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# Washington Apple Pi Journal

January – February 2012  
Volume 34, No. 1

**Blackout:  
SOPA, PIPA, and Sabotage**



# Washington Apple Pi

# Journal

January – February 2012  
Volume 34, No. 1

## Deadlines

### Writers' submissions:

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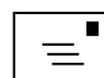
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## President's Page The Pi Wants You!

Jay Castillo

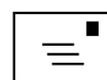
**S**o far, so good. Our first sessions in our new clubhouse have turned out well. We still have a few kinks to get out, but that is the nature of progress. The Pi owes thanks to the dedicated members of the Management Committee and volunteers who performed the move and set up in the new location. Thanks also to Pi members who stopped by on move days to relieve us of unneeded items, ranging from office supplies to odd bits of hardware. Indeed, we even sold some of our furniture to a nascent technical enterprise launched by one of our members. Please check out our new location. Let us know what you think.

I am constantly reminded that a volunteer army, the few, the proud, operates the machinery of the Pi. We need even more volunteers to relieve the burden on our core group, and to expand our support to the Pi members. Whatever your knowledge of Apple products and software, your technical expertise, managerial skills, or logistical capabilities (such as making coffee), we can find a place for you. I assure you that you will enjoy the camaraderie of the volunteer group and receive substantial psychic rewards, and an occasional cookie.

One of our most pressing needs right now, however, is for contributors to the *Journal*. I am doing double duty as both President of the Pi and Managing Editor of the *Journal*, and my toughest task is getting articles. We always need more than we have on hand. We have a small cadre of regular contributors, but they can't provide all we need. We pride ourselves on the fact that almost all our articles are written by Pi members. Most of us have tales to tell of Mac experiences, good and bad. We are learning about new hardware and software we have bought. Share your stories and reports with your fellow Pi members. Our crack editorial staff will turn almost any contribution into stunning prose. So take the leap, and send us a draft.

**We always need more than we have on hand. We have a small cadre of regular contributors, but they can't provide all we need. We pride ourselves on the fact that almost all our articles are written by Pi members. Most of us have tales to tell of Mac experiences, good and bad.**

The Journal needs you!



## Editor's Column

Jay Castillo

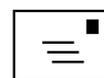
**H**ooray, we made it! Here is our January-February *Journal*. After the usual trials and tribulations, here are several informative and topical articles. Let us know what you think via [feedback@wap.org](mailto:feedback@wap.org). We are always looking for articles, so contribute as you can, and if you would like to volunteer as part of our editorial staff, jump right in.



Most of the articles for this issue are the work of Lawrence Charters and Jay Castillo (ahem). Brent Malcolm starts us off with an overview and pictorial of our new clubhouse site. Please take note so you can come for a visit. Lawrence provides our cover story with his perspective on the vulnerabilities of the World Wide Web to sabotage, for either malicious or politically motivated reasons. Jay Castillo follows with a discussion of his experiences using *Dropbox* and *FileMagnet* to move files between Mac desktop and iOS 5 devices. He then gives us a tutorial on the new features of the About This Mac function in Mac OS X Lion. It's handy stuff to know.

Once again Lawrence gives us excellent security pointers in his article instructing us to change our Apple ID password right now! It's easy to do and will save you headaches and possibly save you money. Lawrence's final contribution to this issue is a review of the *WriteRoom* writing tool. It's a bare bones application for those who just want to see the words on the screen with a minimum of overhead.

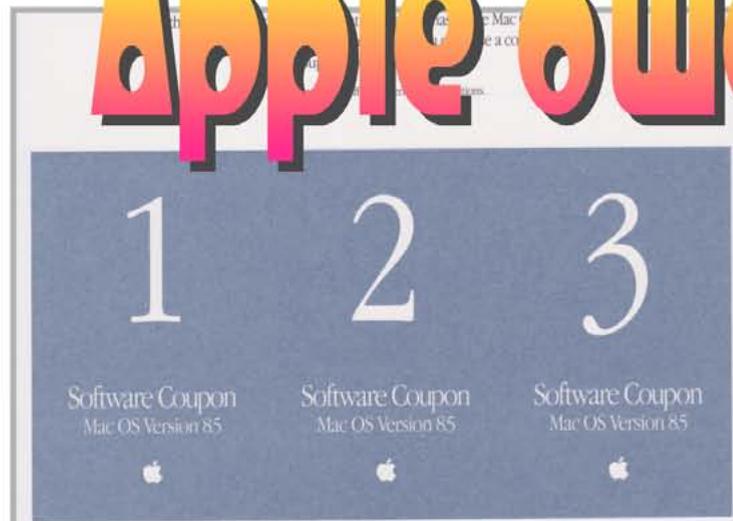
The final article for this issue is a reprint from our friends at the TidBits website. Adam Engst tells us how to use Lion's Recovery Disk Assistant to create an external recovery drive. Take advantage of it.



# I figure by now

# Apple owes me a pony

**BE SURE TO SAVE THE ORIGINAL COUPONS; YOU CAN'T USE A COPY OF THE COUPONS AS PROOF OF PURCHASE**



**TO GET SOFTWARE UPDATES AND OTHER SPECIAL OFFERS FROM APPLE, YOU'LL NEED THE COUPONS BELOW AS PROOF OF PURCHASE**



**IMPORTANT: DO NOT DISCARD THESE COUPONS.**

**PROOF OF PURCHASE COUPONS**





**Figure 1.** This is the sign for the Church that you will see as you come north on Cedar Lane. Turn right to get to the lower parking lot.



**Figure 2.** The entrance from the lower parking lot. It is adjacent to the room that the Pi uses.



**Figure 3.** An interior view of Room 30-31.

## Pi Clubhouse

# The Pi's New Clubhouse Site

*Brent Malcolm*

**A**s we mentioned in the last *Journal*, the Pi has given up its long-held space on Parklawn Drive in Rockville. In fact, we no longer lease any office space. Rather, we have a post office box for all correspondence, and rent space on an as-needed basis for all Pi activities that used to take place in the Rockville Clubhouse. Presently this space is in the Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church located at 9601 Cedar Lane in Bethesda. Directions to the church are posted on their web site: <http://www.cedarlane.org/directions.html>.

Beginning in January, all Pi events that used to take place in the former Clubhouse are being held in Room 30-31 on the lower level of the church complex. This room is located next to an entrance that is close to the lower parking area and is accessible.

As you come north on Cedar Lane, the sign on the right directs you into the lower parking area (Figure 1). From there, you can see the lower level entrance (Figure 2). Directly to the left of the entrance door are the windows of Room 30-31. The room

itself is actually a double room, approximately the same size as the main meeting area in the Parklawn building. It is comfortably furnished for all of the Pi's activities, and as an added bonus has a lovely view of the wooded grounds surrounding the church. Figures 3 and 4 show the size and the layout.

The room can be split into two separate meeting areas if our needs so dictate, and can be equipped with a movie screen or our flat screen TV as required. Thanks to Jason Woo for the photographs.



**Figure 4.** Another view of the room. Notice the expanse of windows and the view you get of the outside when you are in our new space.

# Blackout: SOPA, PIPA, and Sabotage

© 2012 Lawrence I. Charters

**O**n January 18, 2012, an estimated 7,000 websites world wide were blacked out, in full or in part, as a protest against two pieces of proposed U.S. legislation: the Stop Online Piracy Act (SOPA), introduced in the House of Representatives, and the Protect Intellectual Property Act (PIPA), introduced in the Senate. Known as the SOPA Blackout, this was the largest, most widely viewed one-day protest in history.

The merits of the two pieces of legislation have been widely discussed elsewhere and that discussion won't be repeated here. Instead, this article focuses on the blackout itself.

This one-day protest was also the greatest act of industrial sabotage in history. In just 24 hours, an estimated 160 million people went to Wikipedia and found it blacked out. Many times that number saw Google's blacked-out logo, though Google itself was fully functional. Macintouch, a very popular Macintosh news site, was blacked out, as was the technology magazine *Wired*, the tech cartoon XKCD, and even such highly specialized sites as Cakewrecks, which specializes in funny critiques of very poorly designed cakes. You can see several of the websites that were blacked out in the illustrations that accompany this article.

## 503: Service Intentionally Unavailable

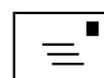
Boing Boing is offline today, because the US Senate is considering legislation that would certainly kill us forever. The legislation is called the PROTECT IP Act (PIPA), and would put us in legal jeopardy if we linked to a site anywhere online that had any links to copyright infringement.

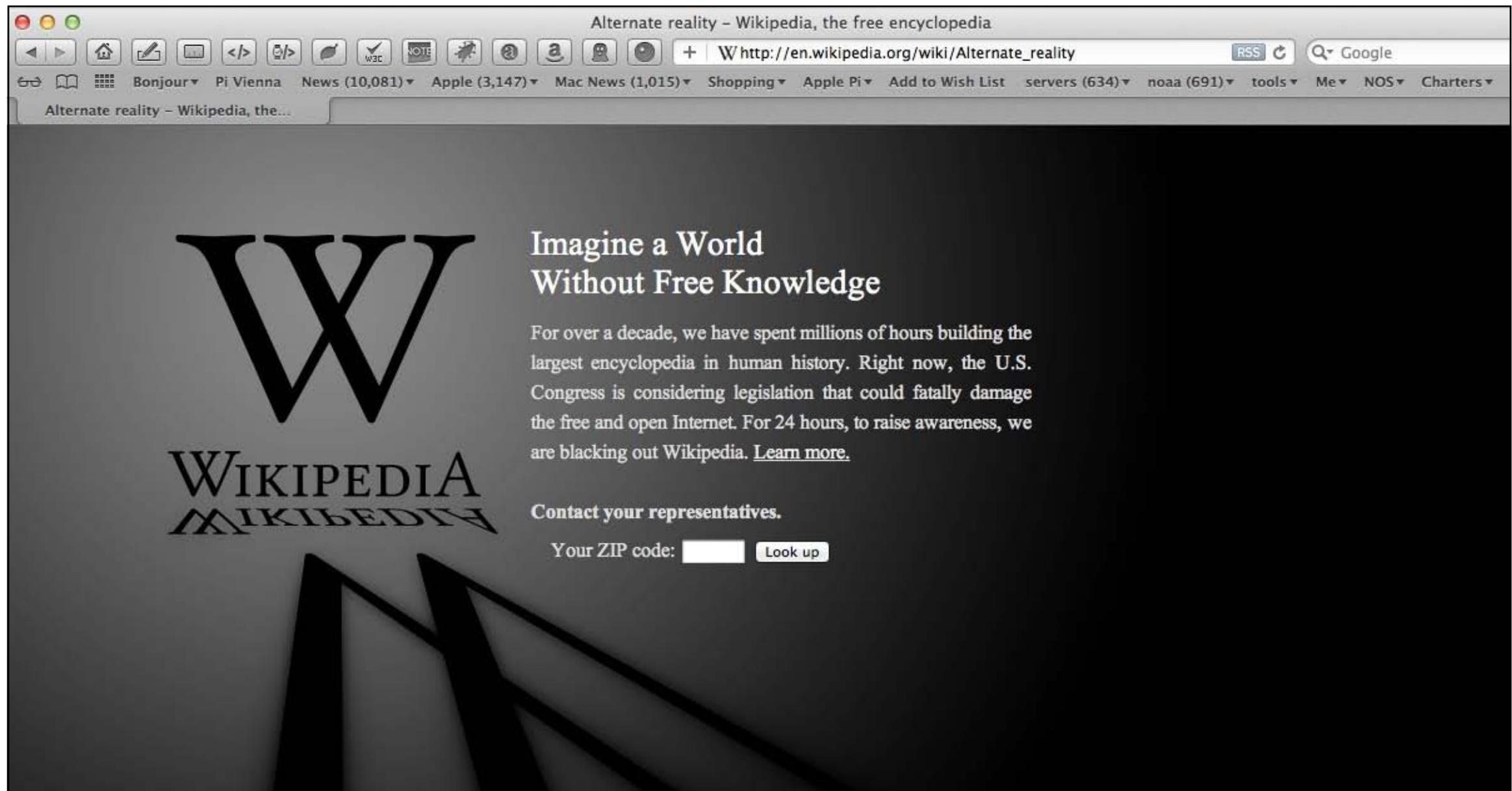
This would unmake the Web, just as proposed in the Stop Online Piracy Act (SOPA). We don't want that world. If you don't want it either, visit [AmericanCensorship.org](http://AmericanCensorship.org) for instructions on contacting your Senator. You might also join us with Craigslist and Reddit and [sign this petition](#). The [Electronic Frontier Foundation](#) has more information on this and other issues central to your freedom online.

Thanks,  
The Boingers

Viewed as sabotage, the blackout illustrates not only the intended political message—the proposed legislation could cripple millions of websites—but also a more fundamental problem. We live in an electronic age and depend on the Internet for information, entertainment, commerce, and a host of other services, yet a few thousand loosely organized website operators managed effortlessly to shut down a big chunk of the World Wide Web. There was no destruction, and the purpose of the blackout was not malicious, but the power of the few, and the fragility of the many, was on clear display.

Boing Boing, a group blog, was unavailable on January 18, 2012 but urged users to send messages of protest to Congress.



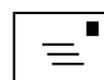


Wikipedia did the same.

The first major act of industrial sabotage in recent times took place on Friday, November 29, 1985, in Japan. A small radical group, Chukaku-ha, had protested for years the government expropriation of farmland for building Tokyo's Narita International Airport. The protest was going nowhere, so on this

otherwise routine workday, Chukaku-ha launched over 30 physical attacks on the communications centers, communications cables, and switching centers used by Japan National Railways. The national rail system between Tokyo and Osaka was shut down, 11 million commuters were

stranded, and the two largest cities in the country ground to a complete standstill in the largest traffic jam ever experienced. I was living in Japan at the time, and this was the first time—and the last time—I suffered a train delay there. My train eventually arrived 14 hours late.





This site is blacked out today in protest against "SOPA" and "PROTECT IP", proposed U.S. laws that threaten the **open Internet**, which revolutionized society and enabled the creation of websites like this one.

Please contact your congressional representatives today and urge them to vote against these laws:

[United States Representatives...](#)

[United States Senators...](#)

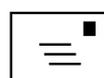
[Where Do Your Members of Congress Stand on SOPA and PIPA?](#)

[PIPA/SOPA State of Play](#)

#### **More information:**

- [End Piracy, Not Liberty](#) [Google]
- [My SOPA Opposition Letter](#) [Tim Lisko]
- [Stop the E-parasite Act](#) [petition and response at the White House]
- [Stop the Internet Blacklist Legislation](#) [Electronic Frontier Foundation]
- [About SOPA](#) [Craigslist]
- [Stop Online Piracy Act](#) [Wikipedia]
- [List of Those Expressing Concern With SOPA & PIPA](#) [Center for Democracy & Technology]
- [Stop American Censorship](#) [Fight for the Future]
- [Five reasons the Internet's still protesting SOPA and PIPA](#) [Washington Post]
- [How SOPA would affect you: FAQ](#) [Cnet]
- [Cybersecurity in the Balance: Weighing the Risks of the PROTECT IP Act and the Stop Online Piracy Act](#) [Brookings]
- [SOPA-rope-a-dopa](#) [Stewart Baker]
- [A technical examination of SOPA and PROTECT IP](#) [Reddit]
- [An open letter to Congress about SOPA and Protect IP](#) [OpenDNS]
- [SOPA Bill Sponsor Has Copyright Violation of His Own](#) [Call-A.P.P.L.E.]
- [#stopsopa](#) [Twitter]

Macintouch was out of touch in support of the SOPA Blackout.





# STOP SOPA

Cake Wrecks has gone dark today in protest of the U.S. Stop Online Piracy Act (SOPA) and Protect-IP Act (PIPA). These bills seek to censor the Internet, and would give the government power to shut down websites over even the *accusation* of copyright infringement, no proof needed.

Stopping online piracy is a good thing. Doing so at the expense of free speech and the global Internet is not.

Thanks to public outcry SOPA was shelved by the House this week, only to be brought back again late last night. It's expected to continue going forward next month, and its sister bill PIPA is scheduled for a vote next week. Don't stop now. Please, go to [Stop American Censorship](#) to learn more, and tell your representatives to protect your right to free speech by opposing both bills.

## Stop SOPA and PIPA

Call your Congressional representatives and let them know what you think. You'll be connected through your computer, so have your headphones and mic handy.

Representatives from 20895:  
[Not your location?](#)



Sen. Benjamin Cardin  
Email | Facebook | Twitter  
202-224-4524  
[Call Now](#)



Sen. Barbara Mikulski  
Email | Facebook | Twitter  
202-224-4654  
[Call Now](#)



Rep. Christopher Van Hollen  
District: MD8  
Email | Facebook | Twitter  
202-225-5341  
[Call Now](#)

powered by **GRASSROUTES**

**The SOPA Blackout, while not destructive, had the most pointed message of all: the web is vulnerable, so don't deliberately break it.**

Cakewrecks usually focuses on cakes that go wrong, but on January 18, 2012 its focus was on legislation.





Wired magazine pulled the plug as well.

**...the targets were electronic devices, but the victim was society at large. Our dependence on technology was laid bare.**

Two more great sabotage events took place in 2001. On July 19, the Code Red worm infected nearly 360,000 Windows computers in roughly 12 hours. During the peak infection period, Code Red was invading 2,000 new hosts every minute. I was in Alaska on a scientific expedition and was looking for shore facilities to transmit back data collected at sea. Every single computer I tried in Juneau—at the Harbor Master's office, at the U.S. Coast Guard station, at the public library, at a commercial Internet cafe—was non-functional.

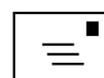
Later that year, in September, the Nimda worm infected machines at an even more frenetic pace, leaving 2.2 million dead Windows computers behind in a 24-hour period. Sporadic attacks by Code Red and Nimda continued for several years.

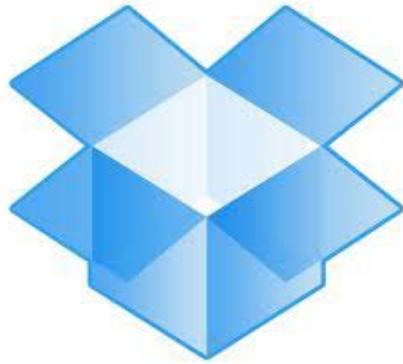
In each of these cases—the Japan National Railway shutdown, the Code Red and Nimda attacks, and the SOPA Blackout—the targets were electronic devices, but the victim was society at large. Our dependence on technology was laid bare. Chukaku-ha physically attacked and destroyed equipment that allowed the world's most advanced railway system to operate. In the Code Red and Nimda attacks, hackers exploited some gaping holes in the Windows operating system to disrupt hundreds of thousands of businesses, government agencies, and private individuals.

The SOPA Blackout, while not destructive, had the most pointed message of all: the web is vulnerable, so don't deliberately break it.

[The web comic XKCD was not amused.](#)

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>ARCHIVE</b><br/><b>NEWS/BLAG</b><br/><b>STORE</b><br/><b>ABOUT</b><br/><b>FORUMS</b></p>  | <p> <b>A WEBCOMIC OF ROMANCE, SARCASM, MATH, AND LANGUAGE.</b></p> <p>XKCD UPDATES EVERY MONDAY, WEDNESDAY, AND FRIDAY.</p> |
| <p><b>SOPA</b></p>  |  |
| <p>[don't censor the web.]</p>  |  |
| <p>I make my living drawing xkcd, which wouldn't have been possible if people hadn't been able to freely share my comics with each other all over the internet. As a copyright holder and small business owner, I oppose SOPA and PIPA.</p> <p>See the links below to learn more. </p> <p>LEARN MORE:</p> <p>EFF: <a href="#">ONE-PAGE GUIDE TO SOPA</a></p> <p>REDDIT: <a href="#">A TECHNICAL OVERVIEW OF THE SOPA AND PIPA BILLS</a></p> <p>DYN: <a href="#">HOW THESE BILLS WOULD BREAK DNS</a></p> <p>EFF: <a href="#">FREE SPEECH ON THE WEB</a></p> <p>ACT:</p> <p><a href="#">CONTACT INFORMATION FOR US ELECTED OFFICIALS</a></p> |  |





Software Tutorial

## Moving Files to Your iPad

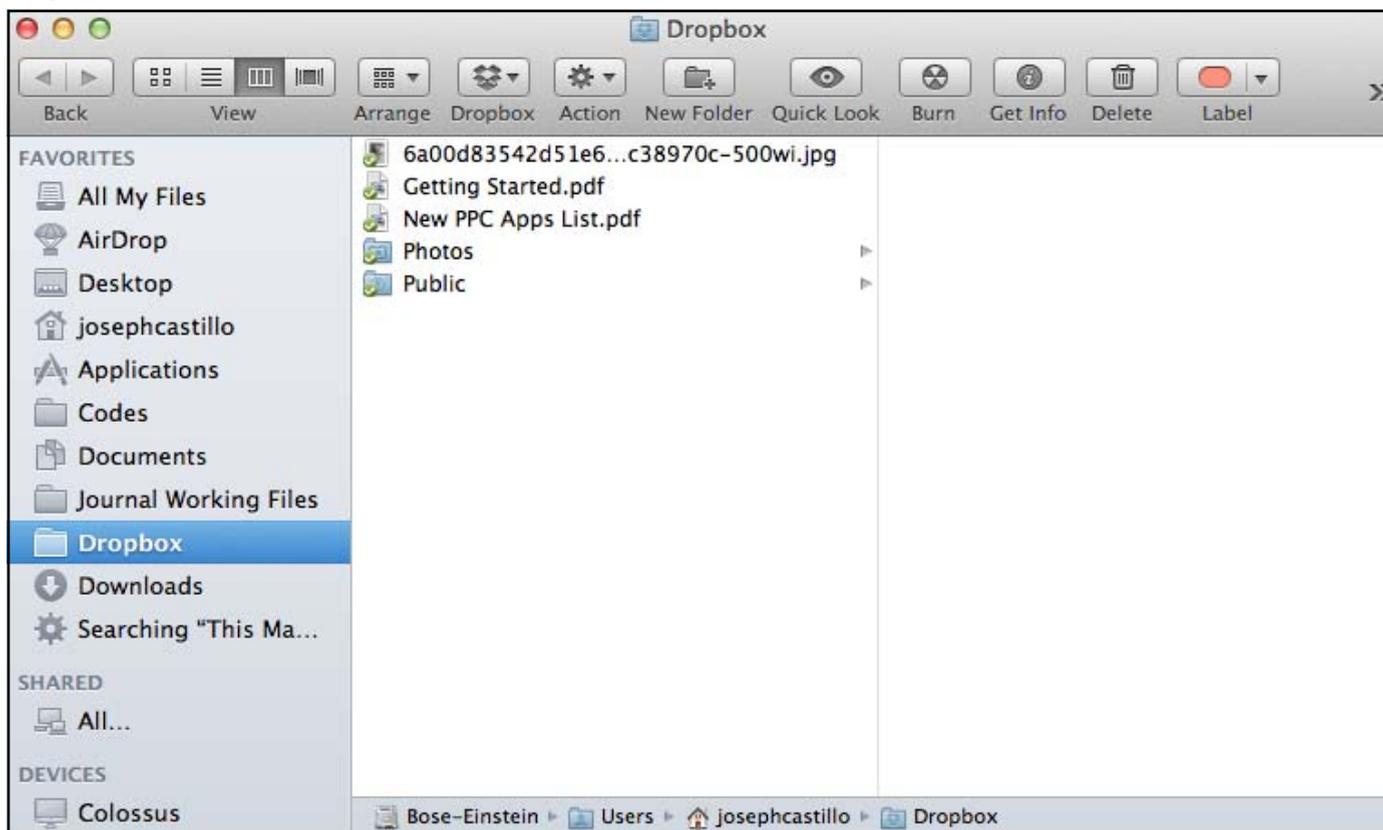
Jay Castillo

**W**hen I first got my iPad, I used it primarily for media consumption. As I learned about its capabilities, though, I realized I could do more.

One thing I wanted to do was to store and retrieve various files, such as documents, pdfs, and images. I have discovered two applications that permit me to move files from my iMac to my iPad (and iPod Touch) and vice versa: *Dropbox* and *FileMagnet*. Both are easy to use: just drag and drop.



**Figure 1.** This is the Dropbox window that opens on my iMac when I click on the open box icon.



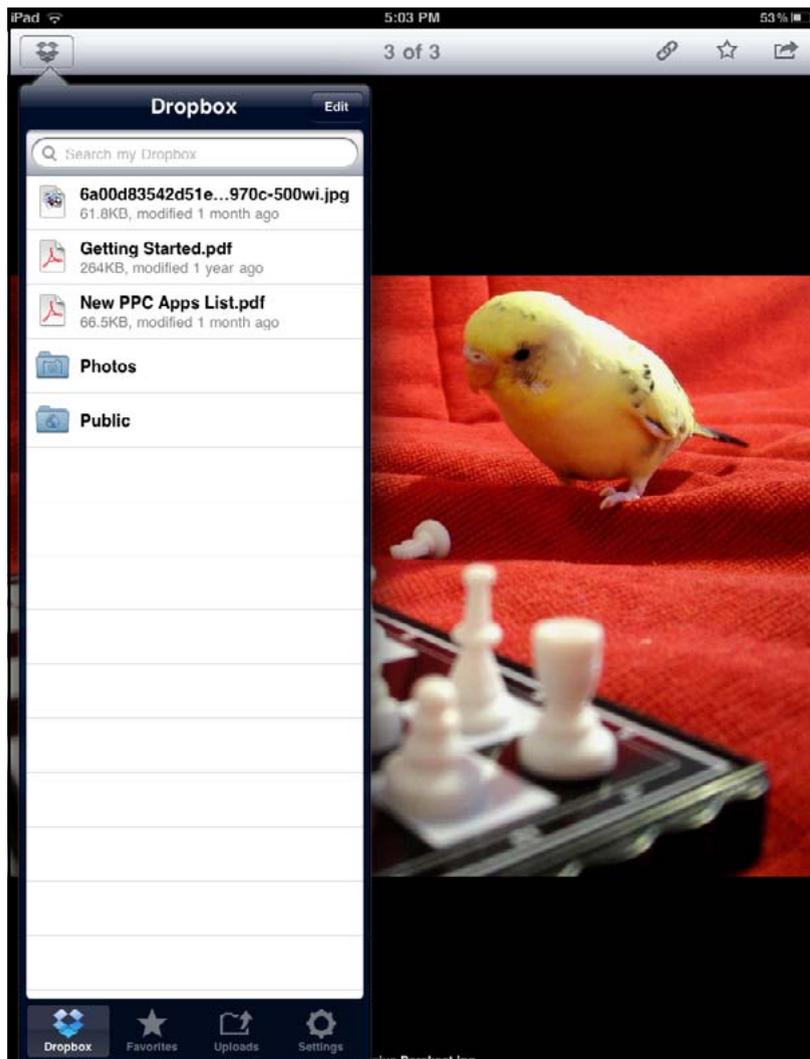
### *Dropbox*

*Dropbox* is a free, web-based application that allows the user to sync files between devices, share files with others, and back up files to the Cloud. Because it is web based, it needs an Internet connection. *Dropbox* provides 2 GB of free storage, but a user can purchase more.

Using *Dropbox* to transfer files between my iMac and my iPad is very simple once I have downloaded the application and installed it on both devices. *Dropbox* places a menulet on the menu bar, an open box icon, naturally. I click on the icon, select Open *Dropbox* Folder, and my personal *Dropbox* folder opens on my desktop (see Figure 1). I drag the file I want to transfer into the open window, and now it is on the web. If I click on the *Dropbox* icon on my iPad, I see the same folder that was on my iMac (see Figure 2). I tap on the appropriate file name or icon, and it opens on my iPad. Sweet!

The files remain on my iPad, viewable any time I open the iPad *Dropbox* app. But I must keep in mind that I can only transfer files between my iPad and iMac (both directions) when I'm on the Internet.

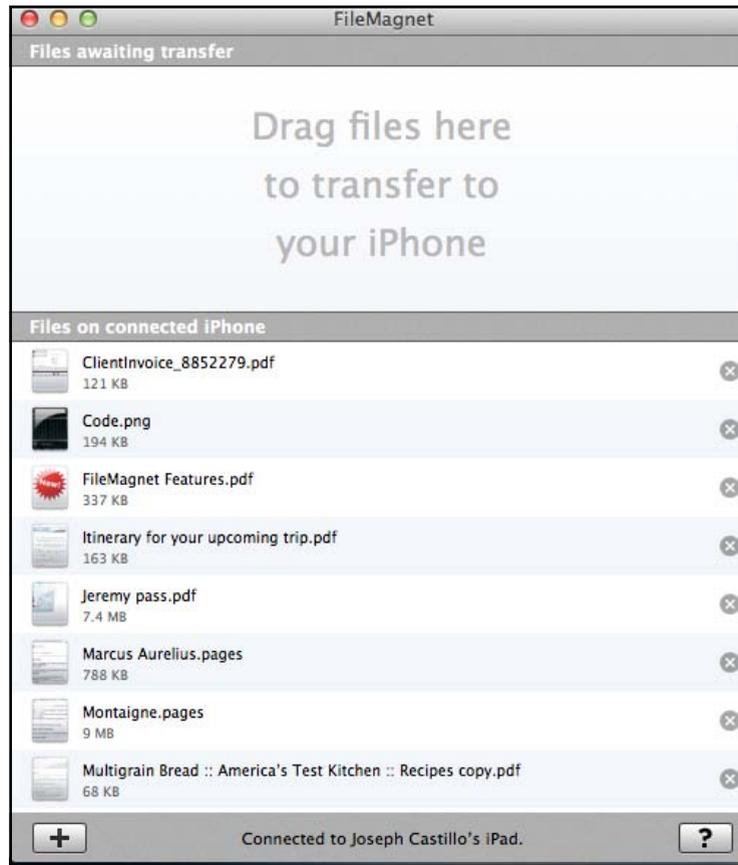




**Figure 2.** The window that opens on my iPad looks a little different, but is the same folder.

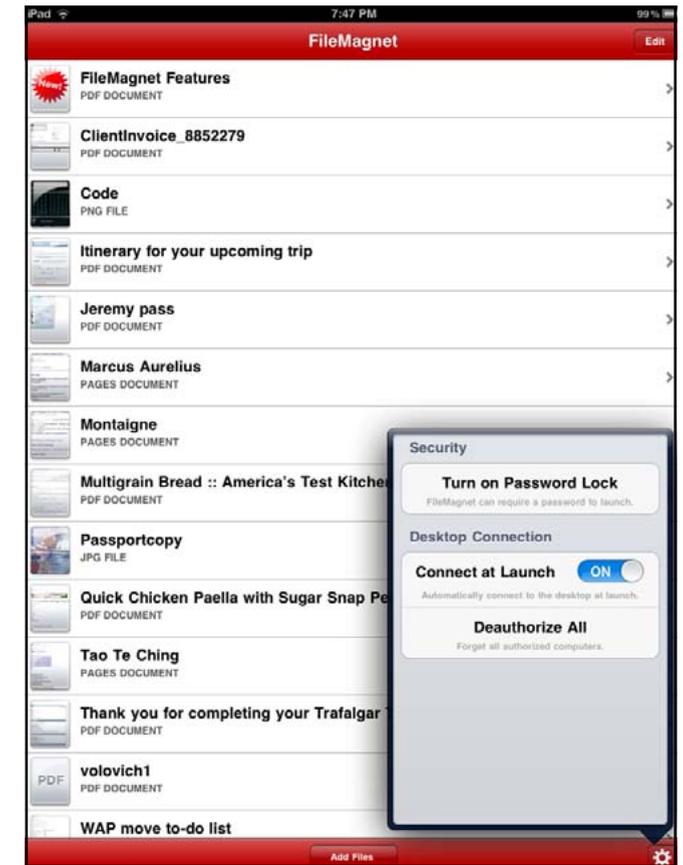
### *FileMagnet*

*FileMagnet* also requires installation on both devices you want to move files between, and requires both devices in the exchange to be connected either to the same wireless network or directly through *iTunes* sync. It costs five dollars at the *iTunes* store, relatively expensive, but worth it to me. Like *Dropbox*, it is very easy to use.



**Figure 3.** When I open *FileMagnet* to transfer files to another device, I see this window. At the bottom are the files that are already on my iPad. At the top is the window into which I can drag more files to transfer.

To transfer a file using *FileMagnet*, I open the app on my iMac, and see the window shown in Figure 3. The bottom section of the window shows what is already on my iPad. The top section is where I drag the file(s) I want to transfer now. I then open the app on my iPad. The window that opens (see Figure 4) has the same list of files that are already on the iPad as I saw on the iMac, and an “Add



**Figure 4.** This is the window that I see when I open *FileMagnet* on the destination device. It lists the files that are already on the device, and gives me the option to add more.

Files” button at the bottom. When I click on Add Files, I get a choice of transferring the files using *iTunes* and a USB connection or using a wifi connection (Figure 5). Either way, *FileMagnet* gives me step-by-step instructions to follow (see Figure 6). I usually use the wifi method, since it can be done quickly and without physically connecting the mobile device to my iMac.

## On The Road or at Home

The choice of which app to use to transfer files is largely determined by where I am. *Dropbox* allows me to transfer files from my iPad to the Cloud when I am on the road, and then open them on my iMac when I am back home. If I'm at home, *FileMagnet* is the obvious choice. Using both, I have all options available to me.

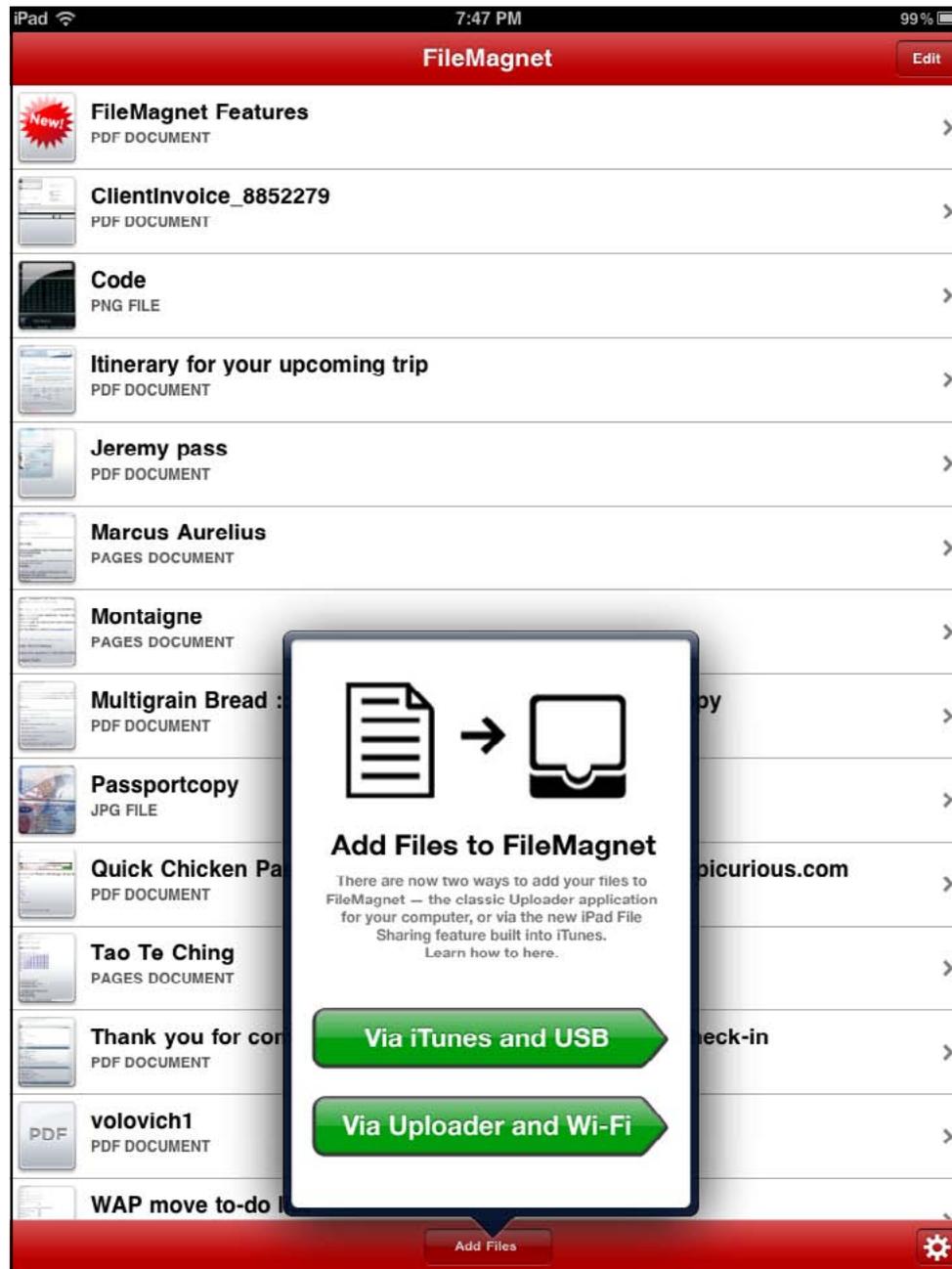


Figure 5. In *FileMagnet* I can choose between two ways of transferring files.

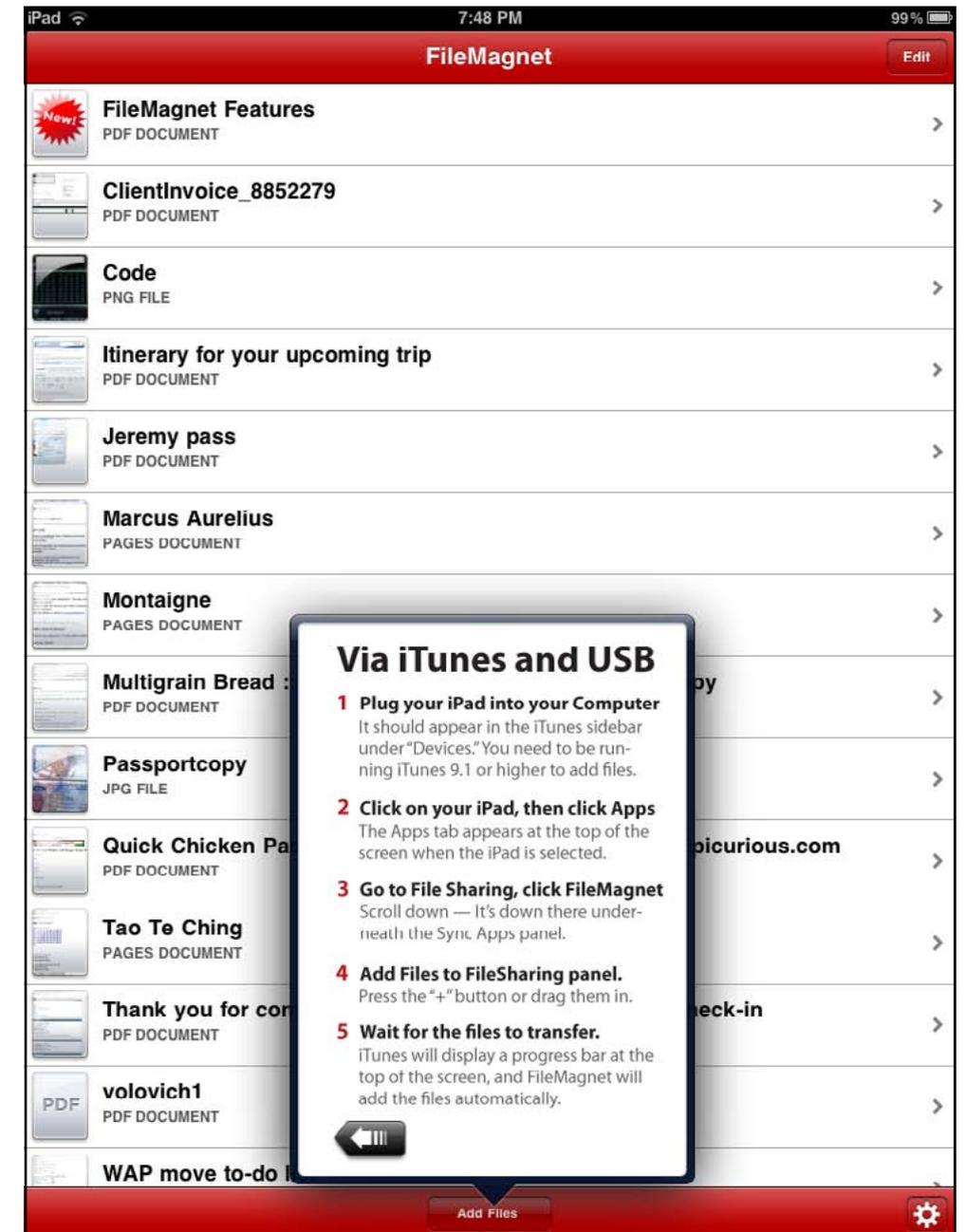


Figure 6. *FileMagnet* gives me detailed step-by-step instructions for the transfer.

## What Lion Says “About This Mac”

Jay Castillo



**O**n the far left of the menu bar on your Desktop, you will find the Apple icon. If you click on that icon, you will see the Apple menu. Click on the first item, About This Mac, and you see a pane with the basic technical information about your Mac computer (see Figure 1). If you need to know the operating system version, processor speed and

type, amount and type of RAM, or the name of your startup disk, this is where to find it quickly. You can also check for software updates from this pane. If you want more information about your Mac, click on the More Info button at the bottom of the screen.

In any version of Mac OS X before Lion, when you click on that More Info button System Profiler opens and displays a System Report. When you click on More Info in Mac OS X Lion, however, you will see a new About This Mac window, as shown in Figure 2. This displays an image of your Mac. On the top left of the window are four tabs, Overview (which you are

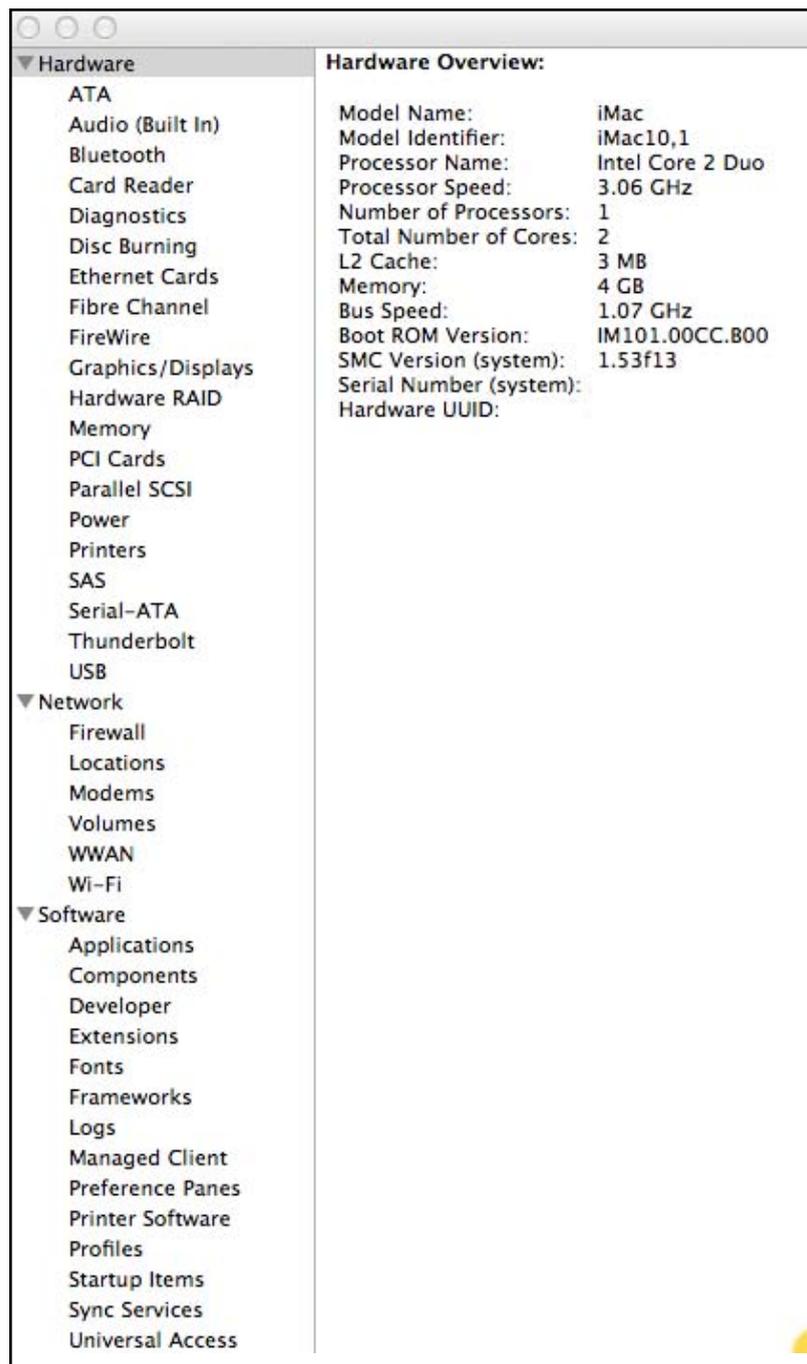
**Figure 1.** Click on About This Mac under your Apple icon and you will see this window.



**Figure 2.** In Mac OS X Lion, when you click on the More Info button in the About This Mac window, this screen pops up.

seeing), Displays, Storage, and Memory. On the top right are the Support and Service tabs. At the bottom of the window are buttons for yet another opportunity to check for software updates, and for a System Report. The Overview shows the identity of your Mac, in this case a 27-inch, Late 2009 iMac. It also tells you the type of graphics card you have, the serial number of your machine (very important), and the specific version of your operating system.

If you click on the System Report button, you will see the report shown in Figure 3 —the same report that you saw in prior versions of Mac OS X. There are three information topics:



**Figure 3.** This is what the System Report for my iMac looks like.



**Figure 4.** The Displays window in Lion has yet another image of your screen, as well as information about it.

Hardware, Network, and Software. Under each of these is a list of subtopics. Clicking on any of these provides you with an extensive report. You may not recognize or understand much of the technical data, but the information is useful to experts for understanding your system configuration. If you have a telephonic technical support session, you may be asked for information from the System Report.

For older versions of Mac OS X, the System Report is the last of the data available from About This Mac. But for Lion, there's a lot more. Let's go through the tabs in the About This Mac window in Lion.

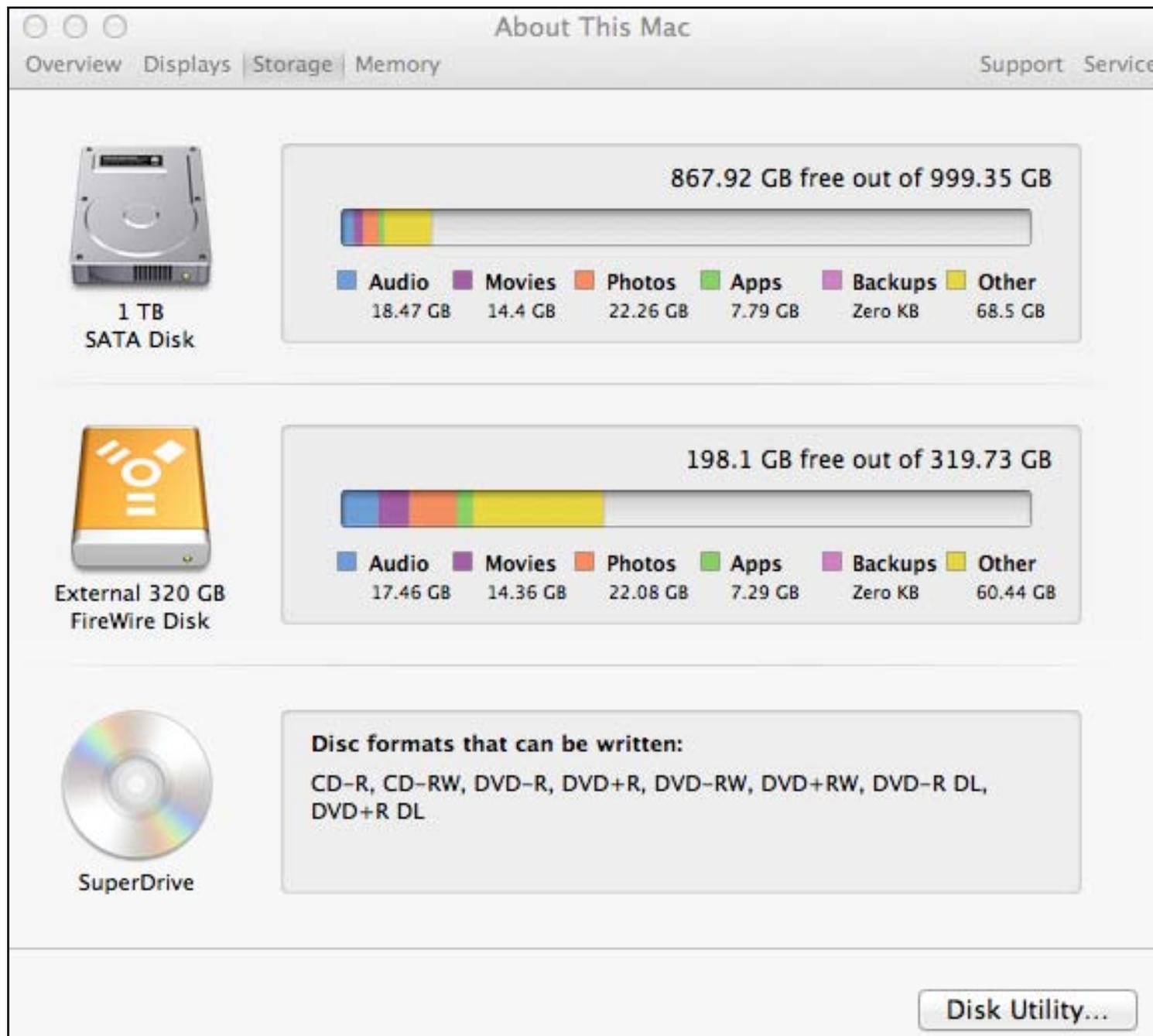
## Displays

Clicking the Displays tab opens a window that tells you the size and resolution of your display, and the graphics card parameters (Figure 4). On the bottom right corner is a button to take you to the Displays Preferences in System Preferences.

## Storage

The Storage tab opens what I think is the coolest window of the four (see Figure 5). There is an icon for each hard drive mounted on your system, that identifies the type and capacity, and there is a familiar colorful display for each that shows the amount of storage occupied by your audio, movies, photos, apps, backups, and "other." You also see the amount of space remaining on the drive. This graph is similar to the one you see when you plug your iPod Touch, iPhone, or iPad into iTunes. The last element of the window shows the available formats for your DVD drive (if you have one).

A characteristic of the Mac operating system is that there are many ways to accomplish a task or function. On the bottom right corner of the Storage window is a button for launching Disk Utility so that you don't have to go to the Utilities folder.



**Figure 5.** Click on the Storage tab –it will take you to this window. Isn't it cool looking?

## Memory

Clicking on the Memory tab opens a window that tells you how much memory is installed on your computer, how many memory slots you have, and the capacity of each (see Figure 6). It also shows you which slots are in use, how much

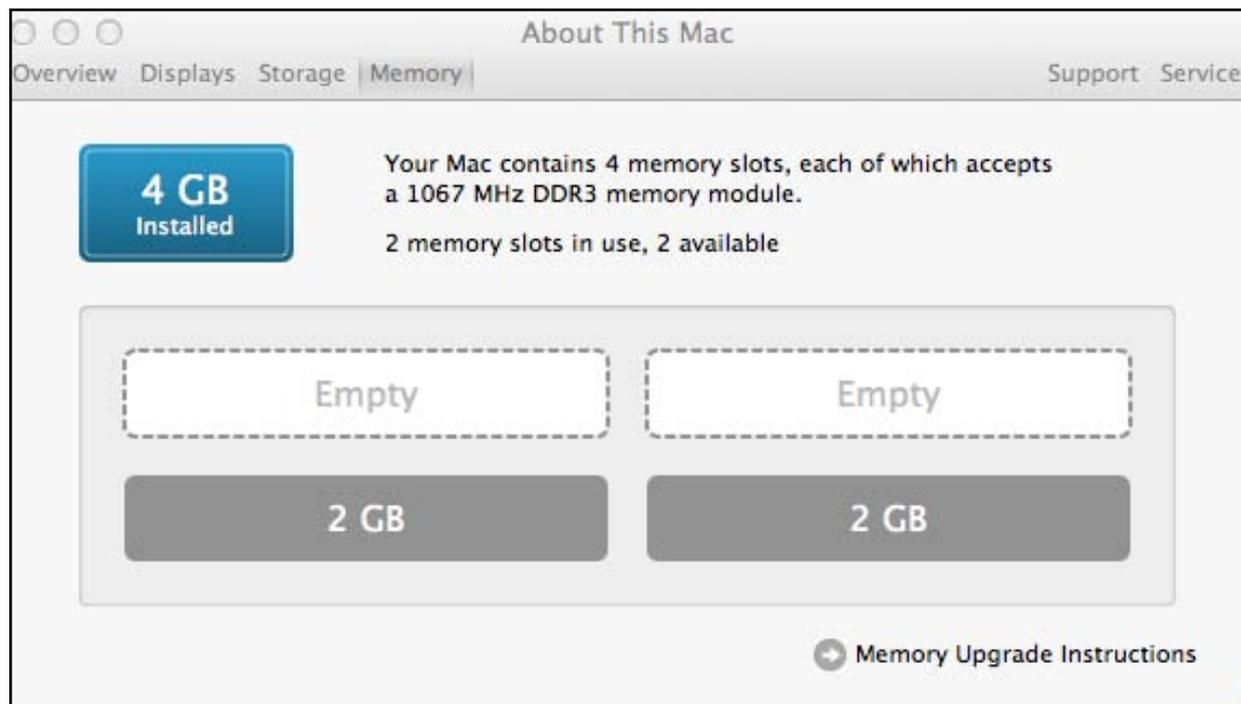
more memory can be installed, and the type of memory required. When you click on the Memory Upgrade Instructions button at the bottom of the window, you will get illustrated instructions for your type and model of computer from the Apple Support website.

## Support

When you click on the Support tab on the upper right side of the About This Mac window, a window opens that has operating system resources in the upper half and Macintosh resources in the lower half (see Figure 7). The Help Center arrow opens a “Welcome to OS X Lion” page with a wide variety of topics, and a search window. The Mac OS X Support arrow takes you to the Lion section of the Apple Support website. The Macintosh Resources section provides access to the user manual for your Mac, as well as hardware information and troubleshooting support. However, when I clicked on the User Manual arrow, even though I have an iMac running Lion, the resulting iMac manual referenced Snow Leopard, not Lion.

## Service

The final tab, the Service tab, brings up a window that provides general information on Apple warranty terms and support services, and has links that I found handy when I needed to check the expiration date of my AppleCare coverage. Clicking on the first arrow, “Check my service and support coverage



**Figure 6.** The Memory tab opens a window that shows you graphically how many memory slots are in your computer and how much memory is in each.



**Figure 7.** The Support tab connects you to links to the Help Center, to Mac OS X Support, and to a number of Mac resources, including a User Manual.

status,” brings up a dialog box asking for permission for Apple to receive your Mac’s serial number. Then a window opens that provides the information, or tells you if are not covered. You can also click through for repair or other service-related resources.

### So Take A Tour

It is worth your while to go through the About This Mac sequence in detail. You may discover useful information and resources, and at least you will know what is there. Since it is always available from your Desktop, it is a quick way to access Apple resources without going through your web browser.



## Change Your Apple ID Password. Now.

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**T**here is one thing Mac, iPad, iPhone, and iPod users have in common. No, it isn't political beliefs; archconservatives and the very liberal both use these devices. No, it isn't age, or gender, or income level, or nationality. It is something that most of them never give much thought to: an Apple ID.

You may not even know you have an Apple ID, but if you have a Mac or iPhone or iPad or iPod, or even if you have a Windows machine and you also have an *iTunes* account, you have an Apple ID, and that Apple ID is worth money. As shown in Figure 1, your Apple ID can be used to purchase music and applications from the *iTunes* Store, or hardware or software from Apple's online store. Not shown in the list, but also important, is the ability to purchase and download new software from the Apple App Store that is built into every copy of Snow Leopard and Lion.

Because virtually everyone with an Apple ID has used it to purchase something from Apple's online

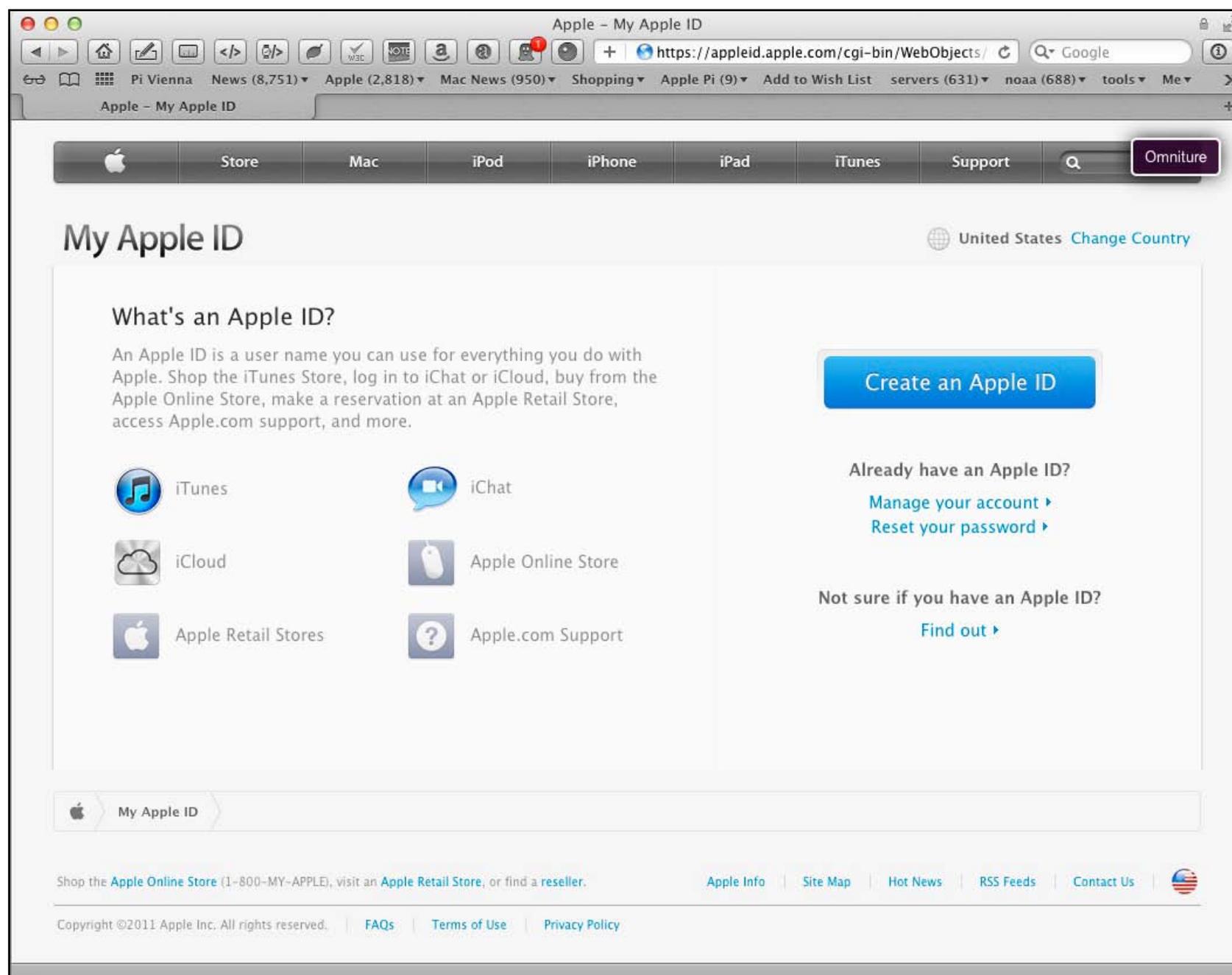
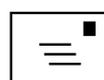


Figure 1. Check out all the things you can do with your Apple ID.



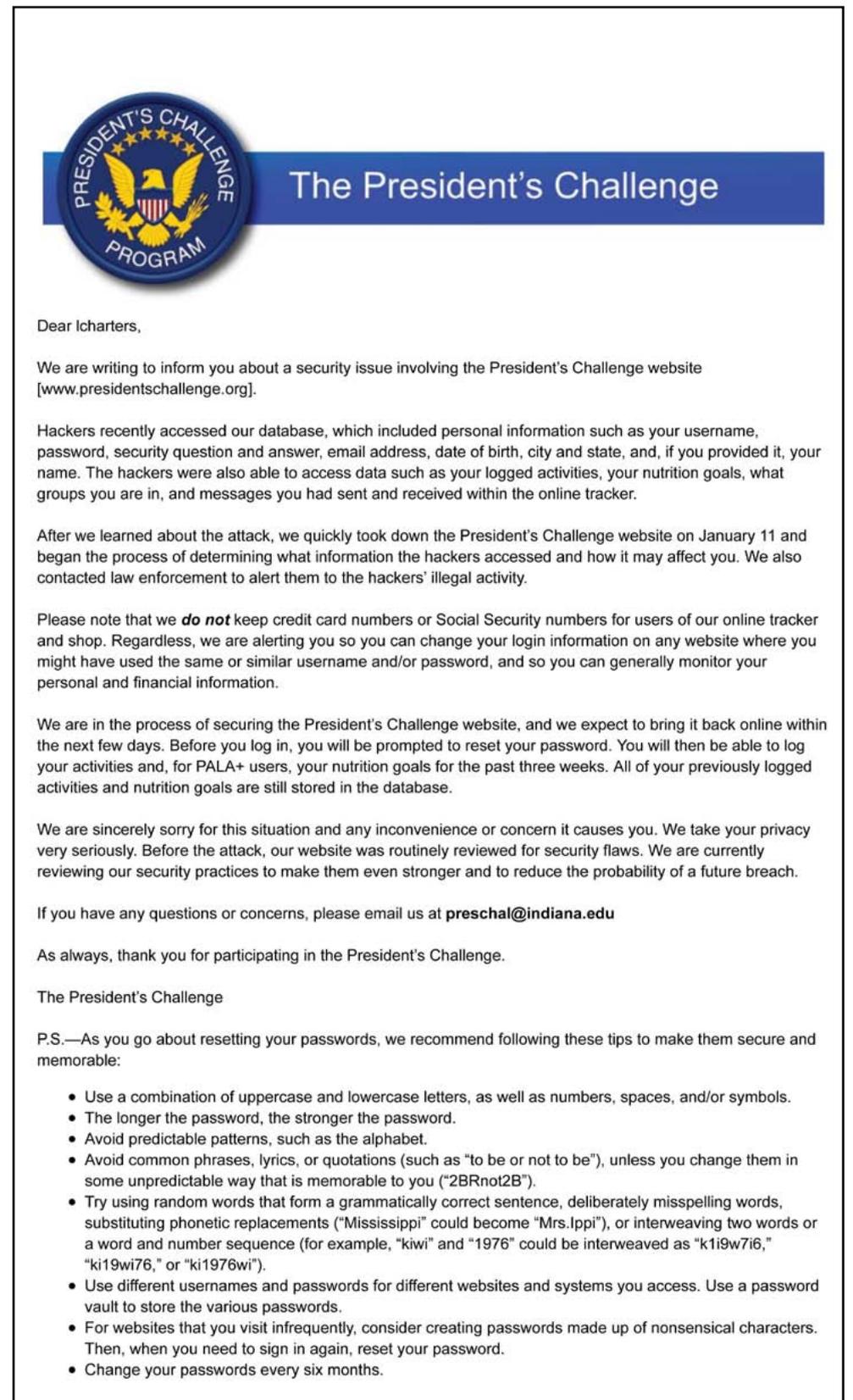
## Easily guessable passwords and reused passwords caused more economic grief in 2011 than all the bank robberies in the entire country.

services, the Apple ID is usually tied to a credit card. As a result, anyone who ever manages to gain access to your Apple ID credentials has the ability to spend your money, draining your account of any credits you might have from *iTunes* gift cards, or simply running up your credit card bill by purchasing a shiny new computer or a library of music you probably can't stand.

Your Apple ID is in two parts: the Apple ID itself (an email account) and a password. Because the ID is an email account name, and because you use your email account to communicate with others, your email account name is no secret. Millions of network devices worldwide have passed your email account name through various routers, firewalls, servers and whatnot. Spammers certainly have your email address; you get spam, don't you? Bluntly put, one-half of all the information necessary for some unknown person to spend your money is widely available: your email account name.

Which brings us to the second part of your Apple ID: the password. Over the past couple of years, a great many people have had their accounts on the *iTunes* store drained of money because they (a) had easily guessable passwords, including the infamously poor password of "password," or (b) used the password on more than one online service. Easily guessable passwords and reused passwords caused more economic grief in 2011 than all the bank robberies in the entire country.

**Figure 2.** Here is the letter I received recently from "The President's Challenge" website, telling me that hackers had accessed their database and urging me to change my password.



These economic losses typically do not come from attacks directed at individual *iTunes* accounts or anything else so obvious. Instead, hackers attack throwaway services that nobody really cares about, such as contests to get a free iPad, or an online petition to keep a company from building a skyscraper bordering your back yard, or an online service that helps you keep tabs on fellow members of your Civil War reenactors' unit. These less prominent services have no access to your credit card information—the services are almost always free— but, and this needs to be stressed, if you have a weak password, or you reuse the same password for multiple online services, you essentially are inviting hackers to spend your money.

Armed with a long list of visitor email addresses and passwords used to register for a free set of steak knives, hackers can then visit the *iTunes* Store or the online Apple Store and try to use these same email addresses and passwords to make purchases. The hackers don't need to know your credit card number; all they need to know is your email address (which they got from some other site) and your password (which you used on that site and Apple's site) to spend your money.

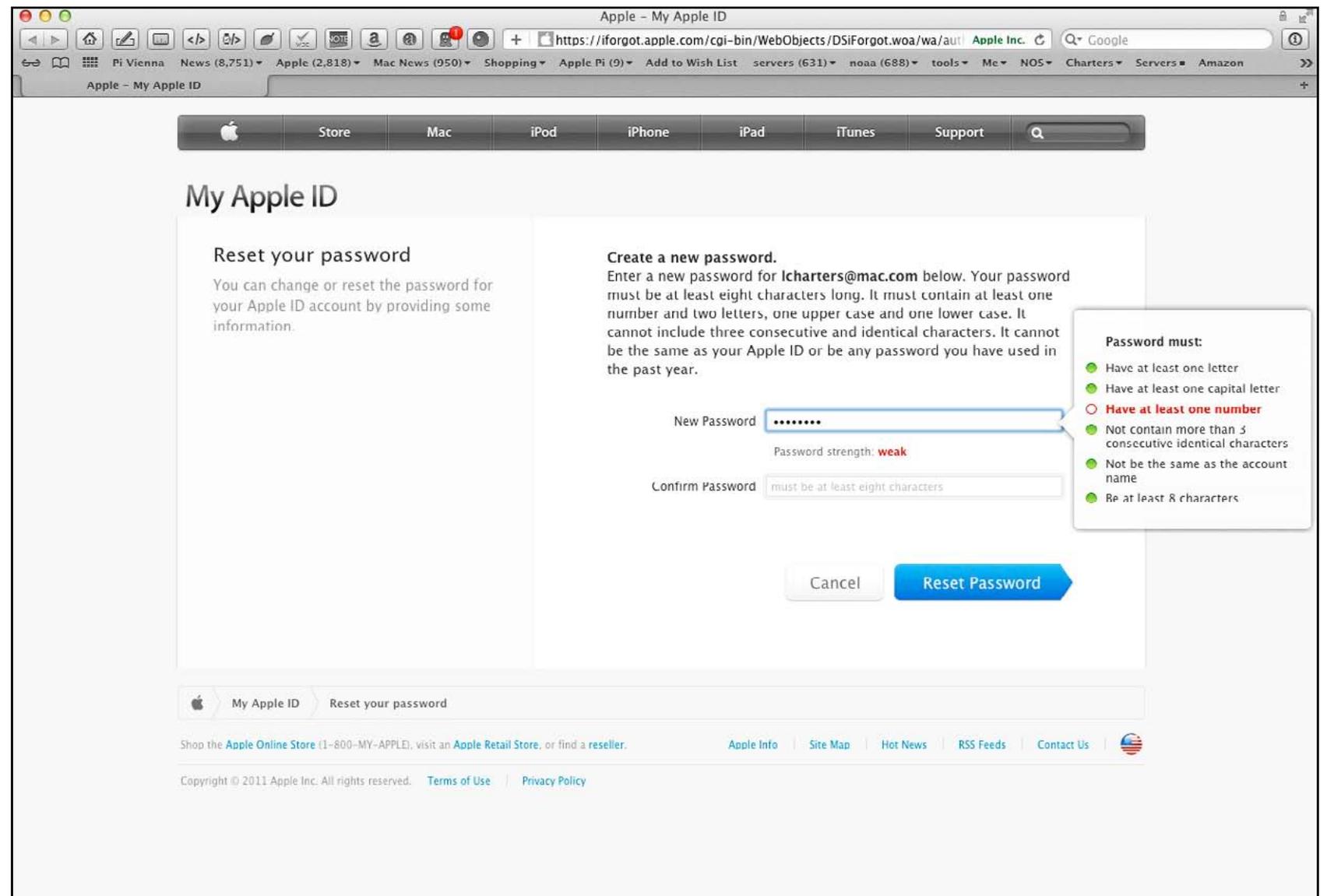


Figure 3. Apple has a number of requirements for your Apple ID password, designed to make it more secure.

This problem isn't unique to Apple. Hackers can spend your money on Amazon, too, or L.L. Bean, or almost any other retailer. Poor passwords are common, and reusing passwords on multiple sites is even more common. Combine these two and it is easy to spend your money, without ever

knowing your credit card number or anything else about you.

To give you a specific example, see Figure 2. You probably won't be able to read the fine print, but this is a recent message from "The President's

Challenge” website, hosted by Indiana University. Once upon a time, I was asked to visit the site and evaluate it for a particular purpose. To do that, I needed to create an account consisting of an email address and password. The message states, in part, “Hackers recently accessed our database, which included personal information such as your username, password, security question and answer, email address, date of birth, city and state, and, if you provided it, your name.” The letter then goes on to strongly recommend that I change my password and gives explicit instructions for how to create a strong password.

This didn’t cause me any grief. I don’t reuse passwords—certainly not passwords that are also used for accounts tied to money—but I’m the exception. Each day, millions of dollars are collected from online accounts of those less wary.

When it comes to your Apple ID, stopping such theft is easy. Go to:

<https://appleid.apple.com> and click on the link that says, “Manage your account.”

You’ll be taken to a page where you can change your password, create security questions (to keep others from changing your password for you), and update contact information. If you don’t remember your Apple ID password, click on the link that says “Reset your password” and you’ll be taken to a page that asks you some security questions or, alternatively, sends you an email with a special link for resetting your password (Figure 3).

Take a good look at Figure 3. Apple doesn’t like easily guessable passwords, so you can’t get away with “password” or “1234” or something else trivial. You are guided through changing your password, complete with hints on a good password.

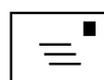
## After changing your password comes the all-important Step 2: Don’t use that password for any other service.

What is a good password? Something that is long, and memorable. Is your favorite movie “Fantasia,” from 1940? A password of: **Fantasia-1940** not only meets Apple’s requirements but also is almost impossible for a password-breaking program to solve.

After changing your password comes the all-important Step 2: Don’t use that password for any other service. Use your Apple ID and password only for your iCloud services, *iTunes* Store, Mac App Store, online Apple store and other Apple services. Don’t use that password for Amazon, Google, *The Washington Post*, Publisher’s Clearing House, your bank, or any other service.

And please don’t think you are exempt. This article was prompted by roughly 50 incidents passed on by Pi members over the past year. In each case, the member thought their *iTunes* or Apple email or some other Apple account was hacked by evil hackers. In each case, the member was wrong: a non-Apple site was hacked, but because the Pi member either reused the same password on Apple’s sites or the member used some trivial password, it was easy for the hacker to use the member’s credentials.

Fight crime on a very personal level: Don’t reuse passwords.



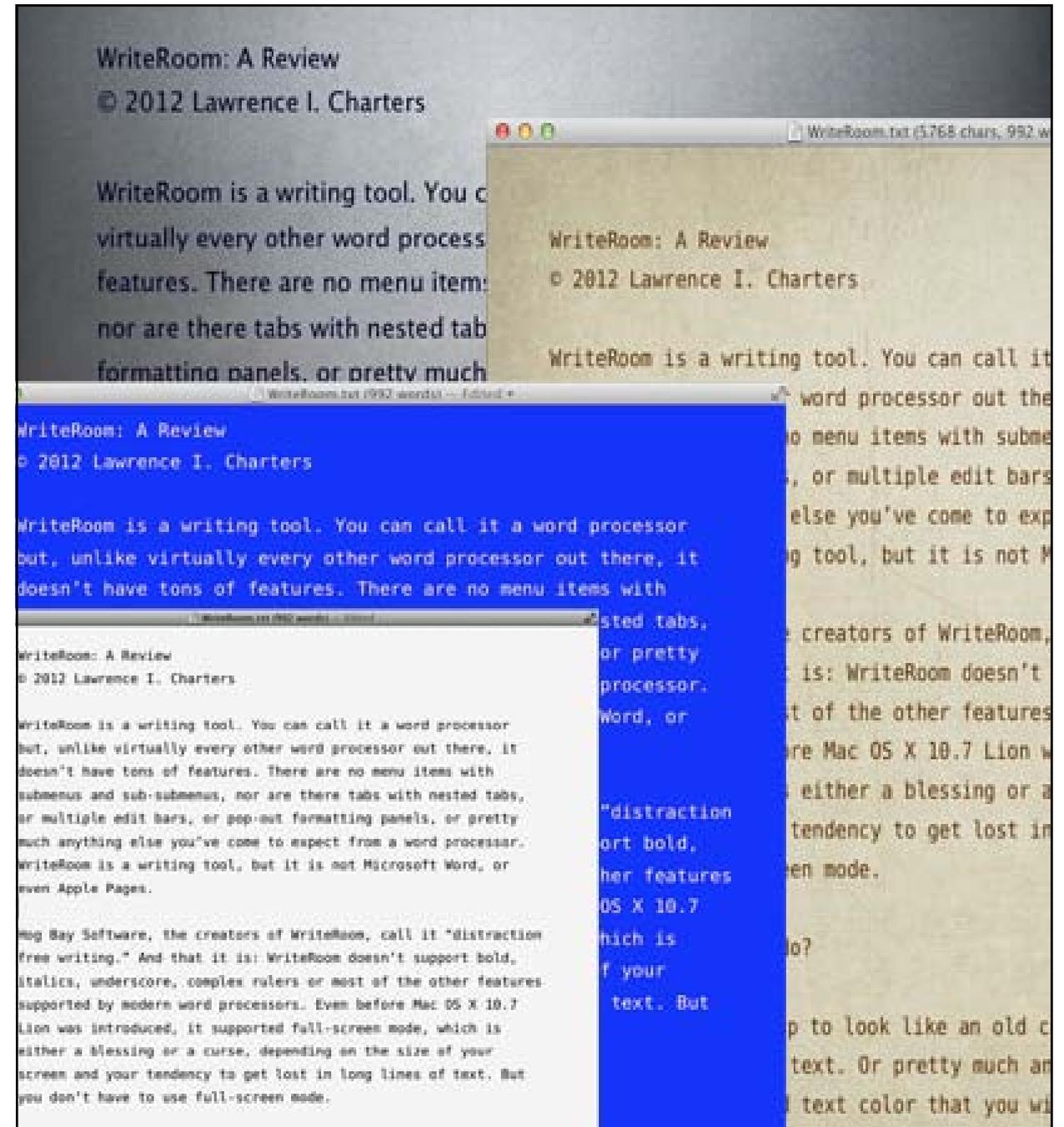


*WriteRoom* is a writing tool. You can call it a word processor, but, unlike virtually every other word processor out there, it doesn't have tons of features. There are no menu items with submenus and sub-submenus, nor are there tabs with nested tabs, or multiple edit bars, or pop-out formatting panels, or pretty much anything else you've come to expect from a word processor. *WriteRoom* is a writing tool, but it is not *Microsoft Word*, or even *Pages*.

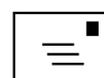
Hog Bay Software, the creators of *WriteRoom*, calls it "distraction free writing." And that it is: *WriteRoom* doesn't support bold, italics, underscore, complex rulers, or most of the other features supported by modern word processors. Even before Mac OS X 10.7 Lion was introduced, *WriteRoom* supported full-screen mode. This is either a blessing or a curse, depending on the size of your screen and your tendency to get lost in long lines of text, but you don't have to use full-screen mode.

## What does *WriteRoom* do?

- You can set it up to look like an old computer terminal, with a black background and green text, or pretty much any other combination of page color, background color, and text color that you wish.
- You can save your work in either plain text or Rich Text Format (RTF); aside from an option to export a PDF, that's it.



WriteRoom can be customized to look like almost anything.





quickly—no waiting for *Microsoft Word* to do whatever the heck it does and *Pages* to do whatever it is doing—it is something you are encouraged to use. Speed may not be everything, but it does get the attention of the impatient among us.

There isn't a lot more to say about *WriteRoom*. It is fast. It is simple. It is, within the design limits, flexible and configurable. Unlike most word processors, figuring out how to configure it is obvious; there are no hidden options. The manual is only ten pages long, including the cover sheet, table of contents, and credits.

It is also inexpensive: \$9.99. There is a version of *WriteRoom* for the iPhone and iPad for \$4.99, which I haven't seen but am giving serious thought to purchasing. Hog Bay Software also makes a simpler editor, *PlainText*, which is available for the iPhone and iPad for free.

Yes, minimalist is sometimes that good. I wrote this review in *WriteRoom*, in less than half an hour. Just formatting it with *Word* for the *Journal* took longer.

*WriteRoom* for Mac is available for \$9.99 direct from Hog Bay Software, at <http://www.hogbaysoftware.com/>

*WriteRoom* for iPhone and iPad is available for \$4.99 from the *iTunes* App Store.

The latest version, *WriteRoom* 3.0.3, requires Mac OS X 10.7 and iOS 4.

## Hot Links

### **You too can be a serious writer**

So you really want to be a serious writer. It can't be that hard.

Here are some ideas about how your iPad can be put to the task:

<http://www.zdnet.com/blog/mobile-news/ipad-2-as-a-serious-writing-machine-how-to/5964?tag=search-results-rivers;item10>

### **Will my MobileMe Galleries disappear?**

Help! I need to save my MobileMe Gallery! MobileMe will self-destruct in June 2012. Photo sharing site ZangZang might be the place of refuge.

Check it out:

<http://tidbits.com/article/12645>

### **The bad guys are even after your iPhone.**

No, you're not paranoid: they ARE out to get you. Learn about the Carrier IQ Company and its data collection software installed on smart phones.

It's easy to protect your iPhone from this menace. Learn how:

<http://blog.intego.com/carrier-iq-and-the-iphone/>

### **Should you compare the Kindle Fire and the iPad 2?**

What is this Kindle Fire of which you speak? And how does it compare to iPad2? Maybe they don't compare. Try this:

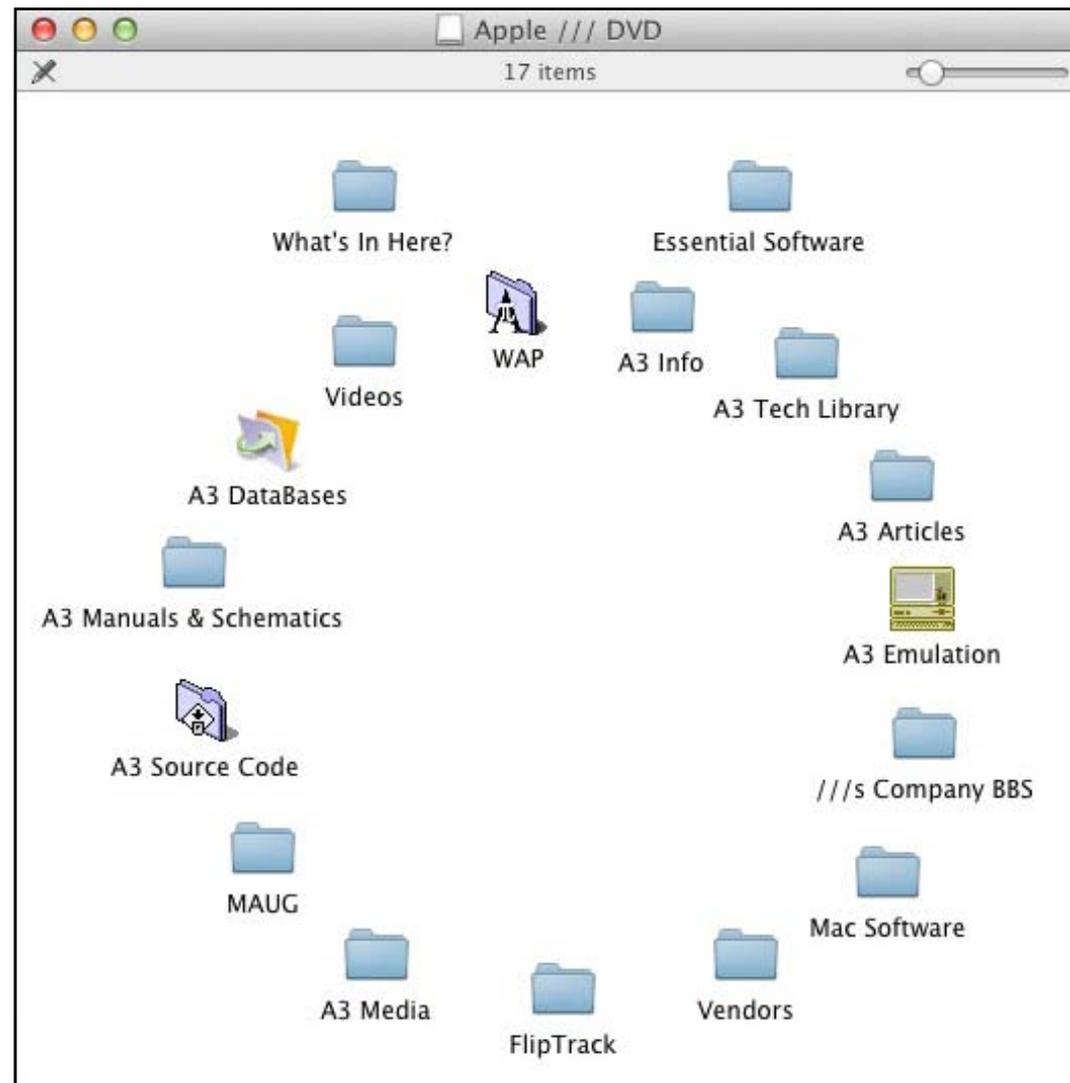
[http://www.macworld.com/article/163882/2011/11/kindle\\_fire\\_and\\_ipad\\_2\\_comparing\\_the\\_incomparable.html#lsrc.nl\\_mwipod\\_h\\_crawl](http://www.macworld.com/article/163882/2011/11/kindle_fire_and_ipad_2_comparing_the_incomparable.html#lsrc.nl_mwipod_h_crawl)



## Washington Apple Pi Apple /// DVD Going Online

**A**t the beginning of January, Washington Apple Pi's long-time Apple /// guru, Dave Ottalini, redesignated the Apple /// DVD he prepared some years ago as public domain. Before this, the DVD was sold by the Pi through the Pi store for \$35.

### Apple? /// DVD contents



Saying the DVD is in the public domain and providing the material in a useful format are, unfortunately, two different things. This is a data DVD, not a video DVD, and it contains a massive amount of information (see figure). Getting all of Ottalini's work up and available on the Pi Web site will take awhile, but as it becomes available, you will be able to find it here: <http://www.wap.org/a3/>

For those of you not familiar with the Apple ///, it was Apple Computer's first explicitly "business" computer, intended as a follow-on to the more "hobbyist" Apple II. After its release in May 1980, the introductory price of \$7,800 and some serious technical issues greatly hindered sales, and it was discontinued in 1984, a few months after the introduction of the original Macintosh.

Despite the poor sales, however, the Apple /// offered some major advances for the time, including an advanced operating system, a hard disk drive, a bit-mapped display with customizable fonts, and backwards compatibility with Apple II software. Washington Apple Pi became a world-recognized center of Apple /// expertise, and the Pi even funded some hardware and software development projects.

Check back over the next few months as we place Ottalini's massive trove of information on the Pi site. If you have an Apple ///, you will certainly find something of interest, and for those who don't, the material is a fascinating journey back to the early days of personal computing.

# Lion Recovery Disk Assistant Creates External Recovery Drives

Adam C. Engst

*This article originally appeared in TidBITS on 2011-08-10 at 9:47 p.m.*

*The permanent URL for this article is:*

<http://tidbits.com/article/12411>

One of the initial criticisms leveled against Mac OS X 10.7 Lion was that, because it's currently available only from the Mac App Store (a \$69 USB drive version is slated to become available this month), it's not obvious how to recover from problems if your boot hard disk or solid-state drive is damaged. In most situations, where your boot drive is sufficiently functional, you can still perform various recovery actions thanks to a special hidden partition called Recovery HD. In case of trouble, either hold down Command-R at startup, or hold down the Option key at boot to select and start up from that partition. The Recovery HD partition may be read-only and small — only about 650 MB — but its tools can be extremely helpful (thanks to Joe Kissell's "Take Control of Upgrading to Lion [1]" for these details).

Once your Mac has booted into Recovery mode, you have seven possible actions, the first four of which appear in a Mac OS X Utilities window, and the remaining three of which are available from the Utilities menu:

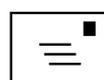
- Restore from a Time Machine Backup. As you would expect, this option enables you to restore from a Time Machine backup on another mounted disk.
- Reinstall Mac OS X. How could you reinstall Mac OS X — which is a 3.76 GB

download — from a disk that's only 650 MB in size? Simple — this option downloads the Lion installer from the Mac App Store again. Make sure you have a fast Internet connection.

- Get Help Online. Sometimes you just need to look something up, and this option launches Safari to display some local help files. If you have an Internet connection, you can search the Web in general as well.
- Disk Utility. This option runs Disk Utility, so you can repair the disk having problems.
- Firmware Password Utility. Use this utility to set, change, or remove a firmware password from your Mac.
- Network Utility. With Network Utility, you can troubleshoot network connections.
- Terminal. Sometimes it's comforting (or at least useful) to have access to the full Unix command line.

(For a lot more interesting information about Lion Recovery, see Apple's technical article "About Lion Recovery [2].")

But back to my original point — what do you do if your boot drive is sufficiently damaged or otherwise dysfunctional that you can't boot into Recovery mode? Apple has now released the *Lion Recovery Disk Assistant* [3], a standalone app that you can use to make an external Lion Recovery drive using the contents of your existing Recovery HD partition. You must do this on a Mac running Lion,



and if your Mac came with Lion pre-installed, the external Lion Recovery drive will boot only that model of Mac; if you upgraded from 10.6 Snow Leopard, the external Lion Recovery drive will boot any Mac upgraded from Snow Leopard. Luckily, because the Recovery HD partition is so small, you can use any external drive that's at least 1 GB in size, a perfect use for some old USB thumb drive you may have lying around. Just make sure it doesn't contain any useful data, since it will be erased in the process.

To make your external Lion Recovery drive, follow these steps:

1. *Download the Lion Recovery Disk Assistant* [4] (1.07 MB) from the Apple Support Downloads site (it doesn't appear in Software Update and I somewhat doubt it ever will).
2. Connect the external drive and launch the Lion Recovery Disk Assistant. (See Figure 1).
3. Select the drive and click Continue to start the process of copying the data from the Recovery HD partition. This will take a few minutes. (See Figure 2).
4. When finished, the installer tells you how to use the external Lion Recovery drive (hold down the Option key at boot to select the drive). Note that you won't be able to see anything on this drive; the partition doesn't even appear in Disk Utility. (See Figure 3).

The process was simple and easily accomplished, and when I tested my external Lion Recovery drive, it worked perfectly. Although I don't expect most Mac users to understand the utility of such a tool, I strongly encourage all TidBITS readers running Lion to create one of these external Lion Recovery drives for



Figure 1.



Figure 2.



Figure 3.

Macs upgraded from Snow Leopard. And, if you get a new Mac with Lion pre-installed, create another one for that Mac. The simple fact is that you can never anticipate what will go wrong, and if Murphy has anything to say about it, the first time something goes wrong it will be sufficiently bad to prevent you from using your boot drive's Recovery HD partition.

One final note. A different way to obtain a bootable Lion recovery volume is to clone the disk image hidden inside the Lion installer onto a DVD, thumb drive, or other volume (as Joe discusses in *"Take Control of Upgrading to Lion [8]"*). Doing so is a bit trickier than using the Lion Recovery Disk Assistant and requires more space (4 GB or more). But you end up with a bootable volume that has all the capabilities of the Lion Recovery drive, plus a complete copy of the Lion installer — meaning you won't need to download it again if you ever need to reinstall Lion.

[1]: <http://www.takecontrolbooks.com/lion-upgrading?pt=TB1089>

[2]: <http://support.apple.com/kb/HT4718>

[3]: <http://support.apple.com/kb/HT4848>

[4]: <http://support.apple.com/kb/DL1433>

[5]: <http://tidbits.com/resources/2011-08/Lion-Recovery-Assistant1.png>

[6]: <http://tidbits.com/resources/2011-08/Lion-Recovery-Assistant2.png>

[7]: <http://tidbits.com/resources/2011-08/Lion-Recovery-Assistant3.png>

[8]: <http://www.takecontrolbooks.com/lion-upgrading?pt=TB1089>

Permanent article URL: <http://tidbits.com/article/12411>

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## Members Helping Members

**D**edicated volunteers are the lifeblood of the Pi. Whether it is installing a hard drive at a Clubhouse Saturday event, answering questions at a General Meeting, or placing advice on the TCS Forums, there are many ways to pitch in and help, depending on a member's interests and talents. Please consider making a commitment to ensure that the Pi remains a strong and energetic club dedicated to helping its members. All volunteer efforts are appreciated. Check out these areas where assistance is needed.



## Featured Position – General Meeting Webcast Director

The Pi currently captures its General Meetings on videotape for future viewing by members who cannot attend the meetings. Using the same camera, we are able to concurrently produce live webcasts so members can view the meeting in real time via the Internet. We need a dedicated volunteer to oversee the technical and production aspects of this webcast.

There are various technical components to putting up the video on the Pi's Ustream web page. The Webcast Director needs to ensure that the equipment is properly set up and functioning, and needs to monitor the audio and video streaming production from start to finish (or designate someone to do this) to ensure satisfactory audio and video quality. The Webcast Director will not be responsible for any other part of the General Meeting program, but will focus exclusively on the webcast production.

Any previous experience in TV or video production would be advantageous, but is not required. A basic understanding of video and audio equipment and how to connect them would be helpful, but the contracted cameraman has primary responsibility for equipment hookup. The Webcast Director needs to make sure that the meeting presenters do not stray from their predetermined stage positions, so they remain adequately illuminated for the entire presentation. Also, this person should be available in case of a technical or other problem that would require the speaker to temporarily suspend their presentation. Case in point: the Webcast Director will stop the action when the cameraman indicates that a new tape needs to be swapped out in the video camera.

If you are interested in helping out with an eye on taking over this important position, contact Bob Jarecke at [robert.jarecke@wap.org](mailto:robert.jarecke@wap.org).

## Journal Managing Editor

The *Journal* is an established, time-honored publication of the Washington Apple Pi and it is in need of someone to take over as Managing Editor, leading a team of dedicated and highly skilled volunteers. The *Journal* is published on a bi-monthly basis so most of the activity occurs in the three weeks leading up to the publication date. In addition, this person will be a member of the Pi's Publications Committee, which has oversight of all printed material published by the Pi. The job is challenging, but very rewarding.

If you enjoy writing and want to help the Pi progress, this is the job for you. If you enjoy working with enthusiastic colleagues on meaningful projects, apply today.

Contact the interim *Journal* editor, Jay Castillo, at: [editor@wap.org](mailto:editor@wap.org) with any questions or to express your interest.



## General Meeting Manager

Our General Meeting programs need someone dedicated to the planning and managing of these important club events. The job includes coordinating meeting activities, making any necessary arrangements, and managing the behind-the-scenes tasks. While it sounds like a job for Superman, that really is not the case. If you have juggled household duties or been an office administrator, you have the skills. While another Pi manager emceeds the meeting, you will be making him or her look good!

Because this activity needs to be approved by the Pi's Management Committee, the volunteer will serve as an adjunct member of that committee. This volunteer opportunity is guaranteed to keep you busy, and when the meeting is over and everything is packed up, lunch is on the Pi.

Send your inquiries to [robert.jarecke@wap.org](mailto:robert.jarecke@wap.org).

Contact [office@wap.org](mailto:office@wap.org) to express interest and we'll go from there.

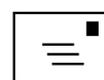
## iChat Help Volunteer

Apple's *iChat* application offers a way for Pi members to help other members from the comfort of their own home. Interested? Read on.

*iChat* is an ideal means for direct communication using text, voice, video, or, in the last two versions of Mac OS X, screen sharing. With the Pi having commercial grade servers and server software, we now have the means to host our own *iChat* network. We are currently testing the capability of this interactive networking software, and the first results are positive.

So what will Pi *iChat* Help volunteers do? Basically, the volunteer helps members who have questions or a problem, but instead of meeting face-to-face, you handle the matter using *iChat*. What's that? You don't use *iChat* or haven't even launched it yet? No problem, we will train you. We will also be providing guidance on how to deal with common issues, and on problem-solving techniques, and will supply a list of associate helpers who can help with particular issues. All you need to bring to the equation is your people skills and a genuine desire to help.

If you have even the slightest interest or any questions, contact the Management Committee Chair, Bob Jarecke, at [robert.jarecke@wap.org](mailto:robert.jarecke@wap.org).





### Some actual product warning labels:

On the bottle-top of a (UK) flavoured milk drink -  
AFTER OPENING, KEEP UPRIGHT. (duh!)

On a New Zealand insect spray -  
THIS PRODUCT NOT TESTED ON ANIMALS.

In a US guide to setting up a new computer -  
TO AVOID CONDENSATION FORMING,  
ALLOW THE BOXES TO WARM UP TO ROOM  
TEMPERATURE BEFORE OPENING.  
(Make sense...except these instructions were  
IN THE BOX!)

In some countries, on the bottom of Coke bottles -  
OPEN OTHER END.

On a Sears hairdryer -  
DO NOT USE WHILE SLEEPING.  
(Now THAT I'd like to see!)

On a bag of Fritos -  
YOU COULD BE A WINNER!  
NO PURCHASE NECESSARY. DETAILS INSIDE.  
(The shoplifter special!)

On a bar of Dial soap -  
DIRECTIONS: USE LIKE REGULAR SOAP.  
(And that would be how?)

On Tesco's Tiramisu dessert -  
(printed on BOTTOM of the box)  
\* DO NOT TURN UPSIDE DOWN.  
(oops...Too late! You lose!)

On Marks & Spencer Bread Pudding -  
PRODUCT WILL BE HOT AFTER HEATING.  
(Are you sure? Let's experiment.)

On a Korean kitchen knife -  
WARNING KEEP OUT OF CHILDREN.

On a string of Chinese-made Christmas lights -  
FOR INDOOR OR OUTDOOR USE ONLY.  
(As opposed to what...use in outer space?)

On an American Airlines packet of nuts -  
INSTRUCTIONS: OPEN PACKET, EAT NUTS.  
(I'm sure glad they cleared that up.)

On a Swedish chainsaw -  
DO NOT ATTEMPT TO STOP CHAIN  
WITH YOUR HANDS OR GENITALS.  
(What kind of consumer phone-call led to this  
warning?)

On a child's superman costume -  
WEARING OF THIS GARMENT  
DOES NOT ENABLE YOU TO FLY.  
(That's right, destroy a universal childhood  
fantasy!)



# Washington Apple Pi

