



June 2006 Double Click Main Meeting Report

by Jim Macak

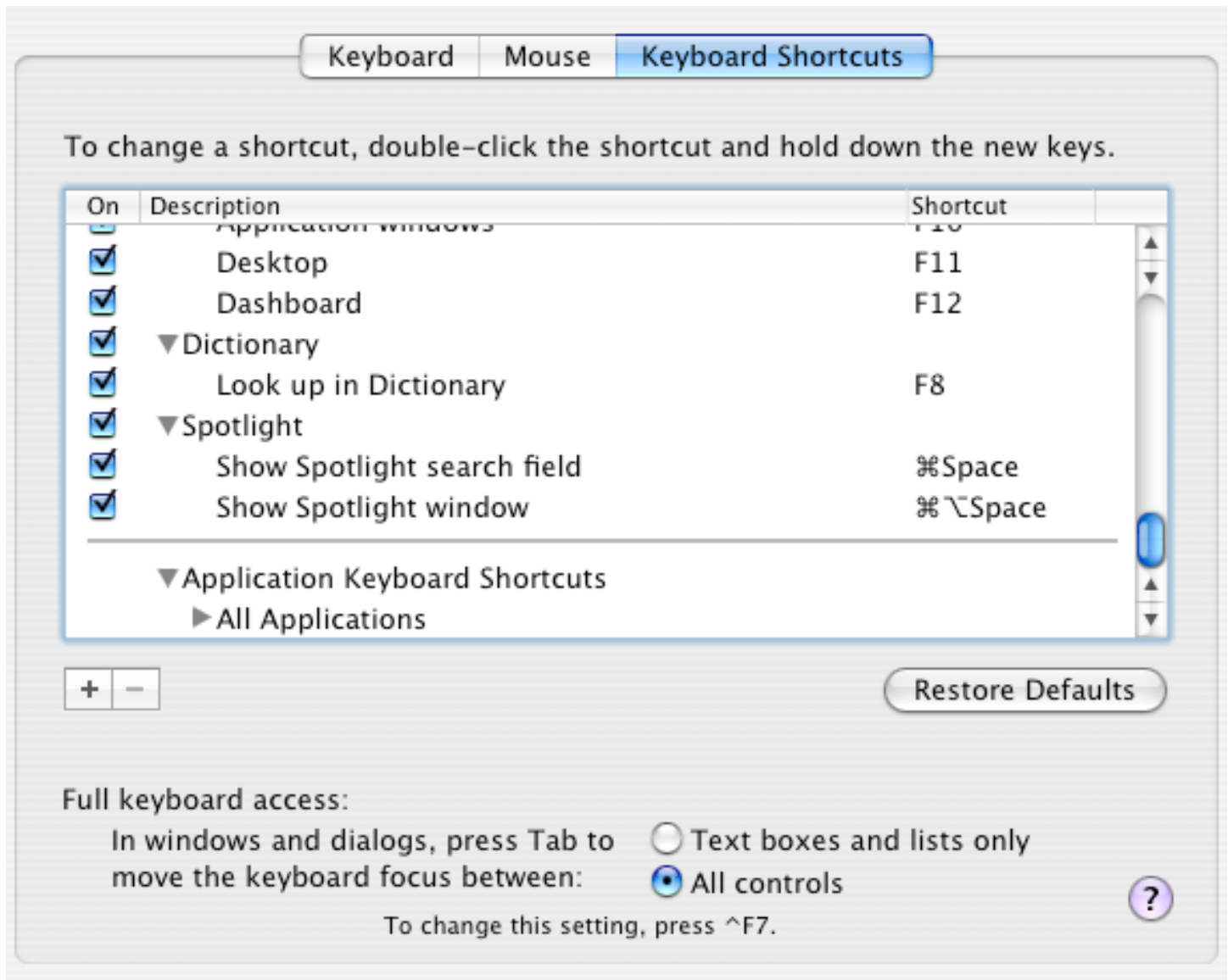
The June 11th Double Click meeting was opened by Double Click President Jim Macak. Attendance was a bit higher than average on the somewhat cool June afternoon. The announced agenda included the Beginners SIG presentation, the main demonstration by Dan Neesley and, concluding the meeting, a special "Super Raffle." The special prize for the additional raffle was a one-year subscription to Apple ProCare, which provides training, priority repairs, advance reservations and more at our local Apple Store.

<http://www.apple.com/retail/procare/>

Beginners SIG Session

Steve Parker presented his "Beginners SIG" demonstration. Among other tips, he showed how to customize the application menus under OS X, adding custom key combinations.

This customization is accomplished via the "Keyboard Shortcuts" tab of the "Keyboard and Mouse" preference pane of "System Preferences" application.



"Q & A" Session / Announcements

The Questions and Answers session followed Steve's presentation. As usual, a wide variety of topics were discussed. Some printing and printer set-up problems were addressed, the new Apple MacBook (the Intel-based replacement for the iBook) was reported to have received a positive initial "buzz," and some iPhoto questions were addressed.

Jerry Smaglik, Double Click's Treasurer, discussed two new ideas to promote familiarity amongst Double Click members. Each would consist of very brief "talks" by members at our monthly meetings.

The **"3 Minute Ticker"** would be an opportunity for you to tell the rest of us at the meeting about a great computer program or feature you came upon... or something that turned out to be a waste of money! You could tell us about your best (or your worst) computer purchase, hardware or software, or perhaps about a good or bad experience relative to computer service. Share it with the rest of us! As the title of this feature implies, members will have three minutes to tell their story. A limited number of speakers (one or two) will be featured each month.

"Tell Us About Your Business" would provide Double Click members an opportunity to introduce the group to their business in a five to 10 minute talk. Suggested points that you may wish to address would be:

- are you the owner, or a key employee?
- when did your business start?
- what product or service does your company provide?
- tell us about the Mac computers you use.
- how can Double Click members help you?
- what do you consider a good referral?

Your membership in Double Click provides you access to computer expertise... now it may also improve your customer base. There may be customers for you right in the room!

Members interested in presenting a "3 Minute Ticker" or "Tell Us About Your Business" talk should email Jerry at <jsmaglik@wildblue.net>.

File of the Month

Jim Macak presented a single "File of the Month" at the meeting.

VLC Media Player 0.8.5

Product Description:

VLC media player is a highly portable multimedia player for various audio and video formats (MPEG, MPEG-2, MPEG-4, DivX, mp3, ogg, ...) as well as DVDs, VCDs, and various streaming protocols.

Jim noted that VLC is especially handy if you download an audio or video file from the Internet that is in an unusual format and won't play with the various utilities that one normally uses for playback under OS X. Just as *GraphicConvertor* is superb for viewing a very wide variety of graphic formats, VLC enables one to hear and view a wide variety of audio and video formats.



Product Requirements:

Mac OS X 10.3.9 or higher

Freeware

<http://www.videolan.org/>

or

<http://www.versiontracker.com/dyn/moreinfo/macosx/14738>

Main Presentation

"One Man's Mac" and "Parallels" was presented by Dan Neesley, Double Click member, Mac aficionado and consultant. (In 1984, at North Shore Computers, Dan introduced many of us "old timers" to Macintosh, "the computer for the rest of us," and his leadership in hosting information sessions for local Macintosh users eventually led to the formation of Double Click.)

Dan started out by outlining the foundation of his organization of his own Macintosh under OS X: he doesn't use the "Documents" folder in his Home folder. Although the "Documents" folder is installed by default and Apple encourages users to store their files in the "Documents" folder, Dan argues that other files may be put there by applications and he'd rather keep his own files completely separate. Hence, he keeps all his files in a new folder that he has created in his Home folder. He calls it "All My Stuff" and he creates sub-folders in "All My Stuff" for email, photos, downloads, etc. With his Mac organized this way, he knows for certain that all of his stuff is indeed in his "All My Stuff" folder and is therefore pre-packaged for back-up, searching, sharing, etc.

The remainder of Dan's talk touched on a myriad of tips, suggestions and recommendations, including software, hardware, purchasing, organizing and more.

Following are links that Dan supplied to me after his talk. I've also added a few links from his talk. Some of the annotations to the links are Dan's, but most were added by me.



MacUpdate – A site that tracks software updates for your downloading pleasure. Dan notes: This site loads *much* faster than the "old standby" VersionTracker.com.

<http://www.macupdate.com/>

Backdrop - A simple utility to fill your screen with a giant blank window, helping you focus on the window in which you are currently working.

<http://www.johnhaney.com/backdrop/>



Easy Find - An alternative to or supplement of Spotlight which finds files, folders or contents in any file without the need for indexing.

<http://www.devon-technologies.com/products/freeware/>

AppZapper - Completely uninstalls applications and all of their associated files. (Perhaps safer to use than the commercially available "Spring Cleaning" from Allume.)

<http://appzapper.com/>



Parallels – Run Windows on your Intel-based Mac.

<http://www.parallels.com/en/products/>

Take Control Ebooks - Highly practical, tightly focused electronic books covering Mac OS X, Macintosh applications, and hardware.

<http://www.takecontrolbooks.com/>

Academic Superstore – Discounted computer shopping for students and teachers.

<http://www.academicsuperstore.com/>

Tidbits - A free email and Web publication covering the Macintosh Internet community: All the News that's Fit to Byte!

<http://www.tidbits.com/>

43 Folders - A website about personal productivity, life hacks, and simple ways to make your life a little better.

<http://www.43folders.com/>

CyberGuys – Computer products store. Dan recommends that you get their paper catalog. (Click on the "Contact" link.)

<http://www.cyberguys.com/>



HP LaserJet 1022 – Pictured here is the new (current) version of the HP LaserJet printer that Dan recommended. List price is \$200.

<http://tinyurl.com/hk68e>

HP LaserJet 1012 – Dan notes: This is the one I showed. It's been discontinued in favor of the 1022 which is faster and has a longer duty cycle. *Only the 1012 and the 1022 are Mac-compatible.*

<http://tinyurl.com/g3vd2>

Other World Computing – In Woodstock, IL, a long-time seller of Macintosh peripherals, upgrades and accessories.

<http://eshop.macsales.com/>

OWC miniStack – An external hard disk drive the size of a Mac mini

<http://eshop.macsales.com/shop/ministack/>



OWC On-the-Go Pocket Hard Drives – Small, portable, with a clear case.

<http://eshop.macsales.com/shop/firewire/on-the-go>



OWC - Hard Drive to USB 2.0 adapter - Turns any ATA or SATA drive into a convenient external drive. About \$25.

<http://tinyurl.com/e8zvq>

Granite Digital – “Hot-swap” hard disk drives and cases.

<http://www.granitedigital.com/catalog/index.htm>



CoolDrive - Serial ATA HD to USB Case with removable trays.

<http://cooldrives.stores.yahoo.net/dusatousb20h.html>

PopChar X - Tired of searching and remembering keyboard combinations for umlauts and other special characters? Want to get the most out of your fonts? PopChar X makes "typing" of unusual characters easy without having to remember keyboard combos.

<http://www.macity.com/products/popcharx/>

Sam's Club – When shopping locally, Dan finds lots of Mac-compatible computer stuff here!

<http://www.samsclub.com/>

Dan's return to the Double Click podium to share his multi-year accumulation of Macintosh knowledge and experience as he gave us a whirlwind tour of how he keeps his Mac organized, the software tools he uses on a regular basis and the hardware values that he has discovered was very well received. We hope to bring him back for more presentations in the future!

Double Click

July 16th Meeting Preview:

Apple's GarageBand 3

Presented by Chuck Floading, Member, Double Click Board of Directors.



GarageBand 3 is a software application from Apple Computer that allows users to create music. Amateurs and non-musicians are the intended audience for this often overlooked component of Apple's iLife '06 suite. While *GarageBand* may be the least complicated of Apple's many audio processing applications, it is by no means a toy.

Even if you don't have a musical bone in your body, *GarageBand* makes music making possible. The July demo will help unlock those possibilities for you.

Check the Double Click website for more meeting information:

<http://www.double-click.org>

This meeting report was written and produced by Jim Macak, Double Click's President.

Jim is an Apple Certified Help Desk Specialist and Macintosh help consultant for the Milwaukee area. His website is <http://www.yourmacdoc.com/>