Levis* with a wired, *iPod* pocket and even a pair of eyeglasses that were tiny monitors for viewing your *iPod with video's* movies. There really needs to be an *iPodWorld* trade show!

### January Tip

**No more Classic.** The new Intel processors and *Rosetta* make a fine combination, but they can't run the Classic (Mac OS 8-9) environment. If you still use ancient software that requires Mac OS 9, you will need to upgrade to Mac OS X versions (if available) or forgo a Mac sporting Intel processors. I've noticed that most users are abandoning the old applications, so this will probably not cause you much inconvenience. I'm going to miss my *Deathground* game, though. Darn.

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