

ou've seen the news and read the reviews. Apple Computer is becoming Silicon Valley's favorite hot stock and cool company. It's a story-book ending come true! With all the good news surrounding Apple these days, it's sometimes difficult to separate fact from fiction. Thankfully, the staff at ATPM is here to help! We're primed and rhymed to bring you our latest issue!

Hey, Diddle, Diddle, the iMac's in the Middle!

Apple's iMac—the translucent computer representing the computer company's transparent attempt at gaining market share—is at the center of more than one industry debate. While the iMac's overall design has received a lot of praise from industrial designers, the lack of a floppy drive along with Apple's desire to use USB ports has won it a little bit of scorn.

According to the fine folks at 1 Infinite Loop, eighty percent of buyers purchase a new printer when they purchase a new CPU. Maybe they're right. Maybe they're not. However, by moving to USB from ADB we think Apple's developed a convenient way to sell other people's products and increase third-party support for the platform.

Apple will not guarantee that OS X will run glitch-free on non-G3 machines. Maybe it'll work, maybe it won't. The people most likely to benefit from this scheme are Apple's shareholders. We'll see if the this approach causes sales to "jump over the moon." Maybe it will, maybe it won't. What we do know is that the resale value of putty-boxed, non-G3 machines has fallen through the floor. Until the iMac's pre-sale numbers are officially announced, we're keeping our feet on "solid ground." We're not making any predictions. The ATPM staff will not be making any calls...except to our stockbrokers. There's talk that the company is retiring Clarus the dog-cow, but we think the company's become a rather heavy "cash cow."

Humpty Dumpty Sat On A Wall!

For several years Apples naysayers have claimed the company will be never be put back together. We agree. All the king's horses and all the king's men could never put the old Apple together again. We're grateful. The new company's slimmed-down product line and laser-sharp consumer focus will win many Wintel converts. It's true that the company lacks six-PCI-slot machines and multiprocessor options. That's O.K. For now. Apple's 3rd fiscal quarter financial results speak for themselves.

In its most recent quarter, Apple Computer succeeded in growing profits while stabilizing sales. The sales slide has ended and the gross margin per unit sold increased dramatically. Most Wall Street analysts are still cautious about Apple and its future prospects. Although the company has been profitable for three consecutive quarters, there's concern that the company has done little to increase unit sales.

However, we'd like to note that the quarter ended with a short-term delay in the shipment of high-end PowerBook's and the release of the much-publicized iMac only about forty-five days away. If you were in the market for a new Macintosh and you knew the release of the \$1,299 iMac was just weeks away, what would you do? That's right. The only thing forestalling a huge increase in Apple's unit sales is pent-up demand for the Bondi-Blue computer. The most recent quarter also ended with lower inventories and a bit more cash. If analysts don't see where things are headed, Humpty Dumpty isn't the only one sporting a few cracks.

Jack Be Nimble, Jack be Quick!

We'll say it. Intel's release of the Celeron chip is a big mistake. The iMac more than holds its own against 400 MHz Pentium II machines. You can imagine the test results that compare the ROM-less iMac with the slow-poke "celery chip." What is Intel thinking? Even PC pundits are expressing disappointment in the Celeron chip, as the August issue of PC Computing attests.

Heading into the holiday buying season, authorized Apple resellers are receiving an early gift. There's no competition for the iMac in its market. We wouldn't be surprised if Apple contracted with Umax to manufacture iMacs in order to meet demand. In late August/early September, G3 speeds approaching 400 MHz will establish the Macintosh as the undisputed price/performance leader. It's a wonderful time for Mac users. New games and new products will enhance our personal computing experience.

Mary, Mary, Quite Contrary!

Apple's renewed success and financial health removes a major distraction from our midst. ATPM was created to celebrate the "personal computing experience." We're happy to renew our mission. This month's issue celebrates the Mac community's return to normalcy.

Unlike other publications, our goal isn't to bring you the latest hardware test results and esoteric software performance appraisals. Our e-zine has grown because we place our emphasis on the ever-changing, often humorous relationship between human beings and our six-colored logo machines. Even if the Apple trademark becomes more black and white, we intend to fill our pages with colorful anecdotes and a full spectrum of stories and reviews.

How Much is That Doggy in the Window?

It may seem like we are switching themes, but good news about low-price and high-quality service is always “welcome” on our pages. So stated, the staff of ATPM is pleased to introduce our latest sponsor, Small Dog Electronics. Just in case you think we’re “barking up the wrong tree,” Please visit their Web site at <<http://www.smalldog.com>>. You’ll find the latest in Macintosh hardware and software at very attractive prices. Their caring, low-key approach is satisfying the needs of many Mac owners. You’ll come to know the people at Small Dog Electronics to be a Mac man’s (and Mac woman’s) best friend!

We appreciate your continued support!