

CAMP News

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Capital Apple Mac
Performa User Group



Gardiner, Maine

www/campug.org

February 13 meeting • 7:00 p.m. at Gardiner Area High School

Sue Westlake will demonstrate DiscLabel and TextExpander, both from SmileOnYourMac. Rob Darby will bring in a printer to show how DiscLabel prints directly to CD/DVD. Members who attend will be eligible for a free drawing of each program and everyone will receive a code for a 20% discount for both. **Plus**, we'll be raffling off a free copy of Leopard that we received from Apple. *Don't miss it!*

It's All on the Inside

Using Time Machine With an Internal Hard Drive

by Jeff Frankel, CAMP Newsletter Editor

I thought I was so smart. That was back in July 2005, when I purchased my PowerMac G5. I ponied up a few extra bucks for a 250 gb internal hard drive, and bought a 250 gb G-Tech external hard drive for backups.

Fast-forward to October 2007. Enter Time Machine. Boy, was I so dumb.

Time Machine, as most of you know, is the marquee backup utility of OS 10.5. Time Machine copies your source drive (or as much of your source drive as you let it) to a second hard drive of your choice, and then over time adds changed files and new files to the backup drive. Due to these accretions, the size of your backup will, in short order, grow significantly larger than the contents of your source drive(s). To prevent Time Machine from running out of space, you need a backup drive comfortably larger in size than the source drive(s).

So my 2005 strategy of buying a backup drive equal in size to my internal drive turned out to be shortsighted 2+ years later. Although my 250 gb internal still had lots of space left, I

could see the handwriting on the wall. I figured that my like-sized external hard drive would only accept Time Machine backups for a few months before Time Machine started deleting the oldest changes to free up space.

I started researching external hard drives. 500 gb is the new sweet spot in externals. My first inclination was to buy another G-Tech, but the model I wanted was sold out everywhere. In mid-2007 I had bought my son a 500 gb LaCie d2 Quadra. This was a solid piece of equipment. The d2 and comparable 500 gb models from other manufacturers are widely available for under \$200.

The newest connection type for external peripherals is something called eSata, short for external SATA. Although eSata's 1500 mb/sec maximum transfer rate is theoretically much faster than Firewire 800 (800 mb/sec), [transfer rates published by Other World Computing for its external hard drives](#) show only a small difference between the two ports. Plus, I would need to buy a SATA card for my Mac.

Then I remembered something Adam Tomash had mentioned, almost in passing, a while back: that the G5 Power Mac uses an internal SATA bus. In other words, my existing internal hard drive is a SATA drive. And then it hit me: why not buy a *second* internal drive for Time Machine backups? You benefit from internal SATA's 3000 mb/sec data rate, save space on your desk, and save money. (I ultimately purchased a standard, business-class 500 gb internal Seagate Barracuda with 16 mb cache from the Augusta Best Buy for \$120.)

Obviously, if the host Mac fails you can't move an internal backup drive to a substitute machine as easily as you can an external. And if your other machine (assuming there is another machine) is a laptop or an iMac, you're SOL unless you have a bare drive holder or spare case lying around. But that's not a major consideration if the backup drive is devoted to Time Machine. The reason is that Time Machine is designed to (a) restore lost files and folders, or (b) re-create an entire bootable volume with your data in conjunction with a Leopard startup disk. Time Machine does not by itself create an immediately available bootable backup. If you use Time Machine to back up your entire system to an external drive, in the event of system failure you can't simply plug the external Time Machine drive into another Mac, boot from the external

Notes From the Field: Blowing the Whistle on Little Snitch

Roger York decided to try out Leopard's new remote access utility, Back to My Mac. But try as he might, he couldn't connect to his home Mac from a Mac at Robert Sezak's store. The culprit turned out to be Little Snitch, the port-monitoring utility from Objective Development that monitors your Mac for unauthorized "phone home" transmissions to unknown third parties. Roger had configured Little Snitch on his home Mac to throw up an alert box each time an outgoing transmission was detected. Most of these transmissions are routine communications involving email, passwords, cookies and the like, and the usual course of action is to dismiss the warning. The problem was, Roger wasn't home to see it. Little Snitch saw the attempted communication from the Sezak Mac and blocked the home Mac from responding. It wasn't until Roger got home and saw the Little Snitch alert box still displayed on his home Mac that he realized what was happening. After Roger reconfigured Little Snitch, Back to My Mac worked properly.



drive and resume work. You would first need to start the substitute Mac from a Leopard startup disk and then restore your Time Machine backup to yet another drive before you could resume work. Thus, for Time Machine backups, you don't lose much flexibility by going internal.

The user manual that came with my PowerMac had easy-to-follow instructions for installing an internal drive, and everything went well. From what I've read, it's even easier with Apple's current tower models, the Mac Pro line.

Time Machine is a great tool. But it doesn't do everything. For the reasons touched on above, it is highly advisable to have a bootable backup of your data available on an external device to minimize down time in the event of hardware failure on the host machine. For me, this problem was neatly solved simply by purchasing the internal hard drive noted above. That freed up the external G-Tech drive which was previously devoted to Time Machine. I now make a bootable clone of my startup

drive on the external every few days. I use Retrospect for this purpose, although there are a wide variety of freeware, shareware and commercial applications that can do this.

The third leg of my backup system is a DVD-DL backup set of my home folder that I created with Retrospect. I update this every month or so and store it at my office.

What's the next step in backups and crisis recovery? My guess is that the next big comer on the data loss prevention front will be the growing popularity of RAID clusters, i.e., a pair of two disks running in tandem, configured for either speed or reliability. If a RAID is configured for reliability, data is simultaneously written to both drives—active cloning, as it were. If one drive fails, the other instantly steps in and becomes the active drive without missing a beat. RAID's have long been a fixture for business users, and declining prices may bring them into home and home office settings with greater frequency. ☀