

mini'app'les Newsletter

the minnesota apple computer users' group, inc.

October 2008

Upcoming Meetings

Here is a list of mini'app'les meetings for the next two months. The information was compiled as this newsletter was being assembled and is subject to change. As always, confirm the Special Interest Group (SIG) date, time, and location with the cognizant SIG Leader or the mini'app'les web site (<http://www.miniapples.org>).

October Calendar

* This SIG is NOT sponsored by mini'app'les; the listing is provided as a service to members

Wednesday	October 01	6:30 pm	iWork/AppleWorks SIG
Tuesday	October 07	7:00 pm	Mac OS X SIG
Wednesday	October 08	7:00 pm	TC Photoshop SIG*
Wednesday	October 08	7:00 pm	Microsoft Word SIG
Wednesday	October 08	7:00 pm	VectorWorks SIG*
Thursday	October 16	7:00 am	Macintosh Consultants SIG
Monday	October 20	7:00 pm	Board of Directors Meeting
Thursday	October 23	7:00 pm	FileMaker Pro SIG
Saturday	October 25	9:00 am	Multi-SIG Meeting
Monday	October 27	7:00 pm	Mac Q&A SIG

MEETING	LOCATION	LEADER
Board of Directors	Merriam Park Library, 1831 Marshall Ave, St Paul	Bruce Thompson, 763-546-1088
FileMaker Pro SIG	Partners, 2250 Terminal Rd, Roseville	Steve Wilmes, 651-458-1513
iWork/AppleWorks SIG	Southdale Library, 7001 York Ave S, Edina	John Hunkins Sr, 651-457-8949
Mac OS X SIG	The Foundation, 311 7th Ave N, Minneapolis	Bob Demeules, 763-559-1124
Mac Q&A SIG	Merriam Park Library, 1831 Marshall Ave, St Paul	Les Anderson, 651-735-3953
Macintosh Consultants SIG	Good Day Café, 5410 Wayzata Blvd, Golden Valley	Bob Demeules, 763-559-1124
Microsoft Word SIG	Edina Executive Plaza, 5200 Willson Rd, Edina	Tom Ostertag, 651-488-9979
Multi-SIG Meeting	St. Charles School, 2727 Stinson Blvd, Minneapolis	Tom Gates, 612-789-1713
TC Photoshop SIG*	Minneapolis College of Art & Design, Auditorium 150, 2501 Stevens Ave S, Minneapolis	Jeff Tranberry, phone number not available
VectorWorks SIG*	CJR Office, 4441 Claremore Dr, Edina	Charles Radloff, 952-941-1667

November Calendar

* This SIG is NOT sponsored by mini'app'les; the listing is provided as a service to members

Tuesday	November 04	7:00 pm	Mac OS X SIG
Wednesday	November 05	6:30 pm	iWork/AppleWorks SIG
Wednesday	November 12	7:00 pm	Microsoft Word SIG
Wednesday	November 12	7:00 pm	VectorWorks SIG*
Thursday	November 20	7:00 am	Macintosh Consultants SIG
Monday	November 24	7:00 pm	Mac Q&A SIG
Thursday	November 27	7:00 pm	FileMaker Pro SIG

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Board of Directors

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SIG Director	Kevin Stryzik 651-489-4691 stryzik@mac.com
Director at Large	Tom Gates 612-789-1713 tgates@isd.net
Membership Coordinator	Erik Knopp

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Questions — Members with technical questions should refer to the Members Helping Members section or bring their questions to an appropriate SIG meeting. Please direct other questions to an appropriate board member.

Dealers — mini'app'les does not endorse specific dealers. The club promotes distribution of information that may help members identify best buys and service. The club itself does not participate in bulk purchases of media, software, hardware, and publications. Members may organize such activities on behalf of other members.

Newsletter Contributions — Please send contributions directly to our post office box (mini'app'les, PO Box 796, Hopkins MN 55343) or email them to miniapples@mac.com.

Deadline for material for the next newsletter is the fifteenth of the month. An article will be printed when space permits and, if in the opinion of the Newsletter Editor or Publications Director, it constitutes material suitable for publication.

Newsletter Staff this month: Harry and Pam Lienke

The layout of this newsletter was done using Apple's Pages word processor.

mini'app'les forums: <http://miniapples.7.forumer.com>
mini'app'les web site: <http://www.miniapples.org>
mini'app'les email: miniapples@mac.com

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Moving? Going to be away from home and leaving a forwarding address with the Post Office? Changing to a better email provider? Please send us a Change of Address when you are informing others. By using a moment of your time, you ensure you receive a notice when your club membership is expiring and you get your newsletter email notification delivered promptly. Change of Address should be sent to the club's mailing address (mini'app'les, Attn: Membership Director, Box 796, Hopkins MN 55343) or to the club's email address (miniapples@mac.com).

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From the Editor's Desk — October, 2008

Volunteers Still Needed

Come on, folks. If this group is to continue to provide valuable information to Twin Cities Mac users, we need to have more volunteers to help collect and present that information!

- Publications Director
- Main Mac Special Interest Group Leader
- iLife Special Interest Group Leader

Please contact a member of the Board of Directors to make known your interest in helping the mini'app'les.

SIG Reports

Thanks to Bruce Thompson for providing a summary of the happenings at the OS X SIG.

If you don't see a report from your favorite Special Interest Group (SIG) in this issue of the newsletter, please speak to the SIG Leader and encourage him or her to provide a write-up for the next newsletter. You could even provide a summary yourself; Pam and I are happy to help clean up any articles submitted for publication in this newsletter.

Thanks for your help.

Harry Lienke

Members Helping Members

Need Help? Have a question the manual doesn't answer? Members Helping Members is a group of volunteers who have generously agreed to help. They are just a phone call or an email away. Please call only during the appropriate times, and **only if you are a current mini'app'les member** and own the software in question.

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1. Les Anderson	651-735-3953	anderslc@usfamily.net	DEW
2. Tom Ostertag	651-488-9979	tostertag@usfamily.net	EW
3. Bruce Thompson	763-546-1088	bthompson@Macconnect.com	EW
4. Pam Lienke	651-457-6026	plienke@aol.com	DEW
5. Ardie Predweshny	612-978-9774		DEW
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7. Chuck Hauge	612-963-5064	Chaz@CPHSolutions.com	D
8. Ron Heck	651-774-9151		DEW

D: Days, generally 9 am to 5 pm

E: Evenings, generally 5 pm to 9 pm

W: Weekends, generally 1 pm to 9 pm

Please call at reasonable hours and ask if it is a convenient time for helping you. By the way, many of these volunteers can also be contacted on our forums. We appreciate your cooperation.

mini'app'les needs more volunteers for Members Helping Members — If you are willing to be a Members Helping Member volunteer, please send an email message to Membership Director Chuck Hauge or contact him on our forums with your name, telephone number, contact hours, and the software and hardware areas you are willing to support.

Multi-SIG Meeting

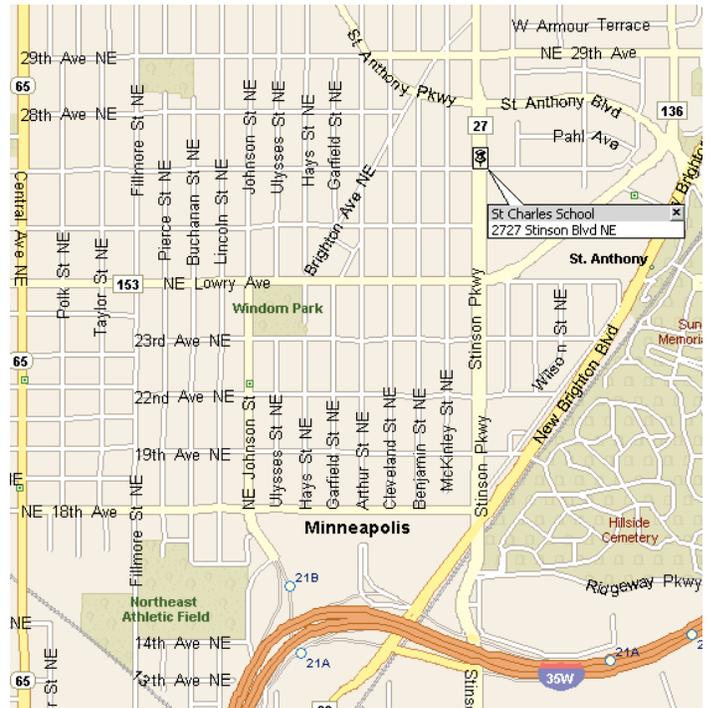
Join other mini'app'les members on Saturday, October 25, for a Multi-SIG meeting. Members will be available to help with hardware problems, software problems, and any questions you may have. High-speed internet access will be available for those large system updates you have been putting off. Diagnostic software and tools will also be available. Bring the equipment that is giving you problems for help in resolving those problems. A ramp and two-wheeled carts will be available to help transport equipment between vehicles and the meeting room.

Several of our Special Interest Groups (SIGs) will be having sessions at this meeting.

If you have suggestions for a speaker or presentation, your Board of Directors would like to hear from you.

The time is October 25, 2008, from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm. The place is St. Charles School located at 2727 Stinson Boulevard NE.

How to Get to St. Charles School



To get to St. Charles School from I-35W, take the Stinson Boulevard exit and follow Stinson Boulevard north to the school at 27th Avenue.

From I-694 you should take the Silver Lake Road exit south to 37th Ave (County Road D) and turn right. Go west to Stinson Boulevard and turn left. Go south ten blocks on Stinson Boulevard to the school at 27th Avenue.

iWork/AppleWorks SIG of September, 2008

by Harry Lienke

Someone wondered why time and place information was not available from the club's on-line iCal calendar. The information is available so we explored the situation. The problem is that the calendar shown in a browser acts differently than an iCal calendar on your desktop even though both are displaying Week mode. On the desktop, an event is selected by clicking anywhere within the colored area highlighting the event. In the browser, the event is selected only when one clicks on the text of the event. When the questioner used his browser to access the calendar and clicked on the text in an event, the detailed information about the event was displayed as expected.

An attendee wondered if anyone knew of a way of simulating Word's Outline Mode in Pages. He had emailed an Outline Mode document to himself and, with some help from an Apple Genius, created a Pages style that resembled Outline Mode. The style is a template with a special list format for outlining. No one had any suggestions.

Someone wondered about creating indented paragraphs and hanging indents. Our genial host, Pam Lienke, used the Text mode of the Inspector to get to the Tabs window. The Paragraph Indents' First Line parameter is used to create indented paragraphs. The Paragraphs Indents' Left parameter is used to specify hanging indents.

Pam reviewed last month's procedure on changing fonts (click on Fonts in the Tool Bar to reveal the Fonts Panel). We found by trial and error that fonts can be added to the Favorites collection by dragging them from other collections and dropping them on the Favorites collection in the Collections window. Out of curiosity, Pam played with the shadows controls on the Font window. She was able to create a shadow and change its opacity, blur, offset, and angle, but was not able to change its color even though she was able to change the color of the text and highlighting. Later on we discovered the Inspector's Graphic window can be used to change the color of the shadow of text as well as the color of the shadow of a graphic.

Pam showed how to match the color of another item on the screen by clicking the magnifying glass to the left of the color box in the Colors window. She then clicked an item on the screen whose color she wanted to match; the color appeared in the color box. She selected an item to color in the document window and dragged the color from the color box to the item.

Pam indicated she had created a document needing footnotes. She showed how to select Insert and then Footnote to put a footnote at the bottom of a page. She later decided she needed endnotes rather than footnotes and demonstrated how to change a footnote into an endnote using the Inspector; choose the Document Inspector, then the Document tab, and change the first pull-down menu under Footnotes & Endnotes to Use Document Endnotes.

One attendee wondered if anyone knew of a way to selectively delete files in a secure fashion. It was suggested one can create a pre-Trash folder on one's desktop and put files that appear to be trash but do not need to be deleted yet into that folder. When a file needs to be deleted securely, it can be put into the trash and the OS X Finder's secure delete capability (Finder - Secure Delete) utilized. The opinion was offered that this sounded like more effort than it ought to be; it was asked if there was a reasonably-priced utility that could be used to securely delete a given file. No one had an answer at the meeting. After the meeting, the person with the need went to Apple's web site and discovered a donation-ware widget that does what he was looking for; the widget is called [Shredder](#). Thanks for the tip, Tim!

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 1, at 6:30 pm at the Southdale Library. Hope to see you there!

The iWork/AppleWorks SIG will also hold a session at the Multi-SIG meeting on October 25.

OS X SIG of September, 2008

by Bruce Thompson

The September OS X meeting started with a discussion of some of the Google applications, in particular the new Google browser, Chrome (not yet available for Mac). It was also noted the online experience is changing from one where the browser is primarily a conduit for information (news sites, online retail, other types of research) to one where the browser functions almost as an operating system with online applications such as those from Google (spreadsheet, word processing, photos) and from Apple (so-called "cloud" computing).

Bob Demeules mentioned that Apple had scheduled an event for Sept 9. It is anticipated they will announce new iPods at that time. Also, OS X 10.5.5 is currently seeded as Beta, but no date for release has been announced.

Bob put in a plug for Applejack, a free system maintenance utility that runs in Single User mode, although it must be installed in the graphic user interface (GUI) environment before it can be run. The latest version, 1.5, is now compatible with Leopard.

Denis Diekhoff asked about a free PowerPoint (PP) viewer for OS X. Currently it appears that Microsoft does not offer one for OS X, only for OS 9 and PP 98. Several suggestions were made to work around this situation - Keynote can open the files but there is a cost; Open Office and NeoOffice are both free and read PP files but are rather large; and, if you have a G-mail account, they can be viewed online as a slide show.

Bob showed how to add a custom keyboard shortcut, in this case how to use a key command to add a hyperlink to a selection in Mail. The process is built into OS X and can be used with virtually any application. Just do some checking to verify that the key command does not conflict with existing key commands.

Bob then moved into a discussion of Really Simple Syndication (RSS) — what it is and why we should use it. It is a quick way to monitor multiple web sites

for changes and to view a brief description of articles. It is especially convenient for sites such as newspapers and other news sources, since there are often information changes that are not easily identified. Additionally, all the articles are in one place, so it is not necessary to navigate to each of the sites you wish to monitor. Most newspapers and many other sites offer RSS, and can often be configured for just limited areas (e.g., sports or business) so as to focus your information retrieval.

There are several ways to track RSS sites — Safari, Mail, and several stand-alone RSS readers, as well as web-based readers such as that offered by Google. One third-party application he demonstrated is called "Times". It allows you to configure your view to resemble a newspaper and to easily note articles that you wish to save for further review. The current version is \$30. Another popular reader is NetNewsWire, which is currently free.

The next OS X meeting is October 7th at The Foundation.

Gaming On A Mac 2008, How Does It Stand Up To PCs?

by David Peck

You can afford one computer — should you buy a Mac just to play games? The short answer is “maybe.” Macs have come a long way in the gaming department. A variety of PC games are ported to the Mac. If you are a casual gamer or love the most popular games that have been ported, you will have no problem with native Mac gaming.

If you have not heard, Macs are now powered by Intel and can boot directly into Windows XP or Vista. This opened up the world of Gaming to Mac users, allowing them to enjoy the best games out there while staying with their Macs and Mac OS X. The nicest thing about Macs today is that you can look at their Intel processors and make a direct performance comparison with their PC counterparts. Did you know that Macs were used to demo Vista? That the MacBook Pro at one point had better Vista benchmarks than its PC competition?

Mac Pro, MacBook Pro

If you are a hard core gamer and boot into Windows XP or Vista, the Mac Pro and MacBook Pro handle most PC games just fine. One thing about gaming, Mac or booted into Windows, the top of the line Mac tower is expensive compared to what you can find in a PC. That is not to say you cannot find a \$2500 PC tower, but you can get a pretty good PC gaming machine for less than \$1400. The MacBook Pro is pretty reasonable price-wise for what it offers compared to PC laptop competition.

iMacs

I don't own an iMac so I do not have first hand experience with it. Their performance falls somewhere in the middle, but they do have better graphic capabilities and are better performers than MacBooks. Check out the forums at [Mac Rumors](#) and [Inside Mac Games](#) for the latest opinions. Read this iMac article at The Unofficial Apple Weblog ([TUAW.com](#)).

MacBook

If you are a casual gamer, the MacBook fills the bill. If you are a hardcore gamer, because of its integrated graphics ([X3100](#)) chipset on the motherboard, the MacBook is limited in its ability to "game." The new MacBooks do, however, have Shader 2 support so they play more games. My wife has Windows XP installed on her MacBook and plays a variety of relatively low-overhead PC games as well as Mac offerings — things like Nancy Drew (PC), those run-of-the-mill murder mystery games (PC), lots of gambling games (Mac), Mystery of the Sphinx (PC/Mac), all of the I Spy games (PC/Mac), and Penumbra Overture (Mac), a mystery horror game.

Bluetooth Basics - Bluetooth Technology Tutorial

By Jason Kohrs - 19.JAN.05

Bluetooth technology is nothing new, but in many respects it still seems to be more of a buzz word rather than a well understood, commonly accepted technology. You see advertisements for Bluetooth enabled cell phones, PDAs, and laptops, and a search of the [Computer Geeks](#) website shows all sorts of different devices taking advantage of this wireless standard. But, what is it?

History

Before getting into the technology, the word Bluetooth is intriguing all on its own, and deserves a look. The term is far less high tech than you might imagine, and finds its roots in European history. The King of Denmark from 940 to 981 was renowned for his ability to help people communicate, his name (in English)... Harald Bluetooth. Perhaps a bit obscure, but the reference is appropriate for a wireless communications standard.

Another item worth investigating is the Bluetooth logo, shown above. Based on characters from the runic alphabet (used in ancient Denmark), it was chosen as it appears to be the combination of the English letter B and an asterisk.

Capabilities

The FAQ on the [Bluetooth.org](#) website offers a basic definition: "Bluetooth wireless technology is a worldwide specification for a small-form factor, low-cost radio solution that provides links between mobile computers, mobile phones, other portable handheld devices, and connectivity to the Internet."

Just like 802.11 b/g wireless networking systems and many cordless telephones, Bluetooth devices operate on 2.4 GHz radio signals. That band seems to be getting a bit crowded, and interference between devices may be difficult to avoid. Telephones are now being offered on the 5.8 GHz band to help remedy this, and Bluetooth has taken its own steps to reduce interference and improve transmission quality. Version 1.1 of the Bluetooth standard greatly reduces interference issues, but requires completely different hardware from the original 1.0C standard, thus eliminating any chance of backwards compatibility.



The typical specifications of Bluetooth



indicate a maximum transfer rate of 723 kbps and a range of 20-100 meters (65 to 328 feet - depending on the class of the device). This speed is a fraction of that offered by 802.11 b or g wireless standards, so it is obvious that Bluetooth doesn't pose a threat to replace your wireless network. Although it is very similar to 802.11 in many ways, Bluetooth was never intended to be a networking standard, but does have many practical applications.

Practical Applications

Browsing the [Computer Geeks](#) website shows a variety of products that take advantage of Bluetooth's capabilities, from laptops and PDAs, to headphones and input devices, and even wireless printer adapters.

[Laptops, such as the Toshiba Tecra 9000](#), include an onboard Bluetooth adapter to allow the system to connect to any Bluetooth device right out of the box. For laptop or desktop systems that do not have an adapter built in, there are USB Bluetooth adapters, such as the [Belkin F8T001](#).



[Bluetooth enabled PDAs, such as the HP iPAQ hx4700](#), allow for convenient wireless synchronization and data transfer.

Headphones can take advantage of Bluetooth for two purposes... audio playback and mobile phone communications. Using something like the [Logitech Mobile Headset](#) with a Bluetooth enabled mobile phone allows anyone to go hands free, as well as wire free.

Logitech, and other manufacturers, also produce input devices that eliminate wires thanks to Bluetooth. You can add a Bluetooth mouse to your system, such as the [Logitech MX900](#), or both a mouse and keyboard using something like the [Logitech diNovo Media Desktop](#). One advantage



that Bluetooth wireless keyboard/mouse combinations have over the standard RF wireless keyboard/mouse combinations is range. Where most standard RF



keyboard/mouse combinations have a range up to 6 feet; a Bluetooth keyboard/mouse combination will usually have a range of up to 30 feet.

The HP JetDirect BT1300 Bluetooth printer adapter makes

sharing a printer extremely convenient by eliminating the need for any wires or special configurations on a typical network. Printing to any compatible HP printer from a PC, PDA or mobile phone can now be done easily from anywhere in the office.

Final Words

At this point the popularity of Bluetooth might not be as large as some proponents would have hoped, but many devices are available for those interested. The cost and competition from other standards have hindered the widespread acceptance, but Bluetooth does offer a viable solution to many devices that might not have wireless connectivity without it.

This article is reprinted from the Tech Tips web site - <http://www.geeks.com/techtips/default.asp>

Software Review 1: Bento

by Maria O. Arguello

Product: Bento from FileMaker
Company: FileMaker
URL: <http://www.filemaker.com>
Price: Single: \$49, Family Pack:
\$99



System Requirements: Exclusively designed for Mac OS X Leopard 10.5.x

Test System: Mac Pro 2 x 2.66-GHz Dual-Core Intel Xeon, 7 GB RAM, Mac OS X 10.5.3

Rating: 4.5 out of 5 Apples

Cry, PC users — this application is only for the Mac. Cry, Mac users, if you're not using Leopard. Bento takes advantage of Apple's Core OS Architectural Layer and Core Services. FileMaker Pro is the robust professional database application at the hefty price of \$299, but Bento is for the rest of us at \$49 (personal or small business use). It is the database that replaces AppleWorks, in my opinion. FileMaker is a subsidiary of Apple Inc., which explains why it has the look and feel of Apple's iWork and iLife applications, making the learning curve almost trivial.

It does take time, though, to get familiar with all its features and to design your forms, but there are 20 templates to choose from, and you can start entering your data in minutes. Bento offers several library templates designed for home, education, or work. The business templates are for billing, event planning, contacts, expenses and more. I used the event planning template to track the participants, the location, invitation, and contact information for a chartered bus trip I am organizing.

The time billing template allows you to export the data into a comma-separated value (CSV) format (i.e., Excel) and easily generate invoices. The personal category templates include an exercise log, vehicle maintenance forms, to-do items, and more.

Customizing your database with Bento is its strongest feature. It's as simple as drag and drop in Form View, which shows one record at a time. To delete a field simply drag it out of a window, and it disappears in a puff of smoke. You can also easily resize, align, and

rearrange the fields. You can create new databases (Libraries) from scratch or import them from CSV files with a simple drag and drop.

On first launch Bento imports any data you have in iCal and Address Book, saving you a lot of time. Any contact changes in Bento's Library will also show in your Address Book application and vice versa. This also works with changes in events or tasks on your iCal Library. If for some reason you don't want Bento to display your iCal or Address Book in the source list simply open up the Home dialog menu and disconnect them. The data stored in Address Book and iCal do not disappear, they just don't appear in Bento.

It also seamlessly integrates with other Apple programs such as iLife and iWork.

Bento offers more than mere data storage and management. You can include media files such as photos and video, hot links to Web sites and to related files on your hard drive such as Microsoft Word documents. These features take it beyond a simple spreadsheet.

There is lots of support for Bento at the FileMaker website. You'll also find tutorials under the Help menu like the Bento User's Guide, Keyboard Shortcuts, and Service and Support.

I find the automatic save for every change made in the database disconcerting. It works fine but I would prefer a Save function. Bento also lacks an option for printing multiple records on one sheet of paper.

Bento is named after the Japanese lunch box.

This article was reprinted from the web site of the [Main Line Macintosh Users Group](#).

Software Review 2: Bento

Manufacturer: Filemaker Inc.

Retail Price: \$49.00

Bento, Filemaker, Inc's database for the rest of us, has made quite a ripple amongst the Mac community.

Many were interested by Filemaker's approach. Bento was released as a public beta and feedback was solicited before the final release. Others were just pleased by its ease of use and affordability.

Although Bento isn't as powerful as Filemaker, its ease makes is enticing. Using Bento feels like an iWork or iLife application rather than a database. In fact, in many ways the interface reminds me of iTunes. When you choose New Library from the File menu, you're met with a chooser that allows you to select from 24 templates. From there you can add, delete and arrange fields as you see fit.

In Bento, adding fields is surprisingly easy. You click on the plus button at the lower right and you're met with a dialog box that let's you choose the field you want. Bento will allow you to create text boxes, dates, numbers, calculated fields, check boxes, drop downs and more. New fields then appear in the Fields portion of your window and you can drag it to wherever you like in your layout.

Bento offers integration with Address Book and iCal so that you can display iCal tasks in Bento or add tasks in Bento and have them shared in iCal. That means that tasks or contacts created in Bento can sync with your iPhone. Unfortunately, Bento doesn't sync its forms on the iPhone yet and I suppose we'll have to wait for the iPhone software development kit (SDK) release.

Bento does have some shortcomings. First, you can't drag a graphic, such as a logo, onto the layout. Instead you have to place it in a media box, which looks hokey. Being able to add a graphic was an often requested item on the Bento forum.

You also can't fine tune the different colors in a layout. So if I like the Starfield theme but want the green to be a little lighter or darker, there's nothing I can do. In Bento, the theme you choose is the theme you get. Fortunately, the themes are attractive and



better than what most people could develop on their own. Still, I would relish more flexibility.

In one sense, that's not surprising since making Bento too powerful might erode Filemaker Pro sales. But I can't help but wonder if adding these few extra features might not help benefit Filemaker, Inc in the long run by attracting users who wouldn't have used Filemaker Pro anyway.

Although I own Filemaker, I found Bento a delight to use. It is accessible and intuitive and that's what using a Mac is about. If you're a light database user, Bento is the right program at the right price. But if you need something more flexible, Filemaker Pro may be a better choice. Bento is available for \$49 and a 30-day demo can be downloaded at www.bentotrial.com.

Review by NCMUG member James Bleifus.

This article was reprinted from the web site of the [North Coast Macintosh Users Group](http://www.northcoastmacintoshusersgroup.com).

WD 320GB: Maximizing Laptop Storage

a review by Tom Piper

If you are a laptop owner, then you've enjoyed the portability, but probably complained that the hard drives are always about a third of the size of a comparable desktop computer. As I've migrated from mostly desktop units at home to mostly laptops for everyday use, this frustration has been very annoying because I want to take everything with me. I could acquire an external auxiliary USB drive, but it's that much more to lug around.

Western Digital has recently produced a new WD Scorpio Blue 2.5-inch SATA hard drive that was a major performance upgrade for my two-year old MacBook Pro 17". Their promise became a reality on my laptop with 320 gigabytes of capacity, an 8 megabyte cache, 5400 rpm spin speed and 12 millisecond access time. The heat of my laptop now is only from recharging it, not from drive access . . . not even when I'm doing a 4-hour continuous backup!

This internal drive is truly high-performance, low power consumption, ultra-cool, and hush quiet. Other than an occasional mini-click, I cannot hear any disk whir or chatter (during installation, I actually had to hold the bare drive next to my ear to hear any activity). So far, it appears that my overall battery life and file access time have improved by 10-20% compared to the 200 GB Toshiba drive it replaced (which replaced the original 120 GB it came with). And, did I already say that it is unbelievably quiet and fast?

When Western Digital brags about this hard drive, they say things like:

- Massive capacity - Whether they are in an external drive or a notebook computer, WD's 320 GB 2.5-inch drives offer the most available capacity for space-hungry operating systems, plus plenty of room left over for photos, music, and video.
- Quiet - In a notebook drive, silence is golden. WD's exclusive WhisperDrive™ combines state-of-the-art seeking algorithms to yield one of the quietest 2.5-inch hard drives on the market. These algorithms also optimize the way a drive seeks for data, which significantly improves power consumption. So now silence (and longer battery life) is golden.
- Reliable and Rugged - WD's ShockGuard™



technology protects the drive mechanics and platter surfaces from shocks. WD's SecurePark™ parks the recording heads off the disk surface during spin up, spin down, and when

the drive is off. This ensures the recording head never touches the disk surface resulting in improved long-term reliability due to less head wear, and improved non-operational shock tolerance.

The bare drive (model WD3200BEVT) retails for \$169.99 on the [Western Digital website](http://www.western-digital.com), but I've seen Internet prices under \$150). Incidentally, if you do want this drive in an external USB 2.0 case (like another member of our user group), the WD Passport Portable can also be found for under \$150. These hard drives are a tremendous value . . . I thoroughly endorse it to make your laptop faster, quieter, cooler and more resourceful, inside and outside!

This article was reprinted from the web site of the [appleJAC Macintosh Users Group](http://applejac.com).

Editor's note: Serial Advanced Technology Attachment (SATA) is a very high speed computer bus primarily designed for transfer of data between the motherboard and mass storage devices.

Strengths and Weaknesses of Time Machine

by Claire J Rottenberg
CJRTOOLS ebooks

Like many other Mac OS X 10.5 (Leopard) users, I use Time Machine for backing up data. As good as Time Machine is, however, it is not perfect and probably should not be the only backup option you use. In this article, I describe some of the strengths and weaknesses of Time Machine and offer suggestions for other backup options that can be used to supplement Time Machine.

Strengths of Time Machine

Time Machine's greatest strength is probably its automatic functioning. Once you've set up Time Machine, you can forget about it because Time Machine will automatically back up your files every hour. It works quietly in the background so you don't need to stop working on your computer while Time Machine is backing up your files.

Another advantage of Time Machine is that backups are cumulative and incremental. Once an initial backup is completed, Time Machine will back up only new or changed files so subsequent backups are quicker and take up less storage space than the original backup. In addition, Time Machine will keep making incremental backups until you run out of disk space on the backup drive. In other words, your backup drive can contain several months worth of files before some files need to be deleted. This can be a particularly useful feature for certain backup tasks, such as saving archived files of business or financial data.

Time Machine's restore feature for individual files and folders is one of its greatest strengths. Time Machine lets you search for files by location and date or by using Spotlight. Once you've found the file you want, you only need to click a button to restore it.

A final positive aspect of Time Machine is that you can back up files from multiple drives or partitions to the same backup drive. This is an especially useful feature if you partition your drive or if you have several drives attached to your computer.

Weaknesses of Time Machine

Although Time Machine has some excellent features, it doesn't let you create a bootable clone of your hard drive. If your drive dies or the system becomes corrupted, the process to restore your system with Time Machine can be long and complicated, especially compared to the ease of restoring with a cloning application, such as SuperDuper! If you're backing up your entire drive with Time Machine, to restore the system, you have to boot into the Mac OS X Install disk and wait while your entire system is restored. If your hard drive has died, you are without a working system until you replace the drive. In contrast, with a cloned drive, you can boot into the backup drive and start working with it immediately.

Another downside of Time Machine is that the initial setup for Time Machine can be confusing and time-consuming. Instead of selecting files to include in a backup, which would clearly be the most logical way to set up backup files, with Time Machine you have to select the files to exclude from a backup.

Another weakness of Time Machine is that, over time, your backup files can consume huge amounts of storage space so you will probably need a large drive for your Time Machine backups. With the difficult financial problems many people are facing today, the cost of purchasing a large extra hard drive just for Time Machine can put a strain on an already limited budget.

A final weakness of Time Machine is that you can't back up files to CDs or DVDs. Since it's always a good idea to have off-site backups of critical data, it would be good if this feature were built into Time Machine.

Programs to Supplement Time Machine

There are several excellent free or low-cost backup programs you can download, as well as some Apple programs you might already own, to add backup features missing in Time Machine.

The first type of backup application you should have in addition to Time Machine is a cloning program. This type of program will let you create an exact copy of your main drive and, in an emergency, you can

immediately boot into the clone and start working with it. Two excellent cloning programs are Carbon Copy Cloner (www.bombich.com/software/ccc.html) and SuperDuper! (www.shirt-pocket.com/SuperDuper/). CCC is donationware and you can view some tutorials for using it on my Leopard Tips website (homepage.mac.com/cjrtools/mac-leopard-tips/leopard-tutorials/leopard-video-tutorials.html). SuperDuper! is free for basic cloning, but for more advanced features, such as incremental cloning, you need to pay a small shareware fee (\$27.95).

If you are a MobileMe subscriber, Apple has provided you with Backup, an application that lets you back up files to your iDisk, a hard drive or CDs or DVDs. With Backup, you can create custom, scheduled backups so, as with Time Machine, the backups can occur while you're working on other tasks.

If you use iTunes and iPhoto, those applications have built-in backup features that let you easily save your valuable music and photo collections to CDs or

DVDs. A free alternative to iPhoto, Kodak EasyShare (www.kodak.com), comes with a built-in backup update feature that lets you know when you should back up your photo library to a CD or DVD.

Conclusion

Time Machine is an excellent, unique backup option, but it is missing features that can be easily supplemented with free Apple and third-party alternatives. So, even if you use Time Machine, you should consider adding a cloning program and applications for saving valuable data to CDs or DVDs.

Claire J Rottenberg is the author of Easy Guides to Mac OS X software (Safari, Mail, System Preferences, TextEdit) and Course Books on Mac OS X 10.5, iPhoto '08, iTunes, and Mac OS X 10.4. More information on her books is available on the CJRTOOLS ebooks website (www.cjrtools.com/ebooks).

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