

Magazine of the Apple User Group of Canterbury Inc.

# Applebyte



June 2009



Try before you buy to your hearts content  
at the Sydney Apple Store!

*David Chilvers*

**Waimairi School**

**June 24<sup>th</sup> 7:30 pm**

**APPLEBYTE** is the monthly magazine of:  
Apple User Group of Canterbury Inc.

Submissions for publication are due by the 12th of the month of publication. Please submit all articles to:

**editor@appleusers.co.nz**

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The magazine is printed by PrintStop (<http://www.printstop.co.nz>).

# Meeting venue

Meetings are held on the last Wednesday of each month (except December) beginning at 7:30pm, at Waimairi School at the end of Tillman Avenue, off Bligh's Road.

Drinks and snacks are available while we all calm down after the excitement of the meeting.

Some members carpool to get to meetings. If you don't have a car and find it difficult to get to meetings, please contact a committee member to arrange transport. Usually there is someone living near you who can offer a lift.



# Meeting programme

Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> April 2009

## Monthly Meeting

- Welcome and News
- MacBasics - Raewyn Saunders
- New releases: WWDC et al - Peter Fitchett
- iMovie '09 - Craig Saunders

Come along and share your passion for Apple products. Learn about the latest technology, and enhance your skills. And meet with old and new friends over supper. Also remember to try your luck with the evening's raffle. Visitors welcome.



# Submitting your article

Electronic submissions are preferred (to save wear and tear on my fingers). Just choose whatever format suits and send it to:

**editor@appleusers.co.nz**

One page is roughly 450 words. Most articles are less than 4 pages, but longer articles may be accepted if of particular interest or relevance. Please ask in advance if you are planning a longer article.

Please write clearly; short sentences are recommended to help you do this. Use a spell-checker. If you are quoting some other article, please include an acknowledgment of your source.

Pictures can help explain your article, so by all means include one (or more) if appropriate. The format is not important - jpeg, tiff and gif are all fine, but try to provide a high quality image (300 dpi) if possible.

For screen shots, you can use the build-in Apple functions Apple-Shift-3 or Apple-Shift-4, or a utility such as Snapz Pro, available from:

**<http://www.macdownload.com>**.

## Next Deadline: 12 July 2009

### Logic

*Peter Fitchett*

Do you get really intrigued by something that you read in the Press? Do you wonder who it was that wrote that article, or who approved republishing the article - they didn't think about it at all, did they?

A recent article from "The Washington Press" (of course I read it daily - not!) fits this situation. In the article they suggest that the simplicity of writing apps for the iPhone (write once and you are done) may come to a screeching halt with the release of the new iPhone.

The basis for this suggestion lies in a remarkable finding reportedly from Engadget - who determined from the technical specs that there were new facilities in the hardware of the new iPhone that were not in old iPhones! (I hope that they didn't spend too much to perform this remarkable research.) Anyway this leads to the conclusion that going forward, some apps may not work on all the devices. They also claim that this is pretty complicated stuff, so I hope that you are not too confused by the idea.

Finally, because an app that uses a new hardware feature can't run the same on an old model without the feature, Apple's claim of 'write once' is called into question, and all other platforms that cannot claim 'write once' must seem much more reasonable.

Are you able to follow the logic here?

# Prez sez

*Bart Hanson*

The documentary (Welcome to Macintosh) Peter played at last months meeting reminded me of all the reasons I love using a Mac. The early years of the two Steves at the Homebrew Computer Club, Apple's steady development over the years, and not least, the place of the Macintosh in the the public psyche today, of a machine and operating system that is both elegant and cool.



All this has come about through Apple and it's people, especially Steve, not accepting second rate along the way.

Non Mac users like to infer that Mac users need to belong to an exclusive club and that we are somehow fickle for preferring a machine that has a perceived higher purchase price. I find it is not worth trying to argue against this as it is just a perception, not reality. For me, the real advantages Apple have are the synergies gained from matching elegant hardware to the best (fully Unix compliant) OS, topped off with a beautiful GUI called Aqua.

Mac users may look like religious zealots worshipping at the feet of Steve Jobs and while we do stand in awe of the man, Mac users think more (as well as differently) about why they prefer to use a Mac than nay sayers are prepared to give them credit for.



I purchased my first Mac in 1993 (it was a IIsi with a 20 GHz processor, a 40 MB HD and 9 MB of RAM) to assist me with designing stained-glass windows. It helped me perform this task admirably but I soon found myself wanting to dig deeper to find out what made the magic.

For me those early days felt like a marvelous journey of discovery. SuperPaint, Fractals, early Quicktime, fun fun fun!

We take so much of the magic of today's Macs for granted, but I still appreciate belonging to a group of like minded people for whom the wonder also remains.

See you at this month's meeting!

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# Review: ScriptPal

MacWorld

A few years back, I extolled the virtues of Doug Adams's repository of AppleScripts for iTunes (<http://dougscripts.com/itunes/>). The hundreds of iTunes scripts available from Doug's site give iTunes features you've always wanted—or never realized you needed. I covered some of my favorites in that previous article.

There's just one problem: once you get hooked, iTunes's scripts menu can get so crowded that it's tough to find a particular script. And unlike OS X's systemwide scripts menu, you can't organize the iTunes version into folders to give the menu some much-needed organization.

A solution to this menu mess can be found in Doug's own **ScriptPal**, a nifty iTunes add-on that takes your iTunes scripts and puts them in an attractive, resizable window that floats above iTunes, disappearing when iTunes isn't the frontmost program.

ScriptPal's palette-like window lists all your scripts, giving you easy access to any of them; it even recognizes aliases to AppleScripts stored elsewhere. Double-click on a script name to run the script; option-double-click to open the script in Script Editor. You can also right-click on a script name to show the actual script file in the Finder (inside

**~/Library/iTunes/Scripts**  
or

**/Library/iTunes/Scripts**)  
or to search Doug's site for that script; the latter option is useful for making sure you have the latest version.



But what makes ScriptPal especially useful—and superior to iTunes's menu—are its organizational features. The first is that ScriptPal recognizes folders inside the Scripts folder. I long ago created subfolders inside iTunes's Scripts folder to make some sense of the contents. ScriptPal's window reflects that organization, correctly displaying those folders; double-click on a folder (or click on its disclosure triangle) to view or hide the folder's contents.

The second organizational feature is that you can create groups *within* ScriptPal. Select the scripts you want to group together, click on ScriptPal's Action menu, and then choose Make New Workgroup; click

on the Action button again and choose Save Workgroup As to name and save the new workgroup. You can then use the Action button to switch between viewing all scripts and viewing any saved group.

If you've assigned a keyboard shortcut to a script using System Preferences, that shortcut will appear next to the script name in ScriptPal. Unfortunately, you can't assign keyboard shortcuts from within ScriptPal—a useful feature I'd like to see in a future version.

For heavy users of iTunes scripts, ScriptPal is a useful add-on.



*Thanks to Dan Frakes, Macworld.com, for this review.*

# MagnumMac

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# Special offers

*Peter Fitchett*

**Note:** These specials are available to all user group members.  
**Contact** Peter ([web@appleusers.co.nz](mailto:web@appleusers.co.nz)) for access or coupon codes.

## **WebYep**

The PHP-based CMS "WebYep" offers handy plug-ins for Dreamweaver, RapidWeaver and Freeway. It can also easily be integrated into existing websites either via these plug-ins or via direct source code editing. The outstanding features of WebYep are its extreme ease of use for editors and the minimum integration effort for web designers. These features make WebYep the ideal solution for small to medium websites. Further details at: <http://www.obdev.at/webyep/>

This Apple user group special is 20% off the regular price of EUR 29.00

This offer is valid through **June 30, 2009**.

## **TimeTable**

TimeTable reads and filters iCal calendar data and calculates the hours spent in the events. It is the easy way to list the amount of hours that you have scheduled in iCal. TimeTable makes it simple to track and bill for your time without keeping a second record outside of your calendar. You even can find trends and analyze your calendars. Further info and 14-day trial: <http://www.stevenriggs.com>

Using this special offer, Apple user group members get a 20% discount.

This offer is valid through **July 31, 2009**.

## **designProVideo**

designProVideo.com (the sister site of macProVideo.com) produces pro-level tutorial videos for Adobe CS4 and Final Cut Studio. Their trainers are Apple courseware authors and respected industry professionals! Watch tutorials online or download them to your computer. There's no need to wait for discs to be sent in the mail. Start learning now!

Apple user group members can save 40% off the regular Online Tutorial Library subscription price of \$25 (US). For just \$15 (US) a month, you can access the entire designProVideo.com Online Tutorial Library. As a subscriber, you'll also receive an additional 25% discount on all HD Tutorial downloads! Further info:

<http://www.istudiopublisher.com/index.php/store/>

This offer is valid through **July 31, 2009**.



## MacScan Protection

MacScan from SecureMac quickly detects, isolates and removes spyware from Macintosh computers using both real-time spyware definition updating and unique detection methods. It also includes Internet clutter cleanup with blacklisted tracking cookie detection and removal. Since 1999, SecureMac.com has been at the forefront of Macintosh system security. The site also operates as a clearinghouse for news, reviews and discussion of Apple computer security issues.

Regularly available for \$29.99 (US), this special user group is discount 20% off. Try before you buy with free trial at:

<http://macscan.securemac.com>

This offer is valid through **October 31, 2009**.

## Mac|Life

Mac|Life is THE mac magazine that changes all the rules. Mac|Life recognizes Apple's dynamic role in work, play and life and will appeal to core Apple users. With fresh insight, in-depth how-tos, stunning design and exclusive information, Mac|Life helps users realize their full potential. Mac|Life is the ultimate magazine about all things Apple.

Mac|Life is offering a one-time Apple User Group member charter subscription rate of \$14.95 (US) for 12 issues, a savings of 40% off the basic subscription price. Check out the site at:

<http://www.maclife.com>

This offer is ongoing.

Offers also available from:

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Peachpit Publishing  
TidBIT Publishing  
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**Note:** These specials are available to all user group members. Contact Peter ([web@appleusers.co.nz](mailto:web@appleusers.co.nz)) for access or coupon codes. For further specials, see our website.

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# WWDC 2009



Apple's WWDC 2009 (Worldwide Developers Conference) is held in San Francisco every year. 5,200 developers attended from 52 countries.

The first WWDC Keynote speech in many years without Steve's trademark presentation (he's coming back to work at Apple next month after making a recovery from poor health) was still exciting, with Phil Schiller leading off with updated MacBooks, Bertrand Serlet spoke about some exciting new features in Mac OS X 10.6 (Snow Leopard) and Scott Forstall on the iPhone 3G S and the new iPhone OS 3.0 SDK.

## MacBook

Apple has added a 13-inch model to the MacBook Pro line and added new ports to some machines. These include an SD slot and firewire 800 port.

The new 13-inch MacBook Pro comes with an Intel processor up to 2.53GHz, memory expandable to 8GB, and starts at US\$1,199. This replaces all the current aluminium 13-inch MacBooks.



The 15-inch and 17-inch MacBook Pros now comes with an Intel processor up to a 3.06GHz and memory expandable to 8GB. Both have had a price cut, with the 15-inch model now starting at US\$1,699 and the 17-inch model at US\$2499.

The MacBook Air has also been updated and now starts at US\$1,499 with a 1,86GHz processor. With 128GB Solid State Drive, it will start at US\$1,799, representing another price cut.

The only MacBook left in the laptop lineup is the white polycarbonate model, starting at US\$999. Its configuration has also been updated.

## Snow Leopard (Mac OS X 10.6)

Highlights of Snow Leopard include a further enhancement of the 64-bit architecture, QuickTime® X and next-generation multicore and GPU processor support. Apple says its engineers focused on refining 90 per cent of Leopard, making it faster and reducing its size. Of particular note, Finder, Mail and Time Machine all run significantly faster. A Snow

Leopard installation is also much faster, and requires up to 6GB less drive space.



Snow Leopard supports large amounts of RAM, increases performance, and improves security while remaining compatible with 32-bit applications. The new OS provides improved support of multicore processors using a technology Apple calls Grand Central Dispatch, and includes an implementation of OpenCL, a new interface to allow applications to run some of their code on the super-fast graphics processor in the computer.

Apple has integrated Mac OS X Mail, Address Book and iCal support for Microsoft Exchange Server 2007 in Snow Leopard. Exchange to-dos, folders, and e-mails appear within Mail. iCal and Address Book show integrated personal and Exchange calendars and contacts. All is Spotlight searchable.

Snow Leopard requires 1GB of RAM and is designed to run on any Intel Mac. Sorry, but the PowerPC processor is not supported by Snow Leopard.

Single licenses for Leopard (Mac OSX 10.5) users to upgrade to Snow Leopard will be US\$29 and the five-license Family Pack will cost US \$49.

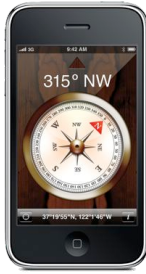
Safari 4.0 with the new Nitro JavaScript engine loads web pages over three times faster than IE 8 according to VeriTest's iBench Version 5.0 on default settings. This is available to be downloaded immediately.

## iPhone

The New iPhone 3G S (the S stands for speed) hardware includes a 3 megapixel auto-focus video-capable camera, digital compass, voice interface, twice the processing power, and hardware encryption. The 3G S comes in 16GB (US\$199 subsidised) and 32GB (US\$299 subsidised). The previous model the 8GB 3G (which Apple is keeping on the market) is slashed to US\$99 (subsidised). The US \$99 version is available today while the iPhone 3G S will be available from June 19th (depending on your country).

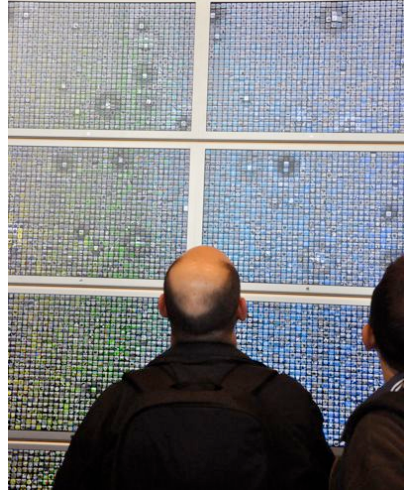


The new iPhone OS 3.0 gets Cut, Copy and Paste functions, shake to Undo, many new Developer APIs, Cocoa Touch support for text, landscape mode updates, spotlight, and MMS (to



be available in the USA once AT&T have it ready). A tethering ability will allow you to use your iPhone as a cellular modem (connecting your computer to the internet), integrated TomTom GPS navigation using the digital compass will give turn-by-turn navigation, locate your iPhone via MobileMe, (play a sound to help you locate it, regardless if it is set to silent), and even wipe your data remotely (if you think that you may be permanently parted from your iPhone).

At the WWDC venue Apple created a clever wall of 30,000 iPhone app icons using 20 Mac Pro Towers driving 20 Apple Cinema Displays and using Quartz Composer and the OpenCL API's in Snow Leopard. Each app icon lights up, then pulses whenever the application is downloaded.



If you have a broadband connection you can watch the keynote yourself here:

<http://www.apple.com/quicktime/qtv/keynote/>

The Joy of Tech™

by Nitrozac & Snaggy



Baby Geek's first words.

# Editorial

*Peter Fitchett*

Well it has been a great month to watch our favourite news sources; there has been so much to feed to yearn for something new. From Apple, WWDC was a big item with lots of announcements, but they also released updates to the iLife'09 programs (except iWeb) and upgraded the base MacBook model earlier in June as well. The other big item to excite the press was the release of the Palm Pre phone - designed by ex-Apple employees now working for Palm. (in fact one of them, the chief designer, has just replaced the CEO of Palm!!) The Palm Pre is the closest thing to a competitor to the iPhone to be released by anyone. Also last month we saw Microsoft's new search site, <http://www.bing.com>

Although these announcements have filled many columns of press, both printed and on the web, this is vastly exceeded by all the 'predictions' and wishful thinking that 'expert' commentators continually reported prior to the official announcements. The American Constitution formally recognised the Press as having a special and protected place in our society, but I am not sure whether the "Freedom of the Press" was really intended to protect these troops of fortune-tellers - they are not really reporting the news or providing an analysis of events; they are just publishing rumours for the glory of a 'good headline'.

A vast number of these predictions failed to receive validation in the official announcements, leaving many disappointed commentators carefully picking over their rumour lists for the items that they could then claim to 'have got it right!' Not so for some others; they were happy to 'distort the facts' a little to justify a continued faith in their published rumours. The much mis-reported Apple netbook computer model is an example that comes to mind. In spite of Apple's statement to financial analysts earlier this year, this non-product has continued to be widely predicted as likely to be announced at WWDC. It wasn't, of course, as we all know. Shortly after WWDC, another expert article was published by a continued enthusiast, who manipulated Apple's product price list to show the "gap" left for a coming announcement of such a netbook. It appeared that there was a large gap between the US\$999 price at the bottom of the MacBook range, and the \$299 price of the iPhone - leaving the netbook nicely fitting at the US\$6-700 range. This, of course, ignores the fact that the \$299 price is heavily subsidised, and the true list price of the iPhone is \$699 - oppps, there goes that gap in the price range!

Of course, if Apple did announce a netbook, wouldn't this same press have a field day calling for all sorts of investigations, and raising the prospect of multiple legal cases relating to Apple misleading the markets by its false declaration that it was not working on a netbook. Most of us can't have our cake and also eat it, but it seems to me that maybe the Press is exempt from this restriction as well.

# Review: iBank

Bob Carpenter

## iBank 3.4.2

**Review by Bob Carpenter**

**Developer: IGG Software (<http://www.iggsoftware.com>)**

**Price: \$59.99 (Upgrade price: \$29.99)**

**Pros: Mac-like interface, numerous features**

**Cons: Price**

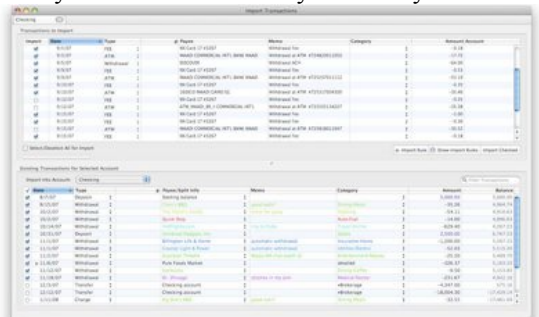
Throughout history, people have searched for the Holy Grail. Alas, my search hasn't been quite so lofty. However, at times, it has appeared to be just as fruitless. I've been searching for a Mac personal finance program that I was completely happy with. Like most of you, I first started out with a version of Quicken that came pre-loaded on my Mac. Unfortunately, while the Mac version of Quicken may share the same name as its Windows' cousin, it's not the same program. I also found it to be very finicky on my Mac and likely to crash when I upgraded OS X if I didn't buy a new version of Quicken. Also, don't even get me started on Intuit's upgrade policy. :-)

As a result, I started looking into various personal financial management programs. I was never happy with any of them, but I was happiest with Moneydance. Unfortunately, its Java interface meant that the program never works exactly like a Mac program would. However, it did what I wanted it to do and I just learned to live with the entry quirks. Entering transaction splits were especially frustrating.

However, because of an announcement in the Apple User Group bulletin, I decided to contact IGG Software for a review license of iBank to see if it finally filled my personal finance management need.

### QIF (Quicken Interchange File) import

This was vital to me because I wasn't willing to start out from scratch. I needed to be able to export my Moneydance data and have iBank seamlessly import the data so I could hit the ground running. I give credit to iBank that I was basically able to do this. I say "basically" because when iBank took my original QIF file that I exported from Moneydance, it created both accounts as checking accounts. It didn't affect the data, but I wanted to be able to use the visual cues to distinguish my



savings and checking accounts. I also found that if I renamed one of the accounts, it messed up my account balances. On further reflection, that made sense because my money transfers from one account to another couldn't find the other account name. It would've been nice to receive a warning before I renamed the account that this could happen.

However, since iBank allows you to selectively import transactions from the QIF file, I simply created the accounts prior to importing the QIF file and selecting which transactions went to each account. It would've been nicer to use the "Create accounts for this file" option, but it caused the problem of making every account look like a checking account. Since I know that QIF files can differ from program to program, it's possible that the QIF file that left Moneydance didn't have all of the information that iBank needed to know that these transactions belonged to a savings account and to choose the appropriate account icon. While manually selecting the transactions was a bit tedious, I only had to do it once and I had the accounts set up the way I wanted them.

### Transaction Entry

To me, this is where "the rubber meets the road". If entering transactions isn't easy, you won't do it and having the program is worthless. After using iBank for a month, I'd give it an A- for entry. As you might expect, you simply select "Add New Transaction" from the Transaction menu or simply hit Command-N as I do. When you first start entering transactions, you'll have to type out your Payee, Amount, Category, etc. After having this information defaulted in for me in Moneydance, I was disappointed. However, as I started using iBank, it started remembering my transactions as Moneydance did. I was hoping that by importing my data that iBank would start the memory process. Unfortunately, it only remembered the transactions that I had actually entered by hand. Luckily, since most of my transactions are the same from month to month, it only took until the beginning of the next month to see that iBank started remembering what I entered last month.

In transaction entry, there are three views: List, Cover Flow, and Thumbnail. I have to admit that I don't see the need for having Cover Flow in my finance software, but there's probably someone out there that loves it. The list view takes up the least real estate, but I actually prefer the thumbnail view (pictured here). I do wish the actual graphic that went with the transaction could be resized to be smaller. However, I found the thumbnail view the easiest to read.





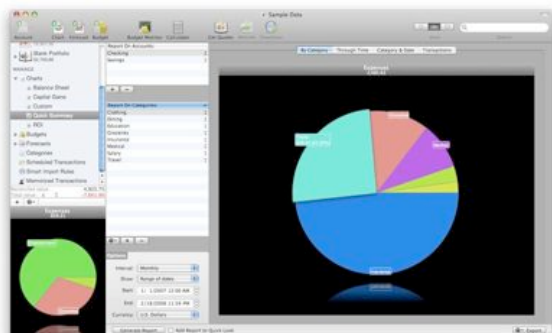
I do like that iBank has different graphics to go with your different income and expense categories. That can be useful for determining at a glance what type of transaction it is. I only wish that IGG included graphics for all of their built-in categories. It will allow you to drag in your own graphics. However, your graphics will look very grainy unless you use 512x512 pixel icons like IGG uses. The graphics that IGG includes look very professional. I just wish there had been more of them.

Another part of transaction entry is entering a split transaction. A split transaction is a transaction that belongs to several categories. The easiest example I have is my credit card bill. I pay for many things with my credit card ranging from food to a software purchase. Being able to separate these expenses gives me a much better idea of where my money is going. Entering splits in iBank is easy. Simply click on the "+" button in the Splits section. By default, you won't see this part of the screen unless you click on the blue triangle to show the expanded transaction entry screen. iBank does a nice job of keeping track of how much money is remaining in your split transaction. That makes it easier to avoid mathematical errors where your splits don't add up to the original transaction amount. I do wish that iBank saved my split information from month to month as well as the transaction itself. If I start entering "Disc", iBank knows it's my Discover Card and puts in the previous month's balance (which I do have to re-enter each month). However, it doesn't remember my split information. That's unfortunate for me since a lot of the splits are identical each month (cable bill, phone bill, etc.).

## Reporting

If you're not looking carefully, you might not see reports in iBank. That's because they're hidden under Charts. When you create a chart and select which income and expense categories you wish to see, there's a "Generate Report" button that gives you a PDF report by month and income and expense category. I found the pie chart useful to look at for my expenses. I would've preferred a nice graphical representation of income vs. expenses.

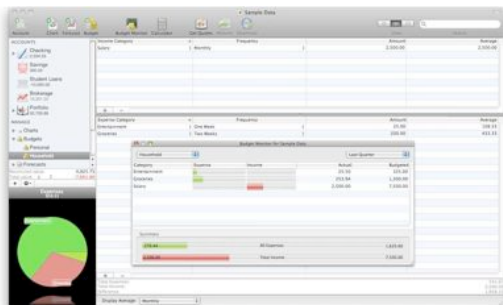
iBank does have their bar graph of income and expenses through time, but I didn't find that chart as useful to me. I also would've liked the option to have iBank have intervals like "Current Month", "Current Quarter", etc. Right now, I have to change the dates if I want the chart to reflect the current month or quarter. That's not as convenient as I would like.





## Budgeting

iBank does include the ability to create a budget. It was sufficient for my needs since my past budgets have been simply "hey, stop spending money now". As a result, the budgeting that iBank includes is much better than I've done for myself in the past. Doing this review forced me to think about how much money should be spent on each category based on my past spending and what my spending should be. Just going through the budgeting exercise made reviewing iBank worthwhile. Knowing that I should review this module made me sit down and think about how much I should be spending in each category. However, for more sophisticated budgeters, I'm not sure that iBank will have enough features for you. For instance, I didn't see a way to do an "envelope budget" where you save your money for a future expense. With the way my teeth are going, that might start coming in handy. :-)



With iBank's budgets, you simply choose the income and expense categories and how frequently they occur. I did have to change my paycheck to monthly because the "every two weeks" option isn't the same as being paid twice per month. Once you set

up your budget, you simply click on the budget monitor to see how you're doing. Unlike with the reports, you can simply choose "month to date", "last month", etc. without having to worry about entering any dates. I only created one budget, but iBank does allow you to create multiple budgets. I don't have the need for this, but I can see how other people might.

Investment accounts and smart import rules I've lumped these two together because I really didn't test either of these. I tried setting up my Roth IRA as a investment account but iBank expects this account type to be used when you are buying and selling shares. I couldn't find a way to simply enter my gain/loss based on my monthly statement using an investment account. Looking at iBank, it does allow you to download current share prices for your stocks or mutual funds.

iBank also allows you to download your account information directly from your bank if your bank supports this option. To be honest, I wasn't interested in giving iBank access to my bank account information. I have no reason to distrust IGG, but I'm quite paranoid when it comes to my financial account information. However, iBank can also import a file that you download manually from your financial institution. My institution, JP Morgan Chase, does support downloading files in the new OFX (Open Financial Exchange) format which replaces the old proprietary

QIF format. iBank easily imported this file and automatically reconciled the imported transactions that I had already entered that matched the transactions in the file from the bank.

The smart import rules go one step further where you can eliminate hand entry of your transactions and simply download your transactions from your bank. The smart import rules screen looks like a Finder "find file" screen where you can choose multiple conditions where if a payor matches "X" and some other field matches "Y", then the category should be "Fuel". If I downloaded transactions from my bank, I can see where this would be useful. Otherwise, you end up having to re-categorize your transactions that you just downloaded which eliminates much of the time savings.

### **Reconciling accounts**

Along with transaction entry, this is the other vital functionality for me. If it's too hard to reconcile the account, I'll drop the program like a hot potato and find something else to use. iBank doesn't stray too far from the tried and true Quicken reconciliation process, but it does add a slight Mac twist to it.

To reconcile your account, you create a new statement. iBank will ask you the beginning and ending dates of your statement. Those dates are normally easy to find on your bank statement. One nice thing about iBank is that it defaults to reconciling all transactions between those dates. Moneydance, by comparison, will only reconcile those transactions automatically if you're downloading them as opposed to reconciling manually. Now, if any transactions need to be unreconciled, you simply drag the transaction from the reconciled portion of the statement to the unreconciled portion. By not having to click on the transactions that should be reconciled between those dates, it saved a lot of time and prevented errors.

I do wish there was an easier way to reconcile your historical transactions that came before you started using iBank. I had to create a "Historical statement" that went from the date of my first transaction (my beginning balance had a date of 12/31/1969) to the day before my first iBank transaction. It took a few minutes for iBank to churn through the transactions, but it was worth it to me since the unreconciled transactions only showed those transactions that really weren't reconciled.

### **Final thoughts**

As you can see, iBank has a lot to it. I didn't even touch on its Forecasting tool since I didn't try it out. I've enjoyed using iBank as I've been trying it out for this review. That's why the only con I listed was price. When I went to IGG's website to download the review copy, I remembered why I'd passed it by before. For my needs, \$60 was a bit steep. If you use all of iBank's features, then I feel it's a very fair price. Hopefully, at some point, IGG will consider an iBank Lite that didn't

have the investment, forecasting, and online download features that could sell for \$30-\$35.

While there are a few rough edges, iBank is the best program I've found so far for doing personal financial management on my Mac. I realize there are people who run Parallels or VMWare Fusion simply so they can run the Windows version of Quicken or Microsoft Money, but that's not something I'm willing to do. I bought a Mac because I like running Mac software. There's the rare exception where I have no choice but to run Windows on my Mac. However, thanks to developers like IGG, personal finance software isn't one of those exceptions for me.



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# Safari

*Peter Fitchett*

Safari is Apple's Web browser. It began as an in-house replacement to Microsoft's Internet Explorer for Mac, which Microsoft didn't update or improve on at the same rate as it did for its Windows counterpart.

Safari is currently in its fourth version, and in the latest version has received Cover Flow-style bookmark browsing, history search, a visual bookmarks start page, a large-size tab style that mimics Google's Chrome, and a rather large dollop of speed.

Unlike most Apple software, the Safari update was made available as a public beta at the beginning of the year for both the Mac and PC. There were a number of interesting features made available to determine their reception. In general, most of the features have been well received, as there were only minor tweaks in the final version of Safari 4, when it was released during the WWDC. Safari is now a serious browser for serious Windows users, and its position on Macs has been bolstered; but that is not to say that it will satisfy everyone all the time.

Users of Safari 3 will be hard-pressed to not notice that the interface is completely new, with a look and feel much more in line with the other major Webkit-based browser, Google Chrome. The browser launches with the menu bar, tab bar, and status bar all hidden, presenting you with the location bar, bookmark bar, and the slick Top Sites interface. Top Sites is essentially Opera's Speed Dial feature, presenting your most commonly visited Web sites, with a Cover Flow-style skin. The black background, curvature, and reflective window bottom make this the most professional-looking Web browser around. A blue star and an upturned corner indicate that a site has been updated since your last visit to it. Tap the Edit button in the bottom left corner to remove a site or pin a site permanently to Top Sites.



In the beta, Apple experimented with a Chrome-style "tabs-on-top" that it has abandoned in the public release. The font for the tabs was often hard to read, and made Safari look excessively like Chrome. The new tab style now looks much like the old tab style. It is good, however, to see that Apple is looking at the user-interface, and trying different ideas.

Cover Flow is now available as a graphic way to browse your bookmarks and history, however, if you've got a somewhat older computer you still won't be able to use any of these graphics improvements.

Another new change in the public release is that browser crashes caused by plug-ins, (like Flash, Shockwave, Silverlight, etc.) are now sandboxed (protected in memory so that they cannot interact with other programs). If a plug-in crash, only that plug-in will be affected. The page that it's on will continue to function (while not showing the affected part of the page), and you can reactivate the plug-in by reloading the page. Unfortunately, this is not very easy to test, as the browser and the available plug-ins just don't seem to want to co-operate by crashing.

Safari 4 is also the first non-beta browser to fully complete the Acid3 Web standards compliance test. This means that it will display web pages very accurately - if the page is written to web standards. There are still a lot of sites written explicitly for Internet Explorer (usually the 4-year old IE6) which may continue to be a problem to view. (This is also a problem for many other browsers, including those Microsoft competitors on the PC, and this is a significant motivation for them to be backing the EU watching Microsoft so much at present.)

Apple's big claim with Safari is that it's the fastest browser on the market, and Apple just might be right on that count, but like all statistics, there is a 'but ...'. Performance measurements do depend upon the hardware configuration, and also on what webpages you use for the tests. Google's Chrome does manage to edge Safari out of the top spot on some pages, and Firefox also manages this a couple. It is even reported that there is a page somewhere where Microsoft's IE 8 edges out the other browsers! All that aside, I think that it is quite safe to state that Apple has produced a pretty fast browser for us, and Safari is one of the fastest browsers out there. However, it still lacks extensions, and for many Firefox users that's enough to keep them from switching.

Another area where Safari is excelling, is memory consumption; unfortunately this is not such good news for us. In other words, Safari is still a RAM-devouring beast. With two tabs open, visiting 2 test sites, it was using a shocking amount of RAM--more than 500MB. Google Chrome consumed about 75MB of RAM across the same two sites under the same circumstances, while Firefox required 120MB.

That aside; this is a very nice browser, a worthwhile upgrade, and I would strongly recommend that you download this if your computer configuration will permit you to use it.

*Online Advertising has blown a gaping hole in the classified-ad portion of newspaper revenue. Who is to blame; Google or Craigslist?*

An anonymous correspondent offers some middle-of-the-night thoughts on the question:

It's not at all about blame-casting. It's about proper diagnosis for treatment and recovery. If papers are critically ill from classified revenue woes (Craigslist, eBay, informal email, ...) but they falsely self-diagnose as being sick from over exposure in Google News, then they'll end up closing their borders by withdrawing from news aggregation sites at Google, Yahoo, MSN, and elsewhere. That won't hurt Internet companies [like Google] at all, but it will leave publishers with fewer new visitors, less online monetization opportunities, and still obliviously infected with disappearing classified revenues. They will get sick faster, and journalism as democracy's conscience will weaken. That will hurt every other company, every citizen, and nearly every country.

The only blame belongs to the publishers. Craigslist, like all startups, was originally funded with pennies on the dollar compared with what media empires spend. It still is! Craigslist has not been bought/co-opted/copied by any of the major publishers even though doing so would have been a natural idea. Readers are moving online but publishers act as though they will go there only if dragged rather than racing to their only life saving destination. News is valuable, but you can no longer get it in printed form as it is hours old by the time you get your paper -- CNN and online news sites had it hours ago! Analysis is worth waiting for, but that is what magazines like The Atlantic are all about. Newspapers will never be about selling your old BBQ again. Ads at random, scattered between unrelated stories, are not part of the future of shopping.

These are the issues for papers to agonize about; to wring their hands about; and maybe even to beg money to solve. Unfortunately, they've been copying the ideas and technologies invented and introduced by William Randolph Hearst for so long that they forgot his example of how to innovate for the modern day. Hearst, were he living as a 'Rupert Murdoch' of today, would own Craigslist by now, would have an industrywide micropayment system, would have recruited legions of readers as hyper-local bloggers, and otherwise employed the tools and resources of our day to advance his cause just as he brought cartoons, drawings, and later photographs and color to his readers in his.

What do you think?

# Power PC - RIP

*Peter Fitchett*

Apple, a company that's rarely namby-pamby about making technological changes, has put its foot down once again with its Snow Leopard upgrade to Mac OS X due in September.

When the new operating system arrives in September, it'll work only on Intel-based Macs. That means Mac OS X 10.5, aka Leopard, will be the end of the line for those with Macs that use PowerPC processors. The good news is that Leopard will continue to support the PowerPC processors, so the software that you have now will continue to do the same things for you as it does today.

It was four years ago that Apple first told the world it was switching from PowerPC chips to Intel's x86 chips. Even though PowerPC models arrived afterward and the first Intel-based Macs didn't start arriving until 2006, three years is a long time for computers. Anyone who hadn't upgraded by now isn't the sort who demands cutting-edge technology.

Much of what's important about Mac OS X 10.6 isn't consumer-oriented features, but rather underpinnings to let Mac software take better advantage of new processor directions--Grand Central Dispatch for multicore processors and OpenCL to use graphics chips for general-purpose computation. Although Apple sold high-end PowerPC-based machines with two dual-core processors, they wouldn't benefit much from Snow Leopard's abilities to juggle multiple jobs at the same time, and it's likely that most people with that large a computing demand have already moved on to Intel-based machines.

And supporting new operating systems on older hardware is expensive. Bug fixes and security patches must be tested on a much wider array of systems. The expense is even higher with the complexities of supporting multiple processor families.

## **What will PowerPC users miss?**

Mac OS X 10.6 has other features, to be sure, and Apple drew more attention to them than to the lack of PowerPC support at its Apple Worldwide Developer Conference in San Francisco. For example, Snow Leopard gets built-in support for Microsoft Exchange servers, which will make Macs coexist more easily in corporate networks and let people avoid Microsoft's Entourage software. Also arriving is a method to more easily shift among one application's open windows is another, a faster and more flexible Finder to browse files, faster backup with Time Machine, and higher-resolution video chat.

But the way I see it, those extra features are more refinements than revolution. For most users, there is really little incentive to upgrade to Snow Leopard, and I suspect the new low US\$29 Mac OS X 10.6 upgrade price (or US\$49 for a household with up to five Macs) is set to

provide some encouragement - after all, it is to Apple's benefit, as the support costs are sure to be lower for Snow Leopard .

Infrastructure that will help tap into multicore processor power is important. I'm still not expecting any free lunch for developers--it'll still be hard to write software split into parallel chunks that run independently in separate threads--but providing an operating system foundation that handles some multithreading chores stands to help the Mac ecosystem broadly. The fact that the only Macs available today with more than two processor cores are Mac Pro models costing at least \$2,499 indicates that Apple recognizes the today's limits of multicore chips for most users. An examination of Intel's road-plan shows the ballooning of the number of processors per CPU chip in the next year or so, so I am sure we will be seeing more processors in Macs, even the low-end Macs.

Over the past 20 years, Apple has shown that it's more focused on the future than on the past, and it's clear that multicore chips are the future. Getting performance from them is crucial to the success of any software.

### **Breaking with the past**

Maintaining backward compatibility is a tough act in the computing market, where hardware changes faster than customers upgrade. Microsoft, has extended support for elderly software such as Windows NT 4.0 and Windows XP, but Apple has been willing to draw the line on many other occasions besides the Snow Leopard change.

Here are some examples:

- The company switched from Motorola's 680x0 family of processors to the PowerPC line in the mid-1990s. To ease the transition, Apple provided translation software that could run older programs for 680x0 chips on the newer machines.
  - After leading the charge for years with 3.5-inch floppy disk drives that were significantly smaller than the 5.25-inch models in PCs, Apple ditched the built-in floppy drive altogether with the 1998 introduction of the iMac. Need a floppy? Get an external drive.
  - Also going by the wayside with the iMac was the Apple Desktop Bus, which had been used to connect keyboards and mice. Apple embraced the USB technology that began its life on the PC side of the industry.
  - FireWire, standardized as IEEE 1394, is perhaps something of an exception. The Apple creation had superior data transfer speed compared to USB, but Apple no longer embraces FireWire universally. Today, MacBook Pro laptops have FireWire ports while the MacBook Air doesn't and consumer-oriented aluminum MacBook models introduced in 2008 didn't.
  - ExpressCard, which inherited the the expansion-slot throne from the PCMCIA standard, is another victim of Apple's calculus. The company's newly announced MacBook Pro line ditches it in favor of an SD Card slot for flash memory cards. Only a "single-digit percentage of
- page 24 **Applebyte**



customers" was using the ExpressCard slot, said Phil Schiller, Apple's senior vice president of worldwide marketing, in his speech at WWDC

- When it comes to connecting external monitors, Apple anointed DisplayPort when seeking a successor to the mini-DVI port in earlier MacBooks, passing over an entrenched alternative to DisplayPort, HDMI (High-definition Multimedia Interface). Adapters can help bridge the gap, though, for those who need to support incompatible displays.

### **Innovation's consequences**

Not everything is an either-or proposition. Apple's gradual transition to a 64-bit operating system--a transition it says Snow Leopard completes--was eased by compatibility for older 32-bit drivers so older hardware didn't suddenly break. In comparison, Microsoft has strained hard for years to try to get hardware companies to release 64-bit drivers to let Windows communicate with their products.

But often, change does come at the expense of last year's technology, and it can be rough on us when it's time to move on. How many of you have thrown out (or stored in the garage) old printers, scanners, modems, external SCSI disks, and so on, that will not connect to your Mac today?

Microsoft, in updating Internet Explorer, has had to maintain compatibility with IE 6, a browser introduced eight years ago, in part because so many businesses don't want to rework processes that rely on it. Apple, with a relatively small market share and low penetration into businesses, can move ahead to Safari 4 in a much more liberated way.

Apple wraps itself in the flag of innovation, and if you're a Mac user, you should expect both the ups and downs of that philosophy.

PowerPC, thank you for your service. R.I.P.

## **SeniorNet Mac**

**Computer Training Lessons:** Two-hour sessions, once a week for four weeks. Course notes are provided. Classes are small with a maximum of six students and two tutors per lesson.

**Social Events:** Held on the fourth Tuesday of the month.

**Newsletter:** Supplied every two months.

The **Learning Centre** is situated in the Cranmer Centre Poolhouse, which is accessed from Montreal Street at the Armagh Street corner.

Contact: If you would like to join SeniorNet Mac and are in the 55-plus age group, please contact Allan Rutherford at (03) 352-4950, or email:

**ajmr@xtra.co.nz,**

or else leave a message on the club's answerphone at (03) 365 2003.

# WolframAlpha

*Peter Fitchett*

I mentioned the new WolframAlpha computational knowledge engine last month. Have you had a bit of a play with it? The rest of the world has, with some interesting discoveries of just what the site knows about us and our environment. Here are some of the questions that people have asked, and the resulting answers ...

Q: To be or not to be

A: that is the question (according to the William Shakespeare)

Q: How much wood would a woodchuck chuck if a woodchuck could chuck wood?

A: a woodchuck would chuck all the wood he could chuck if a woodchuck could chuck wood. (according to the tongue-twister)

Q: How old are you?

A: 1.887 days {on 2nd day after site opened to public}

Q: How many angels can dance on the head of a pin?

A: Angels are pure intelligences, not material, but limited, so that they have location in space, but not extension. Therefore, an infinity of angels can be located on the head of a pin. (according to Dorothy Sayers)

Q: 88 MPH

A: speed at which Marty McFly needed to drive the DeLorean DMC-12 in order to time travel

Q: Are you?

A: I am capable of universal computation; that I can say.

Q: What is the answer to life, the universe, and everything?

A: 42 (according to ... well, you know!)

Q: 1.21 gigawatts

A: power required to operate the flux capacitor in the DeLorean DMC-12 time machine

Q: Why did the chicken cross the road?

A: To get to the other side.

Q: What is the air speed velocity of an unladen swallow?

A: there is unfortunately insufficient data to estimate the velocity of an African swallow (even if you specified which of the 47 species of swallow found in Africa you meant) (asked of a general swallow (but not answered) in Monty Python's Holy Grail)

Q: What do you like?

A: I like to explore the computational universe

Of course, there are a lot of meaningful answers too, so give it a try; perhaps place names and dates to get started ....

# Bing

*Peter Fitchett*

As you may have heard, Microsoft has released a new search engine, Bing (after they were unable to buy Yahoo's search engine last year). At first, I thought that this should have been Bling, but it does appear that Microsoft want to stick with Bing. The Press is making a big thing of this new "Google killer" (why does everything have to be some sort of 'killer' in the Press?) but I think that in a few months we will have a better idea of how Bing (<http://www.bing.com>) will fit into our search needs. In the meantime, I decided to try some of the questions that were posed to WolframAlpha ...

Q: How much wood would a woodchuck chuck if a woodchuck could chuck wood?

A: The correct answer was the 3rd result given - and it provided a link to Yahoo!

Q: How old are you?

A: No answer, but the 5th result is an age calculator!

Q: What is the answer to life, the universe, and everything?

A: 42 - in the 1st result.

Q: Why did the chicken cross the road?

A: Several answers available: KINDERGARTEN TEACHER: To get to the other side. PLATO: For the greater good. ARISTOTLE: It is the nature of chickens to cross roads. KARL MARX: It was a historical inevitability.

Q: What do you like?

A: Bing decided to change the question to 'How do you like?' - but still didn't answer the question.

What is your experience? Bing appears to be designed to provide a similar function as Google, and it may be that which is a better tool for us will be just personal preference .. time will tell.

## Group contacts

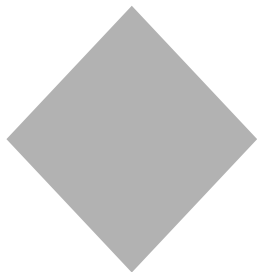
Website <http://www.appleusers.co.nz>

Mailing Lists **Peter Fitchett** (3) 960 8189  
[listadmin@appleusers.co.nz](mailto:listadmin@appleusers.co.nz)

The AUGC Discussion List is for members who wish to discuss club matters.

The HELP list is open to all Mac users who wish to give or receive assistance.

# About the user group



## Aims

*The Apple User Group of Canterbury Incorporated (AUGC) is a non-profit organisation which exists for the purpose of exchanging ideas and expertise about the use of Apple computers, the Macintosh operating systems, and related hardware and software.*

## Committee

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Help: A full list of helpers and volunteers can be viewed in the Contacts section of our website.

Snail Mail: PO Box 31-053, Christchurch, New Zealand.

Website: <http://www.appleusers.co.nz>



Apple User Group