

Microsoft

... at it again

Microsoft Patents the Mother of all Adware Systems

07.17.07 - John McBride - ars technica

It's such a tremendously bad idea that it's almost bound to succeed. Microsoft has filed another patent, this one for an "advertising framework" that uses "context data" from your hard drive to show you advertisements and "apportion and credit advertising revenue" to ad suppliers in real time. Yes, Redmond wants to own the patent on the mother of all adware.

The application, filed in 2006, describes a multi-faceted, robust ad-delivering system that lives on a "user computer, whether it's part of the OS, an application or integrated within applications."

"Applications, tools, or utilities may use an application program interface to report context data tags such as key words or other information that may be used to target advertisements," says the filing. "The advertising framework may host several components for receiving and processing the context data, refining the data, requesting advertisements from an advertising supplier, for receiving and forwarding advertisements to a display client for presentation, and for providing data back to the advertising supplier."

The adware framework would leave almost no data untouched in its quest to sell you stuff. It would inspect "user document files, user e-mail files, user music files, downloaded podcasts, computer settings, computer status messages (e.g., a low memory status or low printer ink)," and more. How could we have been so blind as to not see the marketing value in computer status messages?

The software would also free advertising from its traditional browser yoke. "A word processor may display a banner ad along the top of a window, similar to a toolbar, while a graphical ad may be displayed in a frame associated with the application. A digital editor for photos or movies may support video-based advertisements," the patent application says.

The patent application, first unearthed by InformationWeek, gives the impression that your software would have more control over the advertising than you would. "An e-mail client may specify that ads from competitors must be excluded, that its own display client must be used... (that) no more than 4 ads per hour are allowed, and that only text or graphical... advertisements

are supported." The patent makes no mention of any method by which an actual user might exert control, nor does it mention very real privacy or security concerns.

That's okay. It's still a good thing. It says so right in the application: "The ability to derive and process context data from local sources rather than monitor interactions with a remote entity, such as a server, benefits both consumers and advertisers by delivering more tightly targeted advertisements. The benefit to the user is the perception that the ads are more relevant, and therefore, less of an interruption. The benefit to the advertiser is better focus and a higher chance of conversion to a sale."

The patent is a fascinating exercise in advertising delivery systems. But surely that's all it is—an exercise. No way anyone would ever actually make a thing like this. Right?

editor note: Does this mean I'll only receive advertising for Mac stuff? Redmond time will tell!

"Not so quick"

Apple looking into QuickTime 7.2 issue

07.17.07 - Jim Dalrymple - Macworld

Apple on Tuesday said it is looking into an issue that some users are having with the most recent update to its QuickTime media technology.



After installing QuickTime 7.2, some users reported having issues with some Code Fragment Manager (CFM) applications including Word, Excel and Entourage, among others.

"Apple has received a few reports that the QuickTime 7.2 update may cause issues with some Power PC-based applications running on Intel-based Macs, and we are looking into it," an Apple spokesperson told Macworld.

Apple recommended contacting AppleCare support if customers have any questions.

QuickTime 7.2 added export features for the iPhone, support for full screen viewing in QuickTime Player and updated the H.264 codec, among other changes.

The issue appears to be limited and does not affect everyone. Apple didn't provide any timeline for a QuickTime update to fix the issue.

Safari's Regrettable Memory

07.17.07 - Christopher Breen - Macworld



Reader Bill Zagotta is unhappy with Safari's long memory. He writes:

Safari does a nice job of trying to guess and fill-in the web address I am about type...sometimes. But after a restart, when I type "g" to go to Google, it guesses I want to go to a genealogical web page. I have tried to clear out caches and to reset Safari and to delete the items it seems to be remembering for a "g." Nothing will eliminate Safari's memories of web addresses I have visited. How can I erase all or undesired web address in the Safari brain?

Regrettably, Safari doesn't provide a single command for getting rid of these memorized entries. They're concocted from Safari's bookmarks, cache, and history. You can get close by choosing Reset Safari from the Safari menu but using it can be problematic. In the first place, it doesn't touch your bookmarks so some of those entries will still appear. Secondly, it will clear more data than you probably want it to. In addition to clearing the history and emptying the cache, it clears the Downloads window, removes all cookies, and gets rid of any names and passwords you may have asked it to save.

You can do this piecemeal. Start by choosing Safari -> Empty Cache. Then choose History -> Clear History. Then go into the Bookmarks area and clear out bookmarks you don't want.

Or you can just adopt one of a couple of new habits. The first would be to type more than just that first letter "g." Try "go" and see if that brings up Google. Or bypass the whole autofill thing by clicking in the Address field, pressing the Space Bar once, and start typing. Autofill doesn't work if the first character is a space.

Finally, you can help prevent additional entries from being added by choosing Private Browsing from the Safari menu. With this option enabled, the websites you visit won't be cached or added to Safari's history and therefore don't later appear as Autofill entries.

Tonight...

- 7:00 Help desk - Tom Davis

7:00 **Magic Time!**
New members - Lynn McAlpine
Dues (\$3) - Ray Kallman

7:10 **Security observations from work**
Ray Kallman

@7:30 **iChat**
Lynn, Brian, Cindy

Wrap-up - Lynn

What is this thing called iChat

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

iChat is an AOL Instant Messenger (AIM), ICQ, .Mac, Google Talk and Jabber client by Apple Computer for their Mac OS X operating system. Using a Jabber-like protocol and Bonjour for user discovery, it also allows for LAN communication. iChat's AIM support is fully endorsed by AOL, and uses their official implementation of the AIM OSCAR protocol. Using a Jabber transport, iChat users may also integrate their MSN and Yahoo! contacts into the Jabber pane.



It bears a brushed metal interface (as of Mac OS 10.4) and uses speech bubbles and pictures that are meant to personify the online chatting experience. With iChat, green (available), yellow (idle), and red (away) dots can be seen next to the name of each connected user on the buddy list. To cater for colour-blind users, this can be altered to show different shapes to illustrate status rather than colour.

History

In June 2003, Apple Inc. announced iChat AV Public Beta, a new version of iChat that added voice and video chat capabilities. It also introduced the iSight camera, designed specifically for use with iChat AV. These capabilities are based on the industry-standard, but not yet widely adopted, Session Initiation Protocol (SIP) for video chat and audio chat. The final version of the software was shipped with Mac OS X v10.3 and became available separately on the same day for users of Mac OS X v10.2 for \$29.95. Apple eventually discontinued sale of iChat AV separately; it can now only be acquired through OS X or with a new Mac.

In February 2004, America Online introduced AOL Instant Messenger (AIM) version 5.5 for Windows-PC users. This version allowed video (but not voice) chats over the AIM protocol and was compatible with Apple's iChat AV. On the same day, Apple released iChat AV 2.1 Public Beta to allow Mac OS X users to video conference with AIM 5.5 users.

In June 2004, Steve Jobs revealed that the next version of iChat AV (commonly called iChat 3) would be included with Mac OS X v10.4 (Tiger). iChat 3 supports up to four people in a video conference and ten people in an audio conference. Additionally, video conferencing uses H.264/AVC, which offers better quality than the H.263 codec used in previous versions. This release also supports the Jabber protocol (which can be directly used to connect to Google Talk and indirectly be used to connect to users of services including Yahoo! Messenger and MSN Messenger as well). However, support is limited as it does not support several common Jabber/XMPP features like account creation, service discovery and full Multi-User Chat support. Despite initial rumors that the client would support tabbed browsing for multiple chat windows (a popular feature available on almost all third-party clients), the released version did not, puzzling many users.

In October 2005, iChat received support for encrypted communications, but only for paid subscribers to Apple's .mac service. These features are part of iChat 3.1, released as part of the Mac OS X 10.4.3 update on October 31, 2005. This version also added support for Jabber multi-user chat.

On August 7, 2006, several upcoming features for the Mac OS X Leopard version of iChat were announced. Major features include iChat Theater, which allows users to share photos and Keynote presentations over a video chat, and "Backdrops," similar to chroma keys, but do not require a green or blue screen, and allow users to insert movies or photos as a backdrop in video chats. Also being added is screen sharing, which will allow two users of Mac OS X Leopard to have control of the same desktop and work collaboratively. Minor features include multiple logins, animated icons, use of Photo Booth effects in live video chat, and tabbed chats.

On June 11, 2007 in addition to the features announced at WWDC 06, it was announced that iChat Theater would be able to show documents that can be displayed on Quick Look. However, even though screen sharing was omitted from the keynote, the button for screen sharing still is on the current Leopard screenshots of iChat.

iChat Resources

- www.apple.com/macosx/features/ichat/
- www.apple.com/macosx/leopard/features/ichat.html
- www.apple.com/support/ichat/
- www.apple.com/support/ishight/
- docs.info.apple.com/article.html?artnum=25748
- www.mac.com/1/learningcenter/Modules/qg_dmiChat_t1.html

Save Large Photoshop Files Faster

07.18.07 - Rob Griffiths - MacWorld

If you work with large Photoshop files, you're probably well aware of how slowly they save. Much of that time is spent flattening your image in order to create the preview icon you see in the Finder. While useful to have, you probably don't need to see a preview icon for every interim version of your image. By disabling preview icon generation on save, Photoshop will save your work much more quickly. You can change how Photoshop works permanently via its preferences, or just on a save-by-save basis.

To permanently alter Photoshop's preview icon behavior, select Photoshop -> Preferences -> File Handling, and look in the File Saving Options section. Set the Image Previews pop-up to Never Save if you want to permanently banish icon previews, though that will make browsing your images in the Finder much tougher. A better option is to select Ask When Saving. When you save a file in the future, you'll see a new section in the Save dialog that lets you enable or disable the preview for that particular save.



If you'd rather not make a permanent change, here's a workaround that will accomplish the same result. Create a new group (Layer -> New -> Group) and call it Toggle All or Master Group or something similar. Now drag all your existing layers and groups into this new group. When you want to save quickly, without a preview, turn off the visibility to this Toggle All group (click the small eye icon in the Layers palette), then save. If you want the icon previews created, leave the visibility as it is prior to saving.

A non-group alternative method of doing the same thing is to Option-Click on the eye icon for any one layer, which will hide all layers other than the selected one, then release the Option key and click the eye again for that same layer, hiding that one. After you save the file without the preview, the quickest way to show all the hidden layers is to control-click on the Layers palette and use the contextual menu.

This trick won't make much of a difference on smaller Photoshop images. But if you routinely work with large, multi-layer, multi-group masterpiece, the time savings can be considerable.

An iPhone in a Blender?

07.17.07 - Adam C. Engst - Tidbits

This is just painful to watch. There's a company called Blendtec that makes a high-powered blender. To showcase its capabilities, they've done a number of hilarious "Will It Blend?" videos that feature a wide variety of objects being subjected to blending. They've destroyed a can of fake cheese, old toilet components, and even a garden hose. But for their latest spin de force, Blendtec put an iPhone into their demon blender, and... well, you'll just have to see what happens for yourself. Don't try this at home, not that any sane person would.



Watch the iPhone spin and self destruct at: blogs.pcworld.com/staffblog/archives/004866.html

TarMac

Tidewater Area Macintosh Users Group
Apple User Group

The Tarmac Vaporware Gazette, named in honor of past president Jerry Rowe, is published for each meeting by smitty's printshop, a non-existent shop specializing in things of little or no importance to the world at large. Send your comments, good or bad, to smittysprintshop@mac.com.

TarMac "Control Panel"

Brian Fountain, president
Tom Davis, vice-president
Ray Kallman, treasurer
Lyle Sanders, user group ambassador
Jamie Lewis, master-at-arms

other panel members

Jan Cook
Cindy Huffman
Lynn McAlpine
Frank Smith

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If you stand up you're the president

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