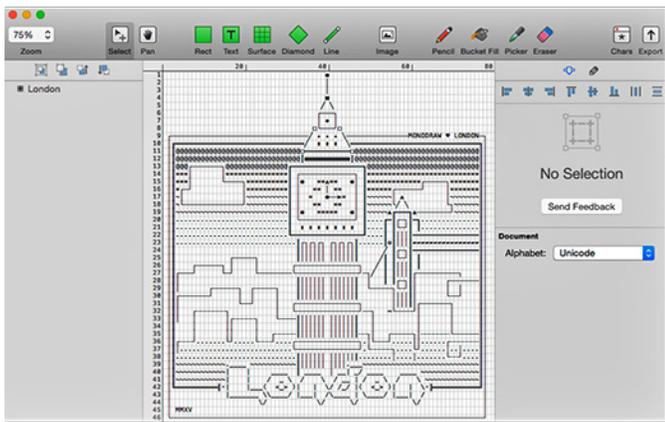


# printout

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

## Art Apps

Our meeting on February 16 will be focused on creating art.



Tom Owad will demonstrate Monodraw, an ASCII art editor for creating text-based art and banners.



And Eric Adams will demonstrate the Dreamscape app and show us how photos can be made to look like paintings with a number of interesting filters.

No need to bring an easel - It's all digital. We hope to see you there. 🍷

Meet us at

**Bethany Village Retirement Center**

Education Room

5225 Wilson Lane, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055

**Tuesday, February 16 2016 6:30 p.m.**

**Attendance is free and open to all interested persons.**



# Keystone MacCentral Minutes

## January 19, 2016

### Business Meeting

President Linda Cober brought the meeting to order and asked board members for their reports. Webmaster Thomas Bank II said he continues to update our Facebook page with any relevant news and links. Eric Adams asked members to give him any leads they may have on vendors who were not represented at last year's auction. He is preparing to send out emails to vendors for this April's auction. Someone mentioned that Evernote would be a worthwhile app.

### Q&A & Comments

Jim Carey mentioned Amazon Prime Music as a worthwhile part of the services included in an Amazon Prime subscription. Charles Palenz reported that his transition to El Capitan went smoothly but he thinks USB is handled a bit differently after the upgrade. After his Mac wakes from sleep, he sometimes get error messages stating that an external hard drive attached via a USB hub was not properly removed. Someone suggested that an older model USB hub could be causing that behavior and that a powered USB hub might not have the same issue.

Don Fortnum was leery of losing important files after updating to El Capitan. Members did not think that would be a problem. It is always best to have backups. Jim Carey recommended downloading any OS X updates even if you don't intend on installing them right away. They might later become unavailable from Apple when the latest operating system is released.

We talked about batteries in newer iMacs. An online search revealed that they do have a battery inside to preserve PRAM and clock information. They should last for a number of years. The ifixit web site has tutorials with pictures on how to replace the battery in an iMac. Dennis McMahon provided the following link: <https://www.ifixit.com/Guide/iMac+Intel+20-Inch+EM-C+2133+and+2210+PRAM+Battery+Replacement/994>

We also looked at saving open tabs in Safari using an option in the Bookmarks menu. Gary Brandt mentioned a problem with his 2009 era iMac not recognizing a Fitbit

device via Bluetooth. Eric Adams suggested resetting the SMC by shutting down the iMac, unplugging the power cord, waiting 15 seconds before reattaching the power cord, and then waiting an additional 5 seconds before turning power to the iMac back on. You can reach additional Bluetooth options in newer Macs by holding down the Shift and Option keys when accessing the Bluetooth menu. You can try removing all Bluetooth devices if you have other input options available before setting those devices back up.

An iCloud subscription can be purchased using your iTunes account. You might be able to find periodic discount offers for iTunes gift cards.

### Program Notes

Our January program consisted of some video learning. The first video was a David A. Cox video on some features of El Capitan. You might want to search for David's videos on YouTube. He has many good ones. You will need to install El Capitan if you want to use third party plugins with the Photos app. There were not many released at the time the video was filmed but there should be more available now.

David mentioned that the Mail app has been updated to integrate better with the Calendar app. The Spotlight search window can now be moved to where you want it onscreen. Spotlight can retrieve information when a natural language question is posed, such as "what is the Phillies score".

The new Split Screen mode was demonstrated in the video, with two open apps sharing screen space. Safari has an option to pin tabs and audio buttons to mute one tab or all tabs in Safari.

Notes has some new features, including a folder structure. You can use check boxes in Notes as well as new formatting options. Calendar can communicate with Apple Maps. YouTube videos will have an AirPlay button to send them to an Apple TV.

El Capitan has an option to show or hide the menubar. Several apps offer the capability of highlighting a flight number to display information for that flight.

We next watched a video featuring Nancy Muir, author of the iPad for Seniors for Dummies book, who demonstrated

some of the iPad's features. We followed that with a video detailing the top five reasons to get an iPad Pro. The iPad Pro comes with four speakers and improved audio output. Its light weight and capabilities might convince you that it could replace a laptop. There are some cool accessories available for the iPad Pro.

For comic relief, we watched a video from the Ellen show featuring Simon Pierro, a magician who does magic tricks with an iPad. The next video from DarGadgetZ was a review of the new Apple TV. The presenter really praised the controller. He said that there were more apps for the Apple TV than other similar platforms. Image quality is optimized. You can use built-in Siri voice recognition to perform several commands including showing captions. The reviewer did not like the layout of the onscreen keyboard at all and said it might take some time to get the Apple TV set up.

The last video we watched related to the previous one. It was titled How To Kill Your Cable Bill, in which David A. Cox reviewed devices and services that might allow you to do just that. If you have an HDTV, you might want to try The Leaf, a small antenna for local station reception. There are a number of online services worth investigating. For about eight dollars per month, a Hulu Plus subscription lets you subscribe to individual TV shows. David suggested signing up for a free trial of Hulu Plus. He provided a link ([tinyurl.com/huluviapco](http://tinyurl.com/huluviapco)) for a two week free trial offer. For about the same price, a Netflix subscription lets you watch movies and selected TV shows online. Of course, if you have a Mac, iPad, or iPhone you will want to check out the Apple TV. A Mac Mini might be another option for sending content to a TV set. Others would be the Roku 3 or Chromecast dongle. If you are only interested in one or two shows from a premium cable network, you might want to try an option that could be cost effective for you. The iTunes store offers selected premium series to be purchased with a monthly pass. 🍷

by Glenn Fleishman

## Alternatives to Apple's Wi-Fi Base Stations

As the author of "[Take Control of Your Apple Wi-Fi Network](#)", you might think that I'd be biased in favor of the fruit company's products. Yes and no! For Mac and iOS users who need access to specific features and want the simplicity of configuring a base station through native software for both OS X and iOS, or who want to extend a network wirelessly, Apple's long-in-the-tooth lineup remains the right choice, though it's currently overpriced for what it delivers.

If you don't need specific AirPort-only features and are willing to brave Web-based router administration and a steeper learning curve, you have a couple of alternatives that cost substantially less and offer capabilities Apple doesn't include and likely never will.

**The Apple Advantage** — Apple was one of the first companies to incorporate advanced features into its consumer-oriented 802.11n base stations, which have evolved into the current 802.11ac models. (That's 802.11ac wave 1, which I'll explain further below.) Apple's base stations offered relatively affordable simultaneous dual-band networking — data flowing over 2.4 GHz and 5 GHz at the same time — with access controls, radio and channel choices, guest networking, USB printer sharing, hard drive sharing (except the AirPort Express), dedicated backup storage (Time Capsule), and music streaming (only on the AirPort Express).

But those advantages are in the distant past — most of these previously innovative features date to 2009 for the AirPort Extreme and Time Capsule and 2012 for the AirPort Express. Especially with the AirPort Extreme and Time

Capsule models, which have had an identical tall "cracker box" form factor since their update in 2013, subsequent improvements have been solely in radio systems, with additional antennas and the move up to 802.11ac wave 1. But that's not unusual — nearly every base station you can find has similar radio systems.

The AirPort Express is even further behind the curve. Last updated in 2012, it remains stuck with 802.11n and 10/100 Mbps networking, two Ethernet ports (one dedicated to a wide-area networking — WAN — or broadband connection), and no hard drive or multiple USB printer support. It uniquely sports an audio output (for analog and digital connections) that enables AirPlay streaming. (That audio-only output option was removed from the fourth-generation Apple TV.)

In contrast, the AirPort Extreme and Time Capsule have three switched LAN and one WAN gigabit Ethernet ports, and can handle multiple printers and hard drives, although even their USB ports remain USB 2, rather than the ubiquitous and 10x faster USB 3 standard.

So why pick an AirPort Extreme, Time Capsule, or AirPort Express, given how long it has been since Apple has paid them much attention?

- AirPort Utility remains a relatively friendly and easy way to configure one or more base stations. It runs only in OS X and iOS. (The Windows version hasn't been updated in several years.)
- Plugging one or more printers into a base station via USB makes them available to OS X machines. (If a printer

supports AirPrint, you don't need to plug it in to the base station; in fact, doing so disables AirPrint, according to Apple.)

- You want to use AirPlay to stream music through the audio port on an AirPort Express. AirPlay isn't found in many third-party receivers or other devices. (A [refurbished](#) third-generation Apple TV can be a better deal, though.)
- Apple's implementation of extending a network via wireless base station connections — using Wireless Distribution System (WDS) — can work well, but it's reliable only among Apple's own devices. (I switched to an Ethernet backbone in my house years ago due to earlier WDS issues, but I know many people who use it, especially when stringing Ethernet is impossible or they're renting and can't put holes in the wall.)
- You want to use Back to My Mac to modify or check a base station's status or to access attached USB drives.

• Apple is easy to work with for warranty repair and replacement, and some base stations models were problematic enough that people were able to get free replacements years later. Apple includes base stations as a warrantied accessory when you purchase an AppleCare extended service agreement for a Mac: any base station purchased up to 2 years before the Mac's date of sale, or bought during the 3 years of AppleCare, is covered till the end of the AppleCare term.

While the term "Apple tax" is often used to ridicule people who prefer a product that works well and costs more to one that is cheap and bad, in the case of Apple's base stations you're not getting what you pay for unless one or more of the above factors is important.

**Picking an Alternative** — In the past, non-Apple routers suffered from a lack of OS X-compatible drivers and options for services like USB printer and hard drive sharing. Some routers required you to download and run a Windows app to update firmware. Others relied on Java or even Internet Explorer. Most of that nonsense has disappeared, and simple browser-based administration is generally effective. I have seen a few situations where Safari behaves oddly with an admin interface, but in those cases Chrome or Firefox usually works fine.

I recently needed to replace one of the three base stations in my house, because [I upgraded my broadband service to gigabit fiber](#), which required locating the broadband modem in a totally different part of the house. I use Ethernet as the backbone between three Apple base stations of different vintages, and had forgotten that the one closest to the broadband modem was limited to 802.11n, was a single-band-at-a-time model, and topped out at 100 Mbps Ethernet. That would drag down a 1 Gbps symmetrical Internet connection, and it also meant I hadn't been getting the best use of my LAN, either.

I'm an editor-at-large at The Wirecutter and recently helped in a late-stage edit of its revised guide for the best

[all-around Wi-Fi router](#). The reviewer picked the 802.11ac [simultaneous dual-band](#) TP-Link Archer C7 (v2), which typically sells for about \$90, or half the price of an AirPort Extreme.



I had considered the new [Google OnHub routers](#), one made by TP-Link and one by Asus, but the prices (\$200 and \$220) are nonstarters and most of the interesting features aren't enabled or seem awkward ("[Google's OnHub Router Gets Rough Treatment in Early Reviews](#)," 31 August 2015).

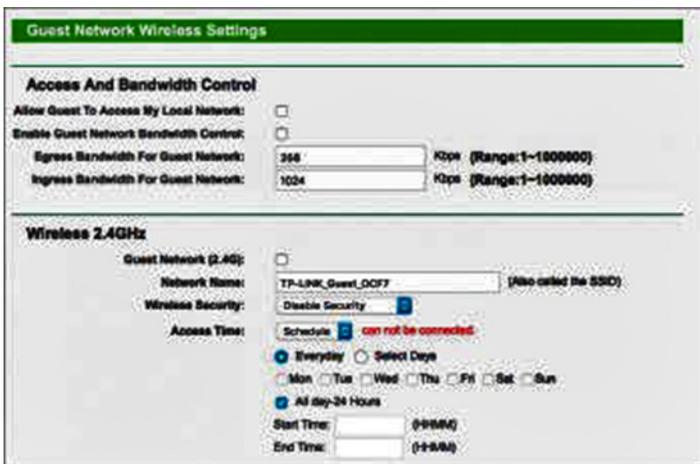
There are literally hundreds of inexpensive 802.11n and 802.11ac routers, but few have consistently outstanding reviews or include as many features as the TP-Link unit. After reviewing what I needed, I opted to buy the Archer C7: it checks off all the Wi-Fi boxes I need and a number of others. While it lacks the AirPort-only features mentioned above (AirPort Utility configuration, AirPlay, and Back to My Mac), I'm not troubled by the omissions, and I suspect many people won't even notice these features are missing.

Like most non-Apple routers, the Archer C7 has an absurd number of configuration options. Most router manufacturers adapt reference designs made by chipmakers, which includes microcode that runs the router. The manufacturer typically creates a physical case, customizes and extends the software, and packages administrative tools in its own user interface. Because so many options are available in the chipset and reference design, they're generally presented to the user as equally valuable, though some are hidden in an Advanced section. Most people never need to change more than a few settings, but for those who need extras, you'll find options in the Archer C7 Apple doesn't and will never offer.



For instance:

- Guest networking goes far beyond Apple’s approach, with settings to throttle inbound and outbound bandwidth usage, set different network names and security parameters for 2.4 and 5 GHz guest networks, set access time limitations, and opt to let guests use LAN resources.



- If you use Dynamic DNS to cope with an ISP changing your publicly facing IP address, the router can log in to several DDNS services to keep the domain-to-address connection up to date.



- Security controls abound, including options enabled by default to prevent malicious behavior from passing through your router, and other controls that can be turned on to block denial-of-service attacks. The Archer C7 even has a way to restrict actions for devices on the local LAN reaching out to the Internet, and a separate section for fine-grained parental controls.
- WPS (Wi-Fi Protected Security) is fully supported, whereas Apple offers it in only a limited way. WPS lets you add devices, particularly those that lack a screen or full interface, to Wi-Fi networks without entering long WPA2 passphrases.

If you’re concerned about using Bonjour, AirPrint, or AirPlay over a network that’s not all configured with Apple gear — don’t be. The underlying protocol, mDNS, is now used by companies other than just Apple, and it works in general with modern Wi-Fi routers from other companies.

The worst thing I’ve seen, which isn’t terrible, is that the Bonjour names for network devices don’t appear in AirPort Utility when I’m configuring my two remaining Apple base stations, although the names do appear in the Archer C7’s DHCP Clients’ list.

Even without the extra options, the Archer C7’s price may be right. I’ve messed with a few settings, but I was mostly looking for a strong 802.11ac router that would handle DHCP routing and pass traffic through, while also further extending coverage in my house.

I’ve been using the Archer C7 for several weeks, and haven’t hit any roadblocks or consistent problems. I seem to need to reboot it occasionally, but because of a necessary telco-provided modem, I’m never entirely sure where the fault lies, the modem or the router. When I’ve needed to change settings or look up how I configured a feature, I haven’t been stymied. As with most routers, after an initial configuration, you rarely mess with details — set it and forget it.

As I note above, although there are many competing routers, few truly inexpensive models have gotten decent reviews. But TP-Link makes a super-cheap 2.4 GHz-only 802.11n router, the TL-WR841N, which sells at Amazon for \$19 and is generally well liked in over 9,000 reviews, averaging over four stars. It also incorporates a four-port gigabit Ethernet LAN switch plus a WAN port, making it a great spoke end for a network.

**What Apple Should Do** — Apple could reclaim the loyalty of its ecosystem in a few ways:

- Drop the price. Apple likes to maintain high margins, and typically keeps the price the same for given products even as it improves their features. Base station prices have dropped in the past; doing so again by repricing the AirPort Express to \$49 (from \$99), the AirPort Extreme to \$129 (from \$199), and the Time Capsule to \$199 and \$249 (from \$299 and \$399 for the 2 TB and 3 TB models) would bring prices back into line.
- Provide more in terms of features and standards support. The AirPort Express should finally move to gigabit Ethernet and 802.11ac. The AirPort Extreme and Time Capsule need USB 3 if Apple is serious about hard-drive sharing and Time Machine backups with external drives, and they should include a four-port LAN switch (up from three) like most competitors. And the Time Capsule line should add a 4 TB option.

Apple could also step up to **802.11ac wave 2**, to which I alluded in passing earlier. Nearly every consumer 802.11ac product on the market uses wave 1, which is a huge improvement over 802.11n in the 5 GHz band. But wave 1 was only the first step towards implementing everything in the 802.11ac spec. Wave 2, which is built into the iPhone 6s and 6s Plus, allows for more efficient targeting (known as beamforming) of individual Wi-Fi adapters, which in turn allows for simultaneous data streams to multiple devices, thus improving network throughput.

- Open up base station configuration. If Apple wants to remain native, it needs Android and Windows 10 clients that are as up to date as Mac versions. Or there needs to be a Web-based interface — perhaps it could be part of iCloud.com.

- Add Bluetooth and HomeKit support. Bluetooth would allow the kind of nifty first-stage setup that the fourth-generation Apple TV includes, in which it uses proximity to bypass security hoops. HomeKit is a long-term direction for Apple to support the Internet of Things (smart home devices and other stuff), and its base stations should include solid support for HomeKit, at least in premium models, rather than requiring yet another networked device to act as a hub.

Apple still makes quality Wi-Fi base stations. But its gear is long in the tooth and desperately needs some attention.

If you're waiting to see if Apple comes up with something new before making a purchase, biding your time until the middle of 2016 seems sensible — the last few AirPort releases have dropped in June. However, if you need a new Wi-Fi gateway sooner and aren't wedded to AirPort-only features, either of the TP-Link models mentioned will do a fine job while keeping more money in your pocket. ☑

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by Adam C. Engst

## Your Favorite Mac Personal Information Managers

**O**ur call for ratings of Mac personal information management apps last week was a huge success (see [“Vote for Your Favorite Mac Personal Information Manager,”](#) 11 January 2016). The survey garnered responses from over 600 people, and suggestions for 16 apps on top of the 20 we started with, including some I'd never even heard of before. Even more apps than that were suggested, but I realized early on that “personal information manager” was a term that some people took to mean “task manager.” Others suggested Web apps, general databases, text editors, and even the Finder, and while all of these might work well for taking, finding, and organizing notes and other information, we had to set some limits and thus kept it focused on Mac apps that felt as though they could be an alternative for the primary features of Circus Ponies NoteBook. That resulted in accepting a few apps that were more outliners than information managers.

The other thing that became clear is that these apps, although they're nominally in the same category, actually vary quite widely. On average, responders rated nearly four apps each, meaning that some people have used a lot of the apps in the list at one time or another. A few commenters even said that they use more than one of these apps simultaneously, since different apps have different strengths.

When it came time to evaluate the results, I calculated the weighted average for each app, assigning a weight of 1 (Avoid it) through 5 (Can't live without it) for the five choices — the best weighted average possible is thus 5. Apps that received only a handful of votes have skewed weighted averages, of course, so I also counted the raw number of votes each app received.

What should you take away from this list, when looking for a personal information management app?

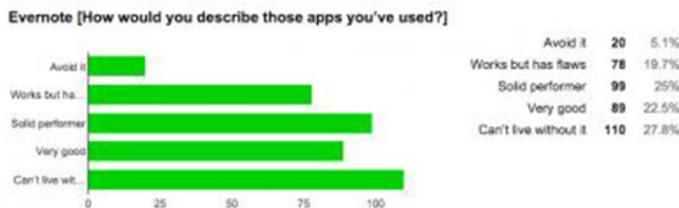
- Apps that received a lot of votes are well-known, but not necessarily popular. Microsoft OneNote, for instance, ranked 6th in number of votes, but 27th in the ratings.
- Apps added relatively late in the survey garnered fewer votes, but if they have a high enough weighted average, they may still be worth looking into. TheBrain and iNotepad had only 5 votes each, but scored 3.80 (5th) and 3.60 (6th) in weighted average.
- The most interesting apps are those that have a lot of votes and a high weighted average, such as OmniFocus (158 votes, 3.87), nvALT (100 votes, 3.85), and DEVONthink (213 votes, 3.80).
- Be sure to look at the [full results](#) and [read the comments on the original article](#), since there's a ton of useful information there that I couldn't convey here.

Without further ado, then, here's the full list, sorted by number of votes. I offer rating graphs and commentary for the ten apps that garnered the most votes; for the rest, the research is up to you, since only you know what features are important. Focus on apps that have free trial versions, since you'll want to get some experience with the app before you commit to it, and because you're likely to want to use this app for years, stick with apps that are getting regular updates. There's no guarantee any of these apps won't disappear tomorrow, but you don't want to start with an app that's already a zombie.

**Evernote** (365 votes, 3.48, Free / \$24.95 per year / \$49.99 per year) — Our top vote-getter was Evernote, the popular online note-taking service that also offers native apps for OS X, iOS, Windows, and Android and automatically syncs between all your devices. In the free version, you can create multiple notebooks, create notes by typing or clipping information from Web sites, add files to notes, tag your notes for easy finding, share and discuss notes, and more. For \$24.99 per year, Evernote Plus adds offline access for

the mobile apps, a passcode lock for the mobile apps, and the capability to store email messages. For \$49.99 per year, Evernote Premium lets you search inside Office documents, can turn notes into presentations, lets you annotate attached PDFs, scans and digitizes business cards, lets you see previous versions of notes, and shows content related to your notes.

Peter Sloep spoke for happy users when he said, "I love the way notes can be synced between my laptop, desktop, iPhone, and iPad. I occasionally use the ability to share notes, for instance to build a shared collection of recipes, but for serious collaboration Google Docs is unsurpassed." But a surprising number of people — given Evernote's high rating — expressed reservations about Evernote's future. Among [other comments](#), Austin wrote, "I've been putting my whole life in Evernote for years, but with the recent seismic shifts in their business side and continued issues with software stability, I can't say I'm 100% happy about using it." Gordon Wainwright added, "I switched from Evernote to DEVONthink some months ago. The main reason was the long term archiving I require for my family history. Export in Evernote is very poor and painful for a large collection of files and notes." And Rick said, "Evernote is an attractive choice for short to medium-length notes, with easy markup and attachment options. It's still where I put much of my stuff, but I'm also looking for a way out. I'm concerned about crashes and about a business model that doesn't seem very well suited to casual personal use. It's also ungainly to search once you get more than a few hundred notes. For me, at least, this product actually becomes less useful as I put more into it."



In the interests of clarity, the labels are:

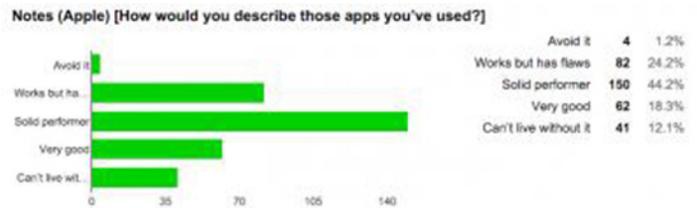
- Avoid
- Works but has flaws
- Solid performer
- Very good
- Can't live without it

Editor

Apple [Notes](#) (310 votes, 3.14, Free) — It shouldn't be surprising that Apple's Notes app received so many votes — it's included with OS X 10.11 El Capitan and iOS 9, and syncs well between the two via iCloud. It's focused and easy to use, with support for multiple folders that can contain any number of notes. Notes themselves support styled text with bulleted and numbered lists, checklists, graphics, map locations, and any file you can drag in. If nothing else, Notes is the easiest app to try.

Tommy Weir summarized it well, saying "Apple's Notes is a simple tool but iCloud sync gives it a role for most people in keeping text based notes and simple data available

everywhere." But gastropod spoke for those who don't want their data in the cloud: "Actually, iCloud sync is what keeps me from even trying it — it requires iCloud be on for all of the features, and won't just sync via USB. I don't want anyone else's cloud when I have my own servers. It's far too troublesome to remember not to use a cloud app for sensitive data, or decide what may become sensitive once added to the others things in the app. It's all well and good to have decent encryption on the hardware, but once it's on Apple (or other) servers, it's much more vulnerable to social engineering and other hacks." [Other commenters](#) mostly weighed in on these issues.



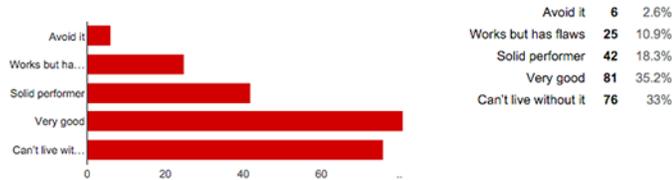
[DEVONthink](#) (213 votes, 3.80, \$49.95/\$79.95/\$149.95) — Coming in [three editions](#) (Personal, Pro, and Pro Office), DEVONthink offers a vast feature set behind a Getting Things Done-inspired workflow where you create notes and file them later. DEVONthink manages notes, files, and Web bookmarks that can be captured with a single click. Text can be plain or styled, you can annotate imported PDFs, you can choose among multiple views, and the app can file notes for you into folders automatically. The higher level editions add automatic grouping, a concordance, smart templates, scanning (with OCR), email archiving, and Web sharing. If anything, DEVONthink's many capabilities can make it somewhat overwhelming, which accounts for the popularity of Joe Kissell's "[Take Control of Getting Started with DEVONthink 2](#)" book, which is due for an update soon.

Tommy Weir [explained why DEVONthink is so popular](#), saying "DEVONthink Pro Office is the Mercedes Benz of information managers on the Mac. Really well put together, the app is steadily developed and improved, it's solid and professional. You can take your important company work, records and files and put them in there. And not worry. We had a project, ten years of files, nested organised files and folders, various media, tens of thousands of documents, gigabytes of data. DEVONthink Pro Office took them in no problem, found links I was unaware of, made intelligent organisational offerings, and synced the lot off to the cloud for my various Macs to access as needed."

Rick generally agreed, but called out one negative. "I've used DEVONthink Pro off and on for a year or so, but not intensively. It seems to be stable, performs well, has an amazing set of features, and has extensibility options. Search works well even for larger collections of information (unlike Evernote). But... The one little thing that's kept me from fully committing to DEVONthink is the tiny fixed size of the font used to return search results. If you have older eyes or a higher DPI display you will likely hate this aspect of DEVONthink. I'm reluctant to dismiss software for a single reason but this is really egregious. DEVONthink has

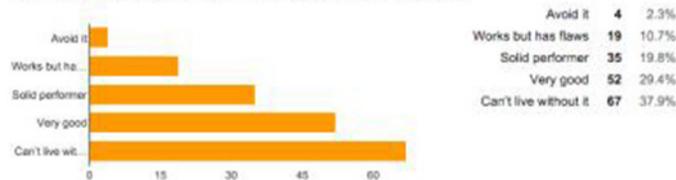
nice import and export options, so at least I'm not feeling locked in despite my doubts."

**DEVONthink [How would you describe those apps you've used?]**



**OmniFocus** (158 votes, 3.87, \$39.99/\$79.99) — Although OmniFocus received a lot of votes and was very highly rated, it probably shouldn't have been included in the survey. It was the first suggestion made, and I didn't realize the extent to which it's really a task manager, not an app for managing notes and files. Some people commented that they used NoteBook as a task manager too, so if you're in that group, OmniFocus might be worth investigating.

**OmniFocus [How would you describe those apps you've used?]**



**OmniOutliner** (157 votes, 3.58, \$49.99/\$99.99) — Right behind OmniFocus is OmniOutliner, which initially seemed like a slightly off-topic suggestion as well, since it's marketed more at being a writing app rather than a personal information manager. However, I'm happier about having it in the survey for the simple reason that Circus Ponies NoteBook stood out because of its outline-based approach to note-taking, and OmniOutliner is probably the best-known outliner on the Mac today.

With it, you can take notes in outline form, style your notes with templates, add files as attachments, and sync your outlines between OS X and iOS. There are also smart column types, Spotlight-based searching, audio recording, and more. The \$99.99 OmniOutliner Pro adds cross-references with row linking, advanced styling and formatting, and workflow automation with AppleScript.

You can [read all the comments](#) from the previous article, but Kemer Thomson gave a nice overview:

If you tend to think in a structured manner, as I do, Omni Outliner is a very viable option and the one I have gravitated to, at least until I find something better. Like all of The Omni Group's software products, it is polished and attractive, powerful and configurable, provides excellent compatibility on both OS X and iOS, and has excellent product support. Some might object to the price, especially since you probably will need to buy it twice, once for each platform (Mac and iOS). However, I use OmniOutliner for much more than note-taking, as it is a superb outlining tool, so its has been well worth the investment for me.

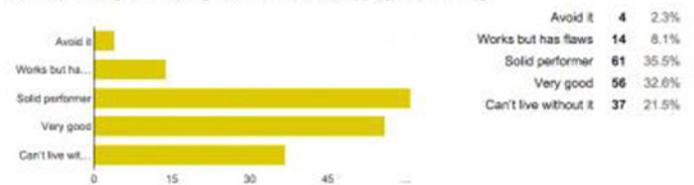
Perhaps the biggest negative is its proprietary data format, which could make migrating to another tool difficult, at

least if you use its ability to embed attachments. Note migration is a key issue for me: I would like to feel confident that the data will be readily accessible to me in ten years. The Omni Group seems like one software company that could stand the test of time.

Another potential issue is OmniOutliner's preference to use the OmniPresence file system for synchronization. A lot of thought has been put into OmniPresence and it generally seems to work better than either iCloud or Dropbox for synchronization, but I'm not completely comfortable using The Omni Group's (free) service, nor in a position to set up my own WebDAV server to host it myself.

So, if you are already using other OmniGroup products, and especially if you have a use for OmniOutliner in other contexts, and if you are willing to structure your notes within the boundaries of the tool, OmniOutliner offers a powerful approach.

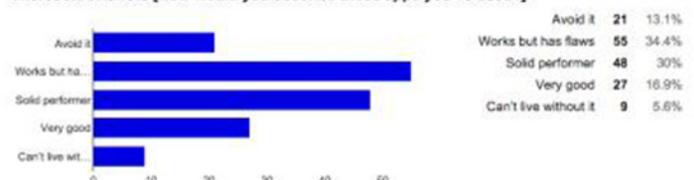
**OmniOutliner [How would you describe those apps you've used?]**



**Microsoft OneNote** (148 votes, 2.68, Free) — Despite garnering a large number of votes and being free to use, Microsoft OneNote didn't fare well in the ratings. None of the commenters explained why, but OneNote appears to have a decent feature set in that you can style notes however you like, add pictures or other files to a note, clip Web articles, send email into your notebook, tag your notes for later finding, and share notes with friends. One notable criticism in the Mac App Store notes that the Mac version lacks a number of features in the Windows version of OneNote, including such basics as offline access to notes.

Those who left comments on our survey liked OneNote, though. makeittalk said, "I switched to using OneNote from Evernote after the Mac version achieved additional features a year or so ago. The fact of life is that I use Microsoft Office on the Mac and IOS and this works well with it. And Scott concurred, saying, "I've pretty much settled on OneNote. I was skeptical at first — the "M" word — but have grown to appreciate its usefulness. Syncing works well between my Mac and iPad, which is important to me. And unlike with Apple's Notes offering, individual notes actually look good regardless of platform — no typeface issues."

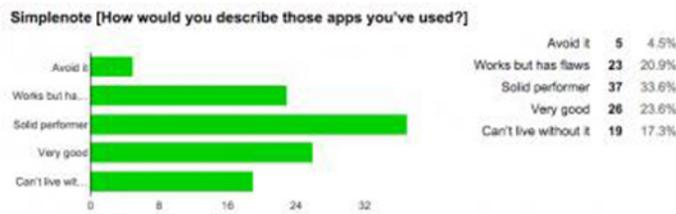
**Microsoft OneNote [How would you describe those apps you've used?]**



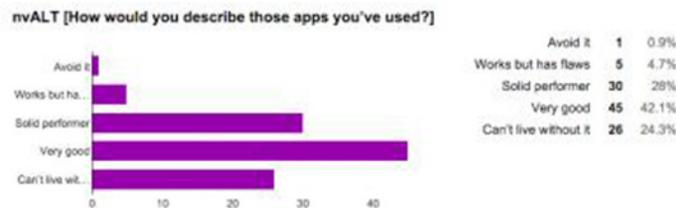
**Simplenote** (102 votes, 3.31, Free) — With native apps for OS X, iOS, Android, Kindle, and the Web, Simplenote is

a bit like Evernote in terms of giving you access to your notes wherever you are and on whatever device you're using. Although it supports only text in notes, Simple-note has instant searching, and you can group notes with tags. Perhaps most interesting is that Simplenote backs up your notes whenever they're changed, and you can drag a version slider to go back in time. Because it's a free service (an account is required), a [number of other apps tie into Simplenote](#) for note syncing, including nvALT, Notational Velocity, Metanota, and Tinderbox.

John M. said "I only use SimpleNote on iOS, but it acts as a seamless way to sync Notational Velocity notes (NV does not have an iOS app). Works very well, but is strictly text-based (though the database can be encrypted)." Worryingly, several people said that they had experienced some data loss. Rick noted, "I haven't used this for a couple of years, because I found that it often failed to sync notes and even occasionally deleted a few. If that problem has been solved, then I would say it's probably one of the best text note organizers of all." And Arno Wouters warned, "I twice lost data with Simplenote and I am not the only one who had these problems. Perhaps these problems are solved, but I would never again trust my notes to a program of a company whose testing phase fails to identify problems that may cause serious data loss."

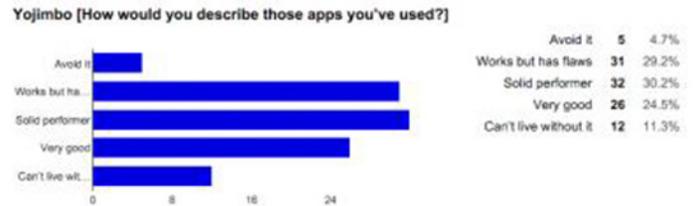


**nvALT** (100 votes, 3.85, Free) — nvALT offers a number of niceties beyond what Notational Velocity does, such as new shortcuts, full-screen mode support, color schemes, better Markdown support, and more. However, although nvALT received a good number of votes and was highly rated, it hasn't been updated since 2013, and is itself a port of the open-source Notational Velocity, which hasn't seen an update since 2011. That's not to say that it's not good, or worth continuing to use, but probably isn't the best app to start using now.



**Yojimbo** (95 votes, 3.05, \$30) — Yojimbo goes beyond simple text notes to accept nearly anything: text, bookmarks, PDFs, Web archives, images, and more. And anything you put in can be exported at any time. Yojimbo features Spotlight-based searching; lets you organize your data with tags, labels, and collections, and can sync your data between Macs or with the iPad version (via a \$2.99 per month subscription).

An anonymous commenter reported, "I've used Yojimbo on my Macs for years as a way to store a lot of miscellaneous information. I still use version 3 as I only have one Mac, so I never tested their subscription sync service. I have the iPad version, too. I wish there were one for the iPhone. The lack forces me to use Apple's Notes for factoids I want available when I'm away from home and not carrying my iPad." And John M. added, "Yojimbo is among several information managers that I purchased when considering a replacement for SOHO Notes. It most resembles SOHO Notes or Evernote in its interface. I found SOHO Notes increasingly unstable, with lackluster customer support. Yojimbo is very stable, and is backed by the folks who created BBEdit."



**Notational Velocity** (92 votes, 3.38, Free) — The open-source Notational Velocity has an unusual approach that melds searching and note creation into a single interface. As you type into the search field, Notational Velocity constantly refines the list of matching notes, until you've either found the one you want, or are ready to create a new one (notes can contain only text). The database is compressed and encrypted before being written to disk, saving is done automatically, and the app is designed to be usable entirely from the keyboard. Unfortunately, Notational Velocity hasn't seen an update since 2011, so I can't recommend anyone switch to it at this point.

Pal Borsting, who previous used both NoteBook and Evernote, explains why those who have used it like it. "I have used Notational Velocity together with SimpleNote on iPad and iPhone for some years now. It has two major strengths that sets it apart for me. First search is lightning fast and I find what I am looking for. Second, entering new notes is also very fast. The sync between Mac and iPhone/iPad is very reliable and the same is true for Mac to Mac. It is text-only which I like."



**The Rest of the Personal Information Managers** — I don't want to imply that there's anything wrong with the rest of these apps merely because they weren't among the top ten, but this already lengthy list would turn into a book if I went into detail on each app. So, for the remaining 26 apps, I've listed the number of votes, rating, and price, and included a link to the app's Web site, along with a link to any available comments about it. Let me know in the

comments if this is a useful approach, and if there's a better way we could do it in the future.

- [Notability](#) (71 votes, 3.10, \$5.99) — Read comments from the previous article.
- [VoodooPad](#) (61 votes, 3.08, \$39.99) — Read comments from the previous article.
- [EagleFiler](#) (58 votes, 3.50, \$40) — Read comments from the previous article.
- [SOHO Notes](#) (44 votes, 2.57, \$39.99) — Read comments from the previous article.
- [Curio](#) (39 votes, 3.15, \$129.99)
- [Tinderbox](#) (34 votes, 3.56, \$249)
- [Notebooks](#) (33 votes, 2.94, \$19.99) — Read comments from the previous article.
- [Together](#) (29 votes, 2.72, \$49.99) — Read comments from the previous article.
- [Growly Notes](#) (18 votes, 2.89, \$4.99)
- [NoteTaker](#) (16 votes, 3.06, \$24.99) — Read comments from the previous article.
- [Outline](#) (15 votes, 2.93, \$39.99) — Read comments from the previous article.

- [Quiver](#) (14 votes, 2.79, \$9.99)
- [TopXNotes](#) (12 votes, 2.67, \$39.99)
- [Yep](#) (10 votes, 3.10, \$23.99) — Read comments from the previous article.
- [Tree](#) (9 votes, 3.11, \$11.99) — Read comments from the previous article.
- [Toodledo](#) (9 votes, 2.67, Free)
- [Caboodle](#) (6 votes, 2.67, \$19)
- [TheBrain](#) (5 votes, 3.80, Free/\$219)
- [iNotepad](#) (5 votes, 3.60, \$24.99) — Read comments from the previous article.
- [Dossier](#) (5 votes, 1.40, \$24.99)
- [Cudgel](#) (4 votes, 2.25, \$995)
- [Versatil Markdown](#) (3 votes, 3.33, \$14.99) — Read comments from the previous article.
- [Metanota](#) (2 votes, 2.00, Free/\$9.99)
- [NeO](#) (1 vote, 4.00, \$6.99) — Read comments from the previous article.
- [Opal](#) (1 vote, 1.00, \$32) 🗑️

## Software Review

### Momentum Brings Eye Candy to New Browser Tabs

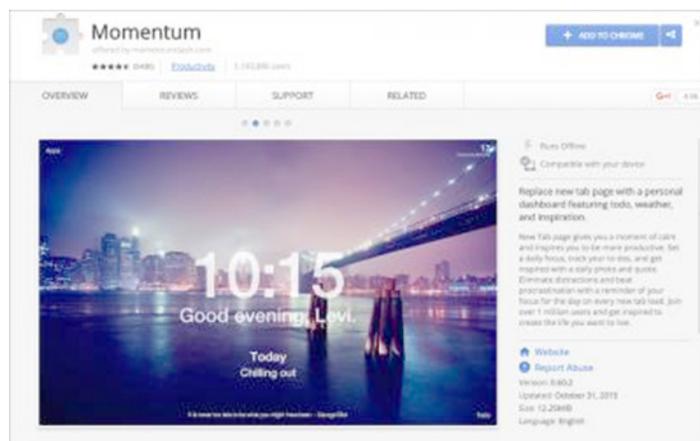
by Adam C. Engst

In most Web browsers, when you open a new tab, you can choose to have it display your home page or thumbnails of frequently used sites. Or you can do what I've done until recently, and just keep new tabs blank. I did this because I'm always creating a new tab in order to go to a particular Web site, and no single page or grid of thumbnails is likely to anticipate what I want.

Not long ago I happened on a free Chrome extension called [Momentum](#) that is so utterly delightful that even 16-year-old Tristan couldn't resist installing it on his Chromebook, despite it being recommended by his otherwise completely clueless father. Created by a small team of designers and developers who talk about making "software that has a real impact on the human condition" and "weaving culture, history, and the milk of human emotion into modern app design," Momentum adorns every new browser tab with a picture of a spectacular landscape from the 500px

photography site, subtly adding useful little widgets around the edges. The photo changes every day, and I've never seen one that wasn't absolutely gorgeous.

**Getting Some Momentum** — To install Momentum in Chrome, [open it in the Chrome Web Store](#) and click the Add to Chrome button.



There's also what seems like an [abandoned beta of a Safari extension for Momentum](#). Unfortunately, it has few of the features of the Chrome version, many glitches, and numerous

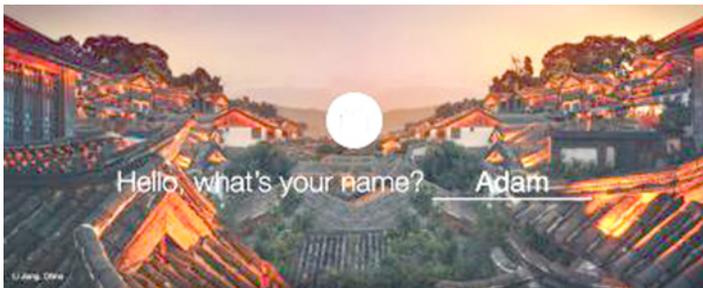
**complaints from users.** It may still be worth a try if all you want are Momentum's pretty pictures. You'll need to download the extension and then double-click it in the Finder to install it in Safari, and then set Safari to use Top Sites in Safari > Preferences > General > New Tabs Open With.

The team behind Momentum says they're **planning a Firefox add-on**, but are waiting for some changes in Firefox to stabilize, hopefully soon.

**Use Your Momentum** — Returning to the flagship Chrome version, a picture truly is worth a thousand words when it comes to Momentum. To see it, press Command-T to open a new tab.



Smack in the middle of the screen is the time, along with a greeting that updates throughout the day. Double-click the time to switch between 12- and 24-hour time. Momentum knows who I am because I told it early on, and you can double-click your name to change it at any time. Below that is room to enter what you want to focus on for the day, and a motivational quote.



At the top left, there are controls for Links and Search. Clicking Links reveals a small popover in which you can store links to frequently used sites, just like a bookmarks bar. If you click the magnifying glass, you can search for anything in Google; the results appear in another popover.

Moving clockwise, in the upper right, Momentum shows how many to-do items you've completed, along with the temperature and weather in your location. To switch between Fahrenheit and Celsius, double-click the temperature; double-clicking the location lets you change that as well.

In the lower right, the Todo control shows and hides a simple to-do list. It's more like a slip of scrap paper for jotting things to remember than a task manager. You add an item by clicking where it says "New todo" and typing, and you can either mark an item as done by clicking its checkbox,

or just delete it by hovering over it and clicking the x that appears to its right.



Finally, in the lower left, Momentum tells you where the astonishing image you're seeing was taken, and mousing over the place name toggles it to show the photographer's name. A gear icon displays a menu of administrative options, the most important of which is Customize. Click it, and you can turn off the focus, quote, links, search, weather, and to-do list if they're not useful to you. You can also switch to Bing for searching.



If you use multiple Macs and want to sync backgrounds, quotes, to-do items, and more, you can create an account on Momentum and request access to the account syncing beta. It all depends on how private you want to be.

Niceties abound. If you press the Tab key twice after opening a new tab, you can use hotkeys to access Momentum's various widgets: T for Todo, L for Links, S for search, F for focus, C to bring up a normal Chrome tab, and comma for Settings. I quite like Momentum's in-place editing of settings, and while it's not inherently discoverable, both the Customize and Help screens remind you to double-click on anything you want to change.

The only two things you can't turn off are the time and greeting, so if you're not a fan of them or Momentum's other widgets, check out the **Flickr Tab** Chrome extension, which shows you a new photo selected from the most popular images on the Flickr photo sharing service every time you open a new tab. For Firefox users, there's **Flickr NewTab**, which does much the same thing, although you may want to click the gear icon in the upper right corner of a Firefox new tab page and choose Show Blank Page to avoid overwriting the photo with site thumbnails. For Safari, the closest I've been able to find is **Flume**, which pulls its new tab photo from Instagram. It requires that Safari new tabs be set to Empty Page, you must have an Instagram account, and it installed for me only in OS X 10.11 El Capitan, not 10.10 Yosemite.

Momentum's eye candy won't change your life, but it might make you just a wee bit happier, as it has me and a [million other users](#). I get a little thrill every morning when I see whatever beautiful photo has been chosen for the day, and again whenever I create a new tab. What's not to like?

## Apple Updates

### [Xerox Printer Drivers 4.0 OS X](#)

**Jan 27, 2016 – 66 MB**

System Requirements

- OS X Lion 10.7
- OS X Mountain Lion
- OS X Mavericks
- OS X Yosemite

This download includes the latest Xerox printing and scanning software for OS X Yosemite, OS X Mavericks, OS X Mountain Lion, and OS X Lion.

### [Mac App Store Update for OS X Snow Leopard](#)

**Jan 27, 2016 – 3.5 MB**

System Requirements

- OS X Snow Leopard 10.6.8

This update ensures future compatibility of the Mac App Store included with OS X Snow Leopard, and is recommended for all Snow Leopard users.

### [Lexmark Printer Driver 3.1](#)

**Jan 27, 2016 – 216.7 MB**

System Requirements

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

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

### [Lanier Printer Drivers 3.0 for OS X](#)

**Jan 27, 2016 – File Size: 19.7 MB**

System Requirements

- OS X Yosemite 10.10 and later
- OS X Mavericks 10.9 and later
- OS X Mountain Lion 10.8 and later
- OS X Lion 10.7 and later

This update installs the latest software for your Lanier printer or scanner for OS X Yosemite, OS X Mavericks, OS X Mountain Lion, and OS X Lion.

### [Epson Printer Drivers 3.2 for OS X](#)

**Jan 27, 2016 – 1.3 GB**

System Requirements

- OS X Yosemite 10.10 and later
- OS X Mavericks 10.9 and later
- OS X Mountain Lion 10.8 and later
- OS X Lion 10.7 and later

This update installs the latest software for your EPSON printer or scanner for OS X Yosemite, OS X Mavericks, OS X Mountain Lion, and OS X Lion.

### [Ricoh Printer Drivers 3.0 for OS X](#)

**Jan 27, 2016 – 35.5 MB**

System Requirements

- OS X Yosemite 10.10 and later
- OS X Mavericks 10.9 and later
- OS X Mountain Lion 10.8 and later
- OS X Lion 10.7 and later

This update installs the latest software for your Ricoh printer or scanner for OS X Yosemite, OS X Mavericks, OS X Mountain Lion, and OS X Lion.

### [Infotec Printer Drivers 3.0 for OS X](#)

**Jan 27, 2016 – 14.8 MB**

System Requirements

- OS X Yosemite 10.10 and later
- OS X Mavericks 10.9 and later
- OS X Mountain Lion 10.8 and later
- OS X Lion 10.7 and later

This update installs the latest software for your Infotec printer or scanner for OS X Yosemite, OS X Mavericks, OS X Mountain Lion, and OS X Lion.

### [Gestetner Printer Drivers 3.0 for OS X](#)

**Jan 27, 2016 – 16.3 MB**

System Requirements

- OS X Yosemite 10.10 and later
- OS X Mavericks 10.9 and later
- OS X Mountain Lion 10.8 and later
- OS X Lion 10.7 and later

This update installs the latest software for your Gestetner printer or scanner for OS X Yosemite, OS X Mavericks, OS X Mountain Lion, and OS X Lion.

### [Savin Printer Drivers 3.0 for OS X](#)

**Jan 27, 2016 – 18.9 MB**

System Requirements

- OS X Yosemite 10.10 and later
- OS X Mavericks 10.9 and later
- OS X Mountain Lion 10.8 and later
- OS X Lion 10.7 and later

This update installs the latest software for your Savin printer or scanner for OS X Yosemite, OS X Mavericks, OS X Mountain Lion, and OS X Lion.

### [NGR Printer Drivers 3.0 for OS X](#)

**Jan 27, 2016 – 19.3 MB**

System Requirements

- OS X Yosemite 10.10 and later
- OS X Mavericks 10.9 and later
- OS X Mountain Lion 10.8 and later
- OS X Lion 10.7 and later

This update installs the latest software for your NGR printer or scanner for OS X Yosemite, OS X Mavericks, OS X Mountain Lion, and OS X Lion. 🗑️

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