



MAC FACTS

from

Mac Help Desk

SUPPORT, SALES, TRAINING & SERVICE

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🍏 Apple Solution Experts 🍏

Volume 10, Number 10

October 2000

A Message from Dru

Q: Why don't witches have babies? A: Because their husbands have hollow weenies! Have a happy and safe All's Hollow Eve (Halloween).



I've had a number of e-mails recently from people who note that they've contacted me by phone during the day and that I don't return their calls that day. So I guess it's time, once again, to explain our office situation. Mac Help Desk does not have a secretary. We have an electronic answering machine. During the day I'm out in the field with y'all and don't have an opportunity to call in and check the phone. Phone messages are generally 'picked-up' the following morning. If you need me ASAP, page me! 214-249-9543. Enter your area code and phone number at the tone and I'll call you back ASAP (same day).



New members to the Mac Help Desk family: Virginia McAlester, This is the West.com, Kaye Patton, Vicki Morgan, Carol Long, Gus Hoff, Kris Henrickson (from Des Moines, WA!), Melinda Faranetta, Arthur Weston, Linteriors, James Mason, Bonnie Power, Jon Coe, and Zimmerman, Avelrad, et.al (from Houston). Glad you're all here!



We're good, but... We recently 'lost' a longtime client/friend because of a stupid mistake. This client, a writer, used, for many years, an LCIII and an original LaserWriter printer. The LCIII and the printer were connected through the original AppleTalk connectors. (If you've never seen one of these they look like the connector on the Apple Desktop Bus keyboard). When asked for my advise about a new Mac I recommended a iMac (with an external floppy) and a new Epson 740 inkjet printer. The client did, indeed, purchase the iMac (not from me though). But he also purchased a Okidata LaserPrinter, vintage 1992(!) that used the same connector as the Apple LaserWriter (AppleTalk connectors). Unfortunately there's no way to hook up an iMac to an AppleTalk connector. After an exhaustive, and unsuccessful, search that took several weeks (and every vendor I could think of), I received a 'nastygram' from the client accusing me of not doing my job. "Perhaps", I said, "but I didn't purchase a printer that uses a connector that's eight years out of date, either". The moral here is if you don't want my advice or recommendations, don't ask me for them. But even if you decide not to take my advice and the decision you make is an incorrect one, I will still go a long way to try to correct it. Most times we're successful in rectifying these situations.



DON'T PANIC!

These are certainly paranoid times in America....and, indeed, throughout the world. American warships are being attacked by unknown parties, with many lives lost; the Middle East is flaring into turmoil and ultimately violence, whose neither end nor full extent have yet been seen. These events in turn have seen Apple's stock swept along with massive tides in the markets brought on by fears that these problems will flare further; its own recent "adjustment" a heart attack to many who hold it.

Losses in stock market and dangers to a corporation's bottom line are hardly comparable to out-of-control violence and lives lost. Regardless, many Mac fans and Apple investors are grappling with The Fear; thankfully, from Cupertino, Austin, Somerset, New York, L.A., and an increasingly motley list of locales have come more reasons to see a fair-weather trend on Apple's side in the near future.

For one, Mac OS X is coming along nicely now. Apple has been planning the Public Beta for some time, and has made excellent use of the massive amount of feedback it is getting. A large number of developers who had been assigned to work on classic Mac OS projects have now been transferred to OS X projects. Mac OS 9.1 is in the late final candidate stage, although in a significantly trimmed form -- several of the original projects to alter OS9 have been scrapped in the interests of expedience. As this change has helped Apple catch up with its hopes to put every ounce of oomph behind the experience of Mac OS X 1.0 and still delivering before the term "early 2001" needs to be stretched too thin.

QuickTime 5, although still not quite ready for prime time, is similarly ramping up. Apple still has more ground to cover, but QT5 should have most Mac users a comfortable step up on the way soon.

Motorola is still slowly chipping away at its 500MHz-1GHz V'Ger "G4e" processor, which will likely ship well in advance of the 800MHz-1.2GHz+ Silicon-On-Insulator (SOI) accelerated Apollo cousin that was described by Moto engineers at a conference last week. So far most V'Gers that run at all are running in the general vicinity of 500MHz, but yields are still not good enough to make a cost-effective or reliable chip. Since V'Ger adds new AltiVec, FPU, and Integer units but deepens the command pipelines (a tactic regularly used in the x86 world to trade performance per clock cycle for more total clock cycles), performance is boosted over PowerPC 7400 (current use) and 7410 (as-yet unused low-power version for portable and embedded use) original G4s at the same clock rates, but only by 15-30% overall (without L3 cache; L3 caches up to 2MB may accelerate the chip a further 10-15%). The good news here is that although the V'Ger will not be dramatically faster at the same clock rate on non-AltiVec operations, it will have legs -- Motorola hopes to use the chip's deeper pipelines to enable them to rapidly scale the clock rate upward, moving from 550-700MHz somewhere in the vicinity of December or January to 933MHz by April.

Expect changes to Apple's product lines in the months ahead as well -- the G4 Cube will gradually be moved away from leaning on its "sex appeal" and more toward value for the user who already has a desirable display but wants the kind of price/performance currently only available to iMac

Apple representatives were not available for comment about the move, apparently designed, like the rebate program, to boost hardware sales. But dealers said they welcomed it.

"We were disappointed when we couldn't originally sell the 500MHz Cube," said Dru Richman, CEO of Mac Help Desk in Dallas, Texas. "Customers would call or e-mail us and say they liked the Cube, and they'd say, 'I'll take the 500MHz model.'"

Richman, echoing comments by other dealers, said Apple's policy of offering some products exclusively through the Apple Store represents an unfair competitive advantage. "All we really ask is level playing field, which is pretty hard when we can't obtain certain products," he said.

Richman, while welcoming the opportunity to obtain new Apple products for his clients, noted a downside: "Right now, because of the glut of inventory, many dealers are so stocked up on everything," he said. "It almost contributes to the problem rather than helping."

Apple, during its earnings announcement on Wednesday, revealed that dealers and distributors are carrying eight weeks' worth of inventory, three weeks more than usual. CEO Steve Jobs said the company plans to reduce inventory to normal levels by the end of the year rather than doing so gradually over several quarters. As a result, he said that Apple expected to report one more "disappointing financial quarter" before getting "back on track" next year.



Mac Help Desk Continues Rebates

Mac Help Desk, Richardson, TX, recently announced rebates of up to \$50 per Mac on all new Mac equipment purchased through Mac Help Desk. For more information go to the Mac Help Desk web page at: <http://www.machelpdesk.com/specialdiscount.html>



Thanks for taking the time to read our newsletter. Feel free to 'pass it along'. Any comments would be greatly appreciated.