

KeyMac Journal

Volume 9 Number 3

March 2005

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Bob Beaupre

The premise of this message is "Most of us only use a small percentage of what our computers can do for us." Recently, one of my favorite things is to read newspapers on the internet. We have a daughter teaching at the American School in Beirut, Lebanon. We have been following their political turmoil in the Daily Star. For perspective, we also check for information on news.bbc.co.uk/ for the BBC point of view. CNN is cnn.com; nytimes.com is the NY Times; latimes.com is the LA Times. Jack Leitch reads the Detroit Free Press, freep.com.

My favorites are: foxnews.com and investors.com/editorial which I consider the best investor information. Investors Business Daily, like my iBook offers far more than I use. My wife who is a Google fan, suggested onlinenewspapers.com/usstate/. Another member uses www.refdesk.com.

Last night, just in time for this message, I became aware of the next logical step in news reading, blogs, RSS and XML. Instantly, I was over my head.

Here is an excerpt from USA TODAY's Andrew Kantor, 1/2/04 RSS is "Really Simple Syndication" or "RDF Site Summary." RSS allows Web site owners to create a list of what is on their pages, constantly updated. USAToday.com for example changes all the time. Blogs change less often. Kantor uses an RSS Reader (or RSS aggregator or "headline viewer") to check sites. He uses one called intraViews.

Having a RSS reader is like having a newspaper that is filled with only the information that you prefer. You might do a search on "RSS readers" or "RSS aggregators." There are many lists out there including one at Weblogs Compendium.

As I said, I was over my head, but someone can take us from there, hopefully soon. □



MONTHLY PROGRAMS

MARCH 15: Jacob Miller will discuss issues in selecting a new printer, scanner or projector and may also have some "Tips and Tricks" to share.

APRIL 19: Alan Houtzer, our own "Mac Genius," will preside over an ever popular Q&A and general discussion session. So start collecting your questions and frustrations and bring them to the meeting. Alan may also have some things to tell us that we don't even know we need to know.

A note from Nancy Mahan in response to the Club's memorial for Owen.

February 11, 2005

Dear Mike,

The KeyMac Club has honored Owen's memory with their contribution to the hospital cause so dear to his heart.

His entire family is grateful for their generosity.

Please convey my appreciation.

Sincerely,

Nancy

MASTHEAD

Published by the KeyMac Computer Club

Co-President.....Bob Beaupre
spyglass25@mindspring.com
 Co-President.....Mike Wall
dillysdad@pop.mindspring.com
 V.President.....Drake Hawkins
drakhawk@earthlink.net
 Co-Secretary.....Joan Englehart
joaneng@bellsouth.net
 Co-Secretary.....Al Kishbaugh
kish12@earthlink.net
 Treasurer.....Arlene Stanicek
astan01@bellsouth.net
 Co-Editor.....Gladys Calhoun
gladyscalhoun@earthlink.net
 Co-Editor.....Joan Englehart
joaneng@bellsouth.net

USE GOOGLE AS A CALCULATOR: The calculator built into OS X is cool, but you have to go find and launch it. If you have Safari open, however, just type your calculation (using either the numbers pad of your keyboard or the regular portion) into the search box and hit return. Google will return the result almost instantly. For example, key in “460/4”

CONVERT UNITS USING GOOGLE: If you are cooking and you do not have that 2/3 measuring cup, but you do have a teaspoon measure, open Safari and enter “2/3 cup in teaspoons” into the search box and hit return, and you will instantly find out that there are 32 teaspoons in 2/3 of a cup. Google can do just about any kind of conversion or calculation. Try the following:

- “10 degrees celsius in fahrenheit”
- “80 kilometers in miles”
- “2 liters into cups”

□

TREASURER’S REPORT

Balance February 1 2005	\$1142.38
Expenses	-6.30
Dues were received from 3 members:	<u>+45.00</u>
Balance as of March 2, 2005	\$1181.08

✓ it Out

For a daily vocabulary upgrade, you can sign up to receive the Merriam-Webster Word of the Day at www.merriam-webster.com. They draw their words from its Collegiate Dictionary. To subscribe just go to the above web address; on the left side of the page click on the link to “Word of the Day,” then the tab at the top “subscribe.” Fill in the information and you should be receiving an email daily with the new word. If you would prefer not to subscribe, you can see the Word of the Day just by viewing the site. □

MacHOME POWER TIPS

MORE GOOGLE TIPS

Note: For the following tips, you do not need to key in the quotation marks; these are given here only to delineate what you do need to key in.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"To err is human, but to really foul things up requires a computer."
 Farmers' Almanac, 1978



From Behind the Lens

Gladys Calhoun

INK JET PHOTO PRINTERS

This is a continuation of a review appearing in last month's Journal from an article in the February issue of Macworld critiquing two of the most recent ink jet photo printers on the market.

Canon has recently released a pair of color ink-jet photo printers that are similar in technology but target somewhat different markets. The **Pixma iP8500** delivers fine-quality prints no larger than letter size. The **i9900** also prints well, and it can produce prints as large as 13 by 19 inches. The two printers have more similarities than differences in color quality, but variations in the way they operate will determine which model better suits your needs.

Extra Colors

Both of these printers feature Canon's ChromaPlus eight-color ink set in addition to the traditional CMYK print cartridges. These extra colors perform two functions: the paler ones help add density to lighter colors so pastels and some flesh tones reproduce more accurately, and the other inks extend the CMYK gamut, giving bright, saturated primary colors more punch.

The ChromaPlus inks deliver some of the brightest colors on the market. Both of these printers excel in reproducing vivid primary colors; subtle pastels are also well represented. Gray-scale images have a slight sepia cast. Although this is pleasing aesthetically, it is difficult to get a completely neutral black-and-white print with these inks.

These two printers use identical ink cartridges and print heads, and have an extremely small drop size—2 picoliters. Maximum resolution is 2,400 by 4,800 dpi, and you choose the resolution in the print driver according to the media and quality setting you are using. If your digital camera supports the PictBridge or Bubble Jet Direct standard, you can print directly from your camera without a computer. However, this means that you are relying on the camera's color accuracy alone. Generally, a few adjustments in an image-editing program will enhance print quality.

Unlike Epson, which went with a pigment ink set—for archival permanence—with its UltraChrome inks, Canon has gone the dye route with its ChromaPlus inks. While dye-based inks always lay down a bit more smoothly on paper than pigmented inks, they are much less permanent than the 100-year archival standard. Their shorter life span is fine for most consumer purposes.

Quick, Quiet Quality

Setup for both printers is straightforward: just install the driver, align the print head, and enter the correct values in the setup menu, and you are ready to print.

In tests, both printers achieved the same speed when printing a 22MB 8- by 10-inch reference print, taking 1 minute and 18 seconds to print via the USB 2.0 port. When printing via the USB 1.0 port, speeds dropped substantially, to 1 minute and 56 seconds. Via the i9900's FireWire port, printing was no faster or slower than it was using the USB 2.0 connection. A 4- by 6-inch borderless color print took 19 seconds to print with USB 2.0 and FireWire, and 26 seconds to print with USB 1.0. Both printers run quietly.

As expected, the printers displayed identical color

balance on Canon's Photo Paper Pro, which was a bit cyan and blue in the light areas of the test print and had a somewhat cool overall balance. With a minor correction in the print driver, a neutral balance was achieved. So be prepared to spend a little time to get the look you want.

Differences Between the Two

The iP8500 is part of Canon's new Pixma series emphasizes appearance. With all its doors shut, it looks more like a piece of home theater gear than a printer, and its design helps keep dust and dirt out of the unit.

In addition to the standard top-loading paper slot, a paper cassette underneath the printer lets you load additional sheets or perform double-sided printing on Canon-approved paper. You can print text in duplex mode on bond paper, and perform manual duplexing with either of the paper trays.

With its more traditional style, the i9900 has one top-loading paper tray, and it took only 2 minutes and 49 seconds to produce a 13- by 19- inch borderless print at the highest quality setting.

Macworld's Buying Advice

The printer you should purchase depends on your workflow, desk real estate, and budget, as well as the printer's image quality and image longevity. The reviewer prefers the i9900 for its ability to produce much larger prints and for its FireWire port. □

IN SUMMARY

CANON i9900

PROS: Great color; fast; quiet; can produce larger prints than the Pixma iP8500; FireWire connection.

CONS: Dye-based inks lack long-range archival permanence; no option for fine-art papers; black-and-white prints have a sepia cast; no duplex printing.

PRICE: \$500

CANON PIXMA iP8500

PROS: Great color; full duplex printing; fast; quiet; updated design looks cool and protects the printer when it is not in use.

CONS: Dye-based inks lack long-range archival permanence; no FireWire port; no option for fine-art papers; black-and-white prints have a sepia cast.

PRICE: \$350

A NEW ILIFE FOR 2005

This is a continuation of the article in the February Journal with an overview of the changes in iMovie, iDVD 5, and Garageband 2.

iMovie HD

- Import and edit high-definition video (HDV).
- Use Magic iMovie to automatically create a film: just plug in your camcorder; iMovie HD does the rest.
- Use the media browser to import photos and video clips from your digital camera and add them to your movies.
- Create high-definition video slideshows from your iPhoto albums.

iDVD 5

- Fifteen new themes.
- New dynamic drop zones: customized with your photos/video.
- Improved, editable DVD Map and the new Drop Zone Editor.
- Burn projects to your hard drive as fully encoded Disk Images.
- OneStep DVD feature transfers your unedited movie directly from your DV camcorder to DVD.

Garageband 2

- Record up to eight audio tracks at once.
- Learn musical notation and grok music theory with the help of real-time notation display.
- Tighten up the rhythm of real instrument you record using new timing enhancements.
- Tuning enhancements can help fix flat or sharp vocals.
- Tune guitars before you record a performance.
- Turn your recorded tracks into reusable Apple loops. □

FIREWIRE DISK MODE

Jack Leitch

You can connect any Mac with built-in FireWire to any other Mac with built-in FireWire and have the hard drive of the first computer appear as an external hard drive on the second. This is a great way of transferring large files from one computer to another. But perhaps even more important is that if there is a problem that prevents one computer from booting up, you can connect it to the other as an external hard drive and troubleshoot it remotely. Another use is one that I personally found to be of utmost importance. If your computer will just not boot up after you have run all the

Tech Tools, etc., and you need to do a clean install, you can transfer everything you want to save to the “live” computer and transfer it back afterward.

Obviously, you must have a 6-pin to 6-pin FireWire cable. These cables cost between \$20-\$30 and are available at almost any computer supply store, office supply, or online. Before you attempt to hook up the computers, make sure that each computer has FireWire 2.3.3 or better installed. If you have an earlier version, you can download the latest FireWire software update at www.apple.com/firewire.

Now shut down the Mac you want to use as the external hard drive, but leave the second Mac running. PowerBooks and iBooks should be plugged in to a power source since FireWire drains the battery. Now connect the FireWire cable from one Mac to the other. Press the power button to restart the first Mac holding down the T-key. The Mac soon shows a FireWire disk mode icon on its display and its hard drive icons appear on the second Mac.

When you’ve finished copying the files or troubleshooting, just drag the hard drive icon to the trash. Don’t worry—this doesn’t erase the hard drive, it simply unmounts it from the desktop. Now go back to the first Mac and shut it down. Then disconnect the FireWire cable and restart the Computer. □

PHOTO SLIDES TO CD

Mike Wall

Anyone who has a collection of photographic slides stashed away and has been thinking about putting them on a CD might like to know about an incredible deal at WalMart: for \$2.82 they will put up to 40 35mm slides onto one CD, and the quality is excellent. I don’t know the exact scanning resolution but the resulting file size is about 4MB per picture, which is big, i.e. good quality. By way of comparison, another photo lab in the area charges \$1 per slide to scan them to a CD! From the CD you can easily import the pictures into iPhoto with all the flexibility that gives you.

Advantages of doing this are a great saving of space, much more convenient viewing options and greatly increased longevity. While going through my collection, some nearly 60 years old, I was struck by the fact that some slides were still in excellent condition while others from the same era had severely deteriorated colors. The sooner you convert to CD the longer your memories will last. □