



The GAB'er

The Newsletter of the Greater Albany Apple Byters

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iPad 2 Announced



The iPad 2 is finally here, where it will feature the rumored A5 dual core chip in an all new design that will provide up to 2x of processing power, and up to 9x faster graphics than its predecessor. Thinner than your iPhone 4 it measures a mere

8.8mm – even though there are two cameras crammed into it on both the front and the back of the device.

At just 1.3 pounds in terms of weight, coming in both white and black shades from day one, and you can choose to get yours from either Verizon Wireless or AT&T, depending on which carrier you jive with. Another feature that the iPad 2 comes with would be a cable that handles 1080p output that works great with all of the apps, mirrored video output, and a \$39 price tag attached to said accessory for added convenience.

Smart Covers are thrown into the mix as well. You can choose from poly or leather designs with either material boasting 5 colors to choose from. Of course, the poly option is much cheaper at \$39 a pop while the leather one requires you to fork out another \$30.

Battery life stands at 10 hours, and for that kind of mileage, what is the price point like? Well, it will come in Wi-Fi only and Wi-Fi and 3G connectivity, ranging from 16GB, 32GB and 64GB models for \$499, \$599, \$699 and \$629, \$729 and \$829, respectively.

Coordinator's Corner

by John Buckley



When it comes to backing up your computer, there are two types of people, those that do and those who are sorry. No matter what you think and what numbers your hard drive manufacturer says about the average life of your hard drive, remember that the number you see is an average. Every hard drive will fail at sometime between 1 second and that number. Therefore backing up is important if you don't want to be sorry.



This month we will look at Best Practices concerning backing up your computer and what is best for you. This will look at using Apple's

Time Machine as well as other strategies that can make your life a lot easier when the hard drive fails at that very important moment.

As usual, check our website for the most current GAAB information. You will find a map and aerial photograph showing how to get to the meeting location.

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Next GAAB Meeting
March 9, 2011
Time Machine

7:00 p.m.
St. Mary's Hospital,
Troy, NY

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Serving the Apple Computer User Community Since May 1984

The Greater Albany Apple Byters is an Apple Computer User Group. Meetings are held the second Wednesday of each month (except July and August) in Room 212 of Troy High School, located on Burdett Avenue, Troy, NY.

Annual membership fee is \$10.00. Membership privileges include this newsletter, access to a large public domain software and video/audio tape library, local vendor discounts, special interest groups, and other special offers.

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Apple Ambassador

by John Buckley

Apple Ambassador: March May Come in Like a Lion with Lion Announcements

More evidence that MobileMe could soon be free

by Charles Jade, Gigaom

Amidst the launch of new MacBook Pros, the developer preview release of OS X Lion, and the introduction of FaceTime to the Mac App Store, it's easy to overlook what's missing at Apple's website today. That would be MobileMe, or at least the option to purchase Apple's suite of online services. Apple has not only notified resellers that the company is discontinuing sales of the retail box, but it has also stopped offering MobileMe for sale digitally at the

Apple Store online. Current users can still renew their services, and sign up for a free trial (with an option to pay for an upgrade) outside of the store, but indications suggest that MobileMe will soon be free.

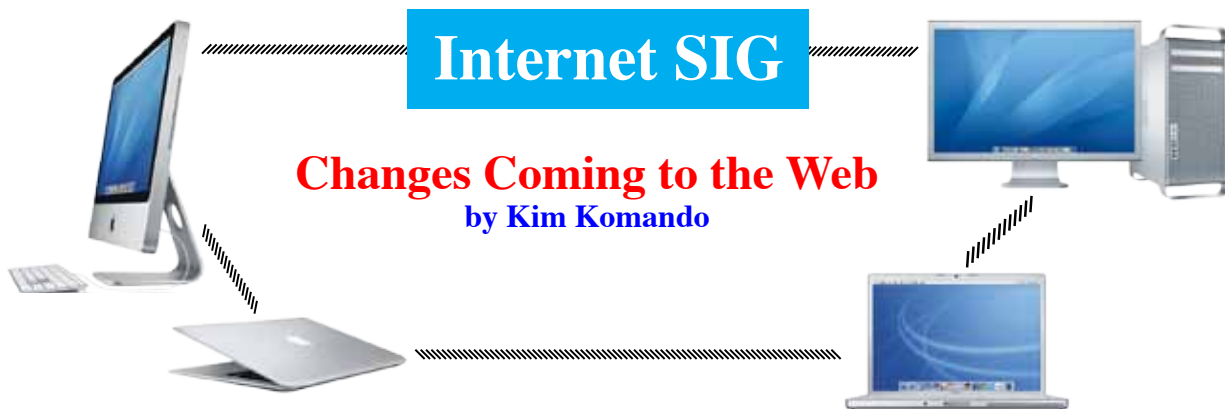


Two weeks ago, the Wall Street Journal reported Apple was preparing a major redesign of MobileMe set to launch in the summer alongside a new iPhone. According to "people familiar with the matter," Apple was "considering" making the service free, offering a "locker" for files, photos, music, and videos. Social features would also be a big part of the new MobileMe.

Cult of Mac followed up on that report with a list of new features coming to Apple's cloud services suite, including personal video streaming and location services similar to Foursquare and Facebook Places, as well as the ability to find other MobileMe users nearby. All this information would appear on a brand new homepage, and be constantly updated from iOS devices. According to Cult of Mac's

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Most people don't think too much about the technology underlying the Internet. They just want videos to play, pages to appear and email to work. Behind the scenes, however, big changes are currently underway.

They will affect the Internet at its most fundamental level. It's good to have a basic knowledge of these changes. This way, you can decipher what's true and not when you're out surfing the Web.

HTML5

Let's start with HTML. It's used to show you content online. HTML5 is the next major revision of the Hypertext Markup Language standard. HTML5 offers a lot of improvements. After all, it's been more than 10 years since HTML 4 was released.

The most important change is perhaps the way video is handled. Most online video uses Flash. It's become the de facto standard for online streaming. You'll encounter it on sites like Hulu and YouTube.

Flash uses a lot of resources. It can cause browsers to crash. It's also a popular target for criminals. Flash's biggest problem is Apple. CEO Steve Jobs has been outspoken in his criticism of Flash. And iOS devices like the iPhone and iPad won't play Flash video. That poses problems for sites that rely on Flash video.

Fortunately, HTML5 can help. You won't need a separate player for HTML5 video. (Flash requires a browser plug-in.) HTML5 video is part of the language used to build sites. As long as you have an HTML5-compatible browser, the video will play. And many of the stability problems will be gone.

Like Flash, HTML5 is about more than just video. It can be used to create interactive Websites. And, it will include CSS 3. Cascading Style Sheets are used to style Web pages. With CSS 3, expect to see sites that are a lot more visually appealing.

As I said, your browser will need to support HTML5 video. The latest versions of Firefox, Safari and Chrome already support HTML5 video. Internet Explorer users will need to upgrade to Internet Explorer 9. Earlier versions of IE won't handle the video. Expect Internet Explorer 9 to be released in the next few weeks.

IPv6

The other change coming to the Internet is more technical and perhaps less interesting. But it is much more important than HTML5. The Internet is upgrading to the IPv6 addressing system.

Every computer, smart phone and Web-connected gadget has an Internet Protocol address. The IP address identifies these gadgets online, allowing them to communicate. Currently, IP addresses are governed by Internet Protocol version 4, or IPv4. This provides roughly 4.3 billion addresses.

That seems like a lot of IP addresses, and it is. But it isn't enough. There are almost 2 billion computers online. More are being added every day. And that doesn't include smart phones, security cameras and other Web-connected gadgets. Each needs its own IP address.

The last of the available IP addresses will be used by this fall. There are temporary measures that can help with the shortage. The real solution is to upgrade to IPv6. IPv6 allows for roughly 3.4 times 10 to the power of 38 IP addresses. Suffice it to say that IPv6 provides enough IP addresses.

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Education SIG

Education and Technology Integration

One of the great things about the integration of technology into the educational process is the availability of programs for teachers and students that allow for new approaches in education, which expand the learning boundaries of the students of today and the future. One of these programs is MIT STEP.

MIT STEP offers a teacher-licensing program that can be done entirely at MIT or in conjunction with courses at Wellesley College. This program licenses students to teach mathematics or science in grades 5-12. The Scheller Teacher Education Program (STEP), offered through the Department of Urban Studies and Planning, prepares MIT students to become teachers who are competent to teach in their field, willing to challenge established norms, able to bridge the boundaries among disciplines, and eager to help students develop the desire to question and explore.

For Educators, STEP is actively engaged in many research and development projects, designing and testing new learning technologies for use in formal and informal education. While some projects are in limited testing with partners, others are freely available for all to try and to use (some complete with curriculum and assessment). Find out more about these projects on the projects page. One of these is the interactive game *Vanished*, a collaboration between MIT and the Smithsonian Institute.

The Smithsonian Institution and MIT announced the April 4 launch of VANISHED an 8-week online/offline environmental disaster mystery game for middle-school children, meant to inspire engagement and problem solving through science.

Developed and curated by MIT's Education Arcade (a research group in Comparative Media Studies) and the Smithsonian Institution, VANISHED is a first-of-its-

kind experience where participants become investigators racing to solve puzzles and other online challenges, visit museums and collect samples from their neighborhoods to help unlock the secrets of the game. Players can only discover the truth about the environmental disaster by using real scientific methods and knowledge to unravel the game's secrets.



To navigate through the mystery game's challenges, participants will gain access to Smithsonian scientists from such diverse disciplines as paleobiology, volcanology, forensic anthropology and entomology.

Potential participants can sign-up for VANISHED at <http://vanished.mit.edu> beginning March 21, although you can currently sign up now on the Web site to receive notification of when the game officially starts.

“Current science instruction relies too heavily on memorization and activities with pre-determined outcomes causing many kids to lose interest in science and have misconceptions about what it means to be a scientist,” said Scot Osterweil of MIT Education Arcade. “VANISHED will provide kids with real scientific mysteries to solve. The popularity of television shows like CSI, Bones, and NCIS tells us there is hunger for this kind of problem solving. We're eager to provide to VANISHED participants the genuinely fun and engaging experience of what it's like to be a scientist: trying to understand the unknown, asking why something has occurred, searching for evidence, and collaborating with other investigators.”

As the weeks progress, VANISHED players become scientific investigators taking part in a wide variety of thought-provoking, collaborative, and engaging activities both on and offline. Participants will have the opportunity to communicate directly with Smithsonian scientists via videoconferences. During these sessions, players will tap



into the experts' knowledge of key subject matters that have a major impact on cracking the mystery.

Online, VANISHED participants will take part in weekly tasks that help reveal more of the mystery. They will develop and investigate hypotheses, work with other players via online forums moderated by MIT students, and play games that help illustrate science concepts in order to unlock the secret of each aspect of the mystery.

Offline, they must collect scientific data from their neighborhoods and search for clues at Smithsonian affiliate museums across the country where exhibits will explain an area of science or history that players will need to understand to solve the mystery. Journal entries written by a game character will lead VANISHED players in different areas of the country to local participating museums, encouraging them to gather and decode clues. These local players report their findings back to the entire VANISHED community to spark discussion and hypotheses that in turn enable the story to progress and participants to inch closer to solving the mystery. The Field Museum in Chicago and seventeen Smithsonian-affiliated museums, including the Aerospace Museum of California, the Museum of the Rockies, and the Kansas Cosmosphere, have already signed on to contribute to this online/offline experience.

"Smithsonian educators are committed to providing young people with educational experiences that address real issues, while allowing participants to use a variety of resources as well as their creativity to solve problems," said Claudine Brown, the Smithsonian's Assistant Secretary for Education. "Projects like VANISHED demonstrate the power of collaboration as we work with museums across the country to share knowledge and inspire the next generation of young scientists."

Once VANISHED has reached its completion, the project's published findings will provide a blueprint for creating a range of similar activities that museums can deploy to engage their patrons. The Smithsonian Institution and MIT will publish a handbook that will document the project's design, techniques for mastering potential challenges, and an open-source software infrastructure to facilitate the development of similar games.

Simulations and Games for Learning

The research program of STEP focuses on games and simulations for learning. As a part of The Education Arcade, many of the STEP's initiatives involve the design, development, implementation and/or research on video games for learning. Much of the work focuses games for math and science in secondary schools, but new initiatives

span the realm of learning games more broadly including games for learning history and foreign languages. A large initiative in mobile games is a centerpiece of STEP, as it explores new models of implementing technologies in the classroom.

The longest standing research component in STEP is StarLogo, a simulation platform that helps kids and teachers learn about simulations and fosters interest in modeling and programming. The newest iteration of StarLogo (known as StarLogo TNG) makes programming more accessible and exciting through the introduction of a graphical programming language and a 3D world. This version of StarLogo is now used not only to bring modeling and simulation to the classroom, but also to interest novices in programming through making games.

Linking to Educational Standards and Measuring Outcomes

As the move towards state and national standards grows, it is becoming increasingly important to tie classroom activities directly to the standards. While standards vary considerably from state to state, most call for engaging students in inquiry-based activities. In addition many recommend integrating technology into the everyday explorations of all disciplines, and some stress the importance of incorporating modeling and simulation in secondary school courses. In particular, science, mathematics and social studies standards explicitly address the need for student use and development of models.

The games and simulations designed, developed, and researched by STEP staff and students are created to stimulate interest, knowledge, understanding and inquiry, while connecting with many of the content standards that are the reality of today's classrooms.

The role of STEP does not stop at the development of new software. STEP is also involved in working with students using new technologies, constructing professional development for teachers, and researching the efficacy of these new approaches in (and out of) the classroom. This includes looking to new measures of learning that value both content and process skills.



My Backup Plan

by Lex Friedman, Macworld.com

Macworld cares about your data, and you should too. If you don't backup, assume that you will someday lose data that is important to you. We've covered the basics of how to keep your Mac backed up, and Macworld editor Dan Frakes has already written about his own setup for backing up. Here's mine.

I like to make backups of my files both on-site (in my home) and off-site. I'll start with my approach to on-site backup.



My basic setup

My primary machine is a MacBook Pro. I use it as a true laptop at night, and by day it's hooked into my desk setup with a second monitor, external keyboard, and other devices. I found continually plugging in external hard drives (and then later unmounting them so that I could disconnect from them) was far too annoying to stick with. Thus, to mesh my need to back up regularly with my preference to move my Mac around frequently, I opted to connect my external hard drives wirelessly.

I use an Apple Airport Extreme Base Station. It sports a single USB port, but you can plug a USB hub into it to make multiple devices accessible on your wireless network. My hub has a pair of hard drives (along with a printer) plugged in.



Time Machine

Those hard drives become available on my Mac as network drives. The larger of the two hard drives serves as my Time Machine backup. (For my initial Time Machine backup, I connected the drive directly to my Mac. Wireless file transfers are, as you would expect, slower than wired ones. By making the initial backup while connected directly, that initial dump of hundreds of gigabytes went far faster than it would have otherwise.)

The drive that I use for Time Machine holds 1TB of data—that's 1,024 gigabytes. Since Time Machine tries to keep multiple revisions of changed files, I like to afford it as much disk space as possible. I think of Time Machine as perfect for recovering files that I might not notice have gone missing right away, like an erroneously deleted MP3 or an unfinished article for Macworld. The more space Time Machine has available, the more versions of my files it can keep. I don't go to Time Machine often, but I love that it's there.

SuperDuper!



Time Machine is excellent, but it's not enough. In the worst case scenario of colossal hard drive failure, you can't start up from a Time Machine backup; it's not bootable. So the second, smaller hard drive connected to my Airport Extreme serves as a clone. I use SuperDuper for this purpose.

SuperDuper creates an exact copy of your Mac's hard drive. That way, if your internal drive gets completely and irreparably hosed, you can plug the cloned drive right into your Mac and boot from it instead.



It's not immediately obvious how to use a networked Airport drive with SuperDuper, because you won't see the drive listed in SuperDuper's dropdown menu. Instead, you'll need to use SuperDuper to create a Read/Write 'Sparse' Image on the remote drive, and backup to that. (Check the "Backing up over a network" chapter in SuperDuper's copiously detailed Help for detailed instructions.)

As I did with my initial Time Machine backup, I made my original SuperDuper backup with the drive connected directly to my laptop via USB.

Of course, a cloned backup's usefulness is tied in large part to how recent it is. I schedule SuperDuper to run the backup every evening; like Time Machine, it's able to transfer only those files that have changed from the previous backup. Of course, in the event that I need to restore from a clone that's a few days stale, it's likely that my Time Machine backup will be far more current—allowing me to update the necessary files piecemeal.

CrashPlan



Those are my local backups, and I'm happy with how they work. But with all the precious data on my drives (particularly all the photos and videos of my kids, and everything I've ever written) they're not enough. If my whole home is destroyed, I can at least rest assured that my data will remain safe.

To achieve that goal, I rely most heavily upon CrashPlan, my favorite of numerous online backup solutions. For about \$5 per month, CrashPlan behaves much like Time Machine—it stores backups of all my files, including past iterations of those files, and updates continuously throughout the day. I can restore files via a Web interface, or via the CrashPlan software on my Mac. Should my Mac and backups get toasted, I can login to the CrashPlan site from any other computer to regain access to my files. And, for a fee, CrashPlan will ship a DVD or hard drive with the latest snapshot of your data that it has on file.

CrashPlan can also send you regular updates (via e-mail or Twitter) letting you know the exact status of your backups. (You can, of course, check on that status manually at any time.) The once-a-week emails telling me that my (and my wife's) laptops are fully backed up as of just a few minutes ago are very reassuring.

Dropbox and Google Docs



If you're a Mac user and you don't already use the free Dropbox, you're missing out; it's simply brilliant for synchronizing files across multiple computers and devices. But Dropbox is also a great way to backup certain files.

Following the OS X instructions from Dropbox's Website, I created symlinks for folders that I update very frequently, moving the originals to my Dropbox folder, and placing the symlinks where the folders used to reside on my Mac. This way, Dropbox backs up those files regularly (and with file revision history) without changing my workflow at all, and without eating up double the necessary space on my hard drive.

Not only can I access my Dropbox backups from the company's Website, I can also get at them from any other Mac (or device) linked to my Dropbox account.





Google Docs quietly supports many Dropbox-style features. Though there's no way yet to mount your Google Docs folder on your desktop the way you can with Dropbox, you can upload your files to the service as an added backup. Admittedly, I don't do so often, but when I'm working on longer pieces, I like to be as safe as possible.

Other Websites



Finally, I upload my photos and videos to various Websites, including my own personal site hosted through Dreamhost. That means that my latest photo album with shots of the kids playing outside in the snow exists not just in iPhoto, my Time Machine backup, my SuperDuper clone, CrashPlan, and potentially Dropbox and/or Google Docs; it's also hosted on one or more Web servers, too.

Paranoid is good

In his conclusion to his own backup write-up, Dan Frakes wrote that he's "admittedly paranoid about losing" his data. So should we all be. My total financial investment in my backup solution is cheap—many 1TB hard drives can be had for under \$100, and the \$60 that I pay CrashPlan each year is similarly affordable. My data, on the other hand, is priceless. Hard drives crash. You can hope for the best, you can let nagging fear worry you endlessly, or you can take a few relatively simple steps to ensure your data stays safe. Even if you don't take my approach or Dan's, make sure you're thinking carefully about how you're protecting your data. I don't worry about my data anymore, but I still worry about yours!

Program Coordinator

Continued from page 1.

In addition, we will set the schedule for the remaining demonstrations and then take a look at what is now available from Apple including the new Snow Leopard tips and Apple announcements over the past month.

To find out what's happening, GAAB is the place to be. So be sure to be at our March meeting and every meeting to find out the best information about the Mac.

The March meeting will be held at St. Mary's Hospital in the Leonard Board Room on Wednesday, March 9, 2011. The meeting will begin at 7 p.m. St. Mary's Hospital is located at 1300 Massachusetts Avenue in Troy NY.

However, the best route to take from the Northway is the following:

1. Merge onto NY-7 East from the Northway.
2. Follow Route 7 to Troy where it becomes Hoosick Street.
3. Turn left on Oakwood Avenue (10 Street/NY-40) which is the first light after the bridge and bare right.
4. Turn right on Sausse Avenue. Turn left onto Lindenwood Court. When you come to the first entrance to the hospital parking lot, turn left and park.

Internet SIG

Continued from page 3.

Unfortunately, IPv6 isn't immediately compatible with older hardware. Underlying Internet technology needs to be upgraded. This requires time, effort and money. And most Internet firms seem to be putting off the upgrade. Less than 1 percent have made the switch.

Fortunately, the changeover will largely happen behind the scenes. In most cases, you shouldn't need to upgrade your equipment or software. That's provided you use XP SP3 or newer. One exception is your modem. Your ISP should let you know if you need to upgrade it.

Until your ISP upgrades, you can't access IPv6 Websites. June 8 is World IPv6 Day. Many major sites will enable IPv6 to test the system. But you can test your system now at <http://test-ipv6.com/>.



Why NFC Could be Another Game-Changer for Apple

by Eric Jackson, thestreet.com

When you're a \$330 billion market cap company, you need big things to move the needle. Apple knows that.

Look at Microsoft. It has the hottest thing in gaming right now with its Kinect gesture control device. It sold 8 million units in the first quarter of its availability, blowing away expectations. It's going through huge upgrade cycles right now in Windows 7 and Office. Yet, the stock is trading down, since announcing its earnings last month.

When Apple announced iPad a year ago, most of the initial coverage focused on its name. (Remember that?) Many skeptics remained -- until they started using one and found out they couldn't live without one.

This is classic Steve Jobs. Don't ask customers what they want. Why? Because they don't know what is possible to create in the future. Instead, give them something they've never experienced but which will be a "must have" once they touch it.

From Apple's viewpoint, iPad was going to fill a critical middle-ground between iPhone and the Mac. And if they could create a new product category from nothing, that would create a "meaningful" amount of revenue for them.

The analysts totally blew their job of estimating how big iPad would be last year before it went on sale. Shaw Wu of Kaufman Bros. said in March that he thought they would sell 2 million iPads for the year. The uber-Apple bull, Gene Munster of Piper Jaffray, said in March they would sell 2.8 million in 2010 (though he upped his estimate to 6.2 million by June). Katy Hubert of Morgan Stanley and David Bailey of Goldman Sachs were the most bullish of the analysts, who thought that Apple could ship 6 million iPads for the year. In the end, Apple shipped over 14 million tablets.

So, what are the experts missing at the moment about Apple? The company has a number of irons in the fire at the moment and several could develop into major areas for the company. But I'm most interested in what they're going to do in the area of Near Field Communications (NFC). NFC is a technology that -- after merchants install

necessary point-of-sale hardware -- will allow users to pay using their mobile phone rather than a traditional credit or debit card.

Picture waving your iPhone at the grocery store to pay, rather than your Visa, Mastercard, American Express, Bank of America or JPMorgan Chase debit or credit cards. Your iPhone would already be linked to your iTunes account anyway, so the process would be comfortable for many right from the start.



Make no mistake: Apple has its long-term eyes on totally disrupting the cozy and lucrative perch on which the major credit card companies sit. In the U.S., this represents a \$6.2 trillion market today.

Apple wants to take a major share of mobile payments in the future. eBay's PayPal unit should also consider itself on notice.

eBay recently held its analyst day, during which it touted the mobile payment opportunity in front of it and how the world was moving to more and more mobile payment transactions. Their vision of the mobile payment world jazzed analysts and investors enough to make the stock jump 8% that day. However, the vision they painted is exactly the one Apple sees and is going to go after.

When I listened to the PayPal presentation, I noticed that they kept referring to their "digital wallet" as the only one that was mobile device-agnostic. Translation: we know Apple is coming to eat our lunch.

Apple should be welcomed by merchants. Merchants want to find customers and want a less expensive transaction from their payment providers. Apple will likely offer a much cheaper processing fee than the 2-3% they are currently paying. Part of the reason is that Apple is a merchant themselves in their stores. They know how much income they lose each year paying credit card companies for not doing much.

Users want an easy experience and to be delighted with finding the right product or service at the right time. Apple



knows that it can play a role here in helping both sides and it will. It also knows that many users will “trust” its brand vs. PayPal and the card companies. They have a much more personal relationship with users. Apple has also already become highly intertwined with its users through the iTunes experience compared to the one users have with Google’s Android phones.

According to PayPal, 2010 Global Retail Sales were \$8 trillion. So, just 1% of those run through a mobile payment platform like PayPal or Apple would represent \$80 billion in Total Payment Volume (TPV). \$80 billion is the kind of number that moves the needle for a company the size of Apple.

So, NFC - the technology - is what will allow Apple to disrupt the major players in the payments space. But most analysts don’t yet see it. They describe NFC as a new technology feature add-on -- as if Apple was adding Bluetooth support to the iPhone so that you can play your iPhone songs on your car -- when it is so much more lucrative for Apple.

Therefore, it will be very interesting to watch for what gets announced for NFC-support when iPad2 and iPhone5 get announced in the coming weeks. Deutsche Telekom executives have already hinted this is a sure thing.

Of course, just like with the iPad estimates for 2010, analysts are unlikely to start reflecting the \$80 billion in total payment volume market which Apple is trying to grab until well after the signs are clear that people are starting to use their iPhones and their iTunes accounts to pay for things. There might not be clear evidence of that for another 12 months.

I am playing this coming trend by owning Apple but also the vendor I think is best positioned to supply the chips to allow Apple to go after this market: NXP Semiconductor. There is no guarantee they will be chosen by Apple, but they seem best positioned to me. Even in the worst-case scenario that they aren’t chosen to supply Apple, they will hugely benefit from the adoption of NFC technology by all mobile phone providers. Just yesterday morning on their latest earnings, NXP said 70 million NFC-enabled mobile devices will be sold this year. Other NFC vendors include Broadcom and On Track Innovations.

Will that be cash, credit, or Apple?

Apple Ambassador

Continued from page 2.

source, “the concept is that you would have your own website that’s dynamic, all based on what you are doing at that moment. Apple thinks of it as having a webserver in your pocket... everything will be dynamically updated to MobileMe.”

If those rumors sound overly ambitious for MobileMe, the service is set to benefit from significant additional resources very soon. At the Apple shareholder’s meeting on Wednesday,

COO Tim Cook announced that the billion-dollar data center in Maiden, NC would be opening in the immediate future, and it would be supporting both iTunes and MobileMe services. The opening of that data center may be advancing the timetable for the new MobileMe. Conveniently, Apple is widely expected to introduce a new iPad at an event next Wednesday. A high-profile event like that would also provide an excellent opportunity to reintroduce MobileMe to the public.

That means that current MobileMe users should think seriously about not renewing their memberships at this time. Keep in mind a MobileMe subscription can be reactivated up to 45 days after expiration. If, like me, you’ve recently renewed, don’t expect a refund. However, it’s almost a sure thing that Apple will offer a value-added rank of additional paid services that current MobileMe subscribers will be automatically switched to if it does end up making the basic service free. Let’s hope that whatever the new MobileMe “Premium” offers, it costs less than the current \$99, as the days of picking up cheap activation codes on eBay have probably ended with the discontinuation of the physical box sales.

Nonetheless, as a long-time MobileMe user I’m excited about the prospect of a rejuvenated service with new features—domain hosting would be awesome—for me and a free version that will help grow the MobileMe platform and user base. What features are you hoping for in the new MobileMe, and would you switch from using comparable services from Google and others if it does become free?

Mac OS X Lion features multi-user remoting, offers inexpensive Windows Server alternative by Sebastian Anthony, Download Squad Switched

Right down at the bottom of the Mac OS X Lion page on the Apple website is a tidbit that we should probably pay



more attention to: OS X Lion will come with Lion Server built-in. It will be included on the same disc -- it will come pre-installed with every Mac that Apple sells. You will get all of the juicy Server features for free.

Now, this isn't to say that Lion Server has an overwhelming feature set, but it's more than enough to run a home or small business network -- and when you compare it to the cost of a preconfigured Windows Home Server box or Small Business Server 2008, which can be hundreds of dollars, it becomes a very good deal indeed.

If we haven't sold you yet, check out a feature that 9to5 Mac has just discovered in Lion Server: multi-user remoting. Multi-user remoting means that someone can be sitting at a Mac with OS X Lion installed, and someone else can log in remotely without interrupting the current user. If you prefer Windows terminology, it's like running concurrent RDP sessions.

9to5 Mac goes on to mention that if you have MobileMe and combine it with Back to my Mac you should be able to have concurrent users logging in from all over the world. There might be some potential tie-ins with future versions of iOS, too!

10.7 Lion allows multi-user remote computing by Mark Gurman, 9to5 Mac

Yesterday we told you that the popular Back to my Mac feature might go free with 10.7 Lion and we also told you the service received a few tweaks in Lion. Well today, we have discovered a brand-new feature, which we're calling multi-user remote computing, that allows you to remotely login to any account on another Mac. This best way to explain this is through an example.

You're on your couch with your MacBook but the presentation file you need is on the home iMac, which someone else is using with their own account. With Snow Leopard, you would only be able to screen share onto that iMac and have access to the other person's screen, not your account with the presentation file. Now with 10.7 Lion, when you login through the Finder, you are given an option to either view the screen of the other person's account or access your own account to grab the file.

The best part is that the other person's account stays untouched and you are accessing your account all in the background, remotely. The other person using the iMac never even needs to know that you grabbed a file off the computer. They won't be interrupted at all and now now you have your file. If you have MobileMe this can even work completely remotely from anywhere in the world with the Back to my Mac service.

It truly seems like Apple is taking their strides at remote computing to the next level with Lion and it appears they are doing a great job thus far. These remote screen sharing enhancements in Lion seem to be truly beneficial to anyone with multiple Macs, and just makes the whole computing experience more efficient. Lets hope this all comes free this summer. This also reminds us of rumors about the iPhone 5 being remote computing on steroids.



iMac screen sharing with MacBook Air on a different account

MacBook Pro Showcases Thunderbolt's Speed

By Agam Shah, IDG News



Intel's Thunderbolt interconnect technology, formerly called Light Peak, has emerged from the company's lab and will soon find its way into product, including Apple's new line of MacBook Pro laptops, Intel said Thursday.

First announced in 2009, Intel's Thunderbolt technology will transfer data between host devices and external devices at speeds of up to 10 gigabits per second, Intel said on its website. Thunderbolt will be able to transfer a full-length high-definition movie from an external storage device to a PC in less than 30 seconds.

Apple will be the first to offer Thunderbolt technology in its new line of MacBook Pro computers, also announced Thursday, and other companies such as LaCie and Western Digital will offer products based on the technology in the future.

The company collaborated with Apple in developing the interconnect, said Jason Ziller, director of Thunderbolt planning and marketing at Intel, during a call to discuss the technology.

Ziller did not comment on when Thunderbolt ports would become available in other laptops and desktops, saying PC makers needed to be contacted directly on their plans. PC makers such as Sony are backing Thunderbolt.

Thunderbolt is a breakthrough, and provides performance, simplicity and flexibility in laptop design, Ziller said. Thunderbolt could help reduce the number of connectors on PCs, which could make laptops thinner and sleeker.

The technology was specially designed for audio and video enthusiasts, Intel

said. Users can get real-time processing by synchronizing high-bandwidth audio and video between PCs and other devices, cutting the lag time that exists with other technologies.

Contrary to what Intel said when the company first talked about Thunderbolt in 2009, it will not use light to provide high-bandwidth data transfers between devices, an Intel spokeswoman said in an e-mail, without providing further detail.

Initial builds of Thunderbolt will be based on copper, David Perlmutter, executive vice president and general manager of Intel's Architecture Group said in an interview at CES last month. Optical technology is expensive and will be implemented over time as it gets cheaper, he said.

For the majority of user needs today, copper is good, Perlmutter said. But data transmission is much faster over fiber optics, which will increasingly be used by vendors in Thunderbolt implementations.

An Intel spokesman in an e-mail said that optical cabling for Thunderbolt will come later this year. Intel in the past has said that optical technology could help provide faster data transfers over longer distances than electrical technology.

But Intel is very happy with the current Thunderbolt implementations using electrical technology, and data transfers are very fast, Ziller said.

Thunderbolt could compete with connector technologies such as USB, Firewire, and HDMI (high-definition multimedia interface), which link PCs to external storage, audio devices and displays. Laptops and devices with

USB 3.0 ports started reaching store shelves last year and offer data transfer speeds up to 5 gigabits per second. Intel has held off support for USB 3.0 on its PC chipsets, which has been a topic of concern for PC makers, which have had to implement third-party controllers to add USB 3.0 ports to laptops.

Thunderbolt is complementary to USB 3.0, which is mainstream and widely supported on many devices, Ziller said. There are many USB storage devices already available, and Thunderbolt could be an alternative on price and performance in the future, Ziller said. Nevertheless, Intel will continue to support USB 3.0 and PCs could come with both USB and Thunderbolt ports.

Intel, however, has said that Thunderbolt will be complementary technology, and support many data transfer, networking and display protocols through a single, unified connection. Thunderbolt currently communicates with devices using PCI Express for data transfers and DisplayPort for displays, Intel said. All devices can connect to a PC using a single hub, reducing the need to have multiple connectors.

The bidirectional PCI Express and DisplayPort channels in the connectors can transfer data 10 gigabits per second in each direction, so theoretically users could be transferring 40 gigabits of data per second simultaneously, Ziller said.

Special Thunderbolt connectors and cables will be needed to connect devices, and Intel is working with component manufacturers to deliver those. Products with Thunderbolt would also need to have a controller chip supplied by Intel, which is being made available to the industry, Intel said.



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