

Newsletter

The Apple iMacs hadn't been revamped in a very long time and were certainly in need of a revamping, so when today they unveiled the all new iMac line featuring 20- and 24-inch widescreen displays encased in aluminum and glass enclosures, there was much rejoicing in Macville. The iMacs feature the latest Intel Core 2 Duo processors and a new, ultra-thin aluminum Apple Keyboard and built-in iSight video camera. The 20-inch iMac now starts at USD\$1,199, (USD\$300 less than the previous 20-inch model), and the 24-inch iMac comes in at USD\$1,799 (USD\$200 less than the previous 24-inch model).

The new iMac includes the latest Intel Core 2 Duo processors running up to 2.8 GHz with 4MB of shared L2 cache and up to 4GB of 667 MHz DDR2 SDRAM memory. The iMac line features ATI's next generation of graphics with the ATI Radeon HD 2600 PRO with 256MB of GDDR3 memory and the ATI Radeon HD 2400 XT with 128MB of GDDR3 memory. The new iMac now offers up to 1TB of internal storage to accommodate a user's growing library of digital photos, movies and music. The iMac includes built-in AirPort Extreme 802.11n wifi networking, delivering up to five times the performance and twice the range of 802.11g; Gigabit Ethernet; a total of five USB 2.0 ports (including two on the new Apple Keyboard); and one FireWire 400 and one FireWire 800 port.



The new iMac also features highly recyclable and durable materials including scratch-resistant glass and professional grade aluminum. The power-efficient iMac also meets the stringent new Energy Star 4.0 requirements.

The new iMac line is available immediately through the Apple Store, Apple's retail stores and Apple Authorized Resellers.

The new ultra-thin aluminum Apple Keyboard is just 0.33 inches thin at its front edge. A new optional Apple Wireless Keyboard is a compact design that, with Apple's wireless Mighty Mouse, offers a cable-free desk-

top. The new Apple Wireless Keyboard will ship by the end of August and will be available as a build-to-order option with the new iMac through the Apple Store for a suggested retail price of USD\$30, or USD\$50 when purchased along with the wireless Mighty Mouse, and as a standalone purchase for a suggested retail price of USD\$79. Microsoft Office 2008 Slips to January

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In what one may perceive as either a major or minor delay, Microsoft's Macintosh Business Unit (MacBU) has announced that Office 2008 for the Mac will now ship in mid-January 2008 in the United States, with worldwide availability scheduled for the first quarter of 2008. That probably translates to a public unveiling at Macworld Expo in San Francisco on 14-Jan-08. Previously, Office 2008 had been scheduled for release in the second half of 2007, but according to the MacBU, the slip was required to achieve the necessary level of quality. User comments on Microsoft's Mac Mojo blog tend toward the testy, with a number of people expressing disappointment about the delay while simultaneously acknowledging that quality is key.

Software Updates

Microsoft Office Open XML File Format Converter for Mac 0.2 (Beta)

Apple Airport Extreme Update 2007-004

GraphicConverter 6.0

Apple posts Mac OS X 2007-007, Safari beta 3 security updates

Apple iTunes 7.3.2

Parallels Desktop 3.0 Build 5060.0

iLife '08

iWork suite

Next Meeting: August 16, 2007

iLife '08!

By Ed, ed@smalldog.com

Apple also announced a new version of iLife, now called iLife '08. As an iLife '06 fan, I have to say this new version looks incredible. Here is a brief run-down of the new features in each iLife application.

iMovie '08 - iMovie is being released as an all-new application, and has a new interface and icon to show it. The app is now centered around an iPhoto-like library, where you can catalog all your video. This is something I've always wanted - it should be very convenient to keep all the video on your Mac in one central location, ready to be watched, scanned, and even edited.

iMovie now claims to accept video from "any source," and the video can be mixed & matched in single projects. It also features a newly expanded "Share" menu, with updated options for outputting video to iPod, iPhone, Apple TV - and direct exporting to YouTube. The YouTube feature is going to be huge. Steve Jobs is telling people to skip the DVD, and exchange high-res video files computer to computer, or computer to TV.

There are actually dozens of added features, upgrades, and enhancements throughout iMovie '08. It really is a whole new application. We'll explore iMovie in depth in the future; you can read about some of the new features by clicking on <http://www.apple.com/ilife/imovie>. More on iMovie and upgrading to iLife '08 in the next article.

iPhoto '08 also received some updating love. A new feature called Events allows you to easily group and organize huge iPhoto libraries. New photo editing features include noise reduction, white balance adjustment, selective improvement, guided cropping and more. You can choose to automatically show or hide photos based on your star rating (you do rate all of your photos with stars, right?) There are new books and calendars available (including much larger calendars than the previous options.) Photos can now be exported to a new .Mac Web Gallery, which promises a better way to post and organize photos online. You can contribute to the gallery "from anywhere" you have internet access. Read more here about the new version of iPhoto by clicking on <http://www.apple.com/ilife/iphoto>.

Garageband is updated with a slew of new features. The biggest all-new feature is the Magic Garageband. This is a "virtual onstage band" that you can jam and record with. There are new interactive instruments that can be edited in real time. There is a new multitake feature. Garageband can now record high-fidelity 24-bit/44.1kHz audio. There is a built-in Mastering Engineer to make your songs sound like a commercial CD. There is a new visual EQ to allow you to graphically adjust frequencies for each track by clicking and dragging EQ bands. Parameter Automation sets the parameters of instruments and effects to change at multiple points within a song. You can now organize the structure of a song by using predefined sections (intro, verse, chorus, and bridge), print software instrument tracks as music notation with automatically formatted staves and complete measures, and display the name of chords in real time as you play on a USB keyboard. Also - you can now export tracks as MP3s. Read more here by clicking on <http://www.apple.com/ilife/garageband>.

I'm glad to see that iWeb has been updated. First, you can finally easily switch iWeb themes. This was not possible in the previous version of iWeb. There are eight new themes to go along with this feature.

There are new animated web album pages. You can put 500 photos online per album. iWeb makes it easy to integrate Google Maps and Google AdSense on your web pages. A new feature called Web Widgets makes it easy to embed a snippet of live content from another website on your iWeb page. Web Widgets would include YouTube videos, stock tickers, weather reports, and more.

Finally, Apple has made it easier to use a personal domain name with your iWeb pages. Read more here by clicking on <http://www.apple.com/ilife/iweb>.

iDVD received the least love in this upgrade. The main feature is new, professional-quality DVD encoding. Apple says "the new professional-quality option in iDVD uses advanced encoding technology to maintain the highest possible quality for DVDs that are near or at the disc's capacity."

There are 10 brand-new themes, and all of the older themes are also compatible. The interactive "drop" editor has been updated. Menu navigation, real-time preview, and theme switching are all faster. Indeed, iDVD touts better performance throughout rather than a glut of new features. Read more here by clicking on <http://www.apple.com/ilife/idvd>.

iLife '08 requires a PowerPC G4 (733MHz or faster for iDVD), PowerPC G5, or Intel Core processor, 12MB (1GB recommended) of RAM, and Mac OS X v10.4.9 or later.

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