

Users react to Macworld announcements

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Amid iPods, plasma monitors, flashing displays, loud music, free trinkets and luxury leather beanbag chairs for tired Macworld Expo attendees to fall into, users reacted to Apple's multiple product announcements and product updates.

"There's almost no excuse anymore not to create," said Tony Espinosa of Jandy Pool Products, an attendee who had arrived within the last two hours and had watched Steve Jobs' keynote address from multiple Internet feeds.

During the keynote Jobs unveiled a new FM radio tuner adapter available for the iPod, released an updated version of its iLife multimedia content editing suite, stated record-breaking earnings and iPod sales for the most recent quarter and unveiled new hardware in the form of an iMac and laptop, now named the MacBook Pro, powered by Intel's Core Duo microprocessor. The new models promise to be three to five times faster than Apple's current iMac G5 and PowerBook G4 models and consume less power while providing the speed of dual core processors, which essentially function as multiple processors on a single chip.

Espinosa added that if his budget permits, the leap in processor speed makes upgrading a non-issue.

"I want the new one," said Erica Pierantozzi, a member of the Human Resources Department for Virgin Public Bank. "I'm waiting for the new Mac Mini," said her brother Jason Pierantozzi, a recent graduate of San

Jose State attending his first Macworld Expo.

While most seemed pleased with the show and its variety of offerings, others expressed concern. In the transition away from Apple's traditional PowerPC microprocessors, which have been manufactured over the years by IBM and Motorola, who have alternated duties for the task, Apple faces a conversion period in which applications written for its Mac OS X operating system must be written for both the PowerPC processors as well as Intel's Core Duo chip. During this period software will have to be written in what are known as Universal Binaries, which allow the software to run under both hardware types. During the conversion period software will have to run under an emulation technology known as Rosetta, which may affect the speeds at which programs will run.

"Everything's related to the iPod," commented Patricia Daugherty, a production assistant for Unique Solutions in San Francisco. Daugherty mentioned that while she was interested in the products being presented on the show floor, most fit into the toys or gadgets category, as opposed to the educational products she felt more interested in.

Daugherty also expressed some concern over the Universal Binary switchover that Apple's transition between processors might create and stated that she's looking to upgrade, but the new hardware, while impressive, seems expensive, especially with the option of being able to use a Windows-based PC since major applications such as Microsoft Office are cross-platform and behave reliably on both ends.

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