



March-April 2006

# MacNews

## APRIL 2006 CALENDAR

- 1**  
9:05 AM dBug Cafe at the RC
- 3**  
6:30 PM Beginning Mac User's SIG at RC  
—Getting Connected to dBug's Exchange
- 4**  
7:00 PM Board Meeting at RC
- 5**  
7:00 PM Final Cut, DVD Studio Pro, Live  
Type, Motion, & Photoshop tutorials
- 8**  
9:05 AM dBug Cafe at RC - 9:05 AM to  
Noon
- 10**  
6:30 PM Intermediate Mac User's SIG at  
RC—Q&A and Troubleshooting
- 11**  
7:00 PM WebObjects SIG at RC
- 12**  
6:30 PM Main Meeting at the RC:  
Integrated iLife 06
- 13**  
7:00 PM Xcoders SIG at RC
- 15**  
9:05 AM dBug Cafe at RC
- 17**  
7:00 PM FileMaker Pro SIG at RC
- 19**  
7:00 PM Mac OS X SIG at RC
- 20**  
7:00 PM Entourage vs Apple Apps--  
updated
- 22**  
9:05 AM dBug Cafe at RC
- 26**  
6:30 PM Digital Imaging SIG at RC
- 27**  
7:00 PM Xcoders SIG at RC
- 29**  
9:05 AM dBug Cafe at RC

## dBug March Main Meeting

**What:** Buying a new Mac: How in the world do we decide?!

**Who:** Cathy Doser, Main Meeting Mogul

**When:** 6:30pm on Wednesday, March 8, 2006

**Where:** dBug Resource Center

9620 Stone Ave. N., Suite 202

Seattle, WA 98103

206-624-9329

<http://www.dbug.org>

When you buy a Mac, not only is it an important financial decision, but it's an emotional one as well. This is the computer you're going to be doing so much work on and having so much fun with that if you make a wrong decision when you're buying it, you could be miserable for the next three to four years!

Come join us for the March Main Meeting when Cathy Doser will walk us through the process of buying your next Mac. We'll also discuss exciting accessories that can kick your Mac up a notch (Sorry Emeril!). Bam!



## New macintosh Virus/Worm Vulnerability?

<http://www.takecontrolbooks.com/buying-mac.html>

### Mac OS X Virus Q & A

*By Mike Grueter, dBug Mac OS X SIG Leader*

**Q:** I've read that Mac OS X is getting attacked by viruses! Is the sky falling? What should I do?

**A:** Two pieces of questionable software have recently been found. One named "latestpics.tgz" (now called "Oomp-A" or "Leap-A") was posted to a message board on the MacRumors web site (it is no longer there). The other, "Inqtana.A" is an experiment or "proof of concept" that has not been seen outside of a lab.

I don't consider either piece of software to be a virus. Leap-A is software that requires someone to manually download it, unarchive it, and double-click it in order to run. It also would not do anything harmful to your computer if you did actually run it (it has no "payload"). It can supposedly propagate itself through your iChat buddy list if you were to actually run

it, but by default, Apple has checked an iChat preference checkbox titled "Confirm before sending files", so it seems you'd have to manually OK that as well. Probably the best analysis of this software is available here <<http://www.ambrosiasw.com/forums/index.php?showtopic=102379>>.

Inqtana.A supposedly takes advantage of Bluetooth code in Mac OS X to send itself to other Bluetooth capable systems within a 30 foot range. Again someone would have to manually download it, unarchive it, and double-click it in order to run, and users of nearby Bluetooth capable systems would have to accept the transfer before the software could install itself. This software does not do any damage to the compromised system either. On top of all this, Apple issued a security update almost a year ago that fixed this security issue.

This type of software is generally called "malware". Anyone could do something similar (far more destructive actually) in a few minutes by writing a simple 1 or 2 line AppleScript that deletes a user's Home folder for example, saving it as an application, pasting a JPEG or MP3 icon on the application, and naming it something convincing. The trick would be getting someone to actually run the malware.

Anti-virus software companies are running wild with this "news" calling it the "first ever virus for Mac OS X" to boost their software sales <<http://www.sophos.com/pressoffice/news/articles/2006/02/macosexleap.html>>. Not only do I not consider this software to be a virus, it's not even the first time this has happened. A similar "scare" ran through the Mac OS X community a few years ago. We discussed it in the WaterCooler conference on dBug's ExChange online community, and anti-virus software companies and news media went nuts then too. See <<http://www.wired.com/news/mac/0,2125,63000,00.html>> and <<http://arstechnica.com/news/posts/1081455881.html>> for more on that one.

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## Capital Improvement Project

Thanks to the membership's generosity during the Capital Improvement Project Fund Raising Drive, dBug has been able to purchase a new projector. It has been installed at the Resource Center and greatly improves our comprehension at Main Meetings, SIGs and Classes.

It is a Microtek CX6 DLP Multimedia Projector.

<<http://www.microtekusa.com/cx6.html>>

Thanks people.

The sky is not falling. There are still no viruses that target Mac OS X. My solution to this problem is the same as it always has been:

- 1) Backup your data
- 2) Don't download stuff from people you don't trust
- 3) Keep your software up-to-date

Apple has a whole article on this subject here <<http://docs.info.apple.com/article.html?artnum=108009>>. They released it after the MP3 scare noted above.

Q: Are you currently recommending any anti-virus software?

A: No. There will probably come a day when an actual damaging virus appears for Mac OS X. That is when I will consider anti-virus software.

Q: What about my friends using computers running windows? They can be harmed by hundreds of thousands of viruses, trojan horses, worms, etc. Shouldn't I run anti-virus software to scan any files or e-mail I might send them? I don't want to inadvertently infect them.

A: Even if you did run anti-virus software and clear your system of windows-specific malware, that would still not protect the windows users around you from other sources of malware, so why bother? People should protect their own computers from the malware that specifically targets their software/hardware. Don't pay money to install software on your system that could slow down everything you do, introduce instability and incompatibilities, add potential security problems, and not benefit your system.

Q: What if I am running something like VirtualPC to emulate DOS or windows?

A: Well, then you are running windows and should protect yourself from viruses, trojan horses, and worms that target windows. It would definitely be a good idea to install anti-virus software in the windows environment you've installed on your Mac.

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## Lady Bug Mice for sale

Since Fund raising is a never ending process for a non-profit, dBug is selling Lady Bug Mice. They are very good Logitech programmable USB Mice for \$20.00. They are available at the RC and as raffle items at Main Meetings.



## Description of February Main Meeting: Secure Wireless Networking

Were you looking to effectively secure your home or office wireless networks? Or were you just wondering how to get AirPort (802.11 b/g) to work in your iBook or PowerBook without having everyone in your neighborhood see what's in your laptop?

We joined Cathy Doser and Terry Dizard (lectures on wireless network design, security and standards at Cascadia Community College) on February 8th as they demystified wireless networks and the security we need to use to be safe in these days of war drivers and spoofer who want to steal our information. Even if you have a desktop Mac, you too can join the wireless revolution.

Cathy described the meaning of all those mystery terms like IP, WPA, and the like. Terry gave us the basics of securing any wireless network. We need to be sure to close our networks with the Airport Admin Utility on Macs

and to use WEP or more secure WPA passwords for the networks. With non Apple routers, the term is "turn off broadcasting" but the need for passwords is the same. Do it folks.

The editor would add that the use of a hardware Firewall in our routers (Airports) and a software Firewall in our Macs is important. To begin, open System Preferences, go to Sharing and turn on the Firewall. In the Advanced tab to the Firewall turn on Stealth Mode. Then if someone finds your network, your machine will be harder for a war driver to find.

If you haven't switched to a Mac yet, the wireless networking and security information applies to Windows also. Security is even more of an issue for non-Mac users.

<[http://www.dbug.org/publications/main\\_meeting\\_notes/](http://www.dbug.org/publications/main_meeting_notes/)>

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## Is NeoOffice a viable alternative to the 'high-priced' spread?

*By John Livingston, Office Applications SIG leader*

### Are free office applications a viable alternative?

Some Mac users are tired of paying \$229 to \$500 for office software full of features they may not want. The lure of free office software, based on the OpenDocument standard instead of Microsoft's may beckon.

Quoting its own "About NeoOffice" web page, NeoOffice adapts OpenOffice.org code that uses the X11 windowing system and it then takes advantage of Mac OS X's cool Java integration to tap into the traditional Macintosh user-interface elements. The result? An office experience that feels like any other application on your Mac.

Is this the way to go in the future? We recently had a demo of Neo-Office J, a Macintosh-specific version of Open Office.

NeoOffice appeared to be as good as or better than "the high-priced spread" in the areas of presentation (analogous to PowerPoint), calc (spreadsheet) software. It has its own drawing program, which the high-priced spread doesn't.

NeoOffice's text program (word processing) was a bit more frustrating than the high-priced spread. Even though it is supposed to be compatible with Microsoft Word, special characters like bullets all had to be re-entered, and some features had to be turned off.

As our demonstrations evolved, we realized that many of

these involve having to learn slightly different ways of going about things from using Microsoft Word.

Specific issues involved continuing the numbering in numbered lists after inserting non-numbered paragraphs. It is easy to do this in Word. We had a great deal of trouble getting NeoOffice to do this. There is no obvious tool in NeoOffice to copy the formatting from one paragraph and insert it in another. However, NeoOffice had a much better Repeat tool, which accomplishes a similar function.

NeoOffice required a number of steps to customize toolbars in its text application.

But remember: NeoOffice is free. And even its developers agree that some more refinement is needed to make NeoOffice Mac-friendly:

Here's a caveat though—while NeoOffice is quite stable and feature-complete, it has not entirely adopted the Mac look-and-feel. There are still some bits of the old Windows/Unix interface in there. For example, the scroll bars do not have the familiar blue Aqua rounded look. The dialog boxes and "widgets" like check boxes and radio buttons are not the gorgeous Apple versions you're used to seeing. And the file chooser may look unfamiliar.



At our SIG meeting last month, dBug member and software developer Bill Campbell demonstrated NeoOffice's older sibling, OpenOffice. Unlike NeoOffice, which appears to be Mac native, OpenOffice requires the UNIX-based X11 application, which can be installed from the Tiger or Panther disks.

OpenOffice has more accessible database functionality than NeoOffice—it reminded the SIG Leader of Microsoft Office Professional for Windows, which incorporates the database program Access. (We know that FileMaker works with just about anything, but it is not integrated into an office suite).

Bill showed us at our demonstration that both OpenOffice and NeoOffice programs appear to use a more universal XML format that is cleaner and more web compatible.

Unfortunately, OpenOffice requires a bit more familiarity with X11 and UNIX than the SIG leader has. It does not natively open Mac fonts — while NeoOffice indeed does use the fonts at hand.

Another concern expressed by members of dBug is that the current release of NeoOffice (1.2) won't run on Intel-based Macs <<http://trinity.neooffice.org/modules.php?name=Forums&file=viewtopic&t=2230>> while Microsoft reports <<http://www.microsoft.com/mac/default.aspx?pid=macIntelQA>> that Microsoft Office 2004 and X will run—under Rosetta—on MacTels \* (Macintoshes with Intel processors). NeoOffice is working on this in the next release.

The Office Application SIG Leader's analysis is that it probably would not be worth the time for people who already have Office 2004 to junk it in favor of Open Office or NeoOffice, especially with the MacTel issue right now.

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## Music SIG growing

Due to overwhelming interest, Clark Schroeder will be doing another GarageBand workshop soon covering how to produce a song from the ground up! Stay tuned!

<<http://www.dbug.org/sigs/music/>>

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dBug Resource Center directions:

<<http://www.dbug.org/about/directions.shtml>>

Information on joining dBug:

<<http://www.dbug.org/about/join.shtml>>

While you are surfing, check out the current SIG calendar:

<<http://www.dbug.org/calendar/>>

dBug is the Macintosh Downtown Business User Group located in Seattle, WA (USA)<<http://www.dbug.org/>>

## Turn off AutoComplete

In NeoOffice text documents, Auto complete highlights words in yellow. Then, it then is supposed to allow you to complete the words by tapping the Spacebar on your keyboard! But it didn't work universally when we tried it, and it was a very annoying feature to the author. To turn off Auto Complete in NeoOffice:

1. From the Tools menu, choose **AutoCorrect/AutoFormat**.
2. Click the **Word Completion** tab.
3. Clear the **Enable word completion** checkbox

The author actually found that by clicking the **Show as tip** button, he could live with the Auto-Complete feature, since it didn't show ubiquitous yellow words in the middle of the text field.

Below is a screenshot of a NeoOffice Presentation window, analogous to PowerPoint.



However, IF you don't want to spend \$200-\$500 to buy Office 2004, and IF you are willing to learn a few new ways of running software, NeoOffice might be something to look at, and if you are into X11, Unix, or Linux, Open Office might also be an alternative.

For more information, visit <http://www.neooffice.org/> and <http://www.planamesa.com/neojava/en/index.php>

\*(Although Virtual PC comes bundled with Office 2004 Premium, it is NOT an Office application and it is NOT compatible with Intel-based Macs: Virtual PC for Mac is highly dependent on the operating system and hardware and will require additional development to run on Intel-based Macs.

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## dBug Board of Directors 2005-2006

From right to left, it's Dona McAdam, Tom Auciello, Mike Grueter, Caryn Roberts, Cathy Doser, Karen Lindner, Allan Swensson, Desi & Lucy Arnaz.

<<http://www.dbug.org/about/bod.shtml>>

