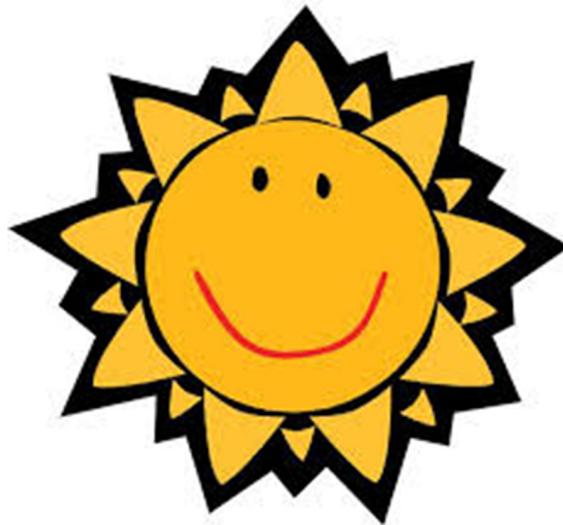


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Keystone MacCentral Macintosh Users Group ❖ <http://www.keystonemac.com>



**It's our summer break
We'll be back in
September**

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3301 East Trindle Road, Camp Hill, PA 17011

Tuesday, September 13, 2013 6:30 p.m.

Attendance is free and open to all interested persons.

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Keystone MacCentral is a not-for-profit group of Macintosh enthusiasts who generally meet the third Tuesday of every month to exchange information, participate in question-and-answer sessions, view product demonstrations, and obtain resource materials that will help them get the most out of their computer systems. Meetings are free and open to the public. The *Keystone MacCentral printout* is the official newsletter of Keystone MacCentral and an independent publication not affiliated or otherwise associated with or sponsored or sanctioned by any for-profit organization, including Apple Inc. Copyright © 2013, Keystone MacCentral, 310 Somerset Drive, Shiresmanstown, PA 17011.

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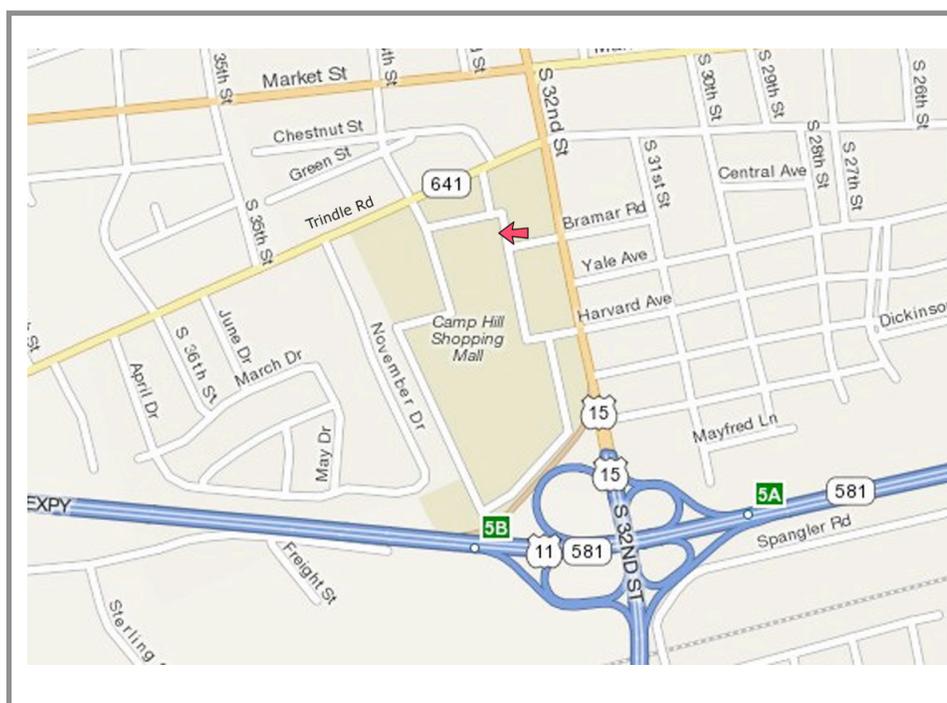
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by Adam C. Engst

Apple Previews OS X 10.9 Mavericks

Following the example set repeatedly by Steve Jobs, Craig Federighi, Apple's Senior Vice President of Software Engineering, took the baton from CEO Tim Cook at the [keynote](#) of Apple's Worldwide Developer Conference to reveal the future of OS X. Federighi joked that Apple didn't want the tenth version of OS X to be delayed due to a dwindling supply of cats and garnered a big laugh from the 6,000 developers present when he suggested that Apple would be calling it OS X Sea Lion.

The reality is still watery, though, as Federighi went on to say that Apple would henceforth be naming versions of OS X after places in California that have inspired Apple. First up in that category is [Mavericks](#), a surfing location just north of Half Moon Bay in Northern California. Not being a surfer, I can't speak to the attraction, since the Wikipedia entry for Mavericks describes it as an extremely challenging and hazardous spot that has claimed the lives of several well-known big wave surfers.

Nonetheless, OS X 10.9 Mavericks it is, and if you were wondering, it is indeed singular. Developers received a preview version of Mavericks at WWDC today; Federighi said the public release will come "this fall." Speculation of where in the September to November time frame the release will hit may now commence.



With [Mavericks](#), Apple is balancing two competing desires – the pull to make OS X more like iOS and the need to add features that make sense only on a big-screen Mac. Although I haven't been a fan of the so-called iOSification of OS X in the past, I think Apple has a better handle on what the goal is now. With the addition of Launchpad and some of the other changes in Mountain Lion, it felt as though Apple was somewhat slavishly copying iOS in OS X. But in Mavericks, the main iOS-related changes are more about app parity.

iBooks – Notably, two new apps will find their way into the default set in Mavericks: iBooks and Maps. iBooks

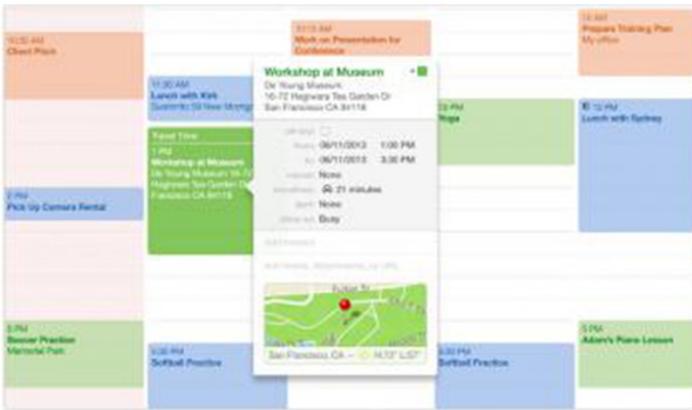
looks almost exactly like iBooks on the iPad, providing access to the 1.8 million titles in the iBookstore and supporting both standard EPUBs and enhanced Multi-Touch books created with iBooks Author. Two welcome additions made possible by large screens include a pane listing your notes and the capability to open multiple books at the same time. Although nothing was said about it during the keynote, it seems logical that iBooks in Mavericks will support PDF files as well, though it's unlikely that it will accept other formats, such as the Kindle-centered Mobipocket format. (Although Peter Lewis and I haven't discussed details yet, the release of iBooks means we can retire Bookle, our EPUB reader for OS X. More on that in the future.)

Maps – The new Maps in Mavericks is, of course, also extremely similar to Apple's Maps app for iOS, with full support for street maps, 3D view, flyover imagery, and turn-by-turn directions. The big difference, I believe, will be raw size – put Maps into full-screen mode on a 27-inch iMac, and you'll have a qualitatively different experience because you'll be able to see so much more than on an iPad or iPhone. You'll also be able to send routes developed in the Mac version of Maps to your iPhone, and bookmarks will sync between all your Apple devices. The main question is if Apple will eventually create a Web-based interface for Maps, or if sharing locations with people not using Apple devices will continue to fall back on the ubiquitous Google Maps.



Calendar – Although Contacts didn't merit a mention, Federighi took glee in showing off the redesigned Calendar, saying, "Absolutely no virtual cows were harmed in the making of this interface," and later making a comment about how you could scroll seamlessly now that the faux stitching was gone. I assume Apple will lose the skeuomorphic interface of Contacts as well, and, frankly, good riddance to bad design. There's a place for skeuomorphism when it maps with function (as with folders, or the Trash), but most of Apple's recent skeuomorphic interfaces were pointless – Federighi even commented later that Apple had "run out of green felt" for Game Center. Apart from the new look, Calendar brings continuous scrolling, so you can look at the last half of one month and the first half of

the next one (BusyCal has had this feature for some time). More interesting is a new event inspector that suggests addresses and points of interest as you type in the location field, even showing a map, calculating travel time, and building that into the event time. And again, the features will remain largely in sync with Calendar for iOS.



Safari – There’s less room to innovate with Safari, given the maturity of the Web browser as a category, so Apple has given only a little attention to the interface, updating the look of the Top Sites view and bringing bookmarks and Reading List into a combined sidebar, along with the new Shared Links feature that shows links posted by people you follow on Twitter and LinkedIn (but not Facebook, notably). You can browse the shared links without closing the sidebar, and a special control at the top makes it easy to retweet. Clearly, we are not meant to do anything with our lives but browse and share, browse and share, browse and share. Under the hood, Safari features some impressive-sounding new technologies that promise to increase both performance and battery life. How much of an impact those will make in real-world usage remains to be seen, and, of course, Google and Mozilla will undoubtedly be revamping their browsers in the intervening months as well.

iCloud Keychain – Apple’s forthcoming iCloud Keychain promises to store Web site user names and passwords on approved devices, protect them with AES 256-bit encryption, keep them up-to-date on each device, and automatically fill them in when you need them (at least in iOS 7). It also holds credit card information and sports a password generator, just like 1Password. It doesn’t look like it will support secure notes as 1Password does, though, and it will of course work only in Mavericks and iOS 7, and only in Safari (though Google and Mozilla could conceivably add support to Chrome and Firefox). Put simply, iCloud Keychain is probably a good thing for users who wouldn’t otherwise have tried 1Password or another password manager, but I imagine serious 1Password users will want to stick with their familiar utility, particularly if they rely on a variety of Web browsers like we do.

Notifications – One of the more welcome changes in Mavericks comes with Notifications, which straddles the line between useful and annoying in 10.8 Mountain Lion. Some notifications will become interactive, so when you

get a chat message or tweet notification, you can reply right in the notification alert. Similarly, you’ll be able to delete e-mail messages from their notifications, respond to FaceTime calls, and more. Push notifications from your iOS apps can now appear on your Mac as well, which could be extremely helpful, and if you’re using a MacBook that requires the login password on every wake, you can access Notification Center from the lock screen to see a summary of what happened while you were away (this will be true in iOS 7 too). Another feature that will appear on both platforms is automatic updating of apps; I presume – or at least hope – it will be optional for those who don’t want apps updating willy-nilly in the background. Finally, it sounds as though Apple has finally listened to Joe Kissell and made it so notification dismissals sync across devices – it’s not full-fledged awareness of a primary device, but it’s a good start (see “[An Alarming Abundance of Alerts](#),” 13 May 2012).

Finder Tabs – Not everything that’s new in Mavericks has a parallel in iOS. A much-rumored and really quite obvious feature – Finder Tabs – will make its debut in Mavericks. It puts Safari-like tabs in Finder windows, with each tab showing the view of a different Finder location. Apple suggests you can devote a tab to Documents, another to AirDrop, and a third to Back to My Mac, all in a single window, but that strikes me as wishful thinking, since so few people use AirDrop or Back to My Mac in comparison with the number of users who just want to have quick access to multiple folders. Switching among tabs is merely a matter of a click, and moving files from tab to tab works just as you’d expect via drag-and-drop. Finder Tabs also makes the concept of a full-screen Finder window less ridiculous, since you can have numerous tabs for your most frequently used locations.



Multiple Displays – Full-screen mode itself becomes vastly more useful in Mavericks because Apple has finally acknowledged that a lot of serious Mac users rely heavily on multiple displays – I’ve had two monitors on my main Mac since the SE/30 in 1990, and I’d never consider working on a single-display Mac (well, unless it was at least 4,000 pixels wide). In Mavericks, full-screen mode works the way it should have from the start on multiple displays, with each screen getting its own full-screen app. The concept of primary and secondary displays has gone away – each display gets its own menu bar, and the Dock appears

on whichever screen you're working on. You can rearrange full-screen apps and other windows via Mission Control.

If you have an HDTV with an Apple TV, you can use it as a full-fledged, independent display via AirPlay. Although some have hailed this feature as a big win, I have trouble seeing the utility, given that most people don't have TVs at their desks, and most HDTVs I've seen wouldn't be easy to read up close. The main use case I can see is for those doing video editing, since they could push the preview video off to the TV.

Tags – The final marquee feature of Mavericks is the addition – after many long years – of tagging. It appears that tags replace the long-standing labels entirely, and a new field appears in the Save dialog for adding tags (you can also add them in the iCloud Open/Save dialog). They're auto-completed as you type, and it's easy to add new ones. Tags can also be assigned to files in Finder windows, and a new tag list in the sidebar of Finder windows displays all files with particular tags. Dragging a file into a tag view adds the tag to that file, and you can also search for files via tag.

Under the Hood – All these features are good to see, and I'm looking forward to being able to play with them. But Apple has also put a ton of effort into making Mavericks-equipped Macs simply run faster, longer, and cooler with a variety of advanced technologies hidden under the hood. Timer Coalescing groups low-level operations, essentially letting the CPU rest in a low-power state more often.

With an app that isn't actively doing something, App Nap cleverly slows it down if it's not visible – hide the app or simply drag a window over it, and App Nap can recover its CPU cycles, reducing CPU energy use by up to 23 percent, conserving valuable battery life. App Nap also works on Safari tabs, so only visible tabs get full access to the CPU. Similarly, Safari Power Saver recognizes the difference between the primary content and video or animations off in the margins (often ads) and won't play them unless you expressly invoke them, much like the ClickToFlash plug-in does in Safari.

Mavericks also redistributes the workload when watching iTunes HD TV shows and movies, sending more of the processing to the Mac's graphics processing unit, reducing disk access, and giving the CPU a rest. Apple estimates that this new approach will let your CPU use up to 35 percent less energy while watching video.

Lastly, Apple has come up with a technology, called Compressed Memory, that compresses in-memory data from inactive apps, freeing up more memory for use by active processes. Apple claims that the Mac won't have to waste time transferring inactive memory back and forth to disk, though it's not entirely clear how that will work – there's a point at which there simply won't be enough free memory available and the inactive memory will have to be written out to disk.

Remaining Questions – Although I anticipate numerous details leaking out over time, since Apple hasn't been enforcing developer NDAs over the last few releases of OS X, you'll have to wait a few more months to get your hands on OS X 10.9 Mavericks. Given the integration of so many apps and services with iOS 7, it's likely that the two will ship simultaneously, and the added complexity of that may suggest a date later in Apple's self-imposed window. Price wasn't mentioned, but it's probable that it will cost the same \$19.99 as Mountain Lion did, or even less. Similarly, Apple said nothing about what generation of Macs would be supported, although it's a good bet that all Macs sold within the last two or three years will be included.

In the end, apart from the name, which feels random (are that many people at Apple really inspired by big wave surfers?), Mavericks strikes me as a well-thought-out revision to OS X, combining Mac-specific features, parity with iOS 7, and under-the-hood improvements in a welcome package. ☑

by Josh Centers

Canvas Slated to Return to the Mac in 2014

On its mailing list, [ACD Systems](#) has announced that it is reviving the Mac version of Canvas, its technical drawing, pagination, and illustration app. ACD stopped making Canvas for the Mac in 2007. A beta of the resurrected program will be available in "spring 2014."

"We have a lot to be excited about here. We know there are a lot of loyal Canvas Mac users out there, and we're looking forward to being part of their workflow again," said Dallas Vandekerkhove, Director of International Business Development at ACD Systems.

Canvas originated on the Macintosh in 1987, as part of the desktop publishing boom. It wasn't until version 3.5 in 1992 that it was ported to Windows, and the final version for the Mac was [Canvas X](#) in 2005.

Canvas is the latest professional application to return to the Mac after a long absence. Autodesk brought [AutoCAD](#) back to the Mac in 2010 after a 16-year absence.

Although Canvas isn't cheap, with the Windows version currently listing for \$599.99, this news should be welcome for graphics professionals unhappy with Adobe's move to a subscription-only licensing model (see "[Creative Cloud Complaints Darken Adobe's View of the Future](#)," 17 May 2013). ☑

Explaining the Apple Ebook Price Fixing Suit

By now, you've undoubtedly heard the news that U.S. District Judge Denise Cote has ruled against Apple in the antitrust suit filed against the company by the U.S. Department of Justice and 33 states, saying that Apple conspired with five major publishers to raise the retail prices of ebooks. Apple has announced that [it will appeal](#), denying any wrongdoing. Initially, the next trial was supposed to set damages, but I imagine that will be set aside until the appeal is decided, first at the 2nd Circuit Court of Appeals, and then the Supreme Court if necessary.

[Cote's 160-page opinion](#) is remarkably well-written and is a fascinating read, at least if you're interested in the chronology and minutiae of this case. I've read the entire thing, and have found it far more compelling than the soap opera media coverage of the trial, which took place from 3 June 2013 through 20 June 2013. It also clarifies numerous points and questions that came up during and since the trial. Rather than attempt to summarize the entire opinion, I'm going to focus on answering questions surrounding it, based on what Judge Cote wrote.

If you have other queries that I haven't addressed here, please ask them in the comments, and I'll do my best to answer them.

Where did this situation come from?

There are two key factors that led to this suit. Most important was Amazon's pricing of bestselling ebooks at \$9.99, even when that was below the price Amazon paid publishers for those titles. The publishers hated Amazon's pricing structure because they feared it would change reader perceptions about what a book ought to cost, they were worried that cheap ebook sales would cut into expensive hardcover sales, and they were concerned that the rise of inexpensive ebooks would further damage the brick-and-mortar bookstores that served as alternatives to Amazon. In 2009, Amazon controlled 90 percent of the ebook market, due to the success of the Kindle and to its lowballing of prices, so the publishers were looking for solutions to what was called "the Amazon problem."

The second factor was the introduction of the iPad in January 2010, and Apple's desire to open a bookstore for ebooks along the lines of the iTunes Store. In June 2009, the book industry as a whole was estimated to be \$35 to \$42 billion in size, with trade books – books distributed to the general public – comprising \$12.5 billion of that. Although trade ebooks were only \$100 million or so at that time, predictions put the ebook market size at \$1 billion by 2010. So Apple

wanted in, and went to the Big Six publishers to negotiate an agreement to resell their books.

The publishers saw working with Apple as a chance – perhaps the only chance, an idea emphasized by Apple in the negotiations – to fight back against Amazon, with the publishers desperate for any means to raise ebook prices and Apple standing as one of the few companies with enough clout to compete against Amazon, thanks to the iPad hardware and the hundreds of millions of iTunes accounts.

How do pricing models fit into the equation?

Traditionally, books are sold via "wholesale" pricing, which means that the publisher sets a cover price for a book, and bookstores pay a negotiated wholesale price, usually about 50 percent of the cover price. The bookstore then sets the price wherever it likes. For instance, a \$30 hardcover might sell for \$15 to bookstores, and the bookstores might sell it for \$25, advertising the \$5 discount from the cover price. (As an aside, many author royalty agreements pay a percentage of the wholesale price, so if an author gets a 10 percent royalty, she'll earn \$1.50 on that \$30 book.)

Amazon was exploiting the wholesale model by paying more for some ebooks than it was selling them for, the classic loss-leader approach. For every bestselling ebook Amazon sold for \$9.99, the company might have lost \$3 to \$4. So, although the publishers were incredibly unhappy with the \$9.99 price, they were still making the same amount as they would have had Amazon sold the book for \$19.99.

When Apple first approached the publishers, it was assuming that it would purchase ebooks on a wholesale model, as the company does for music, TV shows, and movies sold in the iTunes Store. However, several of the publishers suggested that Apple instead adopt an agency model for ebook distribution, and after initially rejecting the idea, Apple became enamored of it.

In an "agency" model, publishers set the prices that retailers will sell books for, and then take a set percentage of those prices. Apple is no stranger to the agency model, since that's exactly what's used for the App Store and Mac App Store, where developers set their prices and take 70 percent from each sale, leaving 30 percent for Apple.

So what's the problem with the agency model?

Nothing, inherently. Retailers tend not to like the agency model because it gives publishers control over pricing, something retailers prefer to manage on their own. But it's important to note that there is nothing illegal about the agency model.

Apple's legal woes instead stem from how the agency model ended up being applied more broadly, thanks to two other contractual requirements: pricing tiers with caps and a most-favored-nation (MFN) clause.

The pricing tiers with caps were designed to prevent Apple from being embarrassed with unrealistically high prices – Apple's executives knew the company would be ridiculed if iBookstore prices were far higher than Amazon's. Although the details varied throughout the negotiations, Apple ultimately succeeded in setting two basic price tiers of \$12.99 and \$14.99, with the first for new release hardcovers priced between \$25 and \$27.50, and the second for new releases priced between \$27.51 and \$30. There were also \$16.99 and \$19.99 tiers for new releases priced higher than that, by \$5 increments.

The second key factor was the MFN clause, which stated that if any ebook retailer charged less than Apple was charging in the iBookstore, Apple could match it, regardless of what price the publisher had set. So, if Amazon had some bestseller for \$9.99, Apple could also sell it for \$9.99, even if the book would otherwise have fallen into the \$14.99 tier.

Before coming up with the MFN clause, Apple had initially suggested that the publishers all adopt the agency model for all ebook retailers across the board. Apple's goal in doing this was to avoid price competition with Amazon, since under the agency model, the publishers would likely set the same price everywhere. Although the publishers weren't upset by this (they were less happy with the price tiers and 30 percent fee), Apple switched to using the MFN clause because it solved the price competition problem more elegantly, encouraging rather than requiring the publishers to move other ebook retailers to the agency model.

Why was this? Without across-the-board agency pricing, the MFN clause meant that publishers would earn far less money any time another ebook retailer lowballed a price and Apple matched it. The only rational reaction for the publishers was to move all retailers to agency pricing, so the same book was for sale at the same price everywhere.

An open question is why Apple was so interested in eliminating price competition. There's some indication that Apple didn't want to compete with Amazon's loss-leader strategy, but Apple's cash hoard would certainly have enabled it to win a price war with Amazon, which doesn't have nearly Apple's resources.

How this is an antitrust violation?

Again, there is nothing inherently illegal with the agency model, price tiers, or an MFN clause. And there isn't even anything wrong with combining them in negotiation with

a single company. The problem comes when they're combined in negotiation with six publishers that between them control nearly 50 percent of the book market, and over 90 percent of the New York Times bestsellers.

After five of the Big Six publishers signed Apple's deal, they immediately went to Amazon to switch their wholesale pricing agreements to the agency model. Amazon was understandably upset about this, due to the loss of pricing control, but had no choice but to accept in the end. Subsequently, the publishers also negotiated an agency model with Google, which was similarly unhappy.

Once the agency model was in place, ebook prices from those publishers rose immediately. Roughly two weeks after the move, prices at Amazon rose 14.2 percent for new releases, 42.7 percent for New York Times bestsellers, and 18.6 percent overall. Publishers raised prices for their hardcovers as well, to bump them into higher price tiers, and increased prices for their backlist books, older titles that sell relatively few copies each, but which form the long tail of book sales.

Simultaneously, and in a win for the basic economic rule that higher prices result in lower sales, the number of sales dropped by 12 to 17 percent per publisher. In short, customers bought fewer books and paid more per book.

In Judge Cote's opinion, the combination of Apple working with all the publishers simultaneously to fix ebook prices in such a way as to cause them to rise was where Apple violated the [Sherman Antitrust Act](#). Whether the 2nd Circuit Court of Appeals upholds or strikes down Cote's ruling remains to be seen.

Do publishers and authors earn more money because of these higher prices?

That's one of the counterintuitive aspects of this situation. Yes, customers paid more – as noted, prices rose nearly 19 percent per book overall after the agency model went into effect.

But publishers earned less per book, with some predicting the overall drop in earnings would be as much as 17 percent. Here's why. Consider a \$29.99 hardcover that Apple would sell for \$14.99. The publisher would earn 70 percent of that, or roughly \$10.50. But under the wholesale model, the publisher might have sold that book to Amazon for as much as \$15. Plus, because publishers were earning less, they also allowed fewer promotions that would have reduced prices for customers.

Since author royalties generally track with publisher earnings, most authors presumably earned less as well, though the specifics undoubtedly varied by contract.

Ironically, the agency model probably caused Amazon to earn more than it was earning under the wholesale model, since it could no longer sell ebooks as loss leaders. But just as the publishers didn't agree to the agency model in order to earn more money, Amazon wasn't utilizing the wholesale

model because it wanted to earn less. In both cases, the issue was control over pricing.

Isn't Amazon really the bad guy in this case?

In a word, yes – Amazon started the snowball rolling by selling ebooks as loss leaders. But you shouldn't be irritated that the judge is somehow letting Amazon off the hook. Amazon isn't on any hook here – this case is purely about whether Apple's activities in negotiating agency model contracts with price tiers and MFN clauses with the major publishers is a violation of antitrust law.

That's not to say that Amazon couldn't be brought up on antitrust charges for [predatory pricing](#), but that would be an entirely separate case. Indeed, Judge Cote even addresses this:

If Apple is suggesting that Amazon was engaging in illegal, monopolistic practices, and that Apple's combination with the Publisher Defendants to deprive a monopolist of some of its market power is pro-competitive and healthy for our economy, it is wrong. This trial has not been the occasion to decide whether Amazon's choice to sell NYT Bestsellers or other New Releases as loss leaders was an unfair trade practice or in any other way a violation of law. If it was, however, the remedy for illegal conduct is a complaint lodged with the proper law enforcement offices or a civil suit or both.

Nor should you interpret Amazon's role in this case to mean that Apple was somehow riding in on a white horse to save the day for customers. First, the agreements that Apple negotiated with the publishers caused ebook prices to rise, which is one of the things antitrust law is aimed at preventing. Second, although it's easy to say that the iBookstore increased competition in the ebook market by providing an alternative to Amazon, Apple's agency model and MFN clause ensured that the publishers would charge the same price everywhere, entirely eliminating competition on price. That in turn would likely have made it significantly harder for any new companies to enter the ebook retailing market and compete with Apple and Amazon.

What happened with the publishers?

Initially the U.S. Department of Justice filed this lawsuit against Apple and five of the Big Six publishers (Random House didn't agree to the initial iBookstore contracts). Over time, though, all five publishers [settled with the Department of Justice](#), basically agreeing to terminate existing contracts with Apple and other ebook retailers, and renegotiate contracts that don't prevent retailers from discounting ebook prices. However, retailers are not allowed to discount below the point of breaking even on a publisher's works overall. In other words, Amazon can still discount titles below cost, but not to the extent of losing money on a particular publisher's titles in their entirety.

From a practical standpoint, ebook retailers have gained price control again, and ebook prices have vacillated,

dropping initially, then rising slowly. Plus, [Amazon has started raising prices](#) for scholarly and small-press books.

Does this decision have any effect on the App Store or other Apple businesses?

For the moment, definitely not, since Apple is appealing the decision. A subsequent trial was to be scheduled to assess damages, but there was no hint in the opinion that Apple's actions in this particular case are in any way related to its other businesses.

So the fact that the App Store and Mac App Store rely on the agency model, and that Apple has an MFN clause in one of its music agreements (which used a wholesale model) are simply unrelated for now.

Wasn't the judge biased against Apple from the start?

Much was made of the fact that Judge Cote said before the trial: "I believe that the government will be able to show at trial direct evidence that Apple knowingly participated in and facilitated a conspiracy to raise prices of e-books, and that the circumstantial evidence in this case, including the terms of the agreements, will confirm that."

What's now clear is that this wasn't the gaffe it was made out to be. In accordance with the court's procedures for non-jury trials, much of the information was submitted during the pre-trial phase. Judge Cote had prepared a draft opinion based on those materials, and the parties to the case understood that the final decision would incorporate both the pre-trial information and the evidence that came out during the trial.

So, as the opinion states in footnote 2: "Consistent with these procedures, and with the expectation that the Court had already prepared a draft opinion, the parties jointly asked the Court for its preliminary views on the merits at the final pretrial conference held on May 23, 2013." Hence Judge Cote's statement.

What does Apple's appeal hinge on?

After working through the chronology of the case, Judge Cote examines the six major arguments that Apple raised in its defense. In each case, she dismisses Apple's position, of course, but Apple's lawyers will undoubtedly be digging into her reasoning in their appeal.

Not being a lawyer, I'm uncomfortable analyzing the strength or weakness of each argument, or of Judge Cote's counter-claims, but Philip Elmer-DeWitt, writing for [CNN Money](#), runs through each argument, laying out which he believes are the strongest and weakest.

Regardless, it's now a matter for the 2nd Circuit Court of Appeals to decide! ☹

ReadKit for Mac Is Almost the Perfect Reading App

In the wake of the demise of Google Reader (see “[The State of Google Reader Replacements](#),” 27 June 2013), I’ve been forced to move away from my preferred Mac newsreader, Reeder. It hasn’t been updated to support any of the new RSS syncing services, and developer Silvio Rizzi has removed it from the Mac App Store while saying that “Development of Reeder will continue after July 1st.” Fortunately, developer Balazs Varkonyi of Webin has come to my rescue, updating his [ReadKit](#) app to support a slew of RSS services just before the Google Reader shutdown.

Originally an app designed as a viewer for read-later services, such as [Instapaper](#), [Pocket](#), and [Readability](#), ReadKit now supports bookmarking services [Pinboard](#) and [Delicious](#), plus RSS syncing services [Fever](#), [NewsBlur](#), [Feed Wrangler](#), and [Feedbin](#), and it even has its own internal RSS support. The effort has paid off. As I write this, ReadKit has rocketed to the top ten paid apps in the Mac App Store, where it [retails for \\$4.99](#).

For now, if you want a Mac-native RSS reader that syncs with other platforms, then ReadKit is your only option. The aforementioned Reeder is tied to Google Reader, which no longer functions, and the latest version of NetNewsWire doesn’t feature syncing at all.

When you first launch ReadKit, you’re given the opportunity to add any or all of the above-mentioned services, which is a straightforward process. However, one snag is that Instapaper support requires a paid Instapaper subscription for a dollar a month, which could be a deal breaker, as I’ll explain later. Instapaper is a free service, but viewing it from a third-party app requires a paid subscription. However, sharing to Instapaper is usually free from any app.

ReadKit’s interface is simple and clean, like a Mac app should be. Your content sources are in a sidebar on the left, individual items in the middle column, and content in the right column. You can reorder the list of services in the preference pane. My advice, if you’re a Feed Wrangler subscriber, is to move that service to the very bottom of the list, as it stubbornly displays every feed you’ve subscribed to and clogs up the list.



Just because you can add so many services, doesn’t mean you should. In my experience, adding Feed Wrangler, NewsBlur, and Feedbin at the same time leads to extremely high CPU usage, which in turn makes my MacBook Pro sound like it’s preparing for takeoff. It’s best to just pick one RSS service and stick to it.

No matter how many services you’re brave enough to add, ReadKit makes it simple to keep up with all of your content, thanks to a feature called Smart Folders. Like Smart Playlists in iTunes, Smart Folders let you specify criteria for filtering content. By default, ReadKit includes two Smart Folders: Read Later, which compiles all content from services like Instapaper and Pocket, and RSS News, which compiles all items from your various RSS subscriptions. The RSS News Smart Folder is pretty good about not displaying duplicate entries from multiple services, but it slips up sometimes.



If you have a paid Pinboard account, and you should if you’re a bookmark hoarder, you’ll be pleased to see that ReadKit provides full support for all of your tags, in a separate Tags tab at the bottom of the screen, as well as

access to your archives, private bookmarks, and shared bookmarks in the feed tab. The Tags tab also features all of your starred Pocket items.



Adding content to all services is straightforward, yet problematic. To add something new, whether a bookmark or a new subscription, click the plus icon on the bottom of the window, then select your preferred service from the pop-up menu. The options change depending on which service you choose. New Pinboard bookmarks require a Web site address, with an optional title and description. However, ReadKit doesn't accept tags, which is an odd exclusion, since tags are a core part of Pinboard.

Subscribing to RSS feeds is hit or miss, depending on which syncing service you use. To add an RSS subscription, choose a service and paste in the feed URL – there's no built-in directory of feeds. However, if you keep your RSS subscriptions sorted into folders, as you probably do, then adding feeds can be painful, as only NewsBlur, which was the first RSS service supported by ReadKit, supports adding a feed to a folder. Adding feeds to Feed Wrangler works, but you can't add a feed to a Smart Stream. Meanwhile, adding feeds to Feedbin seems to be broken entirely, claiming that any feed I try to add to it isn't valid. However, those feeds later appeared in my Feedbin account, so there are still some kinks to work out.

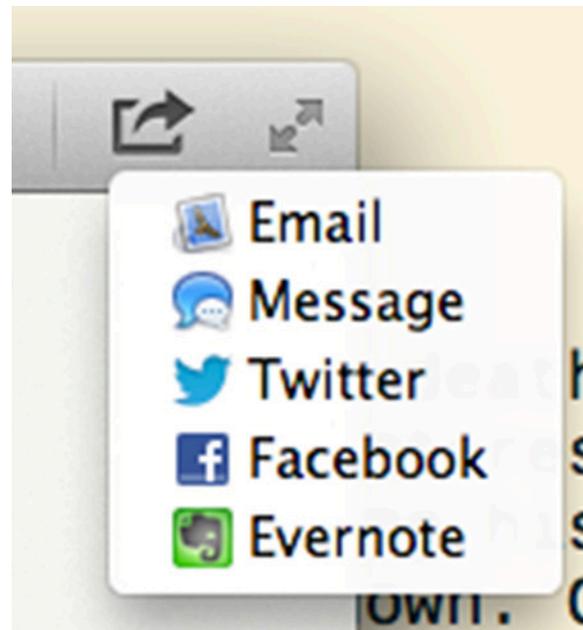


Assuming you can add the content you want to read, ReadKit allows extensive customization options as to how you view your content. By default, ReadKit displays articles in the Optima typeface at 18 point. I don't find this optimal,

but you can choose any font you please. Not only that, but you can view content as left-aligned or fully justified, adjust article width, and even set line height. There are also a few themes included, but I'd like to be able to set a custom theme. I'm also surprised some variant of the Solarized color schemes, which are popular color schemes designed to maximize readability, isn't included, though the Corporation and Dark themes are pretty close.



You can also choose to render content with Readability's text parser for enhanced clarity, though I haven't noticed a difference from the built-in engine. Of course, you can also open any article in your default Web browser. There's also a share menu that lets you send content to e-mail, Messages, Twitter, Facebook, and Evernote.



You might notice a couple of items missing from that list: Instapaper and Pocket. You can still add articles to those services, by dragging the item from another service. For instance, you can drag an article from Feed Wrangler into Instapaper to save it for later reading, or you could drag an article from Pocket to Pinboard when you're done reading it, but want to save the link for future reference. However, this is a problem if you prefer Instapaper, because you can't

add an Instapaper account to ReadKit unless you have a paid subscription. Normally, I'd recommend supporting the service, but with Instapaper's recent acquisition (see "[Betaworks Takes over Instapaper](#)," 25 April 2013), and presumably upcoming redesign, the future of paid subscriptions is a question mark. Even if you're fine with using Pocket instead of Instapaper, dragging and dropping is more cumbersome than clicking a button. This is an oversight that I hope to see smoothed out in an update.

Also missing from the Share menu is an option to copy a link. Rather, you need to choose Copy Link from the Item menu.

Most annoying though, is that RSS feeds sometimes stop refreshing entirely until I quit and relaunch the app. I'd blame it on the individual service's API, but other RSS

apps seem to sync just fine. To be fair to developer Balazs Varkonyi, he worked like crazy to add so many new services under a tight deadline, so things are understandably imperfect and will undoubtedly be improving over time.

Overall, ReadKit brings together a lot of features in an attractive package for a low price. Yes, it does currently suffer from a number of bugs. But I can look past most of them, since none are showstoppers, the app is still extremely useful, Varkonyi scrambled to support Google Reader refugees, and he's prompt in communicating with users. Most important, there aren't really any other options for RSS syncing on the Mac. As a professional technology writer who depends on all these services to keep my finger on the pulse of the Apple community, ReadKit is indispensable. 🍷

by Tim Sullivan

Rumors and Reality

The need for speed: The Wi-Fi Alliance, a global organization that ensures the interoperability of Wi-Fi technologies, has begun certifying the latest in Wi-Fi advance. It's called "802.11ac." It offers speed of up to 1.3 Gigabits per second. That's double the current top speed of 802.11n, the current standard.

The ac version could, in theory, download a high def movie in 4 minutes. There are some bottlenecks that will slow the transmission. The number of people using a specific site and having hardware that will handle the increased speed are two obvious factors.

iWatch watch: Apple is applying for an "iWatch" trademark in a number of countries. The filings cover everywhere from Taiwan to Turkey, as well as Japan, Russia and Mexico.

Apple has begun assembling a team of hardware and software engineering, medical sensor, manufacturing, and fitness experts, indicating the company is moving forward with a project to build a fitness-oriented, sensor-laden wearable computer, according to our sources.

Tim Cook is betting that wearable sensors is a growth field.

In addition to rounding up team members from inside Apple, the company has also hired experts in relevant sensor and medical fields. Based on new hires, it seems that Apple's interest in sensors focuses on the ability to measure glucose and other body level information. With this data, the product could inform users of vital information in a non-invasive way. These sensors could also pick up more data to give a user a snapshot of their health, which would be ideal for fitness applications.

PrimeSense is an Israeli company that developed the technology used by the original Microsoft Kinect. Using hardware, the system can detect body movements and hand gestures to control activities on a computer screen.

While Apple has its own patents on similar 3D technology and has been working on its own gesture-controlled OS, it is reported to be in acquisition talks with PrimeSense. 🍷



Dropbox's Datastore API Takes Aim at iCloud

At its first [DBX developer conference](#) on 9 July 2013, Dropbox announced a new platform, called the [Datastore API](#), which offers exciting data-syncing possibilities for future iOS apps. (An API, Application Programming Interface, allows programmers to access to the inner workings of a program.)

If you use an iPhone or iPad, chances are that you depend on one or more apps that sync via Dropbox's file-based [Sync API](#). The [Datastore API](#) takes syncing support a step further, enabling developers to build simple databases into their apps and have the data in those databases – contacts, to-do items, and settings, for example – synced with other Dropbox-connected apps.

The Datastore API automatically merges data when changes in a Datastore-enabled app are made on different devices, eliminating worry about conflicts. Plus, Datastore-enabled apps can work offline, saving changes locally, and then sync up once a connection becomes available.

With the addition of the Datastore API to the existing Sync API, Dropbox is offering a noteworthy alternative to Apple's iCloud. While storing both key-value pairs suitable for simple configuration data and discrete documents has worked well in iCloud, the more complex Core Data syncing has suffered from [significant problems](#). ([Core Data](#) is Apple's preferred way to work with data in both iOS and OS X, and it's heavily used by Apple developers.)

For those who have struggled with iCloud data syncing issues, Dropbox's Datastore API might hold out new hope. To gauge reactions, we reached out to two developers who have publicly criticized iCloud in the past: Greg Pierce of [Agile Tortoise](#) and Rich Siegel of [Bare Bones Software](#).

"I think it's a bit premature to make any long term judgments about it, but Dropbox has a great reputation in this space and has become ubiquitous enough that requiring a Dropbox account for sync is not terribly intrusive for many users," said Pierce, whose Drafts note-taking app for iOS has garnered many fans. But he tempered his optimism by pointing out Datastore API's limitations, like a lack of support for Apple's Core Data, as well as tight limits on database sizes and queries.

Siegel, whose "digital junk drawer" app Yojimbo relies on Core Data, echoed Pierce's concerns about the lack of support for Apple's database framework, and pointed out that the Datastore API is not yet available for OS X – only for iOS, Android, and JavaScript (Web apps).

The lack of desktop support severely limits the Datastore API's potential. Steve M., a Dropbox employee who posts on the company's official forums, [has indicated](#) that a desktop library will be added, but initially only for the Python scripting language. This is sure to disappoint Mac developers, as almost all Mac apps are developed in the Objective-C language. [Mark Munz of Unmarked Software commented](#) on Twitter that requiring Python for access to the Datastore API on the desktop is a bit like a Mac-native Cocoa app requiring AppleScript to access an API – it can be done, but is a hack and hard to maintain.

Rich Siegel also noted, "Anyone who's been working on iCloud thus far has either made it work, is in a holding pattern waiting for developments, or has gone on to develop and implement an alternative strategy. Although the Datastore API shows promise, in none of those cases do I expect a developer to drop what they're doing and try to adopt it if they already have a plan in process."

In short, cautious optimism. Although Dropbox has a good reputation, the fact that Apple has struggled with Core Data syncing via iCloud shows that making something like the Datastore API work reliably isn't an easy task, and until developers have had a chance to dig into it, they won't know how well it actually works.

Plus, without support for both Core Data and OS X, the Datastore API won't be able to replace many uses of iCloud syncing anytime soon. Even if it gained those capabilities, many Apple developers have put a lot of time and money into making iCloud work. And those developers who have rejected iCloud, like [The Omni Group](#) and [Vemedio](#), have invested heavily in creating their own syncing solutions, and will be unlikely to abandon them for Dropbox. But for developers just starting sync-related projects, or those without the resources to develop independent solutions, Dropbox's Datastore API may open a new world of possibilities.

Also announced at the DBX conference were a couple of useful interface elements that will start appearing in Dropbox-savvy iOS apps soon: the [Chooser](#) and the [Saver](#). The Chooser is a file picker for Dropbox, much like iCloud's document browser, that developers will be able to drop into any app to make it easy for users to open documents stored in Dropbox. On the other end of the equation, the Saver enables users to save a document to Dropbox with a single click. It's available for Web apps now, with versions for iOS and Android coming soon. 📄

June - July Software Review

Apple Updates

Security Update 2013-003 (Snow Leopard)

Jul 2, 2013 - 349.5 MB

System Requirements

- OS X 10.6.8

Security Update 2013-003 is recommended for all users and improves the security of Mac OS X.

Security Update 2013-003 (Mountain Lion)

Jul 2, 2013 - 20.4 MB

System Requirements

- OS X 10.8.4

Security Update 2013-003 is recommended for all users and improves the security of Mac OS X.

Security Update 2013-003 (Lion)

Jul 2, 2013 - 61 MB

System Requirements

- OS X Lion 10.7.5

Security Update 2013-003 is recommended for all users and improves the security of OS X.

Canon Inkjet Printer Drivers 2.12 for OS X

Jun 27, 2013 - 200.46 MB

System Requirements

- OS X Mountain Lion
- OS X 10.6.1 or later
- OS X Lion or later

This update installs the latest software for your Canon Inkjet printer or scanner.

Digital Camera RAW Compatibility Update 4.07

Jun 27, 2013 - 6.11 MB

System Requirements

- OS X 10.8.2 or later
- OS X 10.7.5 or later

This update adds RAW image compatibility for the following cameras to Aperture 3 and iPhoto '11:

- Panasonic LUMIX DMC-G6
- Panasonic LUMIX DMC-GF6
- Sony Alpha SLT-A58

Java for OS X 2013-004

Jun 18, 2013 - 64.02 MB

System Requirements

- OS X Lion 10.7 or later
- OS X Mountain Lion 10.8 or later

This update corrects an issue with Java applications failing to draw or respond to user input.

Java for Mac OS X 10.6 Update 16

Jun 18, 2013 - 69.47 MB

System Requirements

- OS X 10.6.8 Snow Leopard

This update also corrects an issue with Java applications failing to draw or respond to user input. ☒

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