

## DR. MAC

# Backing up my obsession with backups

By **BOB LeVITUS**

FOR THE CHRONICLE

My Mac has four or five external hard disks connected to it at all times.

I'm not recommending that you connect four or five external disks to your Mac, but here are five reasons I recommend that you have at least one or two:

- You can create a "bootable clone" of your startup disk on an external hard drive using inexpensive or free software such as SuperDuper, ChronoSync, or Carbon Copy Cloner. Then you will always have a backup copy of every file on your startup disk. You also can plug your bootable clone into almost any Mac, restart from it, and be up and running with your stuff in minutes.
- Hard disk prices have never been lower. My first external hard disk was a 20 megabyte SCSI drive that cost as much as my Mac Plus — \$2,495. These days you can buy a 250-gigabyte hard drive for less than \$150. My hard disks come from LaCie, Maxtor or Other World Computing.

Power PC-based Macs can only boot from external FireWire drives; Intel-based Macs can boot from either FireWire or USB 2 drives.

- If your startup disk gets too full, your Mac may slow down. Because of the way Mac OS X's

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

- SuperDuper, Shirt Pocket Software, [www.shirt-pocket.com](http://www.shirt-pocket.com)

- ChronoSync, Econ Technologies, [www.econtechologies.com](http://www.econtechologies.com)

- Carbon Copy Cloner, Donation requested, Bombich Software, [www.bombich.com](http://www.bombich.com)

- LaCie, [www.lacie.com](http://www.lacie.com)

- Maxtor, [www.maxtorsolutions.com](http://www.maxtorsolutions.com)

- Other World Computing, [www.macsales.com](http://www.macsales.com)

virtual memory scheme works, you should try to keep at least 10 percent free.

Select its icon in the Finder and choose File and Get Info. The Get Info window will show you the disk's capacity and how much free space remains.

- You can move your digital media, such as your iTunes and iPhoto libraries, to an external hard drive.

- Almost all hard disks today are plug-and-play. Plug it into the wall and then connect it to your Mac with a FireWire or USB 2 cable, and your new disk will appear on your desktop.

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*Bob LeVitus is the author of 48 computer books including Mac OS X Tiger For Dummies, and a Mac consultant, troubleshooter, and trainer. Visit his Web site at [www.boblevitus.com](http://www.boblevitus.com); e-mail comments to [doc@boblevitus.com](mailto:doc@boblevitus.com).*

