



BRMUG

Baton Rouge Macintosh User Group

News and Views

January 2006

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

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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 January meeting will be held at the **Bluebonnet Library** on **January 19th**, the 3rd Thursday of the month, at 6:30 P.M. The meeting will be 6:30 PM at the Bluebonnet Library. This month, Don Ballard will present *Buddy, where did they put the start button?* With many users switching from Windows to Mac OS X, a number of questions about the differences between the two operating systems become important. Don will try and point out some of the obvious differences for the new switchers (while showing the old hands a few things at the same time). This should be a good introductory meeting packed with information. 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>).

Here is the meeting schedule:

6:30 PM	Welcome and recent news
6:50 PM	Don's Distraction
7:00 PM	Buddy, where did they put the start button?
8:00 PM	Questions and answers
8:30 PM	Adjourn to Brewbachers

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

December Holiday Gathering

I enjoyed the chance to see some of you in December at Brewbachers. Being able to just attend a meeting and not worry about a presentation is nice. It is also great to have a chance to just talk and listen. I hope everyone had a great holiday and you are ready to start another exciting year in the Macintosh world.

AAPL

WOW!!! While this month's news is just like previous months, it is still amazing. Here are some high points: Yes, Apple set a number of new all-time high stock values again (maxing at \$86.38). Amazing. By the way, the day Apple announced the new Intel-based Macintoshes, they closed at \$80.86 (the first processor in the X86 family of processors).

Apple exceeded \$72 billion Market Cap at one point. Apple's value actually topped Dell! They are about equal right now. Considering that Dell is the number PC vendor, having Apple equal their worth is a big deal. Now Apple just needs to grow from 5% market share to closer to Dell's 30+%.

From a longer term view, Apple has come a long way. A little over 2 years ago, Apple stock was selling at about \$12 and the Market Cap was below \$6 billion. Since then, the stock has split twice and topped \$85. With the 2 splits taken into account, the \$12 price is more like \$3. From that perspective, Apple is worth more than 24 times as much in 24 months! Incredible growth.

So, Apple has had an amazing last couple of years. Apple is certainly poised for an even brighter future. Many analysts are now picking a \$100 target for Apple. The move to Intel looks like it might go smoothly. Of course, it could also tank. (but I sure do not expect it to). So, as I

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have said before: Get the sunglasses out -- the future looks really bright.

Microsoft Office

Apple and Microsoft have signed an agreement that commits Office development for the Macintosh platform for at least 5 more years. Details of the deal, have not be released (of course). I suspect that Apple has promised to limit their competition with Microsoft (maybe that is why Numbers has not shipped yet).

Intel Macintoshes

MacWorld did not provide every surprise that everyone suggested, but it was still exciting. And Apple proved me wrong on a number of fronts.

I expected Apple to announce the Mac-Mini and the iBook as their first Intel based systems (as did many people). Since the professional applications (Final Cut Pro, Aperture, ...) are not dual architecture yet, it seemed unlikely that Apple would impact the high end product line. It also seemed to make sense that Apple would not start at the top of the tree.

So, Apple find a third option. They announced the consumer desktop (the iMac) and the professional laptop (PowerBook). In an interesting move, Apple has not discontinued the PowerPC versions of these machines. You can currently buy either version right now (most expect the PowerPC systems to be discontinued as more systems move to the Intel processor).

The Intel iMac includes several improvements over the PowerPC model. The Intel dual core processor is available at 1.83 and 2 GHz. Memory is now PC2 5300 (667 MHz) DDR2 (2 SODIMM slots -- like laptops). The video card has been improved to an ATI Radeon X1600 PCI Express video card with 128 MB of memory. This should produce much faster graphics. Prices have remained the same. Preliminary information has been pretty positive. Speed improvements of 2x to 5x have been mentioned. Real world experience has not yet had time to determine how the Intel iMac really compares the PowerPC model. The iMac now supports a external video connection that is not limited to mirroring. So you can now add a second monitor to the iMac. The iMac is currently shipping and some people have already received theirs.

The big surprise to me was the MacBook Pro (Intel based PowerBook). The new ProBook looks a lot like the current

PowerBook. And its dimensions are similar. The MacBook Pro is only available in 15" model right now at 1.67 and 1.83 GHz. It also includes two SODIMM slots using PC2-5300 memory (obviously very similar cpu boards/designs to the iMac [which probably explains why these two products were updated at the same time]).

The MacBook Pro has a single FireWire 400 port (no FireWire 800). The video card is the ATI Radeon Mobility X 1600 with 128 MB and dual link support (so that it can drive a 30" display). It also includes a built-in iSight camera.

The big change on the MacBook Pro is the power connector. Since the first laptop, the power connector has been a problem. If you make the connection snug, you risk pulling on the cord and having it pull the laptop off the table. So most companies have made some attempt at a loose fit. Many attempts result in either poor longevity of the power adapter or damaging the power connector on the motherboard needing a replacement motherboard (Apple has seen their share of both sides). The new power connector fits into a small depression on the side of the MacBook Pro and is held in place by a magnet. This means it simply falls off with no damage if the cord is pulled. This idea will catch on like wildfire! Ideas like this are why Apple is an amazing hardware vendor.

The MacBook Pro will not be immediately available. Apple expects to start shipping in late February.

iLife 06

iLife 06 was announced (as expected). iLife gained another member - iWeb along with significant updates. iLife has become an excellent value.

I was surprised that Front Row and Photo Booth were not added to iLife. Not sure why. Maybe they are being withheld to join the unannounced PVR software to produce a new product (iMedia)?

iWeb is supposed to make it easier to make web sites and blogs. iWeb seems to be based on the same basic engine as Keynote and Pages. It is template based (just like they are). It is designed to make it easy to take content from the other iLife applications and publish it. We will have to see how it fairs as people use it.

Each of the other products have been updated to make it easier to publish information. Integrating into podcasts and

blogging has been made a lot easier.

Some quick items: iPhoto now supports up to 250,000 photos. iDVD now supports external DVD drives.

Several folks have already said that the new version is well worth the cost (\$79).

iWork 06

Numbers was not announced. Keynote and Pages both were upgraded. Of course Pages has new templates. It now supports 3D Charts and Tables with calculations and Mail Merge with the Address Book. It also has added Freeform Curves, Shapes and Masks.

This is beginning to sound familiar. Pages is growing. It is taing on some aspects of a spreadsheet and a drawing program. Almost like Pages is slowly growing into AppleWorks?

Keynote also gained features. In fact, many of the same features that were added to Pages were also added to Keynote. Both products made significant gains without making big headlines. I suspect the next version will be pretty neat.

iPod for Chrysler

Apple and Chrysler announced that future Chrysler products would feature integrated support for the iPod. Beyond merely being able to hear your iPod on the radio, the vehicles will be able to control the iPod via the vehicle audio controls. This is really cool. I hope more car companies partner with Apple (with 14 million iPods sold last quarter, the interest is very high).



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Universal Binaries

Sometimes the past re-occurs. I remember when we transitioned from the 68000 processor to the PowerPC family. These two processors were very different. Apple undertook the process of translating all of their code from 68000 to PowerPC. When they did it, they decided to create a single executable that include the instructions for both processors. Conventional wisdom back then was sure the idea would not work.

But Apple did it. In fact they did it very well. For a number of years you could boot either hardware platform and run all applications.

This experience is obviously proving important for Apple. The new universal binaries include code for PowerPC and for Intel processors.

So far Apple has Mac OS X, iLife and iWork available as universal binaries. The professional applications (Final Cut Pro, Aperture, ...) are expected to be released as universal binaries by sometime in March. Since the MacBook Pro will have just started shipping, the paradox of shipping a professional hardware solution without the necessary software is not expected to be the case.

Many of the professional applications tend to take advantage of AltiVec. Porting these applications to an architecture without AltiVec is taking a little longer.

BRMUG 2006

It is time for another year. To the right you see the chart of the various presentations we did last year.

BRMUG's motto is *Helping Macintosh users more effectively utilize their systems*. I believe in this idea. I really enjoy trying to help.

I need to thank Don Ballard, Glenn Matherne and Richard Johnson for their support over the years. I also wish to thank each person who reads the newsletter and/or attends the meetings.

In spite of the Internet and the many wonderful books, I believe that the user group serves an important purpose. The nature of the Macintosh and Mac OS X does dramatically reduce the need of constant and ongoing support.

With the increase in the number of Macintoshes being sold to folks who do not know Mac OS X, the need for additional support is back on the upswing. These switchers are becoming a significant percentage of the Macintosh user base.

Over the years, BRMUG has changed to try to meet the needs of the users. We have changed our meeting location several times to adjust to the desires of the community. At one point, we produced software disks. We have

2005 Meeting Calendar			
January 20	iPhoto Introduction	Isaac Traxler	Bluebonnet Library
February 17	Keynote 2	Don Ballard	Bluebonnet Library
March 17	Tiger Preview	Isaac Traxler	Bluebonnet Library
April 21	Pages	Isaac Traxler	Bluebonnet Library
May 19	Epson CX6400	Isaac Traxler	Bluebonnet Library
June 16	Software Gems	Isaac, Don & Glenn	Bluebonnet Library
July 21	Garage Band	Glenn Matherne	Bluebonnet Library
August 18	iChat A/V	Don & Isaac	Bluebonnet Library
September 15	Katrina & Apple	ALL	Bluebonnet Library
October 20	Alternatives to High Cost Software	Don & Isaac	Bluebonnet Library
November 17	iTunes, iTMS, Podcasts	Isaac Traxler	Bluebonnet Library
December 15	Holiday Gathering	N/A	Brewbachers
BRMUG's Meetings at a Glance Send ideas to newsletter@brmug.org .			

tried a few tutorials at various times. We have maintained a printed newsletter (minus a few lapses). Many folks have suggested shifting to a virtual newsletter available online and/or e-mailed (stop printing and mailing the newsletter). What do you think? It does cost us real money. Stamps are now \$0.39 each. Printing costs money. In particular, producing a specific sized newsletter is very time consuming. Should we keep doing a printed newsletter?

We embraced the Internet very early on (at least for this section of the country). While our current site has some out of date sections, I believe it is useful. Any comments? What should we change? Add? Remove? I do apologize, after doing the newsletter, going to the planning meeting and preparing for the primary meeting, I have no had time in a while to update the site. I hope to get here soon.

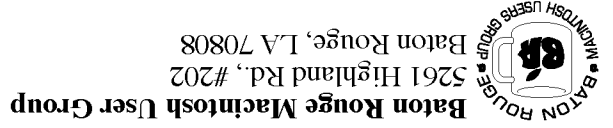
Do the meetings need to change? What kinds of topics would you like? The lack of Internet access during the

meeting does limit our topics quite a bit (someday the library will have wireless access for us). Take a look at what we did last year and let me know where you want us to go.

About now, you are probably seeing a common thread. While I do get a lot of help, I still do a lot (newsletter writer, editor, presenter, web developer).

We could use some help. We really need articles for the newsletter (it needs variety). I am more than willing to produce a larger newsletter if material arrives. We need some new folks to do presentations. We have pretty much exhausted the collective skills of Don, Glenn, Richard and myself.

I also request that you seek out some other Mac users and bring them to some meetings. We are so busy with everything else, that we do not seem to have time to recruit. Hopefully BRMUG benefits you. Give us the chance to benefit more people. Help us get the word out.



This Month:
 Buddy, where did they put the start button?
 by Don Ballard

*Hiroshima 45
 Chernobyl 86
 Windows 95*

**THIS NEWSLETTER IS RECEIVED BY ALL
 BRMUG MEMBERS, CONTRIBUTORS, AND
 REPRESENTATIVES.**

The Baton Rouge Macintosh Users Group is a non-profit organization dedicated to Macintosh Users. Our mission is to help bring these users together in order to keep them informed of Apple Computer, Inc.'s trends, visions, and educate them on how to best use this most cost effective, easiest and friendliest of all platforms: **The Macintosh.**

If you are in the position of selling, supporting, or using the Apple Macintosh computer or any of Apple's products, we would like your participation and support for the benefit of our membership and your customer base.

Everyone is invited to attend the meetings. For a complimentary newsletter, or flyers to give out to others, or any information about the group contact the following BRMUG Ambassador: Isaac Traxler, President, (504) 926-1552, e-mail: president@brmug.org. We'll be most happy to talk to you about the Macintosh!

Send this form with \$15 (\$10 with copy of current school id for students) check payable to BRMUG to: BRMUG Treasurer, 5261 Highland Road, #202, Baton Rouge, LA 70808.

BRMUG Membership Form 1/2006

Name: _____

Address: Street, City, State, ZipCode

Home Phone: _____

Office Phone: _____

Things the club should do: _____

My interest areas: _____

