



# BRMUG

Baton Rouge Macintosh User Group

News and Views

## November 2004

### 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](mailto:info@brmug.org) or check our web page at <http://www.brmug.org/>

#### BRMUG Volunteers

Isaac Traxler [president@brmug.org](mailto:president@brmug.org)  
Glenn Matherne [vp@brmug.org](mailto:vp@brmug.org)  
Don Ballard [treasurer@brmug.org](mailto:treasurer@brmug.org)  
Don Ballard [sec@brmug.org](mailto:sec@brmug.org)  
Richard Johnson [m1@brmug.org](mailto:m1@brmug.org)  
Jeff Sheldon [m2@brmug.org](mailto: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](mailto:newsletter@brmug.org). Articles are printed on a space available basis. Submissions are welcome!

The November meeting will be held at the **Bluebonnet Library** on **November 18<sup>th</sup>**, the 3rd Thursday of the month, at 6:30 P.M. This month will be a little different. We will meet at the **CompUSA Store** on Bluebonnet. Head for the back, right corner (where the Mac stuff is). Mike Luchsinger (Apple's man at CompUSA) will be our host this month (We will probably meet in one of the training rooms directly behind the Macintosh section). Mike will show off the new **iMac G5**. Along with the new iMac, he will give us a short overview of GarageBand. This is an excellent opportunity for the BRMUG members to meet and talk with Mike. Baton Rouge is fortunate to have a full-time Apple employee working at CompUSA to assist Macintosh users. And Mike is an excellent ambassador for Apple, the Macintosh and CompUSA. Please come on out and get to know him better You might want to arrive a little early and peruse the store -- lots of potential Christmas gifts to be found. 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.

#### October Meeting

We finally got to have the iDVD meeting that we were planning. It turned out that even though iDVD is a relatively simple product with a very obvious task, it makes for a full meeting. I showed off a DVD I made of pictures and movies from the canoeing trip where I broke my leg. I tries to show the ease of creating a DVD by dynamically adding menu items, changing backgrounds and replacing pictures. iDVD really is easy to use but it can get a little confusing bouncing from iDVD to iMovie to iPhoto to iTunes as you collect the makings of your DVD. I hope you enjoyed the meeting. While it was some work, I really enjoyed showing off iDVD and I am very happy to have this canoe trip saved for posterity.

#### AAPL

This last month has been pretty god for Apple. I know I was afraid the price was going to go back down. Instead, Apple has enjoyed a slow steady increase for most of the month with the price varying between \$50 and \$55 a share. While this modest increase does not approach the success of last month, it was very

welcome. It is not unusual for a price spike to be followed immediately by an equal (or even larger) price dip. Not only did Apple retain its gains of last month, it achieved about a 10% growth (almost \$50 to almost \$55). Stock jumps of 10% in a month or very rare.

Apple is riding a 5 year high for its stock price with a net value of over \$21 billion. I can remember earlier this year when the stock was below \$20 and their net worth was less than \$8 billion. I remember being seriously concerned about the danger of Apple being taken over just for their cash on hand (just under \$5 billion). Times have certainly changed. Lets hope that Apple can keep up the growth that they have enjoyed this year. Apple has seen its stock value go up 275% this

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year -- don't we all wish we had bet on Apple this time last year?

### *iPod U2 and iPod photo*

Apple knows the iPod is a winner (sold over 2 million last quarter). Like any good business they are looking for new ways to leverage the iPod. And so was born the iPod Mini. Now we have the iPod U2 and the iPod Photo. The iPod U2 is just a 20 GB iPod for \$350. But it does have some unique attributes: black front, red Apple click wheel, signatures of the band members on the back and a \$50 off coupon for buying the complete U2 digital collection. While this may not be the best deal on the market, every die-hard U2 fan wants one. Obviously, this could be the beginning of an entire new line of specialty iPods.

Apple also released the iPod Photo. While people have been talking about this potential product for a long time, Apple just sort of slipped it out instead of making a huge deal about it -- new product introduction without a huge pre-announcement blitz?! What will Jobs and Apple think of next?

Anyway, the iPod photo is the next evolutionary step for the iPod. It comes with a 40 GB hard drive (\$499) or a 60 GB hard drive (\$599). It includes a 65,536 color LCD with 220x176 pixel resolution. New functionality via iTunes turns this iPod into a first class picture viewer along with the best portable music player there is. It also includes composite and S-video output so that you can play slideshows of pictures directly from the iPod photo. When used with a computer, it is a hard drive with complete access to all pictures stored on it. The built LCD, while limited, is perfect for previewing pictures and showing off the latest pictures of the grandchildren. All Apple needs to do is fix the iPod photo so that I can load pictures directly from my camera/media into the iPod without needing a computer. Suddenly the iPod becomes the answer to every digital camera users prayer while on vacation (Apple does resell Belkins \$100 option to read media cards. While it is functional, it lacks the pizzazz of the iPod. I just wish Apple would design their own.). Did I mention that you still get earbuds and that the iPod photo retains all of the previous iPod functionality? It does!

### *iMac G5 and Repairs*

One of the big changes with the release of the new iMac G5 has been Apple's approach to its inside. Previous iMacs

have been off limits for customers. Apple designed all previous models of the iMac in such a way that many users were uncomfortable opening the machine.

The new iMac G5 changes everything. Apple is inviting the customer to take a hands on approach to maintaining their machine. Here a quote from a recent *Wired* article (<http://www.wired.com/news/technology/0,1282,65510,00.html>):

***With the new iMac G5, Apple Computer has outsourced its warranty repair operation -- to its customers.***

***The iMac G5 is completely user serviceable. With its simplified, modular interior, the machine was designed to make it easy for consumers to perform their own repairs.***

***If something goes wrong, Apple dispatches a spare part, and the owner performs the do-it-yourself repair, from swapping out a faulty hard drive to installing a new flat screen.***

***The new iMac is perhaps the most user-serviceable machine on the market. But Apple is not alone in outsourcing repairs to customers.***

My apologies for quoting so much text. But this is a really critical change in Apple's treatment of the iMac and its iMac customers. The last several years have brought reduced prices on standardized peripherals as volume has increased. Unfortunately, reduced reliability has also hitched a ride all too often. Because of the limited ability for consumers to easily repair previous iMac models, the iMac was not taken very seriously and a used iMac was a very uncertain quantity. Apple's new approach could make the new iMac much more desirable as it ages along with making it easier and less expensive to repair and upgrade. All of these are good for the consumer in the long run. Of course, it may also raise the resell price some.

### *Mac OS X 1.0.3.6 Release*

Tiger may not be here yet, but Apple is not just letting Panther languish -- it has seen steady bug fix/performance enhancement releases since the beginning of the summer. If Apple continues to improve Panther at this rate, I might be willing to wait quite a while before I see Tiger.

This update focuses on improving network sharing performance, updates

for several applications (Safari, DVD Player, Calculator, ...), improved video, FireWire and USB support along with security updates. I can say that iTunes is not skipping as I type now (One of the oddities was that iTunes worked without flaw on my dual 450 MHz G4 while using InDesign to layout the newsletter but that my "new" dual 2 GHz G5 frequently suffered dropout while playing iTunes and bouncing between InDesign and Safari. Since the update and reboot this morning, I have not heard any skips. Performance seems less jerky). I agree with Apple on recommending this update for all Panther users.

### *Firefox 1.0 Released*

If you discover a site that Safari is not happy with or you yearn for the old, early days of Netscape, you might want to try Firefox. As many of you know, Mozilla is the current do-it-all browser from the mozilla project that was founded when Netscape released the source code to Netscape. While Mozilla is an excellent product, it tends to be a bit bloated (with mail client, news reader, web browser, html composer, ...). If you remember, Netscape Communicator had a light-weight sibling called Navigator that was only a browser. Firefox is the browser only version of Mozilla. Firefox has a lot in common with Mozilla, but at the same time has its own personality and features.

I highly recommend it as a fast, stable, tabbed browser that is loaded with features. It lacks some of the glitz of Safari, but it is more likely to work with sites aimed at Netscape than Safari. It does



**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](mailto:info@brmug.org)  
 web: <http://www.brmug.org/>

support disabling animated GIFs. It also supports header/footers on printed pages (so that printouts of web sites include titles, page numbers and URIs. I wonder when Safari will get these features?

Anyway, FireFox grew up. The 1.0 release is officially out. Go get it and give it a try. You maybe surprised and how good it is.

### Apple Updates

Apple's automated update service is nice. It is really great to have my machine constantly look for new updates automatically. But sometimes it is not always convenient to sit and wait for my machine to update. And if you have multiple machines, it seems like you should be able to download the updates once and then apply them to multiple machines.

When I start thinking like that I turn to Apples update web site to download the latest updates (<http://www.apple.com/support/>).

From here you can download just about all of the updates Apple has released for Mac OS X, iTunes or any other Apple product. You can then dump them to a CD/DVD or put them on a server on your LAN to update all of your Macintoshes.

This can be important for many reasons. It is priceless if you need to update a machine that does not have Internet access. It can be equally important for machines that have limited or slow Internet access. Large updates (and groups of updates) can be downloaded where bandwidth is high, burned to a CD/DVD and then applied to machines limited to dial-up Internet access. Suddenly updates that would have taken hours can be done in a few minutes.

Another important advantage exists.. If you download the updates and archive them on CD/DVDs you will have them for the future. Why? What if you need to rebuild your machine from scratch (need or choice)? What if you get a "new" hand-me down machine? Pull out the disks and while later you are done without waiting on the Internet for hours. Also a big plus if you happen to lose access to Apple's site (network problems, ...).

For me, it helps me feel a little better about the price tag of Panther (and the upcoming Tiger purchase). \$129 for a CD or 3 seems awful steep. But when I look back over the collection of updates it includes, I begin to appreciate where the money goes. That \$129 paid to develop Panther. It also helped pay for each of the updates I have received. From that perspective, the price seems pretty good. And at the price of cd media, the cost of a dozen CDs is less than \$2. A real cheap price for the insurance.

by Isaac Traxler

2004 Meeting Calendar			
January 15	Annual Game Review	John Quebedeaux	Bluebonnet Library
February 19	iTunes, iTMS, and Music	Isaac Traxler	Bluebonnet Library
March 18	Adobe Illustrator	Isaac Traxler	Bluebonnet Library
April 15	Places You Should Know About	Don Ballard, Isaac Traxler	Bluebonnet Library
May 20	Introduction to iMovie	Isaac Traxler	Bluebonnet Library
June 17	iCal/AddressBook	Isaac Traxler	Bluebonnet Library
July 15	Networking Macs	Isaac Traxler	Bluebonnet Library
August 19	Intro to AppleScript	Don Ballard	Bluebonnet Library
September 16	Cancelled (hurricane)	N/A	Bluebonnet Library
October 21	Introduction to iDVD	Isaac Traxler	Bluebonnet Library
November 18	CompUSA/iMac G5	Mike Luchsinger	Bluebonnet CompUSA
December 16	Holiday Gathering	Everybody	Brewbachers
BRMUG's Meetings at a Glance Send ideas to <a href="mailto:newsletter@brmug.org">newsletter@brmug.org</a> .			

### Epson Stylus CX6400

Many of you may remember that I bought an Epson C42ux printer about 2 years ago (for about \$19 after rebate). This printer has done a good job (although a little slow). For various reasons, my daughter needed a printer and the family needed a scanner. I had been looking at various Epson all-in-one models. I decided I wanted a model with separate color ink tanks (black, cyan, magenta, and yellow). I had everything mapped out - a refurbished CX5200 was available for \$79 from Epson. Fate offered a CX6400 (newer version) for about \$50 after rebate via a local purchase. After a short discussion, Kathy and I got one. One of the big benefits of Epson printers has been the availability of inexpensive third-party ink cartridges. I was disappointed to discover that the 6400 used a different cartridge from the 5200 (translated: more expensive; 12 cartridges shipped for \$50).

The printer was surprising. Being an all-in-one, it is a little large. Scanning

is adequate, but not fast. Printing was a big surprise. The C42 took minutes to print a page (45 seconds really). The 6400 prints faster than the C42 ejected empty paper (seems like 10-15 seconds a page). You print, and shortly a page comes easing out.

The print quality seems excellent. We are still on the original ink cartridges despite having printed badges for 300+ people and a number of other things. I am really amazed how much we have been able to print from the original ink tanks. I suspect this printer may never live to use its 12 replacement cartridges up (the C42 has not used up half of its \$50 of replacement ink cartridges in 2 years -- of course this printer is faster). This seems to be an excellent, durable printer and an adequate scanner.

It also has a media card reader for printing directly from camera memory cards. These slots can also be used by the computer to load cards directly (not a big deal but a nice touch). Stay tuned for future reports.

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