KEYSTONE MacCentral

printout

Smartphones and Apple Watches

At the next Keystone MacCentral meeting, (if the technology gods permit) we will watch and discuss parts of the Apple presentation that took place on 9/9/2014 at the Flint Center in Cupertino, California. Apple had plenty to talk about as it revealed two new iPhones and its much anticipated smart watch that we now know is called the "Apple Watch" (and not the "iWatch" as most of the world was guessing).

As expected, Apple updated its smartphone line with two new models, the iPhone 6 and iPhone 6 Plus. Both have bigger screens than the last-generation, along with improved cameras and NFC chips that'll enable you to use your phone to pay for things at retail counters. The new phones will ship on September 19th. Meanwhile, the new version of the company's mobile operating system, iOS 8, will be available on September 17th, the day after our meeting.

The most impressive news at the event was the introduction of the Apple Watch, a wrist-worn accessory for the iPhone that can (it seems) do almost anything: it's a fitness monitor, a communication device and front-end for numerous iOS apps. And get this… it tells time too!! It starts out with a price tag of $349 and will be available in early 2015.

We won't have time to watch the entire event, but will hit the highlights, including the announcement that a new U2 album entitled "Songs of Innocence" is available for FREE to everyone with an iTunes account (that's more than half a billion iTunes customers in 119 countries around the world). Apple CEO Tim Cook made the announcement standing alongside U2 frontman Bono at the end of presentation.

Hope to see you at the Keymac Program on Tuesday, September 16th. ♡

Meet us at
Giant Food
Corner of Trindle Road & 32nd St (Route 15)
3301 East Trindle Road, Camp Hill, PA 17011

Tuesday, September 16, 2014 6:30 p.m.

Attendance is free and open to all interested persons.

Contents

Keystone MacCentral Essentials

Meeting Place
Giant Food (upstairs)
Corner of Trindle Road & 32nd St
  (Route 15)
Camp Hill

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310 Somerset Drive
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by Linda J Cober

President's Corner

Welcome back, KeyMac members! I hope your summer was a good one (although if it was like mine, it certainly seemed like a short one) and that you are once again excited about joining your KeyMac friends at our monthly meetings. Our September meeting topic is set: "What's New from Apple?" but as I write this, we have no program notes since we do not yet know the answer to the question. There have been many rumors about upcoming announcements from the mothership, but we will have to wait and see what actually evolves. Our meeting should be interesting, though, and we hope to see you at Giant on September 16.

This upcoming meeting will be our last at Giant, however, as we will be moving to the Bethany Village West Education Training Room for our October 21 meeting. We will be talking about this at the September meeting, but the change should be beneficial. Giant has been a good meeting place, albeit with some technical issues and a cost of $53 per month, and we appreciate their providing us with a room for several years. The Education Training room at Bethany Village West has a good projector and sound system as well as internet access. The presenter will have a separate network from the audience, so bandwidth should not be a problem. The room can best be accessed from Door 21, and there is plenty of parking for visitors there as well. As a special bonus, we will once again be able to have parties where members can each bring food that does not have to be purchased at Giant! If you will miss the meals that you were able to buy at Giant and eat before the meeting or bring upstairs (I personally enjoyed the Chinese food at Giant), you can instead eat at McDonalds, Subway, or the Peppermill, which are close to Bethany Village. In the meantime, enjoy your last before-the-meeting meal at Giant on September 16 and come see what Apple has in store for us all! ⏻

My customer got her phone wet. First solution?

PUTS IT IN THE MICROWAVE TO DRY OFF.

by Gary Brandt

Keystone MacCentral
Minutes
May 20, 2014

Business Meeting

President Linda Cober welcomed us to the May meeting of Keystone MacCentral. She asked if there were any nominations from the floor for our biannual election of board officers. There were none and Steve Shipman moved to close the nominations. Eric Adams seconded. The members currently serving on the board were reelected by acclimation to their positions for another two year term.

Q&A & Comments

Tom Bank asked how to record active webinars from the internet. With the Firefox browser and a plug-in called Download Helper, you should be able to download most streaming videos.

Jim Carey asked about liability insurance for social clubs. He thought we might be able to find an insurance agent that could find us a better price for the liability insurance that KeyMac carries. We might also consider a Hold Harmless agreement. Linda Cober is looking into a different meeting room with more reliable internet access.

Someone asked about options for cleaning an old Epson printer with clogged inkjets. Jim suggested that clogging could possibly be prevented by printing at least once a week. If the print heads are bad, the printer is probably on its last legs. The H-P business line of printers might be an option. Tom Bank recommended the Konica Minolta laser color printer.

Auction Action

Before holding a mini auction of items received after our auction was held in April, we navigated to the web site of Binary Formations to learn about their Chore-inator and Home Inventory applications. Home Inventory allows you to keep important information about your valuables, including photos, that could be of use for insurance claims. The two apps were then auctioned off to the highest bidders.

Program Notes

Dennis McMahon presented three utilities for photography workflow in the first portion of the May program. Viewit

by Hexcat costs $22.00. PhotoSweeper is available from the App Store for $9.99 and Default Folder X costs $34.85.

There is also a lite version of PhotoSweeper that costs $1.99. You drag and drop photos from the Finder onto the PhotoSweeper interface to perform your adjustments. Dennis found his best results came with color sensitivity set to low. Photosweeper can find duplicates or near duplicates with an adjustable matching level. A Compare tool can quickly group photos with common characteristics. Photo Sweeper can run under Snow Leopard and later updates.

Viewit is a fast photo viewer that can be limited to viewing a set number of subfolders. Its thumbnail view looks like a contact sheet. Photos can be marked and renamed in batch mode. You can check detailed camera information for each photo. Viewit allows you to open photos in external editors and it can create Photo Gallery web pages from selected photos.

Default Folder X presents you with a Save dialog box with more options than Apple gives you. You can save favorite locations for saving files and set a history of recently viewed files. Dennis reminded us to check out software bundle offers, where you can sometimes find utilities and apps bundles with better prices.

Jim Carey showed us a video on iPhone tips and tricks. The Control Center has a screen rotate lock if you don't like a changing view. You can tap and hold the 123 button to slide up to the number you want. A double-tap on the Home button can find apps you might want to quit, with a swipe up to quit that app.

The Volume Up button can snap a photo. To zoom the iPhone camera, you reverse pinch the screen. For screenshots, simultaneously press the Home and On/Off buttons.

You can tell Siri to do something in a certain numbers of minutes. Look at Settings/Usage to see the size of files. You might find that Messages is taking up an inordinate amount of space. Message attachments take up space until they are deleted.

Jim's presentation moved on to Adobe Lightroom 5. The catalog is a library of photos and collections are like playlists. You have to create a collection before entering the Develop module to edit photos. Lightroom only stores the metadata associated with each photo. The photos remain in their original locations where they were before being imported into Lightroom. Lightroom can convert RAW files into digital negative (DNG) files. You can build smart previews and add metadata to files during the import process. 🖤

by Josh Centers

Apple Replacing Defective iPhone 5 Batteries

Apple has "determined that a very small percentage of iPhone 5 devices may suddenly experience shorter battery life or need to be charged more frequently," and is replacing defective batteries at no charge. If your iPhone 5 is suffering from poor battery life (or did in the past, such that you already had the battery replaced), here's how to check if your phone qualifies:

• On the affected iPhone 5, open Settings > General > About, and note your phone's serial number.

• Visit this page and enter your serial number in the input box under the Eligibility header. Click Submit to learn if it's covered.

(Wouldn't it be cool if the serial number in the iPhone's About screen was actually a link that would load a Web page telling you if that particular device was eligible for any repair or replacement programs? Just saying…)

If your phone is covered by the replacement program, you have a few options. First, if you've already paid to replace the battery, Apple suggests that you contact them for a refund. If you need a new battery, contact Apple Support or schedule an appointment with your closest Apple Store Genius Bar or Apple Authorized Service Provider.

After making arrangements to have your iPhone 5's battery replaced, perform the following.

1. Back up your data to iTunes or iCloud. (If you use iCloud backup, you can see the last time your phone was backed up in Settings > iCloud > Storage & Backup.) It's safest to back up to iTunes, with iCloud as a secondary backup, rather than to rely just on the cloud backup.

2. Turn off Find My iPhone in Settings > iCloud > Find My iPhone. Apple will not repair any phone that has Find My iPhone enabled.

3. Wipe the phone in Settings > General > Reset > Erase All Content and Settings. (Save this step until the last minute. It shouldn't be necessary unless Apple decides to replace your entire phone.)

Also note that Apple will not perform the repair if your phone has any obvious damage, like a cracked screen. Any such damage will have to be repaired before the battery replacement.

Although it's worth getting this done soon, if your iPhone 5 is eligible, the program runs for 2 years after you bought the iPhone or until 1 March 2015, whichever provides longer coverage. The program covers only batteries and does not extend the standard warranty coverage. ✿

by Jeff Porten

Four Smartwatches Reviewed: Cookoo, Martian, MetaWatch, i'm Watch

A little over a year ago, I mused in TidBITS about what was coming with wearable computing in "Pondering the Social Future of Wearable Computing" (29 May 2013) and predicted that smartwatches would be adopted more rapidly than heads-up systems like Google Glass. Today, with market penetrations of both approaching mere microscopic fractions of a percent, the jury is obviously still out — but I can award myself a prognosticator's medal for predicting which market would be busier. It's time to do an overview of what's actually available as shipping technology. Steve McCabe covered the Pebble (see "Pebble Smartwatch Puts Notifications on Your Wrist," 29 Jun 2014), probably the most well-known of the shipping smartwatches; this article takes a look at four more entrants.

I attended the International CES earlier this year with a vague plan to cover "wearable technology" for TidBITS (see "CES 2014: CES Unveiled and the Startup Debut," 6 January 2014). This rapidly became scaled back to "smartwatches," because a team of fifty would have had trouble taking in the hundreds of exhibitors who claimed to have wearable breakthroughs. Many of whom, unfortunately, were referring to something utterly unrelated, like an iPhone case — marketing always trumps information in the CES catalog — but even so, the dozens of exhibitors who were genuinely unveiling fitness wearables were impossible to cover. (And also not in my journalistic wheelhouse, as my fitness routine is neatly encompassed by a decent pedometer app.)

Even now, restricting this review to smartwatches and with enough models to cover my arm from wrist to elbow, the savvy reader will notice omissions. This review includes some well-known models and some unknown brands, but not others — a decision process that can largely be chalked up to which companies provided review models. If you're

looking for additional coverage, I recommend The Verge's excellent 2013 roundup of smartwatches and wearables.

At press time, WWDC has come and gone without an Apple iWatch, but some are predicting it'll be announced sometime before October. Personally, having heard dozens of rumors to this effect, I'll believe it when I see it… but I'll have some thoughts later on what it should look like.

What, Exactly, Is a Smartwatch? — This is the question that's bedeviling the smartwatch market as the various watches compete to be the first computer you wear. But certain features jump out as being the obvious things you want a smartwatch to be.

A smartwatch shows you useful information. MetaWatch uses "the art of the glance" as their marketing tagline, and I think they've summed it up perfectly. A watch is an always-on tiny display that's available in a second or less; flick your wrist to get your shirt cuff out of the way, and any watch will tell you the date and time, while also acting as a signaling mechanism to those around you about your fashion style.

Every smartwatch aims to provide you with more than just the date and time, but the crucial question is how each decides what information to show you. The smartest models use the iOS or Android notification system to pick what data is relevant, by replacing a standard watch face with a notification display that varies based on the type of notification coming in. Others require you to tap, swipe, or push buttons to get from one display to the next — which works fine in a situation where you're able to fiddle with your toys, but not so much when you just want to know why your wrist is buzzing.

Unfortunately, one area where all smartwatches fall short is in their target markets. Smartwatches are large and clunky compared to the overall watch market, which means that, as Andy Ihnatko pointed out during a Q&A podcast, there simply isn't a model that's suitable for women to wear. Or at least, considering that all of the models under review feel a bit big by my (male, average-wrist-sized) standards, a woman would have to be even less fashion-conscious than I am in order to wear one of these. Until someone comes up with a smartwatch sized for women — and I'll suggest how that might be possible later — keep in mind that I'm using guy-type parameters when I say that a smartwatch feels normal or big and clunky.

A smartwatch provides a control surface. This is where smartwatches struggle most — that is, among those watches that attempt it at all. Nearly all smartwatches use low-power Bluetooth LE to communicate with your iPhone or Android phone, and let you communicate and control your phone with some combination of button-pushing, tapping, and swiping.

All of this happens on a screen that is, on a generously sized smartwatch, 50 millimeters (2 inches) or less across. You know that feeling of claustrophobia you can get when switching from an iPad to an iPhone? That happens in

spades when using a smartwatch, where a huge screen is 240 pixels square. Putting that in iPhone terms, that's 1/13th the real estate on your iPhone 5. The Pebble's 144-by-168 pixel screen is black-and-white and has a display area of 24,192 pixels, which is about 1/8th the resolution of the 128K Mac from 1984 (512 by 342, or 175,104 pixels).

In other words, forget about using a tappable touchscreen as a smartwatch control interface; the ones that do are virtually unusable by any sentient race whose fingers don't taper to a fine point. Which means the current generation of smartwatches are defined by how well their software is designed to use buttons and maybe swipes (rather than taps) to navigate their features. This is hard enough for the mere function of deciding which information to display — it's even more fiddly and difficult when it comes to iPhone control.

A smartwatch is a watch. Not to discourage the manufacturers of smartwatches out there, but speaking as an early adopter who has eagerly taken possession of several smartwatches with the feeling of a kid at Christmas: I bought my first cell phone in the mid-1990s, and haven't worn a regular watch since. My computers and gadgets sync with cellular networks and atomic clocks to tell me the exact time — why would I want to have one more device that simply duplicates that function?

A smartwatch has to be useful enough to get me back in the habit of wearing any watch. (And useful enough to overcome its price, which ranges from "probably not an impulse buy" to "you gotta be kidding me.") And while I've already mentioned that my own fashion standards are a low bar to hurdle — does it go well with a T-shirt and jeans? — other potential purchasers are not so forgiving of what they'll put on their wrists.

On to the reviews, where I've roughly ordered the contenders in least-to-most "smart," which is absolutely not to say least-to-most "good." Nearly every smartwatch in this review suffers from being too clever by half for at least some of its features, and would have been improved by having fewer features and more focus.

The Cookoo — Made by ConnecteDevice, The Cookoo is an analog watch with a grouping of fixed LCD indicators underneath the watch face. "Fixed" means that there's no display, per se; instead, there are a half-dozen icons that turn on to tell you that there is a notification on your iPhone. You then have to use your phone to actually see what it is. Thanks to the lack of a display, the Cookoo has one clear design win — it runs entirely off two built-in watch batteries, and has no need to recharge. The Cookoo lists for $129 in the company's online store, with the exception of the "limited edition" $249 watch that differs only by being green.

The Cookoo specifications say that the watch diameter is 44 millimeters (1.73 inches), which feels about right, and 16 millimeters thick (0.63 inches), which feels too thick. Perhaps it's due to the limited functionality of the watch face, but a thinner case would be apropos here.

The watch connects via Bluetooth to a Cookoo app on the iPhone, where you can set preferences for which notifications appear on the watch, and theoretically update the watch's firmware. ("Theoretically" because this function failed when I paired the watch, and I can't figure out how to try it again.) The pairing operation is driven by the app and is even attractive, allowing initial setup without mucking about in Bluetooth settings.

That said, I have difficulty understanding who would be interested in Cookoo-style notifications. The amount of information that appears on the watch is not much greater than what the phone itself provides when it vibrates in your pocket; yes, you can tell the difference between a text message and a Facebook notification, but not the difference between an important email and any other that's come in over the transom. The out-of-range alert goes off whenever you deliberately turn off Bluetooth or leave your phone behind. So when I first tried out the Cookoo with an earlier version of the connection software, I was distracted by near-constant buzzing on my wrist; now it's possible to turn off the buzzing, but only by turning off entire categories, such as email alerts. There's a missing killer feature here — the capability to pass along notifications only from VIP lists rather than just anyone, which would make the Cookoo's indicator icons substantially more useful.

Likewise, the Cookoo falls short in what it can tell the iPhone to do. A command button can be configured in the app, according to the documentation, to find a misplaced iPhone or check in to Facebook — but perhaps due to my upgrade woes, I couldn't use this feature. I was able to take a picture remotely from my watch, but as that requires setting up the Cookoo app in advance and positioning the iPhone's camera, it seems better done with a dedicated photo app.

So I'm confused whom the Cookoo is supposed to be for. It's not smart or customizable enough for the technophile, who will receive far too many notifications to make the Cookoo's display useful. It might be useful for the kind of person who has few notifications and frequently doesn't

carry his phone — provided he stays within Bluetooth range of it. Perhaps that's why the Cookoo video of the kindly but forgetful grandpa is the strongest association I have with this watch, because it seems most useful for people who receive almost no notifications. And then why have a smartwatch at all?

Martian Watches — Martian's line of Voice Command watches includes three models ranging from $249 to $299, all of which combine analog watch face, an LED notification window, and a two-way wrist radio — or at least, that Dick Tracy description is the first thing that comes to mind when using the built-in microphone and speaker. I reviewed the $299 Passport, the dressiest of the three watches; also available is the $299 Victory, which replaces the Passport's square face with a round one, and the $249 G2G, which retains the square face but comes in a range of bubblegum colors.

The Martian uses a built-in watch battery to power the analog watch, but needs to be recharged over micro USB to keep the smart notifier and Voice Command features working. The micro USB slot has a cover that feels a bit flimsy but has survived testing without breaking off. Compared to the "smarter" watches, it's nice that the core watch functions continue to work (with the correct time displayed) even when you forget a recharge.

The Martian is paired to the iPhone under Settings > Bluetooth, and then configured with the Martian app. The app allows choosing which notifications are sent to the watch, but from a limited list: Facebook, Twitter, Calendar, Reminders, and one email account. I use Google Voice

instead of Messages, so I couldn't test whether iMessages are included in the always-on SMS notification, and likewise I can't receive unsupported Google Voice SMS notifications. These limitations might be circumvented with some clever IFTTT automation actions (see "IFTTT Automates the Internet Now, but What Comes Next?," 20 December 2013), but as with the Cookoo, the lack of more notification control is jarring.

The bottom-left button brings up an in-watch display showing current settings, a world clock (or local date, omitted from the analog watch), and the current temperature. A double-press displays a menu for changing some of the watch's settings, or using the watch as a remote camera shutter button. (Which presents an iPhone request for permission every time, so it's not exactly hands-free.)

The top-left button invokes the Voice Command feature: press it, and the watch's microphone connects you directly to Siri. In quiet environments, this works about as well as Siri usually does, but without the usual visual feedback. The button can also be used to pick up a call through the watch, like any Bluetooth headset. This has been more problematic, as more than once I've had an incoming call transferred to the watch when I'm trying to use the handset.

The Voice Command feature is clever, but I find it a bit too clever; how often are you in a quiet environment where you'd prefer to use the watch's speaker and mic, rather than the excellent ones built into an iPhone? Martian suggests this is useful for "quick phone calls while jogging," (now there's a mental image!) but for people who feel like I do, the company has come out with a range of $129 Notifier watches that omit voice control entirely. I prefer the looks of the Passport over the Notifier, but all in all, I think dropping the voice feature will make for a better smartwatch.

MetaWatch — The MetaWatch is the smartwatch that's currently the also-ran in the race against the Pebble; it's also the only smartwatch aside from the Pebble that I've ever seen worn out in the wild. It includes a display that's — brace for it — 96 by 96 pixels, which would need a magnifying glass to be seen on a Retina screen, but which doesn't look too clunky thanks to good use of fonts and screen positioning.

The MetaWatch syncs via Bluetooth to an app on the iPhone, which is a quick proposition — and that's a good thing, since I had to resync to the iPhone every time the battery ran out or the MetaWatch came off a recharge. Recharging needs to happen only every two or three days, but it requires a dongle that connects to micro USB and then literally clamps onto the front and back of the watch. It works, but it's one more dongle I fear losing.

The good news about MetaWatch is its clever design for selecting and displaying apps. It has four virtual screens divided into a 2x2 grid, which you set up on your iPhone. Apps for the watch, called widgets, are 1x1, 1x2, 2x1, or 2x2, so you can mix and match them so long as they'll fit into the 2x2 square. I have my MetaWatch set up with a full-screen watch on the first screen; time-weather-iPhone battery on the second; full-screen calendar on the third; and full-screen weather on the fourth.

When notifications come in, they take over the screen briefly and display relevant parts of the message in a font ranging from small to tiny; despite the inherent limitations of the display, the screens are readable with either ambient light or the built-in LED. One oddity, though, is that black pixels pressed against the glass can cause a mirror effect, which gives the MetaWatch a unique look when glanced at from angle. A welcome controller in the MetaWatch app controls which apps can send notifications to the watch, so you have fine control over what appears on your wrist.

The other good news is that the MetaWatch ships with a lengthy list of widgets, which includes sports and stocks alongside the ones I mentioned earlier. The bad news is that there's no app store and limited availability of new widgets; for example, MetaWatch pushed a widget with NBA scores during the playoffs, but nothing for World Cup

results. You also can't choose from a wide variety of watch faces as you can on the Pebble.

That said, the MetaWatch includes enough functionality to be useful, and I'm hard-pressed to think of what other widgets I'd add if I had them — which is why I'd like to see an app store of widgets to give me better ideas.

The MetaWatch is currently available from Best Buy or the MetaWatch online store. Prices range from $179 to $299, although Best Buy has them advertised from $79 to $99. The online store has switched from being out of stock to linking directly to Best Buy, which might presage the release of the forthcoming MetaWatch 2 with a higher quality screen, which was demoed at CES in January 2014.

i'm Watch — The i'm Watch from Italian company i'm S.p.A. made a major splash at the 2013 International CES; this splash may or may not have been coincidental with the fact that they gave away a pile of $389 watches to anyone who attended the press briefing. A year later, the price of an i'm Watch is now $349 (or $1,199 if you want the titanium-band version), but they're not generating much press. This may because other reviewers discovered the same thing I did — it was impossible, in the 2013 version, to make it useful.

At first glance, the watch is gorgeous. It's machined as well as an Apple device, and the silicone strap is perfectly functional and attractive. It's almost comically big at 52.9 mm by 40.6 mm (2.08 by 1.6 inches), hosting a 240-by-240-pixel Android screen at 220 ppi. A USB recharging cable ingeniously charges the watch through its audio jack. A bunch of apps are included on the watch, and more are available through an online market. If you have four minutes to kill, watch this marketing video to get an idea of why this product seemed, at first, like smartwatch manna from heaven.
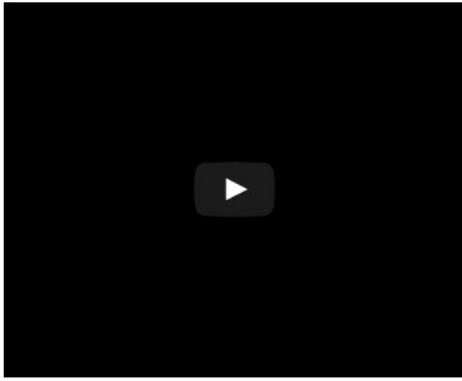

The first time you start to realize there might be a problem is when you try to use an i'm Watch's "watch" feature, because it requires a two-handed gesture to turn on the screen. It'll be turned off most of the time to conserve battery. Once you can see it, the default display shows the time and temperature, and three default buttons that cannot be changed provide access to phone, email, and contacts. Scroll left for four more pre-selected apps, or right for the complete list. However, none of these apps can be set up within the watch; instead, you log into the i'm Cloud Web site to create your settings. The i'm Watch can fetch your contacts from your iPhone, but that's where the integration stops. If you want to see your email or calendar, you have to sync it with one, and only one, Gmail account.

It doesn't pair with an iPhone, but rather uses Internet tethering over Bluetooth for its functionality. This drains the iPhone battery faster than Bluetooth pairing, but as the i'm Watch itself needs to be recharged twice a day with moderate use, you'll have plenty of time to recharge your iPhone at the same time.

The i'm Watch has Facebook and Twitter integration, but I turned these services off quickly because while I'm happy to see a dozen notifications on my iPhone, they're less useful two at a time on the i'm Watch. Then there's the problem that you can't reply or do anything with them. Likewise with i'm Mail, although there you can read (short, text-only) email messages in a much more reasonable small font. But you can't read much in the News app, which displays only headlines. The Weather app can display temperatures for only three cities, and only the first city appears on the home screen; there's no "current location" option, and if you want to change the home screen city, you have to manually delete it in another setting or it'll show up twice.

In the i'm Watch's favor, I did make this note: "In a few years with improved software, this could be a really excellent gizmo." Unfortunately, I don't see anything in anything. Most importantly, watch this video closely to see how difficult it is to set up and use an Android device on a tiny screen. The i'm Watch is an impressive feat of engineering, but unfortunately it resulted in a substandard product that even early adopters will find frustrating and limited.

The Winners — As I said earlier, men have several winning options right now, but women have to be more circumspect. The Pebble and the MetaWatch are neck-and-neck at press time by being what most people expect a smartwatch to be, and with divergent approaches to design that give them distinct strengths and weaknesses. I expect the MetaWatch to move forward shortly on some fronts with the forthcoming release of their newer, higher-resolution models, but Pebble to stay ahead with the diversity of its app selection. In a head-to-head competition, either could be chosen as a matter of personal preference.

The dark horse contender winning its own race is the Martian, which is the only model I've seen, let alone reviewed, that contends as a "dress smartwatch." When not providing a notification, its LED screen mostly disappears into the bezel, and even in "smart" mode it's quick and unobtrusive. A Pebble or MetaWatch is still a computer on your wrist, however fancy its housing. A Martian is a nice watch. Points can be given to the Withings Activité for also looking nice, but it contains only biometric sensors and doesn't actually have any smartwatch functionality.

The Ideal Smartwatch — Since everyone else, including The Verge, seems to be doing it, I'm going to go out on a limb and suggest what I think the ideal smartwatch would be. And yes, I'm going to try to think in terms of what Apple would do, if the company decides to get into this crazy business. But I'll be happy to see any smartwatch manufacturer get there.

First, the Ideal Smartwatch would have a high-resolution color screen. This is rather ironic considering that the only watches that do this now are Android, and based on the ones I have plus the reviews I've seen of the ones I haven't covered, all of them stink. That's because every Android smartwatch fails to reconfigure for sane inputs, no matter how nice their displays are. I expect this to improve when the first generation of Android Wear smartwatches hits the market — but while their demos are pretty, the rubber won't hit the road until they're in general use. Initial reviews of the bleeding-edge releases — the LG G and the Samsung Gear Live — put them in the same category as the i'm Watch for bulky hardware and short battery life. Wrist-top Google Now, however, is a potential breakout feature for upcoming hardware.

A back-of-the-napkin calculation of "Retina-ish" displays says that you could get a 1024-by-768 display on a men's watch without making it the size of brick, and might even be able to get away with a 640-by-480 women's watch.

This already pushes the ideal watch past the 2014 time horizon, presuming that you don't want to spend $300 or more for one. Reasonably priced smartwatches today have black-and-white screens for good reason. Maybe Apple has a supplier chain that would allow them to get tiny color displays cheaper than anyone else; even if that's so, since when has Apple competed on price?

Second, we need a revolutionary input mechanism. The Verge's mockup uses the bezel dial as a scroller, which just strikes me as being a different kind of fiddly from "which button do I press to do what?" The Garmin Forerunner 410 GPS watch used a touch bezel that was generally disliked; the company dropped it in the next generation, relying instead on screen taps and physical buttons.

What's the easiest thing to do on a watch? Tap its face. (Which is in part what Garmin did with the current Garmin Forerunner 620, in fact.) Give me a smartwatch where a single tap brings up a user-selected favorite app. If you want to get fancy, divide the face into halves, thirds, or quadrants — but no more — to bring up a range of apps, which you might indicate on the screen with favicon-sized reminder icons. A double-tap switches to a voice interface — built into the watch, not using a patch to the phone — that understands maybe 50 words, all of which launch individual functions.

I don't care how many buttons or dials you have on your watch, nothing is as simple as "[tap] [tap] tomorrow" for a calendar, or "[tap] [tap] weather." If an app needs Siri to work, such as "[tap] [tap] phone," it can be activated and Bluetooth-connected after the built-in voice recognition does its job. (This, incidentally, is where Android Wear may have gone one better, as saying "OK Google" to a watch is even easier than tapping. But I think I prefer my tactile method until I'm convinced I won't have to repeat it four times to get it to listen.)

Third, we need the price point. The R&D and manufacture of what I've just listed could easily result in a $500 watch, which might sail off into oblivion due to the tiny market of early adopters willing to buy one. But it might not.

Whoever pulls off the first Ideal Smartwatch needs to adopt Apple's pricing strategy. The first iPhone cost $700; now you can get one (albeit, not the best one) free with a two-year contract. I think $500 for a first-generation Ideal Smartwatch is sane in a way that $1,500 for the first-generation Google Glass was not; let it be an early adopter, premium gadget that only a few people purchase, so long as the same model is cheaper a year or two later.
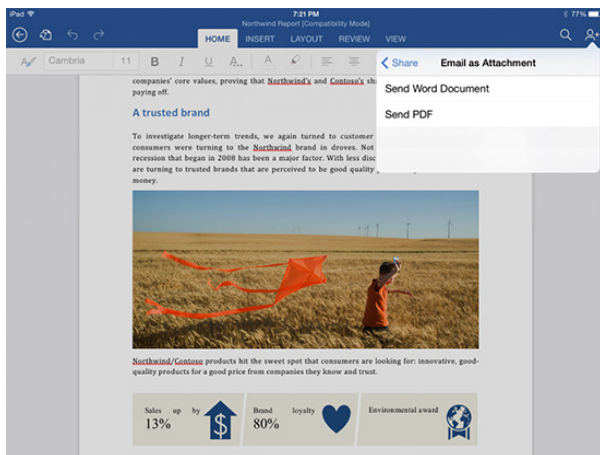
Meanwhile, I'll be happy to see Pebble, MetaWatch, and Martian scrap it out in the $100 to $400 range with their different designs and solutions. I hope that by the time the Ideal Smartwatch manufacturer is competing with them on price, these three have improved their designs to be feature-competitive — or at least refined their designs to be exactly what your smartwatch should be.⌂
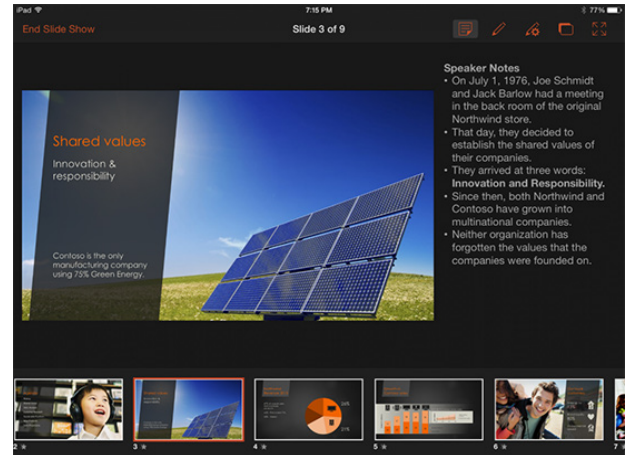
by Julio Ojeda-Zapata

Microsoft Addresses Notable Complaints with Office for iPad Update

Microsoft Office for the iPad, released four months ago to generally positive reviews (including mine, see "Office for iPad: A Deep Look," 3 April 2014), but lacking obvious and important features, has received a solid round of upgrades.

New features in all three of the suite's apps – Word, Excel, and PowerPoint – include export to PDF, support for third-party fonts, and an image-cropping tool with a reset control. PDF exporting is available even to those without an Office 365 subscription, which is required for most Office for iPad functions.

The other updates focus on Excel and PowerPoint. Excel for iPad gains pivot tables, a flicking gesture for selecting data across a row or column, support for external keyboards, and augmented printing options.

PowerPoint for iPad has added a Presenter View for seeing and editing notes, previewing the next slide, and jumping to other slides, all while running the presentation. The app also lets you play video or audio during a presentation, insert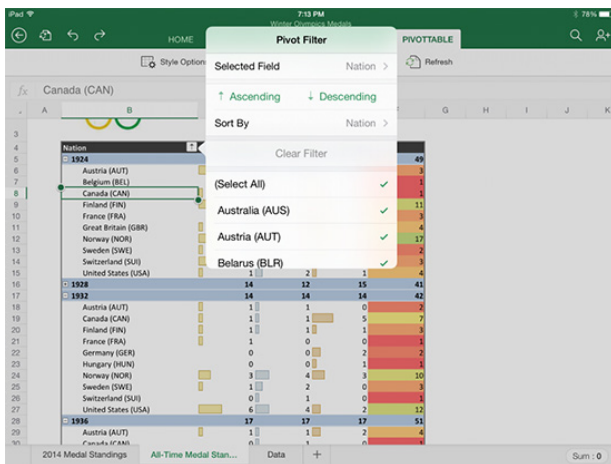 videos from the Camera Roll, add and edit hyperlinks, and use new pen and eraser settings for making and removing annotations during a presentation.

Microsoft earlier addressed one other major shortcoming, by adding printing support, so with this update the company has filled in the biggest holes in the Office apps.

I previously noted other, less-critical shortcomings in Office for iPad, and these remain, for the most part. They include the lack of access to the camera from within any of the apps, no Open In feature for handing content off to non-Microsoft apps; and document sharing that's limited to email (as a link or attachment).

I don't expect Microsoft to offer any Web-based file sharing and backup options other than its own OneDrive (previously known as SkyDrive). Apple and Google favor their own such services over independent services like Dropbox as well, so this is hardly a shocker.

Microsoft has also released updates to iOS and OS X versions of OneNote, the free note-organizing app that is offered separately but has an identical look and feel to its Office cousins and is, for all intents and purposes, an Office app.

The OneNote updates include access to OneDrive for Business and Office 365 notebooks; unlocking of password-protected content created in OneNote for Windows; inserting of attachments, including PDFs; improved note organizing, including rearranging; and copy-and-paste improvements. OneNote for Mac also makes it possible to send notes in the bodies of email messages, rather than just as PDF attachments.

But OneNote still has a long way to go before it will tempt me into defecting from my note-keeping standby, Evernote, as I concluded in "Microsoft's OneNote takes on Evernote" (6 May 2014).

by Josh Centers

Search in Private with DuckDuckGo

Of the unexpected announcements at this year's Worldwide Developer Conference keynote, one in particular stuck out for me: in iOS 8 and OS X Yosemite, Apple will offer DuckDuckGo as a search engine option in Safari.

This has been near the top of my own Apple wish list for years, so much so that I even sent Tim Cook email about it. (Clearly, this announcement is the direct result of my suggestion.) In the past, the only way to use DuckDuckGo with Safari was to install the DuckDuckGo Safari extension on the Mac or to use the DuckDuckGo app on iOS.

But let's rewind a bit. Just what is DuckDuckGo?

DuckDuckWhat? — Founded in 2008 by Gabriel Weinberg, DuckDuckGo is an Internet search engine, and alongside Bing, is one of Google's few remaining competitors (Yahoo now uses Bing for its search engine). The more technical of you might be interested to know that the DuckDuckGo search engine is written in Perl, a programming language that has largely fallen out of favor with coders, but is tough to beat for text manipulation (most of the TidBITS site is powered by Perl).

As for the silly name, it's a takeoff on the kid's game Duck, Duck, Goose, but Weinberg said, "Really it just popped in my head one day and I just liked it. It is certainly influenced/derived from Duck, Duck, Goose, but other than that there is no relation, e.g. a metaphor."

DuckDuckGo is the mom-and-pop shop of search engines. While Google has 49,000 employees, DuckDuckGo has 10, and until 2011, Weinberg was running the whole show. And as you'll see, DuckDuckGo is used far, far less than Google or even Bing.

For years, DuckDuckGo was about as bare bones as a 21-century search engine could be, but that changed with a redesign this year, which brought a fresher look, image search, image and video previews, and many of the other amenities offered by Google and Bing.

So other than hipster cred, why would someone use such a tiny little search engine? In a word: privacy.
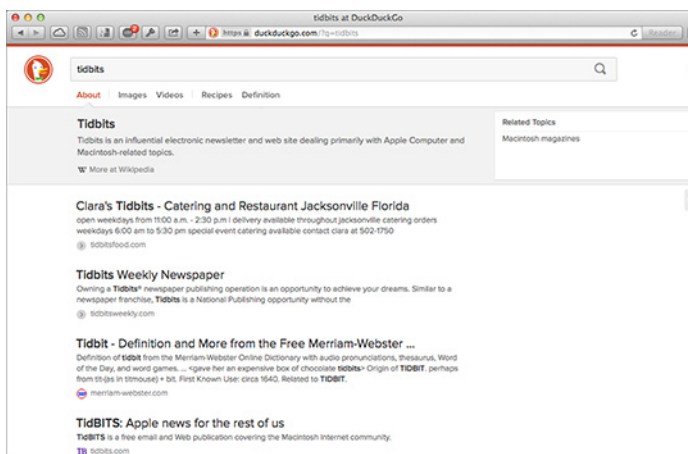
DuckDuckSecret — You might think of Google as a search engine company, or a cloud service company, or a mobile operating system company, but in reality, those efforts are all designed to funnel into Google's real business: displaying advertising.
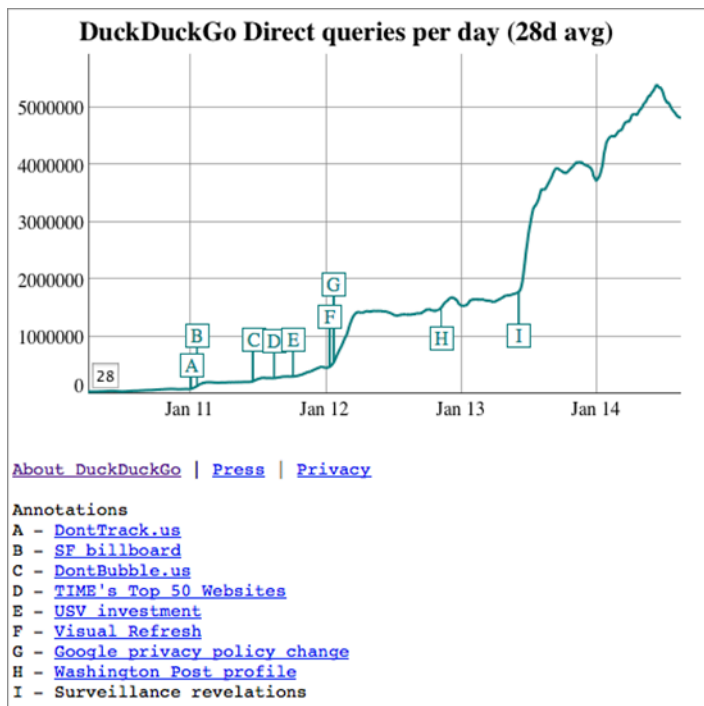
The vast majority of Google's revenue comes from advertising (Google earned $15.96 billion in Q2 2014 alone, almost all from advertising). Advertisers rely on Google because it provides highly granular targeting of ads, to ensure that only the most interested potential customers see them. To accomplish that, Google gathers as much data as possible… about you. As much as Google is working to provide you with compelling services, the company is also packaging you up to sell to advertisers: to Google, you're both customer and product.

Conversely, DuckDuckGo's slogan is, "The search engine that doesn't track you." It has the simplest privacy policy in tech, written in plain English: "DuckDuckGo does not collect or share personal information."

What exactly does that mean? First of all, unlike most search engines, DuckDuckGo tries to prevent Web administrators from seeing the search terms that brought you to their Web sites. That may be valuable to administrators for search engine optimization, but it comes at the cost of your privacy. (Of course, publishers also use it to determine what readers are searching for on their sites so they can better meet demand.) Also, unlike other search engines, DuckDuckGo doesn't store a log of searches, nor does it employ tracking cookies, unless you want certain settings saved across sessions, and even then the cookie doesn't contain personal information.

DuckDuckGo's commitment to privacy was once seen as kooky, but it's now paying off. After Edward Snowden's initial June 2013 revelations about NSA mass surveillance, use of DuckDuckGo has skyrocketed, relatively speaking, with direct traffic jumping from 1.75 million searches per day before Snowden to nearly 4 million searches per day within a few months. Today, DuckDuckGo serves nearly 5 million direct searches per day, which worked out to 159 million direct searches in June 2014. When you include API searches and bots, DuckDuckGo's June 2014 search traffic topped 617 million searches. That's still vanishingly small compared to Google (which handled over 12 billion searches in the same month) and even Bing (3.4 billion searches during that time), but it proves that there is a demand for privacy, even if it is a niche desire.

DuckDuckGo Direct queries per day (28d avg)

About DuckDuckGo | Press | Privacy

Annotations
A – DontTrack.us
B – SF billboard
C – DontBubble.us
D – TIME's Top 50 Websites
E – USV investment
F – Visual Refresh
G – Google privacy policy change
H – Washington Post profile
I – Surveillance revelations

Why wouldn't you want a more private search engine? Because you trade privacy for better search results.

DuckDuckDownsides — Google collects ridiculous amounts of data in order to connect you to the content you want and advertisers to you (and theoretically you to the ads that are relevant to you as well). This practice is demonized by some, but I consider the relationship between the user and Google to be more symbiotic than parasitic.

Google search is an invaluable service provided at no cost to you, and you'd be hard pressed to find anyone outside Redmond who denies that Google has the best search engine available. Part of the reason for Google's excellent search results is that Google collects your preferences and usually can predict what you want.

DuckDuckGo does not do that, and its search results suffer. For instance, if I search for "TidBITS" on Google, this fine publication is the first result, because Google knows me well enough to understand that's what I want. DuckDuck-Go lacks that information, so we're number four there. That's a small example, but Google, thanks to Google News, is also much better at quickly gathering breaking news. When I see an event blowing up on Twitter, a quick Google search often pulls me into the loop. DuckDuckGo is more hit or miss.

Deciding between Google and DuckDuckGo comes down to whether you want better search results or more privacy. The choice is yours.

Fortunately, it doesn't have to be an either/or decision. DuckDuckGo provides powerful tools that enable you to search hundreds of other Web sites as well.

DuckDuckGo Tips and Tricks — Besides privacy, the other staple of DuckDuckGo is the "!bang" search. To search using another Web site or search engine, you append an exclamation mark and a text shortcut to a search.

Here's an example. Let's say I search DuckDuckGo for iPhone 6 but don't like the search results. I can add a !g to the end of that search, turning it into iPhone 6 !g, which sends the search to Google instead. Most !bangs are obvious, so if you wanted to search Google Images, you'd use !gi.

Here are the main !bangs I use on a regular basis:
• !g for Google
• !gi for Google Images
• !gn for Google News
• !yt for YouTube
• !a for Amazon

Those will get you started and are easy to remember, but there are thousands more in the full list. You can also search Apple's Web site, Ars Technica, Boing Boing, Best Buy, eBay, GitHub, Gmail, and just about any site you can think of (except TidBITS — I should submit us as a new !bang).

There are many other neat DuckDuckGo tricks, and I'm learning more all the time. For instance, searching for weather brings up a clean, minimalist forecast from Forecast.io (you need to set a region first from the DuckDuckGo home page). Search stopwatch to pull up a stopwatch app. Here's a cool one: type password 20 strong to generate a random, 20-character password. There are some other handy tips at MakeUseOf, and here's a full list.

So What's the Point? — You may be thinking, "If DuckDuckGo's results aren't as good as Google's, then why bother?" For me, there are two reasons. First, even if I end up sending my searches back to Google half of the time, that's still half as much data as Google would have collected from me otherwise. Again, this is a tradeoff; in theory, my personalized search results at Google suffer a bit, but I retain control of some of my online privacy. Second, I've become addicted to the !bangs to search my most-used Web sites without needing any platform- or app-specific tools. Once you learn the DuckDuckGo !bangs you need, you'll be set, whether you're browsing on your iPad, iPhone, or Mac.

So why is Apple integrating DuckDuckGo into Safari? I think that's obvious — Apple and Google aren't exactly chummy these days, and Apple is looking to replace Google or offer alternatives in every possible way on its devices. I wouldn't be shocked to see Apple purchase DuckDuckGo or create its own internal search engine (much as it did with Maps), though there's nothing to indicate that Apple is considering such a move.

Even given Apple's cold war with Google, the integration of DuckDuckGo was a surprise. Just a few months ago, Daring Fireball's John Gruber implied that DuckDuckGo probably didn't have enough money to offer Apple in order to be integrated into Safari (sorry John, small bite of claim chowder, though I reluctantly agreed at the time). Frankly, I was surprised too, but adding DuckDuckGo makes perfect sense. It's a way for Apple to become less reliant on Google, it's a nice chip to back up Apple's claims of superior privacy, and it's yet another option for users — something Tim Cook's Apple seems happy to provide. ⍟

by Caroline Green

Macphun Tonality
Makes Black-and-White Photos Pop
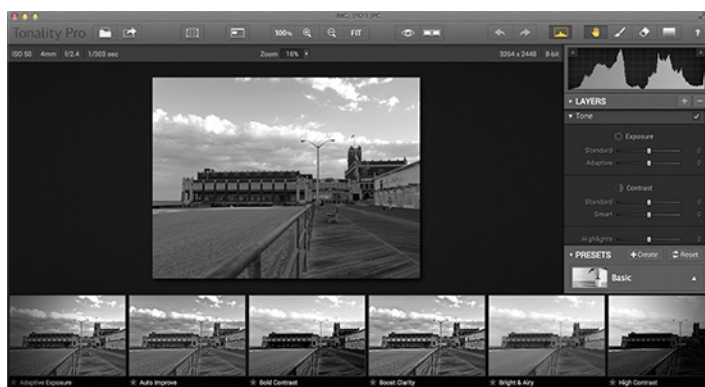
I'm an amateur photographer, with a love of classic photos of my city (New York) by artists such as Berenice Abbott, Rudy Burckhardt, Bruce Davidson, and Helen Levitt. I've worked on capturing buildings, street scenes, and portraits in my own neighborhood, much as they did, and sometimes I want my images to be in black and white, to convey the timelessness that I feel when I'm on my street.

Unfortunately the standard tools for photo manipulation — Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Lightroom, and Apple's soon-to-be-discontinued Aperture — are not really designed for editing black-and-white photography; their focus is on color photos. They don't offer the adjustments needed to turn an average black-and-white image into something spectacular.

Filling this void is the new Tonality from Macphun. It's $19.99 for the standard version or $69.99 for the Pro version; it requires OS X 10.9 Mavericks and at least 4 GB of RAM.
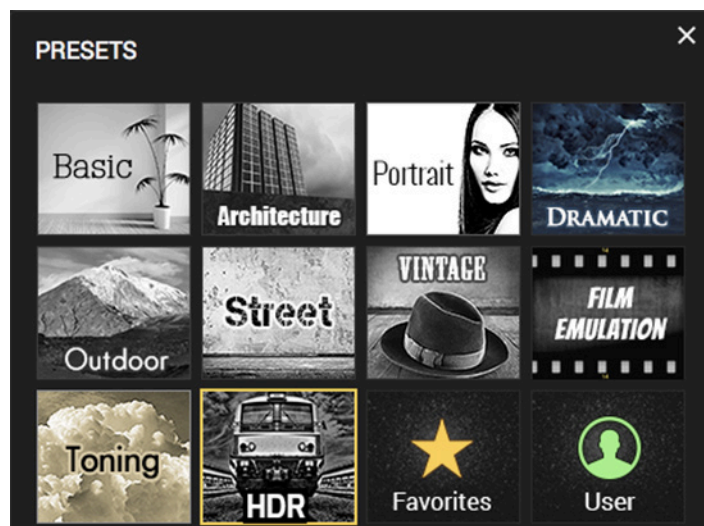
Developer Macphun has created a number of photo-editing apps over the years for both the Mac and iOS. You may know about their FX Photo Studio app for iPhone, iPad, and Mac; exclusive to the Mac they offer Intensify, Snapheal, and Focus 2. Their software is designed to appeal to the hobbyist as well as the professional photographer.

Tonality is also intended for both amateur photographers and professionals, and the look and layout were designed to be fairly intuitive for anyone accustomed to Photoshop or Lightroom. I use Lightroom, and the gray color palette plus the sliders along the right side of the window feel familiar.

For beginners, Tonality provides a number of presets that can give you some amazing effects with a single click. For example, the Vintage category offers presets for Civil War, Old and Faded, Tintype, and Wild West. The Portrait presets include Dark Beauty, Dreamy, and Old Hollywood Glamour.
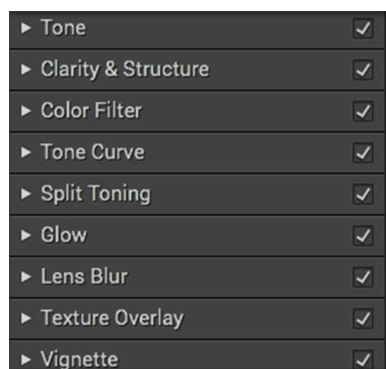

And along the bottom you can see a preview of what your photo will look like with that preset. There are 10 categories of presets, which can bring even a novice like me close to the look I want.

Whether you start from scratch or from an effect preset, you can then play with Tonality's various sliders to adjust the image further. The slider categories are Tone, Clarity, Structure, Color Filter, Tone Curve, Split Toning, Glow, Lens Blur, Texture Overlay (which lets you upload your own textures, or you can use the built-in ones), Vignette, Grain, Photo Frames, and Opacity. I found the number of sliders and options a little overwhelming, yet I can see how the endless combinations and minute adjustments would be of use to a professional photographer looking to achieve a very specific effect.

Like Photoshop, Tonality offers brushes that let you apply changes to only part of the image; a gradient tool that lets you apply graduated settings (although only in a straight line); and a histogram to show you the tonal gradations in your image. Also like Photoshop, you can combine multiple layers to create your image, apply different settings to different layers, and turn layers off and on. This is where things can really get interesting if you're inventive and/or do some planning.

If you build a series of settings that you want to use on multiple photos, or that you want to save for future use, you can create your own presets.

Tonality's sharing function works with all the usual suspects (Mail, Flickr, Facebook, Twitter) as well as SmugMug. After you've worked on an image, you can open it directly into the photography app of your choice, including iPhoto, Aperture, Photoshop, Lightroom, or any of the Macphun apps. You can of course also export it in a bunch of different formats, including JPEG, PNG, TIFF, PDF, and PSD.

What I've described above is the standard version of Tonality. For pros, or those who want to use Tonality as a plug-in within Photoshop, Lightroom, Elements, or Aperture, instead of as a standalone app, there's Tonality Pro, which costs $50 more. Along with being able to use it as a plug-in, Tonality Pro adds:
• More layering options
• More layers per image (8 versus 5)
• More histogram options
• The ability to edit color temperature and tint

Although I've been testing Tonality Pro, I'd be fine with the standard version, and you could easily start with the standard version and upgrade to Tonality Pro at a later date. The Lightroom plug-in is the most useful part of Tonality Pro for me since it lets me do all my editing in one app instead of two.

I found it easy to get started with Tonality, thanks to the presets. Here's the very first image I created with it: the original color photo I took (in Ocean Grove, New Jersey), the initial import into Tonality in black and white, and the finished photo after I played around with sliders and options. All done in maybe an hour.

I'm finding it harder to achieve a specific result that I already have in mind; that's going to require practice to get a better understanding of how the sliders and layers and masking can combine to create various effects.

I know I'm not the next Rudy Burckhardt, and yet in experimenting with Tonality I've created a few images that started out entirely average and are starting to look amazing (to my eye, anyway, and that's really all that counts). I'm going to keep playing with it, exploring its options, and using it for all my black-and-white editing, right alongside my color work in Lightroom and Photoshop.

[Caroline Green is a partner in IvanExpert, which offers Mac consulting and support for home users and small businesses in New York City.]

August Software Review

Digital Camera RAW Compatibility Update 5.06
Aug 7, 2014 – 7.3 MB

System Requirements
- OS X Mountain Lion 10.8.5 w/ iPhoto 9.4.3 or Aperture 3.4.5
- OS X Mavericks 10.9 w/ iPhoto 9.4.3 or Aperture 3.4.5

This update adds RAW image compatibility for the following cameras to Aperture 3 and iPhoto '11:
• Nikon COOLPIX P340
• Nikon 1 V3
• Olympus OM-D E-M10
• Olympus STYLUS 1
• Panasonic LUMIX DMC-GH4
• Sony Alpha ILCE-7S
• Sony Alpha ILCE-5000
• Sony Alpha ILCE-6000
• Sony Alpha SLT-A77 II
• Sony Cyber-shot DSC-RX100 III

Tunes 11.3.1
Aug 7, 2014 – 239.6 MB

System Requirements
- OS X 10.6.8 or later
- 400MB of available disk space
- iTunes in the Cloud, iTunes Match, and iTunes Radio availability may vary by country
- iTunes Radio requires OS X 10.7 or later
- iTunes Extras requires OS X 10.9.3 or later

iTunes 11.3.1 addresses a problem where subscribed podcasts may stop updating with new episodes and resolves an issue where iTunes may become unresponsive while browsing your podcasts episodes in a list.

Epson Printer Drivers 2.18 for OS X
Jul 31, 2014 – 1.19 GB

System Requirements
- OS X Mavericks 10.9 and later
- OS X Mountain Lion 10.8 and later
- OS X Lion 10.7 and later
- Mac OS X 10.6

This update installs the latest software for your EPSON printer or scanner for OS X Mavericks, OS X Mountain Lion, OS X Lion and Mac OS X v10.6 Snow Leopard. ♻

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Shiresmanstown, PA 17011

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