



MAC FACTS

from

Mac Help Desk

SUPPORT, SALES, TRAINING & SERVICE

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A Message from Dru

Boy howdy, where has this month gone? Or this year, for that matter. Well for me, most of the month has been taken up by matters on the home front. On the 9th wife, Carol, received her 50th birthday present – new eyes! Lasik is awesome. On the 8th Carol’s vision was 20/1200. After her Lasik procedure, her version was/is 20/20! No pain, lotsa gain. If you’re interested in Lasik, speak to Dr. Nathan Lipton at 972-699-0049. He’s the best there is.

Then on the 12th we celebrated Mother’s Day. As we have said in past years, and as was so appropriate this year, Mother’s Day was instituted by Mothers against war. Mothers who were tired of losing their husbands, fathers, and sons.

And on the 26th Carol and I celebrated our 7th wedding anniversary. And they said it would never last. Also on the 26th we celebrated Memorial Day. After 22 years in the Service (4 years Army, 18 years Navy), Memorial Day holds a special place for Carol.

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Been scammed lately? The Nigerian Scam is making the rounds again. Don’t fall for it! Go here for more info - <http://www.scamorama.com/> There’s also been some really nasty stuff going on over at e-Bay. Follow the thread at Macintouch at <http://www.macintouch.com/> for more info.

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It’s (almost) new – As many who read my e-mail missives know, I sold my Blue & White G3 last month. It was replaced with a Quicksilver G4 (733 Mhz) vintage 2001 model. It just goes to prove that you DON’T (in most instances) need the newest, shiniest, fastest, badest Mac on the block to get your work (or play) done.

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Roll your own? Found this nifty program called “Business Card Composer”. Here’s the low-down: Business Card Composer, intended at small business and home users, is tailored to fit their business and hobby related card needs. It allows to use the latest innovations of Mac OS X. Features include image masks, opacity and color graded fill options, shadow effects for text, an automatic background generator and more. Full integration with the OS X system functionality lets using data for cards from Apple Address Book. Go here for more info - <http://www.belightsoft.com/composer/>



A platinum debut shows iTunes has hit potential

by Mike Himowitz

When Apple opened its online iTunes Music Store last month with 200,000 digital music tracks for sale at 99 cents each, recording company executives expected to sell a million songs in its first month. Instead, customers downloaded a million tunes in the first week. And another million the second week!

That's an astounding figure, considering that Macs with the latest version of Apple's operating system - the only computers that can access the store - account for less than 1 percent of the nation's PCs.

If I owned stock in a record company, I'd look at those numbers and wonder why the bozos at the top have spent so much energy over the past three years fighting online music instead of jumping in to sell it in a format that millions prefer.

Rather than spending millions on lawsuits against online file-trading services and alienating potential customers as CD sales declined, the industry could have been tapping into a huge cash pipeline - with no distribution costs to speak of.

Is Apple's iStore, with an inventory licensed by five major record companies, a real sign of peace between the industry and its consumers?

It certainly puts fewer restrictions on copying than any of the current, licensed online services, such as Pressplay, Listen.com and Musicnet. Songs from the Apple store can be transferred to the company's iPod players, or burned onto CDs, and played on up to three Macs. And unlike existing online services, Apple doesn't charge a monthly subscription fee.

In fact, the arrangement is a common-sense attempt to deliver portable music at a reasonable cost - with a few limits on rampant, illegal copying. Buyers are responding.

Still, the iStore is obviously an experiment. Although impressive for a start-up, Apple's digital catalog has major holes. In addition to its tiny market penetration, Apple distributes its songs in a new format (called AAC that was developed by Dolby Laboratories) that existing music players, PC-based or portable, can't handle. Mac users must be running OS X and download a new version of the Apple's iTunes software to use the service.

So even within the relatively small Mac world, the audience is extremely limited - which may be why the recording industry was willing to go along with the scheme. It's a relatively risk-free way to see whether customers are willing to buy high-quality versions of songs for a buck, instead of downloading pirated copies free with online file-trading software

Without offering details, Apple has promised to extend the service to Windows PC users by year's end. But it's doubtful Apple will make many converts if it requires them to give up their current software and portable music players. That will be the real test of the model. *(Of course over half of the 700,000 iPods already sold have been the Windows version of what has been widely regarded*

as the 'best MP3 player on the market.' And Apple sold an additional 110,000 iPods on the days following the introduction of the new iPod models – Ed)

Meanwhile, the recording industry is at a critical juncture in its legal and propaganda war against illegal online file trading. Last month a federal judge in Los Angeles ruled that two providers of online file-trading software, Grokster and Streamcast Networks, aren't liable for copyright infringement by their users

U.S. District Judge Stephen Wilson said the companies' peer-to-peer file trading model, which allows users to share the contents of their hard drives over the Internet, is not unlawful because it can also be used to share non-copyrighted material.

The ruling means that the recording industry can't stop illegal file trading by attacking the middleman. That's how it killed the popular Napster service, which used a slightly different system that actively provided users with directories of available songs.

So the industry's main recourse is prosecuting individual offenders - who number in the millions. Last month, it won a major legal victory when a federal judge in Washington ruled that Verizon's Internet service must hand over the names of two subscribers suspected of illegal online file trading. (Verizon has appealed the ruling)

Recording interests also have been aggressively pursuing piracy on college campuses, threatening universities and individual students alike. Last month the Recording Industry Association of America announced a settlement with four students at different campuses who agreed to pay between \$12,000 and \$17,500 each for their illegal file trading.

Unfortunately, suing your potential customers isn't a recipe for long-term prosperity. The record labels will ultimately lose a long-term war to sustain a business model that makes no sense in the digital age.

Technically, recorded music has become separated from its medium. It exists as streams of ones and zeros. We no longer need discs or tapes to deliver or play it - if we want them, we can make them ourselves.

Likewise, the industry's traditional distribution system - wholesalers and retail music outlets - is becoming irrelevant for millions of customers. The system was propped over the years through price fixing and other suspect business arrangements that actually increased the price of CDs while the cost of other digital entertainment declined. Small wonder that customers tired of being charged \$18 for an album with three decent tracks (and eight or nine 'filler' tracks) have no qualms about pirating.

And that brings us to another revolution in the making. One of the advantages of digital music is that we can listen to the songs we really want to hear by creating our own playlists or custom CDs. Want to mix Celine and Sisqo? We're no longer beholden to the album format. That's a good thing because few artists can come up with 10 or 12 good songs every year.

I don't mean to imply that albums will disappear - or should. In fact, Apple said half its early sales were complete albums. But selling music as singles provides a choice for both artists and consumers.

So, for a lot of reasons, I hope Apple's iStore succeeds and makes the transition to the Windows market. If enough customers are willing to pay a reasonable price for music without onerous restrictions, the record companies and artists stand to make money and consumers will get something they've wanted all along

NEWSLINE

Apple Introduces New iPods

Holds up to 7,500 Songs, Yet Lighter than Two CDs



Apple introduced its third generation iPods, which hold up to 7,500 songs in a stunning enclosure that is lighter and thinner than two CDs. The new ultra-portable iPods feature completely solid-state “no moving parts” navigation wheel and buttons; an elegant new dock with audio out for fast and easy connection to your computer or stereo; an “On-The-Go” playlist so users can build a playlist right on their iPod™; a customizable main menu so users can promote the features they use most often to their top level menu; and Apple’s unique, patent pending Auto-Sync for automatically syncing your computer’s music library with iPod. The new ultra-portable iPods are available in three models: a 10GB model for just \$299 (US), a 15GB model for \$399 (US) and a 30GB model for \$499 (US).

“The competition hasn’t even caught up with our first generation iPod, and we’re introducing our third generation,” said Steve Jobs, Apple’s CEO. “With the new iTunes Music Store, you can now buy music online and transfer it right onto your iPod for listening wherever you want.”

The new 15GB and 30GB models come with an elegant dock for effortless connecting to a Mac® or Windows PC. The dock provides a stylish home base for the iPod and includes an audio line out for easy connection to a home stereo or powered speakers, making it easy to sync, charge and go. iPod plays more than eight hours of continuous music and recharges automatically whenever iPod is in the dock or connected to a Mac or Windows PC.

iPod is the only portable music player with Apple’s patent pending Auto-Sync, an innovative feature that automatically downloads an entire digital music library into iPod and keeps it up-to-date whenever the iPod is plugged into a Mac or Windows PC. With Apple’s new fast disk mode switching, iPod switches from Auto-Sync mode to music-player mode faster than ever before.

Building on the success of the original touch wheel, the new iPod is designed with a solid-state “no moving parts” navigation wheel and all touch buttons for enhanced sensitivity and precision over mechanical buttons. The buttons are backlit for easy operation in low light and continue to enable easy, one-handed operation. In addition to MP3, iPod now supports the industry-standard AAC audio format, providing higher quality sound in the same disk space. Whether at the gym, at work, in the car or at the airport, iPod puts 7,500 songs in your pocket—the equivalent of three weeks of continuous music without repeating a single song.

iPod features new customization options including the ability to move frequently used menu items to the main menu. Users also have the power to create an “On-The-Go” playlist and rate their music collection directly on their iPod, offering a new level of control whenever they’re away from their computer.

Pricing & Availability

The new iPod for Mac and Windows PCs are available now, for a suggested retail price of \$299 (US) for the 10GB iPod, \$399 (US) for the 15GB iPod, and \$499 (US) for the 30GB iPod through the Apple Store® (www.apple.com), Apple's retail stores and Apple Authorized Resellers. Laser engraving is available for \$19 (US) and can include two lines of text with up to 27 characters per line. The new iPod will also support high-speed syncing via USB 2.0 with Windows PCs starting in June via a free software download. A separate USB 2.0 cable will be available in June for \$19 (US).

All iPod models include earbud headphones, an Apple iPod power adapter, a FireWire® cable and a 4-pin-to-6-pin iPod FireWire adapter. 15GB and 30GB iPod models also include the iPod Dock, carrying case and wired remote; these optional accessories can be ordered for 10GB iPod models through the Apple Store. iPod requires a Mac with FireWire port, Mac® OS X version 10.1.5 or later (Mac OS X v10.2 or later recommended) or a Windows PC with FireWire or USB 2.0 port, or Windows-certified FireWire or USB 2.0 card, Windows Me, Windows 2000, or Windows XP Home or Professional. A CD containing iTunes®* for Mac OS X and MUSICMATCH Jukebox Plus 7.5 software is included with iPod purchases.

*Some iPod features require a Mac and iTunes.

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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), please send them to me at machelpdesk@attbi.com. 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!