

Website: <http://www.miniapples.org>

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From the Editor:

Lots of news from Apple this month. Apple has released three new iPods, the Touch, the Nano with Multi-Touch and the Shuffle. There were a several updates, two for security issues and iTunes 10 with Ping. The iPhone OS has also been updated. Other than that there have been new releases of Adobe Flash Player 10.1.85.3, Safari 5.0.2/4.1.2, Firefox 4/3.6.9, Opera 10.62, TinkerTool 4.2. and Carbon Copy Cloner 3.3.4

I've also included an article on Dropbox, a utility that we use in the publication of the Newsletter.

[Tom Ostertag](#), Publications Director

Meeting Calendar

At the right is a list of mini'app'les meetings for October 2010. 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 SIG Leader or the mini'app'les website: www.miniapples.org.

Meeting Calendar – October 2010			
Tuesday	October 5	7:00 pm	Mac OS X SIG
Thursday	October 7	6:30 pm	Mac Applications SIG
Monday	October 11	7:00 pm	Board of Directors Meeting
Wednesday	October 13	7:00 pm	VectorWorks SIG*
Thursday	October 21	7:00 am	Macintosh Consultants SIG
Monday	October 25	6:00 pm	Mac Q&A SIG
Thursday	October 28	7:00 pm	FileMaker Pro SIG

Meeting Locations and Leaders

Meeting	Location	Leader
Board of Directors	Merriam Park Library, 1831 Marshall Ave., St. Paul	Tim Drenk, 952-479-0891
FileMaker Pro SIG	Partners, 2250 Terminal Rd., Roseville	Steve Wilmes, 651-458-1513
Mac Applications SIG	Helen Young Room, Southdale Library, 7001 York Avenue South, Edina	Tim Drenk, 952-479-0891
Mac OS X SIG	The Foundation, 311 7 th Ave North, Minneapolis	Bob Demeules, 763-559-1124
Mac Q&A SIG	Merriam Park Library, 1831 Marshall Ave., St. Paul	Chuck Hauge, 612-963-5064
Macintosh Consultants SIG	Good Day Café, 5410 Wayzata Blvd., Golden Valley	Bob Demeules, 763-559-1124
VectorWorks SIG*	CJR Office, 4441 Claremore Dr., Edina	Charles Radloff, 952-941-1667

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

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Q&A SIG Report • 27 August 2010

By [Les Anderson](#)

The August Q&A started out with two tips for Widgets. One dealt with changing the city for time and temperature. Another was for shredding personal files like finance info. Along the same line we discussed erasing a hard drive so a computer can be sold or disposed of.



A follow-up to a previous meeting dealt with problems printing envelopes and getting the the addresses to print in the proper location. Several questions dealt with e-mail; Entourage, how to display more or fewer messages in the In Box or Trash folders and setting the prefs on keeping messages. Another member wondered how best to switch from dial up service to Comcast without losing messages or contacts. If you have your own domain name switching isn't a problem because you always keep the same e-mail address.

Another question dealt with Windows opening in the same configuration as last time they were used. We also talked about the Text to Speech option in the System Preferences.

This was my last meeting as the SIG coordinator. Chuck Hauge will be handling the Q&A from now on. As always the Q&A meets on the fourth Monday at 6PM at the Merriam Park Library.

Apple User Group Bulletin - 15 September 2010

From *The mini'app'les Forummer*

Recent Highlights from the Apple User Group Resources website:

<http://appleusergroupresources.com>

- MacGroup Detroit: Kelby Presents
- User Group Reunion: Looking for Photos of Then and Now
- MUGS - New Jersey: Special Guest Andy Ihnatko
- Last Reminder: MCE is the Place to Be
- DV Expo: SF Cutters Will Be There
- OMUG: OMUGfest 2010
- LHMUG: Things Remembered

- Offers for User Group Leaders and Members including:
-
- Select Wiley Books: 40 Percent Discount
- iPhone 4 Made Simple (ebook): 50 Percent Discount
- Tropic4 TopXNotes: 20 Percent Off
- Ezcapes iPhone 3G/3GS Covers: 50 Percent Discount

Be sure to visit the special offers link to find offers and codes on one page.

http://appleusergroupresources.com/?page_id=653

password: resource

iWork 9.0.4 Gives Pages EPUB Support

by [Adam C. Engst](#)

Apple has released [iWork 9.0.4](#), fixing a few bugs and extending Pages to be able to export the EPUB format used by the iBookstore. [Bugs fixed](#) in Keynote include problems printing handouts with rule lines, the slide switcher, and automatically resizing some images while changing slide size. In addition, Keynote, Numbers, and Pages all receive a fix for a bug related to tables. The update is 63.44 MB, and is available via Software Update or directly from Apple's Support Downloads page.

But the far more interesting news is that Apple has added support for the standard EPUB file format for electronic books to Pages, so it's now possible to export an EPUB from Pages. The reason this is interesting is that despite the fuss about EPUB, the tools available to create EPUB have been extremely limited, falling into four basic categories:

WYSIWYG editing and EPUB export: Until the release of Pages 9.0.4, [Adobe InDesign](#) has essentially owned this category, because it was the only professional program in either the word processing or page layout space that could export reasonable EPUB files that were

more than straight text. There are also several writing tools aimed at creative writers - notably [Storyist](#) and [Ulysses](#) and the upcoming [Scrivener 2.0](#) - that can export to EPUB, though it appears on a quick glance that they are relatively limited in terms of stylistic capabilities, along with features essential for professional writers like change tracking and commenting.

WYSIWYG EPUB editors: The only Mac-compatible program I know of that claims to provide WYSIWYG editing of EPUB is [Sigil](#), a cross-platform, open-source tool that works, but has some serious usability problems. If you have an EPUB that you wish to edit with WYSIWYG editing tools, try Sigil. Beware though, since in my experience, Sigil ignores an EPUB's existing table-of-contents file and creates its own, which is often sub-optimal.

XML-focused editors: These programs, such as Syncro Soft's [oxygen XML Editor](#), provide tools for working with EPUB at the code level. Creating an EPUB with an XML editor is like building a Web site with BBEdit; you get a lot of control, but you have to know exactly what you're doing, and minor mistakes can require debugging.

Conversion tools: There are oodles of tools that claim that they can convert files from a wide variety of formats into EPUB. Frankly, none that I've tested has done squat with the Word or PDF documents that we create for Take Control. I suspect they would work with very simple documents.

In her book "[EPUB Straight to the Point](#)," our friend Liz Castro provides oodles of useful information about building EPUBs in both InDesign and Word (where you're really saving your file as HTML, and then manipulating the HTML file in a variety of tweeky ways to create an EPUB). Liz sells the book (as an EPUB-formatted ebook, natch) directly, or you can buy it in print through [Amazon.com](#) or any of the usual suspects. Since it's the sort of book you'll need to reference frequently while working,

you'll either want the print version or an iPad for the ebook version; the content isn't well suited to the small iPhone screen.

So where does Pages fall? I haven't had much time to play with its EPUB capabilities yet, but it looks like a serious contender in the WYSIWYG editing and EPUB export category. To be clear, Pages cannot open or import an EPUB file, so it's useful only for exporting in EPUB format. (Luckily, Pages can import Word files quite well, so you may not be entirely out of luck if your documents are in Word format.)

Apple has published a [Knowledgebase article](#) on the topic that offers an overview of EPUB and PDF, and how to create an EPUB file with Pages. Although you can create an EPUB simply by exporting any existing Pages document, the results may not be ideal unless you start from [a sample document](#) that Apple makes available on the Web (it's not included with Pages 9.0.4, oddly). The sample document can be used as a template or you can copy its styles into your document. Liza Daly, one of the world's EPUB experts, [has examined the template](#), and is generally positive about what Apple has done, identifying only one notable problem in the XHTML output.

As a quick test, I imported the Word manuscript of Tonya's "[Take Control of iPad Basics](#)" ebook into Pages, and immediately exported it as an EPUB. Almost shockingly, it was pretty darn good on the iPad. A number of internal navigation links were lost on import, but Pages retained the look and feel of our design, properly recognized the table of contents, dealt properly with Web links, and had no trouble with graphics. And when I ran the file through the [EPUB validation tool](#) that Liza Daly's Threepress Consulting makes available, it passed with no errors.

With this new EPUB export added to all the commenting and change tracking features that have appeared in recent versions, Pages may now rank as real competition for Microsoft Word for serious writing. Of course, with Office

2011 due out in a few months, Microsoft has a chance to up the ante, but Apple can't be far from releasing a major update to iWork as well.

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TidBits Software Watchlist

Notable recent software updates

Transmit 4.1.1 -- Panic has updated its file-transfer software Transmit to version 4.1.1. The full release notes list nearly five dozen fixes, but here's the overview: Transmit Disk - the feature that lets you mount remote FTP, SFTP, Amazon S3, and other servers on your desktop as if they were connected hard disks - has been vastly improved, offering full compatibility with 64-bit kernels, improved MobileMe support, better deletion, and ending its reliance on MacFUSE. The update also adds more language localizations, reduces memory usage during file transfers, fixes a slew of cosmetic bugs, and plays more nicely with symlinks and redirected items. (\$34 new, free update, 22 MB)

Adobe Flash Player 10.1.85.3 -- Adobe has updated Flash Player (which you interact with primarily in your Web browser) to version 10.1.85.3 to address a security vulnerability that's actively being exploited in the wild against the Windows version of Flash Player (as of this writing, Macs aren't being targeted). To determine the version of Flash you're currently running, visit the About Flash Player page. If you need a new version, visit the Adobe Flash Player Download Center. If you're using Google Chrome, version 6.0.472.62 includes the new version of Flash Player and has probably updated itself automatically. (Free, 7.59 MB)

Security Update 2010-006 -- Apple has released [Security Update 2010-006](#), an update exclusively for Macs running Mac OS X 10.6.4 Snow Leopard. The update corrects [a vulnerability in AFP Server](#), which manages file

sharing. In certain situations, a remote attacker who knew a valid username on your Mac could log in without knowing the password, and access folders shared via AFP. Apple recommends everyone running 10.6.4 - both the desktop and server versions - install the patch, which is available via direct download or Software Update. (Free, 1.93 MB)

TinkerTool 4.2 -- Marcel Bresink has released [TinkerTool 4.2](#). New features in the system utility software - which lets you adjust all sorts of settings under Mac OS X's hood - include the capability to force iTunes 10 to use a regular title bar with horizontal buttons, a preference for Apple Mail to prefer the plain text versions of HTML email messages when available, and the capability to disable all RSS features in Safari 4 and Safari 5. The new version of TinkerTool should work better for users with small screens, and corrects an issue with login items, as well. [Full release notes](#) are available. TinkerTool 4.2 requires Mac OS X 10.4 Tiger or later. (Free, 1.4 MB)

Pro Applications Update 2010-02 -- Apple has released [Pro Applications Update 2010-02](#), which "adds compatibility for new camera formats, improves overall stability and addresses a number of other minor issues." Apple isn't saying anything more useful, other than that the update is recommended for all user of Final Cut Studio, Final Cut Server, and Logic Studio. The update includes Final Cut Pro 7.0.3, Motion 4.0.3, Color 1.5.3, Compressor 3.5.3, and Apple Qmaster 3.5.3. (Free update, 321.1 MB)

Dialectic 1.7 -- JNSoftware has released Dialectic 1.7, a significant update to its popular telephony software for Mac OS X. Dialectic is a TidBITS favorite (see "Dialectic Simplifies Dialing Any Type of Phone," 10 April 2008) that lets you manage the telephone calls you make, regardless of what type of phone you use. New features in version 1.7 include 64-bit compatibility (under Mac OS X 10.6 Snow Leopard); support for Exchange, CardDAV, and

LDAP accounts; and more and better support for a wide range of devices like the MagicJack and Aastra IP phones. The software requires Mac OS X 10.4 Tiger or higher; full release notes are available. (\$25 new, free update, 7.8 MB)

MarsEdit 3.1.1 -- Red Sweater Software has updated their blog editing software [MarsEdit](#) to version 3.1.1. The new version is now 64-bit compatible. Additionally, a variety of new features have been introduced, including a new, per-blog setting to constrain uploaded images to pre-set sizes, support for Lightroom 3 media libraries, and plug-in support in the rich text editor (so you can view embedded movies, for instance). The update also fixes bugs, including one that caused a blank preview window and another that prevented the ejection of external media volumes. [Full release notes](#) are available at Red Sweater's Web site. (\$39.95 new, free update, 6.0 MB)

Savescreenie 2.0 -- Long ago, our article "[How to Change Screen Capture Formats](#)" (27 June 2005), prompted Christian Franz to create a small utility called Savescreenie to ease the process of changing Mac OS X's default screenshot format. Five years later, Christian's cf/x Software has released the free [Savescreenie 2.0](#). It now supports a number of additional file formats (10 in all), and enables you to set the default location and base name for screenshots. Savescreenie 2.0 requires Mac OS X 10.5 Leopard or later and works on both Intel- and PowerPC-based Macs. So if you prefer a screenshot format other than Mac OS X's default of PNG, or would prefer that your screenshots end up somewhere other than on the Desktop, give Savescreenie a try. (Free, 1.0 MB)

1Password 3.4.1 -- The fine folks at Agile Web Solutions have released [1Password 3.4.1](#), an incremental update to their popular password management utility. Among the included updates is partial support for Firefox 4 betas, but note that Autosave and HTTP Authentication don't yet work. The update also

greatly improves the Sync Conflict Resolver, making it far simpler to diagnose and repair conflicts, including Dropbox syncing issues. Other fixes include improved localization, optimizations for 1PasswordAnywhere, and more; [full release notes](#) are available. (\$39.95 new, free update, 17.3 MB)

Carbon Copy Cloner 3.3.4 -- Bombich Software has updated its backup software [Carbon Copy Cloner](#) to version 3.3.4, resolving a host of bugs and making a variety of other small improvements. Among the issues fixed are an error with files with more than 126 Access Control Entries, errors where extended attributes were not re-applied to files in certain situations, a Leopard-specific issue with saving passwords for encrypted backups, and an issue where the software's log file could be unwritable for the current user. Numerous other bugs, including hangs while authenticating and missing permission checks, are also corrected. Bombich provides [full release notes](#). (Donationware, 3.7 MB)

Editor's Note: This is one of my favorite programs. I've used the cloned backups to restore the hard drive on my G4 several times.

Firefox 3.6.9 -- Mozilla has released [Firefox 3.6.9](#), updating the popular Web browser with support for the [X-FRAME-OPTIONS](#) HTTP response header that enables Web site owners to prevent their content from being embedded in other sites, which can lead to [clickjacking](#) attacks. The update also addresses a number of security vulnerabilities and bugs, some of which could result in crashes. (Free, 19 MB)

PDFpen/PDFpenPro 5.0.1 -- Users and abusers of PDF rejoice, since Smile (née SmileOnMyMac) has released [PDFpen](#) and [PDFpenPro 5](#), significantly beefing up the PDF editing and manipulation tools. Most notably, both versions of PDFpen are 64-bit, and include performance enhancements that speed the editing of large documents. Plus, when performing OCR on a scanned document, PDFpen can now take advantage of multiple

CPU cores for added performance. If you need to redact (black out) information in PDFs, PDFpen can now do that easily, and there's even a Search & Redact command to do so across an entire PDF in a single step (Search & Replace provides normal text replacements). Image editing capabilities have also been improved, with the added capability to deskew scanned documents and adjust image settings such as contrast and saturation. Plus, PDFpen can now resample images to a lower resolution or color depth to reduce PDF file size. PDFpenPro 5 gains the capability to convert a Web site into a multi-page PDF document, can create list widgets and pop-ups in PDF forms, and can create a Submit button to submit PDF form data via the Web or email. Version 5.0.1 is current and requires Mac OS X 10.6 Snow Leopard; [full release notes](#) are available. (\$59.95/\$99.95 new, \$25 upgrade, free update for purchases after 14 February 2010, 42.8/43.1 MB)

Safari 5.0.2/4.1.2 -- Apple has released [Safari 5.0.2](#) and [Safari 4.1.2](#) (the former for users running Mac OS X 10.5 Leopard or later, the latter for users still running 10.4 Tiger). The updates patch a pair of vulnerabilities that could allow maliciously crafted Web sites to execute their own code or crash Safari. Beyond the security fixes, both updates correct issues with submitting forms. Safari 5.0.2 also addresses bugs with viewing Google Image results with Flash 10.1 installed, and uses an encrypted connection when surfing the [Safari Extensions Gallery](#). The updates are available via Software Update or direct download from Apple, and are recommended for all Safari users. (Free update, 37.56 MB for Snow Leopard, 46.71 MB for Leopard, 29.46 MB for Tiger)

iWeb 3.0.2 -- Apple has bumped [iWeb](#) to version 3.0.2. According to Apple's [sparse release notes](#), the minor update improves comments and search support for blogs and podcasts published to Apple's MobileMe service. Assorted MobileMe publishing issues

are also fixed. (\$79 as part of iLife, free update, 177.14 MB)

Audio Hijack Pro 2.9.7 -- Rogue Amoeba has updated [Audio Hijack Pro](#), its tool to capture audio from any audio source on your Mac, to version 2.9.7. The minor update includes a slew of fixes: the Instant Hijack and LAME MP3 components - both of which provide behind-the-scenes core functionality for the software - have been updated to their latest versions, correcting several small bugs in the process. A crashing bug related to deleting a session which was recording has been corrected, and issues with the Minimize to Menubar Record option and hotkeys that included the "A" key were fixed, too. (\$32 new, free update, 6.9 MB)

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Speed Up Your iOS 4-Based iPhone 3G

by [Tonya Engst](#)

Apple's iOS 4, released only a few months ago roughly in concert with the iPhone 4, works not only on the iPhone 4, and the previous generation iPhone 3GS, but also on the iPhone 3G; the original iPhone can't run it. But to judge from vociferous complaints from iPhone 3G users online, Apple was perhaps overly optimistic in providing backward compatibility with the iPhone 3G.

If you have an iPhone 3G running Apple's older iPhone operating system - which was called iPhone OS 3, but has been retroactively renamed iOS 3 - I suggest that you not install the iOS 4 update. If you do, you'll likely notice slowdowns across the board, especially with opening apps, switching screens, and using the onscreen keyboard. Rumor fueled by an alleged email message from Steve Jobs suggests that Apple will address the problem in a future release of iOS 4, but as of version 4.0.2, using an

iPhone 3G with iOS 4 remains painful for many people.

This is particularly troublesome because the iPhone 3G was for sale until the iPhone 4 shipped, and because it's non-trivial to downgrade to the previous iOS 3.1.3 version. When Apple has released versions of Mac OS X that turn out not to work well on older Macs, those Macs are often several years past their sell-by date, and, regardless, you can always revert to whatever version of Mac OS X shipped with that particular model. Besides, not only was the iPhone 3G so recently for sale, but it came with a 2-year contract, so users are locked into using it.

What follows are ideas for maximizing the speed of an iPhone 3G that's running iOS 4. I've tried all but the last idea personally. Restoring from recovery mode finally did help, but I think that restoring my backed-up apps and data caused me to lose most of the gain I'd achieved. However, I've read hundreds of comments online from frustrated iPhone 3G users, so I know that the several-second pauses that I was initially complaining about are not nearly as problematic as the 10-second pauses experienced by others, and those longer delays may be easier to reduce. I've listed the ideas in the order that I think would be most sensible to try them.

Do a Hard Reset Twice -- This action erases various caches and buffers, giving your iPhone a fresh start in some respects. To proceed, press both the Home button and the Sleep/Wake button for 5 to 10 seconds. Continue pressing them as the "slide to power off" slider appears (don't use it) and the iPhone powers off. Release the buttons. Now:

- The iPhone may show an Apple logo and reboot.
- The iPhone may remain off. Once it has been off for 15 seconds or so, press the Sleep/Wake button to turn it on.

Either way, rebooting may take several minutes.

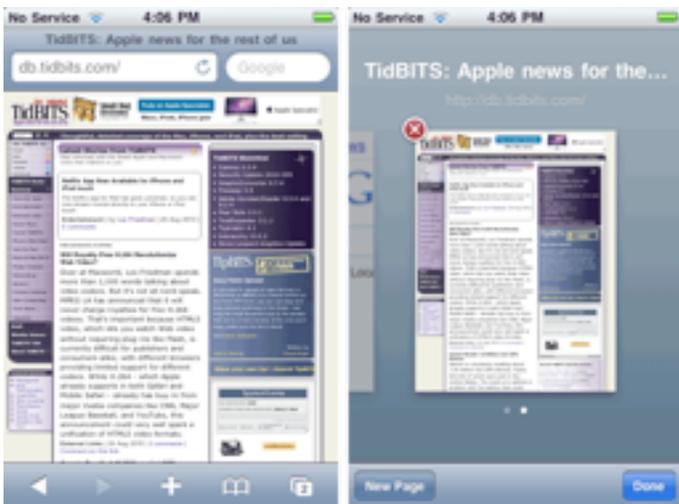
After it reboots, the iPhone displays its usual Home screen. (If you aren't paying attention during a long reboot, you'll have a black screen, because the iPhone will have gone to sleep. In that case, press Home to activate the screen.)

You've now done a single hard reset, so repeat the procedure, which will ensure that the iPhone's internal caches and buffers are squeaky clean. (Or it may just be modern day voodoo.)

Shutter Spotlight -- Spotlight is the search engine behind the search options available on the leftmost page of the iPhone's Home screen. Since Spotlight is indexing the contents of your iPhone, turning it off may free up some system resources and improve performance.

To turn off the search options, tap Settings > General > Home Button > Spotlight Search. Then, on the Spotlight Search screen, tap any checked items to remove the checkmarks. Do a single hard reset to clear memory and start fresh.

Close Extra Pages in Safari -- These pages may be using valuable memory that could be better used elsewhere in the system. Open the Safari app, and notice the icon at the lower right of the screen. A badge on the icon indicates how many Web pages you have open in Safari (in the screenshot below, I have two open pages).



Tap the icon to view a thumbnail of each page, floating on a scrollable screen. For each page except the last one remaining, tap the red X button to close it. Finally, perform a single hard reset to clear memory and start fresh. (If you use a Web browser other than Safari, trying this tip - or its nearest equivalent, such as closing extra tabs - in your browser seems like a good idea, too.)

If closing extra pages helps your iPhone's performance, you'll need to close extra pages every time you quit Safari, which is a pain, unless you use the information in the next tip.

Pay Attention to Memory Use -- You may find it useful to track how much memory is available on the iPhone using a memory-monitoring app, such as Gary Fung's free [Memory Sweep](#) (oddly, on the iPhone itself, it's called Scan). If you check the app periodically, and especially whenever you notice performance lagging, you may be able to identify a usage pattern that causes problems.

For instance, a blog post about the topic from Andrews Technology, "[How I fixed my iPhone 3G lag](#)," reported seeing better performance and more free memory after closing all pages in Safari, as recommended above.

Even better, Memory Sweep has two buttons, Free Memory Moderately and Free Maximum Memory. Tapping the first button seems to clear Safari's page cache (the page thumbnail images are blank on the next load), and whatever the second one does, it takes Safari even longer to start the next time. It strikes me that there could be cons to using these buttons, but Apple did approve the app!

Disable MMS -- Some folks have reported that turning off MMS (Multimedia Messaging Service) makes a huge difference. MMS is used in the Messages app, and where SMS (Short Message Service) messages contain just text, MMS messages can contain photos, audio, and video. To turn MMS off, tap Settings > Messages and tap the switch to turn off MMS

Messaging. Finally, perform a single hard reset to clear memory and start fresh.

Restore from Recovery Mode -- This procedure has five steps. Make sure you have a few spare hours for this task and that you feel comfortable with all the directions before you begin.

1. Back up your iPhone's contents. Apple details this process in the Knowledgebase article "[How to backup your data and set up as a new device.](#)" You may not need to do everything in the article, depending on your situation.
2. Put your iPhone in recovery mode. While the iPhone is connected to your computer via USB and visible in the iTunes sidebar, hold down the Home button and the Sleep/Wake button for 10 seconds. Then release the Sleep/Wake button only. After a short pause, a dialog indicates that iTunes has detected an iPhone in recovery mode. Click OK.
3. Restore the iPhone. With the iPhone selected in the iTunes sidebar, click the Restore button on the right. Proceed with the restoration and be sure to click set up the phone as a new device, when asked.
4. Test to see if the iPhone is working better with a factory default installation of apps and settings.
5. If you like, restore your backup from Step 1. This may reintroduce the problem, and if it does, you can decide whether you'd prefer to live with the problem, or redo Steps 2 and 3 and then set the phone up from scratch while making frequent backups in case the problem occurs again.

Downgrade to iOS 3 -- If you have a few hours to spare, you may wish to revert to iOS 3. Proceed with care. Unfortunately, this process is not supported by Apple, although the worst that's likely to happen is that you'll have to reinstall iOS 4.

The directions I've seen for downgrading look fine for geeks but sketchy for regular people. [Check Lifehacker for full instructions.](#) You might also want to read [Chris Breen's commentary on their instructions](#) at Macworld.

Wait Patiently -- Realistically, none of these are great solutions, and given that Apple officially offers iOS 4 for the iPhone 3G, the ball is in Apple's court. The company has remained mum about the issue, with the only break in the silence being an alleged four-word email message from Steve Jobs in response to a user's complaint: "Software update coming soon." Assuming that message is legitimate, whether that update is iOS 4.1, currently in testing, or something further out remains unknown.

But if the iPhone 3G performance problems aren't solved in the very near future, Apple should acknowledge the issue and provide official instructions for iPhone 3G owners to downgrade to the perfectly functional iOS 3.1.3 until the fix is available. Anything else shows a complete lack of regard for the user experience for iPhone 3G owners, something that a company as obsessed with details as Apple should be ashamed of.

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Dropbox App Adds HD Uploads and Local Cache

by [Glenn Fleishman](#)

Version 1.3 of the iOS [Dropbox app](#) significantly enhances how you can store and retrieve files with the Dropbox cloud-based storage system. Dropbox lets you put a folder on your computer that's automatically synced with the company's central servers, and with any other computer similarly set up. You can also share folders with others, and have those items synced. (For more about Dropbox, see

"[Dropbox: A Collaborator's Dream](#)," 3 February 2009.)

The free Dropbox app started as a modest file viewer for the iPhone and iPod touch (see "[Dropbox Releases iPhone App for File Viewing and Sharing](#)," 29 September 2009), and was later upgraded for compatibility with the iPad. But it was always a bit awkward because the app would retain a copy of a viewed file only if you marked that file as a favorite.

The new version of the Dropbox app now caches retrieved files up to a size limit that you set. As with favorites, it tracks updates, so you can reload a file that has changed since it was cached.

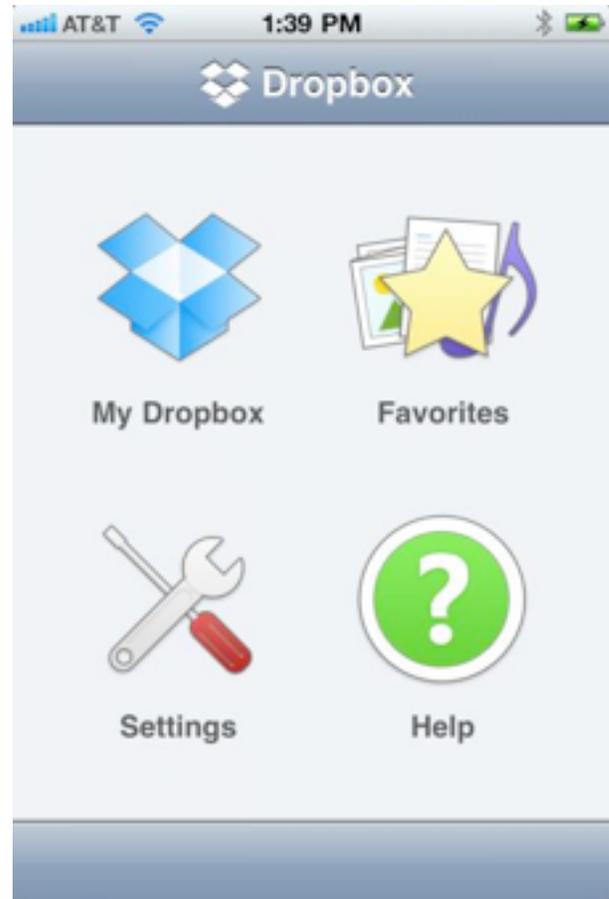


You can now also choose a quality setting, which controls the amount of compression, for handling video and photo uploads. Notably, you can choose an HD setting that preserves the full size of videos and photos shot on an iPhone 4.



The

revised app now features a home page screen from which you can more easily reach settings, help, and items that you've marked as favorites (which enables you to jump directly to specific files rather than browsing through your entire collection).



Taking advantage of iOS 4 background task completion, Dropbox 1.3 will now continue uploads and downloads after you've switched away from the app. (Those transfer tasks must complete with a few minutes.) You can also now create folders from within the app.

Earlier this year, Dropbox opened its system to enable outside developers to build secure Dropbox file access into their own software. I use many pieces of software regularly, including [GoodReader](#), that can download files from Dropbox, upload files to Dropbox, or directly edit files on Dropbox (by reading and then writing). To shine a spotlight on software that includes Dropbox support, Dropbox has

now published an [App Directory](#) on its Web site.

Dropbox [offers 2 GB of storage for free](#), and 50 GB and 500 GB of storage for \$9.99 and \$19.99 per month, respectively.

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Apple Previews iOS 4.1 and 4.2

by *Adam C. Engst and Tonya Engst*

In what has become a familiar September media event (though one that Apple provided via live streaming for the first time, reducing the need to read the numerous liveblogs), Apple CEO Steve Jobs gave a preview of iOS 4.1, due this week for the iOS 4-capable models of the iPhone and iPod touch, and iOS 4.2, which will finally provide a single operating system for the iPad, iPhone, and iPod touch (again, only for those iPhone and iPod touch models that already support iOS 4). Both iOS 4.1 and 4.2 will be free updates.

iOS 4.1 -- Perhaps most notably, Apple is promising three high-profile bug fixes in iOS 4.1. The iPhone 4 has suffered two notable troubles (beyond the widely publicized antenna issues, which are hardware-related), one with Bluetooth and another with its proximity sensor. Jobs said that iOS 4.1 fixes the Bluetooth troubles with dropped connections to headsets and in-car systems, as well as proximity sensor problems resulting in accidental hangups and FaceTime activations when the sensor failed to detect that the phone was next to the user's head. Also extremely welcome is the third fix, a promised solution for the performance problems suffered by iPhone 3G users who have upgraded to iOS 4 (see "Speed Up Your iOS 4-Based iPhone 3G," 27 August 2010).

Editor's Note: See article on page 7 of this newsletter.

For those with an iPhone or a new camera-equipped iPod touch, iOS 4.1 makes it possible to take high dynamic range (HDR) photos that can significantly improve the quality of a photo. HDR photos use a technique called "bracketing," in which three photos are taken in quick succession, one exposed at the camera's best guess, one underexposed, and one overexposed. The three photos are then combined algorithmically, which can often provide noticeably better results, as details and colors that are visible only under different exposures are merged. For example, a blue sky that gets blown out to white under normal circumstances would appear blue in the underexposed photo (leaving foreground elements nearly black); when merged, the sky and foreground are properly exposed. The original photos remain available in the Camera Roll too, so you can compare to see if the HDR version is better or not.

Also new is Game Center, which Apple previewed a few months ago, but which didn't ship with iOS 4.0 (see "Apple Previews Major New Features in iPhone OS 4," 8 April 2010). Game Center comprises a set of APIs for game developers to build into their apps and an iOS app that provides an interface for inviting friends to play multiplayer games, for auto-matching with other online players, and scoreboards.

We're not major game players, but apparently we're unusual in that respect: according to Apple, the iPod touch is the top portable gaming device in the world, with over 50 percent of the U.S. and worldwide markets, and higher sales than the portable gaming devices of Nintendo and Sony combined. Steve Jobs said that 1.5 billion games and entertainment apps have been downloaded for the iPod touch so far. And it's hard to imagine that iPhone and iPad users aren't also playing games, so it seems likely that Game Center will be big, and will make iOS gaming even more compelling.

Also coming to iOS 4.1 is support for full HD video upload over Wi-Fi. Currently, although the iPhone 4 can capture HD video, the Photos app compresses video content and resizes it to a maximum resolution of 568 by 320 pixels when sharing via email, to MobileMe, or to YouTube. TV show rentals also join the mix at the same \$0.99-per-show price as is being charged for TV show rentals in iTunes and on the new Apple TV.

iOS 4.2 -- The presentation offered a quick look at iOS 4.2, which Jobs said would be available in November of this year. Unlike iOS 4.1, which is for only the iPhone and iPod touch, iOS 4.2 will run on the iPad as well as on any iOS 4-capable iPhone or iPod touch. New features promised for iOS 4.2 include built-in Wi-Fi printing and AirPlay.

Several third-party printing apps are already available for the iPad, including ePrint, PrintCentral, and AirSharing HD (the latter does much more than just print). iPhone printing apps are also available. These apps have all had to devise a way of accessing a document in order to print it, and there are a variety of techniques. These apps have also suffered from having to run in the foreground. The new wireless printing option in iOS 4.2 runs in the background, and we presume that third-party printing apps will be able to add background capabilities, should they wish to try to compete with Apple's built-in printing. From the looks of the demo, to use built-in printing, each app must offer a print feature, so it may take some time before apps that ought to support printing actually do.

AirPlay is a new name for an older technology, AirTunes, which lets you stream music from iTunes through an AirPort Express base station to a stereo system. AirPlay now supports video and photos, and works with the second-generation Apple TV, enabling you to stream audio, video, and photos from any iOS device running iOS 4.2 to an AirPort Express-connected stereo or new Apple TV.

iOS Continues Apace -- Although much is being made of the increasing number of Android-based smartphones and tablets, Apple doesn't seem particularly worried. Jobs said that Apple has sold 120 million iOS devices so far, and is activating 230,000 new iOS devices per day. There have been 6.5 billion downloads from the App Store so far, a rate of 200 apps per second, and the App Store now contains 250,000 apps, 25,000 of which are native to the iPad.

Some have suggested that Apple is recapitulating the history of the Mac by keeping iOS and iOS devices entirely proprietary, much as it did with the Mac OS and Macintosh hardware. There's no question that approach limited the market share of the Mac in comparison to Windows-based PCs from numerous manufacturers, but today's situation feels different. That's largely because Apple is not only the first mover in the market, introducing features that make other manufacturers play catch-up, but Apple's huge success with the iPhone, iPod touch, and iPad mean that it has far more market penetration than the Mac was ever able to achieve. Certainly, Apple would prefer to see the smartphone and tablet markets work more like the portable music player market, where Apple entered a weak field, set the standard with the iPod, and then maintained market dominance through innovation and excellent design.

One thing is clear, though - Apple won't be slowing the pace of significant updates to iOS and the increasing number of iOS devices. We'll all just have to hang on for the ride.

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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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D = Days, generally 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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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 Members volunteer, please send an email message to Membership Director Les Anderson or contact him on our forums with your name, telephone number, contact hours, and the software and hardware areas you are willing to support.

Mini'app'les Membership Application and Renewal Form

Membership cost is \$15.00 for one year. To pay electronically using PayPal, visit the mini'app'les [website](#).

If you prefer to pay by check, use the form below. Please make your check payable to "mini'app'les".

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Thank you for your support!

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- Access to the mini'app'les online forums. Post questions and/or answers about issues, trouble shooting, products, buying and selling, special events, discounts, and news about Apple and the mini'app'les club.
- Access to our Members Helping Members network of professional and advanced users of Apple technologies. These members volunteer their time to help other members with software, hardware, and other Apple related issues.
- A variety of Mac Special Interest Groups (SIGs) that meet each month.
- Multi-SIG meetings and workshops to help members with computer problems. You can bring your equipment to these events and receive support from knowledgeable Mac users to help diagnose your problem(s).
- Participation in drawings for computer hardware, software, and other computer related materials.
- Discounts from vendors and manufacturers. Refer to the on-line forums for current offers.

mini'app'les

the minnesota apple computer users group, inc.

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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.

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Submissions — We welcome contributions from our members. Perhaps you're using new software that you just can't live without. Maybe you have a new piece of hardware that you find extremely useful and of high quality. On the other hand, you might be struggling with problematic software or hardware. Why not share your experience with other members by writing a product review? Doing so may steer others towards quality products or help them avoid the problems you may be having.

Submissions must be received by the 15th day of each month to be included in the next month's newsletter. 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.

The 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.

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