



# News You Can Use

## NEWS

The iPhone activation failures were caused by AT&T, not Apple. Apple warned AT&T that the volume of activations would exceed anything AT&T had ever seen. AT&T didn't listen.

AT&T sent their engineers home shortly after the 6PM eastern sales started. By the time west coast buyers came online, AT&T's servers were toast! I'm sure Steve Jobs was furious.

Then Apple stock dropped almost \$9 on news of "weak" first-weekend iPhone sales. (Figures were based on activations, which were hampered by AT&T.) Steve was probably madder.

Apple gave iPhones to thousands of employees on July 25th. AT&T servers again were overloaded. Could Steve get any angrier?

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## QUICK TIPS

### DON'T SPREAD HOAXES

We all receive emailed warnings with risks or tips to save your life.

Before forwarding these to others, check with **Hoaxbusters** or **Snopes** to see if they're hoaxes.

Go to [snopes.com](http://snopes.com) or [hoaxbusters.ciac.org](http://hoaxbusters.ciac.org). You'll find that most of these messages are hoaxes that have been sent around the 'net for years.

## Blame Enron and WorldCom

### Risky Software Updates

It's all the fault of Enron, WorldCom, and those other sleazy companies with their funky accounting practices. Their misdeeds spawned the Sarbanes-Oxley law, which requires more careful recording of sales and profits, and better accounting.

Apparently the Apple accountants, auditors, and lawyers are trying to interpret the intent the law—at least until the first court rulings clarify things.

My understanding of their interpretation, by way of an Apple buddy, goes like this:

**"If we sell an incomplete product, we can't legally log the profit until we make it complete."**

Here's an example. The iPhone e-mail program is missing some desirable features and has a handful of bugs, but at least it's *there*. Apple can add features and fix bugs later without causing any accounting problems. If, however, they *held back* the program till it was better, then the iPhone might be considered incomplete without e-mail. That would screw up the accounting: they couldn't show profit from selling an incomplete product.

#### What It Means To Us

Software updates that come out at the end of Apple's fiscal quarter (Mar, Jun, Sep, Dec) are more likely to be quickly assembled under high pressure to get *something* out the door. These are the months to be more wary of installing new updates.

(I find it easy to remember 3, 6, 9, and 12 as the risky months.)

## Better and Faster

### New iMac Computers

On August 7th, Apple updated the iMac computer line. They're now faster, sleeker, and they sport glossy screens and a very neat keyboard.

## Not This Week, But Perhaps in A Month

### I Phone, Therefore I Might

I thought I was safe from the iPhone mania, because I was with Verizon and AT&T's coverage here is just as bad.

But then that little voice in my head said "But AT&T coverage isn't any *worse*."

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**THE FINE PRINT****THE PRICE LIST**

**Standard Rate** is \$52/hr.

**Apple Remote Desktop** help is billed at the reduced rate of \$35/hr.

**Phone support** is free, except if the call runs to a half hour. Then it's billed at the reduced rate of \$30/hr.

**House calls** are free within a 25-mile radius of Cambria. Each trip beyond 25 miles will incur a \$10 surcharge.

**Email support** is always free. Ask your questions and you'll get an answer, usually within a few hours.

**Invoices** are mailed on the first of each month, covering charges incurred during the prior month. (So, for example, you'll be billed on May 1st for work done in April.)

**New Clients** receive a one-time half hour discount !

**WHAT'S IMPORTANT**

**Solving your problem** the *right* way, as much as humanly possible.

**Not making things worse.**

Some support folks try to fix one problem and end up creating new ones. Where does that leave you?

**Keeping your costs down.** It's more important to provide good service than to squeeze out a few more bucks. When you see a "comp" item on an invoice, it's my way of helping to keep your costs low.

So I switched to AT&T and I'm carrying a Motorola RAZR phone along with my Palm Treo. I'm still using the Treo as a Palm, with its phone turned off. (The RAZR is totally brainless, but at least it communicates upstairs in my house.)

I plan to wait till the first software update/improvement comes out for the iPhone, then take the plunge. (Of course, that plan may fall by the wayside too...) Meanwhile, carrying two devices isn't as bad as I thought it would be. Thank goodness for baggy Levi's with big pockets.

**Cell Tower News**

A few weeks ago, the California Coastal Commission decided the proposed cell tower on the Fiscalini Ranch didn't fit with their idea of Cambria's future.

The County Planning Commission tabled the issue till September, but I'm betting the county will fold their cards anyway. If they do, the next step is an appeal to the C.C. Besides, Friends of the Fiscalini Ranch Preserve needs the tower rent for their ranch maintenance budget.

Betcha we won't see a tower before 2009.

**Advance Planning****Fall Vacation**

For those who appreciate advance notice, I will be on vacation from **October 19 through November 5** this fall. I won't have access to email or phone: we'll be on a Rhine River cruise.

Because I haven't found anyone who can cover for me in my absence, it won't make much sense to email or leave a phone message during this period.

Now, I suppose advising everyone to turn off their computers for 2½ weeks is rather silly. But you should consider planning to make any software or hardware upgrades *before October 1st* so there's time to work out loose ends. Or just wait till after Election Day. (There's nothing special about Election Day; it's just an easier way to remember November 6th.)

This advice especially applies to those who plan to upgrade to Leopard, the new version of MacOS X due in October. Wait till it's been out a month—and the first Software Update is available to fix bugs.