



MAC FACTS

from

Mac Help Desk

SUPPORT, SALES, TRAINING & SERVICE

(972) 783-9787 • (214) 249-9543 - *Pager*

e-mail address - machelpdesk@comcast.net

Web site - <http://www.machelpdesk.com>

a Macintosh Solutions Provider company

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A Message from Dru

And as we come full circle to the conclusion of another year, I want to take the time to thank all of you for giving me the opportunity to be of some small assistance to all of you. Without you, Mac Help Desk wouldn't exist. May you have a Happy, Healthy, Safe, and Joyous Holiday Season and a Prosperous New Year.

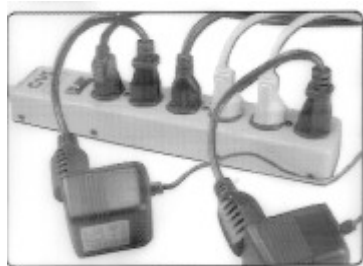
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Apple Corps of Dallas needs you to P-A-R-T-Y! Saturday December 10th, 9 am - 12 noon. Richardson Civic Center. It's our annual Holiday Party, Gaming Get-Together, and Swap meet. Come have a glass of cheer (well, Coke, mostly), meet lotsa great Mac folks of all ages (just like you), and shop (and swap) for Mac stuff. Best of all it FREE! So bring the entire family. For more info go to - <http://www.acd.org>

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Geeky Stocking Stuffer – We all got them. Power strips under our desks. And plugged into those strips, are those ubiquitous power bricks that hog 2 and sometimes 3 outlets. Well, no more!

Meet the Brick Buster!



10" of flexible 18 gauge wire, a 3-prong jack on one side, and a 3-prong jill on the other.

Plug your bricks into these little babies and free up all those previously covered sockets.

"I was able to do away with 2 power strips. Thanks Brick Buster!" – Myra, FL

Only \$2 each, or 6 for \$10.50. Order today. Limited Supply.

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And now for something completely different...I'm going to do something I haven't done since I opened Mac Help Desk in January of 1991...I'm taking a vacation! Wife, Carol, and I are going on a cruise (courtesy of the late Mr. Richman). We leave from Galveston on Sunday December 25th and return on Sunday January 1st. [And I'll tell you now, the office will be closed from December 25th until January 1st. But don't worry, I'll have you covered]



Party time? Live music enlivens any party. If you're planning a holiday gathering, I have just the band for you - *LoveSong*. According to *Dallas Music Weekly*, "*LoveSong* is one of Dallas' premiere small bands." For more info, or to book an event, go to <http://www.machelpdesk.com/lovesong>



Need a great gift (for those who have a terminal case of "I have no time") for the upcoming holiday season (or any season, really)? **iLoad your iPod**, our iPod music loading service offers **Gift Certificates!** Available in just about any dollar amount. Go here for more info - <http://www.machelpdesk.com/imls.pdf>



How to Sell a Used Mac

One of the most common questions I get from my users, clients, and friends is: I have an old Mac that I'd like to sell, how much is it worth? Here are the tools I use to calculate for how much to sell a used Mac.

IDENTIFY IT

First, you're going to need to know exactly which kind of Macintosh you've got in front of you. Apple regularly refreshes their product lines and releases identical-looking computers but with different speeds and components. For instance, the current line of iBooks share an almost identical case design as the first "Dual USB iBook" from more than four years ago. The best tool for identifying which Mac you have is MacTracker (<http://www.mactracker.ca>), an excellent and free database of specifications of every Mac model manufactured. It's MacTracker I refer to, for instance, to find out a Mac model's bus speed, or what speed RAM it uses, or even when it was released. If I'm trying to identify a specific Macintosh, MacTracker can help me there as well. Apple System Profiler will show you the specifications of the computer in front of you and then you can match them up to the listing in MacTracker. Knowing which model Mac you have in front of you is vital. Nobody likes those auction or classifieds listings with vague details, including sellers. Unless you like getting hundreds of emails asking, "Yes, I see you have a PowerMac G4 for sale, but how fast is it?"

DESCRIBE IT

So you've used MacTracker to identify precisely which model Mac you have. You've even

learned that it's officially called, for instance, a PowerMac G4 (QuickSilver 2002ED) and has an 867Mhz processor in it. In your advertisement you should include this information. Here's a list of other information you should include:

- the specific model of Macintosh
- the amount of RAM installed in it
- which optical drive the machine has (CD-ROM, CD-RW, Superdrive?)
- which graphics card is installed and how much VRAM (video RAM) it has
- whether the machine is as Apple shipped it or whether it's been upgraded
- whether there's any obvious damage or scratches/markings
- whether there are any known physical malfunctions (CD drive doesn't open, for instance)
- which version of the operating system is installed (if any).

Most of this information is available from the Apple System Profiler. It's also listed in MacTracker's database. MacTracker is useful in cases where the Mac doesn't have a bootable operating system installed (and so therefore you can't run Apple System Profiler). If the Mac doesn't have an OS installed or won't boot, be sure to include this in your listing.

Take a good picture of it! You wouldn't believe how much a good picture of the product helps sell it. Try to use a picture of the actual machine rather than a product shot from when the machine was released. The difference is obvious to most buyers and having an authentic picture increases the legitimacy of your listing.

PRICE IT

So now you have to make a determination on how much this Mac might be worth. I've seen some wildly crazy listings with sellers asking for overvalued prices and also listings where the seller has no idea what he has in front of him and is asking too little. A fair asking price is an important detail, if only so you don't get those crazy emails from people insulting you for your asking price, but also so you don't get ripped off. There are several tools I use to determine the approximate value of a used Mac. The first is to search eBay's completed auctions listings for similar or identical models. You will need an eBay ID to do this, but it's worth signing up for one if only for this feature. There's a very good chance there will be several if not many completed auctions for an item similar or identical to yours. Scanning the final sale prices on the listings will give you a good idea how much your used Mac is going for and will let you estimate a market-value asking price. While not as accurate, Craigslist listings will give you another indicator of price, demand, and even whether there's a glut of your model being sold. For some reason, a lot of people selling Macs on Craigslist overvalue what they're selling, but it's still a great place to help gauge the market for your used Mac. Other places to look are: UsedMac.ca, MacSwap.org, SecondhandMac.com, and Macofalltrades.com.

SELL IT

Sell it as soon as you can! The longer that Mac sits unused, the lower its price will be when you finally sell it. I've personally made that mistake several times, sitting on a used Mac for months (or even years) before finally getting around to listing it. It's not a pleasant realization that your

“Selling one million videos in less than 20 days strongly suggests there is a market for legal video downloads,” said Steve Jobs, Apple’s CEO. “Our next challenge is to broaden our content offerings, so that customers can enjoy watching more videos on their computers and new iPods.” Music videos are available from artists including Madonna, U2, Eurythmics, Coldplay and Kanye West, and animated shorts are available from Academy Award-winning Pixar Animation Studios. In a landmark deal with ABC Disney, the iTunes Music Store also offers current and past episodes from the two most popular shows on television, “Desperate Housewives” and “Lost” as well as the new drama series “Night Stalker” and the two most popular shows from Disney Channel, “That’s So Raven” and “The Suite Life of Zack and Cody.”

With Apple’s legendary ease of use, pioneering features such as integrated Podcasting support, iMix playlist sharing, seamless integration with iPod® and groundbreaking personal use rights, the iTunes Music Store is the best way for Mac® and PC users to legally discover, purchase and download music online. The iTunes Music Store features more than two million songs from the major music companies and over 1,000 independent record labels, 11,000 audiobooks, gift certificates and exclusive music not found anywhere else online.

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Apple 10-K reveals success as secret sauce

Apple's Mac unit sales have increased 27 per cent while average prices have fallen 7 per cent, Apple's Form 10-K reveals.

The filing confirms success in almost every Apple strategy.

Total Mac net sales increased \$1.4 billion or 27 per cent during 2005 compared to 2004, the company discloses in its regulatory filing. Mac unit sales climbed 1.2 million units or 38 per cent during 2005 compared to 2004.

Apple is also enjoying a 21 per cent year-on-year growth higher education, and 11 per cent growth in the K-12 education markets.

iPod halo confirmed

Net sales of iPods rose \$3.2 billion or 248 per cent during 2005 compared to 2004. Unit sales of iPods totaled 22.5 million in 2005, which represents an increase of 409 per cent from the 4.4 million iPod units sold in 2004, Apple said.

“Apple believes that the success of the iPod is having a positive impact on Mac sales by introducing new customers to Apple's other products,” the company observed.

Net sales of other music related products and services increased \$621 million or 223 per cent during 2005 compared to 2004, it said. These include iTunes Music Store sales.

Retail segment booming

Apple's retail segment continues to boom. The company opened up 38 new brick and mortar retail stores in 2005, expanding operations internationally into Canada, Japan and the UK. Retail sales grew almost double, to \$2.4 billion during 2005. Annualized revenue per store reached \$22.4 million. This gathered income of \$151 million during 2005, compared to \$39 during 2004.

During 2005, net sales in the Americas segment grew 64 per cent or \$2.6 billion compared to 2004, primarily because of significantly-higher iPod sales, the company said.

Apple's European business is also booming. Net sales in the Europe segment grew \$1.3 billion or 71 per cent from 2004. Total Mac unit sales in Europe grew 47 per cent, year-on-year. Desktop computer sales climbed 56 per cent in Europe, Apple said.

It seems Apple is beginning to regain lost ground in Japan, where net sales and Mac unit sales climbed 36 per cent and 8 per cent, respectively, during 2005 compared to 2004. "Japan experienced increased net sales in desktop products, iPod, and other music related products and services", Apple reveals.

Desktop unit sales were up 41 per cent and iPod sales increased by 220 per cent year-on-year in Japan.

R&D, marketing, raised, more stores planned

Apple will spend roughly \$390 million for capital expenditures in fiscal 2006, compared to \$260 million in fiscal 2005. \$210 million of this will be used for expanding its retail segment.

The company also intends raising its research and development (R&D) spending. "To remain competitive, the Company believes that increased investment in R&D and marketing and advertising is necessary to maintain and extend its position in the markets where it competes," it said.

R&D expense amounted to approximately 4 per cent of total net sales during 2005 down from 6 per cent and 8 per cent of total net sales in 2004 and 2003, respectively. "This decrease is due to the significant increase of 68 per cent in total net sales in 2005," Apple said.

All the same, Apple's total R&D expenditures in 2005 totaled \$534 million in 2005, an increase of more than 9 per cent from 2004.

Apple spent \$287 million on advertising in 2005, compared to \$206 million it spent in 2004.

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Thanks for taking the time to read this month's newsletter. Hope you enjoyed it. If you have any comments or suggestions for stories (or would even like to write a story - hint, hint, hint), please send them to me at machelpdesk@comcast.net. Feel free to share this newsletter with a friend. The newsletter archives are located at <http://www.machelpdesk.com/page6a.html>. Y'all come back now, y'hear.

Oh, and one more thing...

The Roses

Bobby was getting cold, sitting out there in his back yard, in the snow. Bobby didn't wear boots; he didn't like them. And anyway, he didn't own any. The thin sneakers he wore had a few holes in them, and they did a poor job of keeping out the cold.

Bobby had been in his backyard for about an hour already and, try as he might, he just could not come up with an idea for his mother's Hanukkah gift.

He shook his head as he thought, "This is useless. Even if I do come up with an idea, I don't have any money to spend."

Ever since his father had passed away three years ago, the family of five had struggled. It wasn't because his mother didn't care or try. There just never seemed to be enough money. She worked nights at the hospital, but the small wage she earned could only be stretched so far.

What the family lacked in money and material things, they more than made up for in love and family unity.

Bobby had three sisters - two older, and one younger. They ran the household in their mother's absence. All three of his sisters had already made beautiful gifts for their mother for Hanukkah.

Somehow, it just didn't seem fair. Here it was, the first night of Hanukkah already, and he had nothing to give.

Wiping a tear from his eye, Bobby kicked the snow, then walked down the street to where the shops and stores were.

It wasn't easy, being six without a father - especially when he needed a man to talk to.

Bobby walked from shop to shop, looking into each decorated window. Everything seemed so beautiful, yet so out of reach.

It was starting to get dark, and Bobby reluctantly turned to walk home - when suddenly his eyes caught the glimmer of the setting sun's rays reflecting off something along the curb. He reached down and discovered a shiny dime. Never before had anyone felt so wealthy as Bobby felt at that moment.

As he held his new found treasure, a warmth spread throughout his entire body, and he walked into the first store he saw.

His excitement quickly turned cold when salesperson after salesperson told him that he could not buy anything with just a dime.

Then he saw a flower shop, and went inside to wait in line. When the shop owner asked if he could help him, Bobby presented the dime and asked if he could buy one flower for his mother's Hanukkah gift.

The shop owner looked at Bobby and his ten cent offering, then put his hand on Bobby's shoulder and said, "You wait here, and I'll see what I can do for you."

As Bobby waited, he looked at the many beautiful flowers and, even though he was a boy, he could see why mothers and girls liked flowers so much.

The sound of the door closing, as the last customer left, jolted Bobby back to reality. All alone in the shop, Bobby began to feel alone and afraid.

Suddenly, the shop owner reappeared and moved to the counter. There, before Bobby's eyes, lay twelve, long stem, red roses, with leaves of green and tiny white flowers all tied together with a big silver bow.

Bobby's heart sank as the owner picked them up and placed them gently into a long white box.

"That'll be ten cents, young man," the shop owner said, reaching out his hand for the dime.

Slowly, Bobby moved his hand to give the man his dime. Could this be true? No one else would give him anything for his dime.

Sensing the boy's reluctance, the shop owner added, "I just happened to have some of these roses on sale for ten cents a dozen. Would you like them?" This time Bobby did not hesitate. And when the man placed the long box into Bobby's hands, he knew it was true.

Walking out the door that the shop owner was holding open for Bobby, he heard the shop keeper say, "Happy Hanukkah, son."

As he returned inside, the shopkeeper's wife walked out.

"Who were you talking to back there? And where are those roses you were fixing?" Staring out the window, he said, "A strange thing happened to me this morning. While I was setting up things to open the shop, I thought I heard a voice telling me to set aside a dozen of my very best roses for a special gift. I wasn't sure at the time whether I had lost my mind or what. But I set them aside anyway."

"Then, just a few minutes ago, a little boy came into the shop and wanted to buy a flower for his mother with a dime. When I looked at him, I saw myself, many years ago. I, too, was a poor boy with nothing to buy my mother for a Hanukkah gift. Back then, a man whom I never knew and never saw again, stopped me on the street and gave me ten dollars. When I saw that little boy tonight, I suddenly realized whose voice I heard this morning."

"So I put together a dozen of my very best roses and 'sold' them for a dime to that young man."

The shop owner and his wife hugged each other tightly. And as they stepped out into the bitter cold air, they somehow didn't feel cold at all.

Happy Holidays to You and Yours

From

Me & Carol

