

## **MIG report: are Interest Groups doomed? by Anton Petre**

Should we give up on Mac Group monthly meetings?

This started discussion at the August meeting, attended by nine members...before a couple more turned up, it look like only five or so. We have over 50 Mac members, but over the last year or so attendance has slowly declined, the worst being only six.

Is it that we are not providing what people want? Are questions, problems, tutorials, tips and hints not enough? Let us have any ideas.

We discussed whether we should seek to merge with the iPad group, but decided that would not work: users of either machine would not get a fair hearing...time would be too short, and interests not necessarily coincide.

Against all that, it turns out that pretty well all SeniorNet groups, both here and in other parts of the country, are finding the same thing. Interest group attendance is dropping, and many courses attract only two or three applicants. Quite a few are cancelled for lack of interest. Even the regular help and support sessions sometimes have more advisers present than “customers”.

Yet some groups — our iPad group is an example — get good turnouts. Tablets and phones are definitely sparking interest. Up North, they are even asking whether SeniorNet is on the way out, as more folk know how to use their devices, and have learned how much tuition and help is available online. What do you think? Tell me at [petre@orcon.net.nz](mailto:petre@orcon.net.nz).

Anyway, we still had a good session in August, with four or five excellent Mac tutorial videos...as usual we all learned something. One member had a problem with Safari misbehaving, and we explored Google on ways to reset the program and sort things out, short of having to reload the operating system. We found a few answers, and with luck, one will work. We also looked at getting rid of malware, how to avoid the problems caused by forgetting vital passwords, clever ways of previewing files and images, and the several ways of including images in emails.

Maybe its not quite time to scrap the monthly meetings yet, but there may come a point where they are no longer worth running. In the end it is up to SeniorNet members — use it, or lose it.