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## OS 8.6 Folly

It used to be that when Apple made a mistake, they stonewalled, thinking the less said the better, and the Mac faithful will soon forget. Then with the return of Steve Jobs this arrogance seemed to disappear. When a mistake was made Apple listened to the faithful and fixed the wrong. Well, Apple, you've made a serious blunder to those of us who stood by you. I'm speaking of the failure to release OS 8.6 update to MacAddict, Macworld, and MacHome Journal for distribution. Like many of you readers, I counted on those updates. Not so much for home as for school when it came time to update dozens of machines. Asking users to spend 3-5 hours downloading the update is sheer folly. The opportunity for file corruption increases geometrically the longer the download takes. I know of several people, including myself who have shunned getting the update as too big of a nuisance to bother with for the amount of benefits it brings to the table. It's pretty obvious why Apple chose this route; by signing on to the Apple server the marketing department is able to get a fix on the demographics of Apple users. But I would bet that the number of people upgrading this way is several times smaller. What Apple could have done is allow the three to distribute the update minus a "key." To get the "key" the user would sign on to the Apple website, answer a few questions, and quickly download the "key," thus making everyone happy.

## Profit and Stocks

The profit numbers continue to come in, while ironically Compaq continues to lose money. Has anybody heard Compaq being called "troubled", "unviable", "has-been"? John Dvorak, a famous Apple basher, continues to pound Apple with criticism for doing nothing more than innovating and challenging the status quo. If Dvorak was fair he would prove it by coming down on Compaq for losing a greater amount of money than Apple. But, of course his argument would be that Apple had it all and was stupid, while Compaq is under the pressures of the global

marketplace. On the surface this might appear to be true, however Apple has been blazing its own trail while Compaq travels the Microsoft/Intel superhighway.

Don't you wish 'The Site' was still on MSNBC? The stupidity of ending that show still boggles the imagination.

At Macworld, Steve Jobs announced that Apple intended to buy back \$500 million shares of Apple stock. It's a great idea considering the amount of cash the company currently has on hand. What I suggest Apple should do is give a rebate of one share to everyone who buys an iMac or iBook, and two shares for a PowerBook or B/W G3. Why? To strengthen Apple loyalty! Think about it: instead of a rebate, a share of the company. An instant, extra level of loyalty. Granted, not everyone would hang on to the stock, but most would, for no other reason than the novelty of it at first. After a while the loyalty would set in. With the speed of technology ever increasing, loyalty will be harder to come by. Many companies have discovered that one of the best ways to keep employees is to give stock-based bonus. Why not do the same for consumers? Are you listening, Steve?

## iBook Commercial

Based upon various pictures, the iBook looks like a winner. The handle alone is a great idea. How come nobody ever thought of that before?

Scene: Typical white Apple commercial background.

Music: Theme to 2001: A Space Odyssey

Timed to the music, the iBook is shown from various angles, first the top, then the back, the sides, and finally the front. When the tympani drums begin to pound the lid opens, the screen displays the statement, "Hello, look, no wires (to the Internet)".

The black screen appears with the Think Different and an orange Apple icon.

## Back On The Bandwagon

The rumors of my writing death were only slightly exaggerated. It seemed like I was in a deep coma, unable to put words into a column. Looking back, I would have to say my absence was a simple case of computer burnout. I have spent the better part of five years learning and (semi) mastering Macintosh. Then, this past year I added the Evil Empire to my dangerous base of knowledge. I was eating, breathing, sleeping computers. All on top of my regular teaching, parenting, and

spousal duties. My plate was too full, and something needed to give. My subconscious picked writing. At first, it was skipping the column every other month. Then came July 10th, I had nothing to offer. Well, I did have an idea I discussed with our publisher, Tim, but I could only say a few words; extreme brevity had taken control. I felt guilty about it for a few days past our deadline, then with my computer troubleshooting job at school ending I was able to let go. For all but 6 hours this past month I was just a user of computers, nothing more. What a vacation it was; I surfed the 'net for the sheer joy of it! I even toured the White House. <<http://www.whitehouse.gov>> It was a heck of a lot cooler temperature-wise than being there in person.

Until next month...

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