



BRMUG

Baton Rouge Macintosh User Group

News and Views

October 2003

BRMUG Information

Member Meetings

Regular meetings are held the third Thursday evening of each month at BlueBonnet Library at 6:30 P.M.

Planning Meetings

The Thursday after the regular member meeting the planning meeting is held at 6:15 at Calendars on Perkins near Essen.

About BRMUG

For more information call the User Group President, Isaac Traxler, 225-926-1552 or send e-mail to info@brmug.org or check our web page at <http://www.brmug.org/>

BRMUG Volunteers

Isaac Traxler president@brmug.org
 Glenn Matherne vp@brmug.org
 Don Ballard treasurer@brmug.org
 Don Ballard sec@brmug.org
 Richard Johnson m1@brmug.org
 Jeff Sheldon m2@brmug.org
 Contact anyone above if you have suggestions for BRMUG.

After the Meeting

Join us at Brewbachers on Bluebonnet after the BRMUG meeting: fun, food, open format. Get to know each other.

Newsletter Articles

Please submit newsletter articles to newsletter@brmug.org. Articles are printed on a space available basis. Submissions are welcome!

The October meeting will be held at the **CompUSA** on **October 16th**, the 3rd Thursday of the month, at 6:30 P.M. This month's presentation will be a **Demonstration of Apple Products** at CompUSA. This will be a chance for you to see various Apple products up close -- in particular the new G5! We will meet in one of the training rooms behind the Macintosh area at CompUSA on Bluebonnet. Members and guests are welcome. After the meeting, we will have our normal Social Hour at Brewbachers. If you need help getting there (<http://www.brmug.org/about-brmug.html>).

Meeting is at CompUSA on Bluebonnet!
 Visit <http://www.brmug.org/next-meeting.html> for more information.

September Meeting Review

Don and I shared some of our favorite features of Mac OS X. Some were very common and a few were not well known. The various examples drew numerous questions from the audience from details about cutting and pasting to alternate booting options. I think we all learned a lot -- I know I did.

AAPL

Another great month! Apple just set another 52-week high (second time in several months). AAPL peaked at \$23.81 on Friday and closed at \$23.68 (just \$0.13 off the 52-week high!). This ended a week of steady growth from Monday's open of \$21.75. The five day chart looks like a stock broker's dream. The rise is probably related to Apple catching up on backorders, the rumor of iTunes/iTunes Music store for Windows being announced soon, and the announcement of Panther. I would expect the price to go up a little more and then drop to the \$23.00 vicinity.

Mac OS X 10.2.8 Release

Apple released Mac OS X 10.2.8 this month. Then removed it. And then finally re-released it again. This update to Jaguar has been long rumored. Apple had been working on a number of fixes and updates to Jaguar that were being bundled into the 10.2.8 release. And then SSH issues were announced. Apple quickly added

updates to SSH and released 10.2.8. Unfortunately, the update broke the network on a number of systems. As the reports surfaced, Apple pulled the 10.2.8 update. It took Apple almost two weeks to re-release 10.2.8. It is now available and seems to be have no major problems. While I applaud Apple for pulling the update until it was correct, critical updates to tools like SSH cannot take "weeks" to release. The unix community expects fixes within 24 hours and gets very upset if they take over a week. Since SSH is crucial file transfer and remote login, it is necessary that it be correct, current, and without known exploit. Hopefully, Apple will look at this and start releasing security fixes quickly and without regard

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to normal bug fixes and enhancements. If not, the Macintosh world could become as unpleasant a world to live in as the current Windows world.

Panther Released

Apple has officially announced the Panther (Mac OS X 10.3) will start shipping on October 24th. The list price is the familiar \$129. If you purchased a new G5, you are eligible for the \$19.95 upgrade fee (plus tax). If you have bought a new system (other than a G5) since October 8, you are eligible for the \$19.95 update. Used or demo systems do not entitle you to the upgrade price. Date is determined by date order was placed, not date the order shipped.

Apple still offers the Apple Family Plan. For \$199 you get one copy of Mac OS X 10.3 and five total licenses. The licenses are restricted to use within a single household for non-commercial purposes. Schools are not eligible for this discount. It does not apply to anyone living outside the residence.

Panther is also available via educational discount for \$69 plus tax. Louisiana State Employees can purchase Panther for \$64.50 plus tax via the state Employee Purchase Program (<http://www.state.la.us/osp/EPP/EPP.htm>).

My copy is on order. Wonder what the count of pre-orders will be?

Virginia Tech Supercluster

The Virginia Tech Supercluster (http://computing.vt.edu/research_computing/terascale/) of 1100 dual processor 2 GHz G5s with 4 GB of memory each has made progress. The environment is completely installed and up and running. They are currently still running benchmarks to send a Linpack rating to the Top 500 list (<http://www.top500.org/>). Their ranking could easily fall in the top 5 -- which would be fantastic based on price. By the way, the cluster will run Mac OS X, not Linux as originally rumored.

iCal 1.5.1, iSync 1.2.1 Released

Apple has released a new faster version of iCal. The new iCal includes an infoDrawer (appointments at a glance), improved alarm features, and better time zone support. You will also need the new version of iSync for synchronizing. A number of users had problems publishing (via WebDav) their calendars after upgrading. This appears related to bad preferences. Check out the Macintosh

archives (<http://macintouch.com>) for details.

Multiple Monitors

As many of you know, I am hooked on multiple displays. I find it as good for productivity as extra memory. It seems some other people thought this might be true. The University of Utah did a study and concluded that multiple monitors do improve productivity. For more details, go to Slashdot (<http://slashdot.org>) and search for "multiple monitors increase productivity" and then follow the link.

Ultimate Display?

When I started to write this, I had a single solution in mind. Now two different places have popped up with displays that go beyond dreaming.

The first place is <http://www.go-l.com>. They sell three and four LCD panel systems. You have to see the web site to believe what they have. Displays with three 15" LCDs start at under \$1500. Displays with four 23" displays are \$17,500. You have to go look at these displays. Amazing.

And if that is not enough, then check out 9x Media (<http://www.9xmedia.com/Pages/Products.html>). They have whatever you want. Many prices are posted. Need a video wall? Want 2 rows of 5 displays each? Check out 9x Media (after robbing multiple banks or becoming a top-level drug lord). Simply unbelievable.

DealRam

dealram.com has recently gotten a facelift. If you have not been there recently, you should take a quick look. It still provides a list of the best known prices for just about any kind of RAM. It also includes Compact Flash, Smart Media, MultiMedia Cards, Secure Digital Cards, Memory Stick, Memory Stick Pro, Microdrive, xD and USB Drives. As always, the prices are quoted including shipping.

Motorola

Could Motorola finally be waking up? Chris Galvin has resigned as CEO of Motorola. They are now planning to spin the Semiconductor Product Sector (SPS) off. In other words, the part of Motorola that designs and makes the various versions of the PowerPC will now be a separate company. If the management of the new group is wise, this could be a very good thing. In spite of Apple's new partnership

with IBM, Motorola still provides all the chips for the Xserve, the iMacs, eMacs, and the PowerBooks. I expect the Xserve to switch to the G5 as soon as possible. The iMac, eMac and PowerBook market is still up for grabs. The top end of the PowerBook line will eventually go G5, but if better G4s are available, they might remain in the PowerBook (some models). The iMac and eMac are also viable future areas that SPS could provide chips to. The iBook is slated to stay on IBM's new G3 chips but could switch to the G4 if SPS has the right chip at the right price. Only time will tell if SPS will work out or if it will turn out to be little to late.

Windows iTunes/iTunes Store

Rumor has it that the Windows version of iTunes will ship on October 16th. Apple has scheduled a press event at the Moscone Center in San Francisco. Apple is saying that this will be the biggest music announcement of the year. Have you also noticed the new iPod ads that are running on TV. I think that Apple really expects to increase iPod sales as a result of the Windows iTunes/iTunes Store announcement.

New Look for VersionTracker

VersionTracker is trying out a new look. Go to their site (www.versiontracker.com) and click on Public Beta on the top right. They have changed the look and feel of this page several times. Try it out and send them feedback. It does seem to load a little faster than the current page.



BRMUG Mailing Address
 5261 Highland Road #202
 Baton Rouge, LA 70808

For more information call the User Group President, Isaac Traxler: (225) 926-1552
 e-mail: info@brmug.org
 web: <http://www.brmug.org/>

Web Site of the Month

I have written about Google in the past. But it has been a while and a lot has changed. I still think Google (<http://www.google.com>) is the best search engine out there. But they have gone a lot farther than mere search engine.

If you click on Services & Tools on the Google site you will see a rather large list of additional services. If you choose Google Labs from here, you will see the newest things they are working on. Here are some of the highlights from these two lists:

labs.google.com/location (Google Search by Location) - You enter a normal search but you also provide a location (such as zip code). Google returns hits that appear to be in that area. Try searching for macintosh in the Baton Rouge area.

www.google.com/mac - Macintosh specific searching

news.google.com - Generated page of current news stories from all over the Internet. Includes links to the stories and pictures. Remember that the page is completely computer generated from searchin the Internet.

froogle.google.com - Search for best price and availability of products (not perfect yet, but improving).

catalogs.google.com - Find just about any kind of catalog.

groups.google.com - Search news groups.

images.google.com - Search for various images from the Internet.

www.google.com/options/universities.html - Listing of universities.

directory.google.com - Google web directory (kind of like Yahoos directory)

labs.google.com/glossary - Find definitions for words and phrases.

labs.google.com/sets - Provide a few examples of something and let Google provide more examples. Really neat! Try plus, se, and classic and then ask for small set. Amazing.

labs.google.com/gviewer.html (Google Viewer) - This search will provide a fully controllable scrolling web page of results. Just try it.

www.google.com/newsalerts - Get e-mail when news on requested topic occurs.

While the above list does include most of the search features available from Google, there are still more. Check out

Future Meeting Calendar

October 16, 2003..... Apple Product Demo CompUSA

November 20, 2003..... Annual Game Meeting John Quebedeaux Library

December 18, 2003 Christmas Party Everyone Library

Ideas for future meetings are welcome and desired!

their web site to explore.

Google does have some other important capabilities. If you choose Advanced Search from the main Google page (to the right of the area you type your search into), you will be provided with a web page that will give you enormous power to perform very specific searches.

The Preferences link (also on the right) allows you to specify several defaults that will apply to future searches. The normal Google search returns the usual 10 responses. You can change this to up to 100 on the preferences page (I like 50). You can also limit which responses you get by language. For instance, you can get English only or choose any languages you know. Google will then return matches to your searches that are in the specified languages.

Speaking of languages, the Language Tools link allows you to translate from one language to another. You can translate a piece of text you paste in or you can point it at a web page. While this is a mechanical translation, it is good enough to get the gist of an article (most

of the time).

By the way, Google learns. One of the more interesting aspects of Google is that it does adjust the responses based on previous searches. In a sense, you can train Google to respond the way you want it to. While I have not figured out how to properly train Google, I have experienced getting different results from coworkers when hunting for technical information. Kind of interesting.

Have you every performed a search, clicked on the hit and then discovered the page was gone or changed? Google has the answer for this also. If you notice, almost every search entry has Cached link. This is a copy of that page at the time Google indexed it. Use this to look at page that are now gone. Also notice the Similar Pages link. Many times I find this useful when I can't figure out just the right way to specify a search.

I find Google phenomenal. It is packed with features and capabilities. Google is much more than a simple search engine. take some time and go visit it.

by Isaac Traxler

Don't forget:

We meet at CompUSA this month!

BRMUG Next Year

This year is almost over now. It is time to start looking to next year. Where do you want us to go next year? What meeting topics would you like to see us do? Do you have any ideas or suggestions?

The week after each meeting, the officers get together and have a planning meeting. The agenda is usually pretty similar: review the previous meeting, review events that have happened that pertain to the Macintosh, determine next month's meeting topic, and brainstorm.

When we review the previous meeting, we thank the presenter (who is usually one of the officers). We discuss what was done in the meeting that was really good

as well as what we can improve upon. We pay special attention to any comments or questions from the audience. We try to use this feedback to help us decide where we should be going. Here are some of the ideas for meetings that we have thought about:

- AppleWorks Introduction
- Panther Features
- Introduction to InDesign
- Overview of iMovie
- Mac OS X Customization

We would like to do more in the graphics and publishing area. If there is anyone out there wo would like to do a presentation, please let us know. If you want a full hour or just a few minutes, let us know. We want to do what you want and need. Thank you.

