

NEWS BREAK

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MARCH 1, 2005 MEETING

Viruses, Backing Up, and Help Desk Hints

Join us on Tuesday, March 1 at 7:30 p.m. in Hodgdon IRC Lecture Hall #1 on the SUNY Oneonta campus for the March MUG ONE meeting.

MUG ONE Program Co-Chair Jesse Hogue will share his knowledge of Mac viruses, advice on backing up your Mac, and help desk hints drawn from his experiences as a student employee for the Academic Computing Services Information Technology Help Desk at SUNY Oneonta.

Jesse will also demo the Mac maintenance tips that he was not able to show at February's meeting, due to time constraints and the lack of a video adapter for his iBook (the latter problem is now remedied).

Questions and answers, door prizes and refreshments will round out the evening. See you then!

For the latest MUG ONE information, be sure to check <http://www.mugone.com>.

For directions to the meeting, see SUNY Oneonta's detailed campus maps:

<http://www.oneonta.edu/navigation/directions.asp>

Or download John Maas's annotated Oneonta map: <http://www.mugone.com/images/OneontaStreetMap.pdf>

POWER STRIPS VS. SURGE PROTECTORS

Look at the back of your Mac and follow the power cord. Is it plugged directly into a wall outlet? Unless you have full house surge protection, your Mac isn't protected from power surges and spikes.

If your Mac is plugged into a simple power strip – perhaps one of those rectangular metal affairs that looks like it dates from the Kennedy administration – that's no more protection than a wall outlet.

A power strip is not the same as a surge protector. While a power strip simply provides extra outlets, a surge protector is designed to protect your computer and peripherals from damage by intercepting surges (sudden increases in electrical power) and spikes (sudden increases in voltage).

OfficeMax, Radio Shack, BJ's and many online sources carry surge protectors that are designed for computers and electronic equipment. Best are ones that have outlets for telephone wires and/or modem cable.

So spend a little time checking, and spend a little money (often as little as \$15 to \$40) updating. Better to be safe than sorry!

Visit MUG ONE's web site at <http://www.mugone.com>



IPODS - COLORFUL, CAPABLE, CHEAPER

Move aside pastels - the vibrant colors of the newest iPod minis are worthy of the J. Crew catalog. Lower prices, expanded capabilities and larger storage capacities distinguish the latest round of iPod updates announced on February 23.

The iPod mini, now available in vivid shades of pink, aqua blue, lime green and silver, dropped to \$199 (considered by some observers to be the "magic price point") for the 4GB model and \$249 for a new 6GB size. Both boast battery life of "up to 18 hours."

The iPod photo now comes in a 30GB model for \$349 and a 60GB model, holding up to 15,000 songs, for \$449. A \$29 iPod Camera Connector accessory (available late March) will allow these new iPod photos to transfer photos directly from digital cameras, omitting the need for a card reader adaptor. Battery life for the iPod photo models has been increased to up to 15 hours when playing music and up to five hours when showing photos.

MUG ONE OFFICERS FOR 2004-2005

Elsa Travisano, President	607/433-2569
mugone@stny.rr.com	
Sven Anderson, Vice President	607/436-3174
anderss@oneonta.edu	
Terry Helser, Sec. & OSC Liaison:	607/638-9885
helsertl@oneonta.edu	
Joanne Johnston, Treasurer	607/432-6320
ejohnston@stny.rr.com	
John Maas, Program Co-Chair	607/437-0665
xaxat@stny.rr.com	
Jesse Hogue, Program Co-Chair	607/436-6912
jessehogie@mac.com	
Brian Foley, SIG Coordinator	607/988-7031
foleymb@dmcom.net	
Johanna Koenig, Librarian	607/432-4975
email: jkoenig@dmcom.net	

FEBRUARY 1, 2005 MEETING

Macworld Expo SF 2005 and Tasty Tech Tidbits

February 1, 7:30 pm, Hodgdon IRC, lecture hall 1, SUNY Oneonta, Oneonta, NY.

President Elsa Travisano began the meeting by introducing herself and welcoming about thirty of us in from the cold. Three MUG ONE members renewed their memberships to get in on the raffle tonight, and we welcomed a new member, Lee Robbins of Hartwick, NY, and a couple of guests. Next month bring a couple of *your* friends to join the fun.

Elsa asked us to email mugone@mac.com if we don't receive Newsbreak by the day of the meeting, and if we have suggestions or reviews to add. The Spring schedule is posted on the MUG ONE Web site (www.mugone.com) and will include Jesse Hogue giving backup, help desk and virus protection tips in March. In April Elsa and Sven will present on Photoshop Elements 3 and Camera Raw format, and May is Marra month, with perennial favorite, Dave Marra. For June we have a Virtual PC presentation penciled in, and may have a few other treats up our sleeve. Stay posted.

Brian Foley brought in the contents of his "junk" box for us to take home old but serviceable equipment, and to label any widgets we knew the identity of for the Web exchange site. He spread the cables and connectors across the seats in the back of the auditorium. Attendees had fun browsing and playing "guess the outmoded peripheral." Thanks, Brian.

Q&A

To start the question and answer period, Diane Aaronson asked why AppleWorks would slow down dramatically on opening a small file. Among the suggestions were to go fishing for cache folders to empty, repair any fonts that may be damaged with disk utilities, and trash the .plist, which is the OS X version of deleting a preference file in OS 9. Elsa reminded us that you ought to keep at least 10% of your hard drive memory available (or more, if you are like Sven and work with huge files). You might also do a "secure empty trash" from the file menu, if you are sure you will never need to recover anything you discarded. There is general maintenance help on the Apple web site and in books in the MUG ONE library.

To solve a balky printing problem in Entourage or Outlook, the suggestion was to rebuild the database by holding down the "Option" key when launching the application. This can take between several minutes and hours, so prior to this you may want to delete or archive any old emails and weed the attachments folder. When the rebuild is done, check that the new database works before throwing away the old database folder that it made. This suggestion led into a long discussion on adjusting dpi (dots per inch) settings in Photoshop, which lost me at the gate.

Program

Sven Anderson began the program by showing how to get useful

freeware and shareware from the Apple website at <http://www.apple.com/downloads/macosx/>. You can also get to this page directly by selecting "Mac OS X Software" under the Apple menu in OS 10.3 and possibly earlier versions of the OS. If you find a good freeware or shareware program, drop an email to mugone@mac.com. We'd love to have a brief write-up for Newsbreak.

Elsa then took over for an iLife slide show of MacWorld Expo in San Francisco. Among the keynote presentation highlights was a teaser for OS 10.4, code named "Tiger." Garage Band and the rest of the iLife applications are updated in iLife '05, and Final Cut Express HD is now \$299. AppleWorks has hit end-of-life and is being replaced by iWork, which consists of Keynote 2 and the word processor Pages, comes with lots of templates and sells for \$79.

As for hardware, the big announcement was the Mac mini for \$499 for a tiny 6.5 x 6.5 x 2" CPU into which you plug your USB keyboard, mouse and monitor. It comes with iLife '05 and iWorks. The little box is intentionally not easily upgraded and extra memory is relatively expensive. And the iPod family has a new gum package sized iPod shuffle for \$99. It's a Jump drive on steroids which caused a stampede to the nearby Apple store to line up for one while the Fed Ex truck unloaded them at the back door! Can you say "geek?" Favorite accessories include a fan-shaped solar charger for iPods and all your other portable electronics, and an iTrip to play iPods through car speakers. There are even web sites for iPod lovers, including www.ipodlounge.com. Elsa also showed a laptop screen protector/cleaning cloth from RadTech, www.radtech.us, and announced Adobe's Photoshop Elements 3 (\$99, \$59 academic) and Acrobat 7. Thanks, Elsa.

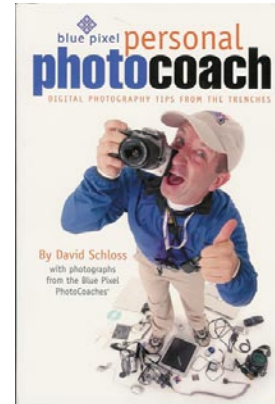
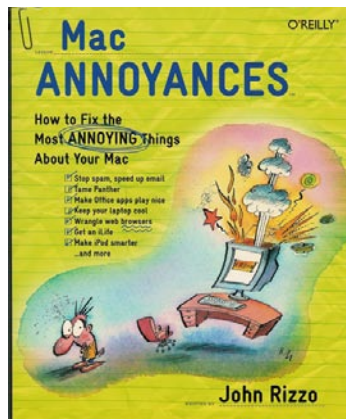
Brian then took over to show Grab, a screen shot application in the OS X Utilities folder. A useful shortcut is to hold down Apple+Shift+3 to do a whole screen shot and Apple+Shift+4 to click and drag the cursor over a part of your screen to save it. Nifty. Then John took over to show Snapz Pro from Ambrosia www.ambrosiasw.com, which can record anything on your screen and save it to a QuickTime movie. He also showed how to access contextual menus by doing a control+Click or right click if you have a multi-button mouse.

Thanks, Sven, Elsa, Brian, John and all. Well done, but still juicy.

We began to draw the winning tickets for the raffle from the orange stocking cap. Several lucky members picked from books, a retractable phone cord gadget, You Control software, T-shirts, pens and other goodies. Much more next month! The diet Pepsi, Sprite, and Oreos and good-for-you cookies disappeared as we all communed. A very successful evening!

The next meeting will be on Tuesday, March 1 at 7:30 pm in Hodgdon IRC, lecture hall 1. Bring a friend and join us for the next program!

— TERRY L. HELSER, SECRETARY



BOOK REVIEWS: MAC ANNOYANCES, BLUE PIXEL PERSONAL PHOTOCOACH

Mac Annoyances, How to Fix the Most Annoying Things About Your Mac, by John Rizzo. 156 pp. O'Reilly, 2005. \$24.95.

Wrestling with Apple's help system, trying to eject a CD from a keyboard without an eject key, or listening to AOL's preternaturally perky voice announce "You've Got Mail!" are enough to drive drive even the most serene Mac user up the wall.

Relax. John Rizzo feels your pain. In *Mac Annoyances, How to Fix the Most Annoying Things About Your Mac*, he offers welcome solutions to 150 of the most irritating, well, Mac annoyances. This eminently browsable book has something to offer to Mac users at all levels and all boiling points.

Annoying issues are grouped into chapters on Mac OS X, email, the Internet, Microsoft Office, iLife, iPod and hardware. (Curiously missing from the lineup is my pet bête noire AppleWorks, a program which vexes me on a regular basis and which I can't ignore because so many of my consulting clients use it. I hope that AppleWorks, and its successor, Pages, will merit a chapter in a future version of the book.)

Each annoyance and solution is presented as a stand-alone nugget of information, making it easy to hone in on single problem you want to solve. But, like eating popcorn, once you start reading it's hard to stop.

I particularly appreciated suggestions for using Sherlock's AppleCare channel as a better help system, and for setting Flag and Followup on an Entourage message to keep it from getting lost in a blizzard of email.

The book sports an exceptionally thorough index as well as a detailed topic listing in the table of contents.

No matter what your level of Mac expertise, you'll be sure to find suggestions and solutions in *Mac Annoyances* to make your computing life less frustrating. Now that's a balm for your inner Mac curmudgeon. Very highly recommended.

— ELSA TRAVISANO

Blue Pixel Personal PhotoCoach, Digital Photography Tips from the Trenches, by David Schloss. 304 pp. Peachpit, 2004. \$24.99.

Blue Pixel is the company that hosts the Just Show Me How Tour of traveling photography seminars for amateur and pro photographers. The Blue Pixel instructors, called PhotoCoaches, are among the top photographers and photojournalists in their fields and are all pioneers of digital photography.

Author and PhotoCoach David Schloss taps the experience and know-how of this illustrious band (which includes award-winning photojournalists, instructors and a White House photographer) to deliver the digital concepts from the Just Show Me How Tour in book form.

You know you're in the hands of pros when a book begins not with camera buttons and settings, but with how to compose a photo. Learning to crop with your camera, not with your photo editing program, develops your eye, preserves image data and saves time. Staying alert to the elements in your photo can save you from the frustration of having to Photoshop out that telephone growing from the back of your subject's head.

The books' chapters cover taking, organizing, fixing and sharing your photos, making great prints, and techniques for special situations including artistic, family and sports photos. The chapter on making great prints is exceptionally useful, with real world advice on resolution, sharpening techniques, printer dialog boxes and paper stock. Pay special attention, too, to the chapter on how to use your flash - it's full of innovative, problem-solving ideas.

Schloss's lucid instruction and tips are illustrated with gorgeous photos and interspersed with anecdotes from the PhotoCoach team. Even if you've read a stack of photography books, *Blue Pixel Personal PhotoCoach* will help you look at digital photography and the opportunities the form provides with new eyes. Highly recommended.

— ELSA TRAVISANO

Special Offers from the Apple User Group Bulletin

These User Group discounts are brought to you by the Apple User Group Advisory Board. You must be a current Apple user group member to qualify for these savings.

Sybex: Scrapbooking with Photoshop Elements

Lynette Kent's Scrapbooking with Photoshop Elements: The Creative Cropping Cookbook is the first scrapbooking guide to Adobe's popular image editing tools. Lynette shows scrapbookers how to expand their creative horizons with tips for enhancing photos and pages, recipe cards for getting the most out of the technology, exclusive coupons for digital scrapbooking products and more.

Regularly \$29.99, user group members can get Scrapbooking with Photoshop Elements: The Creative Cropping Cookbook for \$17.99 plus free shipping – a savings of 40 percent.

Checkout code: *****

<http://www.sybex.com/sybexbooks.nsf/booklist/4377>

This offer is valid from March 1 to May 30, 2005.

LQ Graphics: Photo to Movie 3.1

Bored with the traditional photo-by-photo slideshow? With Photo to Movie 3.1, Macintosh users can add multiple motions, music tracks, voiceovers and transitions to make photos come alive! Utilizing a powerful version of the "Ken Burns Effect," turn a digital photo collection of one or hundreds into a QuickTime movie slide show with an interface that appeals to novice and expert users alike. When finished, movies can be written to DVD, posted on the web or emailed. A revolutionary algorithm optimizes each frame of the movie to nearly eliminate flicker when shown on a television.

Regularly \$49.95, the special user group price is \$39.95.

Offer code: *****

<http://lqgraphics.com/software/offer19928.php>

This offer is valid until May 30, 2005.

Prosoft: Discounts on All Products

Drive Genius is a Mac OS X utility designed to provide unsurpassed storage management. Featuring an easy-to-use interface, Drive Genius is packed with powerful tools such as a drive optimizer, a comprehensive repair facility for analyzing, repairing and rebuilding volumes, plus excellent testing capabilities with media surface scanning, performance benchmarking and data integrity checking.

Drive Genius can be used to initialize drives, create and delete partitions, and erases them securely. It can also hide partitions and duplicate volumes or drives swiftly. Last but not least, Drive Genius features advanced tools for resizing and moving of volumes without reformatting.

Take 25 percent off any Prosoft product, including Drive Genius, Data Backup, Data Rescue, Picture Rescue, Data Recycler, Data Safety Suite and Netware.

Offer code: *****

<http://www.prosofteng.com>

This worldwide offer is valid until June 30, 2005.

MacWireless: Free Shipping

MacWireless offers a full line of innovative wireless networking devices including wireless cards, wireless routers and signal amplifiers. We specialize in state-of-the-art accessories for the Apple AirPort Base Station, and in helping older Macs join the wireless revolution. If it is quality wireless, MacWireless has it.

Apple User Group members receive free shipping on all products from MacWireless.

Offer code: *****

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

This offer is valid until June 30, 2005.

Roxio: Exclusive User Group Savings at Roxio.com

Save 20 to 30 percent on Roxio downloadable software only at Roxio.com. Download Toast 6 Titanium, Toast with Jam 6, Jam 6 Upgrade and Popcorn, winner of Best of Show Macworld SF 2005.

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

This offer is valid until April 30, 2005.

The MUG Store

The MUG Store is a benefit for you AND your group.

Your user group gets one percent back on everything you purchase from the MUG Store ... which means that if you and your fellow members buy from the MUG Store, your user group can get everything from software to new computers for FREE!

The MUG store has free freight, RAM rebates, aggressive pricing on new and pre-owned Macs and great close-out deals.

The passwords to get into this exclusive User Group site are:

12/1/2004 - 3/30/2005

User ID:***** / Password: *****

<http://www.applemugstore.com>

For information about Apple User Group activities, special offers and more, visit the Apple User Group Advisory Board website:

<http://homepage.mac.com/ugab/>



MAC 911 – HELP DESK

By Christopher Breen

Wheels within Wheels

I use a Logitech MX300 mouse, which has a scroll wheel. The scroll wheel doesn't work with all my applications. Do you know why, and whether there is a workaround?-

– *Eric Drachman*

The fault lies with your applications, not with the mouse. Not all applications include the code that would allow them to accept input from a mouse's scroll wheel. Adobe's Acrobat Reader 5, for example, doesn't respond to a scroll wheel, while version 6 does.

To work around this problem, download a copy of Alessandro Levi Montalcini's \$20 universal USB driver for mice and game pads, USB Overdrive. Although you don't need this utility's primary service--making an incompatible mouse work with a Mac--it will let you assign commands such as scroll up and scroll down to your mouse's scroll wheel (or at least page up and page down if the application refuses to respond to the scroll commands).

Song Saving

When I recently opened an MP3 file in iTunes, all my music and playlists had disappeared. I found my music in the Documents folder and imported it back into iTunes, but all my playlists are still missing. How can I recover them?

– *Jeremy Hahn*

It sounds as though you have a corrupted iTunes 4 Music Library file. To fix it, quit iTunes, open your iTunes folder (stored by default in your user folder's Music folder), and drag any iTunes Music Library files to the Trash. (You may have more than one of these files if you've used older versions of iTunes with this computer.)

Now drag the iTunes Music Library.xml file to the desktop. Launch iTunes and choose Import from the File menu. Navigate to the iTunes Music Library.xml file on the desktop and click on Choose. Importing this file should cause your playlists to appear in iTunes.

If you have an iPod that contains the playlists from your Mac, you can also use a utility such as CrispSofties' iPod.iTunes (30 euros, or about \$37 at press time). In addition to copying music files from an iPod to your Mac, iPod.iTunes will synchronize playlists between the two. If you've lost the playlists on your computer, iPod.iTunes should be able to restore them from the copy stored on your iPod.

Phony Contacts

I have a new Motorola V600 Bluetooth-enabled phone. My PowerBook G4 can see the phone and pair to it using a Bluetooth adapter, but iSync won't recognize it. If Bluetooth can see the phone, isn't there some tweak to get iSync to see it as well?

– *Ricky P. Clay*

Currently, no. But there are a couple of ways to move contacts to phones that don't have iSync support. The first is to use Antonio Ferraioli's \$10 OnSync. OnSync allows you to move contacts from OS X's Address Book, Microsoft Entourage, Qualcomm Eudora, and Now Contact (part of Now Up-to-Date & Contact) to the V600 and other phones. (However, OnSync doesn't support calendar events of any kind.)

Your other option is to use Address Book's Send These Cards command. Just pair your phone to your PowerBook; then, in Address Book, select the contacts you want to transfer to the phone, and choose Send These Cards from Address Book's Card menu (see screenshot). In short order, your phone will ask you to accept the transfer. Do so and store your contacts.

Nicer Webcast

I listen to broadcasts of the New York Metropolitan Opera using a Web browser and would like to play them through my AirPort Express. Is there a way to do this?

– *Joe Forbes*

Yes--with a copy of Rogue Amoeba's \$40 Nicecast. Launch your Web browser and begin playing the broadcast. Launch Nicecast; in the Source pane, select your browser via the Select pop-up menu. Click on Nicecast's Start Broadcast button. To keep the broadcast from playing through both your Mac's speakers and your stereo, move Nicecast's volume slider all the way to the left.

Launch iTunes and select your AirPort Express from the AirPort Express pop-up menu at the bottom of the iTunes window. Select Open Stream from the Advanced menu; in the resulting Open Stream window, enter [http:// 127.0.0.1:8000](http://127.0.0.1:8000) and click on OK. The audio from your browser should now stream to the AirPort Express and through your stereo.

Playlists and Pictures

Can iPhoto play more than one song in a slide presentation?

– *Douglas W. Matheson*

iPhoto will happily play multiple tunes when you create a slide show that plays within iPhoto. Just click on the Slideshow button, click on the Music tab in the resulting Slideshow window, and select a playlist from the Source pop-up menu. If you've left the Repeat Slideshow option under the Settings tab enabled, the slide show plays throughout the length of the playlist you've chosen.

Saving a slide show as a QuickTime movie is another matter. Exported slide shows will contain only one audio track.

There's a way around this, but it's more than a bit tiresome. You must combine multiple audio tracks into a single track and then create a slide show whose length matches the duration of your soundtrack.

To do this, launch iMovie, create a new iMovie project, click on iMovie's Audio tab, and drag audio files from your iTunes library into the timeline. Then choose Share from the File menu, click on the QuickTime tab, and choose Expert Setting from the Compress Movie For pop-up menu. Click on Share. In the Save Exported File As dialog box, choose Sound To AIFF from the Export pop-up menu; then click on Save. Now drag the resulting file into iTunes.

Once in iTunes, make a note of the file's length. Return to iPhoto, select the album you'd like to export as a QuickTime movie slide show, and choose Export from the File menu. Click on the QuickTime tab and make sure the Add Currently Selected Music To Movie option is enabled.

Simple math would tell you that if your soundtrack is, for example, 6 minutes long (360 seconds) and you have 60 slides, you should enter 6 in the Display Image For X Seconds field (which appears in the same QuickTime tab) in order for your slide show and soundtrack to end at the same time. Nuh-uh. You have to account for the fade-in and -out effects at the beginning and end of your slide show and the dissolve effect between each slide. These effects add time. The fade-in effect adds 1 second, the dissolve between each slide adds an additional 1 second per dissolve, and the fade-out effect adds 2 seconds. So, for example, if you have 50 slides and you've configured iPhoto to show each slide for 2 seconds, the resulting movie will be 2 minutes and 32 seconds long (100 seconds for the slides plus 52 seconds for the effects). Break out your calculator and accordingly adjust the length of time each slide displays.

Unsolicited Advice: Move from Old to New

Not long ago I devoted an entry in the Mac 911 Weblog to moving data from an old Mac to a new one. The response was such that I thought revisiting the topic would be worthwhile.

If you're upgrading to a new Power Mac G5, you'll discover that one of the first things the new Mac's Setup Assistant does for you is offer to move data from your old Mac via FireWire. If your old Mac has a FireWire port, this is worth considering. Note, however, that the process won't copy over some preferences, and you'll have less trouble if you install your applications from their original discs or installers.

To duplicate your old Mac's hard drive exactly, use Mike Bombich's \$5 Carbon Copy Cloner to place a copy of the old drive on the new one. For this to work, you'll also need to connect your Macs via a FireWire cable.

If your old Mac doesn't have a FireWire connection, extract the hard drive, place it in a FireWire enclosure, and connect it to your new Mac. You should be able to boot from this drive as well (unless the old Mac's system software is incompatible

with the new Mac's).

Finally, you can link your new and old Mac together with an Ethernet cable, create a network between the two computers, and copy data from old to new over the network.

Note that it's a good idea to repair permissions on the old Mac before copying any data to the new one.

Tip of the Month: Word Workaround

I received a password-protected Microsoft Word document that I needed to edit with Track Changes. I couldn't do so until I turned off protection, but I didn't know the password. Here's how to solve this dilemma.

Open the protected file in Word and save it as a Rich Text Format file. Close the file and open it again. Select Tools: Unprotect Document and notice that the password is no longer required and that the Track Changes commands are now available. Save the file once again as a Word document.

– Gabriel Dorado

Macworld contributing editor Chris Breen is the author of Macworld's tips and troubleshooting column, "Mac 911," as well as Secrets of the iPod: Fifth Edition and Mac 911 (Peachpit Press). Chris is also the editor in chief of Playlistmag.com. Find Chris' books at www.amazon.com and www.peachpit.com. Get special user group pricing on Macworld Magazine! Subscribe today at <http://www.macworld.com/useroffer>.

FREE TAKE CONTROL BOOK UPDATES

If you've taken advantage of MUG ONE's 10% discount on all Take Control electronic books (use coupon code *****), remember get your free updates. Just click the Check for Updates button on the first page of the PDF file.

Favorite MUG ONE presenter Adam Engst has come out with several new titles, including *Take Control of Garage Band 2.0*. Check out all the offerings at www.tidbits.com/takecontrol/

PEPSI ITUNES MUSIC PROMOTION

Apple and Pepsi are once again partnering on a music promotion featuring iTunes. Between now and April 11, one in three specially marked 20 oz. and 1-Liter bottles of Pepsi, Diet Pepsi, Pepsi Wild Cherry, Mountain Dew, Diet Mountain Dew, Mountain Dew Code Red and Sierra Mist have a code for a free iTunes song under the cap. Songs must be redeemed by May 23.

For those of you who are heavy consumers of sweetened, carbonated beverages (or glib collectors of caps), note that there is a redemption limit of ten tunes per day.

Details are available at <http://www.apple.com/itunes/pepsi/>

Here's the important question: if a MUG ONE refreshment bottle has a winning cap, who gets to redeem the iTune? :)

REVIEW



The eyeTV 200 and its remote control (iMac not included)

eyeTV 200

Elgato Systems <http://www.elgato.com> \$329

What is the eyeTV 200? Technically, it's a Macintosh-only hardware device that works as a FireWire digital video recorder, a TV tuner and a video encoder. But for all practical purposes, it's video magic in a box.

The eyeTV 200 box lets you watch, record, edit and archive television on your Mac. It offers more flexibility than most digital video recorders and rivals the features of integrated DVRs provided by Time Warner and other cable companies, as long as you keep in mind a few cable box "gotchas." The eyeTV 200 can serve as a digital video recorder, a tuner for watching television or other video input on your Mac, and an analog-to-digital converter for transferring VHS tapes to DVDs.

The eyeTV 200 requires a 500 MHz or faster G4 or G5 with a built-in FireWire port, OS 10.2.8 or higher (10.3 is needed for the most recent software update) and several gigabytes of hard drive space for recording programs. Most recent Macs meet these qualifications. Watching, recording, and editing programs on your Mac requires only a video signal from an antenna, cable line, cable box or satellite receiver. If you want to record programs to DVD, you'll need Toast Titanium (\$99, not included). For analog-to-digital translation you'll need to connect a VCR or camcorder to play the analog tapes.

I tested the eyeTV 200 on a dual 1 GHz G4 with a gigabyte of RAM and a LaCie 120 GB external hard drive. The external hard drive is not necessary, but with program recordings needing about two gigabytes per hour, I appreciated the extra flexibility. (The free space that should have been on my Mac's internal hard drive had recently been filled with the entire contents of my CD collection, but that's a story for another time.)

Setting up the eyeTV 200 is very straightforward. Connect the diminutive (8¼ x 6 x 1½") brushed silver eyeTV 200 hardware box to your video source using an S-video, composite, or coaxial cable. You can hook up different devices to the three input ports and toggle among them if you wish. Then connect the box to your Mac with the supplied FireWire cable. Install the software from the CD, run the software setup assistant and

you're in business.

[Gotcha alert: like most VCRs and DVRs, the eyeTV hardware doesn't communicate directly with a cable box or satellite receiver. You'll need to change channels manually.]

Your Mac doesn't need to be in the same room as your video input (in my case, the cable box) for the eyeTV 200 to work. In fact, having them in separate rooms can be an advantage. In my house, for example, computers and televisions are all located in separate rooms. After thinking through various unsatisfactory scenarios which involved moving a television, a Mac, a cable box or all three, I realized that all I needed was a length of coaxial cable to connect the cable box in one room with the eyeTV 200 box and Mac in the next room. (Living in an old house with plenty of clearance under the doors made running the cable from room to room fairly simple.) Being able to keep an eye on the Weather Channel or a breaking news story without having to leave my Mac is a real convenience.

The eyeTV software lets you watch live TV on your Mac's display in window sizes from an unobtrusive 160x120 pixels to full screen. Live broadcasts can be paused, rewound and fast-forwarded using either the remote control that comes with the hardware (batteries are included) or the on-screen Controller. These features make it easier to deal with life's occasional – or in my case, constant – interruptions. Live television is cached to the Library folder by default, but you can change the location to another hard drive if you wish.

Being able to watch television in a window on my Mac is cool enough. But the eyeTV 200's recording and editing capabilities are what really makes it shine.

Recordings can be live or scheduled. Live recording is as simple as clicking the Record button on the remote control or the on-screen Controller. This "straight through" method is also used to record from devices like a VCR or a camcorder, which makes it a breeze to transfer your old videotapes to digital format.

To make a scheduled recording, you click the remote's Guide button to launch the TitanTV programming grid in your web browser. Select the program in the grid and click Record from the pop-up menu; setup information is automatically sent to the eyeTV 200. [Gotcha alert – remember to change the channel on your cable box or satellite receiver.] You can set up to record one program, or on a daily or weekly schedule.

The TitanTV website lets you hide or delete the channels that don't interest you to slim down the program grid, view a channel's daily schedule as a list, and even create a separate grid of Favorites. Imagine, a program grid that displays only what you want to see! The TitanTV database can be searched by actor, title and genre over a two-week period to help you spot shows you might want to record.

The eyeTV Programs window lists all of your recordings

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Newsbreak is the monthly newsletter of MUG ONE – the Macintosh User Group of Oneonta, NY

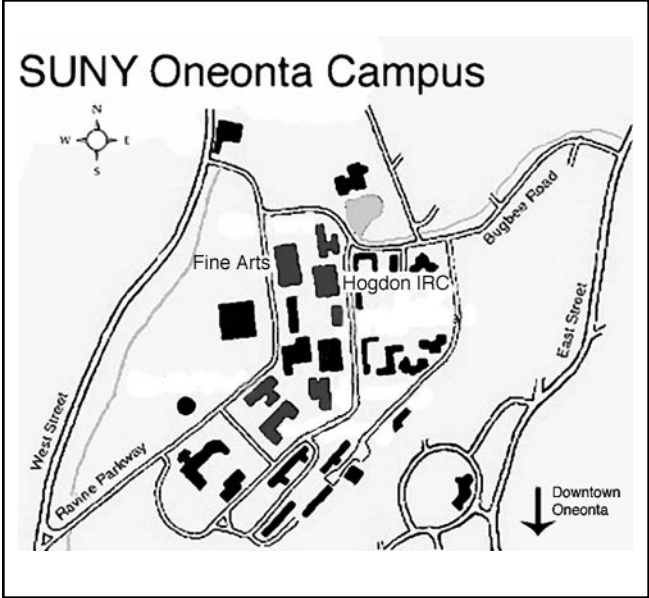
Editor: Elsa Trivisano

Contact *Newsbreak* at:

mugone@stny.rr.com
 http://www.mugone.com

Newsbreak
 28 State Street
 Oneonta, NY 13820
 607/433-2569
 Fax: 607/433-0909

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– Review: *eyeTV 200*, continued from page 7

whether they’re scheduled, in progress or completed. This is the window where you play, organize, edit or delete programs from your hard drive. If you’ve ever tried to edit or organize programs with a regular digital video recorder, you will be amazed at how easy and satisfying these tasks become with eyeTV. The Edit timeline lets you compact a recording by deleting unwanted material with near frame-by-frame accuracy. With a few swift clicks to the Edit timeline you can trim fifteen minutes of commercials and extraneous beginning and end bits from an hour-long program. That’s time well spent, in my book.



eyeTV’s Edit timeline lets you cut out extraneous material

Once your programs are edited and organized, you can store and enjoy them on your Mac. If you have Elgato’s \$199 eyeHome digital media player hardware, you can also view and control them on your television. I recently added an eyeHome to my setup and my eyeHome recordings look every bit as good as professional recordings. It’s pretty darn amazing.

With the addition of Toast Titanium, eyeTV can burn your programs to DVDs or VideoCDs to play in most regular DVD player. The eyeTV software also exports to formats for email, the web, iMovie, iDVD or DVD Studio Pro and Toast, as

well as QuickTime, MPEG-4 and various flavors of DV and MPEG streams. The EyeTV 1.7.1 update posted on the Elgato website allows EyeTV recordings to be exported directly into an iMovie HD project.

The interactive product tour video at Elgato’s website (www.elgato.com) is the best way to get a handle on all the things that the eyeTV 200 can do. For \$329, the eyeTV 200 is an amazingly powerful, versatile and easy-to-use home entertainment manager.

eyeTV 200 tips:

- If you have set parental controls on your cable box, be sure to disable the controls for a scheduled recording if needed. Instead of recording *Lost in Translation*, which I had not realized was rated R, I recently recorded an hour and a half of the “This program is blocked” notice. This is one instance where Time Warner’s integrated cable box and DVR has the upper hand – it alerts you to unlock the parental controls when you set up to record a program with a blocked rating.
- Coaxial is the easiest cabling to run over longer distances. WalMart sells it in both black and white; choose whichever blends better with your baseboards. And check for cable flexibility – if you need to wrap around corners, go for a more bendable cable.

– ELSA TRIVISANO

eyeTV 200

System requirements: Minimum PowerPC G4 500 MHz or G5 processor and built-in FireWire port; OS 10.2.8 or higher, 256MB RAM (512 recommended); @ 2 GB hard drive space per hour of recorded TV; internet connection for optional electronic program guide TitanTV; CD/DVD recorder and Roxio’s Toast 6 Titanium software (not included) required to create DVDs or VideoCDs (optional).