e-Tips Newsletter

Issue 63

Please keep in mind that because of the volume of e-mail we receive and the fact that we are volunteering our time and this free newsletter, we can't routinely answer individual questions by phone or e-mail, or consult on individual problems or purchasing decisions.

The good news about computers is that they do what you tell them to do. The bad news is that they do what you tell them to do.
Ted Nelson—

Inside this issue:

ASI Tech Support
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Out with Wi-Fi, In With EV-DO
by: Wil Wilcox

Is Wi-Fi not cutting it when you're on the road? Wireless EV-DO broadband access lets you connect to the Web from virtually anywhere. We've had the capability for years to use our cell phones as modems connected to our laptops. (See e-Tip 38 from June 2004.) The problem was that this was very slow and generally only fast enough for e-mail and light Web surfing. But now these networks are beginning to offer true broadband speeds. So the time may be right to consider getting wireless broadband Internet access.

Sprint and Verizon now offer EV-DO, Revision A, wireless broadband with DSL-like speeds for both uploading and downloading. Please note that you may not have coverage at this higher speed in your area yet, but it is being rolled out nationally. Just check with your local provider to find out. Sprint claims that their entire network will be upgraded to offer the higher Revision A speeds by the Third Quarter of '07 and currently has the largest coverage capacity. With a contract, the cost is around $59 per month for unlimited access.

I've been using Sprint Mobile Broadband "exclusively" for a month now, and I do have to say that I would not want to be without it. I'm not going to give up my Cable Internet at home yet though. With Sprint Mobile Broadband I've been averaging upload speeds of 350-500 Kbps and average download speeds of 600 Kbps-1.4 Mbps which is very fast but not as fast as my cable modem is. Also, just like your cell phone can drop a call, if you do not have a strong wireless signal, you are subject to being dropped from the Internet and having to reconnect. A strong signal is important to maintaining higher speeds. There are external booster antennas available for around $50 that will help ensure that you have the best connection for the highest possible speeds.

Since I basically have this wireless Internet access everywhere I take my laptop where there is Sprint coverage, I'd rather give up my Cable modem at home before giving up the wireless broadband. Now I'm used to Internet access virtually all of the time. EV-DO is not built into many laptops yet, so for now you'll most likely need to use a PC card or USB dongle for your wireless modem. There are even routers available if you want to share your EV-DO via Wi-Fi with other computers in your home or office.
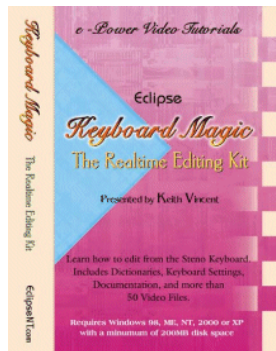
Wil Wilcox (Continued from page 1)

Don't forget that there is a trial period during which you can install the service and test it out yourself to see if it will work for you. If not, just cancel the order, return your hardware and don't get locked into a long-term contract.

I also recommend that you do some research first. The best place to do this is a forum on the Internet at: www.EVDOForums.com. You will find many discussions of Verizon and Sprint, which one is best, and what hardware to purchase. I also bought my hardware from their affiliate, http://3gstore.com/. If you purchase your hardware and service from a reputable and expert reseller such as 3Gstore.com, you will get better tech support and more services than you will if you go directly with the cell companies. Or to put it in plain words, how would you like to press a number and talk to a live person, an expert, able to solve your problem, or push a series of buttons and wait on hold for someone from the cell phone company that can't in the end answer your question?

So should you sit tight, waiting until EV-DO is built into a notebook you buy, or should you buy a PC card and jump in? If you are a heavy-hitter reporter doing expedites and working with scopists, e-mailing jobs and sending sound files, this is perfect. Or if you simply need Internet access both at home and the office and you split your time between more than one location, this could also be for you. Even faster speeds are coming in the next year or two, so if not now, at some point in the future you're going to be pretty tempted to go wireless for all your Internet access needs. ∎

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Mark

By: Keith Vincent

Keith Vincent

I'm hoping this little tip falls squarely in the "That makes sense but I didn't realize it" category.

I sometimes see folks pressing the "Mark" key (F7 or Hyperkey "m") a bunch of times when just one or two keystrokes would do the job. Let's say you want to mark an entire sentence that contains 80 words. Maybe the sentence is five lines long. Here are a few approaches.

  Slow: Press the Mark key 80 times.

  Fairly fast: Press the Mark key, then use the down arrow to mark additional lines of text. Finish by pressing the Mark key a few more times until you have all 80 words highlighted.

  Very fast: Press the Mark key to start marking. Now move forward to the next sentence by pressing either Alt F (as in "forward") or Hyperkey K (shift plus k). All 80 words of your sentence will have been marked with only two quick steps.

In other words, the Mark key simply starts marking. Once you've started marking, anything that moves your cursor forward will increase the amount of text that is marked. Anything that moves your cursor backward will decrease the amount of text that is marked. Thus, "Mark" plus Ctrl Page Down would mark from your current cursor position to the very end of your document. If you were on page 5 and you gave the "Mark" command followed by the "Go to" command (Alt G or Hyperkey G) and indicated page 50, you would have marked all the text from you cursor position on page 5 through the beginning of page 50. ■

Visit Keith's website @: www.KVincent.com

Using Eclipse on a Mac Computer – by Linda Code

Apple Computers have scored a big consumer hit with the new CoreDuo technology that enables the use of Windows-based software on a Mac computer. Up until recently, I have always had PCs because my computers have always been mainly for work. However, while browsing in an Apple Computer store one day last fall, a big, beautiful iMac caught my eye. After doing some research on it, I decided to buy one and use it for my scoping business.

Always one for a new challenge, I knew that Eclipse did not officially support their software on a Mac, but I still had my trusty IBM ThinkPad, and if things got really ugly, I figured I could always go back to churning out pages on my laptop!

The first step was to research Boot Camp v. Parallels. These are two different programs that allow you to split your hard drive on the Mac so that you can have different operating systems installed. The main reason that I went with Parallels was the fact that you can have more than one operating system running simultaneously on the Mac, but Boot Camp requires that you reboot every time you want to switch O/S's.

I purchased a boxed version of Parallels at the Mac store where I bought my computer. The installation was easy. Then I installed a brand new copy of Win XP Pro. The next step was to install my Eclipse software, which went off without a hitch. It was the same as installing it on a PC – it didn't know the difference!

Because the Mac keyboard and mouse are different from their PC counterparts, I customized my workstation by ditching them and plugging in my Microsoft wireless ergonomic keyboard and mouse into one of the USB connections on the Mac. This combination worked perfectly on both the Mac and Windows sides.

My first "issue" then raised its ugly head. The Eclipse USB dongle (software key) was not being recognized by Eclipse. A call to the Eclipse support desk revealed what I had already known – they could not offer any suggestions concerning the Mac….

Eclipse support was very helpful in providing me with a temporary password code, so I could continue to work on the Mac. Eclipse then seemed to work the same on the Mac as it did on the ThinkPad. Now, if I could just figure out this dead-dongle situation….

I phoned Mac support. After all, the thing was plugged into the back of a Mac, so maybe they had an idea. No such luck. They said it was a PC issue because Eclipse was PC software only.

The next idea from Eclipse support was to do a diagnostic test and send a report to the Aladdin people – the company who manufactures the Eclipse USB dongle. After sending that off, I received a file from Eclipse a couple of weeks later that I was to install on the Windows side of the Mac, which would supposedly get my dongle to work. No such luck….

Then I discovered that the Parallels website had an online forum with thousands of posts from people who were also wrestling with this new concept of Windows on a Mac. I poured through hundreds of posts until I came across one thread describing the same type of problem someone was having with a dongle that was part of a commercial manufacturing software program. One post solved my problem! All I had to do was go into the Windows Device Manager settings, disable the Aladdin USB dongle, then enable it, and voila! The darn thing worked! The only hassle with this was that every time I rebooted Windows, I had to go through about a 10-click maneuver to get the dongle to work.

Parallels released a couple of software updates after that. However, good news finally arrived in the form of another Parallels update in December, Build 3036. I installed it, booted up Windows, and Eclipse actually opened up without going through the usual ritual in Device Manager. I was free!

Linda Code(Continued from Page 4)

And now I note that there is no difference between using Eclipse on my ThinkPad and using it on the iMac. Eclipse acts just like it would on a PC. I am a busy, full-time scopist and work with a number of user ID's on Eclipse – one for each of the reporters that I work with. Eclipse works perfectly within each one of those different user settings, and I have had no freezing problems on the iMac.

I have to tell you, I am very happy with using Eclipse on the iMac. True, there were growing pains with Parallels. There were never really any weird issues with the Eclipse software itself. Because I am a scopist, I have the editing version of Eclipse. I have not used the full-blown version for reporting, so I cannot comment first-hand on any experience in that venue. One of my reporters just went out and purchased a MacBook and plans to use it for reporting. If you would like to hear how she is making out, just drop me an e-mail, and I will give you an updated report as soon as she jumps in with it!

If you decide to get a Mac to use with Eclipse and decide to go with the Parallels software, my advice would be to ensure that you get the latest version, then make sure you download the updates after you get the program installed.

Having been a Mac owner now for a few months now, I must admit that I am hooked, and my next step will be to replace my ThinkPad with a MacBook later this year.

Linda Code

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www.accuratescoping.com ■   (special thanks to Linda for submitting this article)

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Total Eclipse CAT Spring Courses - Beginning & Advanced

Cypress College (Anaheim Campus)
Dates: Wednesdays, January 31, 2007 – May 23, 2007
Time: 6:00 – 8:15 p.m. (plus lab earlier - TBA) Room: 308
Anaheim Campus, located at: 1830 Romneya Avenue, Anaheim, CA 92801
714 808-4574 Anaheim Office

To Sign up:

Log onto the Cypress Web site http://www.cypresscollege.edu/~xoladmin/index.htm and click the 'New Student Apply Now Button' *Read the information carefully and then click on the button on the bottom to "Begin the application process" Next, click the New User button if you are new, so you can establish a User name and Password. Once you have completed your application, you will receive an Application Confirmation. Note: After submitting an online application, students will be informed within 24hrs regarding their admissions status via email. To allow notifications to be sent properly, please make sure your SPAM settings are set up to receive from www.cypresscollege.edu & www.cccapply.org .*

After you receive your application confirmation, you can go back to the Cypress College Web site and *Register*. You would then click on the button 'Current Students Register Now.' This will take you to Web Star where you click on the Register for classes and fill in your ID and password information.

Cypress Registration: http://www.cypresscollege.edu/~xoladmin/index.htm

Here is the information on the classes and Lab. (Everyone must sign up for the lab in addition to the course)

Beginning: CTRP 084 - CAT: Eclipse - CRN #23385 OR **Advanced**: CTRP 065 - Advanced CAT - CRN #24167

Lab: CTRP 030 C CRN #24138

If you have trouble registering, please contact:

Cypress Business office: 714-484-7211 My cell phone number is: 858-967-7599 Thanks so much! **Linda Cardoza**

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