

KeyMac Journal

Volume 11, Number 4

<http://www.keymug.com>

April 2007

President's Message

Step right up and take a chance on a...

Wayne Walker started attending Greenville's MUG, and he and I went to the Greer MUG last month. We are expanding our horizons, and we hope we can bring interesting ideas back to make our MUG better for you.

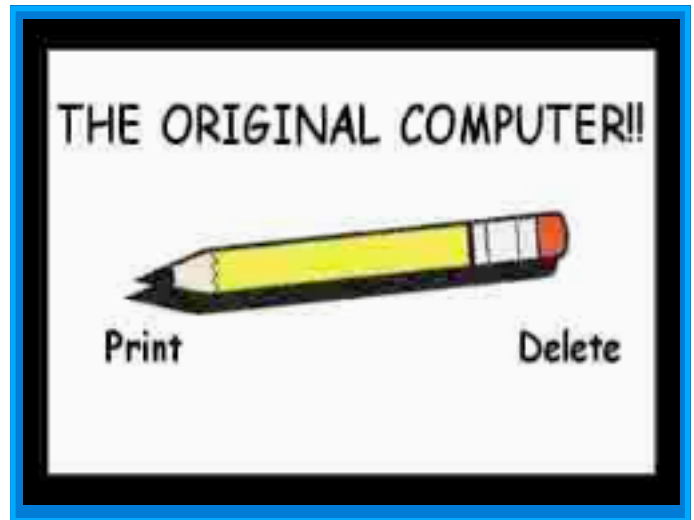
Many MUGs find a way to get free products from software and hardware vendors, then have drawings at their meetings to award them to members. Wayne has begun the process and he expects to have a few items to raffle at the next meeting. With a little work, we can have Lucky Draw raffles at every meeting. The money will go into the KeyMac treasury, so we can ponder what to do with our excess riches.

It will work like this: \$1 for one chance, and \$2 for three chances. We will have the drawing when we come back from the snack/coffee break — often folks have to leave early to get somewhere by noon. This then begs the question of whether you have to be present to win, or will we allow you to write your name on the ticket? Maybe we can have a voice vote on that as we begin the meeting.

See you Tuesday—bring some cash.

Gene

Late Breaker: In the push to get the iPhone out on time, Apple has been forced to delay the release of the next version of Mac OS X until October.



MONTHLY PROGRAMS

April 17: "The State of the Words," a conclusion of the two-part review of Word Processors for Macintosh computers, and if time allows a look at the powerful but forgotten utility Activity Monitor.

May 15: "The Insider's Guide to Making a Web Site." Wayne Walker will show how web sites work, how they have evolved and an overview of how to make a web site.

June 19: "Power Googling: How to maximize your search efforts in Google."

OS X DISCUSSION GROUP

Informal gatherings where members help members

May 1 10 a.m. to noon

June 5 10 a.m. to noon

MASTHEAD

Published by the KeyMac Computer Club

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TREASURER'S REPORT

Balance March 13, 2007	\$1301.87
Deposits: dues paid	115.00
Interest:	.55
Balance April 9, 2007	\$1417.42

ANNUAL TRAINING CLASSES

Mail and Internet Thursday, May 10 9-12 a.m.

Jack Leitch will be conduct the last training class of this season in the Cherokee Room at the Activity Center. Please notify Jack (phyjac@mindspring.com or 944.6255) or Gene Madill (madillg@bellsouth.net or 944.7161) as soon as possible. The class is limited to fifteen people. □

JOURNAL INDEX

Gladys Calhoun has updated the index of articles from past *KeyMac Journals*. You can access the index on our web-site: <http://www.keymug.com>

PUTTING YOUR HARD DRIVE ON A DIET

by Wayne Walker
(part two)

This is the second in a series of articles explaining how to stretch the life of your current hard drive by cutting back on the fat. For our purposes, fat on your hard drive is all those extra programs or files that you are either not using or hardly ever using, the stuff that takes up space without being useful. Our goal is to free up as much space as possible on a Mac hard drive so that buying a new drive can be at a time when we choose to buy one rather than having a drive with no space left force us to buy one before we're ready.

Last time we looked at a program called Monolingual that removes the extra language features of both the OS itself and the programs loaded onto your drive. Because these resources vary with each program loaded, it is impossible to predict exactly how much space Monolingual will save. When I tried it on my MacBook, which has a smaller hard drive and not as many loaded programs as my desktop Mac, I saved 200 Mb. I have heard reports of up to 3 Gig from other sources. Your mileage may vary.

Hard Drive Diet Tip #2 -- Trimming Universal Binary Files



This time we're looking at another tool for saving hard drive space called Xslimmer. In order to understand what Xslimmer does and why it's useful, it's first necessary to review a little Mac history.

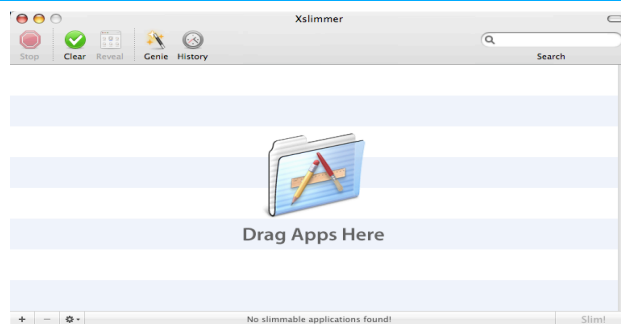
In June of 2005, Steve Jobs announced at the World Wide Developer conference that starting in 2006 Macs would have Intel based CPUs. This was a stunning announcement to the Mac faithful. The Mac had originally been based on Motorola RISC CPUs then PowerPC (PPC) chips from a consortium of developers that included Motorola, IBM, and Apple. In the years

leading up to the 2005 announcement, these PowerPC chips had become problematic for a number of reasons which are outside the scope of this article. As a result, Apple finally decided to shift from PowerPC chips to Intel chips for the brain behind the Macintosh.

Many folks predicted dire consequences as a result of this shift. They feared everything from slower computer to crashing software. Indeed this shift required a great deal of work from the programmers who made software for the Macintosh as so many things changed behind the scenes and had to be reprogrammed. However, with the advantage of hindsight, we can see that the transition to Intel chips went smoother than anyone predicted, probably even smoother than Apple's marketing department itself had dared hope. In our current Mac environment, all new Macs come with Intel CPUs and many older Macs coexist peacefully side by side still supported by Apple and various software vendors. If there is a requirement of any kind, it is usually that you have a certain OS version.

One way that Apple achieved this transition is by inventing programs in a format that has come to be called "Universal Binary." Most modern Macintosh programs are sold in universal binary format. There are exceptions to this such as Appleworks which exist only in PPC format, and notably some games that require an Intel Mac to run. For the most part, however, the vast majority of the programs currently available are in universal binary format. Let's break down the name: Universal because it runs on all Macs, and Binary because there are two code forks within the program itself. This means that there are actually two sets of computer code, one optimized for Intel and one for PPC that the computer can run, and the program chooses which to use by checking your computer when you execute the program. If you have an Intel CPU based Mac, the part of the program designed to support PPC is totally useless to you. It never executes, but it sits on your hard drive taking up space. Similarly, if you have a PPC Mac, the Intel portion of the program is never executed.

This is where Xslimmer comes in. Xslimmer removes that unused code stub, thereby freeing up space on your hard drive. This space varies depending on how the program itself is constructed, but it can approach 50% of the amount of space the program occupies on your disk.



Xslimmer's interface is easy and simple to use. All you do is drag an application's icon to within the Xslimmer program. When you do this, Xslimmer does a fast analysis of the program you just added. Xslimmer is smart. It determines which code set you need, and if you've dragged something to it's list that is not a universal binary, you are informed that the "Application cannot be slimmed further." After adding programs, the user clicks on a simple 'Slim' button and Xslimmer grinds through the programs you've added removing the extra code. Xslimmer also has the ability to remove language packs in a similar way to Monolingual (although Monolingual edited the OS itself which is beyond Xslimmer), and this is turned on by default. If you do not want this turned on, or want to protect certain languages, you must configure that in Preferences. Xslimmer also keeps an internal blacklist of applications that it should never try to slim down, and this list is updated automatically through your Internet connection.

In my test of Xslimmer, I added just 10 programs on my computer, and in less than 30 seconds, Xslimmer had saved me over 1.1 gig of space. Easy, fast, painless. Again, your mileage will vary depending on exactly which programs you are slimming down.

Xslimmer is available from www.xslimmer.com. Although it isn't free, it's the next best thing by being very affordable. An Xslimmer license currently goes for only \$11.95. I heartily recommend Xslimmer.

MULTIPLE IPHOTO LIBRARIES

by Mike Wall

I have a lot of images stored in iPhoto and even though I make extensive use of Albums there are times when navigating around the Library can still get confusing. In particular, if I have a large number of new pix from some special trip or event, I find I would like another level of separation to keep these apart from all the

others. iPhoto makes it easy to do this by creating entirely separate Libraries; it's easy to do, here's how.

1. If iPhoto is open, close it (iPhoto > Quit)
2. Hold down the 'Option' key and reopen iPhoto; a screen will appear which asks if you want to 'Create Library' or 'Choose Library' (in the event you already have more than one).
3. Click 'Create Library' and you will be prompted to give it a name and save it in your Pictures Folder; I strongly suggest you keep it there rather than elsewhere as it will make life easier later when you want to access it. Click the highlighted 'Save' button.
4. A new iPhoto screen will open with nothing in it; simply import your pictures from a camera or elsewhere as you usually would. They will reside in this new Library completely separate from all your other pictures.

Choosing which library you want: Make sure you have quit iPhoto, no matter which Library was open. Then, hold down the 'Option' key and start iPhoto; you will again get the screen which asks if you want to 'Create' or 'Choose' a Library. This time, click the 'Choose' button which will bring up a screen with the name of the last Library you used in the selection box at the top. Click the arrow at the right of that box and you will get a drop down menu which will probably show the names of the Libraries you have created; if they do not appear, click on 'Pictures' which will open a new window which will definitely list the Libraries you have. Select the one you want and click 'Open', and there you have it.

The above is based on OS 10.4.9 and iPhoto 6. There may be minor differences in screens or wording with other versions, but they should be small. □

HOW TO FORWARD DELETE ON A MAC

by Ed@Smalldog.com

We recently relaunched our Mac Basics classes. One of the most common questions from recent switchers (besides "can I use a right click mouse?") is how to forward delete, as can easily be done on a Windows PC. Somewhat confusingly, some people simply call forward deleting "delete," and the backwards deleting Mac users are used to "backspacing."

If you use the delete key on almost any Mac, the cursor travels backwards, erasing the words behind it.

However, the Apple Pro keyboard, and many other third party keyboards (such as my incredibly loud but fun-to-

type-on Matias Tactile Pro) have a dedicated forward delete key. Its symbol is an arrow pointing right with an "x" printed on it. On your Apple or similar keyboard, this key is located above the the four arrow keys between the letter portion of the keyboard and the number pad. Again, it will be printed with a right-pointing arrow with an "x" in it, and it may also say "del." See a picture here:



Apple laptops don't have a dedicated forward delete key. To forward delete on PowerBooks, iBooks, MacBook or MacBook Pros, simply hold down the fn key (function key) and press delete. The cursor will gobble up the words in from of it. On MacBooks, MacBook Pros, PowerBooks, and iBooks, the fn key is located on lower left corner of the keyboard, under the shift key.

Some people like to remap their Apple keyboards, so they can dedicate a key to forward-deleting. Many people recommend and use DoubleCommand for this. Read about DoubleCommand here:

<http://doublecommand.sourceforge.net/> □

FIND STRONGEST WI-FI NETWORKS EASILY

by Adam C. Engst <ace@tidbits.com>

Like most other Mac users, when I'm traveling, I often need to connect to a Wi-Fi network to access the Internet for email and Web browsing. But what if there are multiple available networks and I don't know which would be best to use? In the past, I would usually bring up iStumbler (MacStumbler hasn't been updated in years), but Take Control author Sharon Zardetto Aker alerted me to a simpler method that's built into Mac OS X. If you hold down the Option key when dropping the AirPort status menu, it lists available networks in order of signal strength, rather than the usual (and useless) alphabetical sort. Simple, yet effective, although the signal strength sort should arguably be the default, not the hidden option. Alas, the AirPort menu doesn't indicate which networks require a password for access. If you run into that problem regularly and don't mind running extra software all the time, check out Christopher Sinai's CoconutWiFi, which provides a constantly updating indicator of wireless network. □