


November 2010



# Lakeshore Mac



Your Everything  Experts

## Monthly E-letter

Useful, creative, and easy information to make owning a Mac just that much better! From your friends at Lakeshore Mac



**Tis the Season!** I have had numerous calls from many of you who were sold the wrong thing or told the wrong thing by sales people whom you never would have thought would steer you wrong. It's not that they intentionally do it. It's just that they don't take the time to get to know you. They get paid for selling something and they will sell just about anything to you whether you need it or not. Even the Genius at the Apple Store will do it to you. So, what's a person to do? Knowledge is power! Before you buy anything, do a little research first. Use the information that follows for making an informed decision on what to buy and what not to buy. Never let yourself get ripped off again:

**Internet Service:** Comcast, Direct TV, Hughes Net, Charter, AT&T DSL, Wild Blue, AT&T FIOS to name a few. What do you get? What is fastest? How do you make it work with multiple computers? If you call any one of these providers, they will gladly sell you service, but is it the best one for you? They all have introductory low prices and then slam you once you become an "old" customer. I will explain the differences, hidden costs, and prices.



•**Dial-up:** is a word that should be permanently removed from your vocabulary. It is old, dead technology. If you still have it, God have mercy on your soul.

•**Satellite Internet:** Usually Hughes Net, Wild Blue, or Direct TV. It is one step above dial-up, slow and expensive! Sales people will tell you that you get speeds comparable with cable or DSL. What they don't tell you is the latency of satellite or how long it takes the signal to get up to the satellite in outer space and then back down again to the dish in your yard. Usually over 5,000 milliseconds. That's an eternity when you are trying to Skype, Video Chat or stream movies, all of which you can not do if you have this type of connection. It is also metered. Use too much and they will choke you down below dial-up speeds. It would take you days to send one photo to your sister. Satellite is a last resort when nothing else is available. You will also need to purchase a satellite modem and service contract if you don't want to pay for an expensive repair if their equipment goes out which can be more than \$400. Lightning, rain, fog, clouds or snow will effect your speed or take your internet down completely. Expect to pay over \$100 a month just for the Internet alone. Believe me, I know as this is what I have. I call it my hamster network. The faster the hamster runs, the more speed I get. Run little hamster, run!

•**Verizon or AT&T Wireless:** This technology uses a small USB modem that plugs into the USB port of your Mac. It is a great option for travel but pretty worthless any where else. This technology uses Cell towers just like your smart phone. If you get a MiFi, you can share your connection. The speed is slow but better than Satellite because it does not have to go up into outer space, just to the next tower. It is also metered. If you go over, they don't choke your speed down, they'll just send you a \$400 bill and grin all the way to the bank. Don't believe me? It happened to my sister. Cost is about \$100 per month. (If you don't watch YouTube).

•**DSL or Digital Subscriber Line:** This technology uses the existing phone lines in your house and is usually only available in a city as you must live within 2 miles of the phone company's head end for it to work. You will need a modem which can be wireless too. A wireless modem acts as a router and lets any wireless device connect to the Internet. Most everything is wireless now days. Also known as WiFi, computers, printers, smart phones, tablets, etc. can all jump on your network and talk to each other or over the Internet. DSL is not normally as fast as cable but can be. DSL is dedicated. You are the only one on the line and the speed is consistent. All the phones in your house will need a DSL filter.

Phone lines are dirty. The filter cleans them up so that your data can use the dirty phone lines. DSL is fast and is not metered so you can do all the fun things like watch Netflix movies, Skype or Video Chat. If you are in an office or have a home office that uses multiple lines through a central exchange, you will need a dedicated line just for Internet service alone. If you need to dial 9 to get out, that is your clue that you will need a dedicated line. DSL is a good option for Internet service and should run you between \$50 to \$80 a month.



•Cable: This technology uses coaxial cable to carry a signal. It was first available for TV only then they found out how to connect it to the Internet. You will need a modem which you can rent or you can purchase your own at Best Buy. You will also need to purchase a wireless router for smart phones, iPod Touches, iPads or additional computers or printers to share your connection. It is not metered and you can do all the fun things like watching movies, video conferencing and streaming Pandora to your stereo. This service is fast but can slow down at peak times when everyone in your neighborhood is home as it is a party line and is shared by all. You usually get this service bundled with your phones, TV and Internet. Introductory prices are low and can be only \$40 a month until the introductory time period is up. It will then run you about \$200 a month. This cost is not bad. I pay \$300 a month for the same thing and would give my right arm to have Comcast speeds. Every time they send me a flyer in the mail, I call them up and tell them that it is cruel and usual punishment for them to offer me something they can't provide. I'll even dig the damn trench! Did you know that I worked for Comcast when I first came to Michigan from California? I climbed phone poles and installed cable until I fell 12 feet off a pole. That ended my short career as a cable installer.

•FiOS: I get weak in the knees just typing FiOS! This is Fiber Optics! Cable made out of glass with the signal being an impulse of light. Ooooooh! Blazing fast! Wonderful! Only available in large cities or in a few areas in South West Michigan like Paw Paw. My sister has this in Long Beach, California and only pays \$40 a month for TV, phone, and Internet while I'm stuck with my Hamster network out here in Hillbillyville at \$300 a month. There is something definitely wrong with the picture! You will need a modem which can be wireless from carriers like AT&T. If you have this option in your area, get it and I'll move in :)

There are a few other options like point to point Wireless Towers but they are so rare, I won't get into them. To read more on this subject click here: [Internet Service](#)

**Buying Advice:** If a sales person from Direct TV calls you and tells you to change your Internet service because they can offer you so much more, don't believe them! Satellite is the slowest connection and is at the bottom of the heap with tons of hidden costs. DSL is next on the list with fast service, few hidden costs and steady speeds. Cable comes next with great speed and unlimited use but introductory prices that are unreal. It's a pretty hard pill to swallow once they slam you with the normal rate. FiOS is a gift from God!



**Macintosh:** Are you shopping for a new Mac? If you are, do you get an iMac, Mac Mini, MacBook, MacBook Pro, MacBook Air or a Mac Pro? Confused? Don't be. If you are not in the film industry or a graphic artist, music maker or photographer, you can eliminate anything with the word Pro in it. Leave the MacBook Pro or Mac Pro tower to the Pro's. That leaves the MacBook, iMac, Mac Mini or MacBook Air. Only four. Do you have a spare monitor, keyboard and mouse laying around? If you don't, you can eliminate the Mac Mini. Buying all the accessories separate would cost more than an iMac. Now you have just three. Wasn't that easy?

**Buying Advice:** Go to [www.apple.com](http://www.apple.com) to get your new Mac. Don't forget to get the free printer and Apple Care. The best guide I have found for Mac shopping is from MacWorld. Click here to get all the information you need to make the correct decision on exactly what Mac to buy: [Macintosh Buying guide 2010](#).



**Cameras:** Almost any camera will sync to your Mac through iPhoto. Just plug it into the USB port and click import. But exactly what kind of camera do you buy? Have you heard of the Megapixel myth? A high megapixel rating doesn't mean a better picture. It just means that if you print it out really big, it will look better. Not printing out 11 X 17 photos? Don't worry about it! In fact, you shouldn't be printing out anything yourself except for the occasional photo. It is much more cost effective to have Walgreens do it. Do you know that Walgreens has an iPhone App that you can directly upload photos from your iPhone to Walgreens to be printed out. Sweet!

**Buying Advice:** Macworld again has a great guide for [point and shoot cameras](#). They have another one for [DSLR cameras](#). And yet another for [Optical vs Electronic Viewfinders](#). Everything you need to make the correct choice.

I have given you advice on how to arm yourself with knowledge so you don't get ripped off on Internet Service, purchasing a Mac or a camera. If you ever have a problem or are not sure, call me and I will be glad to help you make the correct decision. If you are standing in the store and some idiot is trying to sell you something that you don't understand, call me and let me talk to the idiot. I'll tell him a thing or two. Remember, I am here for you.

**Mac Rumors Buyer's Guide:** Tired of buying something new and have a new model crop up the next day? Use this information to get the most for your money when purchasing your new Mac, iPhone, iPod or iPad.

**iPod classic:** Buy Now! - Discontinued soon

**iPod touch:** Buy - Product recently updated

**iPod nano:** Buy - Product recently updated

**iPod shuffle:** Buy - Product recently updated

**iPhone:** Neutral - Mid product cycle

**iPad:** New item with no historic data on change

**Mac mini:** Neutral - Mid product cycle

**iMac:** Neutral - Mid product cycle

**Mac Pro:** Neutral - Mid product cycle

**MacBook:** Don't buy - Updates soon

**MacBook Pro:** Don't buy - Updates soon

**MacBook Air:** Buy Now! - Product just updated

Information gathered from [Mac Rumors Buyers Guide](#).



**Great iPhone/iPod Touch App: Gift List (Free Addition):** A great little free App to keep track of everyone you are shopping for this Christmas. Set a budget and stick to it. Get it here: [Gift List](#).



**Great iPad App: Harry Potter Lego:** I know that this App is \$5 bucks but I'm totally addicted. It's so beautiful on my iPad. Fun and intuitive. Almost like being a part of Harry's world. Get it here: [Harry Potter](#)

**Great Mac App: NoteBook 3.0:** Get organized for the new year. Take control of your notes, track your tasks, manage clippings or just organize your entire life. NoteBook by Circus Ponies will do just that. It's a great piece of software for just \$50. Get it here: [Circus Ponies- NoteBook](#)



**Great Deals: Apple Refurbished Store:** Save big buck at the Apple Refurbished store. Get Mac's iPods, and iPads at great discounts with the same warranty as new. This is how I buy all my Mac's and iPods. Works for me! Get great deals here: [Apple Refurbished Store](#).



**South West Michigan Mac Users Group:** We have been recognized by Apple as an official Mac Users Group or MUG. This enables us to get great discounts on all things from Apple. We can even use the Apple logo without getting into trouble. 🍏 🍏 🍏 🍏. Make sure you come to the meetings to get great stuff. We meet the 1st Tuesday of every month at the church of the Epiphany in South Haven. Our next meeting will be next Tuesday, December 7th at 7:00. I will be showing you all kinds of cool Mac Geek stuff to get for Christmas. You won't want to miss it. For door to door directions and meeting links, click here: [SWMMUG](#)

I hope you enjoyed this months E-letter. If you have a question or a problem, there are tons of ways to contact me. Make sure you join my Facebook Fan Page (Lakeshore Mac) so that you can receive daily information on happenings in the Tech world. Just type Lakeshore Mac in the Facebook search filed. Once you find me, click on Like then Add to my Pages Favorites.

**Lakeshore Mac Web Site:** Information for your Mac and great deals via MacMall. <http://www.lakeshoremac.com>  
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*Thanks for Reading!*  
*Jodi*

