



## September 2010 meeting

ClubMac held its first meeting of the 2010 autumn season on Wednesday, September 1, in Old Belvedere Rugby Club.

ClubMac chairman, Tom Martin, opened the proceedings by welcoming new members and guests, and outlined the club's exciting line-up of meetings for the Autumn season with special mention of the October meeting which will feature a visit to the new Compu B store in Grafton Street. He also announced that the club would be resuming its entry level training for beginners and switchers in November.

### Technical Q&A

The following questions were dealt with under the guidance of ClubMac member, **Peter O'Reilly**:

- Over-enthusiasm of a **Magic Mouse** for unintended zooms on a Google map could be curbed by switching to another browser;
- advice sought on a **Rediris OCR** — one user present had used one for two years without problems and preferred it to Omnipage;
- problems encountered in using a browser-based email facility could be avoided by using a dedicated email application such as Mail;
- **iCal on the iPhone** — could the highlight colour of the current day of the month be changed, could placing of items be rearranged by dragging; probably not but various "to do" apps (e.g. "Things") were available in which items were draggable and could be synched to the Mac.
- when putting together images and sound to create a DVD slide show the sound and picture gradually went out of sync: to prevent slippage set the sound rate to 29.77 frames/sec (instead of 30) for a 5 second picture change, or export as movie before burning to DVD;
- when using headphones and microphone with a **Skype** connection the sound from the microphone was not transmitted; solve by setting Skype audio input preferences to external microphone;
- a Mac shut down inadvertently in **Fusion** refused to reboot to allow Windows to close down and appeared stuck in the closing down session: move the status file out and start again;

### What's new in the world of Apple

Tom Martin had the relatively easy job of summing up all of the many new developments that had taken place over the summer; these included:

- iMacs
- 27" LED cinema display
- MacPro

- MacMini
- iPhone 4
- iTunes University

Due to a mix-up in communications, Steve Jobs forgot that ClubMac was holding its first meeting of the season on September 1st and scheduled a PR event in California to promote the revamp of Apple's iPod and AppleTV product ranges which meant, of course, that we could not cover it.

## Useful utilities

Guest speaker, **Noel Davidson**, took us through three of his favourite utilities:

- [Disk Inventory X](#), a disk usage utility which shows you the sizes of folders and files on your hard disk
- Apple's Disk Utility, which has a number of uses including repairing disk permissions (you can find it in the Utilities folder, inside the Applications folder. Or, if you are in Finder, Shift+Command+U)
- [Easy Envelopes](#), a widget which simplified the printing of envelopes.

Noel pointed out that both Disk Inventory X and Easy Envelopes are free, while Disk Utility comes with the Mac OS.

## Guest presentation

**John Dwyer**, disk recovery and Linux specialist, tackled the thorny question of what to do when a hard disk crashed or a vital file mistakenly deleted. Deleted files did not vanish but remained on the hard disk until overwritten and were therefore rescuable by various means. In the case of crashed hard drives, if rescuable, which was by no means certain, recovery of the stored data generally called for expert help. Prevention was the best approach in both cases, i.e. backup to external storage, whether external hard disk (getting cheaper by the day) or internet storage such as MobileMe or Mozy (for unlimited storage). Use of Time Machine (or other comparable systems) was recommended. A degree of care was required for hard disks — moving computers, and in particular laptops, while the little platters inside were spinning up or down was a no-no; it was also a good idea to leave desktop drives on standby rather than shutting down when the computer was not in use. Over time, the normal heating of the inner platters with usage could lead to misalignment with the reading head. A first sign of damage was often a repetitive clicking while the disk was running; if that occurred the contents should at once be moved to external storage. Solid state drives (SSD), which had no moving parts, were not subject to such damage but were still extremely expensive.