



REVIEWED: New Core i5 and i7 MacBook Pros

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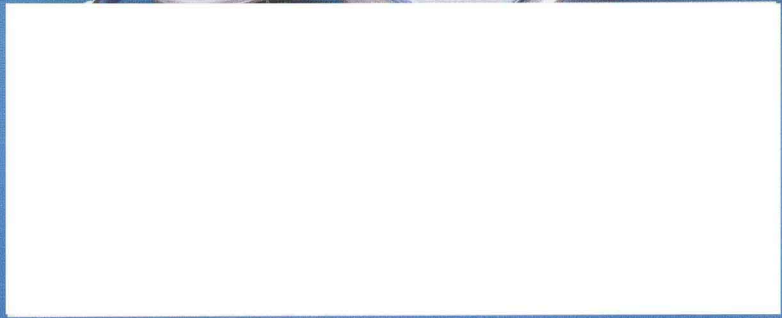
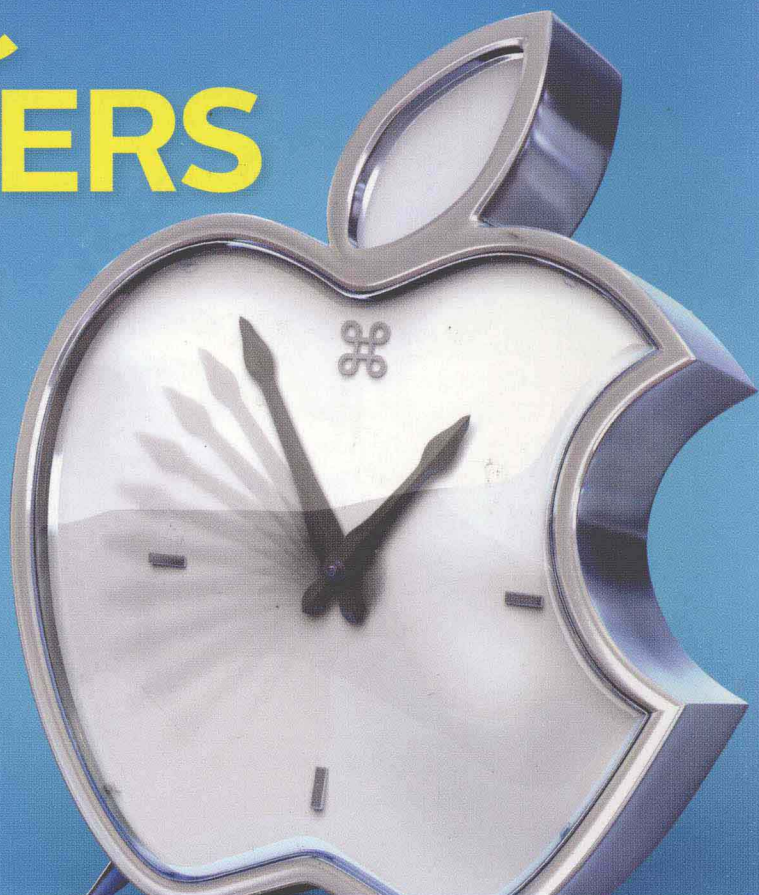
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July 2010

TOP MAC TIMESAVERS

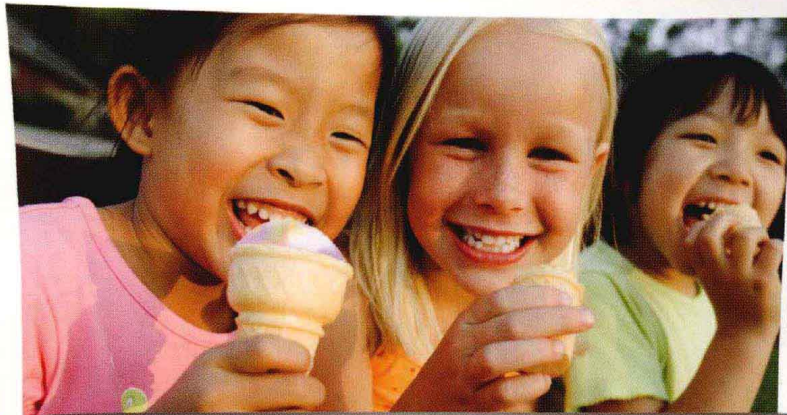
16 Utilities That Will
Make You More
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- ⌚ Launch Apps Faster
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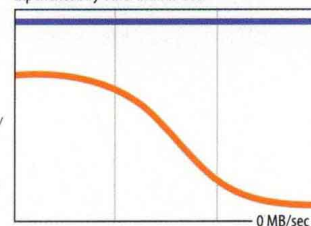
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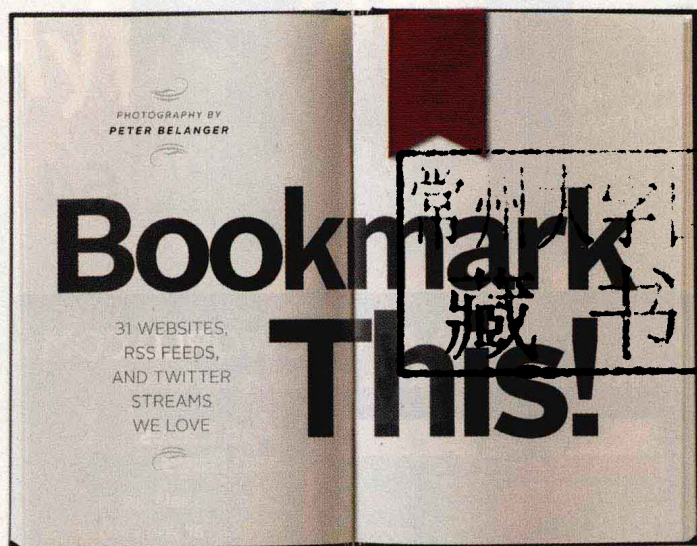
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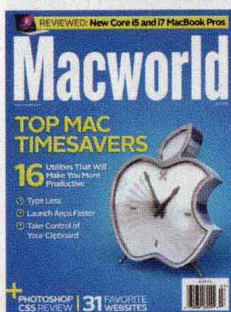
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Illustration by Joe Zeff Design

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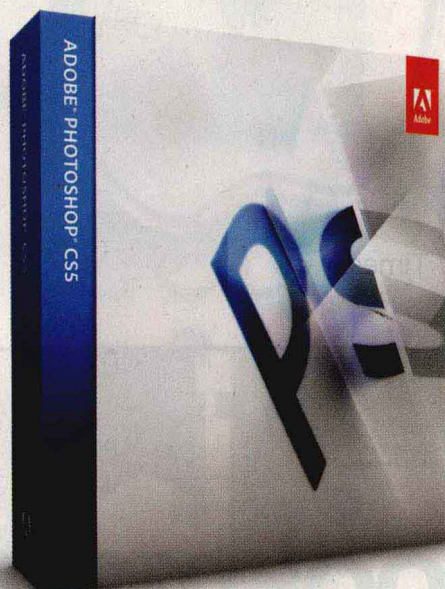
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**iPad Cases and Bags**

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Macworld Podcast: Macworld Pundit Showdown VI (macworld.com/6103).

Macworld Video: Five Cool iPad Games (macworld.com/6104).

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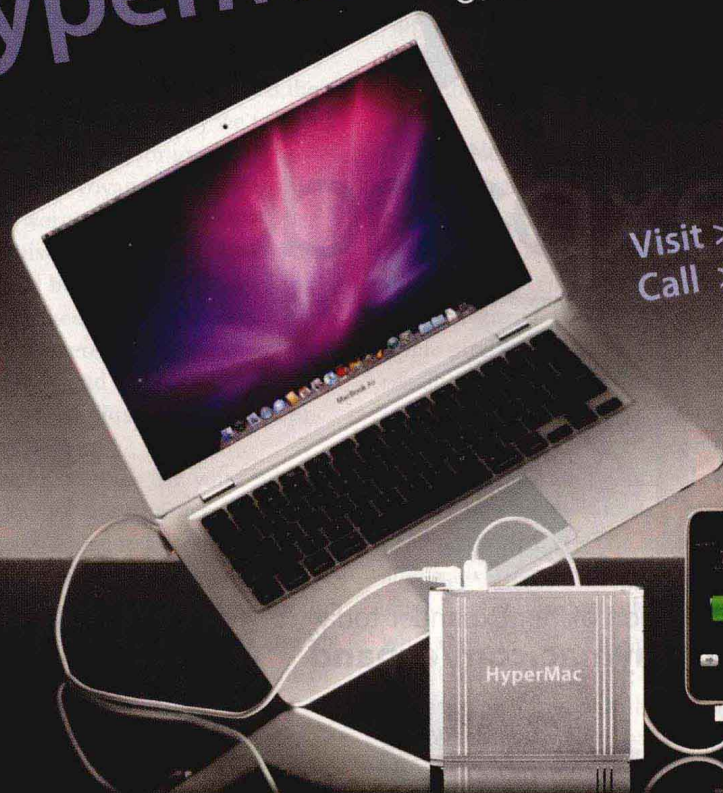
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A Seaworthy Community

Eight years of floating Mac conferences reveal how far we've come

I'm writing this column from the deck of a ship bobbing up and down in the Atlantic Ocean. I'm a speaker on the latest MacMania cruise-slash-conference; because *Macworld* coproduces the event, this is the sixth time I've done it.

More notable than the fact that I'm with a ship full of Apple fans and experts like Andy Ihnatko and David Pogue is that MacMania has been around for most of a decade that's seen a sea change (sorry) in the Mac community.

Then and Now

The first Mac cruise was in May 2002. The ships are still the same. You can still find hot dogs, burgers, and taco fixings next to the pool on the Lido Deck. But everything else is different.

Back then, Apple was just beginning its turnaround. The company had introduced the iMac and the iBook, the latter with built-in AirPort wireless networking. There was Wi-Fi on the first cruise because we brought our own AirPort Base Stations and attached them to the ship's network. Today we take wireless networking for granted.

On the first voyage, users of Apple products were an isolated tribe. Our fellow cruise passengers looked at us like we had boarded the wrong ship. But as I walked around the decks in 2010, I discovered Apple products everywhere—and not just in the hands of the hundred-plus members of our MacMania group.

In the ship's coffee bar, you couldn't use an iPad for five minutes without someone stopping to ask you for a demo. One of the event's speakers ended up grabbing two iPads and walking through a dozen apps for a retired doctor and his wife. They were soon deep in a game of iPad Scrabble.

If you're one of the Mac users who have joined the tribe since the introduc-



The us-against-the-world feeling is gone, but the sense of community remains.

tion of the iPod—which was also brand new on that first cruise (I brought my first-generation model with me)—Apple's near-death experience back then probably seems more like an ancient myth than a historical fact.

Rebels No Longer

What really struck me on this year's cruise is that, although the us-against-the-world feeling of the first event has vanished, the sense of community remains strong. What holds users of Apple products together today isn't rebellion—the whole world seems to have embraced Apple—it's just our shared enthusiasm about technology.

Even in a place like Bermuda (this year's destination), enthusiasm for Apple products runs high. The local cellular shops advertise iPhones. The iStore, an Apple reseller just two blocks away from where we docked, is busy, staffed by bright folks, and serving a market that seems to be hungry for the latest and greatest from Apple. (That's more than a bit of a trick when you're on an island

that's not at the top of Apple's international product-rollout plans.)

A Thank You in Return

Because MacMania cruises are primarily promoted through *Macworld* itself, these events are populated almost entirely by readers of the magazine. I probably talk to more loyal readers of *Macworld* on these cruises than I do at Macworld Expo. And the words they had for the magazine were kind indeed. After they recognized me based on my column photo, they would tell me about their love for the magazine. They praised our writers and all the tips and reviews. But most of all they told me about the delight they had going through the pages every month.

For those of us who work on *Macworld*, it's awfully easy to lose sight of the big picture. We come to work every day and toil at the mundane business of 21st century publishing: talking to writers, assigning stories, wrestling with print and online production systems that are alternately infuriating and exhausting. It's easy to lose sight of why we're doing it. But after spending a week with a bunch of voracious *Macworld* readers, I got to see what happens when the fruits of our labors reach our readers. It's a beautiful thing.

So I say to all of you *Macworld* readers, whether at sea or on dry land: Thank you. Thanks for reading us every month. Thanks for e-mailing or posting on our forums or sending me something on Twitter when you've got something to say. And thanks to those of you who don't do any of those things, but who still read us regularly. We wouldn't be here without you.

Editorial Director **Jason Snell** has taught classes on six MacMania cruises, most recently MacMania X. For more information about MacMania, visit insightcruises.com. E-mail him at jason_snell@macworld.com, or follow him on Twitter at twitter.com/jsnell.

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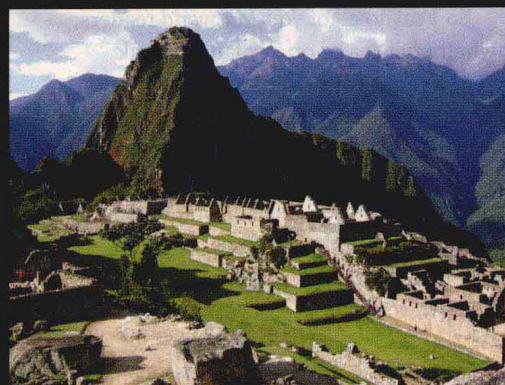
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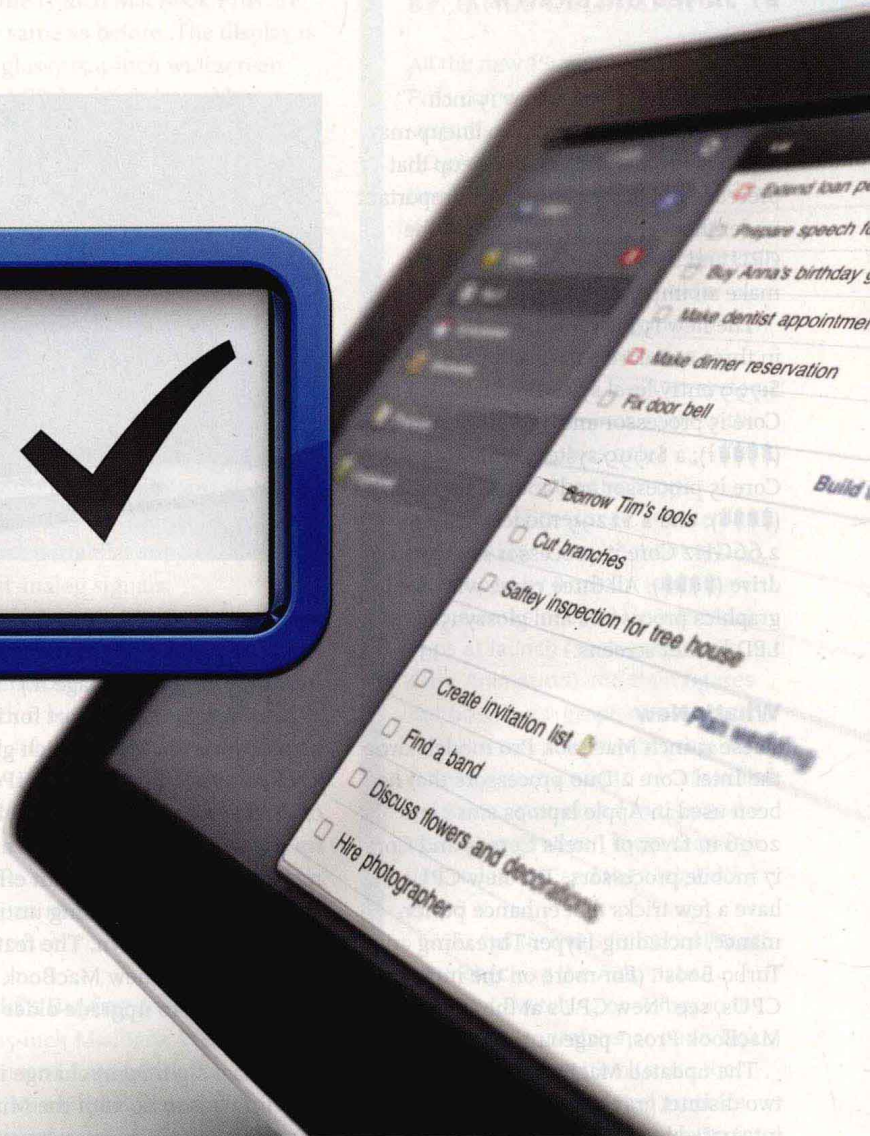


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15-Inch MacBook Pro Speeds Up

The slowest new one is faster than the fastest old one

BY JAMES GALBRAITH

REVIEW

Apple's new 15-inch MacBook Pro lineup may look just like the mid-2009 lineup that preceded it, but thanks to some important under-the-hood changes—to both the CPU and the GPU—the new laptops make an impressive leap in performance.

The new 15-inch MacBook Pro comes in three standard configurations: a \$1799 entry-level system with a 2.4GHz Core i5 processor and 320GB hard drive (●●●●●); a \$1999 system with a 2.53GHz Core i5 processor and 500GB hard drive (●●●●●); and a \$2299 model with a 2.66GHz Core i7 processor and 500GB drive (●●●●●). All three come with dual graphics processors and glossy 15.4-inch LED-backlit screens.

What's New

These 15-inch MacBook Pro models drop the Intel Core 2 Duo processors that had been used in Apple laptops since late 2006 in favor of Intel's Core i5 and Core i7 mobile processors. The new CPUs have a few tricks that enhance performance, including Hyper-Threading and Turbo Boost. (For more on the improved CPUs, see "New CPUs at the Core of MacBook Pros," page 14.)

The updated MacBook Pros also offer two distinct graphics systems: one that's integrated into the CPU subsystem, and another that Apple added; previously, the entry-level 15-inch MacBook Pro had integrated graphics only. The new laptops can use the Intel HD integrated graphics for general-purpose apps, but when they need to run more graphically intensive programs, they can switch over to the faster nVidia GeForce GT 330M graphics system. That switchover is man-



aged by a new technology developed by Apple. (For more on that, see "Big Boost in Laptop Graphics," page 11.)

Also new is the support for inertial scrolling on the Multi-Touch glass trackpad. As on the iPhone, iPod touch, or iPad, when you swipe your finger up or down to scroll through a document, there's a momentum effect that keeps the screen scrolling until it appears to slow down. The feature is available on the new MacBook Pros; you won't be able to upgrade older laptops to get it.

The last significant change in the new line has to do with the Mini DisplayPort, which can now output multichannel audio and video. (You have to use a Mini DisplayPort to HDMI Adapter that supports the new MacBook Pro's audio and video signals.)

The Speedy Results

To see how these internal improvements affected performance, we ran the new MacBook Pros through our

standard system performance benchmark, Speedmark 6. The results we saw were impressive.

The new low-end 2.4GHz Core i5 is 23 percent faster overall in our tests than the previous low-end model, with its 2.53GHz Core 2 Duo. In fact, the new entry-level 2.4GHz MacBook Pro is faster than the last generation's top two configurations (which had 2.66GHz and 2.8GHz Core 2 Duo processors, respectively).

More specifically, the 2.4GHz Core i5 MacBook Pro is 5 percent faster in our Speedmark 6 testing than the previous top-of-the-line 2.8GHz Core 2 Duo MacBook Pro, 7 percent faster in Photoshop, 17 percent faster in our Cinebench CPU test, 16 percent faster on MathematicaMark 7, and 19 percent faster running Aperture.

On average, the new midrange 2.53GHz system is only slightly faster—about 3 percent—than the entry-level model. In some tests (Aperture and Compressor), the

low-end model is actually faster. The top-of-the-line 2.66GHz Core i7 model is 7 percent faster on our tests than the midrange model and 10 percent faster than the low-end laptop; it is 15 percent faster than the 2.8GHz Core 2 Duo model it replaces.

The new graphics systems have given the MacBook Pro a real boost. The nVidia GeForce GT 330M was able to display approximately 19 percent more frames per second in our Call of Duty tests than the last generation's nVidia GeForce GT 9600M. Even bumping the resolution from 1024 by 768 (our standard for Speedmark 6) up to 1440 by 900 didn't impede the system's performance.

Comparing the new MacBook Pros to iMacs that also use Core i5 and Core i7 processors shows that you still pay a premium for performance in a portable. The high-end 2.66GHz Core i7 MacBook

Pro is 24 percent slower overall than the 2.66GHz Core i5 27-inch iMac. Credit for that goes to the iMac's use of the desktop Core i5 and Core i7 processors—which have four processing cores—and a faster, 7200-rpm hard drive.

What Didn't Change

Except for those under-the-hood changes, the 15-inch MacBook Pros are much the same as before. The display is the same glossy 15.4-inch widescreen LCD with LED backlighting and 1440-by-900-pixel resolution. (An antiglare, high-resolution [1680-by-1050] option is available for an extra \$150; a glossy high-resolution display is available, too, for an additional \$100.)

The unibody case is unchanged. There's still a backlit keyboard, a Multi-Touch trackpad, and an 8X DVD-burning SuperDrive. On the sides, you'll find two familiar USB 2.0 ports, one gigabit ethernet jack, and one FireWire 800 port; an SD card slot; a MagSafe power port; and audio line-in and line-out ports that support optical digital and analog signals.

Although the new MacBook Pros have the same nonreplaceable battery as the late-2009 models did, smarter power consumption by the graphics systems and some subtle changes to the battery have improved battery life. In our movie playback tests, (a worst-case battery-draining scenario), the three new laptops lasted, on average, for 4 hours and 35 minutes—an improvement of between 10 and 25 percent.

Macworld's Buying Advice

The new 15-inch MacBook Pros are better performers and have better battery life than their immediate predecessors, but they are priced similarly to them. The extra \$100 for the new low-end system seems like an especially good bargain when you consider the discrete graphics, bigger hard drive, and new 2.4GHz Core i5 processor.

Note that we didn't receive the 17-inch MacBook Pros in time to include reviews of them in this issue; look for summaries of those reviews in next month's issue.



Big Boost in Laptop Graphics

BY JAMES GALBRAITH

All the new 15- and 17-inch MacBook Pros come with two graphics systems. They use integrated Intel HD graphics for everyday applications like iTunes, Mail, and Safari. But if you launch a more graphically intensive app, they will automatically switch to the dedicated nVidia GeForce GT 330M graphics system. (Most of the last-generation MacBook Pros also had two systems; the entry-level 15-inch came with integrated graphics only.)

The switchover from one graphics processor to another is managed by a new technology developed by Apple. It looks for frameworks needed by individual apps at launch (such as OpenGL and Core Animation) and then figures out how much graphics processing power those frameworks require. Previously, you had to decide which graphics you wanted to use; and switching between them required you to log out and then log back in to OS X.

You can turn this functionality off by unchecking the Automatic Graphics Switching checkbox in the Energy Saver preference pane. Doing this forces the system to use the less-powerful integrated graphics only; there's currently no way to force the new laptops to use the more powerful subsystem.

In the new 13-inch MacBook Pros, Apple has replaced the last generation's GeForce 9400M processor with the GeForce 320M. The 320M has three times as many processing cores (48) as the 9400M, and it's also more energy efficient.

Macworld Lab Test

Speedmark 6 Test Results



Longer bars are better. Reference systems are in *italics*. For complete benchmark test results for the 15-inch MacBook Pros, please visit macworld.com/6124. For complete benchmark test results for the 13-inch MacBook Pros, please visit macworld.com/6125.—MACWORLD LAB TESTING BY JAMES GALBRAITH, CHRIS HOLT, LYNN LA, AND MEGHANN MYERS



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13-Inch MacBook Pro

Of all the new MacBook Pros, the 13-inch models have changed the least from the previous generation

BY JONATHAN SEFF



REVIEW

Although the 15- and 17-inch MacBook Pros use Intel's new Core i5 and Core i7 mobile processors, Apple stuck with the Core 2 Duo line of processors in the new 13-inch line: a 2.4GHz dual-core processor in the \$1199 model (●●●●), and a 2.66GHz dual-core processor in the \$1499 model (●●●●½)—up from the previous generation's 2.26GHz and 2.53GHz, respectively.

Some users have wondered why Apple decided to stick with the Core 2 Duo instead of using Intel's new Core i3 CPU. It seems most likely that Apple didn't want to stick with the integrated Intel HD graphics system that goes along with the Core i3. Instead, both new 13-inch models use nVidia's GeForce 320M graphics, which replace the GeForce 9400M system used in the last bunch.

Test Results

Whatever the reason, the new models are faster than the old: The 2.4GHz model received a Speedmark score of 118, the 2.66GHz model a score of 126. The previous generation scored 104 and 120, respectively, and the MacBook got a 111.

The new graphics chips also deliver much better frame rates than their predecessors: On our Call of Duty test, the

new 2.4GHz MacBook Pro delivered 38.9 frames per second, 15.2 fps better than the previous generation's 2.53GHz model.

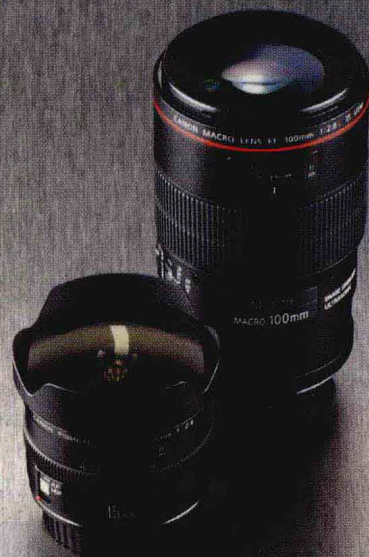
Battery life is better, too. In our testing (which plays a looped video in QuickTime until the battery dies), the 2.4GHz 13-inch MacBook Pro lasted 4 hours and 19 minutes; the 2.66GHz model ran for 4 hours and 33 minutes. Compare those times to those of the 2009 13-inch 2.26GHz and 2.53GHz models (3 hours and 30 minutes and 3 hours and 38 minutes, respectively), as well as to those of the current MacBook (3 hours and 45 minutes). (Apple's claim of 10-hour battery life is based on an entirely different test.)

In my own informal temperature testing (simultaneously running Windows XP in Parallels Desktop 4, encoding an HD MKV file in VideoMonkey, and streaming a Netflix TV show in Safari), the back of the laptop (where the battery is) got warm, but not uncomfortably so. After running for about 15 minutes, the maximum external temperature (measured by an infrared temperature device) was 107 degrees.

The Hardware

All the new MacBook Pros have the same Multi-Touch glass trackpad as before. All of them (including the 13-inch models)

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now have inertial scrolling (swipe your finger down the screen, and the page will scroll as if it has momentum).

Both 13-inch models now include 4GB of 1066MHz DDR3 RAM, and support a max of 8GB. There are the usual ports—two USB 2.0, one FireWire 800, a Mini DisplayPort, a gigabit ethernet port, and an SD card slot. They also have full-size, backlit keyboards, 8X SuperDrives, built-in stereo speakers (which are quite good), and a built-in iSight camera. The new models include a 250GB or 320GB 5400-rpm hard drive (up from 160GB or 250GB drive, respectively, at the same speeds).

The new 13-inch MacBook Pros use the same LED-backlit 1280-by-800-pixel glossy display as the previous models. (There are no antiglare or high-resolution display options, as there are on the 15- and 17-inch models.) The displays are very bright, and

the viewing angle is respectable in the horizontal direction but not that great vertically—you need to adjust the angle of the display to achieve optimum viewing.

Macworld's Buying Advice

If you already have the previous 13-inch MacBook Pro, there's not much reason to upgrade unless you must have the newest version of everything: Although the new models have improved performance, graphics, and battery life, they're not necessarily worth spending another \$199 or more so soon. But to people who have an older (or no) laptop, the MacBook Pros are easy to recommend. That said, unless light weight is your primary buying criterion, you'd probably be better off taking advantage of the Core i5 and i7 processors and improved graphics on the 15- or 17-inch model.



New CPUs at the Core of MacBook Pros

BY JAMES GALBRAITH

The Core i5 and Core i7 chips used in the latest MacBook Pros set a new standard in Mac laptop performance.

They both feature Intel's Turbo Boost technology. With Turbo Boost, the processor can boost its clock frequency when necessary. With the 2.4GHz Core i5 520M, Turbo Boost can increase the clock speed up to 2.93GHz; the 2.53GHz Core i5 goes up to 3.06GHz; and the 2.66GHz Core i7 can go up to 3.33GHz.







The Core processors also support Hyper-Threading. By using four virtual cores, Hyper-Threading allows each of the two cores on these chips to process two threads at once.

There's a key difference between the Core i5 processors used in the 27-inch iMac that was introduced last fall (and is still the fastest Mac we've ever tested) and those in the new MacBook Pros. The MacBook Pros use a mobile version of the Core i5 and Core i7. Both chips have two cores and can support up to four threads. The desktop Core i5 used in the iMac has four cores; however, it doesn't support Hyper-Threading.

Correction

In our "Mac Money Managers" feature (June 2010), we misprinted a URL for SplashMoney on page 50. Instead of macworld.com/5669, it should be macworld.com/5969.

Macs: Current Lineup

PRODUCT	SPECS	RATING	PRICE	DISPLAY	SPEED-MARK 6 ^A	FIND CODE ^B
DESKTOP						
iMac 	Intel Core 2 Duo/3.06GHz (nVidia graphics)	★★★★	\$1199	21.5 inches	148	5510
	Intel Core 2 Duo/3.06GHz (ATI graphics)	★★★★	\$1499	21.5 inches	164	5509
	Intel Core 2 Duo/3.06GHz	★★★★	\$1699	27 inches	162	5508
	Intel Core i5/2.66GHz	★★★★	\$1999	27 inches	209	5511
Mac Mini 	Intel Core 2 Duo/2.26GHz	★★★★	\$599	not included	104	5507
	Intel Core 2 Duo/2.53GHz	★★★★	\$799	not included	118	5506
Mac Pro 	Intel Xeon/2.66GHz (4 cores)	★★★★	\$2499	not included	206	4488
	Intel Xeon/2.26GHz (8 cores)	★★★★	\$3299	not included	203	4503
PORTABLE						
MacBook 	Intel Core 2 Duo/2.26GHz (white)	★★★★	\$999	13 inches	111	5505
MacBook Air 	Intel Core 2 Duo/1.86GHz	★★★★	\$1499	13 inches	70	4953
	Intel Core 2 Duo/2.13GHz	★★★★	\$1799	13 inches	72	4954
MacBook Pro 	Intel Core 2 Duo/2.4GHz	★★★★	\$1199	13 inches	118	6151
	Intel Core 2 Duo/2.66GHz	★★★★	\$1499	13 inches	126	6152
	Intel Core i5/2.4GHz	★★★★	\$1799	15 inches	146	6153
	Intel Core i5/2.53GHz	★★★★	\$1999	15 inches	150	6154
	Intel Core i7/2.66GHz	★★★★	\$2299	15 inches	161	6155
	Intel Core 2 Duo/2.8GHz	★★★★	\$2499	17 inches	140	4952

^A Speedmark 6 is Macworld Lab's standard test tool for benchmarking systems running Mac OS X 10.6 (Snow Leopard). For more information on Speedmark testing, go to macworld.com/5503. ^B In a browser's address field, typing in a find code after macworld.com/ takes you to a product's review or overview.