

MacWorld Conference and Expo - Moscone Centre San Francisco - January 5-9, 2009

Prior to venturing off to MacWorld, I studied the conference offerings and being overwhelmed began there! I committed to a 2 Day PowerTools workshop on "AppleScript", a couple of MacIT Sessions on Remote Desktop Management, a User session on Music Composition, an iPhone Supersession and the Podcasters Day. Seriously I didn't realise how much I was actually committing to. In hind sight allowing a little more time for the Expo and skipping a few sessions would be been a good idea.

Based on "AppleScript 1-2-3" (Apple's official AppleScript training guide), the 2 days of sessions were designed to provide a solid introduction and foundation in AppleScript. The first day is a gradual walk-through of the basics of AppleScript, from A to Z and starting at square one. We started at square one... but the word 'gradual' wasn't really the best word to use... it was more like a lot crammed into a short time. These were totally hands on sessions - writing scripts, error handling, generating dialogs, conditionals, through to manipulating images ... including the ability to crop, scale, pad, and convert images. Plus learning Folder Actions, Finder droplets, moving files and more. I can see a huge amount of benefits to learning AppleScript, particularly to speed-up moving files and managing files within our department. Some of the benefits from using AppleScript can be increased consistency, efficiency and productivity.

Even though the big man (Steve) wasn't delivering Apple's Keynote, I was still keen to see what the latest news was. After lining up early at Moscone Centre West, Apple Senior VP Phil Schiller hit the stage announce **THREE** new things.

iLife09 - featuring facial recognition in iPhoto, video stabilization in iMovie, learn to play in GarageBand and more.

iWork09 - cool new features to Keynote, Pages & Numbers. iWork.com is coming for document sharing online & reviewing.

The third announcement was the **NEW - 17" MacBook Pro**, a fantastic new laptop, lighter, thinner, all new non-removeable battery.

Another session I attended during MacWorld 09, was The iPhone Supersession. To my surprise this session was a very very basic help session for iPhone owners - although it was quite elementary, I did glean a couple of helpful hints with regard to typing into the iPhone but that was about it. I was also massively surprised when they spoke at length Jailbreaking and software that can be installed after Jailbreak.

During MacIT session on "Remote System Management", the presenters particularly covered the TOOLS available for remote system management. In my opinion from this session, the software we use (ARD - Apple Remote Desktop) is one of the two top choices for the style of support we offer. The second MacIT session I attended as "Advanced Apple Remote Desktop". As a very new user to this software, it was a fairly big leap to dive into this Advanced workshop. The session covered the Task Server, plist editing and sending UNIX commands. I found this session facinating and helped me grow as an ARD user. This will help me to better support the ProTools users who call upon me for assistance.

During the User Conference entitled "Music composition & performance with Apple tools" - I kept waiting for the sell to stop. This session had presenters from Apple, and they predominantly just demoed the software showing off the best of what it can do, without getting into any real specifics. It was good to see some cool stuff... but... hardly what I was expecting.

The FEATURE PRESENTATION - with Leo Laporte (host of The Week in Tech ([TWiT](#)) and cohost of popular podcast Mac Break Weekly) was fascinating. Leo's background is as a Broadcaster, he started in radio, moved to TV and now is an internet star. He talked about mass media. A great quote he used which really made that point for me was : "Freedom of the Press, only belongs to the guy who owns the press" - it's simply not that way anymore - with the internet, it belongs to everyone! This lead on to him discussing that today's audience is turning into 'community' and they're more engaged, because, we the audience, are seeking what interests us. Consumers want content... when you want it, where you want it and how you want it. Targeting a narrow audience is good, because this creates communities - which are a more engaged audience, and audience who also have the ability to participate!

The final day was the MARKET SYMPOSIUM - Podcasters Day with the presenter [Alex Lindsay - Pixel Corps](#). This session started poorly and didn't get much better. From the description of this session, I was expecting something completely different. On speaking with other AUC attendees I was not alone in my expectations and also in the opinion of the outcome. I was expecting a little more about how to get podcasts out there. Building RSS feeds, Producing effective podcasts and the like. But what I got was - what's a good camera, "this is my cool CGI set", "these are the cool things I've done" and "these are the software gadgets I use to do all those cool things. So, YES, I was a little disappointed with that session.

Some highlights of the Expo:

- **Ecam** (Call Recorder - for recording Skype - this could be another option for recording phone interviews in the studio)
- **Pulse SmartPen** - this is won BEST of SHOW award at MacWorld09. In a nutshell, it is a Pen with an audio recorder which is nice, but what makes this such an amazing device is that you use a specific notebook that you write in and as you write and take physical notes - it indexes to the audio being recorded.
- **Sorenson Squeeze 5** - I managed to score a fully working 30day demo for Jeff + a MacWorld discount to purchase
- **ScreenFlow** - this is from the makers of Flip4Mac - it's a pro-level screen recording tool that I personally think will come in very handy and I can't wait to give it a go !

At the expo there are so many great product ideas, both hardware and software, some of which are yet to be released and some of which we may never see in Australia.

MacWorld Conference and Expo is the leading end of the industry when it comes to see the latest hardware and software products in the industry. The networking, opportunities to talk to experts, have demonstrations from developers and see the latest from the manufacturers is invaluable. I took the advantage to look beyond my own area of interest for software and hardware that could be utilized in the wider USQ community, and I look forward to sharing this.