September 2006 Double Click Main Meeting Report

by Jim Macak

The September 17th Double Click meeting was opened by Double Click President Jim Macak. Attendance was about average. The announced agenda included a video presentation of *iLife '06* tips, the Q&A session, the main demonstration about color calibration by Bob Stone and Jerry Smaglik and, concluding the meeting, the monthly Double Click raffle with added "Super Raffle."

Beginners Session

In lieu of Steve Parker's "Beginners SIG" presentation (Steve had to miss this month's meeting) a QuickTime movie by Chris Breen of *MacWorld* magazine was shown. The topic of the video was "*iLife '06* tips."

The first tip demonstrated how to store your *iPhoto* photo library on a volume other than your startup volume. The trick is to hold down the option key while launching *iPhoto*. This will bring up a dialogue box that allows you to choose the *iPhoto* library that you wish to use.

Another tip dealt with adding media to the media browser of *iMovie* by dragging a folder of media into the audio or photos area of the media browser.

An *iTunes* tip for removing gaps in playback of music was next presented. However, it was pointed out at the meeting that "gapless playback" is a feature of the new *iTunes 7* (which was released subsequent to the production of this video).

A *GarageBand* tip showed how to customize "musical typing" and a tip was offered about creating a custom *iWeb* template.

We'll be viewing more of these useful and informative *MacWorld* magazine video presentations (made exclusively for Mac Users Groups) at many of our future Double Click meetings.

"Q & A" Session / Announcements

The Questions and Answers session included discussion of several topics, including...

Missing Sync

One question asked was about transferring address book information from a Palm PDA to a Macintosh. The questioner wondered how to do this using Outlook Express as an intermediary but it was noted that the application *"Missing Sync"* could handle this conversion in one step. The main website for this product is http://www.markspace.com/products.html.

Apple Hardware and Software News

The latest product news from Apple was noted at the meeting. Recently the iMac line was updated with new Intel processors and the whole iPod family was revamped. *iTunes 7* was introduced, offering several improvements.

Member Presentation

We had our first "Tell Us About Your Business" presentation at the September meeting. (See the June 2006 Main Meeting Report for more information about the "3 Minute Ticker" and the "Tell Us About Your Business" meeting additions.) Double Click member Dave Swanson talked about his work as a motivational speaker and as an author of a book about how to write a résumé.

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

November Meeting Help Needed

The year is nearly at its end and the holiday gift season is once again upon us. Following our long-standing Double Click tradition, we invite Double Click members to participate in this "Holiday Show & Tell: A Macintosh Gifting Guide" meeting.

Do you have a favorite Mac item that you find especially useful/fun/handy that you consider a "must-have?" If you think your fellow members might be interested in it too (as a gift or for themselves), how about presenting it at this meeting? Your demo might be a game, utility or productivity enhancement software or a cool hardware add-on. Everyone has something like this... why not share it?

Give the rest of us a gift hint by showing your software or hardware favorite at this meeting. A quick 5-10 minute demo is all that we ask...

Jim Macak is coordinating this meeting so please contact him about what you wish to present to your fellow members in November. Your input to the meeting will be well appreciated!

Files of the Month

Jim Macak presented two items for his "Files of the Month" demonstration at the meeting.

MacTracker
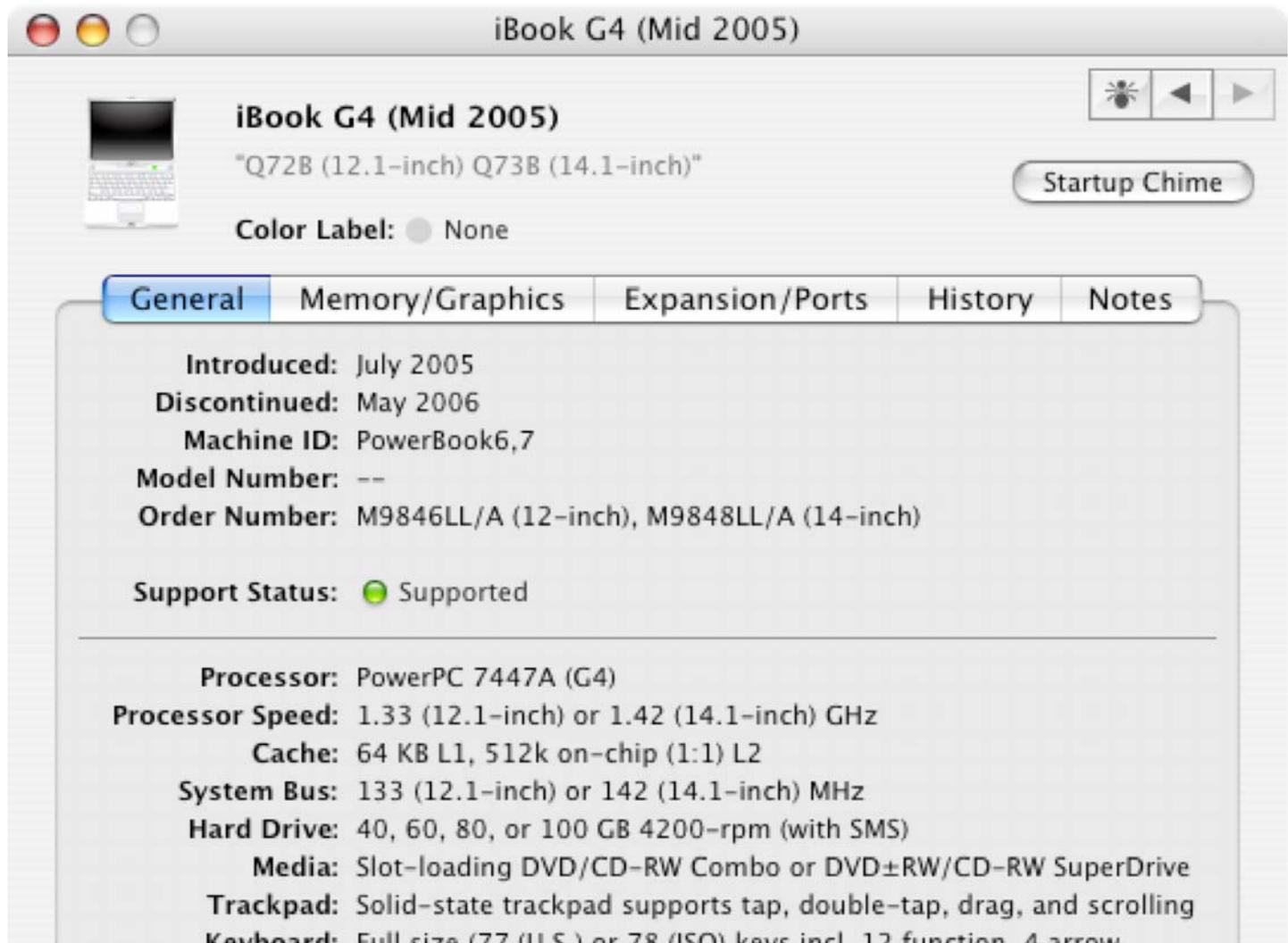
Mactracker provides detailed information on every Apple Macintosh computer ever made, including items such as processor speed, memory, optical drives, graphic cards, supported Mac OS versions, and expansion options. Also included is information on Apple mice, keyboards, displays, printers, scanners, digital cameras, iPod, AirPort Base Stations, Newton, and Mac OS versions.

This info comes in very handy if you are thinking of buying a used Mac and want to check out its specs, or you want to make certain what type of RAM your Mac needs, etc.

MacTracker is freeware.

Requires OS X 10.2 or later
(a separate version runs under OS 8.5 – 9.2.2)

http://www.mactracker.ca/

AppleDailySpecial widget

Each day a number of significantly discounted products from Apple.com's online store are temporarily made available until they sell out. Apple-Discounts.com displays these current-selling "hot deals" in an updated, convenient and easy-to-read format, saving Apple shoppers both time and money.

http://apple-discounts.com/widget.html
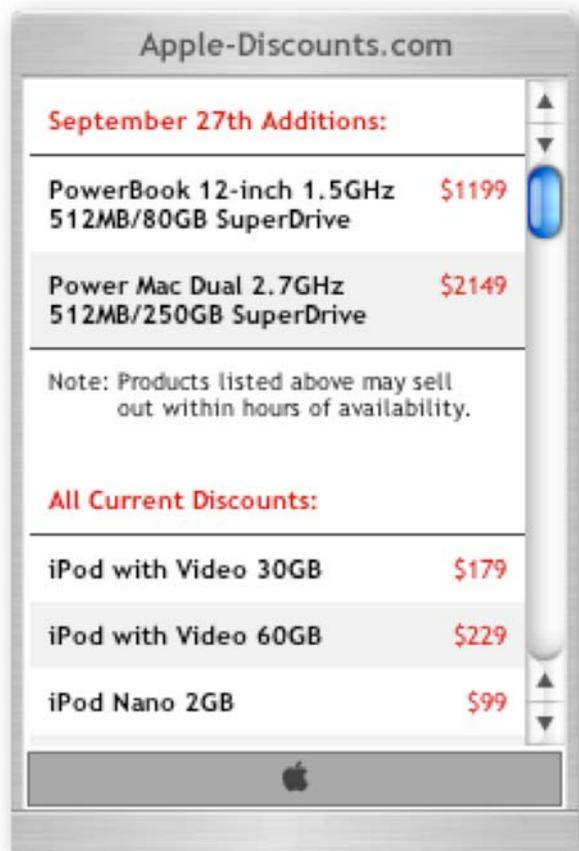
The *AppleDailySpecial* widget is freeware.

Requires OS X 10.4 (Tiger)

Main Presentation – *Notes by Bob Stone*

"Color Calibration of Monitors and Printers"

Presented by Bob Stone and Jerry Smaglik, Double Click Offices.

Monitor Calibration

Although our prints, being ink on paper, cannot exactly match the monitor's light projected image, we want to come as close as possible.

Photos or other images are generally processed in a program such as Adobe Photoshop. Whatever the program, any changes made show up on the screen. However, we cannot trust the onscreen accuracy of the colors or brightness that we see unless the monitor is properly calibrated. The monitor's representation of every color changes over time and recalibration is necessary. (Optimally, recalibration should be done once a month for LCDs and every week for CRTs!)

Using the built-in calibration routines of OS X (available in the "Color" tab of the "Displays" System Preferences pane) is a common way to calibrate. A more elaborate and more accurate way is to use a device placed on the screen that reads colors projected from software that comes with the device. Jerry Smaglik demonstrated the $80 "HUEY," a relatively inexpensive device of this kind. Bob Stone brought a "Spyder2" (a $250 item) that has more depth than "HUEY." Bob recommends Monaco's "Optix" for the serious minded color user.

Interestingly, calibrating a monitor in no way changes the information being sent to a printer. Rather, what is accomplished is that we can now see more accurately what is being sent to the printer.

Printer Settings

Sunday's demo concentrated on Monitor Calibration as part of Color Management. So far, so good... Next: Printing!

Problems with respect to inaccurate color printing are mostly due to mistakes caused by improper instructions to the printer. Bob showed an EPSON printer dialog in his demo and not every setting made sense for other printers. However, the basic principles are the same: choose Adobe RGB as your color space and choose the correct printer/paper/ink as your print space.

From this point on we move to the printer side of our settings and *again* look for choices regarding paper type. (These choices are often in a drop down menu found by clicking on "Copies & Pages".) Move down to "Print Settings" where we change the default media type from "Plain paper" to what we are using. Go back to the "Print Settings" line and click to open the list. The next line is "Color Management". Three choices are given: "Color Controls", "Color Sync", and "No Color Management". Because we want Photoshop to control our color we *must* choose "No Color Management"!

If we mistakenly choose Color Sync we will be asking our computer to double color manage, an impossible task, resulting in off colors.

How Good is Good Enough?

Some of us want our scanner and printer to do better than the factory furnished profile allows. To accomplish this, we can obtain a customized printer profile by sending away for a color chart that we then scan, print and send back (and wait), *or* we can purchase the tools to do our own profile making. Only pros and addicts succumb to owning the high-end equipment to profile each and every paper/ink combination. To send away, the cost is $40.00 for each paper/ink combo you want. The custom profiles are almost always an improvement over the factory stuff, especially as the scanner ages. Less expensive procedures are available but they do not compare favorably to the $40.00 profile or high-end equipment.

Links

http://www.pantone.com/ - HUEY calibration

http://www.colorvision.com/index_us.html - Spyder2 calibration

http://www.cathysprofiles.com/ - custom printer profiles

ℂ double Click

October 15th Meeting Preview:

"Internet Searching with Google:
Tips and Tricks"

Presented by Patricia Lidicker,
Double Click Officer

The use of www.google.com in order to perform a search of the Internet has become so widespread that the term "googling" has entered the common vernacular. Most Google users, however, have no idea what power lies beneath the plain and simple Google home page…

Our presenter for this meeting searches the Internet as part of her daily job. Patricia has learned many of the fine points of performing Google searches and will share them with us during her presentation.

Most everyone knows how to do a simple Google search, but did you realize a simple search can be "fine tuned" and that there are some advanced commands that can significantly narrow down the results you get from a search? (Do you really want to wade through 500 "hits?" I didn't think so!) Patricia will also show how to use the Google image, map, finance, and news specialized searches as well as the "alerts" feature… and, if time allows, there are a heap more, including a new video search.

Come to our October meeting and learn how to get the most out of your Google experience. Find out what your searches have been missing!

Check the Double Click website for more meeting information:

http://www.double-click.org

This Double Click meeting report was written, edited and produced by Jim Macak, the President of Double Click, Inc..

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