SMUG///S

STANFORD/PALO ALTO MACINTOSH USERS GROUP NEWSLETTER

Vol. 15 No.10 • October 2005

FIREFOX

SEPTEMBER MEETING REPORT



Blake Ross



Customer Feedback As A Virtue



Asa Dotzler

At the September 12 General Meeting of SMUG, Blake Ross and Asa Dotzler of Mozilla discussed the company's Firefox opensource browser, which provides a place to discuss what is, and what is not, working.

Firefox is an alternative to Microsoft's Internet Explorer ("IE"). As of 15 January 2005, the cumulative number of downloads of Firefox had reached 18 million, with 130,000 registered users. Firefox users often become evangelists, without use of expensive advertising, and spread the word as to what a user can do with Firefox. By contrast, Microsoft had disbanded its IE team in early 2001, and IE began to lose market share (unusual for Microsoft). Reacting to the change in fortune, Microsoft has released a beta version of a new browser version in August 2005 and appears to be paying attention to users who have been voting with their feet.

Acting in a contrarian mode, many Firefox users have contributed \$10 each or more to a fund, which has grown to about \$100,000, for a two-page advertisement, originally intended for the Wall Street Journal and now redirected to the New York Times. The ad celebrates the Firefox fea-

SMUG OCTOBER 3RD MEETING: FILEMAKER PRO FOR DUMMIES

(And Smart People Too!)

James Higgins, SMUG Webmaster and FileMaker Developer, will introduce SMUG to the simplicity and complexity that characterizes FileMaker Pro. On the one hand, it's ease of use makes it possible to quickly and easily create databases for home and business.

On the other hand, the powerful features built into FileMaker also enables developers to create complex custom software used by Fortune 500 companies.

With FileMaker, you can start slow and easy and scale your database solutions as far as your time and ambition allow!

Find out why FileMaker is the world's best-selling database application for personal computers.

UP COMING EVENTS

October 3 Meeting - **Filemaker with James Higgins**November 7 Meeting - **CS Suite with an Apple Genius**December 5 Meeting - **i Pods and i Tunes with an Apple Genius**

The October, November and December meetings will be held at the Redwood Room

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http://www.pa-smug.org
650-286-7539

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smug october 3 Meeting Schedule Monday 6:30 - 9:00

6:30 - 7:00 Q & A

7:00 - 7:45 Shareware - Owen Saxton

7:45- 8:00 Break

8:00 - 9:00 Filemaker - James Higgins

9:00 Raffle

Firefox - continued from page 1

tures and lists all users who contributed to the fund. Mozilla user-contributors "scratch an itch" as to certain Web problems.

Firefox uses the Google search engine, and Google has contributed some of its technical personnel time to implementation of Firefox. Operating cost for Firefox thus far is about \$7 million – modest for a browser with such strong user sipport.

At a time when many software packagers are adding features with wild abandon, in a rush to accumulate numbers, Firefox developers are deleting selected features as superfluous, in order to simplify operation of Firefox. For example, pop-ups have been eliminated as a potential entry point for viruses and other undesirables. Multiple tool bars have also been eliminated. Firefox also incorporates an ad eliminator. Only features that are clearly needed by users, as determined by user queries, are being retained. Google search terms are being brought up in parallel, in the background, and placed in a special folder.

The Firefox browser is based on about 6.5 million lines of code, with 19 platforms and 31 languages, including Macintosh, Linux and Windows. By comparison, the original Star Wars software, if it had been implemented, was estimated to include about 15 million lines of code. A new book, Firefox For Dummies, will be issue by Wiley circa November 2005, an indication that Firefox is now taken seriously. Cumulative downloads at the Firefox Web site are now approaching 88 million. A spirited Q&A session followed, with testimonials and ant—testimonials offered in abundance.

by John Schipper

More Information on Firefox

by Jim Thornton

The following URL is the official Firefox site hosted by the Mozilla Foundation where this browser was initially developed. This site contains much information about Firefox and other Mozilla software, such as the email client, Thunderbird.

http://www.mozilla.org/products/firefox/

The next URL takes you to Spread Firefox, an enthusiast/fan site where 63 pages later you will have learned a lot about Firefox, related open source projects, and the surrounding evangelism that has driven its spread and acceptance. Blake Ross, the primary author of Firefox, is heavily involved in this site.

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SMUG SUMMER 2005 CD-ROM

New Contents Audio & Music

AudioSlicer 1.0.3 iPodRip 3.8 iTunesJoin 1.0.2 Senuti 0.28 Sound Studio 2.2b5

Comm

JAlbum 5.2.2 Nvu 1.0PR RSS Menu 1.3.3 SafariSpeed 1.3r3

Design and Graphics

RedGreen X 2.2

Fun and Games

A Farewell to Kings 2.0.4 Betty's Beer Bar 1.3.16 Bubble Trouble X 1.0.2 Bugged Out Rally 1.0.7 Chowder 1.0 Darwinia 1.1 Escape 1.7.8 Frozen-Bubble 1.0.0e Garden Golf 1.6 GL Golf 1.73 Midnight Mansion 1.0.2 RockGarden 1.0

Interface

WordOMatic 1.1.3

A Better Finder Launcher 1.9.5 A-Dock X 1.4 Mac-Forums RSSaver 1.0 Movie Screen Saver 1.5 padmacolors15 1.0 ShowOff 0.61 ThemePark 2.1.1 Witch 1.0b4 WuffDesktop 1.2 Xkeys 1.1.1

Kitchen Sink

Bridge Construction Set 1.31 GolfXPress 1.7.4 LilyPond 2.6.0 NoLimits Rollercoaster 1.5.5 Stock Investment Guide 1.6.5 World of Where 2.1

Multimedia

ViewIt 2.9.1 ViewIt Lite 1.0.2 **Productivity**

Mail Scripts 2.7.2 PodQuest 1.7

Utilities

AirPort Monitor Utility 1.1b2 CLIX 1.7a DoThisNow 2.1.1 iTattle 2.0.1

iTunes Library Manager 4.2 Macaroni 2.0.6

MacGhostView 4.2.1

MediaRecover 2.5 Net Monitor 3.9.3

ShowVolumeFragmentation 0.60

StartupSound.prefPane 1.0.3

Tiger Tamer 1.2 Tweak Freak 1.0 Uninstaller 1.9.8 Widget Master 1.2.1 Widget Tamer 1.0.1

Widgets

AirPort Monitor Utility 1.1b2 CLIX 1.7a DoThisNow 2.1.1 iTattle 2.0.1 iTunes Library Manager 4.2 Macaroni 2.0.6 MacGhostView 4.2.1 MediaRecover 2.5 Net Monitor 3.9.3

ShowVolumeFragmentation 0.60 StartupSound.prefPane 1.0.3

Tiger Tamer 1.2 Tweak Freak 1.0 Uninstaller 1.9.8 Widget Master 1.2.1 Widget Tamer 1.0.1

STOCK CONTENTS Graphics

GIFBuilder for OSX 1.0 GifBuilder 1.0 (Cls) Goldberg X 2.5 * Goldberg 2.5 (Cls) * GraphicConverter X 5.6.2 * GraphicConverter 5.6.2 (Cls) * JPEGDeux 1.8 *

Internet

AOL Instant Messenger 4.7 (Cbn) Camino 0.8.4 * Eudora X 6.2.3 * Eudora 6.1.1 (Cls) Fetch 5.0.2 * Firefox 1.0.4 * iCab X 3.0b280 * iCab 3.0b280 (Cls) * Interarchy 7.3.3 * Interarchy 6.3 (Cls) Internet Explorer X 5.2.3 Internet Explorer 5.1.7 (Cls) Java Embedding Plugin 0.9 Mozilla X 1.7.8 * Mozilla X 1.8b1 Mozilla 1.2.1 (Cls) MT-NewsWatcher X 3.4 MT-NewsWatcher 3.1 (Cls) Netscape X 7.2 Netscape Communicator? 7.0.2 (Cls) Netscape MRJ Plugin X 1.0.1 Netscape MRJ Plugin 1.0b5 (Cls) OmniWeb 5.1.1b2 *

OmniWeb 5.1.1b2 *
Opera 8.0.1 *
RealPlayer X 10.0.0.331
RealPlayer 8 6.0 (Cls)
Thunderbird 1.0.2
Windows Media Player X 9

Willdows Media Playel A

Others

BBEdit Lite 6.1.2 (Cls & Cbn) BBTidy 1.0b10 MacTracker X 4.0.b1 * MacTracker 3.0.1 (Cls) MP3 Rage 5.8.4 (Cbn) Tex-Edit Plus X 4.9.3b8 * Tex-Edit Plus 4.1.3 (Cls) textSOAP 4.2.1 * TextWrangler 2.1 *

Utilities

Acrobat Reader 5.1 (Cbn) Adobe Reader 7.0 Adobe Reader Update 7.0.2 * Aladdin DropStuff 6.0.1 Aladdin Expander? 6.0.1 AntiWordService 2.0.1 Application Enhancer 1.5.1 * Default Folder X 2.0.1 * Default Folder 3.1.5 (Cls) PopChar Lite 2.7.2 (Cls) PopChar X 2.2.1 TinkerTool 3.4 *

* New or updated since the previous CDOQ





DashTunes 1.2

DashTunes is small iTunes control widget. You can see what's playing, rate songs, play/pause, skip or go back a track, search & play a song or playlist, adjust volume, uncheck a song, or add the current song to a 'favorites' playlist. DashTunes also has 19 different skins.

Requires OS X 10.4+. Free.



DreamDeals Widget 1.0.8

This cool widget uses 3D animation to show the best of Amazon's deals straight on your dashboard. The animation includes product images, prices, savings and a short description.

Widget preferences let you choose the product categories you are interested in, as well as limit the savings (in percent) for shown products.

Requires OS X 10.4+. Free.



miniStat2 1.4

Universal system monitoring widget. All about your processor, memory, storage, temperature sensors, network connections and battery. Customizable skins and very compact size.

Features:

- Six different view types processor, memory, storage, network, sensors and battery
- Really tiny size and low system resources usage
- Customizable skins make the widget look like your Mac!
- Very useful desktop mode view system statistics summary values at one time
- Control widget without mouse via hot keys
- Smooth animations and cool graphics
- Setup preferable temperature units °C or °F
- Check your wireless mouse and keyboard batteries charge via this widget!
- Color-coding for all temperature values.

Requires OS X 10.4+. \$5.



SimpsonBot 1.3

SimpsonBot displays random quotes from the Simpsons. SimpsonBot has over 1100 quotes. Click on the charac-

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ter to get another quote from that character. Click on The Simpsons logo to get another random quote.

Requires OS X 10.4+. Free.



AudioSlicer 1.0.3

AudioSlicer is a Cocoa GUI application that finds all silences in an audio file and allows you to split it into several smaller audio files and to name/tag them properly. For now only MP3 is supported but other audio formats may be added in the future. While most other tools doing this split automatically according to certain criteria, AudioSlicer shows you all silences within a certain range of duration. You can then listen to the silence - well, to the audio before and after the silence really - and then you decide if you want to split there. The splitting is done without loss, there is no decoding and re-encoding of audio data taking place.

Requires OS X 10.3+. Free.



iLyric 2.0

iLyric searches the internet and downloads the lyrics for the music listed in your iTunes library. iLyric allows you to copy your lyrics over to your iPod in the new Notes format supported by firmware release 2.0. Support for Vcards is in progress for older iPods.

Requires OS X 10.2+. Free.



LilyPond 2.6.0

Why can't computer printout look just as good as traditionally engraved music? With that thought in mind we have started LilyPond nine years ago. We built it to be robust, flexible, and, of course, easily usable. Use it for your music as well! LilyPond takes ASCII input, which you can produce in your favorite environment, quickly and comfortably. No more futzing with the mouse. The input contains all the information, so there is no need to remember complex command sequences. Simply save an input for later reference.

Requires OS X 10.3+. Free.



MathPad 2.6.4 (Cbn)

MathPad is a general purpose graphing scientific calculator. It uses a text worksheet rather than simulating buttons on a hand held calculator. This live scratchpad interface allows you to see and edit your entire calculation.

In addition to being a handy little calculator, MathPad can also take on larger problems. Simple plotting allows quick visualization of results. General purpose arrays allow calculations involving vectors, complex numbers, matrix algebra etc. 2D arrays can be displayed as grayscale or color images. Several examples are included showing such things as equation solving, curve fitting, vector calculations and numerical solution of differential equations.

Plug-in modules provide specialized capabilities in areas such as engineering, finance, statistics, linear algebra, data analysis, sound and image processing.

Requires OS 8.6+ or OS X 10.0+. Free.



Nvu 1.0PR

Nvu is a standalone 'WYSIWYG' (WhatYouSeeIsWhatYouGet) HTML editor based on Gecko, Mozilla's rendering engine.

Requires OS X 10.2.8+. Free.



Photo Desktop 1.5

Photo Desktop allows you to put photos on your desktop, instead of having to choose one photo to use as your wallpaper, you can now add as many little pictures to your desktop as you want.

Photo Desktop allows you to create the desktop you desire in a mini version of the desktop by dragging pictures onto it, resizing and rotating them on the spot. It also allows you to add photos by browsing your local iPhoto library.

Requires OS X 10.3.9+. Free.



SetAlphaValue 1.9

SetAlphaValue is an extension for "Cocoa" applications and sets the alphaValue of windows. In others words, this program is only aesthetic, just for fun;)

Requires OS X 10.3.9+. Free.

Do you need a ride?

From time to time there may be some members who cannot get a ride on any stated meeting night at SLAC. Please don't think that you have to miss a meeting because of this. We can always arrange for one or more of our members—or officers— to pick you up and give you a ride to the meeting with them. But, please try and plan ahead and leave enough time for us to arrange for your connection.

If you have a wheelchair or walker we can also arrange to direct you to, or assist you, to walk the pathways or climb the stairs to whichever meeting room we are scheduled for that night.

Please call or e-mail me and I will coordinate with the membership to get this done. *Lorrie Bleiler 650.948-1400* bleiler@pa-smug.org

--- IMPORTANT READ-ME ---

Security and You

To pass through the security gate on **October 3** you will need:

- To be on our list of members
 If your membership has lapsed, send me an email by Saturday, October 1
- steve@leonead.com, to tell me you plan to attend
- (Of course, err, um, don't forget to pay your dues at the meeting)

AND !!! Be prepared to show a photo ID at the gate.

All guests are welcome as always, but you or they must email me by **October 3** they can be on the list of attendees to be submitted to SLAC security.

My DotMac Discount-Renewal Experience – Jim Thornton

I have been a DotMac subscriber for several years, but lamented the fact that the price was so high.

Last year after SMUG had a presentation by the Palo Alto Apple Store, I took advantage of the 30% discount they said would be offered SMUG members for renewal of DotMac accounts – this would reduce a \$100 expenditure to \$70! That worked, although renewing online using the retail boxed version wasn't entirely straight-forward.

After the last SMUG meeting when another team from the Palo Alto Apple Store discussed Tiger, I asked them

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Dot Mac renewal - continued from page 5

whether the 30% discount for DotMac renewal applied this year, also. They said it did and I went to the store within a few days, spoke to Bob Weder, the more silent of the two presenters, who happened to be at a cash register at the time. He honored the 30% SMUG discount for me – my good experience from last year was repeated! YMMV, but it may be worth a try. It appears from the words on the DotMac retail box that the process will be simpler this year when I renew in October.

Books on Firefox

There have been several Firefox books published recently. Two of them will be raffled to SMUG members at the end of the September meeting: Firefox Hacks by Nigel McFarlane and Don't Click On The Blue E by Scott Granneman. Both of these are published by O'Reilly and were donated by them for the SMUG raffle! There are many more Firefox books that you can find on the Internet or at large bookstores – however, many seem to start deep and then dig deeper. That is, much of what is being published on Firefox is for the geek to use to modify the browser for esoteric capabilities and may not interest the novice.

Firefox Hacks probably tends toward the geek end of the scale. It "explains how to customize Firefox's deployment, appearance, features, and functionality – delivering techniques, tools, and strategies for making the most out of Firefox's outstanding flexibility." (Words from the back of the book.)

On the other hand, Don't Click On The Blue E seems much more oriented to the everyday user – of Microsoft Internet Explorer! "For all those surfers who have slowly grown disenchanted with Microsoft's Internet Explorer web browser, Don't Click On The Blue E" is here to help. It offers non-technical users a convenient roadmap for switching to a better web browser – Firefox. The only book that covers the switch to Firefox, this book is a must for anyone who wants to browse faster, more securely, and more efficiently. It takes readers through the process step-by-step, so it's easy to understand." (Words from the Amazon.com book description.) Though perhaps primarily for the Windows user, this book contains useful information for the Mac user as well – and not just for those using IE.

If you peruse Amazon or the web in general, you can find an enormous amount of information on Firefox and Firefox books! Also, there has been a lot of writing in the popular press lately extolling the features and virtues of Firefox over MS IE, especially in the area of security. Check it out.

More Information on Firefox - continued from page 2

As you might expect, Blake Ross has his own website at: http://www.blakeross.com/

The Firefox project has developed browsers for the Windows (several versions), Linux, and Mac OS X platforms. However, for Mac OS X users, Safari already has some/most of the advantages of Firefox and few/none of the disadvantages of Internet Explorer (IE). It would therefore seem that Firefox provides most of its advantages to IE users, especially on the Windows platform.

If you have a whole lot of time, you can Google "Firefox vs Safari" and peruse the 233,000 entries found by that search:

http://www.google.com/search?client=safari&rls=en&q=Firefox+vs+Safari&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8

What CNET had to say about FireFox for Mac OS X: As the latest version of Safari shipped with OS X Tiger, it will probably be a while before most people consider another browser. But if you're not impressed with the new Safari or haven't made the upgrade to Tiger just yet, you may want to try the latest update for Firefox. While I love how well Safari plays with the rest of my Mac applications, Firefox continues to dazzle with cool extras such as customizable skins and plug-ins. If you'd like a look at the latest iteration of this quick and agile Web browser, check it out here:

http://www.download.com/Mozilla-Firefox/3000-2143 4-10208569.html

Though it's difficult to unseat Safari as a Mac user's preferred browser, Mozilla Firefox garners attention other browser developers might want to note. Its nimble and uncluttered interface houses only the most necessary features, with the option to easily add customized toolbars. Mozilla Firefox claims to be lightning-fast in every way, and though our initial tests didn't yield a huge difference in speed, we do know the more we use Firefox, the more we like it. As with all Mozilla browsers, it offers excellent standards support; pages written to W3C specifications load and function properly. We especially like the tabbed browsing, as well as the various plug-ins and skins offered at the Firefox Web site. Also, Firefox seamlessly blocks unwelcome pop-up ads without requiring additional software. If you're looking for a light and agile browser or like the idea of customizable skins and plug-ins, check out Firefox.

SMUG Member Registration WEB Site http://www.pa-smug.org NAME: ADDRESS: PHONE NUMBER: () E-MAIL: Registration Fee is \$45 which includes a family member: Mail check with this form to SMUG P.O. Box 20132 Stanford CA.94309

If you would like to join Smug please fill out the above form and mail to the address indicated. Please check out our website for more information or call if you have any questions.

Calendar of EVents

Monday, October 3 General Meeting:

Redwood Room bldg.. 48 Stanford Linear Accelerator Center (SLAC), 2575 Sand Hill Road, Menlo Park

Shareware Team meeting at Owen Saxton's house,

1442 San Marcos Circle, Mt. View. Meeting starts at 7:15 pm. (See page 2 for Owen's phone number and E-mail address)

Thursday, October 13

Board of Directors meets at 7:00 pm at the Coffee House (next to the old Printer's Inc.) on California St.

Friday, October 21

DEADLINE for Newsletter articles and Calendar items to be submitted by email to **bleiler@pa-smug.com**

october 2005

Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa 1 2 **3** 4 5 6 7 8 6 10 11 12 **13** 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 **21** 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

November 2005

Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa 2 1 3 5 4 9 10 11 **7** 8 12 13 14 15 16 **17** 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 **25** 26 27 28 29 30

We thought the above calendars would be helpful for those people who don't have E-mail. This is the projection for the upcoming meeting dates.



STANFORD/PALO ALTO MACINTOSH USER GROUP

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NEXT REGULAR MEETING• Monday October3, 2005

James Higgins will be the presenter for File Maker Pro
It will be at held at the **REDWOOD ROOM**

