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MAC SECRETS
EVERYONE NEEDS TO KNOW

By **KIM KOMANDO**, national radio host, USA Today columnist, Fox News contributor and best-selling author

INTRODUCTION

Apple's MacOS may not occupy the same market share as Microsoft Windows, but ask any hardcore Mac user, and they'll say they never want to use another operating system again. Apple's signature software actually beat Windows to the punch by several years, and ever since, it's attracted generations of users who dig its elegant design and ease of use.

But MacOS is more than just a cult operating system. One thing fans and critics both praise is its deep integration with Apple's family of mobile devices. If you've got an iPhone, you can synchronize nearly everything you do on your computer to it and vice versa. You can even unlock your computer screen with just a swipe of your iPhone or Apple Watch.

Not everything is perfect with MacOS, though. For starters, it doesn't always play nicely with Windows, and many file types that work flawlessly on a PC won't open on your Mac. Plus, the operating system's "walled garden" approach means Apple has a say in almost everything you do — and that your third-party software options are much more limited.

Still, MacOS is one of the most complete-feeling operating systems you'll find, and its reputation as stable and more resistant to the malware that plagues Windows is well-earned. If you know what you're doing, your Mac is an incredibly flexible machine that can do all sorts of tasks — just ask the legions of artists, engineers and programmers who swear by their Macs.

Here are just a few of the secrets you can find in MacOS to get the most out of your machine.

SPOTLIGHT DOES MORE THAN SEARCH

01

It's easy to overlook the little magnifying glass that's perched in the upper right-hand corner of your screen. When you need to find a file quickly, you might remember it's there, but did you know this search tool does much more than help you locate things?
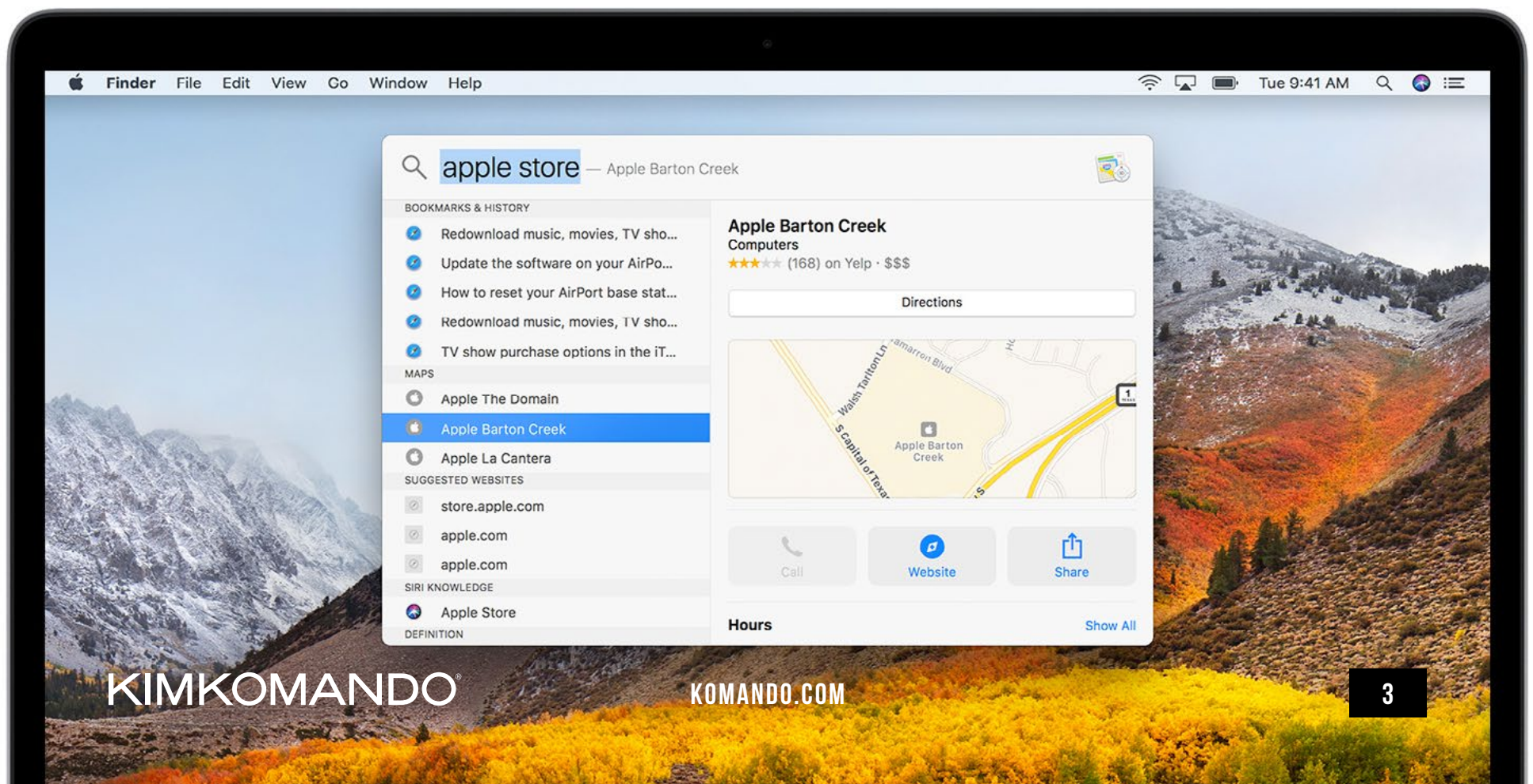
In several ways, the Spotlight tool can act just like a Google search. The next time you have a question, put Spotlight to work.

A great example is when you enter a dollar amount in Spotlight. The program will bring up instant conversions and guesses the one you're looking for. But if it doesn't appear, you can always adjust your search to be more specific.

For example, when you start to type "12 feet," Spotlight automatically calculates a conversion to meters; however, if you type "12 feet to inches" you'll watch Spotlight immediately convert that into 144 inches.

Here are some examples of more conversions Spotlight can complete:

▶ **Weather reports:** Wondering if you need to wear a jacket? Just type, "Weather in [your city and state]" and Spotlight will pull up the local forecast.

▶ **Launch applications:** This is a great trick for all of those apps you're typically digging through your Launchpad to find. Just type the name of the app into Spotlight, then click "Enter" to launch.

▶ **Save battery power:** Running low on battery power? Type "Energy Saver" into Spotlight, and it'll bring up the menu where you can tweak your settings.

▶ **Do math:** Need a quicker option than the calculator to complete some equations? Just type them into Spotlight for the solution.

▶ **Get dictionary definitions:** When there's no time to pull up your dictionary app, type "Define [word]" into Spotlight to get the definition fast.

SEND AND RECEIVE TEXTS ON YOUR MAC

02

Apple's iMessage has long allowed you to message other iPhone users from the iMessage app on your Mac, but did you know you can also send to and receive messages from Androids, too?

Just make sure you're signed into iCloud on your Mac and your iPhone and computer are both using the same Apple ID.

To do this, simply open "System Preferences" from your Mac, go to iCloud and sign in using your Apple ID credentials, then open the Messages app on your Mac.

On your iPhone, go to "Settings." If you're signed in with your Apple ID, it'll show your name at the very top. Tap your name to confirm the email addresses match.

Now scroll down, tap "Messages" and open "Text Messages Forwarding." You should see your other devices here and can toggle which can send and receive texts. Be sure to turn this setting "On" for your Mac.

> **Note:** If you don't see this option, go to "Settings," then tap "Messages" and turn off iMessage. Turn it back on, tap "Send & Receive," then "Use Your Apple ID for iMessage," and sign in with the same Apple ID you use for your Mac.

To verify, your Mac will receive a message asking if you want to allow iPhone text messages to also be sent and received from your computer.

Now, when you add a number from any phone other than an iPhone, it will appear in a green box. Group chats are also enabled — simply click "Details" to name a group chat, add or remove someone, and see friends who have shared their location on a map.
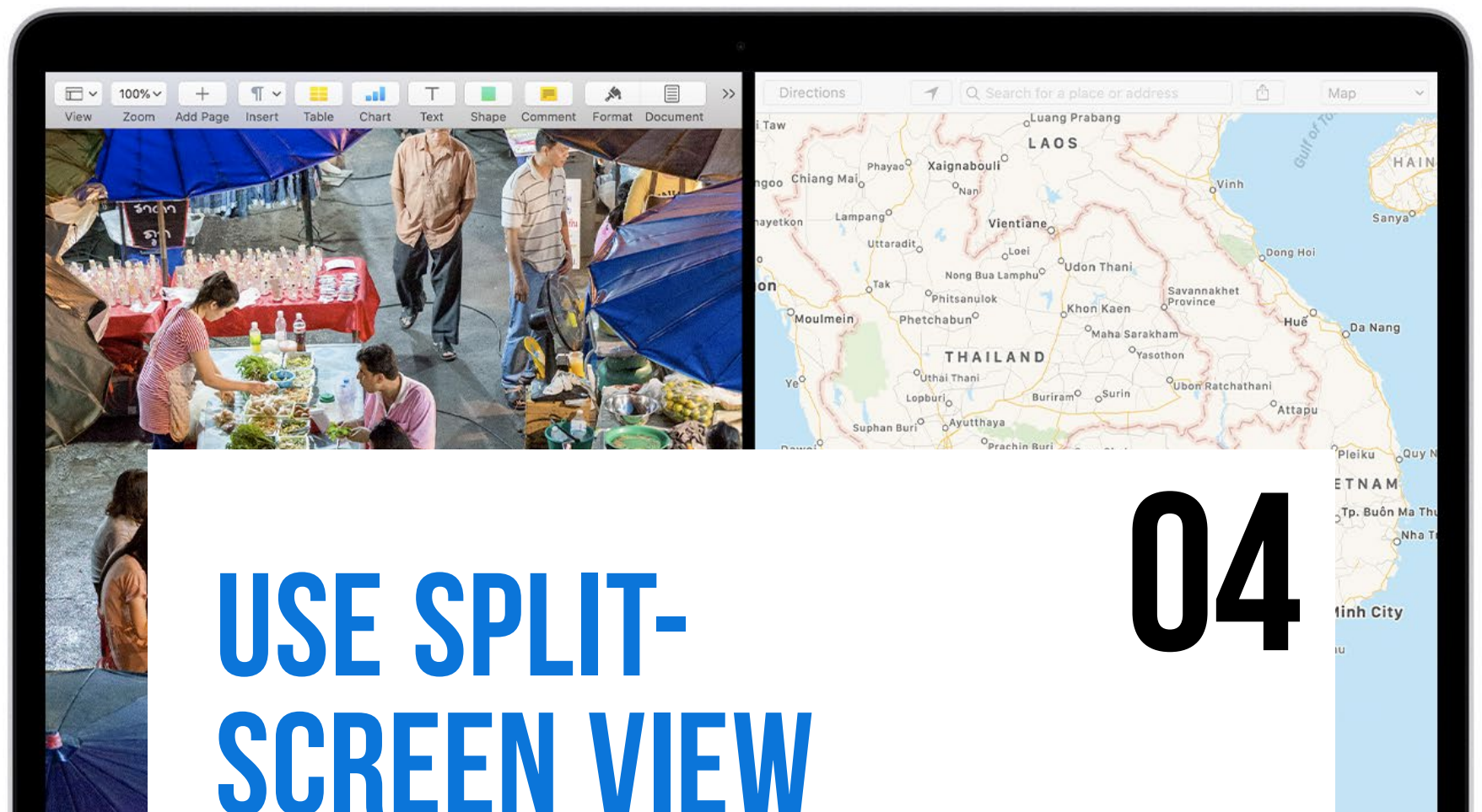
INSTANTLY TAKE SCREENSHOTS

03

Do you need a quick snapshot of something on your Mac's screen? Do it with these handy shortcuts.

To take a screenshot of your entire screen, just press "Shift," "⌘ Cmd" (Command) and the number "3" at the same time.

To capture a specific area of the screen, press "Shift," "⌘ Cmd" and the number "4," and a cursor will appear. Just left-click and drag the cursor over the area you want to screenshot.

To capture a specific window, press "Shift," "⌘ Cmd" and the number "4," then hit your spacebar. A camera icon will appear. Simply left-click on the window you want to capture.

Note: On a Touch Bar-enabled MacBook Pro, you can press "Shift," "⌘ Cmd" and the number "6" to take a snapshot of the OLED Touch Bar itself.

USE SPLIT-SCREEN VIEW

04

Sometimes one screen just isn't enough, but you don't have to resort to shrinking the size of your windows to display two applications on your screen at once.

Here's a quick way you can manage multiple windows on your Mac — this is great for juggling two tasks at the same time.

Left-click on the window's green maximize button (on the upper left-hand side), hold it, drag it either to the left or the right of your screen, then pick another window to pair it with for the perfect split-screen view.
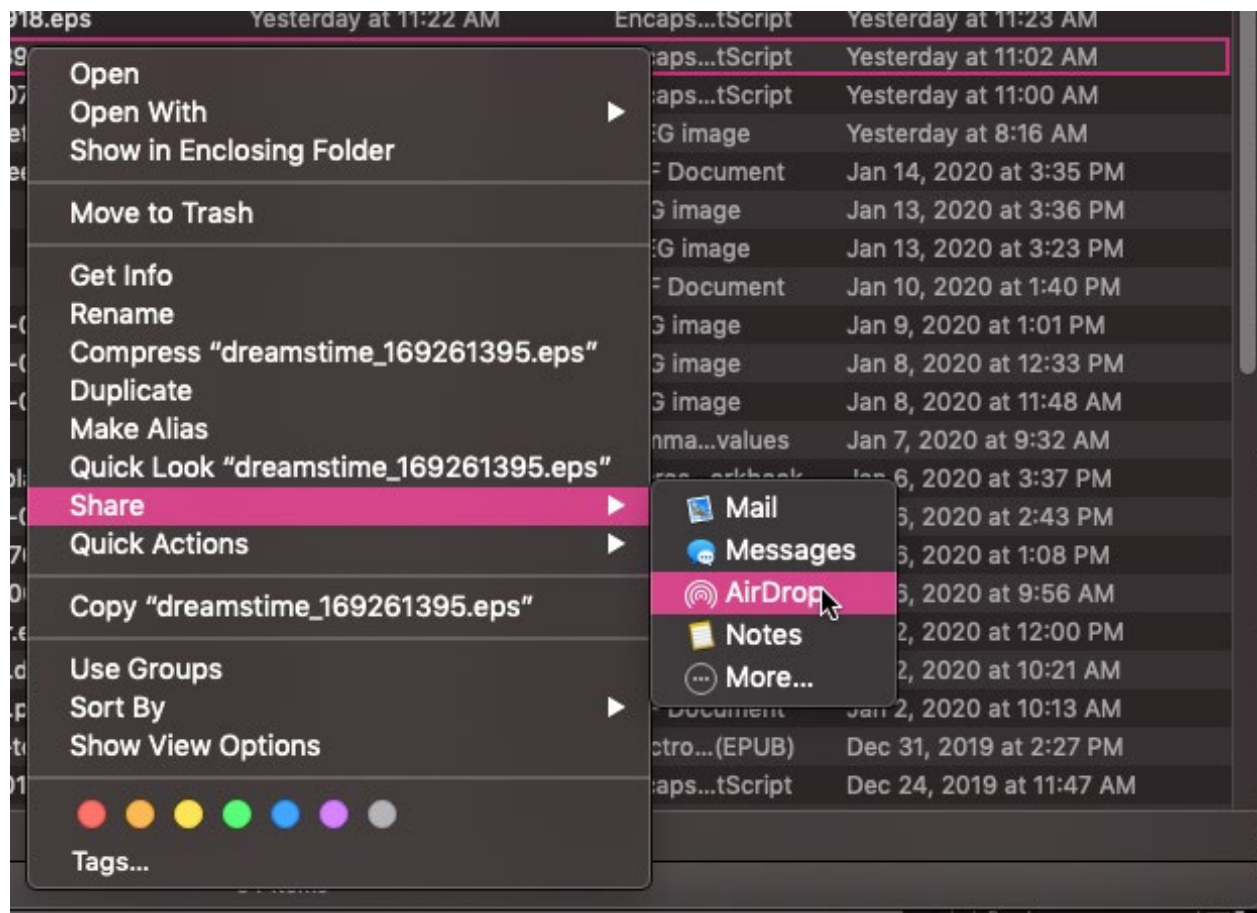
USE AIRDROP TO INSTANTLY SEND FILES

05

Do you find sending files via email or over your network a bit cumbersome? Well, AirDrop makes file sharing so much simpler.

AirDrop is an Apple perk that lets you instantly send and receive files between nearby desktop Macs and iOS gadgets like iPads, iPhones or iPods via Bluetooth.
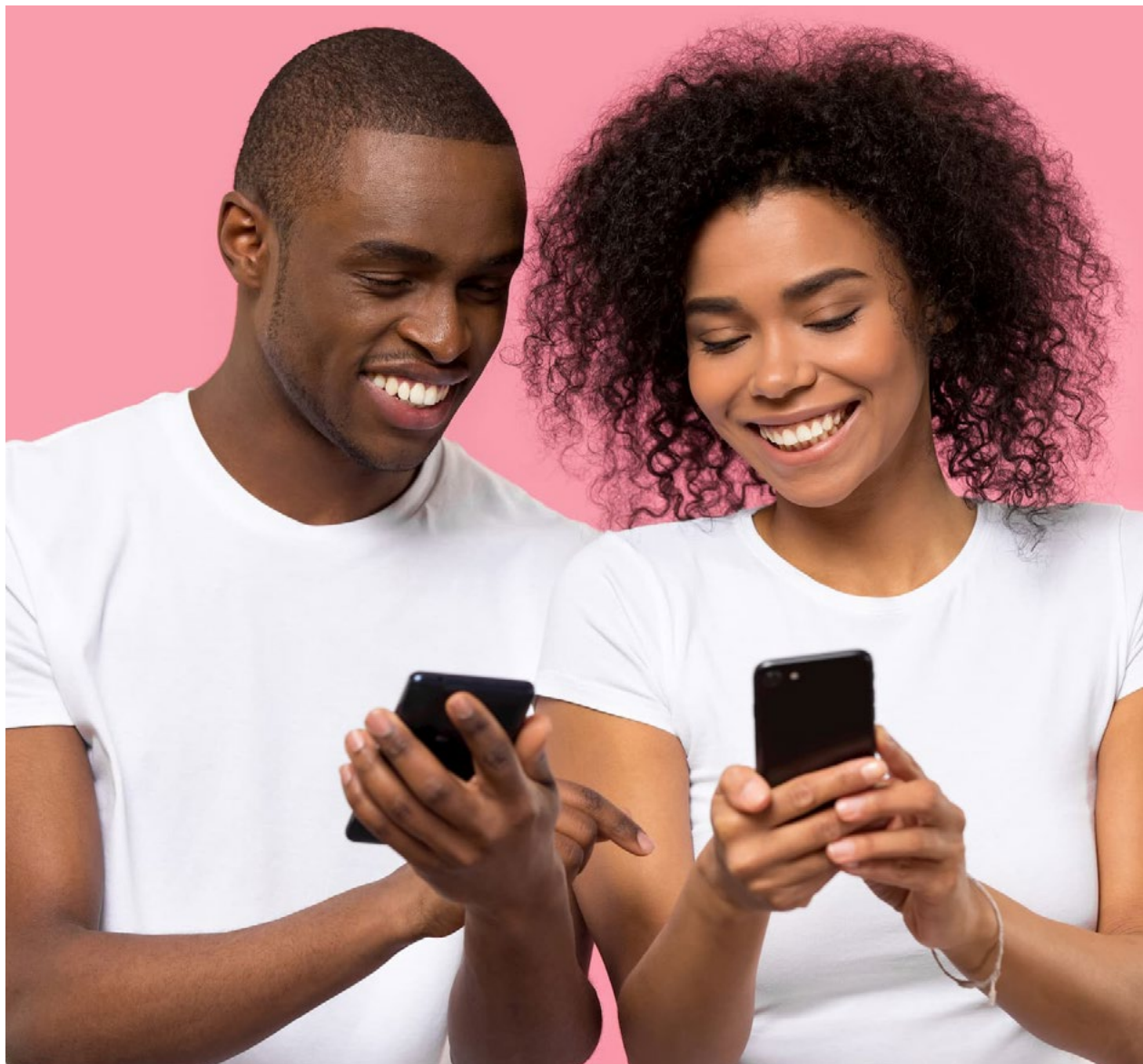
To use AirDrop from a Mac, right-click on a file in Finder, select "Share," then tap "AirDrop." Your Mac will then search for nearby Bluetooth-enabled gadgets that it can share with via AirDrop.

AirDrop works for Mac computers with OS X Lion or later, and iPhones, iPads and iPod touch devices with iOS 7 or above.

One thing to note: AirDrop makes it convenient for trolls to send you unwanted files, which can fill your hard drive with junk — or worse. This is especially common in airports, malls or other crowded places where gadgets are being used in the same area at the same time.
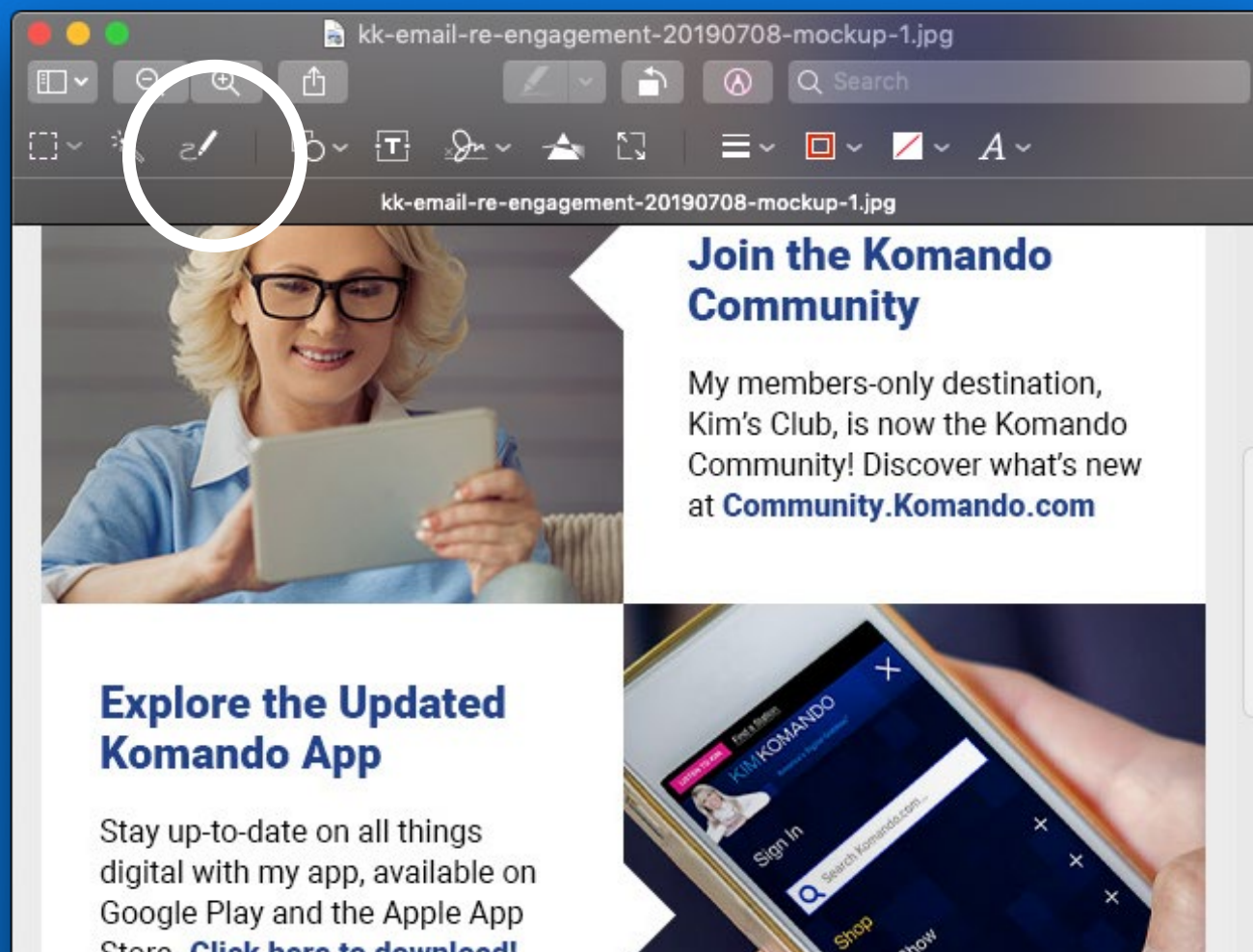
To protect yourself, you'll want to change your default AirDrop settings to "Contacts Only," which will restrict AirDrop access to people in your contacts, or "Receiving Off" to automatically decline files people may want to send to you.

EDIT IMAGES DIRECTLY IN PREVIEW

06

Need to make some basic edits to a photo or other image? When you view your file in Preview, don't overlook that little icon in the upper right-hand corner that looks like the tip of a pen (circled in white below). Clicking this icon will bring up an editing menu that lets you make changes before you save the image.

CLOSE YOUR TABS ON OTHER DEVICES

07

Your kid has just begged to borrow your iPad and you've finally given in. But just as you've handed over the device, you remember there's an R-rated video paused in your browser. What can you do? If you'd like to close those open tabs without fighting to get your tablet back, try this trick with your Mac:

▶ Open Safari and click the icon in the top right corner that looks like two overlapping pages — this is the "Show All Tabs" button. You'll see a list of all open windows for devices signed in with your Apple ID.

▶ Hover your mouse to the right of the window you'd like to close, and a little "X" will appear.

▶ Click the "X" to close the browser remotely.

AIRPLAY YOUR SOUND AND SCREEN

08

If you have an Apple TV or AirPlay-enabled speakers, you can stream your Mac's audio wirelessly to them. And with AirPlay 2, you can stream to multiple speakers simultaneously.

Note: Make sure you're running the latest version of Apple Music on your Mac and that your devices are connected to the same Wi-Fi or Ethernet network.

Open Apple Music on your Mac (or iTunes if you have an older OS). In Apple Music, look to the right of the volume slider and click the AirPlay icon, which looks like a pyramid with signals coming out from it. From here, you can see available speakers or TVs through which to play your Mac's audio and/or video.

You can also mirror your screen to an AirPlay TV or a smart TV compatible with AirPlay 2. To do so, from your Mac, click the mirror menu, which looks like a TV with a triangle at the bottom. If you don't see it, open the Apple menu ("" icon), click "System Preferences" → "Displays" → "Show mirroring options in the menu bar when available." From here, simply choose the TV to which you want to mirror your Mac.
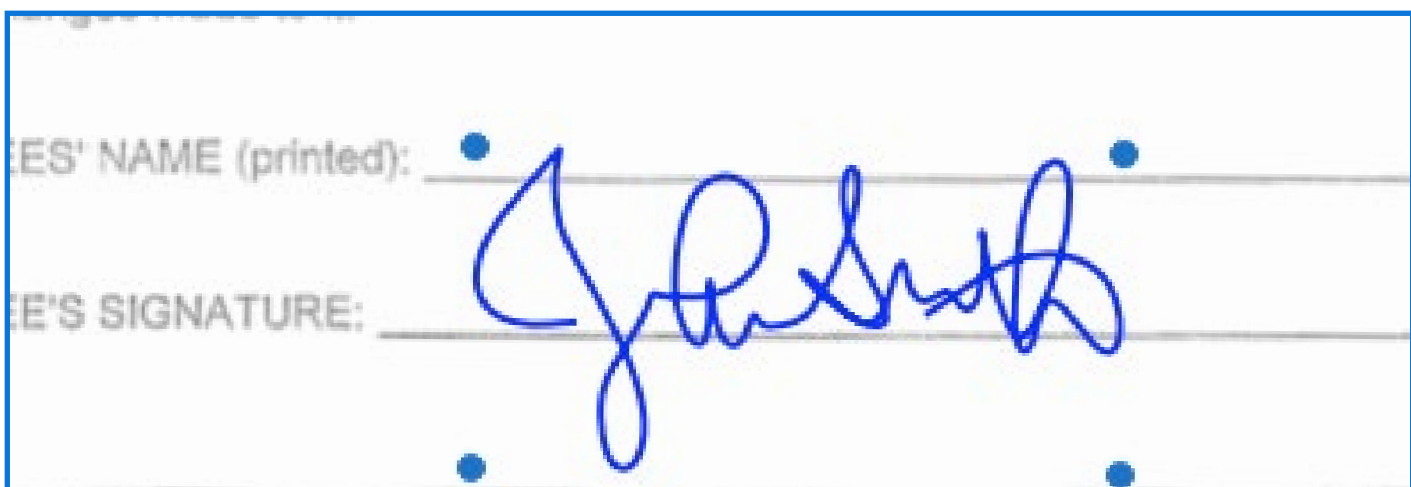
SIGN A DOCUMENT IN PREVIEW FOR MAC

09

Apple's Mac ecosystem comes with a built-in PDF reader through the Preview app. In addition to being a go-to for any and all kinds of digital documents, Preview makes it easy to add and share signatures across your entire family of devices.

To create a signature for signing your PDFs, open Preview and select the markup button, which looks like the tip of a pen. This will display the markup toolbar. From here, select the sign icon, which resembles a small cursive signature. The on-screen instructions will guide you through the rest of the process.

After creating your signature, you'll have the option to drag, drop and size it to your liking for the document.

Keep in mind that Preview also connects to iCloud, so any other devices you've signed into will have access to the signatures you create.
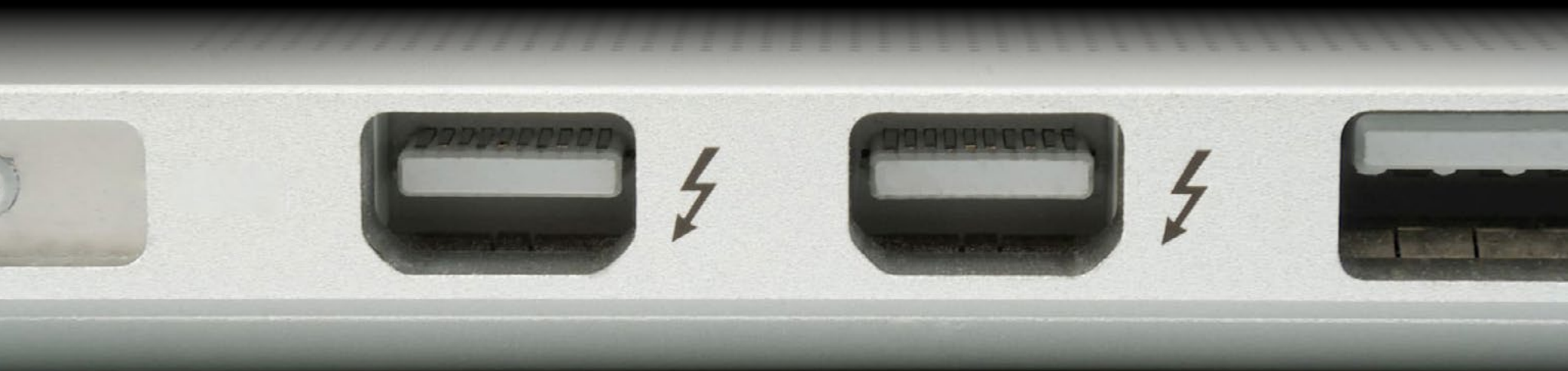
ABOUT THE THUNDERBOLT PORT

10

Connection technology can make a difference. Most external drives will work with the regular USB ports we've all been using for years; however, some Macs come with Thunderbolt 3 (USB-C) ports.

A Thunderbolt 3 port is a lightning-fast way to transfer data. You'll find this latest version of Thunderbolt on more recent MacBook Pro, Mac Mini, Mac Pro, iMac and MacBook Air models. The Thunderbolt 3 port also works with USB-C devices and cables, which makes it a versatile way to connect to a backup drive.

If you want to get the most out of your Thunderbolt 3 ports, look for a drive that specifically supports Apple's technology. The next best thing is a USB-C drive, which will still give you great transfer speeds.

Some earlier Macs use Thunderbolt 2 ports, which are shaped differently and don't double as USB ports. If you're buying a drive with Thunderbolt, check which version it supports. You'll need to use an adapter to plug a Thunderbolt 2 device into a Thunderbolt 3 port.

BONUS: 5 ESSENTIAL DOWNLOADS EVERY MAC USER NEEDS

It's been said that Mac users are a spoiled bunch, and it's hard to disagree. Compared to PCs, which tend to come packed with bloatware and useless apps, the programs baked into MacOS are often simple and expertly designed.

In fact, the flexibility of MacOS is the reason it's cited as a great computer for beginners. Like how iPads come with fantastic software anyone can use, Macs are easy to pick up and learn to navigate, no matter which app you've opened.

But what about software outside of the box? As it turns out, there's a thriving ecosystem of excellent third-party software for MacOS. Some of these programs are so good, pro users swear by them. To help you get the most out of your system, try these apps today.

1. FANTASTICAL

Apple's default calendar is good, but its features leave a little something to be desired.

That's where **Fantastical** comes in. This sleek software won the 2015 Apple Design Award, and since then, it's only solidified its reputation as one of the best third-party calendars available.

Fantastical was built using natural language to input events and dates. All you need to do is type something like "vet appointment at two on Friday," and Fantastical will take care of the rest. It also includes location-based services, calendar sharing and synchronization with both iCloud and Microsoft Office.

2. SELF CONTROL

Do you have a social media addiction? If so, you're not alone. It's all too easy to waste countless hours on platforms like Facebook. And once that time's gone, there's no getting it back.

But quitting social media for good can be just as hard, if not harder, than breaking other bad habits. This goes double if it's the only way you talk to friends and family.

But **Self Control** is here to help. This app will lock down any websites or mail servers you specify. Even restarting your entire system won't be enough to remove the lock — nor will deleting the app.

3. ALFRED

Ever feel like Siri isn't quite cutting it? Siri is definitely a flexible assistant, but it isn't all that reliable when it comes to heavy-duty tasks.

That's where **Alfred** comes in. Think of Alfred as a personal butler for your Mac. Just set Alfred to a specific key combination, type your request and access your apps and documents right from your keyboard. You won't even need to pick up your mouse or touch your trackpad with Alfred installed.

4. PHOTOS DUPLICATE CLEANER

You probably have more photos than you know what to do with on your computer, and you don't need annoying duplicates gumming up your gallery. That's where duplicate file cleaners come in handy.

Photos Duplicate Cleaner is free from the Mac App Store and minimizes the tedious task of scouring your entire system for duplicates. Instead of searching manually, select a folder and let this cleaner do the work for you.

The app creates groups of duplicate photos, so it's easy to find the number of occurrences of similar images. It also makes it easier to clean the selected duplicates. All copies are deleted except the original, which can save you tons of disk space on your Mac, and even on external storage devices.

5. THUNDERBIRD

Sometimes email feels never-ending. If you're sick of wading through a cluttered inbox, try **Mozilla Thunderbird**. Installation is quick and easy, and this email client is packed with features and customizable options.

One of the big standouts? A chat network that lets you connect in real time with your contacts through your favorite messaging app. Other handy features include a one-click address book, attachment reminder and the ability to search the web right from the Thunderbird dashboard.

Throw in a variety of extensions, themes and plugins, and Mozilla Thunderbird is **a clear winner when it comes to reining in all of your email inboxes**.

ABOUT KIM KOMANDO

Kim Komando's interest in the digital landscape dates back more than 22 years. Kim attended Arizona State University, which offers one of the leading Computer Information Systems (CIS) degrees in the nation. She left her first major in architecture when research convinced her that the opportunities in CIS were better.

During her college years, Kim Komando started her first business teaching people how to use personal computers. In her classes, she realized how confusing these machines were, especially to adults. She knew that if she could make things easy and fun, people would listen.

After college, Kim accepted a position with IBM selling computers. She later marketed computerized phone systems for AT&T, then mainframe computers at Unisys. But her dream was to go on the radio and teach many more people to improve their lives through computers.

Kim's reality far exceeded the dream. Today, her network radio shows are broadcast on more than 400 stations in the United States and around the world on the American Forces Network. Kim hosts a daily Consumer Tech Update vignette on 300 top radio stations with over two million listeners, and she is a USA Today-syndicated columnist and a regular contributor to Fox News. She is also an author and philanthropist. The Kim Komando Show airs globally on the renowned Bloomberg Television Network from a custom-designed set at her WestStar MultiMedia Entertainment production facility in Phoenix. Her email news network also delivers more than 10 million informative and up-to-the-minute digital newsletters to subscribers each week.