

# The Mac Vaporware Gazette

*all the news that's fit to download!*

## Electronics Demand May Recover Late This Year

Macworld 04.06.09  
Dan Nystedt



The current uptick in electronics production may be a first sign of bottoming, but real end-user demand for electronic devices will not emerge until the final quarter of this year, Gartner said in a report Sunday. "The bottoming of PC-related production is breathing the first signs of hope into the electronics supply chain," said Gartner analyst Klaus Rinnen, in the market researcher's Semiconductor DQ Monday Report.

"Still, the majority of the industry will not bottom until the third quarter of 2009," he added.

Almost all sectors of the electronics equipment market remain in decline, according to the report. It will take time for all IT markets to hit bottom, but once they do they can return to growth.

The rebounding process will take around two years, he said.

The Gartner analyst is not alone in his view. Despite some positive news recently in the electronics sector, such as a pickup in chip manufacturing activity over the past month and the strong sales of BlackBerry smartphones reported by Research In Motion (RIM) last week, the overall electronics sector remains in decline.

Bhavtosh Vajpayee, technology industry analyst at CLSA Asia-Pacific Markets, says improvements in the technology industry over the past few months have been driven by companies restocking their inventories after working them down, not real end demand.

Companies are also selling more products at significantly lower prices, which is great for users but not so good for corporate profits.

"We expect disappointments to follow in the absence of end-demand revival," he wrote in a report last week.

Gartner says a recovery in global electronics markets depends on economic recovery and the effectiveness of government stimulus packages.

The trouble is that despite some more recent positive news flow for financial institutions in the U.S., expectations for global growth remain dim.

The Economist Intelligence Unit last month reported that there was no let up in the deterioration of the global economy in the first few months of the year.

"In particular, the collapse in global trade since end-2008 is causing severe problems for export-dependant economies, particularly those in East Asia and Germany," the group said in a report.

The researcher now forecasts the world economy will contract by 2.6 percent year-on-year. A global recovery will begin in 2010.

## Some Favorite Apps That Make iPhone Worth the Price

Walter S. Mossberg  
The Wall Street Journal  
03.25.09



Despite all the economic misery, the past nine months have been a little like the heady days of the early 1980s when the personal computer was just getting rolling and new software programs were popping up like weeds.

That's because we have a new computing platform, the modern handheld computer, which is also attracting new software and new functions in droves.

The leader in this phenomenon has been Apple's iPhone, though I expect that this year a few competitors will also begin to attract loads of apps, or widgets. These are small software programs, easily downloaded and purchased, that often connect to the Internet to perform a specific function.

We've seen this before, on a smaller scale, with third-party software for the original Palm (PALM) platform, for Windows Mobile, and, to a limited extent, for the BlackBerry. But these new apps can be far more sophisticated, and they are appearing at a much faster rate.

To give you an idea of the scale of this phenomenon, in just the nine months since Apple (AAPL) opened

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**This Week...** General Meeting with Tips & tricks  
by Brian Fountain

**Next Week...**

Annual Swap Meet  
Buy and Sell your "vintage" stuff

## 2 OS X Upgrades can cause RAM Issues

MacFixit  
03.30 09

Many users have experienced RAM-related issues when upgrading their operating systems to Mac OS X 10.5.x. The symptoms include kernel panics, OS crashes, or the install disk failing to boot the computer.

Apple Support Discussions user arminbw writes: "Random kernel panics on a PowerBook G4 running 10.5.6 (fresh and clean install). This problem does not occur while running 10.4.11. The Apple Hardware Test did not bring up any issues."

Reverting back to the previous OS, as arminbw later relates, seems to stop the kernel panics and crashes, but the question is primarily this, can an operating system upgrade cause otherwise stable RAM to perform poorly and cause problems?

The answer appears to be, "yes." Reports of operating system upgrades causing RAM issues for people have been reported for quite some time. Apple Support Discussions user kaplucker relays: "Quite some time ago, when I upgraded a PowerBook from 10.2 to 10.3, I had a similar problem. Under 10.2 the machine was stable but when I tried to upgrade to 10.3 the machine kept crashing. When I called Apple support, the first thing they asked me was if I had third-party RAM installed, which I did. They then said they thought the RAM was an issue. I asked them "So RAM can work fine under one version of the OS but be bad under another version?" They said yes."

Issues related to RAM can often be pointed to third-party vendors--not to say that third-party RAM is not as good, but Apple does its hardware and software testing using its own RAM. Each new operating system is optimized for the RAM that Apple uses in its machines.

ASD user kaplucker later writes: "I went back to the vendor that sold me the RAM and got two new sticks. After that, all was well."

The actual reasons for why this might occur remain a richly debated topic. Evidence would suggest that a change in timing of the memory access from the new operating system could have something to do with the deficiencies created after the upgrade. Another theory suggests a "bad memory cell location" being at the center of the issues.

In any case, the issues between kernel panics, OS upgrades, and RAM issues are certainly related. If you are experiencing similar issues, you can test your system using the Apple Hardware Test or a third-party testing program like Memtest to see if your RAM is causing issues with your computer. If you are still under warranty, you may consider bringing your computer into an Apple Retail store or an authorized AppleCare technician for testing.



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### iPhone Apps

the iPhone App Store, around 25,000 apps have been published for the iPhone and its close cousin, the iPod Touch. And there have been 800 million downloads of these apps, according to Apple. That's impressive.

So, this week, I thought I'd present minireviews of some of the apps I find myself using most often, in no particular order. You may have an entirely different list of favorites. I am not saying these are the best apps on the iPhone, only that they do their jobs and make the device much more useful for me. All can be found in the app store, by searching on their names.

- **Tweetie** (\$2.99): There are many apps for using Twitter, but I use this one. It not only does a great job of showing me the social network's short, but numerous, postings, but also makes it

easy to track topic trends, to post my own entries, and to conduct and save searches.

- **Facebook** (free): This official iPhone app from Facebook covers the core functions of the full Web site. It allows you to view and upload status messages and photos, to check in on your friends, to manage friend requests, and to handle the service's internal email and chats.

- **Kindle** (free): This is Amazon's iPhone software version of its \$359 Kindle e-book reader. It lacks some of the fancier features of its hardware counterpart, like the ability to create notes or to look up words. But it gives you rapid access to any Kindle e-books you've bought, helps you buy new ones and makes the e-books easy to read on the iPhone. It can be used without a hardware Kindle, but if you have both, Amazon (AMZN) will synchronize the two devices so each knows the exact spot where you left off reading on the other.

- **ICE** (99 cents): This app, whose name stands for In Case of Emergency, puts a big Red Cross-style icon on your iPhone's screen. When the icon is tapped, the app displays your name and contact information; the names and info for your doctors or other emergency contacts; and lists of your medical conditions, allergies and the medications you take. I keep it on my iPhone's home screen.

- **Easy Wi-Fi** (\$2.99): If you hate typing in all the log-in information for the commercial Wi-Fi hot spots to which you subscribe, this app is for you. It automates the process so you have to press only one button. For each of the networks you use, you have to type in your log-in info only once. After that, Easy Wi-Fi will do it for you.

- **ReaddleDocs** (\$9.99): A number of iPhone apps allow you to synchronize files with a PC or Mac, but ReaddleDocs stands out. It has too many features to list here, but my favorite is that

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# TarMac Battery Tips

From MacFixit  
04.02.09

## Tips for great battery life

As the world of personal electronics grows increasingly mobile, issues surrounding battery life, lifespan, and consumption are becoming hot topics for users and manufacturers alike. Rechargeable lithium-ion batteries are the standard power source for many of our favorite Apple products: portable notebooks, iPods, and iPhones. Although at some point all rechargeable lithium ion batteries will fail, there are some tips and practices that can help extend the life of one of the most valuable components of your mobile experience.

### Tips for extending your iPod's battery life

1. **Keep your iPod in the temperature sweet spot.** iPod battery life takes a particular hit when left in extreme heat. When you're out on a summer trip, try not to leave your iPod in the car.
2. **Stay up-to-date.** Similar to Apple's computers, iPods get software updates that can improve battery performance. Be sure to regularly check for updates in iTunes.
3. **Use it.** iPod batteries perform best when they are used. Lithium-ion batteries are designed to be in constant use. Try not to leave your iPod in a drawer for too long at a time. If you find you do not use the battery much, charge and discharge the battery once a month to keep the juices flowing.
4. **Set it right.** If you have a Wi-Fi enabled iPod, disable the Wi-Fi when you're not using it. Similar to AirPort cards in notebooks, the Wi-Fi card in iPods are constantly searching for signals and working to stay connected to them.
5. **Back off your backlight.** Having your backlight always on will significantly reduce the battery life your iPod exhibits.
6. **The built-in equalizer** can also reduce battery life when in use.
7. **Third-party applications** designed for iPods are generally not concerned with battery consumption. Using these often will result in a shorter battery life.
8. For e-mail and data receiving enabled iPods, **change your settings to fetch data less regularly.** Push e-mail and quick data fetching greatly reduces battery life.
9. **Create great playlists.** If you constantly click through your songs, your iPod is constantly accessing the hard drive to fill the cache causing it to use more battery power. Create playlists that will minimize the number of times you click through your library to find the songs you want to listen to.
10. **Compress it.** Using compressed songs on your iPod reduces the amount of power required by your iPod to play them. iPods are designed to work most effectively with songs less than 9MB.
11. **Breathe a little.** Keeping your iPod in a case is a great idea for protection. However, while charging, it is as great an idea to take it out. iPods generate heat while charging and keeping it tightly wrapped in its case can damage the battery performance.

### Tips for extending your iPhone's battery life

Following many of the iPod tips (listed above) will ensure your iPhone's battery life will last as expected. There are also a couple extra features the iPhone offers that can affect battery life.

1. **Watch the heat.** This one bears repeating. Keep your iPhone from being in environments containing excessive heat: your car's

glove box, direct sunlight, or near heating devices in your house.

2. **iPhones have valuable tools to help with battery life maintenance.** Viewing your usage statistics, much like keeping track of your car's MPG, can help you determine the battery life you are getting as well as what to expect in the future.
3. **3G and Airplane Mode.** If you have an iPhone 3G, using the 3G network depletes the battery much faster than the 2.5G network. If you are in an area where you are receiving little to no signal, turn your iPhone to Airplane Mode. Similar to Wi-Fi cards, your iPhone is constantly trying to maintain or search for AT&T's network signals, using battery power all the while.
4. **Lock it up.** Though it may seem obvious, lock your iPhone when you aren't using it to prevent unintended screen usage.
5. **Use your iPhone.** Not that most people have a problem with this one, but doing a complete charge and discharge cycle each month will greatly improve your battery's life span.

### Tips for extending your notebook's battery life

1. **Check out your environment.** All electronic devices have a sweet spot regarding environmental temperature during use. For Apple's notebooks, the sweet spot lies between 50 degrees and 95 degrees Fahrenheit.
2. **Stay up-to-date.** Periodically, Apple releases software updates that improve battery performance. Be sure to download and install all the latest software updates as they arrive.
3. **Start on the right foot.** Be sure to get a full charge and all your updates when you first get your new computer and plug it in for the first time.
4. **Be useful.** Batteries work better with the juices flowing. If you typically use your notebook on your desk and plugged in, hoping to save your battery, Apple recommends discharging and charging your battery once a month.
5. **Store it properly.** Apple recommends long term storage of your battery at a 50 percent charge. Having too little juice could result in your battery becoming permanently discharged. If you have too much you could lose total charge capacity. Be sure to keep your storage place within the temperature sweet spot mentioned earlier.
6. **Settings are important.** There are plenty of settings on Apple's notebooks to effectively maximize your battery life. In your System Preferences, the Energy Saver presents a couple options to manage your Mac's display and sleep settings. Use the presets to get the best performance (less battery life) or better battery life.
7. **Turn down the brightness.** Your computer's display should match the brightness of your environment. If you are on an airplane at night watching a movie, you can turn the display brightness down quite a bit. This is great for both the battery life and your eyes. The more your eyes have to adjust between different brightness levels, the more strain is placed on them.
8. **Be offline.** If you're not using the Internet, turn it off. When your AirPort wireless card is on, it is constantly working to find and stay connected to signals.
9. **Turn off Bluetooth.** Similar to AirPort, Bluetooth signals are constantly searching for signals and trying to connect when they find them. If you're not using a Bluetooth device, be sure to disable the feature.
10. **Watch what's open.** The more applications you have running at one time, the more power your computer needs to use to keep them running. When you're on battery power, try and use one application at a time if possible.
11. **Unplug peripherals.** Charging your iPod, syncing your iPhone, or downloading photos from your digital camera all take a toll on your battery life. This includes ejecting CDs and DVDs that aren't in use.



# Unix Scripts



The Unix subsystems on Mac OS X were originally written for machines that were typically never shut off. Mac OS X inherits this assumption in version 1.x, and has many system maintenance tasks that are scheduled to run between 3 am and 5 am. In addition, there are scripts designed to run weekly on weekends, and once a month in the middle of the night.

If these maintenance tasks are never run (such as on a laptop that is always shut off at night), many log files and system database will grow extremely large or fail to get backed up.

MacJanitor provides a way to run these system tasks at the click of a button. Laptop users could click the 'daily' button every morning (or every few days), or office workers could click the 'weekly' button on Mondays.

If you've been leaving your machine off at night without allowing the maintenance tasks to run for several weeks or more, the first time you run them using MacJanitor may take several minutes. Also, if your log files have grown extremely large and you are low on disk space, the tasks may have problems moving the files around and compressing them. After that, it typically takes less than a minute for each task.

The output of the task is displayed in the scrolling view in the bottom part of the window. If for some reason you feel the need, you may print the output of the system maintenance tasks (but why?...).

You can't really hurt anything by running the tasks more frequently than is intended, and they don't need to be run on a strict schedule. Just run them periodically when you get a free minute every few days or weeks.

*Editor's note: There has been some discussion as to whether Macjanitor runs properly in Leopard. I have used it on my Intel iMac and it*

*appears to work although the action bar in the display does not stop when the process is complete. There is also a widget called Maintidget that is designed to work with Leopard.*

## Five Favorite Keyboard Shortcuts

MacFixit  
03.30 09

Macs have a propensity for productivity. Built-in keyboard shortcuts are just one example. Here are five of our favorites for you to try this week.

- **(Command + Shift + L)** - Opens a new Safari window and performs a Google search for highlighted text when performed.
- **(Command + Option + F)** - Places cursor in the Google search bar in Safari.
- **(Command + Delete)** - Moves the highlighted file (in Finder) directly to the trash--a great timesaver when deleting multiple files throughout your system.
- **(Command + Option + Control + 8)** - Freaks your unsuspecting friends out **by inverting the colors on their screen.** This is actually an accessibility feature in OS X that helps vision-impaired users.
- **(Command + D)** - Moves the directory to the Desktop folder when performed in Save, Save as, or Download windows. Most programs have a default save or download folder (or default to your last saved folder). This command is very useful when you are not sure where you want to save your file

## iPhone Apps



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you can simply send an email with an attached file to a special email address Raddle provides and, very shortly, that file will appear on your iPhone. There, it can be stored and read (though not edited). You can organize your files in folders, and even send them to others. The app works with Microsoft Office files, PDF files and more.

• **Quordy** (\$2.99): There are thousands of games for the iPhone and Touch, but Quordy is the one I turn to most often. Much as in Boggle, it requires you to form as many words as possible from a random screen of letters in a set time period. You can challenge others, either nearby or over the Internet, to play the same game board you did and compare results. Or you can just play solo.

• **Google Mobile** (free): Sure, the iPhone has a fine Web browser with a built-in Google search box, but this app makes searching in Google even easier, with instant search suggestions, searches based on your location, and even the ability to enter search terms by speaking them rather than typing them, though I find the voice feature unreliable.

If you own an iPhone or iPod Touch, the App Store is what makes your device worth its price. It's the software, not the hardware, that makes these gadgets compelling.

## Apple announces WWDC 2009 dates

Dan Moren, [Macworld.com](http://Macworld.com)

Apple announced the dates for the 2009 Worldwide Developers Conference via its Developer Connection Web site. The conference will be held from June 8-12 at the Moscone Center West.

WWDC is a major yearly event for the Apple developer community, featuring technical sessions, hands-on labs, and access to Apple employees for those creating software for Mac OS X and the iPhone, as well as Information Technology professionals.

This year's program is likely to be a double threat for many programmers, as sessions will include information about both the forthcoming iPhone OS 3.0 update as well as the forthcoming Snow Leopard revision of Mac OS X.

Registration costs \$1,295 until April 24th, at which point it goes up \$300. Current ADC Student Members and student Team Members in the iPhone Developer University Program can apply for a WWDC Student Scholarship that will net them a free ride to the conference.

# The Five Most Underused Finder Tools

Speed up working with files by taking advantage of these shortcuts

Kirk McElhearn, [Macworld.com](http://Macworld.com)

*Looking for some quick time-savers? Chances are you don't need to hunt down a new utility, you just need to take advantage of the tools OS X already offers.*

## 1. Spring-Loaded Folders

If you drag a file over a folder and pause, the folder will pop open and show its contents after a short delay. Drag the file over another folder in that window, and that folder will also open. Use this "spring-loaded folder" feature to move files deep into your folder hierarchy without having to open individual windows. And there are two shortcuts: press the spacebar while holding a file over a folder to open it immediately, and press the escape key to cancel a move before you release a file. This feature is on by default. If you'd like to change the delay, go to Finder: Preferences and adjust the Spring-Loaded Folders and Windows Delay slider.

## 2. The Toolbar

Have certain files, folders, or even programs you want access quickly from any Finder window? Drag their icons onto the Finder's toolbar at the top of the window. Drag an icon to a space in the toolbar—say, to the right of the buttons—and wait a second; the cursor will show a plus-sign (+) icon, and then the item will be added to that space. Command-drag an icon to remove it from the toolbar. Control-click on the toolbar and select Customize Toolbar from the contextual menu for even more options.

## 3. The Path Bar

Choose View -> Show Path Bar to reveal this bar at the bottom of your Finder windows. It shows you exactly where the selected file is in your computer's folder hierarchy, no matter which view you're using. You can drag files or folders into other folders shown in the path bar, so this is a good way to move files up to a higher level in your hierarchy. You can also go to any folder by double-clicking on it in the path bar.

## 4. Proxy Icons

That tiny icon you see in the title bar of every Finder window is more than just eye candy. Control-click on it to reveal a pop-up menu showing the current folder hierarchy. Select a folder to jump there. If you hold down the command key while selecting a folder, it opens in a new Finder window.

## 5. Arrow Keys

There's no need to click your way around the Finder. Press command-up arrow to move up in your folder hierarchy, and Command-down arrow to enter a folder or open a file or program. Press a single arrow key to move around in a window. Press the up- and down-arrow keys to move through List View, Column View, and Cover Flow View. Press the right- and left-arrow keys to move around in Icon View.



# iTunes 8.1.1 adds HD Rental Support

Dan Moren, [Macworld.com](http://Macworld.com)  
04.06.09



Not content with all those new features that came with iTunes 8 and iTunes 8.1? Have no fear: iTunes 8.1.1 is here to save the day. And by "save the day" we mean fix a few bugs, add a new feature, and generally get down tonight.

The big news is that 8.1.1 slips in the ability to rent HD movies via iTunes, a feature that was previously only available on the Apple TV (though Apple touted it last month when the company announced HD movie purchases). Renting HD movies will cost \$5 and titles should generally be available for rental within 30 days of release.

Apple, in its infinite wisdom, has also seen fit to give us a few hints about what this new kid on the block can bring us that iTunes 8.1 simply couldn't handle, such as addressing mysterious "issues" when syncing your iPhone or iPod touch. We're not sure precisely what those issues are, but hopefully those having problems will find them now solved.

The 66MB update requires either Mac OS X 10.4.10 or later or Mac OS X 10.5.



The **Tarmac Vaporware Gazette**, named in honor of past president Jerry Rowe, is published monthly by smitty's printshop, a non-existent shop specializing in things of little or no importance to the world at large. Send your comments or articles to [smittysprintshop@mac.com](mailto:smittysprintshop@mac.com).

### TarMac "Control Panel"

Tom Davis, president  
Ray Kallman, vice-president  
Jan Cook, treasurer  
Brian Fountain, user group ambassador

### other panel members

Eleanor Cavin  
Gary Goebel  
Cindy Huffman  
Lynn McAlpine

### Tarmac By-laws

If you show up you're a member  
If you speak up you're an officer  
If you stand up you're the president

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