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## Apple disrespects its own Mac users with iPod's FireWire fiasco

Thursday, February 24, 2005 9:10 am 140 Comments

[iPodDailyNews](#) [MacDailyNews](#)

"FireWire is still Apple Computer's baby, but the proud parent is cutting the cord. With the latest crop of iPods, Apple is no longer including a FireWire cable in the box. The music players will still work with FireWire, if a cord is purchased separately, but only a USB 2.0 cable comes with the device. The move is part of a gradual shift on Apple's part to standardize the iPod on USB, which is far more common in the Windows world," Ina Fried reports for CNET News.

**MacDailyNews Take:** Is "cutting the cord" or "knifing the baby" more appropriate to use when describing the situation?

"Although Apple's embrace has been gradual over several years, it is still a big shift for a company that helped develop the standard behind FireWire, technically known as IEEE 1394, and has been one of its biggest proponents," Fried reports. "Some Mac owners were rankled by the move, saying that as recently as a year or two ago many Macs didn't include a USB 2.0 port. As of Wednesday night, more than 1,300 people had signed an [online petition](#) calling on Apple to again include a FireWire cable with iPods."

"When the iPod debuted in 2001, it used only FireWire, and even the second crop of iPods—the first to support Windows—lacked USB support entirely. It wasn't until April 2003, with the dock connector-based iPods, that Apple first offered a USB 2.0 option. And then it was USB 2.0, which had to be bought separately as a \$19 extra," Fried reports.

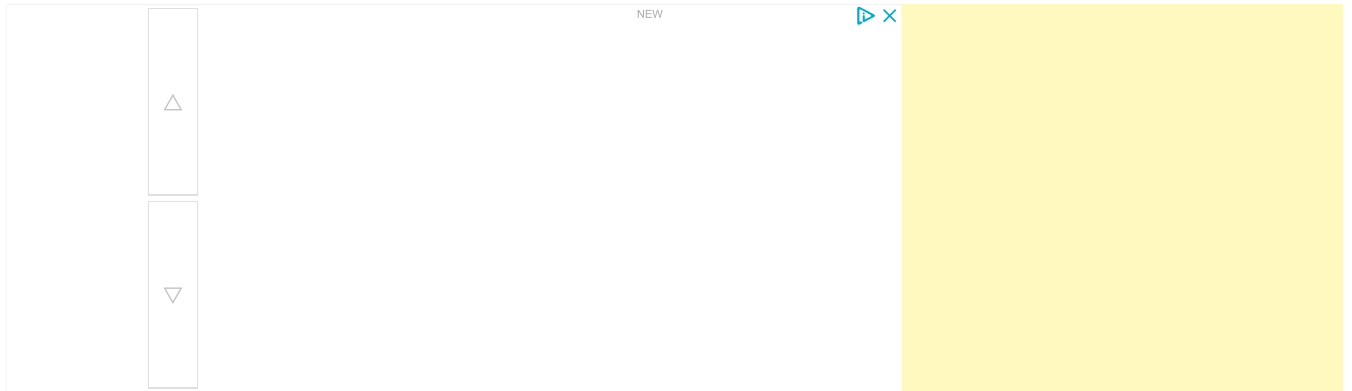
Full article [here](#).

**MacDailyNews Take:** The Apple iPod boxes used to read "Mac+PC." Apple iPod boxes now read "PC+Mac." Mac users ought to be able to "do the math" and get used to being treated by Apple as second class iPod users from here on out. Shareholders should be happy that Apple has a "money talks" attitude. Mac users, especially long-time Mac users, should be wary. Unless your Mac is less than 1 or 2 years old, you'll have FireWire ports, but only USB 1.1 which transfers files much more slowly than USB 2.0 and does not carry enough power to charge an iPod. (And, by the way, even USB 2.0 can't compare to FireWire 400 for sustained data transfer rates). Apple's attitude toward most Mac users seems to be, "you're in the minority, go buy the extra cord" or the usual "go buy a new Mac." Getting "taxed" by Apple for being a Mac user really rubs us the wrong way. And exactly whose fault is it that we're in the damn minority anyway?

What do we want from Apple? Respect for Mac users. In fact, we want better, we want preferential treatment for Mac users; it's well-deserved. We also want Apple to provide to consumers the choice between a FireWire or USB 2.0 connectivity cable from (at least) the online Apple Store at the time of purchase for no extra charge. It's not the lousy twenty bucks, it's the principle. Do the right thing, Apple.

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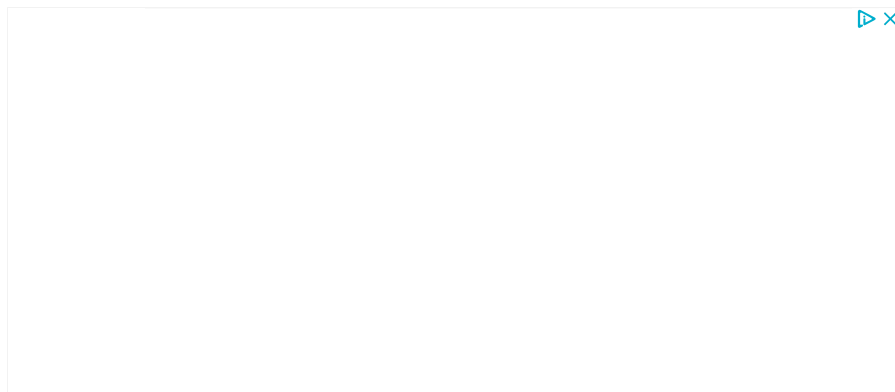
## 140 Comments

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Thursday, February 24, 2005 at 10:41 am

*Getting "taxed" by Apple for being a Mac user really rubs us the wrong way. And exactly whose fault is it that we're in the damn minority anyway?*

I guess it's time for Apple to reopen the Mac-clone market. Resurrect the Power Computing Corporation and let the games begin B-)

[Reply](#)**big jerk**

Thursday, February 24, 2005 at 10:44 am

Oh please. All this fuss over a \$20 cable?

[Reply](#)**sandy**

Thursday, February 24, 2005 at 10:45 am

The iPod doesn't need firewire, so why make a big thing out of it just on principle? If Apple doesn't want to add unnecessarily to the cost, and get the larger market opportunity, they made the correct decision.

**Me**

Thursday, February 24, 2005 at 10:47 am

Rowwwwwrrrrr! Fffft, fffft!

Somebody's up tight. Apple is not obligated to provide either FW or USB cables. Since fewer users in the total computing market are likely to have FW, it makes sense for Apple to focus on USB. Why should they be expected to include both cables?

As for the Wintel focus, this may seem like a snub, but if it means more people will buy the iPod, then in the end it could be better for Mac users. Just a little sacrifice we have to make to get more people in the club.

[Reply](#)**Michael**

Thursday, February 24, 2005 at 10:51 am

This is how things get done, people. Keep up the pressure, MDN. Apple should do the right thing and offer Mac users the option of a FireWire cable from Apple's online store. That seems VERY LITTLE to ask. Wake up, Apple!

Hell hath no fury like a Mac user scorned.

[Reply](#)**DudeMac**

Thursday, February 24, 2005 at 10:54 am

Apple should just ship the FW cables to customers for free as complimentary. All they have to do is ask the customer if they require it. For one thing, those FW cables are not worth \$20, so Apple is getting a good profit from them I can guarantee you.

[Reply](#)**beatsme**

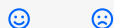
Thursday, February 24, 2005 at 10:54 am

look, it's a financial decision. Apple needs to appeal to the PC world to sell more iPods. And I would've bought my iPod whether I had to buy a separate cord for it or not. Stop making such a big deal out of it.

[Reply](#)**giofoto**

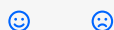
Thursday, February 24, 2005 at 10:55 am

As for the cord....just trying to increase the profit margin. A "cheap" business tactic.

[Reply](#)**The Kahuna**

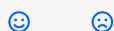
Thursday, February 24, 2005 at 10:56 am

Why not lower the price by removing the USB cable and let everyone buy whatever cable they want as an add on item. A lot of folks won't even need to buy a cable since they will have spare cables from other obsolete devices. Apple just needs to put a sticker on the box indicating that a cable is required that is not included – just like a lot of printers, etc.

[Reply](#)**TB2**

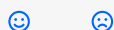
Thursday, February 24, 2005 at 10:59 am

I don't really understand the uproar over this either.

[Reply](#)**rdbvideo**

Thursday, February 24, 2005 at 11:00 am

It's all about computer sales. "What, you don't have a new enough Mac to have USB 2? It's time to update again!" Apple wants us loyal users to keep updating. This is yet one more way to do it. And why not? I'm really enjoying my Mini, and it now handles all my USB 2 needs. I still enjoy my G4 tower (with mutple firewire drives) for video editing. I don't see this one move killing firewire... but it might get a few people to update that old hardware.

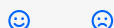
[Reply](#)**Bob**

Thursday, February 24, 2005 at 11:01 am

The Kahuna: "A lot of folks won't even need to buy a cable since they will have spare cables from other obsolete devices."

People have specialized USB 2.0 and/or FireWire cables with iPod Dock Connector plugs on one end from "other obsolete devices?" On which planet?

Face it Mac lovers, Apple is screwing you in favor of the Wintel world and you're lining up to take it as usual.

[Reply](#)**Joe Takata**

Thursday, February 24, 2005 at 11:04 am

Good article Ina. The single firewire cable from the back of a Mac to a dock or a ipod of any generation is still the easiest, most elegant way to connect an ipod. In the words of Mister T, I pity the fool that has to use Apple's kludgy T cable with the usb and firewire connectors to accomodate the PC public that doesn't have a powered firewire port for this purpose...

All that said, shame on Apple for punishing all of us ipod evangelists a.k.a. Mac users by eliminating the firewire cable. If anything, mac users should be entitled to a nominal exchange (shipping costs) to get the proper cable for their new ipod mini or photo.

**gabriel**

Thursday, February 24, 2005 at 11:06 am

Do we want the "halo effect"? This is the price. Well done, Apple

[Reply](#)**Chadwick**

Thursday, February 24, 2005 at 11:06 am

\$20 dollars for a cable? I'm sure they are making \$15 off each cable if not more. The majority of people who would need to purchase this cable are mac users. Just expect more of the same BS as Apple grows.

[Reply](#)**jeeray**

Thursday, February 24, 2005 at 11:07 am

OK USB 2.0 IS WAY FASTER THAN FIREWIRE 400

FIREWIRE 800 IS WAY FASTER THAN USB 2.0

NOW THE FIREWIRE HOOKUP WITH THE IPOD IS FIREWIRE 400  
SO IT IS SLOWER THAN USB 2.0

GOT IT

SO I RATHER HAVE USB 2.0 THAN HAVE A FIREWIRE 400 CABLE HOOKUP

SOMEONE BACK ME UP HERE

[Reply](#)**Harry**

Thursday, February 24, 2005 at 11:09 am

This is pure nonsens .. FireWire cable is just an extra, that's all.

[Reply](#)**outech**

Thursday, February 24, 2005 at 11:12 am

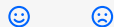
Is any one else worried how the power adapter will plug into the iPod now? Will they just switch that to a USB connection? Also, I like the very very fast Firewire connection with my PB, but when I plug in the just fast USB on my PC desktop it works well too.

[Reply](#)**Hywel.**

Thursday, February 24, 2005 at 11:12 am

Due to tehse small drives being relatively slow, it makes little difference in this application.

But it really sucks that iPod is now PC+MAC rather than Mac+PC

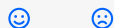
[Reply](#)**JJ**

Thursday, February 24, 2005 at 11:14 am

Jeeray:

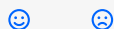
Actually USB 2.0 is *slower than* firewire 400. It claims 480, but FW400 smokes it in real world tests.

... and turn the CAPS LOCK off ...

[Reply](#)**mcloki**

Thursday, February 24, 2005 at 11:15 am

Everyone should quit their whining. Going USB 2 just makes sense for Apple. All of their new machines will have it. Even the mini has USB 2. What do you want a SCSI connector for your iPod? With this decision they serve a broader base. Not everyone has a Mac or PC with Firewire. "The needs of the many outweigh the needs of the few." And we're still few for now.

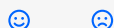
[Reply](#)**The Duke**

Thursday, February 24, 2005 at 11:15 am

So what. If you can't live with whatever USB you may have, or you don't have USB at all, then buy the damn FireWire cable. I'm starting to think it was a mistake for Apple to have ever used FireWire for the iPod because of everyones crying.

Why wouldn't Apple cater to the Windows world with the iPod? The iPod is just a cash cow that is financing all the great strides the Mac and OS X are making. It is also is easier for Windows people to use the iPod with the USB cable (because of lack of FireWire ports on some PCs), therefore increasing the user experience and further increasing potential switchers to look at buying a new Mac, which by the way will come with USB 2.x ports.

I also find it hard to believe how long Mac users keep their aging machines. I have had my iBook now for 3 years which is the longest I've evey kept any computer and the old dog is still a great machine, but I've gotta get something newer soon. I use my computer so much that I appreciate and deserve to be using something relatively new. To give you an exaple of what I mean, I bought a 20" cinema display for my computer at work where everyone else has 15" CRTs. Everyone was amazed that I would spend \$1200 for a monitor when I don't HAVE to have that nice of a monitor. I explain to them that I value how I spend my time, and that I can't explain why I was content to spend 8 hours a day looking into a small CRT. The improvement it brought to my work environment is well worth the money spent.

[Reply](#)**outech**

Thursday, February 24, 2005 at 11:16 am

jeeray,

I am running through USB 1.0 thanks to the backwards compatibility the standard. It is slower, but not slow enough to go into a frenzy when in a few years my 4G iPod needs to be replaced. But to back you up, yes, I believe 2.0 is faster than FW 400. So on a scale we have

**The Dude**

Thursday, February 24, 2005 at 11:16 am

MDN, your take is just WRONG.

With the 50.00 drop in price on the 4GB model, even after buying the cable you are still getting it much less then what it was a week ago. And now there is a new option to get a larger hard drive, at the price of the previous 4GB model.

I really think we need to stop bitching and whining about every little thing. And yes, this is a LITTLE thing.

Okay, how about this. Apple raises the price of the iPod minis by 50.00 bringing the 4GB back to 249.00 and the new 6GB to 299.00. Include the much whined about firewire cable.... problem solve. Cry babies and all pay 50.00 more for a firewire cable that the may or may not need, they can throw the power adapter block back in, and we can all live happily ever after.

Then I suppose that people would whine about the 6GB costing the same as a 20GB iPod. Well, smaller things costs more usually (why does a 20oz bottle of soda cost 1.09 and a 2 liter bottle is .99? Because you don't want to walk around with a 2-liter bottle now do you... it is a size thing, not quantity!). Don't like it? get the iPod 20GB then, and just STFU for a change.

[Reply](#)**jfechner**

Thursday, February 24, 2005 at 11:22 am

The AC adapter and the Cradle to Firewire cable cost \$49 retail when bought thought the Apple store. Therefore the only thing really new about the 4G iPod mini is the longer battery life and and the cosmetic changes. The price drop is a myth.

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