

Last month's meeting was not very well attended. In fact we almost didn't have a meeting at all, but, well I had a few things I wanted to say. And I'm going to say here too. We have a quite a few positions that are empty like newsletter editor, program coordinator, and computer tutor. Jerry Brown does a wonderful job with questions and answers, but people want more than that in a meeting. Without something for the computer tutor part or a speaker, this user group will probably die out. More of us need to step up to the plate. Every single one of us has some favorite website, some piece of knowledge, some interesting video that someone else in the group would like to know about. That shortcut you use in word or excel won't be known by at least one other person in the room, has probably been forgotten by two other people, and will be of interest to most everybody else. No one, myself included, wants to become a full-time computer tutor or be responsible for finding speakers. Most of us, however, can share something for 5 min., or do a more in-depth sharing for 30. The commitment would be for one month and give our meetings more depth.

It is something almost everybody can do. During our discussion Diane prior commented that Susy Ball once told her that a computer group is members helping other members. And that is what we would be doing. Forget the official names for those spots. They are kind of scary. I have never felt like a tutor or teacher, but I do know things that I don't mind sharing with others. Although it still bothers me, I have even lost some of my fear of getting up in front of the room.

A few years ago I became the president of the Sonoma users group. Not because I was so knowledgeable, but because I was the only one who would take the job. In fact, I probably knew less about computers than almost everybody else in the room. We didn't have a program coordinator, so I also became responsible for finding a speaker or giving a presentation myself. Doing one of my first presentations (I don't even remember what it was about) I copied a graphic from the Internet and pasted it into a document - something I did all the time without thinking about it. One of the old time gurus in the group piped up "I didn't know you could do that." It made my day!

At our November meeting the knowledgeable Jerry Brown said he would like to learn how to use Paint. If you've been to the meetings, you know all the problems, questions and glitches I have had trouble with and brought to Jerry for answers. Paint, on the other hand, is something I use all the time. It is one of the most versatile tools I have on my computer, and I will be happy to share all the different things it can do. I would like to know more about using Excel. Jerry has offered to tell us about how he uses his computer. What about you? What do you want to learn more about and what are you willing to share?



This month's email message is a little longer and has some information you will need.

Holiday Greetings—

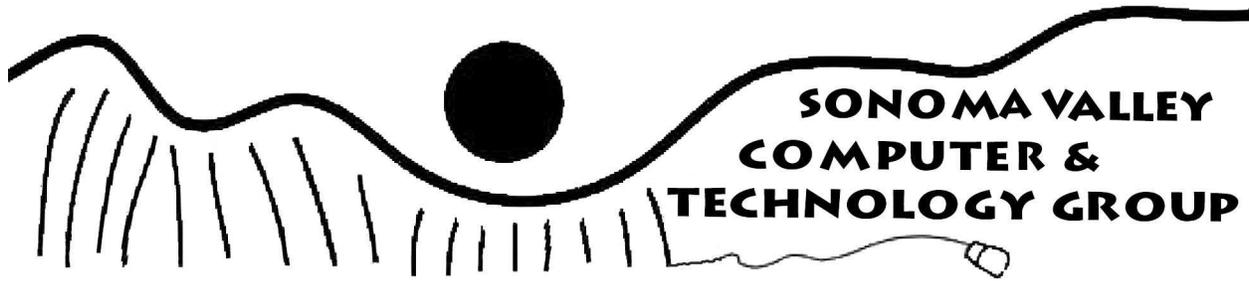
Well, the season finally caught up with the stores. Everything is getting much too commercial! When I was in high school you couldn't even apply for a Christmas job until after Thanksgiving, Now the stores are decorated and selling Christmas merchandise before Halloween.

This month my section is the second article I wrote about Dragon Naturally Speaking, The working title was "What Happened After I Trained My Dragon". I have come to realize that the training is never done and that I actually need more training than my Dragon does. I have also come to believe that updating my profile needs to happen only when I'm not connected to the Internet. There is a new version out, and I have lots of unusable profiles again. Humm....

I am still going through my overload of CEA's "Smart Briefs" newsletter information, as well as its cousin – the Entertainment Matters newsletter. At least it doesn't come daily! CES takes place the second week of January, and I will probably get home just in time for the Napa computer group meeting, so don't expect a newsletter before the end of the month.

I hope your Christmas is merry and your New Year is happy.

--Beth



Well, I got the extra memory and it really made a difference. With extra room to move around, my Dragon could really perform a lot better. No more restrictions. He was now fully functional.

I, on the other hand, had a lot to learn. With all the things he could now accomplish, I had to learn the commands for them. It's like learning a foreign language. My knack for mispronouncing the words I'm thinking doesn't help either. We have ended up in some pretty funny places, with files and folders I never meant to ask for. Once I have a folder open, I can ask for one of the files and he will open it. If I work with that file, he can save it. When I'm done, he can put it away. All I have to do, is remember the right commands and to say them in the right tone of voice. If I don't, they end up in the document. That's easy to correct, but I think my Dragon is training me more than I'm training him.

Actually, my Dragon's training is never done. After each session you're given the choice to save or ignore what you have done. If we have a good session I save it so my Dragon will understand me better the next time we work together. His accuracy always improves after each session. If we have a bad session, I toss it out so I won't confuse him. That usually happens when I'm trying to use him for things other than dictation.

I do like to use my Dragon when I'm writing things like this article. He types a lot faster than I do. A lot more accurately too. And he never misspells words. Even when he misunderstands what I say, or I say the wrong word, the spelling is correct. Some of the mistakes are even funny. Just now he wanted to post what I said to twitter, even though I'm not on the Internet right now and don't have a twitter account. He can also keep up with my thinking speed, something I can never do whether I'm writing or typing. When I'm done writing and want to check my article, he can read it back to me. That makes catching content mistakes a lot easier.

There have been a couple issues.

What started it all was when my profile became corrupted. I contacted Nuance, only to learn that their free technical support doesn't last very long. They expected me to pay for the help even though I had never had a problem before. That didn't seem quite right, considering the price they expect people to pay for their product. After finding out I was writing a review, they agreed to help me for free this one time. Fortunately they also emailed me the three solutions (see box). I was able to restore from a backup. Susy wasn't.

Just after I inserted the extra memory, my profile became corrupted again. I wasn't sure whether the extra space had anything to do with it or not. I was able to restore from a backup again, and renamed it "restore after addition". The next time it happened, I couldn't find the instructions to restore it, so I started a new profile. That took a while, and my Dragon was having problems as none of the training we had done applied to this profile. I was running out of time, so I just put my Dragon away, and typed the documents myself. The glitch magnet strikes again. And again.

The next time I wanted to use Dragon I had three profiles, and none of them worked. I was getting frustrated. I really like being able to dictate instead of type, but I don't have time to keep training new profiles. I couldn't remember how to restore my profile, so I called Suzy.

During this time frame a lot of updates happened. I don't remember what they were all about, I just remember getting 10 to 14 at a time.

I had the instructions. I had the time. I got out my Dragon...and all three profiles were working before I did anything. This was confusing, especially since I had to choose one of them before I could start dictating. I decided I only needed one working profile, so I selected the one with the most training, and deleted the other two. So far I haven't had any more problems. My Dragon and I

just keep getting better all the time.

Recently I have found that I can stress my Dragon out. If I am having a lot of trouble saying the right word, or if there are a lot of unusual words or names and I have to do a lot of correcting, I will get an error message that Dragon has to be reinstalled. It's not as bad as it sounds. It doesn't mean reinstalling the program from scratch. It means closing my Dragon and opening it back up again. Actually, since the exit Dragon button won't work, it means I have to restart my computer. Since I can use my mouse to manually make the changes and save my work, nothing is really lost

except the update to my user profile – which I probably wouldn't have saved anyway.

Sometimes, when you're editing, positioning can be critical. For example, if my Dragon typed "a" when I wanted "at", it's hard to get the right word from the end of the paragraph. The word "that" is especially hard to correct because "select that" means either the last thing you said or the word just before the cursor.

Nuance called. They have a new version. Getting it would "only" cost me \$99. They said they fixed the profile corruption problem, and if I waited a price would double. No thanks guys. That's a lot

Data corruption can occasionally occur when Dragon loads or manipulates files, but in many cases you can restore the User Profile, either from a backup or from a checkpoint.

#### **What can you do?**

To recover a damaged User Profile, Nuance recommends the following options, in order of preference:

1. Restore from a backup.
2. Contact technical support to restore from a checkpoint.

Alternatively, you can Create a new User Profile.

#### **Restore from a backup**

Dragon automatically creates a full User Profile backup every 5th time you save it (backup frequency is configurable in the Options dialog box - Data tab). If a suitable backup copy of your User Profile is available, you can restore from a backup.

#### **To restore from a backup**

Click Profile > Restore User Profile on the DragonBar. Dragon opens the restored User Profile and you can resume dictating.

#### **Restore from a checkpoint**

If you have performed significant training or corrections with Dragon since your last User Profile backup and you need to preserve the changes, or if no backup is available, Nuance recommends that you restore from a checkpoint.

To restore from a checkpoint

Due to the sensitivity of the User Profile data files, a technical support representative must perform the restore from checkpoint. See Contacting Technical Support for instructions about the information you'll need for the call.

#### **What are checkpoints?**

Checkpoints contain automatically created backups of the files used to configure and store the data in your User Profile. Keeping checkpoints requires less duplication of data than a full backup and allows reuse of the rest of the training and other data stored in your User Profile.

#### **When are checkpoints created?**

Dragon creates a checkpoint after you make major structural changes to your User Profile, such as when you:

- ▲ create a new User Profile
- ▲ perform a Dragon software upgrade
- ▲ perform additional training
- ▲ add or delete a Dictation Source
- ▲ add, delete, rename or import a Vocabulary

Dragon also creates checkpoints before and after Acoustic Optimization or Language Model Optimization.

#### **If you need to create a new User Profile**

Caution - If you do not restore the damaged User Profile and instead create a new one, you will lose any customizations, corrections, and Dragon training you performed. However, if the above procedures fail or are not practical and the corrupted User Profile is relatively new, you can create a new one.

#### **To create a new User Profile**

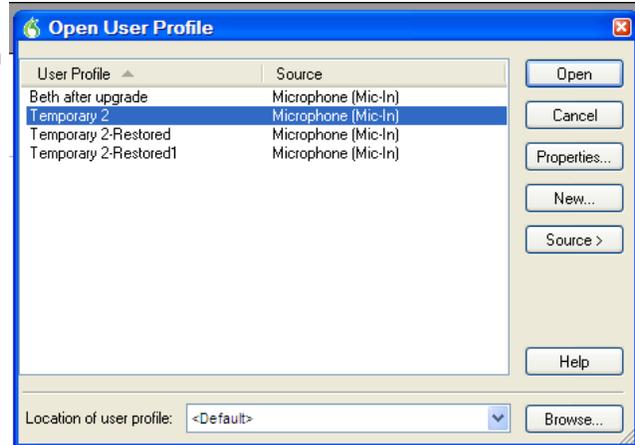
1. Click Profile > New User Profile on the DragonBar.
2. In the New User Profile dialog box, click New to open the New User Profile wizard and follow the prompts.

For Help, see Creating a User Profile.

of money to fix one problem, and who knows what would crop up next. I think I'll stick with the Dragon I already have.

Susy Ball and Jeff Solomon have had some of the same problems. Jeff resolved his problems. Susy removed her Dragon and hasn't put it back on her computer yet.

News flash. Nuance may be part of the problem. My profile is unusable again "because I have upgraded", even though I haven't added anything new. Nuance, on the other hand, has been in contact with my Dragon. They must be adding something that makes my Dragon think I have something new. I think it is time to cut the apron strings – no more communicating with Nuance.



From now on it will just be my Dagon and me.

## Get a free office suite, help charity

By Rick Broida

December 12, 2012

<http://news.cnet.com/cheapskate>



I love a good win-win.

From now until December 24, you can get SoftMaker FreeOffice for Windows or Linux absolutely free. And when you do, SoftMaker will donate 0.10 Euros to betterplace.org, which raises funds for a variety of worthy worldwide projects.



*(Credit: Screenshot by Rick Broida/CNET)*

So what the heck is SoftMaker FreeOffice? As you may have guessed from the name, it's the free version of SoftMaker's commercial office suite. It provides word processing, spreadsheets, and presentations, all with an interface that closely resembles Microsoft Office 2003.

Speaking of which, FreeOffice is fully file-compatible with Microsoft's suite, though it's slightly hobbled when it comes to the newer DOCX, XLSX, and PPTX formats: it can open them, but not save to them. That's one limitation that SoftMaker hopes will drive you to upgrade to the newer Office 2012 Standard or Professional (which are priced at \$79.95 and \$99.95, respectively).

I think that's some brilliant marketing on SoftMaker's part, and something I wish other software vendors would emulate. After all, older versions

aren't generating any revenue for them, so why not give them away?

That said, FreeOffice should prove more than adequate for folks with basic office-suite needs, and you get a full, unrestricted license, no strings attached. In other words, the software is yours to keep forever. And there's no pesky shovelware or nagware, either.

To get it, click through to SoftMaker's Load and Help landing page (<http://www.loadandhelp.com/home-en.html>), click the orange Download Here button, and then click the red Download button. Choose your version (Windows or Linux), then provide your name and e-mail address. SoftMaker will send you the serial number necessary to activate the program. (Mine arrived mere moments after I submitted it.)

I've actually used FreeOffice on and off over the years, and have found it a fast, compact, capable suite. If that sounds like something you could use, why not grab it now and help a worthwhile charity at the same time? Like I said: win-win.

—Beth



# Google Challenges Apple, Amazon With Music Deal in Europe



By Todd R. Weiss

Nov 20, 2012

cea@smartbrief.com

Google brokers a deal with several European licensing groups to add 5.5 million musical works from 35 nations to its Google Play service as Google works to attract customers.

Google continues to take on Apple and Amazon in pursuing customers in the online music business after securing a licensing deal to add 5.5 million musical works from 35 countries around the world to its Google Play music download service.

"The accord with Armonia, the alliance of French, Italian and Spanish licensing groups, is billed as the broadest of its kind," according to a Nov. 19 report from the Associated Press.

That means that Google will now be able to offer and sell songs in more countries from artists such as Lady Gaga and Rihanna, as well as from the British and American catalogs of Universal Music Publishing and from Sony's Latin music holdings, to customers through an umbrella licensing deal, rather than through individual deals in each country, according to the report.

"We're thrilled to have reached an agreement with the Armonia societies," Sami Valkonen, head of music licensing at Google, told MusicWeek.com. "Licenses such as this are important in ensuring that artists and rights-holders are rewarded fairly for their creative endeavors, and digital service providers are able to bring innovative services to market for the benefit of European consumers."

The deal with Armonia is "a welcome development in the on-going reform of pan-territorial licensing in Europe in helping simplify and speed-up the music-licensing process, which is crucial in fostering ongoing rapid innovation by digital music service providers," Valkonen told MusicWeek.com.

For Google, the addition of 5.5 million songs to its expanding Google Play music library is crucial as the company continues to try to add critical mass to its content offerings for customers. Apple and Amazon both had considerable head starts with their content stores, so Google is apparently continuing to make serious strides to get the attention and purchasing dollars of device owners when they buy new music.

In September, Google's Play Store hit an impressive milestone when it reached the 25 billion download mark for content purchased through the store—after only six months of sales.

Google Play was created in March to combine what until then were separate sites where Android lovers could buy their favorite apps, music and ebooks. Before Google Play, users had to shop through the individual Android Market, Google Music and the Google e-Bookstore sites.

According to Google, the 1 billion Android app download mark was reached in mid-2010, while the 2 billion app download mark was hit in mid-2011. That number soared to 10 billion by the end of 2011, then to 15 billion in early 2012, before soaring again to 25 million in September.

Google Play hosts about 675,000 apps and games today, up from about 450,000 in March, according to Google.

The move to create a one-stop Google Play store is part of a Google company-wide effort to consolidate its services.

Apple's App Store just celebrated its fourth birthday in July and now includes more than 567,000 applications for the iPhone and 236,000 for the iPad, as of June. The App Store started with 500 apps in July 2008 when it was launched.

Google Play has been Google's answer to the App Store as both companies are locked in a fierce battle for the lion's share of the mobile-device market. Google also faces a rising threat from Microsoft, which launched its Surface tablets in October.

The latest worldwide mobile market share numbers from IT research firm IDC show Android with 68.1 percent and Apple with 16.9 percent. Research In Motion's BlackBerry has a 4.8 percent share, down from 11.5 percent a year earlier, while Symbian (mostly used by Nokia) holds a 4.4 percent share, down from 16.9 percent a year earlier. Windows Phone holds a 3.5 percent share, up from 2.3 percent a year earlier.

## In-car wi-fi to boom over next five years

Manufacturers expected to introduce it as standard  
By Matthew Finnegan in London

Oct 25, 2012    cea@smartbrief.com



In-car wi-fi is set to boom as the automotive industry gets to grips with the popularity of mobile devices.

Car manufacturers have been fitting vehicles with cutting edge technology for some time, and more and more microchips have been finding their way into cars. According to IC Insights, chips sold to the automotive industry will grow at a faster pace than the overall industry, with the market growing to \$28.0 billion by 2016. As Google lives out its sci-fi fantasies with its driverless car projects, we can expect the average car to be looking very different over the coming decades.

In addition to this, analysts are forecasting that the introduction of wi-fi will allow the integration of tablets and smartphones with onboard systems to be greatly increased in the next few years.

So far only a few manufacturers have bothered with in-car wi-fi, Audi being one of those which has included it either as a feature or an optional extra.

Increasingly this is changing, and, according to analysts IMS Research, the market for in-car wi-fi will increase eightfold over the next seven years across America and western Europe.

While Bluetooth has been used by manufacturers, it has not been able to deliver the speeds that would be made possible by wi-fi, which is likely to be plug the gap and be introduced as a standard in the future.

By fitting cars with wi-fi, drivers and passengers would be able to share content from internet enabled devices as well as creating in-car hotspots,

enabling camera modules or allowing wireless screen duplication. More specific automotive applications such as wireless car diagnostics or wirelessly upgrading software would also be enabled.

Filomena Berardi, senior analyst at IMS Research said that wi-fi uptake is expected to grow swiftly, particularly with advances such as Wi-Fi Direct and Miracast.

"The uptake of wi-fi in vehicles will be fairly aggressive," Berardi said in a statement. "The recent Wi-Fi Alliance announcement regarding Wi-Fi Miracast, is very exciting. Some in the industry see this being used in conjunction with MirrorLink for wireless screen duplication."

"All in all, the future for Wi-Fi in the car is very promising," Berardi said.



**"Can't Get No Satisfaction"?** -  
These Rolling Stones-inspired urinals might do the trick.  
From Reader'sDigest.com

## Why does Facebook encourage me to post my photos

Because pictures are prettier than text? While that might be true, that's not the reason. By posting your photos on Facebook, you've granted the company the license to use it. Theoretically, they can use them any way they want, whether it's for corporate promotional material or advertisements, unless you know to opt out. They also allow businesses that you've "liked" to use your profile photo on ads shown on your friends' pages. Most people fail to read the user agreement, which clearly says that "you grant us a non-exclusive, transferable, sub-licensable, royalty-

free, worldwide license to use any IP [intellectual property] content that you post on or in connection with Facebook" (... snore! Is it any wonder people skip this?) unless you and everyone with whom you've shared your photos deletes them. Occasionally, third-party advertisers have used photos without the user's or Facebook's consent. A few years ago, a man logged on to his account and stumbled upon an ad for an online dating service. Who was the star of said ad? His wife! Awkward! Turns out the service lifted her profile photo from her page.

## Coupons at Checkout finds coupon codes so you don't have to

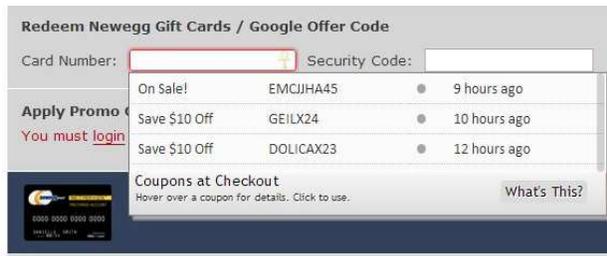
By Rick Broida  
December 5, 2012

<http://news.cnet.com/cheapskate>



*This handy browser extension saves you the time and hassle of searching for discount codes, springing into action once you reach the checkout page for nearly any store.*

*With Coupons at Checkout running in your browser, you'll always have quick and easy access to the latest discount codes.*



(Credit: Screenshot by Rick Broida/CNET)

For years I've been advising readers to search the Web for coupon codes before you complete your online purchase. It's one of my all-time favorite money-saving tips, as it's an easy way to score extra discounts.

Well, not always easy. You have to do some googling, peruse the various sites that aggregate coupon codes, sift through the listings to see if there's one that applies, copy and paste the code, and so on.

Browser plug-in Coupons at Checkout (<http://couponfollow.com/checkout>) eliminates nearly all this hassle. Once you get to a store's checkout page, it automatically lists any and all available coupon codes for that store. You may have to sift through them to find one that works, but it's still significantly quicker and easier than the old method.

According to a company rep, the extension finds and applies discounts from some 100,000 online merchants. This is perhaps better demonstrated

than explained, so take a look at the promo video, then meet me below for some thoughts.

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LfxOgF3ymmc&feature=player\\_embedded](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LfxOgF3ymmc&feature=player_embedded)

I just tried Coupons at Checkout with a Newegg purchase, and while it didn't find a code for the product in my cart (most Newegg coupons are product-specific), it did indeed list every available Newegg code. To find out what each code is good for, you simply mouse over it to see a description.

I have no doubt this would come in very handy at most stores, especially those with more generic coupons like "free shipping" and "\$10 off \$50." What I especially like about Coupons at Checkout is there's no toolbar involved; the plug-in simply sits in the background and does its thing when you land on a checkout page.

What's more, you can pair it with a cashback service like Ebates to boost your potential savings even higher. (In other words, using one doesn't negate the option of using the other.)

As someone who routinely "pauses before purchase" to troll the Web for discount codes, I suspect I'll be relying very heavily on Coupons at Checkout. It does all the legwork, and that's always a plus.



## The Top 10 Most Useful Websites You Never Knew Existed

From Jim Evans' facebook page

Written by Curt Maly on July 16, 2012

The web is a big place, and there are any number of useful websites out there that no one person has the time or ability to locate. Luckily, I've compiled a top ten of the best ones to spare you the hassle. Let's get started!

### #10: Mailinator (<http://mailinator.com>)

While surfing the web, you often need an email address for other sites, but you may prefer not to give out your personal account. Just make up a name, attach @mailinator.com, and that address

is automatically generated, with no sign-up required!

**#9: Zamzar (<http://zamzar.com>)**

It's frustrating trying to view a file, only to get an error message due to not having the appropriate program. At Zamzar, you can upload a file up to 100 mb in size, and convert it into any number of common file types, without installing anything.

**#8: F.lux (<http://stereopsis.com/flux>)**

You may not realize it, but if you sit at a computer all day, you may be causing yourself sleep issues. F.lux automatically adjusts your display's color based on lighting conditions and time of day to prevent this. Just set it and forget it.

**#7: Backblaze (<http://backblaze.com>)**

Anyone who's suffered a total computer crash knows the importance of having backups. Backblaze offers unlimited online backup space for as little as \$4 a month. Your data is encrypted automatically as well.

**#6: Slickdeals (<http://slickdeals.net>)**

Using Slickdeals is like having that friend who knows about all the good sales around town, only for the entire internet. New deals on everything from TVs to body lotion are posted daily by users from all over the country.

**#5: Dropbox (<http://dropbox.com>)**

If you've ever emailed files to yourself or had to run back and forth with thumb drives between your computer, you need this site. Dropbox pro-

vides an online folder you can save files to and then access on any computer immediately.

**#4: YouTube to mp3 (<http://www.youtubetomp3.co.nz/>)**

Everyone has wanted to download a great YouTube clip to listen to later at some point. YouTube to mp3 makes this easy. Just enter the URL for the video, and their site will automatically convert it into an mp3 file which you can then download directly!

**#3: Prey Project (<http://preyproject.com>)**

Prey Project keeps data on your laptop, tablet, or phone safe from thieves by allowing you to remotely lock down your devices, and even provides GPS info to help locate them.

**#2: Ninite (<http://ninite.com>)**

This site will save you hours of installing basic programs on new or newly formatted computers. Just pick your preferred programs from their list and press the button at the bottom, and you'll get an installer file that includes all of them.

**#1: Aviary (<http://advanced.aviary.com/>)**

Aviary provides an online suite of tools for virtually every function. It has editors for images, audio, effects, vectors, and color swatches, and runs right in your browser!

Hopefully, this list reveals how effortless your computer time can be with the right sites bookmarked. For almost any function, there's a website out there that can do it!

## Google Is Testing Same-Day Delivery for Shoppers

By Claire Cain Miller

Oct 26, 2012

[cea@smartbrief.com](mailto:cea@smartbrief.com)



Google is now in the same-day delivery business. In San Francisco, some people affiliated with Google can buy a product, using their phones or computers, and have it delivered to their homes in a matter of hours.

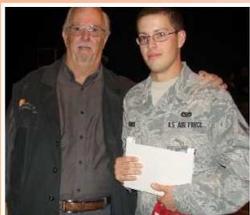
Plans for the new service have been under way for more than a year. But it recently went live for some Google employees and their friends, according to two people briefed on the service who were not authorized to discuss it because Google has not yet publicly introduced it. At least one national apparel chain is involved, one of these people said. A Google spokesman, Nate Tyler, declined to comment.

Google is just one company tackling same-day delivery. So are Wal-Mart Stores, Amazon.com, eBay and the United States Postal Service.

Though the service propels Google into commerce, the company does not intend to operate warehouses or a shipping service but to team up with retailers and delivery companies. Several San Francisco retailers, including national chains, are participating in the program already.

For shoppers, the service means they can avoid the trouble of driving to the store and some of the wait for items ordered online.

Same-day delivery could help physical retailers, which have been under siege from e-commerce companies that offer the convenience of shopping without leaving home. But online retailers offering same-day delivery could make life even harder for physical retailers, because letting people own something the same day has become physical retailers' biggest remaining advantage.



**YESTERDAY'S TECHNOLOGY...POWERING TOMORROW**

**Get involved... you can help change a life.**

The Outlook Foundation repurposes computers for children in need and for military personnel being deployed. But we need your help to fulfill our mission. Individuals, communities and corporations can provide essential support by making a monetary gift, volunteering time and talent, supporting our special events and outreach activities, donating products, and much more.

Your contribution will help us ensure that these children have the same educational tools as their peers and will provide our servicemen and women with a vital link to their families when they are far from home.

Give hope for tomorrow by donating today at <https://outlookfoundation.org/donate>.

*The Outlook Foundation is recognized as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.*



**The Outlook Building**  
517 S. Tonopah Drive, Las Vegas, NV 89106  
Donation Line: 1-888-885-8284 • Office: 1-888-782-3610

The reasons that Google is interested in same-day delivery are less obvious.

Retail ads are a huge portion of Google's business, but they are under threat from companies like Amazon, where shoppers increasingly go to search for products, bypassing Google. Also responding to the threat from Amazon, Google recently tried to improve its comparison shopping service by charging retailers to list their products there. It says retailers are more likely to list accurate and up-to-date items if they are paying.

Additionally, Google has been trying to bridge the gap between the digital and physical worlds to better understand and profit from mobile ads. On computers, Google and advertisers know if a user clicks on an ad and visits or buys on another Web site. But they lose track of customers who look up a business or product on their phone and then put their phone away, walk into the store and buy something. Online ordering and delivery could help solve that problem.

### Smart Computing Tip Of The Day

#### CD/DVD Issues

Reading errors with CDs or DVDs are usually due to smudged, scratched, or defective discs. Clean a troublesome disc with a CD/DVD cleaning spray from a consumer electronics store. The water vapor from your breath can do in a pinch. Wipe the disc's recorded surface in straight lines from the inner hole to the outside edge with a clean, soft cloth. Never rub a disc sideways or in circles. Any contact with a cloth leaves microscopic scratches on a disc, but scratches that run radially from the center of the disc outward usually won't cause skips like ones that follow the spiral track of data around the disc. Occasionally run a special lens-cleaning disc through your drive or disc player to remove dust from the laser lens. If all else fails, try reading the disc in a different drive.

# Analysis: E-readers grapple with a future on the shelf

By Grant Clauser

Nov 20, 2012

cea@smartbrief.com



The home theater PC is still a thing for lots of people, and Lenovo has just announced a new IdeaCentre computer built with home theater in mind. The IdeaCentre Q190 is, according to Lenovo, the world's smallest full-function desktop PC at less than an inch wide, but there's a lot of power in the little box.

It supports 7.1 surround, an optional Blu-ray player (with 3D) and full high definition graphics. A wireless mouse and wireless multimedia remote

with built-in mini (backlit) keyboard should make couch navigation easy.

Of course it runs Windows 8 (Professional Edition). You can outfit it with an Intel Core i3 processor, 1 TB of hard drive and 8GB of DDR RAM. It uses integrated Intel HD graphics. HDMI and optical audio outputs connect it to your TV or receiver. Unfortunately there are no 100-inch touchscreens to go with it.

It comes out in January for a starting price of \$350.



Handy remote with built-in keyboard



## Computers 101

By Randal Schaffer, WorldStart Guest Writer

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### Dave from ND writes:

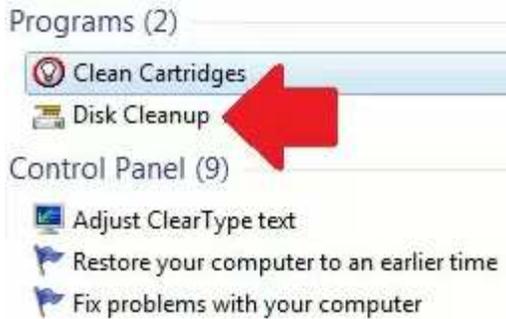
When I go to Defrag the screen comes up, but both bars are solid grey and a pop-up comes up and says Disk Defragmenter will not start. Any ideas?

### Hi, Dave.

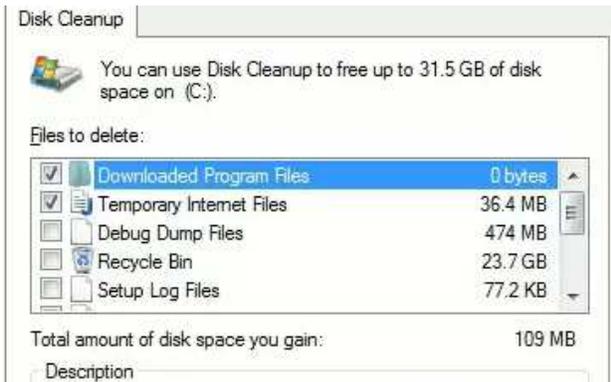
What it sounds like to me is that you don't have enough free space on your drive to defrag. A general rule is that about 15% free disc space is required. Here's how you can check your hard drive's free space in Windows 7... if you have a "Computer" icon on your desktop, double-click it. If you don't, then click "Start" and then "Computer". What comes up should look like this:



In this example, I have about 30% of my hard drive or a little less free. The next thing that you'll want to do is clean up some space on your hard drive. The easiest way that I know to do this is to use the Windows disc clean up utility. You find that by clicking "start", and entering "cleanup" in the search box. It should populate before you've got the whole word in.



In this case, I entered “cle” into the search box and “disk cleanup” popped up as the second option. It will ask you which drive you want to clean, and your option (probably the default) will be C:. It will calculate how much space you can free up. Next, a window will pop that asks what files you want cleaned up. Some will be checked by default.



You can see from the example that I’ve been somewhat lazy about cleaning my recycle bin. So choose which files you want it to clean. If you don’t know what it does, don’t clean it. Typically, whatever the default is plus your recycle bin will be plenty. Once you’ve done that, click “ok”. A verification window will come up asking if you’re sure. Tell it that you are, and the cleanup will proceed.

If this doesn’t free up enough space, it might be time to start deleting stuff from your hard drive. When I had a much smaller hard drive than I do now, I found it easiest to move my documents off onto a removable drive, and just start using that drive to store my documents. You should be able to pick up a portable 750 gig or 1 terabyte hard drive for \$100 or less.

Once you’ve freed up the space, try your defrag again.

Hope that this helps!

## Social Media Is Customer Relations...

By Andy Marken

### Not Public Relations!

[andy\(at\)markencom.com](mailto:andy(at)markencom.com)



Jack Nicholson said it best in **A Few Good Men**... “*You can’t handle the truth!*”



We can agree because we’re not one of the thousands of newly anointed social media PR experts!

But of course *you* are.

After all, you have your company/personal Facebook pages.

You have your company/personal Twitter accounts.

You update your Facebook pages and Tweet constantly.

The boss has got to love you when you tell him/her Facebook just surpassed 500 M users and Twitter has 120 M+ users.

**OMG you’re awesome!!!!**

Of course, some things are in disarray; but hey, they are so yesterday!

Yeah, your corporate press section has a form media folks can fill in for “pretty quick” publicity assistance/information ... hey 3-4 days is quick.

Your press section has all the HTML releases, authorized images. A few real comprehensive website press rooms even have contact names and 9-5, M-F office numbers.

### Look But Don't Touch

If a customer has a problem or is really ticked and happens to reach you begging ... pleading ... crying ... screaming, you simply send them to customer service – in Bangladesh.

There ... another great customer contact!

A recent article in the *Wall Street Journal* noted that everyone is promoting their social media marketing/communications expertise. Or, as Forrester's Sean Corcoran said, *"You can't walk out your house without bumping into a social-media expert today."*

And the latest issue of *Business Week* had a great article on the hot new job ... social media director.

Reading all the noise surrounding social media, you'd think it was the second coming.

Man, it's the brave new world for individuals/agencies.



Finally, a real job you can sink your teeth into.

You have to admit the jobs discussed in the articles sound awesome ... all that viral outreach ... all those neat ideas for others to pick up and run with ... all of the great ideas just waiting to be spread across the market, across the globe.

### We Missed the Class

We always thought social media and sound relationships started with the customer...

And ended with the customer.

Most seasoned folks we know make the point that social CRM (customer relations management) and marketing/sales social media is difficult to get your arms around, difficult to integrate into your business operations.

If you don't understand your customers/your audience, it's tough to develop a social strategy that makes sense for your organization.

The templates the experts offer just don't work for everyone--or anyone, for that matter.

The problem with most smoke 'n mirror folks is they think they can control the conversation.

Hate to disillusion you but she/he owns the conversation about your company, your product/service, your support, you.

Try to control the conversation, steer/manipulate it and you lose the battle ... big time.

That's probably why in a recent social relations survey, 40 percent claimed to have a strategic policy/plan.

The rest are ... faking it! Shooting from the hip. Inventing as they go.

The truth is, social media isn't overly challenging, which may be why there are so many gurus.

All you have to do is know when and how to engage with other people on social media.

Of course, it would be neat if you were productive, efficient, sold folks on your products/services, turned a really negative person around or at least quieted him/her down.

Oh sure, you may be unlucky enough to write something on your personal or business Facebook page that your boss doesn't like, but hey ... you're the guru.

Or, you may Tweet something that irritates the C offices, HR, client but when you're working on the edge its part of the adrenaline rush.

### Company Effort, Not Yours

Management may not be certain why they need a social media expert, but they do know the social media arena is the place where they should have a presence ... of some type.

Experience has also shown them that satisfied, repeat customers keep their doors open.

They know that the best, most satisfied customers are the ones who talk up, support the company's products/services even over the rough bumps.

If a question, problem or issue arises and people are writing all over your wall, you can't simply pass the buck.

We know you're a social media specialist and interacting with customer issues is a dirty little no-nothing job for customer relations specialists. But they came to you and service/support shouldn't have all the fun.

Your social media plans/programs/efforts should be about stimulating, driving customer loyalty.

At the end of the day, that counts more than the number of your page readers or Tweet followers.

It's working with them...talking with them... assisting them.



Yes, real 1:1 customer support customer service.

Sometimes it just isn't very "social!"

Just ask the people who really work with and help customers!!!

## Web-Based Email vs Client-Based Email

By Kevin, WorldStart Staff Member

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Of all the problems people have with computers, probably the most common is email. This is due in large part to the fact that email is probably the most commonly used element in a computer. Because answers to email questions usually require some information about the delivery method, many of them will begin with another question, "Are you using web-based email, or client-based email?"

Web-based is email that's viewed on the web (hence, the name). So, if you're using Gmail, Yahoo!, AOL, or any number of other web-based email providers, you can access it from any location, provided you can just remember that darn password.



Client-Based email is loaded directly on your computer by your client. This is done using installed software that, when opened, automatically downloads all your email, which you can then view at your leisure. Outlook, Thunderbird, and Windows Live Mail are just a few examples of email clients.

I prefer a combination, using Gmail and Outlook together. I can check my Gmail account from any



location, but when I open Outlook at home, this same mail is directed into my computer. For me, one of the advantages of client-based email is that, if I'm not connected to the internet, I can still pull up an old email. It's already there. On the other hand, my computer resources are taken up by the large amount of email stored there. Of course, I could delete those old messages but, as a life long pack rat, that's just not my style.

Using client-based email, if I'm in a public place that provides internet access, I don't need to log in to my Outlook account. This way, I can check my email without worrying that someone might be watching as I type in a password.

Another advantage of client-based email is that it's easier to direct multiple email accounts to a single location. For example, if you use different email accounts for different reasons (a home account, a work account, etc), it's relatively easy to direct all of them to your client-based email.

Knowing which method you use to access email won't solve your email problems, but it may help lead you to a solution.

Affiliating with NVPCUG would give us non-profit status and a wider range of meetings and events to attend. Their members would gain an additional SIG and short newsletter. Check things out at their website - [www.nvpcug.org](http://www.nvpcug.org)

Please consider becoming a NVPCUG member. The dues can be tax deductible, and if you attend any of their general meetings or pot luck events, and win a door or game prize, you could come out ahead of the game.

## Napa Valley Personal Computer Users Group Membership Application/Renewal \*

New     Renewal     Information Update

*Please Print*

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Nickname: \_\_\_\_\_

Street/PO Box: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP Code: \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (check preferred):  Home: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Work: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail (check preferred):  Home: \_\_\_\_\_

Work: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation/Profession \_\_\_\_\_ Retired? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you want to be added to the following NVPCUG e-mail lists?

News and announcements:     Yes     No

General discussion of computer-related topics:     Yes     No

If you do not want your preferred phone number and/or e-mail address published in the *NVPCUG Directory*, which is for the exclusive use of NVPCUG members, check the appropriate box(es):

Do not list phone number

Do not list e-mail address

Family members whom you want to sponsor as Associate Members:  
(Associate Members have the same membership rights as their sponsors,  
except for receiving newsletters)

Full Name

E-mail Address

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Annual Dues:

\$30 **Regular Member** - an individual who is not a full-time student

\$20 **Student Member** - a full-time student who is not eligible for Associate membership.

\$10 **Associate Member** - a family member of a Regular or Student member. Associate memberships run concurrently with sponsors' memberships.

Mail application/renewal to:

**Napa Valley Personal Computer Users Group**  
**Attn.: Membership Director, P.O. Box 2866**  
**Napa, CA 94558-0286.**

The NVPCUG is an accredited IRC 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Your dues payment may be tax-deductible as a charitable contribution.

\* To request a Corporate Membership Application / Renewal form, e-mail: [Membership@nvpcug.org](mailto:Membership@nvpcug.org)