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THE  
TOOWOOMBA  
APPLE &  
MACINTOSH  
USER GROUP  
NEWSLETTER

Issue 130  
October 2008

**MacClips**

# Apple Intros New iPod Nano and iPod Touch

At their Let's Rock event on September 9 Apple announced a new iPod Nano range and an updated iPod Touch.

The iPod Nano now comes in nine colours and features a curved, all-aluminum and glass design.

## New Look, New Brain

The new Genius feature turns iPod nano into your own highly intelligent, personal DJ. It creates playlists by finding songs in your library that go great together.

## Made to move

The accelerometer comes to iPod nano. Give it a shake to shuffle your music. Turn it sideways to view Cover Flow. And play games designed with your moves in mind.

## A Nice Touch

The new iPod Touch features a thin, contoured stainless steel design. The new volume buttons and the built-in speaker give you more to love.

## Get your mobile game on.

Groundbreaking technologies built into iPod touch - such as the Multi-Touch display, accelerometer, and 3D graphics - immerse you in the action.

The iPod Touch also has the new Genius feature. With a few taps, it creates a playlist by finding songs in your library that go great together.

Also announced at the September 9 event was an updated iPod Classic and the long awaited iTunes 8. There had been many complaints regarding incompatibilities between the last iTunes 7 release and the iPhone so with the simultaneous release of iTunes 8 and iPhone 2.1 Apple will be hoping that it is problem solved.

See a Review of the new iPods on Page 3.



Courtesy of Apple

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## A Neat Trick

The October meeting on the 1st will be the latest in our Bring & Brag series. Come along and see what others are doing with their Mac and be inspired to try something new.

## THE TOOWOOMBA APPLE & MACINTOSH USER GROUP Supporting all Apple & Mac Users

Membership offers you:

- The chance to meet other Mac users
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- Access to all User Group resources

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Toowoomba Education Centre, Bakers Street

Phone 4661 4975 for more details

*Free*

# Mac Clips

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## Our Mission

“The objects for which the Association is established are: To provide assistance to Apple and Macintosh users; To disseminate information; To combine knowledge of computer activities.”



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## Editorial

I can recall writing a number of times in the past of my concern that the success of the iPod may tempt Apple to turn its back on its computer business. This concern wasn't lessened when Apple announced that it was forming a separate iPod division.

The problem was that I didn't anticipate the so-called halo effect where users so impressed by their iPod or iPhone experience look again at what Apple can offer in computers.

Another factor is Apple's incredible ability to reform itself. The transition from the Motorola 68k processors to, firstly, the PowerPC and then the Intel processors. At the same time they convinced users to switch from the ageing Classic OS to the Unix based OS X. All of these transitions were achieved without leaving any users behind or unsupported by ensuring cross system compatibility.

If Apple's figures are correct they now enjoy 11% of the PC market. This may not sound like much but consider that it is not so long ago that the figure was as low as 3% and that the current figure represents 11% of a much larger overall market.

Of course the share of the computer market is dwarfed by the 74% of the MP3 market enjoyed by the iPod. Their share of the market is so dominant that some commentators are warning of claims of monopoly.

There are some tricky points here. If Apple is forced to somehow dilute its share of the MP3 market by opening up the iTunes Store to a host of competitors will the content providers be happy about the lack of control over illegal copying? Further will a reduction in the iPod market share that may result also lead to a reduced overall interest in Apple's products? My concern has gone full circle.

R. Lascelles



Once again some members will be demonstrating what they are doing with their Mac in our latest Bring & Brag night. There is virtually no limit to what you can do with a Mac so to see what interesting things other people are doing you should come along to our October meeting at the Toowoomba Education Centre in Baker Street on the 1st.



## Impressive Statistics for the iPod

Although the Mac still doesn't have a particularly large market share (I've seen 11 percent bandied about recently), the numbers for the iPod are stunning, so much so that if I were Apple, I'd be taking pains to avoid activities that could be seen as monopolistic.

The iPod now has 73.4 percent of the music player market share, with the lumped-together category of "Other" hitting second place, sharing 15.4 percent of the market among a large number of companies. In third place with about 9 percent of market share is SanDisk, which has some well-reviewed music players, and in fourth place, with a minuscule 2.6 percent market share, is Microsoft's Zune.

Apple has sold 160 million iPods so far, and according to Edison Media Research, 37 percent of U.S. consumers as of April 2008 own a portable MP3 player; that carries the implication that 27 percent of U.S. consumers own an iPod. I don't know how many "consumers" there are in the United States, but with that number it would be possible to split out U.S. versus international iPod sales.

What's almost more impressive is the ecosystem support that Apple has encouraged around the iPod. According to Apple, 90 percent of cars in the United States offer iPod integration. I assume they mean new cars currently being sold, but even still, that level of support makes it much less likely that any other music player will be able to dethrone the iPod any time soon. (Plenty of inexpensive car stereos can be retrofitted into autos to add iPod support, too.)



Courtesy of Apple

Similarly, Apple claims over 5,000 iPod accessories are available, and since there aren't that

many categories of accessories (cases, speakers, headphones, FM transmitters, etc.), that says to me the accessory field is plenty big enough for numerous competitors.®

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## Coming Up

Mark your calendar now for our upcoming events.

September 3 - System Preferences  
October 1 - Bring & Brag  
November 5 - Utilities

Continued from page 6

“a S.M.A.R.T. alert doesn't mean that your HDD will completely fail for sure, nor can S.M.A.R.T. catch all possible HDD errors” - it's just a very valuable indicator.”

SMARTReporter is a free program that can be downloaded from Apple:

[http://www.apple.com/downloads/macosx/system\\_disk\\_utilities/smartreporter.html](http://www.apple.com/downloads/macosx/system_disk_utilities/smartreporter.html)

Another alternative is the commercial program “DiskWarrior”, reputedly an excellent application for dealing with hard disk problems. Go to <http://mac.softpedia.com/get/System-Utilities/DiskWarrior.shtml> and have a free trial! It's a program costing about \$60-70, maybe more.

All of these potential problem solvers notwithstanding there is one sure fix for all hard drive problems, a backup. Apple has made this easy

with Leopard's Time Machine. If you have a single drive computer such as an iMac or one of the MacBook variants you will need an external FireWire or USB connected drive but these are not expensive if you consider the peace of mind they give you. If you have a desktop Mac with room for multiple drives you can even have your Time Machine or backup drive monitored by SMART-Reporter or checked by all of the other utilities.

In the absence of Time Machine there are a number of other backup utilities available and you might consider burning important files to a CD or DVD.

My Plan Z is to take my computer to the technician who will boot it up in “Target Mode” and then try to fix it. The computer goes in next Monday!!<sup>⌘</sup>

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with “improve[d] reliability,” but in what way, Apple isn't saying.

## Patching DNS

Security Update 2008-006, installed as part of 10.5.5 and available separately for Mac OS X 10.4.11, includes dozens of obscure items that only system administrators can love, as well as several important fixes related to DNS.

As we have written extensively, a flaw in most systems that handle DNS lookups - the conversion of a human-readable domain name into a machine-usable number - could allow criminals and ne'er-do-wells to redirect Web browsing and other traffic to servers operated for malicious purposes. (A legitimate request for [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) could be returned with a forged IP address for a site run by bad guys.)

## Clarity in File Sharing

Another item of interest is a change to how the Sharing preference pane will now display what's accessible in the File Sharing service. Previously, the File Sharing service listed only folders and vol-

umes that you had manually set to be shared, along with the Public folder in your Home folder.

The File Sharing service now shows in the Shared Folders list all folders that are shared, including Public folders in other local users' home directories. Apple added a note - a little subtle if you ask us - that explains that all local volumes (the boot drive and all mounted drives) can also be shared by anyone with administrative access.

## Getting the Updates

Mac OS X 10.5.5 is available via Software Update, or as the following standalone downloads: a delta updater (316 MB) for updating from the client version of Mac OS X 10.5.4, and a combo installer (601 MB) for updating from any client version of Mac OS X 10.5.0 through 10.5.4.

Security Update 2008-006 is available in four versions of Tiger: for the PowerPC version of Mac OS X 10.4.11 (67.7 MB), for the Intel version of Mac OS X 10.4.11 (157 MB), for the PowerPC version of Mac OS X Server 10.4.11 (118 MB). Honestly, it's easiest to let Software Update do its thing.<sup>⌘</sup>

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# Apple Reveals New iPod nano and Updated iPod touch

by TidBITS Staff

As leaves prepare to take color and drop from trees in the Northern hemisphere, so, too, does Apple release its flight of new iPods. This year's revisions settle on one capacity for iPod classic storage, reformulate the iPod nano, and bring new hardware features to the iPod touch. Pricing remains high, in our opinion, showing Apple's confidence in maintaining its large product pricing margins.

## Slimming the Classic Line

Formerly available in 80 GB and 160 GB varieties (the latter of which was packaged in a thicker case), the iPod classic now sports a 120 GB drive and gleams either in silver or black; it's \$339. The new iPod classic supports Genius playlists, but is otherwise unchanged from the earlier version.

may be looking to move the entire iPod line to RAM-based storage. The problem there lies in the capacity differences; no RAM-based iPod offers more than 32 GB of storage, whereas the iPod classic goes up to 120 GB. No reason was given for dropping the 160 GB iPod classic; perhaps it simply wasn't selling well enough. The iPod shuffle, unmentioned at the product launch, remains available in two capacities: 1GB for \$65, and 2GB for \$89. You can choose among silver, blue, green, pink, and awareness-raising (PRODUCT) RED.

## A Snazzier Nano

The iPod nano, as widely rumored, has returned to a long, skinny form factor to make room for a 2-inch, 320-by-240-pixel screen with LED



*Courtesy of Apple*

Are the hard drive-based iPod's on the way out. 1.8-inch hard drives may be small, but they're less durable and bulkier than flash RAM, and as RAM capacities increase and prices drop, Apple

backlighting. The new glass-and-aluminum case is curvier and thinner than the older designs. Surprisingly, the iPod nano now includes an accelerometer (much like the iPhone and iPod

touch), enabling it to switch from portrait to landscape and back as you change the iPod nano's orientation. You can also shake the iPod nano to shuffle the song selection, a clever feature that drew cheers during Steve Jobs's presentation. Like the other new iPods, the nano can create Genius playlists. Battery life is improved, with Apple claiming 24 hours of music playback and 4 hours of video playback.

The new iPod nano supports voice recording via a new set of headphones with a built-in microphone (as well as buttons for play/pause, track skip, and volume control), which is scheduled to ship in this month. Also coming this month are an armband for the nano and redesigned in-ear headphones with dual drivers (a woofer and a tweeter).

Apple offers the revised iPod nano in two capacities (8 GB for \$199, or 16 GB for \$279), and in your choice of nine colors - an entire spectrum including silver, black, purple, blue, green, yellow, orange, (PRODUCT) RED, and pink. The 8 GB models are available immediately, with the 16 GB models expected to ship within days.

Overall, the new iPod nano seems like a winner. Most people seem happy about the return to the longer, thinner form factor, and the addition of the accelerometer is truly neat. We expect it to sell like the proverbial hot cakes this holiday season.

## Touch of Class

The iPod touch received a significant overhaul as well. Now featuring a stainless steel back, the updated iPod touch is thinner than before, with curves that resemble those of the iPhone 3G. The iPod touch now has a built-in speaker (which, Jobs emphasized, is not intended to replace the headphones for music listening), external volume controls, and connects wirelessly to a \$19 Nike+iPod sen-

sor without needing the separate adapter that was formerly required. That's a big win for people who use the iPod while running or walking for fitness; the Nike+iPod adapter messed with the clean lines of the iPod, especially when it came to shoe-horning it into armbands or other cases.

The iPod touch is available in 8 GB, 16 GB and 32 GB capacities, priced at \$329, \$419 and \$549, respectively. Those are significant price drops from the previous prices. All three models are now shipping.

In comparing the new iPod touch with the iPhone 3G, the big differences (apart from cellular capabilities, of course) are the iPod touch's lack of a GPS chip and a camera, both of which would be awfully nice to have in an iPod touch. Apple is clearly trying

to differentiate the iPhone and iPod touch on more than just the capability to make calls, but the now-subsidized iPhone prices confuse that comparison. An iPhone 3G can cost less than an equivalent iPod touch. Of course, you don't have to factor in an expensive mobile phone service contract into the iPod touch price.

## Another Shade of Green

Jobs made a point of saying that in addition to the new features, the new iPod nano and iPod touch have become more environmentally friendly by ditching PVC, mercury, and BFR, using arsenic-free glass, and being made with easily recyclable materials. That's good, of course, but we would be remiss if we didn't note that the most environmentally friendly thing you can do with an old iPod is make sure that it stays in use as long as possible even if, horrors, that means holding off on buying one of these hot new models until your old one bites the dust.☺

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# Mac OS X 10.5.5 Update Focuses on Bug Fixes

by TidBITS Staff

Apple has released Mac OS X 10.5.5, rolling in a large number of bug fixes. As far as we can tell, there are no new features, but thanks to Apple's moderately detailed release notes (thanks, Apple!), users can get a sense of whether or not 10.5.5 is likely to resolve particular problems.

One general bug fix solves a problem that could cause a Mac to turn on unexpectedly at the same time every day, a stability issue with using the color palette in TextEdit, problems syncing contacts properly to Palm OS-based devices, improved reliability when rebuilding a software mirror RAID volume in Disk Utility, and Kerberos authentication issues for Mac OS X 10.5 clients connecting to certain Samba servers (including Mac OS X Server 10.4's Samba server - oops!).

General improvements include better Spotlight indexing performance, an improved Speech Dictionary, and extensive graphics enhancements.

## Time Machine

It's hard to avoid comparisons between Apple's Time Machine and Dr. Who's sometimes-recalcitrant TARDIS, given how Time Machine works well for most people most of the time, but occasionally refuses to back up, gets stuck in the middle of backups, or confuses users with odd error messages. And like the good doctor, Apple is continually working on Time Machine, now improving reliability with Time Capsule, addressing performance issues with initial and in-progress backups, and addressing a spurious message that claimed a backup volume lacked sufficient space.

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## Improved Mail Handling

A number of the fixes in Mac OS X 10.5.5 revolve around Mail, specifically in relation to robustness. Apple addressed stability issues that could result in crashes or other problems when dragging items to Mail's icon in the Dock, saving drafts that have attachments (a particularly annoying one, since it's good form to attach documents early in the writing of a message to avoid forgetting the attachment), and in sending messages.

The update also improves Mail's performance when displaying IMAP messages and fixes problems related to SMTP settings for popular mail hosts CompuServe, Yahoo, Time Warner Road Runner, and Hanmail. Lastly, the new version of Mail re-

solves the temporary disappearance of RSS feeds from the sidebar and makes sure dates appear in collapsed threads when using the Organized by Thread view.

## MobileMe and iCal

Apple's release notes don't go into much detail on this front, but the words "Improves overall sync reliability" are sure to sound welcome to the small minority of MobileMe subscribers who continue to see syncing problems with the online service. The updates to iCal include fixes for handling repeating events and working with meeting attendees. Also listed is resolution of an unspecified "issue with syncing published calendars."

Back to My Mac apparently has also been gifted

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*Courtesy of Apple*



*Courtesy of Apple*

advantage of the Window-Eyes feature. You can also purchase and download media from the iTunes Store using a screen reader.

A new visualizer makes its appearance in iTunes 8, listed simply as iTunes Visualizer from the Visualizer submenu of the View menu. The effect resembles electricity arcing around spheres of dark matter in space. The old visualizer is still available as iTunes Classic Visualizer from the same menu.

iTunes 8 requires the simultaneously released QuickTime 7.5.5, available via Software Update as a 67.5 MB download, to handle the new video options. Also released was Front Row Update 2.1.6 (a 13.1 MB download), which provides iTunes 8 compatibility. Both iTunes 8 and QuickTime 7.5.5 feature security fixes, as well.

iTunes 8 is a 55.9 MB download from Apple's Web site or via Software Update.⌘

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## UK's "Stuff" names iPhone 3G gadget of the year

Reuters report that Apple's iPhone 3G has won a public vote to find the year's best gadget, beating strong competition from three

games consoles, a budget laptop and a balloon-shaped iPod speaker system.

The latest version of the mobile that combines a phone with a music and video player was chosen by readers of Stuff magazine in its annual Gadget of the Year awards.

The magazine described the iPhone 3G as "a faster, cleverer version of an already remarkable phone". The phone's first incarnation, launched in Britain last year, won the coolest gadget prize at last year's ceremony.

Other nominees included Sony's PlayStation 3, Microsoft's Xbox 360, Nintendo's Wii Fit and the B&W Zeppelin iPod speakers.

Stuff's Editor Fraser Macdonald said the nominated products were judged on their performance, design and value, as well as "that elusive cool factor".

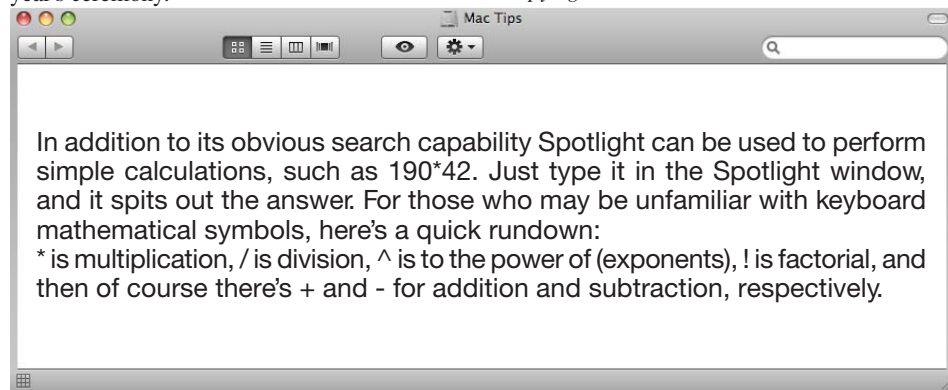
However, the magazine's own gadget of the year prize, chosen by its editorial staff, went to the Asus Eee Pc, a no-frills laptop that costs less than £300.

The judges said it had made more of an impact than any other device and marked the start of a "laptop for everyone" era.⌘

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*Courtesy of Apple*



## A Hard Time for Hard Drives

Colin McGuire

Solid state storage devices such as the familiar USB drives are rapidly increasing in capacity while reducing in price. It is probable that, in time, this technology will take over as the mass storage device in our computers. Indeed, Apple already offer solid state storage as an option in the new MacBook Air and other manufacturers also offer this option. But until the price and capacity can match them we will continue to rely on the conventional hard drive.

But as an electromechanical device hard drives can, and do, fail. There are four basic paths to failure. The first is a failure of the circuit board that controls the drive, the second is a failure of the drive motor, the third is a failure of the drive medium or the read/write head and, finally, the fourth path is corruption of the data on the disk.

It is possible to recover data from a drive even if the drive has failed. In the case of a circuit board failure simply replacing the board with one from an identical drive will usually restore functionality. In the case of a motor or media failure there are those who offer specialist data recovery services, albeit at a cost.

It is also possible to recover data from a corrupted drive but there are ways to minimise the chances of such a failure. Here are a few alternative approaches to maintaining your drive and the data on it.

### Verify Disk

Run the First Aid, "Verify Disk" option, in Disk Utilities (Applications--> Utilities). If there is a problem with the disk, click "Repair Disk." However, the Disk Utility cannot repair problems with the Start Up disk. There will be a screen message to this effect telling you to boot your computer from the Software Install/Restore disk holding down the C key- select Disk Utility from the Utilities menu and then Repair Disk.

Down the bottom of the First Aid screen it will also say whether the S.M.A.R.T. (Self-

Monitoring Analysis and Reporting Technology) status is verified. Check it before you do the test above. If the disk is not verified, back up in a heck of a hurry!!



### Apple Hardware Test

Another way to check your Hard Drive is the Apple Hardware Test - it's on the Software Install/Restore Disk. Before you run the test, unplug all peripheral devices. Boot your computer holding down the Option key and select the Hardware Test. There is a "Quick Test" taking 1 to 3 minutes, or an "Extended Test" that may take over 15 minutes depending on your drive capacity. The test checks Airport, the Logic Board, Mass Storage, Memory, the Modem and Video RAM. The Test will tell you whether your disk is OK or not - displaying an Error Code. The Test does not check the Operating System nor for software problems such as extension conflicts, nor does it identify a hardware failure.

If the disk is defective, you can reboot using the same Software Install disk, holding down the "C" key. Go to "Installer" and select "Disk Utility", then "First Aid", "Repair Disk". Other options include Erase, Partition, Restore and RAID, the same as the internal computer test. This may fail to overcome the hard disk problem in very serious cases.

### Third Party Solutions

A more thorough alternative is provided by the free OnyX maintenance program- <http://www.titanium.free.fr/pgs/english.html> When you run the program it begins by testing the S.M.A.R.T status of your start-up disk.

The program itself also checks Permissions and the "Structure of the Volume" of the Start-Up

disk. As well it will check for corrupt preference .plist files which it will identify and which you



can then Trash. OnyX does lots more. It comes highly recommended by a number of writers for magazines such as Mac Format, Mac Fixit, and iCreate.



## AppleJack

One writer of the iCreate Genius Bar (Issue 59) recommended using AppleJack. It is a command-line program to use in a dire emergency when you cannot even get your computer up and running. Information on the site states: "AppleJack is a user friendly troubleshooting assistant for Mac OS X. With AppleJack you can troubleshoot a computer even if you can't load the GUI, or don't have a startup CD handy.

```
Enter the associated number or letter to choose your maintenance task.
It is strongly recommended you do them in the order listed.

[a] auto pilot. Script will do all tasks sequentially.

[1] repair disks
[2] repair permissions
[3] cleanup cache files
[4] validate preference files
[5] remove swap files

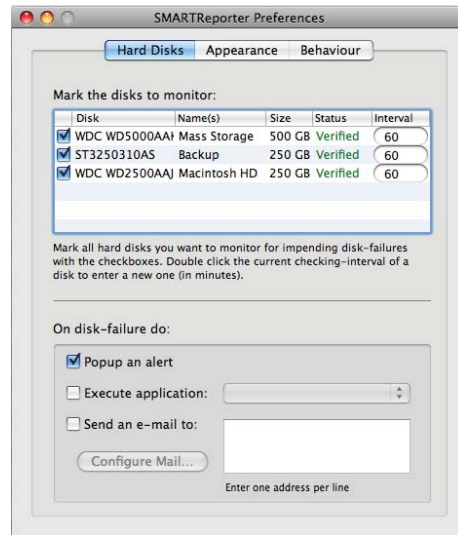
[a] : Just quit, thank you very much.
Your choice: 
```

AppleJack runs in Single User Mode and is menu-based for ease of use". To start up in Single User Mode hold down Command-S after you hear your computer's start-up chime. You can then run AppleJack. This is a free program from <http://applejack.sourceforge.net> and it will check and repair disks, repair permissions, cleanup cache files, validate system preference files and remove swap files.

## Clean Install

One rather drastic alternative is to do a "Clean Install" This will completely erase the hard drive and install a new operating system. You

must then set about restoring all applications, peripheral drivers and your personal files. This is a major, time-consuming, task and may include downloading software, firmware and system up-dates again but it will give you a new, uncorrupted hard drive. If your checks reveal a seriously compromised hard drive that you cannot fix, you could consider having your hard disk replaced rather than repaired. Given the declining cost of external hard drives, it seems the cost of replacing the hard drive is an opportune time to consider getting a larger disk, but as to "how large" you need to find out your options from a technician. This choice also involves a complete rebuild similar to that involved with the clean install. Currently I am having concerns over my Start-Up disk (running an OnyX maintenance program discovered the problem). I'm using a third party program called SMARTReporter, to monitor my disk. This is a risky, temporary strategy. I could not fix the problem using the Disk Utilities on the Software Install/Restore disk.



"SMARTReporter is an application that can warn you of some hard disk drive failures before they actually happen!"

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# iTunes 8 Adds Genius

by TidBITS Staff

Do you have a friend who always seems plugged in to the latest music? With last week's release of iTunes 8, Apple wants to be that hip friend, in the form of the new Genius feature.

The iTunes Genius automatically builds a playlist of songs in your library, matching artists and genres according to Apple-developed algorithms that, in theory, result in a collection of songs that sound good together.

When you install and launch iTunes 8 for the first time, the program asks whether you want to enable the Genius feature in a right-hand sidebar. If you agree, you next log into your (required) iTunes account, and Apple gathers information about your iTunes library, sends it to their servers, and then produces results. The process isn't necessarily quick, depending on the size of your iTunes library. According to Apple, information about your library, including track names, play counts, ratings, and playlists - but no personal data - is sent to the company's servers and analyzed each week.

Two Genius features become available after this initial process. Select a song in your library and click the new Genius button in the lower-right corner of the window. A Genius playlist is created and appears in the iTunes left-hand sidebar. (The Genius button replaces the Browse button from iTunes 7.) The Genius ties into the iTunes Store using that right-hand sidebar, suggesting other songs and artists you would like based on what's in your library.

As with the old MiniStore (which is now gone),

the Genius sidebar is not automatically enabled by default.

## Grid View

An interesting evolution in iTunes is Apple's work toward making your media library less listy and more visually interactive. The Cover Flow mode replicates the old jukebox approach of flipping panels of albums, but despite its 3D appeal, Cover Flow displays only a handful of items at a time.

So Apple has added Grid View, which displays rows and columns of album art in a grid. (Grid View replaces the list-with-artwork view.) The album covers can be resized; like iPhoto's event icons, rolling your mouse pointer over an icon in artist, genre, or composer view displays the albums without clicking the icon. Buttons along the top let you display by album, artist, genre, or composer. Double-clicking an icon brings up the old list-with-artwork view.

In a little stylistic touch, the icons sorted by album are square (like an album cover), while the icons for the other view options have rounded corners. It's nice to see Apple keeping a focus on album artwork, since the digital era has made album covers almost obsolete.

## Other Changes

iTunes 8 adds support for managing the iTunes library using the VoiceOver component of Leopard's Universal Access preference pane; under Windows XP and Windows Vista, iTunes takes

