The Apple Core
Latest technical news

• Not much has happened in Apple-land over December, although the big news is that Google Maps is now available on the App Store for those who've been having problems with the accuracy of Apple's own Maps app.

• Owners of iPhones 5 and iPads mini can update their system to version 6.0.2, but the only information supplied was that it fixed a wi-fi bug. You can update your device directly by tapping on the Settings app and selecting the Software Update option.

• If you're a fan of your iPhone's Do Not Disturb feature, some of you might have noticed that it no longer switches itself off since we all saw in the new year. This annoying glitch will apparently fix itself on the 7th of January. No explanation or apology has been given by Apple. Let's just hope for the sake of those relying on this iOS 6 feature that Apple's engineers are right about the date! Until then, it's back to using the Silent feature instead.

The Hardware Refresh Cycle
To help you time your Mac, iPad, iPhone or iPod purchase perfectly

Model	Last Updated	Recommendation
Mac Pro	11 Jun 2012	Just an incremental update
Mac mini	23 Oct 2012	Buy now
iMac	30 Nov 2012	Buy now
MacBook Air	11 Jun 2012	Mid product cycle
MacBook Pro	11 Jun 2012	Mid product cycle
MacBook Pro 13"	23 Oct 2012	Buy now
iPad	23 Oct 2012	Buy now
iPad mini	23 Oct 2012	Buy now
iPhone	21 Sep 2012	Buy now
Music iPods & iPod touch	9 Oct 2012	Buy now

The Help Desk
Answering your most pressing technical questions

Q: I just bought an Apple USB Superdrive to replace the broken one in my Mac and it doesn't work! What gives?

A: Apple's "it just works" mantra doesn't work in this case. For some unknown reason, their USB Superdrive is only compatible with Macs that didn't ship with built-in DVD drives. However, there's a relatively simple answer, which involves a trip to the Terminal app (located in your Mac's Utilities folder, within the Applications folder).
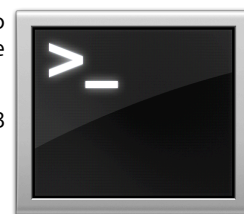
Type, on a single line:
sudo pico /Library/Preferences/ SystemConfiguration/com.apple.Boot.plist

Then insert **mbasd=1** in between the **<string>** and **</string>** values.

Press **Control-X** to save, type **Y** to confirm, and **Return** to set the filename.

Restart your Mac and your USB Superdrive will magically work!

Solution provided courtesy of Luz: *www.hardturn.ch/luz/*

To submit your questions, send an email to **steve@maclore.net**.

Safeguarding your Digital Life

Computers are so powerful and we can do so much with them that we tend to forget how vulnerable they can be. If your photos, documents, music or home movies are important to you, you should seriously consider backing them up.

Don't wait until it's too late. *Contact me* to find out how.

This newsletter, along with all others written since 2008 can be downloaded directly from **www.maclore.net**. If you want to always get the latest issue delivered straight to your inbox, be sure to subscribe to this free service - you can do so from any page of that site. These newsletters will also feature on my new blog, **www.steveparis.net**.
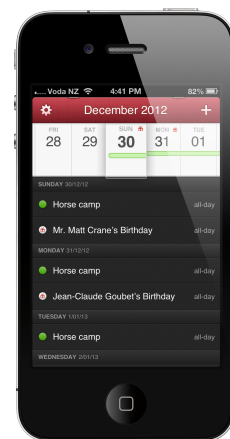
Fantastical: *A clear and simple alternative to your Mac's and iOS's Calendar app?*

Getting to part you from your hard earned money is never an easy task, made doubly difficult when a version of the product you're selling comes bundled with your phone or computer, but Flexibits are confident that you'll find their calendar application worth the expense. The problem with calendar programs is that not everyone is looking for the same thing. Some may be happy with what's on their machine, but I found those lacking.

Fantastical comes in two flavours: one for your iPhone, the other for your Mac and they're designed to make data entry simple and information retrieval a breeze. The Mac version resides in the MenuBar and provides quick, clear access to all your calendars. It allows you to add new entries and modify them from any application. You can download it from the Mac App Store for *NZ$18.99*.

On your phone, the screen is divided into the current date and the two days immediately before and after it. The rest of the interface is devoted to your appointments, sorted chronologically. You can swipe left or right on the calendar to see additional days filled with appointments (those without events aren't visible). Pull down to reveal the current calendar month (which you can swipe left or right again to browse through other months). The interface is clear, and a pleasure to use. The only downside is that you can't see the date and day on the icon itself like you can on the default iOS Calendar app (that's an issue with iOS). It's available now for *NZ$5.29*.

Steve Paris has over twenty-nine years of experience in computers. He's an internationally published writer, supplying articles to the main Mac magazines worldwide. He's also an Apple Certified Trainer and provides consultancy, training and troubleshooting services to the Waitakere area. You can email him at **steve@maclore.net** or contact him on **09 818 6154** or **0210 264 8320**.