

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 2007

Once again, the annual orgy of MacGeeks and tech pundits has come and gone. This year something happened that has never happened before: Apple had no Mac news!

Each year, MacWorld Expo is kicked off with a speech by Apple founder and CEO Steve Jobs, that sets the theme for the rest of the Expo. Jobs usually sums up the previous year's Apple sales performance, introduces new Mac models and Apple software and concludes with his trademarked "one more thing." But, not this year.

Jobs started his address (available as a free download at the *iTunes Store*) with the warning that Macintosh computers were not on the day's agenda. A stunned audience waited to see what was.

AppleTV. As expected, since it was pre-announced last August, the iTV set top box (renamed *Apple TV*) was the first topic.

For a year, Apple has been selling TV shows, short films and, lately, feature films on the *iTunes Store*. But, while Apple has sold millions of these video files, there is a bottleneck preventing wider popularity of this service. Most folks are not satisfied watching video content on their computer or the tiny screen of their *iPod*. *Apple TV* breaks through this bottleneck by bringing your video files from your computer to your TV without re-wiring your house.

Apple TV connects to your TV (HDMI and component for high definition TVs. Adapters needed for standard TVs); it then checks your wireless network for Macs or Windows PCs (!) that are using *iTunes*. If any of those computers (up to six in a household) have music, pictures or videos on them, *Apple TV* makes all of it available to watch and hear on your TV and sound system. The simple, little *Apple Remote*, that comes with all current Macs, is all that you need to control the video, pictures and music.

Apple TV can present all of the music and videos that you have in *iTunes* as well as your *iPhoto* library and slide shows.

Apple TV supports all wireless standards, but, for best performance, the new N standard is almost mandatory. Since most of us have the older B and G wireless, upgrades all around will be necessary, adding considerably to the cost. With a fast N network, performance is excellent. With a G network, video may be less than ideal. With a B network, video will be poor though music and photos will be fine.

Apple TV will cost \$299.00 and will be available in February.



Unmentioned by Jobs in his speech is the new *Airport Extreme* wireless N base station. This addition to Apple's line of wireless components exists to support *Apple TV*. The new *Airport Extreme* is up to five times faster than previous *Airport Base Stations* and also features three ethernet ports for wired devices and a USB port that can be used to share a printer or a hard drive with other computers (Mac or Windows) on the network. These are very nice improvements.

A few pitfalls await upgraders, however. To use the extra wireless speed, your Macs will have to be upgraded to the N standard. Recent *MacBooks* and *MacBook Pros* only need a free software change, but older Macs will need new wireless networking cards that will have to come from non-Apple sources. Since N is so new, interoperability between brands will probably be an issue for at least the next year.

Airport Extreme Base Station will cost \$179.00 and will be available in February.

The big announcement came next. Everybody knew it was coming (rumors abounded for months), but no one had details. So, assuming you've been under a rock for the last week, it was *iPhone*.

Jobs claimed that Apple had made all previous cell phones obsolete. That's a bit hyperbolic. As I see it, they have created a new class of device that is the first of its kind (and, oddly, something very familiar).

What does it do? It makes phone calls. It does text messaging. It does email. It surfs the web. It keeps your address book, calendar and to do list. It takes notes. It takes



pictures with a two megapixel camera. It plays music. It displays pictures. It plays TV shows and movies. It networks with WIFI wireless. It connects to *Bluetooth* peripherals. It exchanges information with your other computers. It uses a graphical interface and icons. It interacts with you using a pointing device and on-screen keyboard. It runs *Mac OS X*. It uses *Safari*, *Mail*, *iCal*, *iTunes*, *iPhoto*, and *Dashboard Widgets*. It has a high definition, 160dpi, 3.5" wide screen display (that rotates from portrait to landscape mode as needed).

Jobs was wrong. His speech was about a new Mac; one that fits in your pocket.

Important stuff to know:

- Exclusive to the Cingular network.
- Two year contract required.
- GSM network.
- Two models. 4GB and 8GB.
- Battery up to five hours talk time, sixteen hours music playback time.
- 4.5 x 2.4 x 0.46 inches.
- 4.8 ounces.
- Not available until June, 2007.
- 4GB model \$499.00.
- 8GB model \$599.00.
- Makes your friends jealous.

This presentation brought down the house. There were many other new products, by many vendors, shown at *MacWorld*, but they got lost in the glow of the *iPhone*.

January Tip—

Powerbooks, *iBooks*, *MacBooks* and *MacBook Pros* can suffer from a bit of insomnia. So, to avoid having your Mac laptop wake up in its carrying case (and overheating), it is important that you make sure that it has really gone to sleep.

Please do this when you want your friend to sleep:

- 1) Close the lid or choose sleep from the *Apple* menu.
- 2) Wait for the the sleep light to light up and begin pulsing slowly.
- 3) Place your Mac laptop in your travel case.

This will avoid damage due to overheating.

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