

s I was sitting down to write this column last Monday without a topic in mind, I was gonna runoff about 1200 or so words about why you should be involved in digital video for the Web, and how Apple would be involved. However, my two and a half year old son, Scott, needed to be disciplined. Therefore, I got up to take him to his room. Instead, he decided to run away from me. And trip. And fall. Face first into his chair. Cutting a gash in his forehead.

Don't panic, I thought to myself, as blood was spurting everywhere. I grabbed Scott up, and held him while my wife got a bandage to temporarily stop the bleeding. Lori managed to get the bandage on, which he immediately tore off, scraping his face a little in the process.

So, we tried again. Another bandage, smaller this time, stays on, and I immediately rush Scott to the emergency room, on the thinking that waiting ten minutes for an ambulance to make a fifteen minute trip would be a bad idea.

Now, my driving is suspect in any case, but this time, I was taking no chances. Having strapped Scott into his car seat, I peeled out, and prayed that no cops were around. This was about 9:40 at night at this point, with less police per square block, so, I felt pretty safe.

I arrived at the emergency room of Torrance Memorial with little incident, having not run any red lights along the way. Just to make sure my son was alive, I would reach back and tickle his feet every thirty seconds or so. I pull into a loading zone, hop out, and go directly to the ER entrance, expecting immediate service. After all, that's what you get on the TV show of the same name, right?

Wrong.

I filled out a form, and sat down. And waited. And waited. And waited some more. I guess the nurse felt that since his eyes were open, and he was alert, that his head injury wasn't life threatening.

So, we're finally admitted, and we're taken to a bed. Now this is the part that is the same as ER. The doctor immediately flung the curtain, separating us from the rest of the world.

Now, this is where it gets weird. (Like it wasn't before, right?) They need to take his bandage off, but Scott wasn't having any, so he needs to be strapped down. Yes, apparently my two and a half year old is a menace to doctors everywhere, and he needed to be restrained. Of course, the wrist straps buckled down to the bed for someone so young. So, they bring out

the papoose board.

Yes, you heard right, there is such a thing as a papoose board. Apparently, some ancient Indian technology is still good.

Of course, this is a high tech device, padded, with velcro straps. Additional precautions included putting his arms in a pillow case behind him, and wrapping a sheet around him before velcroing him down. And Scott screaming the entire time.

The nurse removes the bandage, and puts some green stuff on the cut, to numb it down. The problem? This procedure takes 25-30 minutes. So, the question, do you hold Scott, or leave him strapped in, knowing that he'll have to go back on the board to get the stitches?

Well, I opted for choice two. He gets unwrapped, and I'm holding a whimpering child for about twenty minutes. He has no clue what's going on, except it's past his bedtime.

Around 10:45, they decide it's time to do the deal. Back into the board, this time they didn't bag his arms, but they still wrapped him in a sheet.

A moment about emergency room doctors: it turns out, they've seen it all before, probably that same night that you come in to get your son stitched up.

Consoling my son while he was getting a needle stuck in his forehead, I noticed the doctor was using this unique method to tie the stitches. I remarked casually, "It looks like you've done this before..." to which he replied, "Four times, just tonight." This reassured me, and scared me at the same time.

The end result however, was that Scott needed only four stitches. I get him home about 11:30, and he falls asleep at midnight. Of course, we had to stay up and wake him every two hours, to make sure he's still alive, and that there's no trauma beyond the cut.

Well, it's now over a week later, Scott's had the stitches removed, and they say the scar will be barely noticeable by the time he's ten. And his eyebrows will cover the rest.

While dealing with my son with four stitches, the company that used to sign my paycheck decided to farm me out on a freelance basis, to whom ever and where ever a Mac is in need of, the Shields Touch. I was called into service three times last week. MacMan to the Rescue! NBC has Macs. I've serviced them. Ok, it's various production companies, and one of them is on the CBS lot. Go figure.

At the same time, I get to rake in the big time show business dollars. Life is beautiful, not to be confused with the movie of the same name.

Or so I thought.

It turns out that one production company that shall remain nameless, is still living in the 80's with an AppleTalk network. Two 8600's, a 7200, hooked up to an HP 5M printer.

And that's where the fun begins. The 8600 in question was having freezing problems. So, I figure since they're only running OS 8, an upgrade to 8.5.1 was in order. Ten minutes later, I'm out the door, charging two hours for my time.

However, she wanted to be able to print as well. The Chooser would not allow me to complete the selection of the printer. No little icon next to the printer name in the Chooser. Attempts to print to the offending printer would create an -8940 error. Apple says they don't know what this is. Which would be logical, since it's probably coming from the HP printer. Of course, this didn't stop us from going in, and swapping out the 8600 for a G3, thinking this would fix the problem.

This worked fine, for awhile. But then I decided that the LaserWriter 8 driver needed the correct PPD for the HP 5M. I run the installer that we used an hour to download the evening before, and restart the computer. AppleTalk drops out. I activate AppleTalk, and attempt to reconnect the printer with the new PPD.

No sale.

The same problem crops up.

I do a clean reinstall of 8.5, not having the 8.5.1 update handy, as I had to delete it from my Zip disk to make room for the data transfer.

Didn't help.

So, I leave the 8600 with OS 8 hooked into the AppleTalk network so that she can print, and take my G3, and slowly walk away.

The next morning, today as I write this, I bring the G3 with the 'corrupted' software back to base, and hook it up via AppleTalk to another HP 5M.

It works fine.

No problems, no ups, no extras. I start installing software at random, in an attempt to break it. First 8.5.1. Prints fine. Then I put in the proper PPD. No problem. Then I install IomegaWare 6.0 just for kicks, as we had a Zip attached. No surprises here. I left base, confident in the knowledge that I know what the problem is.

It's the printer.

72 and sunny in Redondo.

e Ya next month.

Disclaimer: Mike is about to shoot a movie, so, if you wanna ump on the bandwagon and show your financial support, ;-) he can be reached at <MShields@atpm.com>.