Could a 30-in. Monitor Help You Do Your Job Faster?

10.11.06 - Todd Weiss - Computerworld

Providing employees with 30-in. computer monitors can boost worker productivity at companies where 17-in. or 19-in. monitors are typically used, according to a French consultant hired for a study sponsored by Apple.

The study, which evaluated Apples 30-inch Apple Cinema Display, concluded that large screens can offer gains of up to 50 percent to 65 percent in productivity on a variety of specific office tasks and can earn back their extra costs in time savings over several years. The 30-in. display costs $1,999.

But other experts say those conclusions are wrong, arguing that the productivity improvement estimates are too high and that using two monitors side by side would likely be a better productivity booster than one larger monitor. The 40-page study was conducted by Andreas Pfeiffer, principal of Paris-based Pfeiffer Consulting, for Apple, which paid for the research.

Pfeiffer looked at a range of computing tasks, from moving data between Microsoft Word and Excel files to image manipulation using Adobe Photoshop. In addition to studying the 30-in. LCD display from Apple, Pfeiffer also did the comparison using a 17-in. Samsung SyncMaster 172x LCD monitor. The Apple monitor has an optimal resolution of 2560 pixels by 1600 pixels, compared with 1280 pixels by 1024 pixels for the Samsung monitor.

The productivity gains, he said, occur because workers using larger monitors can avoid repetitive tasks such as switching between overlapping application windows. Instead, they can have more windows open side-by-side on a larger monitor.

The time savings are for commonly performed tasks and not meant to indicate overall productivity increases for workers, Pfeiffer said. Using a larger screen will only improve specific tasks where data is moved or manipulated quickly.

Pfeiffers testing showed time savings of 13.63 seconds when moving files between folders using the larger screen 15.7 seconds compared to 29.3 seconds on the 17-in. monitor for a productivity gain of 46.45 percent. The testing showed a 65.09 percent productivity gain when dragging and dropping between images a task that took 6.4 seconds on the larger monitor compared to 18.3 seconds using the smaller screen. And cutting and pasting cells from Excel spreadsheets resulted in a 51.31 percent productivity gain a task that took 20.7 seconds on the larger monitor versus 42.6 seconds on the smaller screen.

Theres a very, very clear and strong correlation between screen size and productivity, Pfeiffer said. If youre used to a having a 15-in. or 17-in. laptop and then go to a smaller resolution laptop, you can realize [the difference]. There are certain things that can really slow you down.

A larger monitor is as important as higher resolution, which allows more of an image to be shown on the screen, he said. Of course individual behavior will impact productivity, he said. A user who insists on using [program] menus will be slower than one who uses keyboard shortcuts, for instance.

But several personal productivity experts who evaluate how hardware and work habits affect productivity disagreed with Pfeiffers findings.

I can surf the Net on one monitor and do something else on the other, said Peggy Duncan, an Atlanta-based personal productivity expert and principal of PSC Press. It all goes back to seeing more stuff at one time. But, in my opinion, productivity is increased more by using dual monitors.

Laura Stack, owner of The Productivity Pro consulting firm in Denver, said Pfeiffers estimated productivity gains are way too high. She would estimate a maximum 5 percent productivity gain for workers using a larger monitor. But youre not going to see the boost in productivity youll see by adding a second screen, which could increase productivity as much as 30 percent, Stack said.

People are not robots, Stack said. Its impossible to see those kinds of productivity gains as measured in the Pfeiffer study.

Neen James, a personal productivity expert in Doylestown, Pa., who runs Neen James Communications, said a single larger screen could provide health benefits for workers such as less eye squinting, but she agreed that dual monitors would likely offer more verifiable productivity gains. Those sorts of claims are fabulous from a marketing point of view, she said of the study, but you can make statistics say anything.

Another productivity expert, however, said that either solution a single large monitor or dual displays could help workers, depending on what they do. I think it would be a very personal decision, said Jan Jasper, principal of New York-based Jasper Productivity Solutions. Theres no contest to having more space [to work].

Akilesh Bajaj, an MIS professor at the College of Business Administration at the University of Tulsa, reviewed the Pfeiffer report but said more research is needed before accurate conclusions are reached. Theres a lot of image processing [in the study] so its easy to see where [the larger screen] would increase productivity, Bajaj said. But anecdotal remarks from colleagues estimated that they would not see substantial gains in their own work from having a larger screen, he said.

One multiple-monitor fan, Martin Doucet, owner of Vaixe, a small Montreal-based book publishing company, said he uses one primary 19-in. CRT monitor and two additional 17-in. CRT monitors to get his work done more efficiently in his home office. Doucet said he has been using the system for two years, with one screen for manuscript proofreading, another to follow the authors story plan and the third for communicating via e-mail or instant messaging.

Having that much room makes it easy, he said. I have everything at a glance. It saves time because you dont have to ALT-Tab all the time.

Apples 30-in. display hasn't had much competition in that size range since its introduction, but Samsung Electronics America will debut its own 30-in. LCD monitor later this month at an estimated $1,999, said Andy Weis, a product marketing manager at Ridgefield Park, N.J.-based Samsung. The company has not done any specific research on productivity increases tied to larger screens, he said.

Tonight's Agenda

Help desk until 6:45 with Tom

6:45 **Magic Time!**
New members - Brian
Dues ($3) - Ray
Ambassador & Industry news - Lyle
Shareware - Ray
Items to buy or sell

7:30 Tonight's mini-demo:
Universal Access
Brian Fountain

8:00 Wrap-up - Brian

Please pay your food bill before the meeting starts.

Please consider dining at C&M. With more diners, we ensure that meeting costs remain low.
Thank You!!

Apple CEO Apologizes In Options Scandal

Company Says Jobs Did Not Benefit

Apple Computer's chief executive, Steve Jobs, apologized yesterday for a stock options scandal that he said "happened on my watch," after a three-month internal investigation uncovered "serious concerns" with the actions of two former executives.

Jobs was aware "in a few instances" that unnamed company executives had gone back in time to cherry-pick dates when stock prices were low to increase the likelihood that employees would turn greater profits. But Jobs did not "receive or otherwise benefit from these grants," the Cupertino, Calif., company said in a statement after the markets closed.

About the Mac OS X 10.4.8 Update (delta)

Check Apple's website at:
docs.info.apple.com/article.html?artnum=304200
To view this article and find the links mentioned within.

The Mac OS X 10.4.8 Update (delta) updates Mac OS X 10.4.7 to version 10.4.8 on both Intel-based Macs and PowerPC-based Macs. (If you are updating from Mac OS X 10.4, 10.4.1, 10.4.2, 10.4.3, 10.4.4, 10.4.5, or 10.4.6 to 10.4.8, see this article instead.)

Important: Please read before installing.
• After installing the delta version of this update on an Intel-based Mac, thecomputer will restart two times--the first restart after installing this update may take several minutes; please allow it to complete.
• You may experience unexpected results if you have third party system software modifications installed, or if you've modified the operating system through other means. (This does not apply to normal application software installation.)
• The installation process should not be interrupted. If a power outage or other interruption occurs during installation, use the standalone installer (see below) from Apple Downloads to update.
• If issues occur during installation--for example, Software Update quits unexpectedly, please see this article.

Installation
There are two ways to update to Mac OS X 10.4.8: Use Software Update or the standalone installer. You only need to use one of these methods to update your computer. Automatic Software Update Software Update, located in the Apple menu, will automatically download the latest Apple software. (Software Update might have linked you to this article to learn more about the update.) Note that the update's size may vary from computer to computer

when installed using Software Update. Some updates must be installed prior to others, so you may need to run Software Update more than once to get all of the available updates.

Standalone installer
Download the update installer and run it manually. This a useful option when you need to update multiple computers but only want to download the update once. Two versions of the standalone installer are available from Apple Downloads: a delta and combo.
• The delta update for PowerPC and Intel-based Macs installer (described here) updates Mac OS X 10.4.7 to 10.4.8.
• The combo update installer (described in this article) updates Mac OS X 10.4, 10.4.1, 10.4.2, 10.4.3, 10.4.4, 10.4.5, 10.4.6, and 10.4.7 to 10.4.8.
What's included? This update offers many improvements, including the following, which apply to both Intel- and Power-PC-based Macs unless otherwise noted:

Printing
• Adds support for CDSASSL (Common Data Security Architecture Secure Sockets Layer) printer connections.
• Addresses an issue for Mac OS X 10.4.7 in which some documents containing some Chinese or Korean language characters might not print as expected.

Finder and Apple applications
• Resolves an issue in which a Finder alert message with the buttons "Initialize", "Ignore", and "Eject" might not appear after connecting a partitioned FireWire hard drive.
• Addresses a potential issue in which Preview may unexpectedly quit.
• Improves reliability of iTunes syncing with certain iPod models.

Networking and modem
• Resolves performance issues that could occur when connecting to a Comcast network.
• Improves security by adding support for EAP-FAST for AirPort wireless authentication.
• Improves Express Card behavior for portable Intel-based Macs.
• Improves reliability for connections made in Ireland with an external Apple USB Modem.
• Improves connection reliability for external Apple USB Modems when resuming an Internet connection after answering an incoming call.
• A computer restart is no longer needed to restart nfsd.
• Improves Apple File Sharing client performance by changing the default AFP WAN quantum size..

More...
• Windows File Sharing now generates only one process, avoiding an issue that could cause a Mac OS X computer to become unresponsive if it won a master browser election.
• Improves reliability when faxing in France or Belgium via an external Apple USB Modem. Third-party
• Resolves an issue for Microsoft Word in which Word might stop responding when saving a file that uses certain OpenType fonts.
• Adds RAW image decoding support for these cameras: Sony DSLR-A100, Nikon D2Xs, Fuji FinePix S2 Pro, Fuji FinePix S3 Pro (+Highlights) and Konica Minolta 7.

• Resolves an issue in which thumbnails may appear blank when importing RAW images from a Canon 30D camera.
• Resolves an issue for Microsoft PowerPoint in which the display resolution might not change as expected after switching from a PowerPoint presentation to a different application via Command-Tab.
• Improves compatibility for Canon EOS Utility software after connecting a Canon EOS Kiss Digital camera to a PowerPC-based Mac.
• Improves compatibility for the TV Tracker 2 Dashboard widget.

Other
• Includes recent Apple security updates.
• Improves the accuracy of Rosetta numerics and addresses Altivec translation issues on Intel-based Macs.
• ColorSync matching no longer fails when using a V4 ICC profile in an application opened with Rosetta on an Intel-based Mac.
• Addresses an issue in which some USB devices connected to a PCI card may not be recognized after starting up or waking the computer.
• Resolves an issue in which external USB-based video cameras may not be available after quitting the application that is using it.
• Reduces time needed to transfer data from a USB-based image scanner.
• Improves responsiveness of the Translation Dashboard widget.
• Addresses an issue in which text typed with the Hangul input method may not be visible while the Caps Lock key is active, on PowerPC-based Macs.
• Adds support on Intel-based Macs for multiple cores to LAPACK and BLAS routines in the Accelerate framework; the maximum number of threads used by Accelerate BLAS routines is now limited by the environment variable VECLIB_MAXIMUM_THREADS; addresses an issue with some complex BLAS routines in the Accelerate framework that were encountering an illegal instruction.

Mac's share again rising

With its numbers for August, Net Applications attempted to paint a picture of impending doom and gloom for the fairer platform, stating that the Mac's improving fortunes had stagnated and would soon fall back. However, numbers for September show that 4.72 percent of those measured were running either a PPC (3.88) or Mactel (0.84) iteration of the Mac OS's healthy 0.39 percent rise.

Moreover, Apple's Safari also saw a significant month-over-month rise in share from 3.21 percent to 3.53 percent.

The big winner in Net Application's September numbers is, however, Mozilla's Firefox. The leading alternative browser now accounts for 12.46 percent of those measured, whereas it stood at just 11.84 percent in August.

Editor's note: We'll have to wait for Apple's unit figures, but these numbers would seem to indicate that sales are still driving north at a good clip...

TarMac
Member Contributions

from Larry McCullough

Hey Frank,

I did the below this weekend in case you want to pass it on in the Gazette. Not a big deal, but it was fun, especially getting the old LaCie to work.

Larry

I recently replaced the Sony CD/DVD-ROM "super" drive that came installed in a Power Mac G5 purchased when the G5 was first introduced. The original drive did not have dual layer DVD burning capability and was a bit slow when compared to current standards. I replaced it with a 16X DVD±R/RW "SuperDrive" with 8X Double Layer & Dual Layer burn capability. It was sold by MCE Technologies and was manufactured by Pioneer; model number DVR-111. It also works in a Power Mac G4. Allegedly it is the only 16X SuperDrive Upgrade available that supports Double Layer 8.5GB recording with iDVD in OS 10.4. I was surprised how inexpensive it was. Installation was simple. I've burned CDs with it and the speed increase was quite noticeable. I haven't yet burned a video in iDVD, which will be the real compatibility test.
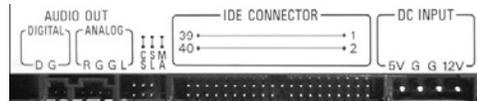
Upgrading and old external CD Drive to a Super Drive

I had an old LaCie external CD RW burner that seldom would mount on the desktop, so was essentially worthless. I placed the old Sony CD/DVD-ROM "super" drive from the G5 into the LaCie enclosure and found that I now have an external super drive for use with an old G3 iMac which still functions well, but has a long-dead CD drive in it. I still can't boot from the upgraded LaCie because it's a USB connection only. The old problem of the external LaCie CD drive not mounting on the desktop seems to be completely gone. Although I've used a lot of LaCie products for a lot of years, I've been getting increasingly concerned about the quality of drive mechanisms they are using. The fact that the Sony drive in a LaCie external CD box works flawlessly, as opposed to the generic drive it replaced, adds further to my concern.

If anybody is doing a similar swap to an external CD enclosure, there is a small crossover jumper on the back of internal CD drives that is normally plugged to "master." To work in an external enclosure, the jumper will usually have to be set to "slave." The master or slave status is set by moving the jumper to the desired setting. There should

be a small diagram on the back of the drive displaying the orientation for MAster, SLave, or CS (cable select.) Using your fingernails, simply pull the jumper off its pins and push it into the desired position.

On the graphic above, which is the back of a typical CD/DVD device, the jumper (not shown) would be placed vertically on the center pair of pins in the group to the left of IDE connector to set the drive to slave, or on the rightmost two pins in the group to set the drive to master.

Maximizing Battery Life

from Cindy Huffman*

With a little bit of care, you can maximize the battery life (i.e. the time your battery will run before it must be recharged) and lifespan of your notebook's battery. Most importantly, use your Apple notebook in its comfort zone for temperature (See "Keep Your Notebook Comfy"). Don't leave it locked in a hot trunk during the summer.

Notebook Temperate Zone.

Your Apple notebook works best from 50° to 95°F. You should store them in places with temperatures of -13° to 113°. That's 10° to 35°C and -25° to 45°, for the metrically inclined. Keeping your Mac as near room temperature as possible (22°C) is ideal.

Your New Notebook

Be sure to fully charge your portable when you plug it in for the first time, and then run Software Update to ensure you have the latest software. Apple periodically releases updates that may improve battery performance.

Standard Maintenance

For proper maintenance of a lithium-based battery, it's important to keep the electrons in it moving occasionally. Apple does not recommend leaving your portable plugged in all the time. An ideal use would be a commuter who uses her MacBook Pro on the train, then plugs it in at the office to charge. This keeps the battery juices flowing. If on the other hand, you use a desktop computer at work, and save a notebook for infrequent travel, Apple recommends charging and discharging its battery at least once per month. Need a reminder? Add an event to your desktop's iCal.

Long Term Storage

If you don't plan on using your notebook for more than six months, Apple recommends that you remove and store the battery with a 50% charge. If you store a battery when it's fully dis-

charged, it could fall into a deep discharge state, which renders it incapable of holding any charge. Conversely, if you store it fully charged for an extended period of time, the battery may experience some loss of battery capacity, meaning it will have a shorter life. Be sure to store the ejected battery at the proper temperature. (See "Notebook Temperate Zone.")

Optimal Setting

You can choose to use your Apple notebook in a way that maximizes its battery life.

• **Energy:** The Energy Saver control panel offers several settings that determine power levels for your PowerBook. Your portable knows when it's plugged in, and runs accordingly. When on battery power, it will dim the screen and use other components sparingly. If you change this setting to maximize performance, your battery will drain more quickly.

• **Brightness**: Dim the screen to the lowest comfortable level to achieve maximum battery life. For instance, when watching a DVD on an airplane, you may not need full brightness if all the lights are off.

• **AirPort Wireless:** AirPort consumes power, even if you are not using its features to connect to a network. You can turn it off in its control panel to save power.

• **Bluetooth Wireless:** Likewise, you can turn off Bluetooth to maximize your battery life, as it also consumes power when not in use.

• **Applications and peripherals:** Disconnect peripherals and quit applications not in use. Eject CDs and DVDs if not currently accessing them.

* Cindy found this article at:
docs.info.apple.com/article.html?artnum=304200

Universal Access Resources

Check these online resources for more info on Universal Access.

for Apple developers:

• developer.apple.com/ue/accessibility/universalaccess.html

for Apple customers:

• www.apple.com/macosx/features/universal access

US government information:

• www.section508.gov/index.cfm?FuseAction=Content&ID=11

Sneak peak at Leopard (10.5) capabilities:

• www.apple.com/macosx/leopard/accessibility.html

E U D O R A

Eudora E-mail Client To Go Open Source

Qualcomm on Wednesday announced plans to release future versions of its Eudora e-mail client software as open source. The company is collaborating with The Mozilla Foundation to base the next version of Eudora on Mozilla's Thunderbird e-mail software.

Qualcomm and Mozilla will each participate in, and continue to foster development communities based around the open source Mozilla project, with a view to enhancing the capabilities and ease of use of both Eudora and Thunderbird, said the organizations in a statement.

Qualcomm expects the first open source version of Eudora to be released during the first half of the 2007 calendar year. In the interim, the company has released the final commercial versions of Eudora for Mac and Windows, and is selling them at a reduced price of $19.95 with a six-month tech support period (customers who have already paid will have their tech support commitments honored in their entirety).

Eudora has a long and storied history on the Macintosh platform. It was originally developed by Steve Dorner at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 1988 and was the first popular Internet e-mail client for the Macintosh in wide distribution. Qualcomm later acquired the software and released it commercially for Mac and Windows. Dorner is now vice president of technology for Qualcomms Eudora group.

"There have been discussions for some time about Eudora's future since it's not in Qualcomm's core business," Jeremy James Senior Director of Corporate Communications, told Macworld. "We wanted to make sure that the core user base was looked after -- there has always been a great reluctance to do something that would abandon those users."

Eudora's future development roadmap earned a thumbs-up from Dorner, who said he's excited to see the software returning to the open source community. Using the Mozilla Thunderbird technology platform as a basis for future versions of Eudora will provide some key infrastructure that the existing versions lacked, such as a cross-platform code base and a world-class display engine. Making it open source will bring more developers to bear on Eudora than ever before, said Dorner in a statement.

"We feel really good about this approach," said James.

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T-Mobile Talks Up Apple, New 3G Network

T-Mobile last week gave a peek into its future plans, which will include a high-speed 3G networks in 2007, enhanced mobile e-mail options, and possibly a partnership with Apple Computer.

According to ABC News, the fourth-largest U.S. wireless carrier at a press conference on Friday said it plans to spend 4.2 billion for 120 new wireless spectrum licenses in the 1,700 and 2,100 Mhz bands, covering the entire United States. The new spectrum will put T-Mobile ahead of Sprint and roughly on par with Verizon in terms of average spectrum in the top 100 US markets. The company said it now has an average of 52.2 Mhz spectrum, compared to Sprint's 49.8, Verizon's 53.1 and Cingular's 67.6.
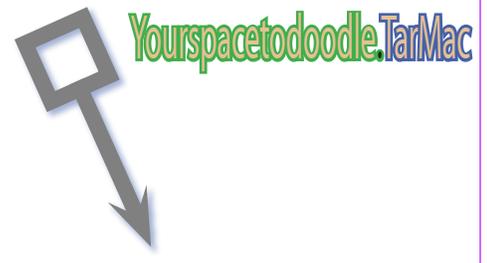
During the press conference, T-mobile chief executive Robert Dotson said the new 3G network will be complemented by UMA, which lets phone calls transition between cellular and Wi-Fi to enhance indoor coverage.

Dotson also spoke quite favorably of Apple, singling out the Mac maker's efforts on the desktop as a "great precursor" of where he thinks the marketplace is headed with 3G, leading to speculation that T-Mobile, not Cingular, will host Apple's much-rumored iPhone project.

Of course, Dotson "declined to comment" about any relationship between the two companies, but went on at some length about how Apple's and T-Mobile's visions seem to be aligned, ABC reported. "The [upcoming] Leopard operating system does an incredibly good job of integrating video, and you're starting to see the integration of voice," he said. "It is a good precursor to how this marketplace can evolve, and how you can really start making money off products and services in a mobile environment."

The T-mobile chief indicated that Mac OS X, not the iPod, is his favorite Apple product. He downplayed the importance of mobile music, video, and TV in the 3G landscape, and instead focused on user-generated content from the likes of MySpace and YouTube, e-mail, and personal information management. As much as 30 percent of Web browsing on T-Mobile's Sidekick handhelds is "directly from MySpace," Dotson said. He added that e-mail is the number one Internet application on PCs, with 91 percent of broadband users e-mailing, only 5 percent of consumer e-mail is currently accessed in a mobile environment.

"As can be seen with Apple's new Leopard operating system, the richness of e-mail communications is just beginning to discover elements beyond the printed word, moving to dynamic and personally tailored image-rich communications," he said.

Yourspacetodoodle.TarMac