Reinventing Textbooks: Apple unveils iBooks 2, a brand new textbook experience for iPad

January 19, 2012 by Jordan Kahn, 9TO5 Mac
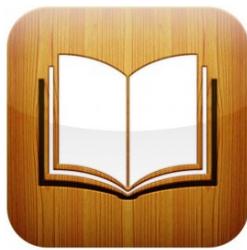
Apple executives took the stage at its education event at the Guggenheim museum in New York City this morning, where the company unveiled two education initiatives: Reinventing Textbooks with "iBooks 2 and "iBooks Author," an e-book authoring tool for Mac.

iBooks

As expected, Vice President of Productivity Software and iWork Roger Rosner took the stage immediately following the announcement to demo iBooks 2. Rosner launched a biology textbook starting with a dramatic introduction video and continued to show off the interactive textbook's features including 3D models, improved index with page number search, index links back into the book, and the ability to pinch to get to the Table of Contents. Rosner also showed how the textbooks have different layouts depending on whether you are in landscape or portrait mode.

To accompany the demo, Apple's worldwide marketing head Phil Schiller announced a new Textbook category for the iBookstore that you can access here. Apple iBooks 2.0 is available for free on the App Store now, and it is compatible with both iPhone and iPad, but textbooks appear to only be available to iPad users. The company also updated its website with an iBooks 2 tour.

Other features demonstrated by Rosner include interactive Q&A content for students and teachers at the end of chapters, and he highlighted a few note taking tools. Rosner demoed how a user's notes and highlights can be instantly turned into study cards. Also, Apple quoted worldwide marketing head Phil Schiller as saying:

"Education is deep in Apple's DNA and iPad may be our most exciting education product yet. With 1.5 million iPads already in use in education institutions, including over 1,000 one-to-one deployments, iPad is rapidly being adopted by schools across the US and around the world. Now with iBooks 2 for iPad, students have a more dynamic, engaging and truly interactive way to read and learn, using the device they already love."

So how do developers and publishers create these content rich textbooks? With a little help from Apple's new creation tool called iBooks Author, that's how.

Apple introduces us to the Wild World of Coded Magnets

January 26, 2012, www.patentlyapple.com

Once in a while we're treated to a new Apple invention that virtually contains a new self-contained world of possibilities and vocabulary to enrich it. It comes out of the blue and feeds our need for meaty new technology brimming with potential. Today is such a day. This is such an invention. Apple's invention reveals a wild world of programmable magnetic devices, and more particularly, to security for computing devices and peripherals that may be provided by programmable magnets. And yet, it reveals so much more than that. Apple envisions this technology eventually working into iOS devices to produce wild haptic effects using Ferrofluids on touchscreens and virtual keyboards. It will also allow Apple's iOS to present light based points on the display as a way to guide a user through a process like a teacher. This is wild stuff folks and it only scratches the surface of what's to come. Grab a coffee, sit back and really enjoy one of the most fascinating patent applications to have surfaced in some time. Update 4 PM MST: Apple reveals inductive charging and/or other wireless charging using coded magnets coming to a new MacBook Dock in a secondary patent.

Read the full article at:
www.patentlyapple.com/patently-apple/2012/01/
apple-introduces-us-to-the-wild-world-of-coded-magnets.html

Over 85 Million Folks Have Signed Up For ICloud

January 24, 2012, MacNews

Apple Chief Financial Officer Peter Oppenheimer says over 85 million folks have signed up for iCloud since it launched in October 2011.

iCloud is a set of free cloud services, including iTunes in the Cloud, Photo Stream and Documents in the Cloud, that work with your iPhone, iPad, iPod touch, Mac or PC to automatically and wirelessly store your content and push it to all your devices. iCloud stores your music, photos, apps, contacts, calendars, documents and more, keeping them up to date across all your devices.

"We're thrilled with iCloud and the response from customers has been incredible," says Apple CEO Time Cook. "It solved a lot of problems that customers were having and made their lives much easier. I see it as a fundamental shift recognizing that people had numerous devices, and they wanted the bulk of their content in the cloud and easily accessible from all devices. iCloud is an important part of our strategy for the next decade."

Scott Forstall is Apple's 'CEO-in-waiting' says new book

January 17, 2012, by Philip Elmer-DeWitt, CNN Money

The senior VP's chief weakness, writes Fortune's Adam Lashinsky, is his naked ambition

He's young (43). Comfortable on stage (played Sweeney Todd in high school). Has serious nerd credentials (Stanford, NeXT). Shares Steve Jobs' obsession with detail (keeps a jeweler's loupe in his office to check every pixel on every icon). And the division he heads -- mobile software -- drives nearly 70% of Apple's (AAPL) income.

"He's a sharp, down-to-earth, and talented engineer, and a more-than-decent presenter," one entrepreneur told Adam Lashinsky. "He's the total package."

According to Lashinsky's new book *Inside Apple: How America's Most Admired -- and Secretive -- Company Really Works,* senior vice president Scott Forstall stands out among the rest of Apple's executive team as the most likely to succeed Steve Jobs once the Tim Cook era is over.

Finish this story at:

tech.fortune.cnn.com/2012/01/17/scott-forstall-is-apples-ceo-in-waiting-says-new-book/

Report: Workers ditch laptops for iPads

Jan 17, 2012 by Ben Camm-Jones, Macworld UK

Many workers are ditching laptops in favor of Apple's iPad, according to new research.

A report published this week by IDG Connect found that in 91 percent of businesses that have deployed the iPad, the device is being used primarily for work.

"Much has been written about the iPad as a 'stay-at-home' device, used predominantly in the living room in a 'lean-back' context. According to one recent survey of US consumers, 60 percent of iPads never leave the home, and 70 percent of usage occurs in the living room," the report reads.

"IT and business professionals use their iPads more intensively, across a wider range of scenarios. Fully 51 percent of IT decision-makers say they 'always' use their iPad at work (and a further 40 percent say they sometimes use it at work). Out-of-home usage is even more intense, with 79 percent of IT decision-makers saying that they 'always' use their iPads 'on the move.'"

However, only 16 percent of those questioned said that the iPad had "completely" replaced their laptop. Six percent said it had replaced their desktop PC, eight percent that it had replaced their portable music player, while two percent said it had replaced their TV, with the same proportion saying it had replaced their smartphone.

Seventy-nine percent of those questioned said that they would now "always" use their iPad for browsing the web, 76 percent said they'd use it always for reading, 73 percent for news consumption, 54 percent for work communication, 44 percent for social networking and 42 percent for personal communication.

"What this survey makes clear is that iPad-based media consumption among IT and business professionals is predominantly text-based and work-related. In particular, web browsing, news consumption and reading emerge as the three most intensive usage scenarios, the killer apps that transform the iPad into a viable business tool."

Apple drops Mac OS X 10.7.3 regular update in favor of combo

February 4, 2012, macnn.com

Apple has temporarily solved problems with the CUI bug in the Mac OS X 10.7.3 update by changing the download users get. Anyone who checks Software Update, along with seeking the usual download, now gets the combo update to Lion (1.3GB, link may not work) instead. The full installer is known to work properly at the expense of a much larger file size.

It's not known if or when the smaller, standard update will return.

The initial 10.7.3 release saw some, though not all, users report missing interface elements and frequent if not universal app crashes. Installing the combo update, when an option, has usually fixed the problem.

FLASHBACK: Steve Ballmer's First Take On The iPhone, January 2007

Jun. 30, 2010 Henry Blodget, Business Insider

INTERVIEWER: ... The Zune was getting some traction. Then Steve Jobs goes to MacWorld and he pulls out this iPhone. What was your reaction when you saw that?

STEVE BALLMER: 500 dollars? Fully subsidized? With a plan? I said that is the most expensive phone in the world. And it doesn't appeal to business customers because it doesn't have a keyboard. Which makes it not a very good email machine.

INTERVIEWER: How do you compete with that, though? He sucked out a lot of the spotlight...

STEVE BALLMER: Let's take phones first. Right now, we're selling millions and millions and millions of phones a year. Apple is selling zero phones a year. In six months, they'll have the most expensive phone by far ever in the marketplace...

Watch...

How to change the Mac's system voice

Jan 13, 2012 Roman Loyola, Macworld.com

Let's get serious!

Thanks to Siri on the iPhone 4S, people are quickly getting used to hearing gadgets talk. Your Mac can talk, too. For using your Mac everyday, there's VoiceOver, which is designed for people who are blind or have low vision. If that's more talking from your Mac than you need, you can use the Mac's Text to Speech feature, where the Mac reads selected text. It can be handy to use in a presentation, or, if you use an app to record your Mac's audio, you can create sound clips to use in videos or audio recordings.

The default voice that your Mac uses for Text to Speech actually has a name: Alex. He has a pleasing tone and a certain warmth, but you have other choices if you're looking for something else. There's Victoria, who's the female equivalent of Alex; and Bruce and Katy, who are more robotic. Lion and Snow Leopard show a total of six voices available, but there are plenty more to choose from. In this how-to, you will learn how to change the system voice, as well as add new voices.

Find the details at:
www.macworld.com/article/164787/2012/01/how_to_change_the_mac_s_system_voice.html

Easy encryption with Disk Utility

Jan 9, 2012 by Christopher Breen, Macworld.com

Reader Bob Ross is interested in encryption. In anything-but-cryptic fashion he writes:

I want to quickly encrypt one folder at the end of the day. Disk Utility is too much trouble and amazingly doesn't securely delete the original folder at the end. Surely, there is a short AppleScript or application out there that encrypts a folder and securely deletes the original folder?

There are third-party utilities such as AgileBits' $35 Knox and Tao Effect's $35 Espionage 2 that can encrypt small bits of data like this for you, but I'd like to take a moment to revisit Disk Utility.

And I take that moment because it really isn't terribly difficult to do this nor do you need to be left with an unsecured folder.

Find out how at:
www.macworld.com/article/164697/2012/01/easy_encryption_with_disk_utility.html

Customer: I have a huge problem. A friend has placed a screen saver on my computer, but every time I move the mouse, it disappears!

How to use services in Mac OS X

Frequently asked questions about Lion's most underused shortcuts

Jan 9, 2012 by Kirk McElhearn, Macworld.com

One of the little-known time-saving features of Mac OS X is services—hidden, single-feature commands that you can access from a special Services menu, or, sometimes, from a contextual menu. These features are generally provided by applications—built-in OS X applications or third-party programs—and let you quickly preform actions that usually require launching additional programs and taking many steps. Here are answers to frequently asked questions about how to find, use, and manage services.

Find out how at:
www.macworld.com/article/163996/2012/01/how_to_use_services_in_mac_os_x.html

How to enter formulas in Numbers

February 3, 2012 by Topher Kessler, MacWorld

When you purchase a new Mac it almost goes without saying that some sort of office productivity suite is required, and though, based on popularity, some might gravitate to Microsoft's Office, there are others available as well, such as OpenOffice, NeoOffice, some standalone word processors, and also Apple's iWork suite.

iWork's programs include Pages for word processing, Keynote for presentations, and a relatively unique approach to spreadsheets with its Numbers program, which if you are used to Excel, offers some similar ways to manage data, albeit with some uniquenesses.

Unlike most spreadsheet programs that offer a seemingly endless grid on which you organize your data and perform calculations, Numbers offers a more inviting starting point. The basic spreadsheet is presented as a blank canvas with a stand-alone table on it, offering you the option to organize your data on multiple tables on the same sheet rather than using a different section of the same grid, an organization that might be a bit more intuitive to some.

While a spreadsheet can be used for organizing and arranging data, its main purpose is, of course, to perform calculations on that data, and if you are familiar with Excel, then once you have a data set in a Numbers document, you can use similar approaches to performing calculations.

Complete this article at:
http://reviews.cnet.com/8301-13727_7-57370956-263/how-to-enter-formulas-in-numbers/?part=rss&tag=feed&subj=MacFixIt

Five keyboard shortcuts you should set up NOW!

Access menu commands across apps with these time-saving tips

by Sharon Zardetto, Macworld.com   Feb 1, 2012

Computers excel at repetitive tasks. So why are you opening the same menus and submenus, looking for the same commands again and again?

OS X lets you assign keyboard shortcuts to menu commands so you can trigger them more quickly. You can tailor application shortcuts to your work habits, but an especially productive way to use this capability is to set up shortcuts that work everywhere.

Setting up a system-wide keyboard shortcut is a cinch: in System Preferences, go to the Keyboard Shortcuts tab of Keyboard preferences. Click Application Shortcuts on the left and then click the Add (+) button beneath the list. In the sheet that slides out, select All Applications from menu and type the name of the menu command in the Menu Title field; enter the shortcut you want to use for it and click Add.

A few tips: Type the command exactly as it appears. Capitalization counts. If there's an ellipsis (…) after the command, press Option-semicolon to insert it. Typing three periods won't work. You don't have to remember your shortcuts—they'll appear in the menus the same way standard shortcuts do. If you change an existing shortcut, your new one shows in the menu. If you delete it, the original one reappears in the menu.

The sections in this article include:

1. Put print options at your fingertips

2. Zoom windows

3. Un-minimize app windows

4. Open and switch applications

5. Access recent folders

And finally...
If you want more…

To find candidates for global shortcuts, check the Apple menu and its submenus. Assign shortcuts to System Preferences, or to the App Store. Another great candidate for global keyboard shortcuts is the Services submenu, since so many services are shared across applications.

Read this lengthy article at:
www.macworld.com/article/165129/2012/02/five_keyboard_shortcuts_you_should_set_up_now.html

First Nigerian "Steve Job" *Spam*

Just for Fun

Feb. 4, 2012 by Adam C. Engst, Tidbits

We're sorry to report that Matt Neuburg will be writing less for TidBITS going forward, now that he has been named as one of the beneficiaries in the last will and testament of Apple co-founder Steve Job [sic]. Although the money was supposed to support religious and humanitarian activities (see below), Matt has told us that he plans to spend his £4 million on a small private island at an undisclosed location in the Pacific. "After all," he told us, "what could be more humanitarian than that?"

Should anyone wish to contest the legality of Matt's claim, here is the original email message he received, sans identifying addresses. It must be real and true, because it says, right in the email, that it is real and true.

SUB: LATE STEVE JOB'S WILL

On behalf of the Trustees and Executors of the late American Philanthropist Steve Job, chairman & CEO at Apple Inc. + Director at The Walt Disney Company. We wish to notify you once again that the late Steve Job. made you one of the beneficiaries to his (WILL), he bequeathed the sum of Four Million Great British Pounds Sterling Only GBP 4,000,000.00) to you in the codicil and last testament to his (WILL) which is eleven (10%) of his total funds of GBP 40,000,000.00 (Fourthy Million Great British Pounds Sterling.

This may sound very strange and unbelievable to you, but it is real and true. Being a widely popular traveled man, he must have been in contact with you in the past or simply you were nominated to him by one of his numerous friends here or abroad who wished you well. Late Steve Job, the reclusive American-born philanthropist born in San Francisco, California.USA.

According to him this money is to support religious and humanitarian activities and to help the poor and the needy in your society. Please if I reach you as I am hopeful, endeavor to get back to me as soon as possible to enable me conclude my job. I hope to hear from you in no distant time.

For more information contact me at my email
We look forward to hearing from you.
Yours in services,
Barr. Nelson Powell Esq

And no, there's no way in hell we're putting this in the email issue of TidBITS — we'd be blocked every which way from Sunday.