



The RAG Times

April 2009

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Eight years and counting

by [Rob Griffiths, Macworld.com](#)

In case you've lost track of time, Tuesday March 24th marks the eighth anniversary of the release of Mac OS X (version 10.0.0). In that time, there have been 52 different releases of OS X, counting the public beta as well as major and minor updates. So in honor of this eighth birthday, here are eight great things about OS X.

With more than 300 new features in Leopard alone, I know the following list is going to disappoint some of you—picking just eight means I've certainly overlooked a number of key features, probably including many that you feel should be listed here. So please, feel free to share your list of eight favored OS X features in the comments.



1. **Stability:** Remember the days of unexpected restarts, a single app bringing down the entire OS, and troubleshooting extension conflicts? Neither do I! OS X has, barring certain hardware failures, put an end to my worrying about the stability of my machine.
2. **Multitasking:** Assuming you've got enough real RAM, OS X does a wondrous job of multitasking. On my Mac Pro, after doing a [Macworld Video project](#), I'll often be surprised to find that I've got 15, 20, or even 25 apps open. As the project progresses, I just keep opening the apps I need, not really paying any attention to quitting others first. Even when I exceed the 8GB physical RAM limit on my machine, OS X does a decent job at swapping virtual memory, making the process

not nearly as painful as it was in prior versions of the OS.

3. **The Unix underpinnings:** Sure, not everyone is going to use Terminal every day, but even if you don't, the stability and multi-tasking goodness in OS X comes from its solid, long-developed Unix core. Add in the ability to access that Unix system via Terminal—not to mention running many Linux applications, such as [GIMP](#), natively—and OS X emerges as a do-it-all OS for pretty much any type of user. If that's not broad enough coverage, of course, you can use Boot Camp (and/or a virtualization application) to run Windows on your Mac as well.
4. **The bundled applications:** Sure, I can occasionally grouse about some of the bundled apps—hey, Apple, did you know people actually play more than Chess on their Macs?—but by and large, the overall quality of the OS X bundled apps is quite impressive. Sure, some are overly simplistic (perhaps Snow Leopard will include thousands separators in Calculator!), but many can ably compete with paid-for solutions. Dictionary is a useful utility to look up words locally or by tapping into the power of Wikipedia. iCal is a reasonably powerful calendaring solution. iChat is probably the most-used application on my Mac. iTunes handles most all of

(cont'd page 3)

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* = Member of RIAG Board

NEED HELP?

This is a list of RIAG Consultants. We may not be able to answer all your questions but hopefully we will be able to direct you to a knowledgeable source.

Applesoft: Dave Angell (401) 941-8934
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 Microsoft Windows: Mark Rafferty (401) 232-2023
 Prodos: Dave Angell (401) 941-8934

This is a volunteer service. Please be reasonable as far as calling times are concerned and try to have all the pertinent data at hand before you call. Before calling, have your computer running so we can quickly answer your questions. If you would like your name listed, please call the editor.

Editor's Note

Please note that the date of the April meeting is changed to the 25th of April. Rainaldo is going to give a demonstration of Apple's MobileMe. Did everyone get their taxes done? Tax software and e-filing really make the job a lot easier. See my story about it on Page 4.

John

Club Calendar

SIG = Special (or Specific) Interest Group. These smaller meetings focus on just one type of computer and often can be the place to get more detailed help or advice on your problem.

Monthly Meeting Apr 25, Saturday
 At Mark's house TIME: at 2 PM. Learn all about MobileMe- NOTE change date Map on page 4.

RIAG Board Apr 28, (Last) Tuesday
 At Dave Angell's house. Time: 7:30 PM. The membership is invited. Call (401) 941-8934 for directions.

* AppleWorks SIG (Last)Thursday
 The AppleWorks SIG is taking a hiatus. If you have any questions call Michelle or Dave Angell.

Internet SIG The Internet SIG is ending because of low turnout. If people request it this group will meet from time to time. For dates, location and directions call John at 946-2486.

Up-Coming Dates:

General Meeting Topic: To Be Announced	Saturday	May 16, 2009
RIAG Board meeting at Dave's	Tuesday	May 26, 2009
General Meeting Topic: To Be Announced	Saturday	Jun 20, 2009
RIAG Board meeting at Dave's	Tuesday	Jun 30, 2009
General Meeting Topic: Holiday photos at Mark's House	Saturday	Jul 18, 2009
RIAG Board meeting at Dave's	Tuesday	Jul 28, 2009
General Meeting Topic: To Be Announced.	Saturday	Aug 15, 2009
RIAG Board meeting at Dave's	Tuesday	Aug 25, 2009
General Meeting Topic: To Be Announced	Saturday	Sep 19, 2009
RIAG Board meeting at Dave's	Tuesday	Sep 29, 2009

Please let us know what meetings you would like to see.

President's Report, April 2009

At our April 25th meeting Reinaldo Perez will demo MobileMe. This replacement for .Mac got off to a rocky start, but Apple has been working on it and seems to have ironed out the bugs.

MobileMe keeps your email, contacts, and calendars in sync on both a PC and a Mac. It works with several popular email programs.

Another neat function of this service, allows you backup and then access your files and photos remotely. It allows you to create web pages and share files and photos with others.

It also works with the iPhone and iTouch to keep them up-to-date.

This should be a fun meeting.

I plan to demo the new version of iLife (9) at our May 16th meeting. This set of programs has several new tricks. One of the best is the ability to identify people in a photo!

Mark



Eight years and counting *(cont'd from pg 1)*

my media needs (which are admittedly simple), Mail has handled probably hundreds of thousands of messages for me over the years, Preview has evolved into a multi-talented image- and PDF-handling utility, and Safari is simply the dominant browser on the Mac.

5. Once you throw in iLife (which is included free with all new Macs, so it's more-or-less like the included applications), the bundled software suite on the Mac is an impressive collection of applications.
6. Drag-and-drop install: Although more complicated applications often run via an installer, I love being able to install most applications with a simple drag-and-drop. Sometimes this simplicity causes troubles for new Mac users, but I love it.
7. Built-in PDF support: After eight years, I take this for granted...until I'm using Windows and realize that you can't, by default, convert anything you want into a PDF without jump-

ing through some hoops. I use this feature daily, saving Web pages and documents in a format that I know I'll be able to look at for years to come—even if the application that created the PDF is long gone.

8. System-wide keystroke capture: No, I'm not talking about some sort of spyware or malware that records your passwords and sends them on to third parties. Instead, I'm talking about the ability for top-level programs to trap your keystrokes, and then do useful and interesting things with them. Programs such as [Butler](#), [LaunchBar](#), [TextExpander](#), and [TypeIt4Me](#) are great examples of what you can do by trapping keystrokes. Sure, this was possible in OS 9, but it was seemingly more complex, and certainly more prone to cause system errors.
9. 512 pixel icons: In order for Leopard's Cover Flow view to display crisp icons at larger sizes, OS X now supports icons that are up to 512x512 pixels in size. To put that size in perspective, the first Mac's screen was only 512x342 pixels! Browsing a folder full of these large icons in Cover Flow mode is a joy, and you can really see the detail work that went into creating the icons. Sure, they don't have much impact on my day-to-day work, but they're gorgeous and, I think, reflect an attention to detail across the entire OS.

So that's my list of eight of OS X's features that I find most interesting. While there are things about Leopard that annoy me, I'd still rather use it—or any version of OS X, for that matter—over either Windows or Linux. So much for my list...which eight features would you include on your list?



Tax Cut by H&R Block

by John Gentile

For the past several years I've been using H&R Block's Tax Cut software to do my taxes. I actually started to do them in February, but as soon as I discovered that I had to pay then I put it off and I finally finished them on April 14. I really didn't want to risk messing it up.

I bought the software on line and downloaded the file instead of asking for a disk. I did a Google search for

discounts or coupons for Tax Cut and I found one for \$5. Something to remember for next year!

As usual, the software is very straight forward and doesn't bother you with trying to fill in forms and trying to think what figure goes into what space on what form. It asks plain questions and takes your answers and places everything in the right place and on the right form. One of the best features is that it automatically fills in data from last year's form so you don't have to spend time entering in all your personal data all over again. During the interview process it actually compares your answers to last year's and watches for things that may cause an audit or for a deduction that you might have missed.

The state taxes are even easier. Because the Rhode Island tax is based on the federal taxes, it only took me about 3 minutes to do the RI part of the taxes. It took longer to print out the final forms!

When it came to filing, this year's version had 5 free e-file certificates but for federal only. You really have a choice of printing out the forms and mailing them with a signature, or filing them electronically with an electronic signature. At first I was going to file the paper forms because I had to pay, but the free e-filing made it so much easier and I used my debit card to make the payment. To file the state forms I did print and send the paper version since state e-file cost \$19.95. I didn't want to pay twice to send them money!

Next year I'll probably continue using Tax Cut since it has the backing of H&R Block. You do get a lot of help from their resources and there are video help screens when you have questions. You can also get live help, but some if it is a pay for service.



Scheduling Software Update

By Christopher Breen (mac911@macworld.com)

Mac 911 Tip of the Week

Reader Tim Biggio is hampered by the punishing policies of his Internet provider. He writes (and I rant): "I live where there is no DSL or cable available so I have to get my Internet via satellite. The downside is that they limit downloads in any 24 hour period to 500MB. This is fine for regular activity, but when my computers need software upgrades it jumps over. The penalty for exceeding is you are limited to 56K speed for the next 24 hours. The possible upside

is that I get unlimited downloads between 2 AM and 5 AM. Is there a way to have the automated software update run in that 2 AM to 5 AM CT window?"

Ah, another satisfied Hughes satellite customer. Very briefly donning my editorial hat, in an era when these kinds of massive updates are common on both the Mac and Windows, it's shameful for Hughes to continue this policy. As a former satellite broadband user I can testify that this means of using the Internet is painful enough without your ISP standing over you like an abusive parent.

Okay, now to your issue. Although Software Update allows you to schedule daily, weekly, or monthly updates, it doesn't provide an obvious way to schedule a time for the updates to occur. But there is a way. And that way is to manually check for updates at the time you want future automatic updates to take place.

When you open the Software Update system preference and click the Check Now button, you set the time for the next automatic check. So, for example, if you click this button at 11:45 AM and you've configured Software Update to check for updates weekly, it will check again a week later at 11:45 AM.

I could suggest that you spend some quality time with the Late-Late-Late Show, stay up until 2:01 AM, and click the Check Now button, but this is something you can deal with in the daytime. And you deal with it by opening the Date & Time system preference, unchecking the Set Date & Time Automatically option, entering 2:00 AM in the time field, launching the Software Update system preference, and clicking Check Now. You don't have to accept any of the updates. Quit System Preferences and relaunch it. Return to the Date & Time system preference, enable the Set Date & Time Automatically option to get the correct time. Software Update will continue to believe it should check for the next update at 2:01 AM.

If you're the kind that cares to geek out, you can also edit the `com.apple.scheduler.xxxxxxxxxx.plist` file, which you'll find in `~/Library/Preferences/ByHost`. Open this file in Property List Editor (part of Apple's Developers Tools) and you'll find a date field under the Timer heading. You can edit this date to rejigger the scheduled update time.

Looking for more troubleshooting advice? Visit the Mac 911 blog.

[Go to the blog](#)



Find Missing Sound Files in GarageBand

By Ted Landau (bugs@macworld.com)

Bugs & Fixes

When attempting to open a lesson file via GarageBand '09's Learn to Play, you may get an unwelcome "Audio file...not found" error. This happened to me, for example, after copying files from an old to a new computer.

Although the error message includes a Search button, I wouldn't waste my time trying it. Inevitably, the error returns to inform you that it was still unable to find the MIA files. If you instead select Skip, the lesson should eventually open. However, not surprisingly, you won't be hearing much, if any, sound.

Where exactly are these missing audio files? Oddly enough, they are most likely exactly where they are supposed to be: inside the Lesson item itself. To confirm this, navigate to /Library/Application Support/GarageBand/Learn to Play. Open either Basic Lessons or Artist Lessons to find the .mwand lesson item that is not working for you. These items are packages, which means they are really folders in disguise. To peer inside, select Show Package Contents from the lesson's contextual menu. Next, go to the lesson's Media folder. Here you will find all the .caf audio files that GarageBand has mysteriously been unable to locate on its own.

Unfortunately, there is no way you can shake GarageBand and shout: "Here they are. Use them." You also won't have success with typical troubleshooting recommendations, such as redownloading the lessons or reinstalling GarageBand itself.

But don't fret. Solving this matter is delightfully simple. The key is to pay a visit to a different Library, the one in your Home directory. Here, go to Application Support/GarageBand/Working Copies. In this folder, you should find one or more files with the same names as the problematic Learn to Play lessons. Delete these files (don't worry, this won't delete the actual lessons). Now, launch GarageBand, and try again to open a lesson. You should succeed without getting the audio errors.

Bugs & Fixes appears every Friday in the Mac 911 blog:

[Go to Mac 911](#)



Variable Pricing Hits iTunes

When Apple announced that they would be introducing variable pricing to the iTunes store, while at the same time removing DRM from its music,

most figured Apple had made a deal with the devil. The devil being the music industry. Apple had ventured to the crossroads and returned with DRM-free music, but had paid a heavy price.

Well that price turns out to be \$1.29. All music in the iTunes store is now [DRM-Free iTunes Plus](#).

The new pricing plan gives the record companies the chance to make an extra \$.30 on popular songs. For example, today's top three singles are \$1.29. Apple is showcasing Rock and Classic R&B songs for \$.69 on the music store's main page. Probably as an antidote to people complaining about the new \$1.29 price point.

We're hoping a bargain bin button appears on the store so we can find our favorite artists' songs at \$.69. Fingers crossed.

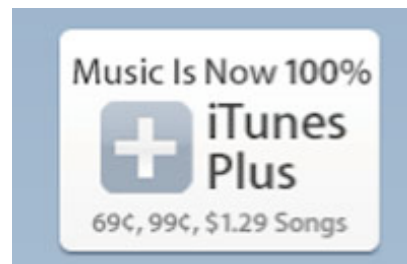
(from MacLife online newsletter April 13th)



Apple's Revolutionary App Store Downloads Top One Billion in Just Nine Months

CUPERTINO, California—April 24, 2009—Apple® today announced that customers have downloaded one billion applications from its revolutionary App Store, the largest applications store in the world. The one billionth app, Bump created by Bump Technologies, was downloaded by Connor Mulcahey, age 13, of Weston, CT. As the grand prize winner of Apple's one billion app countdown contest, Connor will receive a \$10,000 iTunes® gift card, an iPod® touch, a Time Capsule® and a MacBook® Pro.

"The revolutionary App Store has been a phenomenal hit with iPhone and iPod touch users around the world, and we'd like to thank our customers and developers for helping us achieve the astonishing mile-



stone of one billion apps downloaded,” said Philip Schiller, Apple’s senior vice president of Worldwide Product Marketing. “In nine months, the App Store has completely revolutionized the mobile industry and this is only the beginning.”

Today, the groundbreaking App Store has more than 35,000 applications available to consumers in 77 countries, allowing developers to reach tens of millions of iPhone™ and iPod touch users around the world. This summer the iPhone OS 3.0 software update will provide developers with over 1,000 new developer APIs enabling In-App Purchases, Peer-to-Peer connections, App control of accessories, and Push Notifications. The iPhone OS 3.0 release will also add over 100 customer features including cut, copy and paste; Spotlight™ search; landscape keyboard and view for all key iPhone apps; MMS* support; and expanded parental controls for apps, TV shows, and movies from the App Store.

*MMS messaging is available only on iPhone 3G; fees may apply. MMS may not be available in all areas.

Apple ignited the personal computer revolution in the 1970s with the Apple II and reinvented the personal computer in the 1980s with the Macintosh. Today, Apple continues to lead the industry in innovation with its award-winning computers, OS X operating system and iLife and professional applications. Apple is also spearheading the digital media revolution with its iPod portable music and video players and iTunes online store, and has entered the mobile phone market with its revolutionary iPhone.



Auto-Enable Safari's Private Browsing

By Christopher Breen (mac911@macworld.com)

Mac 911 Tip of the Week

Reader Leo Campo is interested in Safari's Private Browsing feature, but finds with it a measure of frustration. He writes: "I'm using Safari 4 beta on an Intel iMac under Leopard 10.5.6. I use the private browsing feature most of the time. Is there a way to make this Safari feature the default action? It gets old very fast always having to turn this feature back on every time I launch Safari, which for me, is several times a day."

Regrettably Private Browsing isn't a feature you can leave on. When you quit Safari and launch it again,

you'll find that Private Browsing is turned off. And no, editing the `com.apple.safari.plist` file does you no good either. Safari just resets the option within the preference file when you next launch Safari.

If you're running Leopard you can, however, automate the process of enabling the Private Browsing option with AppleScript. First, launch the Universal Access system preference and enable the Enable Access for Assistive Devices option. Then, launch Script Editor (within the AppleScript folder inside the Applications folder) and enter the script I've created in the online version of this article:

[Get the script](#)

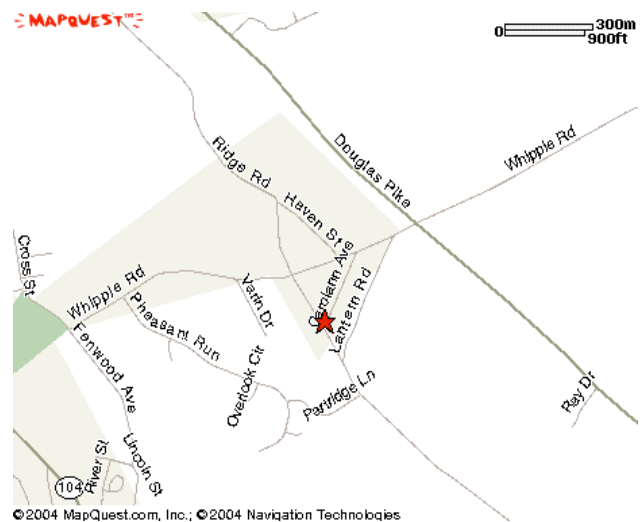
Save the script as an application and then use that application to launch Safari. When you do, Safari will launch and Private Browsing will be enabled.

Note that this solution only works for Mac OS X 10.5; it doesn't work with Tiger.



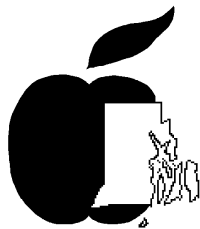
Meeting Directions:

Directions to Mark Rafferty's House.

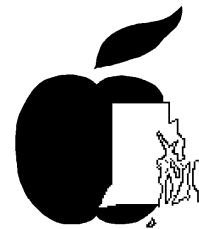


From 295, take the route 7 exit south to Whipple Road, turn right and take the 2nd left onto Carol Ann Drive.

From 95, take the route 146 exit and then take the Twin River Rd exit, turn right on Twin River Rd and go 1 mile to Route 7 (Douglas Pike). Turn right and go up to Whipple Road, turn left and then take the 2nd left onto Carol Ann Drive.



Membership Application
RHODE ISLAND APPLE GROUP
PO Box 387
East Greenwich, RI 02818-0387



Please fill out the information below and send it with a check for \$30 (\$20 for one year's membership and a one time fee for initiation of \$10) to the above address or bring it to any meeting. (Please Print)

Name: _____

Address 1: (Home) _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Email: _____

Address 2: (Business/School) _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephones: (_____) _____ - _____ (Home) (_____) _____ - _____ (Business)

Would you like your () Home or () Business/School # on the Membership list?

In an effort to better serve our members, we would like to know a few things about you and your computer system. This part is, of course, OPTIONAL but the information will help us better serve you.

Occupation: _____ (Optional)

I use my computer in: (Home), (Business), (School), Other _____ Circle all items that apply)

Briefly describe your computer system (present and planned). Please include any modem, hard drives, or major pieces of software, you have.

Computer _____

Printer: _____ Hard Drive: _____

Modem: _____ Other: _____

- Is your computer used primarily for business, entertainment, science, education, or other applications?

- What are some of the things (help, software, etc.) that you want or expect to get out of this group?

- Is there anything you would be willing to contribute to the club. This might include: Demonstrations of Software or Hardware, newsletter articles, programs, and teaching others.

How did you hear about the club?

April 2009

March 2009							April 2009							May 2009							
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4										1	2
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	
29	30	31					26	27	28	29	30			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	
														31							

RIAG

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29	30	31	1	2	3	4
		7:00 PM RIAG Board of Directors meeting				
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
						2:00 PM RIAG Main meeting at Mark's house
26	27	28	29	30	1	2
		7:00 PM RIAG Board of Directors meeting				

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