

the digital plumber

Continued from last month: how to get at studio-based data when on location; how to store the data you make on location; and how to give your Mac a whack around the head if it goes all sulky on you. Click on the name of any product mentioned to go straight to a supplier or download page. Some of the links earn me a few bob if you buy by clicking on them. If you don't want to do this, simply Google the application's name, find the vendor's site and buy it that way.

BUT THE FILE I NEED IS ON MY STUDIO MAC

Make sure you have a fixed IP address at your studio. All sensible ISPs provide them. If yours doesn't, change to a sensible ISP. I regard www.zen.co.uk and www.bethere.co.uk as being among the sensible ISP's. Open System Preferences/Energy Saver on your studio Mac and set it never to sleep. Then install

Lighthouse on it to make it accessible to you, and iGet on your location Mac to do the data transfers. Lighthouse must be set to launch at login and run the SSH profile when it starts up. Lighthouse's help will tell you how to do this. Your router must have uPnP enabled: most do by default. Alternatively, read your router's documentation and set it up to forward Port 22 to your studio Mac's local IP address. <http://www.portforward.com/> can also be of help here. Make sure you have secure passwords on your user accounts: a password that includes a car registration number, of all things, is easy to remember and secure.

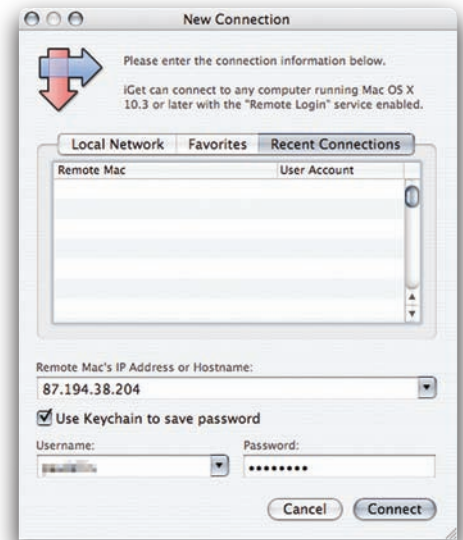
At your location, launch iGet and fill in your studio's IP address and the username and password that exists on your studio Mac. Voila, you're in and can move data around speedily and securely. This setup can even be used to send pictures home overnight, or during downtime.

Mac OS X 10.5 Leopard is set to simplify this, however, as among its new features are "Back to My Mac" (connect to any of your Mac computers at home from any Mac on the Internet. Your home computers appear in the shared section of the sidebar. Just click and you're in), and "Instant Screen Sharing from the Finder" (start an interactive screen sharing session with other Macs on your network. Just select the Mac from your sidebar and (if authorized) you can see and control the Mac as if you were right in front of it), it says here (<http://www.apple.com/macosx/features/300.html>).

DATA STORAGE ON LOCATION

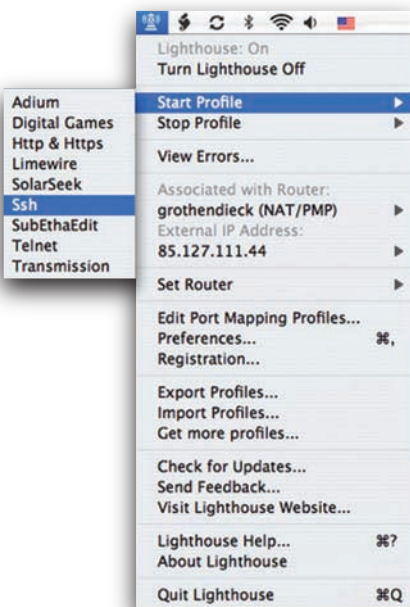
ALWAYS have more hard disks with

The Academy of Plumbing 19 The Complete Location Survival Guide, Part Two by Paul Ellis



you than you think you'll ever possibly need. NEVER take the risk of having a tired assistant edit a shoot overnight because you're running out of disk space. NEVER fill up your laptop's hard disk to within an inch of its life. If you're running out of disk space, buy more disks. If there is nothing available locally, get someone back home to buy something on your behalf and post it to you. Disks are like film. Never run out.

LaCie and SmartDisk FireLite are good choices for cheap, lightweight mobile disks on which to store your shoot data. Make duplicates. Post one home periodically in a Jiffy bag. At the end of the job, deliver the shoot to your client on one and bill them for it.





IF YOUR MAC STARTS TO MISBEHAVE

1) Listen to it. Is it, or any disk attached to it, making a repetitive clicking, clonking and/or whirring sound? That's called the Click of Death, and rightly so. **TURN IT OFF IMMEDIATELY** before the disk thrashes itself to pieces and call for help. You know whom. If it's not,

2) shut it down, disconnect any FireWire and USB devices, then start it up again. Check your cabling, and then reconnect the devices. It's surprising how many problems vanish in this way. If the problem persists, disconnect the devices again, restart, and then add them one-by-one. If you can isolate the problem to a specific device, stop using it. If you still have the problem, disconnect everything again and...

3) run Applejack.

4) If that doesn't fix it, find the Apple disks that came with your Mac and follow the instructions printed on them to boot into Apple Hardware Test. Run Quick Test to check for hardware problems. If it finds no problems, proceed to step 6).

5) If Apple Hardware Test finds

faulty memory, you're going to have to find out which chip has gone bad, for that is what has happened. Laptops and iMacs only have two chips: remove one and see if the problem goes away. If it does, the chip you have removed is faulty; if not, the one still in the Mac is the culprit. G4s, G5s and Mac Pros are more problematic because they have more memory, which often has to be fitted in pairs in specific locations. Nevertheless the troubleshooting procedure is the same: remove all but the minimum memory, and then replace chips until the problem recurs.

6) If your memory and hard disk are OK but your Mac still plays up, connect your bootable backup, restart and boot from it (instructions next month). Launch DiskWarrior and repair your Mac's internal disk. Restart. If DiskWarrior fails, start up your Mac from the DiskWarrior CD (Insert the CD, restart and hold down the C key at the startup chime) and repair it that way.

7) If things are still wacky, try resetting the PRAM (instructions next month), or, on a PowerPC Mac, resetting Open Firmware (instructions next month).

8) Reset the CUDA, Power Management Unit or System Management Controller. All Macs have different procedures for doing this: links to instructions are at <http://tinyurl.com/2jpk43>.

9) If your internal disk hardware is faulty, or if DiskWarrior can't repair your disk, if you can, **BACK UP YOUR VITAL DATA STRAIGHT AWAY** from it to one of your many mobile disks, then continue your shoot, running from the backup. Dismount your internal drive from the desktop if you can to avoid thrashing it. If your Mac locks up, boot another Mac from your backup and continue to run from that. Forget about running any Adobe CS2 or CS3 applications as they won't run from the backup, thanks to Adobe's ludicrous software activation scheme. Well done, Adobe: you really have your finger on the pulse of your users' needs with this one.

10) If any other part of your Mac's hardware is faulty, boot another Mac from your backup and continue to run from that.

Next month, Part Three will include a list of procedures that are helpful in troubleshooting. If there's space left over after that I'll take a first look at Mac OS X Leopard and how it relates to us, paying particular attention to Time Machine and how to configure your system to make the best use of it.

Those of you still hungry for information can keep up by periodically checking my blog at <http://www.thedigitalplumber.co.uk>, where you'll also find my contact details.

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