

COMPUTER NEWS



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The Napa Valley Personal Computer Users Group will meet Wednesday, May 18th, 7:00-9:00 P.M.

At the Napa Senior Activity Center,
1500 Jefferson Street, Napa, California



The meeting begins with Random Access, an open-floor question-and-answer period during which attendees can ask questions about computers and computer-related problems and receive helpful information from other meeting attendees. Questions may be submitted before the meeting by emailing them to Random Access moderator **Jerry Brown** at Questions@nvpcug.org.



The May 18, 2011 Computer Tutor topic will be: member **Jeff Solomon** will be talking about What is Cloud Computing (the subject he was going to cover)? How does Cloud Computing work? (&) What does Cloud Computing mean to PC Users like us. If you have an idea or question that the Computer Tutor **Jeff Solomon** at tutor@nvpcug.org.



This month **Bernhard Krevet** will surprise us with a TBA computer topic. If you have a suggestion on which feature and topics should discuss in the future, please contact **Susy Ball** at

susyball@aol.com. See ya all at the meeting. *

Could you use some practical information that would help you make better use of your computer? Come to this meeting! Guests are always welcome. Admission is always free.

Interested in becoming a member? See page 28 for application information.

NVPCUG

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS & MAC GROUP

In SIG meetings you can learn about a subject in greater detail than is feasible at NVPCUG general meetings. SIG meetings are open to everyone. Meeting times and locations occasionally change, so for current meeting information, see our Web site, www.nvpcug.org, or contact the SIG leaders.

Investors SIG

Meets: Monthly, second Monday
5:30 to 7:30 p.m.
Jerry Brown's home,
23 Skipping Rock Way, Napa

Leader: Jerry Brown
(707) 254-9607
bqandjbb@sbcglobal.net

Napa Valley Mac User Group

Meets: Monthly, second Thursday
6:30 - 8:30 p.m.
Napa Senior Activity Center
1500 Jefferson St., Napa

Leader: Ron Rogers
(707) 226-5352
ronrogersnapamug@gmail.com

Sonoma Computer Group

Meets: Monthly, fourth Saturday,
except Mar 2011
10:00 - 11:30 a.m..
DeLong room
Sonoma Library, Sonoma, CA

Leader: Beth Pickering
bethpick@emailx.net



Requirements For Web Radio

You will need a player, a software application capable of playing back Internet radio streams. Popular players include Microsoft Windows Media Player 9, Real-Networks RealPlayer10, Apple iTunes, and many MP3 music players. We will focus on using Windows Media Player 9. You'll also need an Internet connection. A dial-up connection is sufficient for reproducing audio with AM radio quality. Many Internet radio stations offer streams designed for dial-up users. If you have a broadband connection, you have a wider choice of playback quality. Some radio stations offer near CD-quality streams, although often only as part of an added cost subscription package. Depending on the format, even lower bit rate broadcasts can sound remarkably good. With a broadband connection, you have your choice of any of the available stream bit rates. Finally, your computer system needs a way to play the streams. This can be as simple as a sound card and desktop speakers or headphones or as complicated as using a high-quality sound card to connect to your stereo system.

Overheating: What To Watch For

Any component inside your computer can overheat under the right circumstances, but due to their nature, there are several pieces of hardware that are at high risk for heat damage. At the top of the list is the computer's CPU. Whenever you launch a program on your computer or use an application that's already running, the CPU must work a little harder to keep up. Eventually, the CPU is forced to operate at the peak of its abilities, and that's when it consumes the most electricity and generates the most heat. When the CPU overheats, programs that typically run fine may generate error messages, or the entire computer may crash. Some CPUs are designed to reduce their speed when they overheat, so if you experience severe slowdowns in programs after a certain amount of time has passed, heat is the likely culprit. Video cards are the second most likely type of hardware to overheat, especially if you use the computer to play graphics-intensive 3D games. Most video cards contain their own memory and CPU, and when the memory overheats, it tends to cause white "sparkles" to appear randomly on-screen, whereas heat problems resulting from the card's CPU generally cause the game to slow down or crash.

When To Update Drivers

Some driver Web sites recommend that you update your drivers regularly. Newer drivers often expand functionality, so updating your drivers has a benefit. However, the old saying, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it," applies to computing. A new driver can cause problems with a functional configuration as easily as an older driver can. Conventional wisdom says the following:

1. If a device quits working or crashes your PC even though you have changed nothing, reinstall the existing driver.
2. If you are installing an older device on a new system, or if you have made changes to your system and a device is acting up, look for an updated driver.
3. If your device has never worked well or at all with the default driver (especially if the device and PC are of different vintage), experiment with old and new drivers to find the best one.

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Napa Valley Personal Computer Users Group Contact Information

Officers for 2011

Board of Directors

President	Jim Gray	unlisted	President@nvpcug.org
Vice President	Ron Dack	unlisted	VicePresident@nvpcug.org
Secretary	Marcia Waddell	252-2060	Secretary@nvpcug.org
Treasurer	Roy Wagner	253-2721	Treasurer@nvpcug.org
Other Directors:	Susy Ball, Julie Jerome, Bernhard Krevet, Dick Peterson, Bob Simmerman, Raylene Thompson, Tom Uboldi and Dean Unruh		

Appointed Officers

Computer Tutor Coordinator	Jeff Solomon	553-2114	Tutor@nvpcug.org
Facility Arrangements Coordinator	Dianne Prior	252-1506	Facility@nvpcug.org
Greeter Coordinator	Raylene Thompson	unlisted	Greeter@nvpcug.org
Greeter Coordinator	Bob Simmerman	259-6113	Greeter2@nvpcug.org
Librarian	Dean Unruh	226-9164	Librarian@nvpcug.org
Membership Director	Bob Simmerman	259-6113	Membership@nvpcug.org
Newsletter Editor	Susy Ball	337-3998	Editor@nvpcug.org
Product Review CoCoordinator	Susy Ball	337-3998	Reviews@nvpcug.org
	Marcia Waddell	252-2060	Reviews2@nvpcug.org
Co-Programs Director	Bernhard Krevet	unlisted	Programs@nvpcug.org
	Susy Ball	337-3998	Programs@nvpcug.org
Publicity Director	VOLUNTEER NEEDED		
Random Access Moderator	Jerry Brown	254-9607	Questions@nvpcug.org
Webmaster	Ron Dack	unlisted	Webmaster@nvpcug.org

• All telephone numbers are in Area Code 707.

NVPCUG General Meetings
Held the third Wednesday of each month, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.
Napa Senior Activity Center,
1500 Jefferson Street, Napa

NVPCUG Computer News

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Microsoft Wireless Mobile Mouse 3500

Reviewed by Steve Costello, President/Editor, Boca Raton Computer Society, Inc., Florida, April 2011 issue, Boca Bits, <http://brcs.org/>, president@brcs.org

Introduction

I was in Office Depot in February just doing my usual wandering through the aisles, after my regular check up with the doctor a couple of doors down. I spotted the Microsoft Wireless Mobile Mouse 3500 on sale for \$17⁹⁹, instead of the regular \$29⁹⁹. (I have seen it online since then for as low as \$15.00, but with shipping it would still be more than I paid).



If for some reason you don't want to leave the Nano transceiver in all the time, there is a slot in the bottom of the mouse where it can be stored.

Either way you need to keep it where it will not be lost, as it is so small.

Supported Operating Systems

- Microsoft Windows 7
- Microsoft Windows Vista
- Microsoft Windows XP SP2
- Apple MacOS X10.2.

Power

It is powered by one AA alkaline battery, which should last about eight months according to the paperwork. This should be extended, if you use the on/off switch on the bottom of the mouse to power it off completely between uses, especially if you do not use your laptop all the time.

Size

This has a very long name, but it is really a small laptop sized mouse, which is OK for me, because that is what I was looking for.

USB Nano Transceiver

The USB Nano transceiver only sticks out about a centimeter from the USB slot on the laptop, making it possible to leave in the laptop all the time, which I do so the mouse is always ready to go.

Conclusion

I have only been using this for about a month, at the time of this review, and found that it lived up to my expectations. Everything just worked when I unpacked it, installed the battery, and plugged the Nano transceiver into my Vista laptop. *

Author Bio

Grandfather, South Florida user group enthusiast, blogger, participant of creative writing prompt blogs, still working full-time, and love to read almost anything.



NVPCUG Calendar

May 18	7:00-9:00 p.m.	NVPCUG General Meeting, + A
May 23	10:00-11:30 a.m..	Sonoma Computer Group + E
Jun 9	6:30-8:30 p.m.	Napa Valley Mac User Group + A
Jun 13	5:30-7:30 p.m.	Investors SIG meeting + C
Jun 15	7:00-9:00 p.m.	NVPCUG General Meeting, + A
Jun 25	10:00-11:30 a.m..	Sonoma Computer Group + E
Jul 11	5:30-7:30 p.m.	Investors SIG meeting + C
Jul 14	6:30-8:30 p.m.	Napa Valley Mac User Group + A
Jul 20	7:00-9:00 p.m.	NVPCUG General Meeting, +A
Jul 23	10:00-11:30 a.m..	Sonoma Computer Group + E
Aug 6	10:00-11:30 am.	Board of Directors meeting + D
Aug 8	5:30-7:30 p.m.	Investors SIG meeting + C
Aug 11	6:30-8:30 p.m.	Napa Valley Mac User Group + A
Aug 17	7:00-9:00 p.m.	NVPCUG General Meeting, + A
Aug 27	10:00-11:30 a.m..	Sonoma Computer Group + E

Meeting Locations

- A** - Napa Senior Activity Center, 1500 Jefferson Street, Napa
- B** - Piner's Nursing Home, 1800 Pueblo Ave., Napa
- C** - Jerry Brown's home, 23 Skipping Rock Way, Napa
- D** - Peterson's Family Christmas Tree Farm, 1120 Darms Lane, Napa.
- E** - DeLong Room, Sonoma Library, Sonoma, CA

A Happier, Longer Life? Volunteer!

By Sr. Dorothy Robinson, Editor, Olympia Microcomputer Users Group, WA, December 2010
OMUG News, www.olybug.org/newsletter@olybug.org

Although there may be some situations where volunteering would not necessarily get you a longer, happier life (any veteran could fill you in on that), there are now studies showing that people who volunteer at least two hours a week do in fact receive health benefits from volunteering.

According to an article by Adam Voiland at <http://health.usnews.com> a 2007 report which drew on the results of 30 studies said volunteering can indeed be good for your health. Voiland says the report indicates that “people who volunteer enjoy longer lives, higher functional ability, and lower rates of depression and heart disease.”

Volunteering keeps a person active and interested, as well as helping stay connected with other people.

Voiland quoted Steven Post, director of a research group at Case Western Reserve University that focuses on the “scientific study of altruism, compassion, and service,” as saying, “The helping impulse is very fundamental. When it is locked off we do not flourish.”

If we look around, there are friends, neighbors, and family who could use a helping hand now and then. There are also nonprofit organizations whose mission is to help people. You may be belong to one. In fact, if you’re reading this

newsletter, chances are you belong to The Olympia Microcomputer Users Group.

Any group needs leadership, and OMUG is no exception. All our officers and key members are volunteers, and if you talk to any of them, my guess is that you’ll find they enjoy taking an active part in our computer users group, keeping it alive to fulfill its mission.

OMUG’s purpose, according to our Bylaws, “shall be to provide a non-profit, educational, self-help organization for personal computer users; to cultivate cooperative relationships among computer users in our community; and to promote knowledgeable use of personal computer hardware and software.”

Think about why you joined OMUG, and why you keep renewing your membership each year. Maybe you have computer expertise to offer and you enjoy helping others. Maybe you don’t know a lot about computers and are looking for help. Whatever your reason, computer expertise, or lack of it, is irrelevant to participating in leadership of our group. People with many different lives, leisure and work experiences have served as OMUG officers. You can, too. *

Online Marketing Inside Out

Review: by Gregory West, Member of Sarnia Computer Users’ Group (scug.ca) and Port Huron, MI Computer Group (bwcomp.org), prospector16@gmail.com, Blog: gregorywest.wordpress.com

by Brandon Eley & Shayne Tilley

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<http://oreilly.com/catalog/9780980576825>

Online Marketing Inside Out has nine dynamic chapters that guide you through your next “modern marketing campaign”. Chapter one explains how marketing is changing pointing out things you need to know before you begin planning your next promotion or campaign. You will learn how to make money from a website by page views, optimize the values within search engines (SEO) and how the main players in social media can help you go deeper inside the communities spreading the word of your company or product.

Even though email marketing has been around forever, it seems, this book sparks a new interest showing “many advantages” and the authors “walk you through every step towards a successful email marketing strategy”.

Having your own sales people working for you online is easy when you create an “affiliate marketing program” that is covered in Chapter seven. The advantages of having an “army of salesmen all over the world” promoting for you is explained in easy to understand terms in this chapter. This is followed in sequence with Chapter eight wherein you learn

about the world of “online advertising” as you will be able to “plan, implement, test, and optimize” what you setup with your online advertising.

I really like the way this book is set out. The Table of Contents leaves nothing to imagination. The Preface and Chapters have extensive headings that guide you through the various topics so that you can easily look something up and jump right in on that subject. For example, in Chapter two’s listing you will find headings such as: Press Releases. Then followed with sub-headings: Press Releases in the 21st Century, When to Write a Press Release, Stand Out From the Crowd and so on.

Every chapter tags your interest and keeps you coming back as a reference point for helping you develop your own online marketing campaign. This book is for those who “have a web site and...want to promote it”, or anyone else who wants and/or needs to learn this amazing subject of online marketing.

Even if you are already doing online marketing and feel fairly successful, this book will take you to the next level of expertise and guide you in directions you may have possibly passed by.

Take a look at this video ... <http://gregorywest.wordpress.com/2011/03/29/982/> *

Tips & Tricks | Tutorial: Disk Maintenance

By Les Townsing, a member of the Melbourne PCUG, Australia, April 2011 issue, PC UPDATE, www.melbpc.org.au, editor@melbpc.org.au

Cleaning up your hard drive can restore your PC's Performance

There are three important utilities provided in Windows that help to improve a PC's performance:

- Disk Clean Up
- Error Checking (previously known as Check Disk or Scan Disk)
- Disk Defragmenter

Disk Clean Up

Over time, unnecessary data and "leftover files" gradually collect in all PCs as you use them. As this garbage collects it slowly clogs up your system, taking up space and making performance slower and slower. The Disk Cleanup tool helps you free up space on your hard disk by searching for files that you can safely delete.

There are a number of ways to start Disk Clean Up. My preference is:

1. Open 'Windows Explorer' and right click on the required drive
2. Select 'Properties,' click the 'General' tab, and then click 'Disk Cleanup'
3. Disk Clean Up will then scan the drive and provide you with a list of possible actions and an estimate of the space that can be saved

Depending on your system, a number of different file types are analysed when the initial disk scan is conducted. After the analysis completes you can choose what to do with them. The analysed files include:

- Downloaded program files
- Temporary Internet files
- Recycle Bin
- Temporary Remote Desktop files
- Setup Log files
- Backup files for a previous operating system
- Offline files
- Compressed old files

In addition to the *Disk Cleanup* tab, the *More Options* tab offers further opportunities for freeing up hard drive space. There is nothing on this tab that isn't available elsewhere within Windows in standalone fashion and some will be dealt with below.

There may be other categories that appear in your Disk Cleanup window, but in all cases, highlighting the item will display an explanation of the category in the Description area.

Error Checking

Previously called ScanDisk or Check Disk, this utility is known as *Error Checking* within the Windows XP/Vista/7 system.

Error Checking will check the hard disk for defects in its platters. It will also check file systems. If errors are found it will attempt to fix them.

These errors are found inside your hard drive may be caused for a number of reasons. These include:

- system crashes
- applications that have been improperly closed
- the existence of harmful programs such as viruses

It is important to know that Error Checking is not a data recovery tool. Its job is to maintain the file system, and if your directories or files get in the way of this objective, they will be sacrificed!

Before checking volumes or drives for errors, make sure that all other programs are closed, and disable your screen saver.

To run Error Checking:

1. Open 'Windows Explorer' and right click on the required drive
2. Select 'Properties,' click the 'Tools' tab, and then click 'Check Now'
3. You will be given the options of automatically fixing file system errors and recovering bad sectors

Note: Vista and Windows 7 will not allow Error Checking to run while the system is operating. It must be scheduled to run at boot time.

Disk Defragmentation

When files are created, deleted or modified it's almost a certainty they will become fragmented. Fragmented means the file is not stored in one place in its entirety and different parts of the file are scattered across the hard disk.

Fragmentation causes the drive heads to search for all the pieces of a file in different locations. The more fragmented files there are on a drive, the more performance and reliability suffer.

The Disk Defragmenter Utility is designed to reorganize fragmented files and optimize their placement on the hard drive for increased reliability and performance.

To run Disk Defragmenter:

1. Open 'Windows Explorer' and right click on the required drive
2. Select 'Properties,' click the 'Tools' tab, and then click 'Defragment Now'

When Disk Defragmenter first opens you'll see a list of the hard drives displayed at the top of the screen. Clicking on the 'Analyse' button will display a graphical representation of the amount of defragmentation on the selected drive.

When the Defragment button is clicked, a graphical representation of the defragmentation during and after defragmentation is progressively shown. This graphical

representation does not appear in Vista or Windows 7. You can schedule the Disk Defragmentation Utility to automatically run at a pre-determined time in both Vista and Windows 7.

For the technically minded, you are also given the opportunity to view a defragmentation report after the drive is analysed and when it has been defragmented.

For the majority of users, the Disk Defragmentation Utility included with Windows is sufficient to keep the hard drives in relatively good condition. If you are the type that wants to extract the best possible performance from a system, consider upgrading to one of the premium defragmenter products. *

The Mac Corner

By Danny Uff, a member of the Help Line, Mac OS X and Windows XP, Tiger/Leopard/Networking, Lehigh Valley Computer Group, PA, January, February & March 2011 issues, The LVCG Journal, www.lvcg.org, www.connectingpeoplesoftware.com, danny.uff@gmail.com

Backing Up Your Photos with iPhoto

Digital photos are great. They allow us to save those memories onto our computers. Gone are the days of boxes and boxes of old, aged photos in some drawer (yes, I am old enough to remember them) or bent photo corners. Yep, it's great! Until your computer crashes, and you have no DVD or printed back up of those memories. Do you wish you knew a way to back up those photos that you spent hours importing into iLife's iPhoto application? Well, it's easier than you think!

First you'll need an external back up source. If you only have a couple photos, then a USB flash drive should do nicely. But if you're like me, you have thousands of photos (old and new) so you may need to save them to a CD, DVD, external hard drive or an Internet back up service. Secondly, there are two ways to back up your photos using iPhoto:

1. If you do not have them sorted into groups, events, etc., just highlight all the photos, and then use the File>Export command
2. If you do have them sorted, then your best bet is to save the actual data file that iPhoto uses

Backing this up is a snap:

- Open Finder, then select the Pictures folder
- Within that folder is a file called iPhoto Library. Make sure this file is saved to the external source you are backing up too. That's all there is too it!

Now, to restore the photos, just get the external source and copy the iPhoto Library file back to the Pictures folder, then go back into iPhoto and bingo! All of your events, places, faces and photos are back again.

Printing from an iPad

By now, you may have seen the jazzy iPad TV Commercial that shows the device printing its output to an HP printer. Some Mac users have asked me if this was a real feature of the iPhone, iPod Touch and iPad? The answer to that question is, yes and no.

YES - It is a real feature for the said devices and by having the current update to its operating system. If someone does have an Airprint-compatible printer it does work like a charm. NO - It does not work if you do not have an Airprint-compatible printer.

What is Airprint anyway? It is a new printer protocol, developed by Hewlett Packard, that allows a user to print from a device such as a cell phone, to a compatible printer. If the user is on the same WiFi network as the printer, then the user's device can pick the printer "out of the air" and send it to the printer. However, if the person is not on the same network, he or she can still print to that printer by sending the document (or whatever else you're printing) to a special e-mail address for that printer. The user sets all this up when they first set up the device.

Hewlett Packard is the only company making such printers and they can range from \$100.00 on up. They can be found at major retail and online stores.

In-app Purchases

Back in mid December, there were a slew of reports on parents letting their kids play with their iPhone, iPod Touch or iPad getting billed for what is known as in-app purchases.

In-app purchases let a user purchase items within an iOS application (such as more levels to a game, expanding an already purchased app, etc.) using the user's iTunes Credit Card or Checking Account.

One mother in the United Kingdom discovered that her 4 year old child spent more than \$80.00 (U.S. Dollars) on in-app purchases - story via CNN.

Fortunately, there is a way to disable this feature so that little kiddies (or even you) don't accidentally purchase something while in an application.

1. Tap SETTINGS
2. Tap GENERAL
3. Tap RESTRICTIONS
4. Enter a Restrictions pass code
5. Select "Enable"
6. Scroll down to "In-App Purchases" and make sure it is set to "OFF"
7. Exit Settings

Personally, I have to say that with all of the experience I have with computers, I almost made a mistake with the above and have disabled this feature on my devices. *

Cloud Computing

By Dick Maybach, n2nd@charter.net

Although you can hardly pick up a computer publication without being assaulted by references to *cloud computing*, the term has been abducted by marketing organizations to the extent that it means almost nothing. Today, “cloud” is to computing as “natural” is to food. Although the term means little, the concept is very valuable, and is something that most computer owners use every day. I define cloud computing as using storage or processing resources on the Internet. Most of us already use cloud computing far more than we realize; for example, every e-mail we receive sits on our ISP’s disk until we download it to our PCs, and when we use Google Maps, much the processing and all of the storage occurs on Google’s hardware. In the extreme, cloud computing could evolve to the point where our computer would consist of only a keyboard, mouse, display, and perhaps a printer, with just enough processing power and software to support a Web browser. Google foresaw this as the future of home computing and began developing their Chrome operating system to support it.

A simple example of cloud computing is a backup service, which continually backs up all your data whenever you are connected to the Internet. You don’t have to think about it, and because your backups are stored at a different location, they are safe even in case of a local catastrophe. A similar use is synchronizing data among several computers, where the data might be files, contacts, and your favorite Web sites and (with care) their passwords. Many people also use the cloud to share information with others, for example by using Facebook for personal information, Flickr for photos, or Google Docs for documents. Cloud storage is both convenient and inexpensive; indeed, many vendors offer up to two gigabytes free.

All the above examples are data storage ones, but there are also cloud processing services, such as Google Docs. Google Docs supports the common office tasks such as word processing, spreadsheets, and presentations, which means you can perform these without purchasing an office suite and having to keep it updated. It also allows on-line collaboration (where, for example, several people edit the same document), although few home users are likely to need this feature. Like cloud storage, cloud processing is inexpensive or even free.

By now, you may be thinking, “What’s the Catch?” Somebody has to pay for these services, as providing them requires non-trivial costs for computer hardware, support staff, and communications. In some cases, the free service is a limited sample to entice you to purchase a more versatile one. In others, you are the product being sold. Your habits and preferences are valuable commodities that advertisers will pay to learn about. For many of us this is a fair trade; in return for the convenience of Google’s search engine, we tolerate the ads in the sidebar and being

directed to sites that want to sell to us.

However, there are some security and safety caveats involved. Security is complex for a cloud vendor; your data are stored on the same disks, the same memory, and pass through the same processors as everybody else’s. The process is much like what happens in a commercial laundry or dry cleaner, where everybody’s clothes are tagged and thrown together into a large machine. Afterwards, somebody looks at the tags to get them back to their proper owners. Contrast this to a bank deposit vault, where only your key can open the box where you place your documents. Even at such competent vendors as Google, there have been instances of data leaking from one customer to another, and many cloud vendors are start-ups who have much less expertise than Google. This means that you should take responsibility for safeguarding your data. For example, if you back up your disk in the cloud, encrypt any files (such as those containing passwords or on-line banking data) that present security risks. I store my passwords using KeePassX, <http://www.keeppassx.org/>. Its file is always encrypted on your PC’s disk, and you can safely back it up anywhere. I also use Gnu Privacy Guard (gpg), <http://www.gnupg.org/>, to encrypt files and e-mail. (Both of these programs are available for the Windows, Mac, and Linux platforms.) By the way, when you encrypt a file, be sure that only the encrypted version is ever placed in a directory that is backed up in the cloud.

Safety also is not trivial. Vendors do go out of business and, even if they keep operating, they may find that providing cloud services isn’t profitable. Not all of them back up their storage, which means that their hardware failures and software bugs can destroy your data. If you use the service for back-up or synchronization, this isn’t a problem because the chances of simultaneous failures in the cloud and on your PC is negligible. However, if you store your only copy of your photograph or music collection in the cloud, you are risking disaster. In the case of cloud processing, you should also be concerned about the format in which your data is stored. It does little good to download the file containing your novel if it’s stored in a format that only the (now out of business cloud vendor) could read.

Finally, cloud computing is new, so you should expect some glitches. *

time quantum

An amount of time in which a process runs without interruption. Also known as a time slice.

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Should You Try Linux? (Well, it depends on....)

By Dick Maybach, n2nd@charter.net

There are many good reasons why you should.

- 'It's fast. Every time I use Windows I can feel myself growing older as it creeps through booting up, shutting down, and starting a new program. My wife had an old laptop with XP that had become unusably slow under XP. She replaced the operating system with Linux, and it's now back to its original speed.
- 'It's free. Not only is Linux free, but so are the great majority of its applications. Such
- things as office suites, desktop publishing, Web page design, photo, audio, and video editors, computer aided design, and games (to name a few) are there for you to try out and use. Many of these can import and use Windows documents, such as from MS Word, PowerPoint, and Excel.
- 'It's more secure. While no software is absolutely secure, Linux is far ahead of Windows. This is partly by design and partly because PCs running Windows are far more common than are those running Linux. Malware designers tend to target the most common configuration. Linux users must keep their systems up-to-date (a one click process) and must use the built-in firewall, but they very seldom worry about computer
- 'It's more fun. Linux users are continually trying new programs. They are free, so why not try to find which you like best. Linux is also much more customizable; you can make your desktop look like Windows, like a Mac, or like something only you could love. Finally, because it's open, you are free to poke around its guts to figure out what is really going on under the hood.
- viruses.

Good reasons for caution

There are also good reasons why you might not want to.

- 'Linux is not Windows. It doesn't run most Windows applications. (There are ways around this, but they are more trouble than most Linux novices will find comfortable.) Worse, some Windows applications have no Linux counterparts. For example, although it may change, today you can't watch movies on-line from Netflix in Linux, and there is no Linux program equivalent to TurboTax.
- 'Some hardware doesn't work with Linux. Again, there are ways around this, but they require some experience with Linux. The most common offenders are printers, scanners, and anything made by Apple. This isn't a problem if you are buying a new machine; you just buy only the devices you know are Linux compatible.

- 'Most PCs come with Windows and not Linux installed. You will have to install a new operating system, which is something most PC users have never done. Despite what you may have heard, installing Linux isn't difficult (in fact, it's much easier than installing Windows), but it does require some care.

Let's suppose you've decided to look into Linux. How should you start? First, find a Linux user who is willing to help, not because Linux is so difficult, but because it's new to you. He or she will probably recommend the toe-in-the-water approach. Many versions of Linux are available as a live CD, which lets you run Linux without writing anything to your hard disk. Shut down, remove the CD-ROM, and your machine boots Windows and has no idea it had been running Linux.

Set up your boot order

To do this, set up your PC to boot from a CD-ROM, insert a Linux live CD, and turn on the power. You will most likely have to select between trying Linux (right!) and installing Linux (wrong!). CD-ROMs are much slower than hard disks, but you can see exactly how Linux works with your hardware. Keep in mind that unless you copy your results to a read/write device, anything you do in the live session will be lost when you log off.

The next level of commitment is to install Linux in a dual-boot configuration. Here each time you boot, you choose either Linux or Windows. For instance, you might choose

Windows to watch a Netflix movie, work on your taxes, or sync your iPhone and choose Linux to surf the Web, retouch your photos, or update your Web page. Again, the installation will be much easier with the help of a Linux-savvy friend. Just be sure to back up your files before you begin. Another good approach is to replace Windows with Linux on an old computer.

Linux is a rather large clan of operating systems, the most common of which are Ubuntu, Red Hat Fedora, and SUSE. However, I recommend that you first try Linux Mint, which is a variant of Ubuntu. Its appearance closely resembles Windows', and you will probably be comfortable almost immediately. It shares Ubuntu's compatibility with hardware, which minimizes the chances of problems during and after installation.

There are hundreds of other versions of Linux, and each one has its niche, for example to recover files from damaged disks, to be fast on old and slow hardware, to accommodate children, to run on netbooks and smart phones, and one even lets you use an old PC as a TiVo type video controller.

Give Linux a try. You will probably like it, and if you don't, at least you will have better reason to use Windows other than being ignorant of everything else. *

Word Templates Can Simplify Your Life

By Nancy DeMarte, Columnist, Office Talk, Sarasota PCUG, Inc., FL, January 2011 issue, Sarasota PC Monitor, www.spcug.org, ndemarte@Verizon.net

Templates
Blank and recent
Installed Templates
My templates...
New from existing...
Microsoft Office Online
Featured
Access databases
Agendas
Books
Brochures and booklets
Budgets
Business cards
Calendars
Cards
Certificates
Charts and diagrams
Contracts
Envelopes
Faxes
Flyers
Forms
Inventories
Invitations
Invoices
Job descriptions
Labels
Letterhead
Letters
Lists and to-do checklists
Memos
Minutes
Newsletters
Planners
Plans and proposals
PowerPoint presentations and slides
Projects
Receipts
Records
Reports
New resume samples
Resumes and CVs
Schedules
Statements
Stationery and specialty paper
Time sheets

Templates have been a feature of Microsoft Word since the early versions. These pre-formatted documents are offered as time-savers to users who need a quick business letter, resume, agenda, or other document. Each template includes placeholders with instructions for what should be typed there, such as “recipient name.” The user fills in the required information and the document is complete.

I was never a fan of templates. They were too restrictive; I am the do-it-myself type. There was never the right kind of document for my task among the limited choices. And if I could remember to save the template as a document, I was never exactly sure where it was being saved on my computer. With the greatly enhanced improvements to templates in Word 2007 and 2010, I have changed my mind. The template choices now have been expanded to include hundreds of document types, and they are much easier to find and save. Word 2007/2010 users can even edit templates or create their own templates from personal documents.

Using a Template

Word 2007 provides templates from two sources: installed within the Word program and online at the Microsoft website. To view the installed templates, click the Office button (or File button in Word 2010), then New, and then Installed Templates. Here you will find thirty letters, fax cover pages, resumes, and agendas formatted with the new themes of Word 2007. Click one to see its preview, and then click “Create new,” which opens it as a document, leaving the original template intact in its original location. After replacing the placeholder text with your own, save this document to a folder of your choice. Often the placeholder body text includes tips for changing the

formatting using the new style and theme galleries in Word 2007.

The online templates offer an impressive number and variety of document types. Accessing these couldn't be simpler. Click the Office button, then New. Under the heading Microsoft Office Online in the left column, select the category of template you want. Besides the standard letters and resumes, you will find interesting new categories such as calendars, greeting cards, and stationery, which are colorful and professionally formatted. To use the category “Lists” as an example, under the subheading Home are various shopping lists, emergency contacts list, and a travel checklist, to name a few. Other types of lists include Medical (family medical history, medicines and vitamins, etc.) and Menus (illustrated templates for menus to celebrate all kinds of occasions). Merely reading through the forty categories of online templates should inspire anyone to try some.

Once you have chosen a specific template from the online selections, click it to see the preview. Some of these templates have been created by Microsoft; others have been submitted by users. In the preview window you will see the template's rating (1 – 5 stars) based on user feedback, the file size and estimated download time. If it is a user-created template, it will include license agreement and terms of use links, although these templates have been thoroughly screened. To get an online template, click Download. Almost immediately the template will appear on your screen as a document, with the template stored in My Templates (Office button – New – My Templates) for future use.

An interesting feature of online templates is that many of them contain usable content rather than just formatting suggestions. For example, under the Letters category, the “Apology for Poor Service” letter is an actual apology which could be sent by a business in response to a complaint from a customer. Another letter from the travel letters subheading is “Complaint about Lost Luggage.” For those of us who want to write this letter, but aren't sure how to word it, this template could save the day.

Customizing a Template

Of course, anything in a template can be modified, even the template itself. To edit an installed template, bring it up in the preview window. Next to “Create new,” select Template instead of Document so that it opens as a template. To edit an online template, download it first, and then save it as a



template file type (.dotx). Now you can delete placeholders and replace them with text that will not change, such as your name and address. You can change the font or font size or any other formatting aspect of the template. When done, save it as a template file type with a name that clearly identifies it, such as “Median letter template revised” and be sure it gets stored with other templates in the My Templates folder. In the “Save As” dialog box, choose “Templates” as the saving location. You can always delete templates from the My Templates folder the same way you delete any file.



Saving Word Templates in Word 2007

Create a Template with the Hidden Tab

I have often wished I could create a template from a document that I use regularly. It’s easy with Word 2007. To do this, you will need to reveal a hidden tab on the Ribbon: the Developer tab. Click the Office button, then Word Options. Put a check mark next to “Show Developer tab in the ribbon” and click OK.

First open or create a document that you wish to be the basis for a template. For illustration, let’s say it is a meeting agenda. Decide which areas of the template will change in subsequent uses, such as the date or agenda items. In the Developer tab, you can add a Date Picker from the Controls group. It’s the second icon in the bottom row. This will add a drop down calendar to the template from which to choose a date and gives options for formatting the date. To add a placeholder for a text item, the Controls group includes a Rich Text command (Aa) which will add a placeholder. You can then use the Properties command to add text which describes what should be typed there, such as “Agenda Item 1.” Save your creation as a template (.dotx or .dot) in My Templates as described above. It will be readily available when you need it.

Templates can help us do a variety of tasks with Word without the tedium of creating all our documents from scratch. Explore the template choices, and you will surely find some that meet your needs. *

Working with Page Numbers in Word 2007

By Nancy DeMarte, Columnist, Office Talk, Sarasota PCUG, Inc., FL, April 2011 issue, Sarasota PC Monitor, www.spcug.org, ndemarte@Verizon.net

Adding page numbers to a document seems like a simple task. You open your document, position the cursor, and, on the Insert tab in the Header and Footer group, click Page Number. But Word offers several customizations for this process. It all depends on where you want your page numbers to appear and how you want them to look.

Inserting Page Numbers

Your first decision is where you want to position the page number: in a header, footer, or in the margin. The most common place is in a footer. Fortunately, the Footer gallery has many footers which include page numbers. Click the Insert tab, then Footer, and scroll to see the gallery choices. Click a design to make it your footer.



If you find a footer you like which does not include a page number, it is possible, although not easy, to add a page number to the footer. To do this, insert your footer choice and double click the footer area to select it. You will notice that a Header and Footer Tools tab appears above the

Ribbon whenever a header or footer is selected. Put your cursor in the footer where you want the page number to appear. Because many of these gallery footers contain tables, you may have to press Ctrl+tab to set a tab stop within the table cell in order to put your cursor exactly where you want it.

Once the cursor is set, under Header and Footer tools, click Page Number. Click “Current position” which opens the Number Style gallery. Click a design for your number from the gallery, and it will appear in the footer. Warning: If you choose an option other than “Current position,” such as “Bottom of the page,” the page number will replace the footer instead of adding to it.

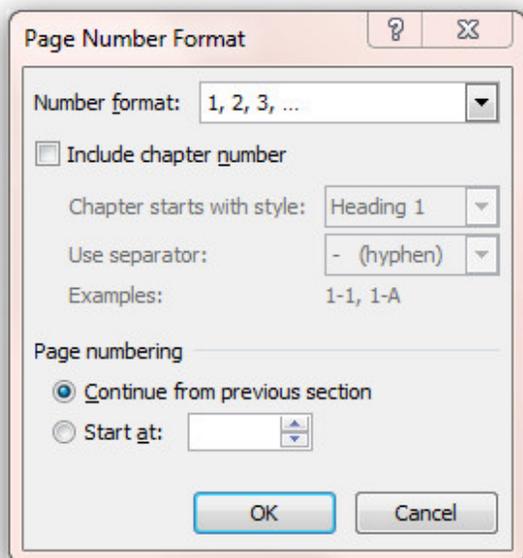
An easier approach is to insert the page number first, and then add other elements and information to your footer. To do this, on the Insert tab, in the Header and Footer group, click Page Number. Choose “Bottom of the page,” then click a number style from the list, making sure the design puts the page number in the area of the footer where you want it to appear (left, center or right). To insert content after the page number in the footer, press the End key, then

Page Numbers cont. on page 12

the Tab key. Then enter the content, such as author's name or date. You may need to use the Tab key to adjust the position of content items.

Formatting Page Numbers

Office 2007 is full of new galleries, which are collections of preformatted content which can be added to a document with a single click. To see the page number gallery of styles, start with a document that does not contain page numbers. On the Insert tab, click Page Number and then one of positions, such as "Top of the Page." A gallery opens that shows page numbers in various positions on the page. Some include graphical elements, others text, such as "Page X of Y," as in Page 3 of 14. More options can be found in the Building Blocks Organizer. Click the Insert tab — Quick Parts — Building Blocks Organizer and scroll to the Page Number gallery.



To change the actual number type, such as from numeric to Roman numerals, click the Page Number icon and select "Format Page Numbers." Choose the style you want from the drop down list.

Of course, you can always select just the page number and format it yourself. Double click in the area where you've put the number, then select the page number to reveal a mini-toolbar just above it. Here you can easily change the font and apply attributes such as color, boldface, or italics. To change the size of the number using the mini-toolbar, either click the large or small capital A icon, which grows or shrinks the selected number, or change the font size number. The new format is copied immediately to all other page numbers in the document.

Removing Page Numbers

The easiest way to remove all page numbers in a document

is to select one of them and press the Delete key. If you have created a footer which includes a page number and other content, the content will remain even if the page number is deleted.

Managing Page Numbers

Often you will not want a page number to appear on the first page, which might be a cover sheet or title page. It isn't difficult to remove the page number from the first page, but don't just delete the number 1. This will cause all the other page numbers to disappear as well. Instead, remove the first page number using the "Different first page" command. Let's say you have added a footer which contains the author's name and the page number. Double click in the footer area of the first page, which opens the Header and Footer Tools tab. Click to put a checkmark next to "Different first page" in the Options group. Your footer and page number will be removed from the first page. The second page will contain the footer and page number 2. You can now insert a footer that does not include a page number on the first page, if you wish, without changing the numbering on the rest of the pages.

If you want the first page to be unnumbered, but the second page to display page number 1, insert a footer with page numbers in the document, then double click in the footer area of the first page. Under Header and Footer Tools, select "Different First Page." Then click Page Number — Format Page Numbers. In the "Start at" box, type 0, and then click OK.

It is also possible to change the numbering style or format in different sections or chapters of a book or long document. A section within a long document can, for instance, include no page numbers, even though the surrounding sections are numbered.

Working with page numbers is just one example of the depth of options available within Microsoft Office programs. The more you become familiar with the options and how to use them, the closer you will come to fully utilizing these programs. *

Speaker Cables

Keeping speaker cables inconspicuous is usually a priority, and often this requires stringing the cables along baseboards, around doors, or behind your drywall. Unfortunately, long speaker cable may reduce sound quality because electrical resistance increases with the length of the cable. If a single speaker cable is longer than 40 feet, consider purchasing a thick 14-gauge or 12-gauge speaker cable to maintain conductivity and to ensure your speakers can produce the full spectrum of sound.

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THIS AND THAT

By Elizabeth B. Wright, Member, Computer Club of Oklahoma City, February 2011 issue, CCOKC eMonitor, www.ccokc.org, wright599new@sbcglobal.net

Last Fall my husband and I were part of a tour group which visited several countries. The most amazing part of the trip was how many of our fellow passengers had brought laptop computers and Kindle book readers. Since nearly all of us had digital cameras, we used our computers to download the images after each day's adventure. That gave us some reassurance that even if our cameras had been lost or stolen, the downloaded images would be safe on the computer. We were able to leave our computers in the care of the tour company while visiting the various sites of interest. Then we would have them with us later in our hotel rooms. The smartest thing I did was take with me a very small ACER Netbook and a very small Seagate 500G external drive. Also several USB flash drives for extra storage. The netbook computer was so much easier to carry than a full sized laptop, and all I needed it for was photo downloading and email. I did not try to do any photo enhancing or editing while still on the road. That was saved for my return home. And here it is January, and I still haven't finished!!

It is a bit difficult to explain how I nearly lost some of my pictures, but here goes. We took four cheap point and shoot cameras with us on the trip. Three of them used SD memory cards. At some point during the trip at least one card was interchanged between two of the cameras. In addition to that confusion, somehow the numbering system was duplicated in two of them, causing pictures with the same numbers appearing on two memory cards. Somehow, almost surely because of the daily downloading procedure, both sets of numbered images were salvaged. It took me quite a while after we returned home to figure out the problem and actually retrieve all of my images. At least I think they are all accounted for.

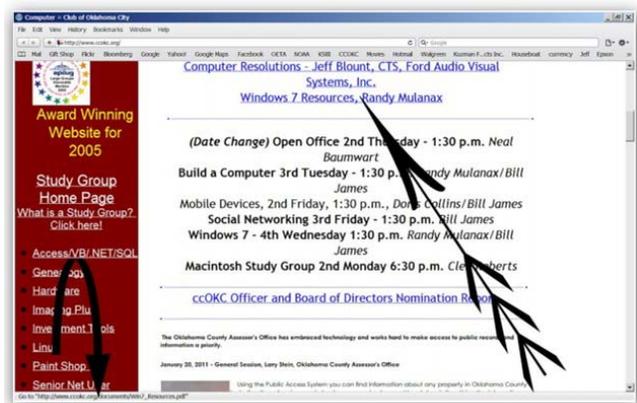
My personal accessories included, in addition to the still cameras, a newly purchased FLIP video camera. It has limited memory, so each day I not only downloaded the videos but also erased them in the camera. This was a bit risky, and I am not too sure some videos were not lost. I don't remember taking any that I can't find, but it is possible. In my defense, most of my videos were not any good anyway. Word of advice: If you are going to travel with a new device, purchase it far enough in advance to learn how to use it. If I could do it over again, a small hand-held tripod would have been very useful for stabilizing the camera as well as keeping my clumsy fingers off of the very sensitive controls. Amazingly, the videos are of very high quality for such a small device, so even though mine are not particularly good, it should be possible to lift some still shots from them to use with the rest of the still pictures we took.

Upon returning home, I copied all of our pictures, even the bad ones, to flash drives and gave them to our son. Not only will that give us a backup if something happens to our computers, but he actually wants to look at them. That is the greatest compliment of all.

HOVER CRAFT

I recently received one of the slickest SPAM emails I have ever seen. The website was made to resemble a Microsoft offering, complete with pictures of products that looked like Microsoft Office programs. But when you hovered over the link, it did not go directly to Microsoft.

Hovering is NOT clicking. Remember this. When you hover the mouse pointer over the link, i.e. placing the mouse over the link on the screen but not pressing any buttons, it should produce the actual link at the bottom of the screen. Using our club webpage as an example, pretend the fancy arrow is your mouse pointer and that it is hovering over the option to view details for Randy's study group. (The real mouse arrow does not show in a "printscreen" image.) At the bottom of the page, under the curved arrow, is the actual web URL which will transfer you to the page containing the information for the group. It is in very small print and hard to read, but it is there. It says: "Go to http://www.ccokc.org/documents/Win7_Resources.pdf (<http://bit.ly/h2TmCh>)", and the quotes are included in the URL.



In the case of the suspicious website, the URL address contained some words after the initial part of the link, including "Microsoft," which would again lead you to believe it was a legitimate Microsoft offering. If this had been truly from MS, I think that company's web address would have been in the first part of the link, in other words "microsoft.com". Since the Golden Rule is to never click on links incorporated in unsolicited email, I decided the offering was SPAM and deleted the email from my web server, never to be seen again (hopefully). *

Troubleshooting PC System Slowdowns

By Vinny La Bash, Regular Contributing Columnist, Sarasota PCUG, Inc., FL, December 2010 issue, Sarasota PC Monitor, www.spcug.org, Vlabash@Comcast.net

Your PC used to be a rocket ship with turbo boost. Today, a glacier could whiz right by it. What happened? Listing all the possible causes could generate a useless lengthy list, so let's focus on some likely culprits and look at what can be done to either eliminate or tone down their effects on performance.

Windows 7 has been out for over a year now, and one of its virtues is that it requires far less system resources to operate than either XP or Vista. Nevertheless, initial lightning like response tends to fade over time, and system hang-ups become all too common. Before reformatting your hard drive let's examine some less drastic methods of getting your PC back to its initial unspoiled state.

The odds are good that you have enough physical RAM to run your most common applications without your machine having to swap data in and out of memory often enough to be a problem, but are your memory chips performing the way they should? Computers have become very powerful compared to machines in the past. Your digital watch probably has more computational power than some main frames built in the 70s.

Buying memory used to be a simple affair. You needed to know the maximum speed your motherboard would support and how much memory would fit into a slot, and that was it. Motherboards today will allow a mix of speeds without apparent trouble, but the system will default to the slowest memory speed to avoid conflicts.

Most memory chips are fine, but if you try to save money by buying cheap RAM you could be purchasing chips with minor flaws that don't show up until you stress your system with video editing, high end games or some other application with far-reaching RAM demands. A high quality motherboard will have built-in mechanisms to let your system keep working, but you may pay a steep performance price. To check out your memory (and other system components) download the free Belarc Advisor program to see what you have. It is an amazingly extensive analysis of your system. You can download the program at http://www.belarc.com/free_download.html.

Until recently, heat generated by memory chips was not an issue. That's changed with the newer type RAM chips and the only way you can know if your memory is overheating is to power down, open the case, and touch the chip. If you have to pull your hand back, your memory is probably running too hot. If you think your memory chips are overheating, check your motherboard manual to see if you can

install a RAM fan. Another alternative is to install a fan card in a PCI slot.

Multitasking and resource hungry applications need RAM and lots of it. If you are running on a manufacturer's minimum specifications you probably don't have enough physical memory to accommodate the more demanding tasks. Memory is cheap, and there is no good reason not to have the maximum amount of memory that your system can handle. The amount of RAM you can install is determined by the chip set on your motherboard. Consult your user manual. Windows 7 can handle up to 192 gigabytes. That's overkill, but there is no good reason to work with less than 4 gigabytes.

Background applications are like invisible gremlins throttling performance. Take a look in the notification area located at the bottom right section of your display. Every icon there represents a program. All of them are running. Most of them are performing their function in the background, but they all consume system resources.

Left click on the **Start** orb and type **System Configuration** in the search box. After launching the tool, click on the **Startup** tab and uncheck the boxes of any unneeded startup programs.

Manufacturers assemble their systems to work, not necessarily to work at optimum performance. Don't overlook the BIOS settings as a cause of system slowdown. Most people accept the default BIOS settings and never check them. It's always a good idea to get your motherboard's user manual and examine the BIOS settings that optimize performance. Sadly, there is no centralized database you can reference, but you can use Google or Bing search engines to find out. The odds are good that your default settings need to be changed.

Intel and AMD have gone to great lengths to design processor chips that are efficient and generate less heat. That hasn't eliminated the need for some kind of cooling mechanism which is most commonly a fan. Accumulation of dust can overwork a fan, and cause it to fail. Clean the dust out with a can of compressed air, and monitor the fan afterwards for signs of failure. Bearings can get loose and cause vibration. When you hear noise develop because a fan is failing, don't hesitate; replace the fan. Clean out the interior of your machine with compressed air while you're at it.

If quality control wasn't the best when your machine was built, the heat sink used to cool the processor may not be placed properly above the CPU; the thermal paste may be of inferior quality or have been improperly

applied. This condition appears mostly with home built systems, and sometimes even in commercially assembled units.

A poorly designed case can contribute to excess heat due to internal airflow restrictions. It's best to check this out before you buy, but if you didn't, installing extra fans is usually possible unless you have a laptop.

Overclocking can generate enough excess heat from the CPU to cause failure. If you are experienced enough to handle overclocking, consider a water cooled system.

It can be expensive and it's certainly more complex, but that's the price you pay for extra performance.

Keep the ambient temperature comfortable. If you feel too warm it's probably too high for your system. You needn't keep your computer in a refrigerator, but adequate ventilation and room temperatures below 80° are simply common sense procedures.

Whenever you notice degrading system performance, always look for potential hardware problems first. Software can be at fault, but it's far less likely to be the root of your problems. *

Your Computer's Health, Part 1

By Art Gresham, Editor, UCHUG (Under the Computer Hood User Group), CA, January 2001
issue, UCHUG Drive Light, www.uchug.org, leditor101@uchug.org

At the start of this new year the UCHUG Drive Light is going to present a series of articles on the general topic of Your Computer's Health.

You say you are doing most of those things recommended to keep your body healthy: annual physical, dental checkups, good diet, bathe regularly, stay physically active. And you do what you must do to keep your auto healthy like oil changes, tune ups, check the tire inflation and tread depth, wash it occasionally, and use good quality gasoline. Even in your home you take out the trash, wash the dishes, vacuum the carpet, change the heater air filter, flush the toilet.

But are you as regular about the same kinds of things with your computer? Like other areas your life, your computer has several facets that you should care for with some regularity, from weekly, or monthly. Some areas are software, or data based, to help keep the computer running at full speed. Others like simply opening the case and removing the dust accumulated on the cooling fins and fans that will help it stay cool and functional for more years.

Maybe you already have a plan, and actually do make data backups (we all do have Acronis don't we?) but what are you doing to be sure your computer stays alive so that you never have to actually use one of those backups? Have you actually complained recently about how much slower your computer seems to run than it used to do?

We want to present some ideas to help you form a plan, or get started. We each have a wide variety of things that we do, some are very common and widely known. Others may be very unique, much deeper, or something you simply never thought of doing. What you choose to do will, of course, depend on how you use your computer. But the important thing is that you know that your computer's health is your responsibility and if you "take out the trash" occasionally then something is likely to become, well trashed!

Let's start with the basics. Here in Part 1 we want to look at basic hard drive-OS-data cleaning. For this article

I am using XP, so your newer Vista/Win7 will have some slight differences. Windows includes a number of good basic tools that you can, and should be aware of and using. For starters, how full is your hard drive (or hard drives) and how much space can you free up so you can download more of the great utilities (more ideas about those soon) and photos from all the holiday parties and family gatherings. I always like to start by noting the free space, and after all finished I can see a measurable improvement there. Other areas will be a lot harder to note accurately (did the system start/shut down faster this time? Did that program seem to load faster?). So to start Open My Computer, Right Click your hard drive (usually labeled "Local Disk (C:)"), and click Properties. Note how much space is used and free, then close the dialogue box. Repeat for each hard drive. Note that you can probably run the Defragmentation program from the Tool tab on this dialog window, but resist the urge for now, we have miles to drive before we are ready to do that step.

Before defragmenting you should delete as much of the unneeded, unwanted, unused files and programs as you are comfortable removing. While I am primarily thinking of temporary internet files, useless log files, and other truly worthless stuff, you may also have duplicate copies of data (photos, important files) that have been leftover from other activities. While there are a number of tools for finding and deleting those 'clones' we will leave that to a much later discussion. But you say your drive is so large you don't even know where to begin?

Well, start with the 'biggies' first. Why waste 20 minutes hunting and deleting 50 tiny files that save you two megabytes of disk space when there may be two or three directories you can delete in 30 seconds and save 5 gigabytes of space. But how do you find them? Use a tool!!

My first tool choice is OverDisk (Freeware) <http://users.forthnet.gr/pat/efotinis/programs/overdisk.html> which was featured in

Your Computer Health, Part 1 cont. on page 16

the January 2007 Drive Light. Open a disk letter and see the folders and files as a series of concentric rings, as if you were looking down onto the disk itself and seeing the files laid out below. The neat thing is that the biggest folders and files are graphically displayed and you can quickly zero in on the folders that are the biggest. It may be your email folders that have grown out of control and need to be archived. Perhaps you will see a folder for a program you have long since forgotten about and no longer use. By starting here you will have an idea where the big fish are hiding. Check each drive letter or partition and see what sticks out.

Now that you know a little more, generally, about what and how much is on your drive let's get down to getting rid of those pesky junk, temp, trash and other files. The problem is that they are tucked away in folders nested 6 levels deep, or under names that appear self-important, or downright mysterious. Don't be tempted to just dive in with Explorer and manually delete them helter-skelter. Use a Tool!! Actually for this I use several different tools because each seems to catch a few files that the others miss. You may want to try these and then just use the one that gives you the best results. I recommend, and use these the end of every month (usually after I finish the Drive Light as that is one of my major monthly milestones - sorta like smoke detector batteries and DST!

First, and one of the fastest is CCleaner (Freeware) from <http://www.piriform.com/> which was

mentioned in the August 2009 Drive Light. In addition to quickly finding all those useless files, it contains a very good registry cleaner.

My next tool is very similar, called CM Disk Cleaner. Although it does not appear to be being updated it is available on several download sites including http://www.scanwith.com/download/CM_DiskCleaner.htm

Next is the very advanced Advanced System Care (Freeware) from IObit. This is probably one of the most complete, and easy-to-use tools. A very good review and download is available from download.cnet.com

Now that you have a nearly automated way to find all those files, deleted many, cleaned up the registry, and feel you have made some good progress, go back and look at those drive properties and see if you have saved any space. You probably have, especially on your C: drive and perhaps your primary data drive. NOW is when you can run your defragger. Either use the one supplied with Windows, or use a free tool also from IOBIT called Smart Defrag. But you say defragmenting takes so long and your time is so valuable.

Well, I have mine setup to automatically begin defragging each time my computer is inactive for five minutes, and Deep Optimize every weekday at 7PM (which is when I am usually eating supper, or watching TV). Now I can relax knowing I have cleaned up and defragged with very little effort. *

Your Computer's Health – The “Oh Oh” Moment, Part 2

By Art Gresham, Editor, Under the Computer Hood User Group, CA, February 2011 issue, UCHUG Drive Light, www.uchug.org, leditor101@uchug.org

Oops. Darn, What The....? You know the feeling. Yesterday everything was fine. Today you are wondering what happened overnight. What can you do if your computer seems to have suddenly gotten sick? Perhaps it was caused by that neat new application, or game, you installed yesterday, or maybe something got installed when you visited that website that promised to speed your computer's internet access, but when you the page opened it ran a moment and then seemed to hang up with no sense that it really did what was expected. Maybe you should not have installed that app/game/utility because it was some kind of rogue or worthless program, or worse, and you are now stuck with a sick system.

Don't you wish you could go back in time to last weekend when everything seemed to be running fine? Well, you can. Probably.

If you are running a Microsoft Windows ME, XP, Vista or 7 then the System Restore is available to offer

you protection for many of these kinds of illness, and might be worth checking to see if you can regain your computer's health.

System Restore allows you to roll back most system files, registry keys, and installed programs, the DLL Cache folder, local user profiles, and more. When installed, and not disabled (more about that later) you may manually create a restore point, or use one of the automatically created points. And it does this without affecting your personal files, or data such as e-mail, documents, or photos. We will discuss full backups that include your data in a future article.

Also note that in Vista and later versions it has been improved and now uses “Shadow Copy” Technology with even more backup capabilities.

So where do you look to see if you have any restore points? You should do this today to be sure it is not disabled. Open System Restore by clicking the Start button, clicking

All Programs, clicking Accessories, clicking System Tools, and then clicking System Restore. Be sure to select "Restore my computer to an earlier time," then click Next.

You will see a calendar of the current month, and several of the dates should be marked in Bold. These dates have restore points available, and some may have more than one as shown below. You may have multiple restore points for several reasons.

Wikipedia lists the Restore points that are created:

- When software is installed using the Windows Installer, Package Installer or other installers which are aware of System Restore.[note]
- When Windows Update installs new updates to Windows.
- When the user installs a driver that is not digitally signed by Windows Hardware Quality Labs.
- Every 24 hours of computer use (10 hours in Windows Me), or every 24 hours of calendar time, whichever happens first. This setting is configurable through the registry or using the deployment tools. Such a restore point is known as a system checkpoint. System Restore requires Task Scheduler to create system checkpoints. Moreover, system checkpoints are only created if the system is idle for a certain amount of time.

- When the operating system starts after being off for more than 24 hours.
- When the user requests it. On Windows Vista, shadow copies created during File Backup and Complete PC Backup can also be used as restore points.

Older restore points are deleted as per the configured space constraint on a First In, First Out basis. [Wikipedia] To begin a restore simply click on the date you want, and then click Next a couple times. Your system will restart and hopefully you have healed the patient.

If you do not see any restore points, you might want to check that the process is not disabled. To do this in XP you can right click My Computer, open the Properties, and click on the System Restore Tab. There you will see a checkbox where you can "Turn of System Restore on all drives. Be sure that is un-checked. For Win 7 see the FAQ How do I turn System Restore on or off? *

References:

- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/System_Restore
- <http://windows.microsoft.com/en-US/windows-vista/What-is-System-Restore>
- <http://windows.microsoft.com/en-US/windows-vista/What-types-of-files-does-System-Restore-change>

Your Computer's Health –

What Junk Files? - Part 3

By Bob Woods, Webmaster, UCHUG (Under the Computer Hood User Group), CA, March 2011 issue, UCHUG Drive Light, www.uchug.org, webmasters@uchug.org

The UCHUG Drive Light is presenting a series of articles on the general topic of Your Computer's Health. I have a Compaq laptop that is around 7 months old that I use for reading e-mail, surfing the web, publishing the changes to the UCHUG web site and occasionally playing games. Since I have any important files backed up on external devices I have not been too concerned with making a full backup image of the hard drive on this PC. I also have not run any cleanup utilities. After all, if it ain't broke, why fix it? But, after having the PC for 7 months I thought it might be time to take on these tasks. In the January 2011 edition of Drive Light, Art Gresham started a series of articles on PC maintenance. Part 1 of the series was tips for basic hard drive and OS data cleaning. I figured that there is no better time to do a cleanup than before imaging the hard drive.

Following Art's advice I first loaded CCleaner. I am a volunteer in the IT department at the USS Midway Museum; we use CCleaner to start data cleanup on the

computers in use by the staff so I am familiar with its use. When run, CCleaner gives you a nice interface with a number of options for cleaning temporary files left behind by Internet browsers (IE, Firefox, etc.), Windows Explorer, Windows itself and other applications that use temp files. To check on what it finds you can click on "Analyze" vice "Run Cleaner." That way you have a chance to determine what the application will be doing. I expected it to list a number of IE and Firefox temp files, but was surprised at how many system and application temp files it found. In all over 350 MB would be cleaned off the drive. After running the cleaning function I clicked to scan the registry for problems. During this scan CCleaner looks for unused items, missing shared DLL's and application paths, obsolete software references, leftover installation references, fragments and a few other items. CCleaner lists all that it finds for you to review.

Your Computer's Health – Part 3 cont. on page 18

Your Computer's Health – Part 3 cont. from page 17

Again, given that the PC was only 7 months old I was surprised by the number of leftovers from updates and software removals. Cleaning these items will result in a cleaner registry which will speed bootup and shutdown times and increase system stability. When you click to “Fix selected issues.” you will be given the option to save the registry prior to the cleanup or cancel the operation. It took about 10 minutes to do the all of the cleanup.

The next application to install and run is Advanced System Care. This application will allow you to further clean up the registry, remove Spyware, clean up more junk files and past browser history. You may ask why do this as CCleaner did some of the same functions? Each of the applications will take a slightly different approach to scanning your system and find different items the other did not find. Sure enough, there were a few more registry issues and temp files missed by CCleaner. Advanced System Care also has a system diagnosis section not in CCleaner that will analyze and fix system performance, system configuration and security problems. Another few issues were cleaned up. Advanced System Care also took about 10 minutes for the cleanup. I could have also used it

for disk defragment, but wanted to use a separate defrag program so loaded IOBit Smart Defrag.

Smart Defrag is another application that has a nice clean interface that is easy to use and understand. When ran it I found fragmentation after 7 months was less than 1 % (only .71%). Back in the earlier versions of Windows I would have expected at least 10-15% fragmentation. It seems that the OS may be getting better at not fragmenting files. Still, any fragmentation will use extra space and take extra time for the hard drive heads to move to pick up bits and pieces. So even at less than 1% fragmentation I was willing to take the time to perform the defragmentation. Total time was about 15 minutes to defrag the 50 GB of data stored on a 220 GB drive.

At the end of the whole process I saved hard drive space, cleaned up the registry, and eased the burden on the hard drive. So, did I see a performance improvement? Without running a benchmark it would be hard to tell, but the system does seem a bit quicker. But the overall benefits to the health of the system should result in better performance and longer hard drive life. As for the backup, it went smoothly and is much cleaner as I did not back up un-necessary temp files and junk in the registry. *

Online Marketing Inside Out

Review: by Gregory West, Member of Sarnia Computer Users' Group (scug.ca) and Port Huron, MI Computer Group (bwcomp.org), prospector16@gmail.com, Blog: gregorywest.wordpress.com

by Brandon Eley & Shayne Tilley

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<http://oreilly.com/catalog/9780980576825>



in easy to understand terms in this chapter. This is followed in sequence with Chapter eight wherein you learn about the world of “online advertising” as you will be able to “plan, implement, test, and optimize” what you setup with your online advertising.

I really like the way this book is set out. The Table of Contents leaves nothing to imagination. The Preface and Chapters have extensive headings that guide you through the various topics so that you can easily look something up and jump right in on that subject. For example, in Chapter two's listing you will find headings such as: Press Releases. Then followed with sub-headings: Press Releases in the 21st Century, When to Write a Press Release, Stand Out From the Crowd and so on.

Every chapter tags your interest and keeps you coming back as a reference point for helping you develop your own online marketing campaign. This book is for those who “have a web site and...want to promote it”, or anyone else who wants and/ or needs to learn this amazing subject of online marketing.

Even if you are already doing online marketing and feel fairly successful, this book will take you to the next level of expertise and guide you in directions you may have possibly passed by.

Take a look at this video ... <http://gregorywest.wordpress.com/2011/03/>

[29/982/](http://gregorywest.wordpress.com/2011/03/29/982/)

*

Online Marketing Inside Out has nine dynamic chapters that guide you through your next “modern marketing campaign”. Chapter one explains how marketing is changing pointing out things you need to know before you begin planning your next promotion or campaign. You will learn how to make money from a website by page views, optimize the values within search engines (SEO) and how the main players in social media can help you go deeper inside the communities spreading the word of your company or product.

Even though email marketing has been around forever, it seems, this book sparks a new interest showing “many advantages” and the authors “walk you through every step towards a successful email marketing strategy”.

Having your own sales people working for you online is easy when you create an “affiliate marketing program” that is covered in Chapter seven. The advantages of having an “army of salesmen all over the world” promoting for you is explained

Windows Lab

Use Windows 7 Backup?

By Barney Babin, Cajun Clickers Computer Club (LA) member and instructor for XP, Vista Workshop and Windows 7, April 2010 issue, Cajun Clickers Computer News, www.clickers.org, ccnewsletter@cox.net



As those of you that have taken my classes know, I am paranoid when it comes to the subject of backup. Windows 7 includes a good backup program that can either take an image of your hard drive or backup selections made by you. I'm assuming here that you understand that you NEVER backup either your image or your individual files and folders to the same hard drive that your Windows operating system is installed upon, which is normally drive of concern during backup. I'm also assuming that all of your programs and data reside in the same partition, normally C Drive.

So, what is an image? An image is an exact copy, think of it as a camera snapshot, of the hard drive, which includes all the programs, the operating system and all your data that you have generated and saved on your hard drive. If your computer ever stops working you can use this system image, which does not allow you to select individual items, to completely restore your system to the state it was in when the image was made, including your programs, operating system, and your created data.

If you're into video tutorials go to the below URLs to view a tutorial on how to create a system image or to view a tutorial on how to backup files and folders of your choice.

<http://tinyurl.com/4w94999>

<http://tinyurl.com/4gjlouq>

If you want a step-by-step procedure for a system image, go to the below URLs for the files step-by-step procedure.

<http://tinyurl.com/ybfgx7o>

<http://tinyurl.com/yg46n9u>

I strongly recommend, that no matter which procedure you choose, try to save more than one backup. This procedure is normally called generational backups. What this means is that you always have the option of retrieving information from more than one backup. There are times that you do not recognize that your "masterpiece" item, be it document, image, graphic, etc., was modified incorrectly and you do not have the original item saved on your hard drive, only the modified version. That is when a generational backup becomes just as precious as gold. You can browse the backup in the backup and restore window to navigate to the item in question, and retrieve it in its original state, provided that you have retained enough generational backups to be able to do so.

By now you should be asking the question, how often and where? The "how often" depends totally upon your usage patterns, the importance of your documents, such as sentimental value, business associated irreplaceable, etc. which may be daily, biweekly, weekly, etc., but don't extend the time too long because if your system "dies" you only have data from your last backup period and anything from that date to the present instant will be lost, thus frequency of backups can become extremely important.

In my case I backup files and folders as they're created, via a mirroring program, to other hard drives at my house and offsite on the web. I also just copy and paste some items onto flash drives for convenience, fast simple transport, etc. I perform a full image of my drive at least once a day, but remember, I do more things on a computer than you do in my volunteer positions, so your pattern will be totally different than mine.

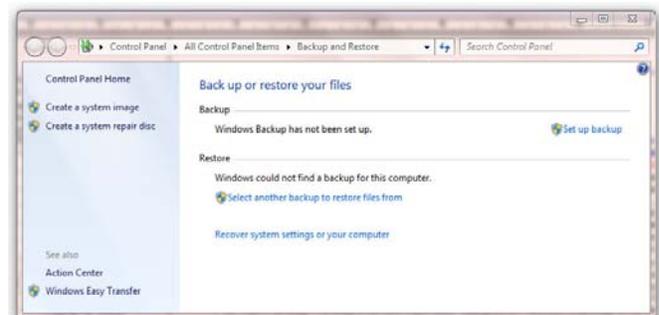
If you're performing full images, I recommend using external drives, additional internal hard drives, network drives, etc. that will have ample room for multiple backups. If you are backing up certain items only, the Documents folder is usually where everything is saved and will normally be able to be conveniently saved to flash drives, DVD, offsite on the web, or if your total backup size is small a CD.

Never keep these backup devices in close proximity to your computer that generated the backup. Remove them from your house, if possible, store them in a bank vault, store them at work, or store them offsite on the web.

If you are going to use one of the procedures described above, I also recommend that you create a system repair disk, as described at <http://tinyurl.com/2c4o4qo>.

As part of the repair procedure your backups will be recognized on external drives, other hard drives in your computer etc., and will illicit questions on whether you want to restore from these items or not.

Want to know more? Do a Google search on Windows 7 backup tutorials or attend any of my classes where I address the subject of backup in week four of my sessions. *



Legacy Family Tree Basics, Part 1

By Bill Ellis, Regular Newsletter Contributor, Computer Users of Erie, PA, December 2010 issue, Horizons, The Official Journal of CUE, www.cuerie.com, cueriel@verizon.net

Legacy Family Tree Genealogy software

<http://www.legacyfamilytree.com/>

Stop, look and learn. Our hectic life has programmed us to get things done quickly. After all, there's so much to do and so little time. As an example, I work on my family history almost every day. If I'm not researching my family tree, then I'm entering newly found information into my genealogy program. I'm doing this all the while I'm trying to maintain a home and family, which I'm sure you know consumes a lot of our time. With all these demands, we tend to hasten through most of our least important tasks so we can give more time to the important stuff. At the end of the day, we also would like a little time to relax and unwind.

Even though we enjoy on our computers, I think our computer tasks fall into that least important task list. Hence, we get the computer tasks done quickly, always using the same methods and/or steps that we have always used, because it's quicker, and we're never really looking at how we could improve on doing these tasks.

We're going to look at some of the basics of the Legacy program that we use in our genealogy group. I'm sure that some of these items will help improve our computer and genealogical skills. I'll be starting at the opening screen, which we usually look at briefly, if at all, before we head to the guts of the Legacy program. This is where we cheat ourselves because we don't take the time to stop, look and learn.

The first thing I like to see, when starting Legacy, is the Legacy Home screen. This gets me into that Stop, Look and Learn frame of mind. If I started Legacy in any other screen, such as the Family View screen, I would simply start entering the family data that I had gathered. Beside the Legacy Home and Family screens, you can also start Legacy by opening the Pedigree, Descendant, Chronology, Index or Research screens. You can also decide to open Legacy by going to the last screen viewed when you closed the Legacy program the last time you used it. The Options menu, at the top of the window, is where you can make any one these choices. Click Options and then click on Customize and go to the General Tab. The Startup View panel in the General tabs section is where you make your selection as to which screen you would like Legacy to start up in.

In addition to starting up in the Legacy Home view, I also like to see the Tool Tips that Legacy has to offer and I start them at the same time. In order to see the Tool Tips, click on the View menu. Click on Tips Window at the very bottom of the pop up window. You can get to this Tips Window from almost anywhere in Legacy. If you want the Tips Window to show up every time you start the Legacy program, as I do, just select that option at the very bottom of the Tips Window screen.

Some of the stuff in this Tips Window is pretty straightforward. You'll look at some of these tips and say, "Gee Whiz" I know that, 'cause I'm already doing this. Believe me, they are not always that simple. So, don't dismiss the feature. Some tips are quite thought provoking. So much so, that you will have to use the Show Me button for an explanation. The Show Me button will guide through whatever steps are needed to complete the task of that particular tip window.

Another great item in the Tips Window is the What's New button. Every time you update Legacy the information under this button will change. There's a lot of new stuff under this button, so take a few minutes to look through "What's New". For example, in the latest version, Legacy has added a Best Fit button for the children's column. We used to select one, two or three columns to list the kids. In days of yore, large families were the norm. With three columns and five kid's spaces in each column we recorded up to fifteen kids for a family and we could see all their names. However, in later years, when we became more aware of the cost of raising a family, the off springs became fewer and fewer. However, if you selected to use fifteen spaces for kids, three columns with five spaces each, every family got fifteen spaces even if they only had one, two or three kids. The best fit button for children will adjust the columns for each family, depending how hefty their herd of children is or isn't. This gives your family view screen a better look.

Another new feature is a beefier search engine. You can search an entire file for missing information, such as given names, marriage dates, death dates, etc. You can also search for missing sources for facts or events. I know I'm guilty of not entering complete information or sources, mostly because I don't have them at the time of entry. I should have, however, immediately made a To Do list for the item that still needs my attention, so I don't forget it. Alas, I'm not really swift doing that either and the item is soon forgotten. This is just what we've been talking about. Too much to do and not enough time to do it right. This heftier search options has been a blessing to me, because it helps me correct my ineptness.

Now, I can search for the items I didn't have time to do the first time around and either fill in the missing information or make a proper TO DO list so I handle them at a later date.

The Legacy program can help us work quicker and better if we just take a moment to Stop, Look and Learn. *

System Requirements:

Windows 7, Windows Vista, Windows XP, Windows ME*, Windows 98*, Windows NT, Windows 2000 (Legacy runs on newer Macs with Windows installed under Bootcamp, Parallel or Fusion. Legacy runs on Linux machines with a

Windows emulator like VMWare or Sun's Virtual Box)

Note: *Runs on both 32bit and 64bit Windows platforms.*



Legacy Family Tree Basics,

Part 2

By Bill Ellis, Regular Newsletter Contributor, Computer Users of Erie, PA, December 2010 issue, Horizons, The Official Journal of CUE, www.cuerie.com, cueriel@verizon.net

Legacy Family Tree Genealogy software

<http://www.legacyfamilytree.com/>

This is a continuing article about the Legacy program's Home Page. I mentioned in the previous article, which was published in the December 2010 issue of Horizons, that our hectic lifestyle keeps us from investigating all the amazing features that are included in the software programs that we use every day. We stick to the same old tried and true procedures, because it's quick, it's easy and it gets the job done. I hope this article will encourage you to take a little time to look further and see what your software program(s) have to offer.

As mentioned in the previous article, to startup in the Home page window you need to click on the Options menu item at the top of the screen. In the drop down menu, click on Customize. In the customize window are several tabs. You should be at the General tab view. If not, click on the General tab to bring that view forward. The very first item, on the left, is called Startup View. In this section, you can select one of several views that will tell Legacy which view you would like to have Legacy start up in. The first view item is called Legacy Home. This is the one that I would like you to select if it hasn't been already selected. Now go to the bottom of the screen and select save. From now on, whenever you start the Legacy program, you will see the Home view screen with several panels. These panels are as follows, Legacy News, To-Do items, Birthdays, Death Dates and Anniversaries, Statistics, Updates and Support. You will also notice a long white bar across the top of these panels with the word Address in front of it. This is the same address bar that is in your browser when you're surfing the Internet and is used in the same way. We'll talk about that address bar a little bit later.

When you open Legacy in this Home view screen you can connect to the Internet via cable, DSL or dial up. You will have to tell Legacy how it needs to get connected. To do that, click on the Options button near the upper right of the screen. In the drop down menu, click on Options. In this window are two tabs. One is called Internet Options and the other is called Reminder Options. Click on the Internet Options tab to bring it forward if it isn't already

forward. The Internet Options tab gives you two selections to choose from. Choose the one that is right for your type of Internet connection and click on save.

Now that you are connected to the Internet and you have started Legacy in the Home View screen you can use the Legacy News panel. This panel lets you read some of the latest news from Millennia. The articles in the panel are short excerpts of the full story. If you would like to read the full story, just click on the highlighted/underlined text and you will be transported to the Millennia web site. At the Millennia site you can read all or some of the articles and even add your comments at the end of each article. You are also given the choice to submit your own article(s). When you have finished with the Millennia site, simply click on the little house icon that is just above the address line and to the left. There is also a little house icon at the very top of the page. DO NOT click on that one. When you click on the little house icon you will be transported back to the Legacy home view from whence you came.

Below the Legacy News panel are two very interesting panels. One is the To-Do items panel and the other is the Birthdays, Death Dates and Anniversaries panel. Both of these are reminder panels. They remind you of items that need your attention. For example, when you create a To-Do item for an individual or an event you can fill in a reminder date of your choosing. As that date approaches, the To-Do item will be posted in the To-Do panel as a reminder. You can also create a reminder for birthdays, anniversaries and dates of death. In order to create this type of reminder, go to each person's information screen, where births, deaths, occupation, etc., are stored. In the lower right side of the window are two selections. They are birthday reminder and death date reminder. If you check one or both of these options, the dates of the checked events will be posted in the corresponding reminder panel. The same holds true for anniversaries. Click on the couple's marriage date to bring up their wedding information. At the very bottom of that window you need to put a check mark in the Anniversary reminder. Now that you have the reminders ready to go, you need to do one more thing. Go

Legacy Family Tree , Part 2 cont. on page 22

Legacy Family Tree , Part 2 cont. from page 212

back to the Legacy Home view screen and click on the Option button in the upper right of the window as you did before. Click on Options in the drop down menu. This time click on the Reminder Options tab to bring that window forward if it isn't already forward. There are three reminders listed. Put a check mark in the ones you will be using. Just above these three reminders you will need to tell Legacy how many days in advance you would like to be reminded of these events. Once you've done that, click save and you're all set.

The remaining three panels on the right, Statistics, Updates and Support are pretty self-explanatory. The statistics tells you the number of individuals, families and sources in the family file that you are working with. The update panel tells you if you are up to date with the latest version of Legacy. If this panel tells you that you need to install the latest update, you can click on that panel to download and update the Legacy program. Whether you update your Legacy program, or not, is your choice. I like to wait at least a week after an update is out before I install it. This gives the programmers a little more time to get some of the bugs ironed out, if there are any. The support panel has several items in its list. There are two items here that I feel are of great importance. They are watch training videos and tips from the experts. When you choose watch

training videos you will be able to view a video of the basics of legacy for free. This is a really good training video for all levels of genealogists. You can also preview all the other videos to see if they meet your needs. Some you can view for free, while others you can preview before you decide whether or not to buy it. Clicking on the Tips from the experts will take you to a very long list of "How To" instructions. Here is where you can get tips on a ton of Legacy's functions such merging, split screen view, importing and exporting and so on. The Tips from the experts go hand in hand with the help screen that is within the Legacy program and in most cases will also give you step-by-step instructions.

So, my friends. Don't be shy. Dig into what software you've been using all this time and see what it has to offer. To my genealogist friends, I wish you happy hunting. *

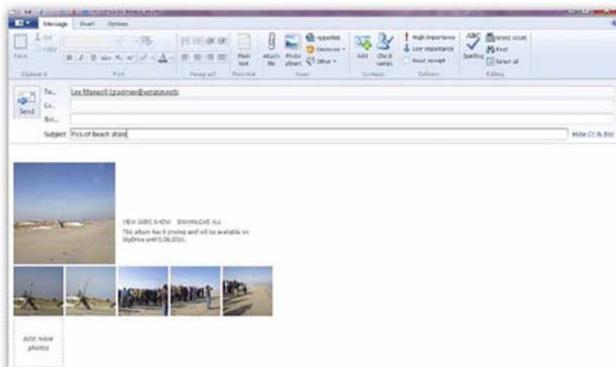
System Requirements:

Windows 7, Windows Vista, Windows XP, Windows ME*, Windows 98*, Windows NT, Windows 2000 (Legacy runs on newer Macs with Windows installed under Bootcamp, Parallel or Fusion. Legacy runs on Linux machines with a Windows emulator like VMWare or Sun's Virtual Box)

Note: *Runs on both 32bit and 64bit Windows platforms.*

When Outlook dies, Windows Live Mail lives

By Jo Graziade, Leader, Word Processing Workshop, Brookdale Computer Users Group, New Jersey, March 2011 Issue, Bug Bytes, <http://bcug.com>, gjo520@gmail.com



Screenshot of Windows Live Mail showing message window with attached photo images.

I had been using and enjoying the features of Microsoft Outlook 2007 since 2007, never imagining that one fine day I would log in only to see a message saying something to the effect that Outlook was in use and that I had to close a "pst" file, or face the consequences. In fact, MS Outlook simply stopped. I was unable to move appointments, open an email, or do anything that I was accustomed to in order to make my activities on the computer enjoyable and efficient.

For lack of a better option, I decided to turn to Windows Live Mail (WLM), a part of the Windows Live Essentials

suite that was already installed on my system along with my favorite photo management program and even my antivirus app.

Since this was already present, I didn't have to do much, except launch it. It happily grabbed my mail downloads from Gmail and politely asked me if I wanted it to be the default email program. I said "Yes!"

I was pleasantly surprised. I use Gmail but I was pleasantly surprised. I use Gmail but only for the convenience of having an online calendar and email program that I could access from any computer. As far as WLM, I would say the only real inconvenience is the loss of my Outlook calendar, but I can manage using the online Google calendar whenever I'm on my desktop.

First Impressions

When you first use WLM, you are obligated to establish a connection with your ISP (Internet Service Provider). Since I use Gmail/Verizon/Hotmail/Yahoo, I can add these by going to the accounts Tab, clicking on the Email icon and adding an account. Since I sync everything on Gmail's server, there is no need to do this. In fact, it gets kind of confusing when lots of email accounts are listed, at least for me. So I stick to my Gmail account and things have been going smoothly.

New handheld computer that also phones (SmartPhone)

(Verizon Motorola Droid X – Android OS 2.2 Froyo)

By Merle Nicholson, Secretary, Tampa PCUG, Florida, January 2011 issue, Bits of Blue, www.tpcug.org, Merle@merlenicholson.com

OK – this is an article about an Android phone by a guy who is three times older than the demographic that normally buys these things.

So I'm going to say "Facebook" here and now, the first and last time because I'd don't have a Facebook account; I haven't "friended" anyone, so I certainly don't care where they are. And I haven't gone hunting for dates for 47 years. Just so you know who I am.

I've replaced two pocket devices with one Android SmartPhone two weeks ago. I had a tiny wireless telephone that I used for, well, telephoning, and a five year old PDA – a Dell Axim x50v.

The old Dell is still functioning almost as well as it did when it was new. Its connectivity options are limited to wireless/b and Bluetooth. I used it mostly to sync with my Outlook calendar and contacts and keep family pictures to bore people with. The charging/sync connector is getting flaky, and I bought a new part to replace it, but the tiny soldering required put me off some and also prompted me to look elsewhere. Don't get me wrong, I can solder. NASA taught me how a lifetime ago. But this is tiny, close together and there are about twenty things to be soldered.

The phone I've had for two years has been just a telephone to me; it connects to a hands-free device I bought for the car, but it will also take pictures and do messaging, in which I had no interest. I discovered that the process to keep the camera from taking pictures of the inside of my pocket made it hard to take any kind of pictures at all and that Verizon was going to charge me to get them off my phone after I did take some. I have a good camera anyway.

Verizon is making it pretty easy to get a new phone and a data/mail plan to go along with it. But Amazon is doing it better by reducing the price of this model (Droid X) down to \$120, \$50 cheaper than buying direct from Verizon. That's after a \$30 credit accumulated at Verizon for having fulfilled my last 2-year contract. That's \$120, no tax, no shipping, no activation fee, plus, I later discovered that, because I went to Amazon through the TPCUG link, \$65 was credited to the TPCUG. I activated the phone with Verizon within a few minutes of delivery to my house but after the on-line activation failed. Apparently Amazon and Verizon work it all out because the Amazon price is reduced by Verizon's \$30, and Amazon checks while you wait online to verify the Verizon eligibility if you've told Amazon that you're an existing Verizon customer and have

given the phone number you want to use.

OK, now about Android phones – or rather what I've learned so far. There seems to be a consensus that the latest version of the OS, version 2.2, is the best so far, and 2.2 apparently has some much-needed new features. Being a Google product – you guessed it – it had a lot of features imbedded in it that depend on Google. I'm not especially fond of going to one source for everything, but Google has not eliminated all your choices, and, with time, now I'm completely comfortable with it.

Email would be a good example. I'm using my own email server account for email, not my Gmail account. My mail is still managed on my home PC because I run a business and my Outlook is essential. My Outlook 2010 isn't just an email/contact list/calendar; it truly categorizes and manages that searchable client data going back several years. So the phone brings in all my incoming mail from my private server, and I can send replies or initiate new mail through my server.

The web-based Gmail/Contacts manages your contact list on your Android phone pretty much seamlessly.

I export files (calendar by broad date range and contacts one at a time) from Outlook and then log into my Google email account and import each of those files.

I really don't know if the data is on the phone or in the "cloud," but I've decided I don't care. The contacts and calendar data appear in my phone not instantly but within maybe an hour; I'm not sure.

So far no one has discovered my Gmail account and that's just fine. On the phone, I pretty much just read any incoming email that I'm especially interested in, reply if required and then just erase all the phone's email. There are programs (purchased and free) that improve the Outlook to Android transfer process, but I haven't yet seen any need to fully automate the exchange.

Here's a list of most of the functions and programs I'm actively using. Most are free and already installed. A few were free from the Android Market, and just two were purchased.

- **Browser** – The Internet browser is surprisingly good considering the screen size. It responds to 2-finger zoom and pan rapidly, so, with a small amount of manipulation, you can see any part of even a large page in all detail. A very large number of websites have pages optimized for mobiles. Wikipedia is one excellent example.

- **Navigation**—Google navigation is just amazing, and it's free, unlike the optional VZNavigator, which has a \$10 monthly fee from Verizon. Type in or speak a destination, and Google looks up and presents all the possibilities; select the one you want and the route is presented with voice directions as you drive. When you reach the destination, it presents a Google Street view. This really surprised me when I stopped and it showed a photo of the front of my house.
- **Maps**—Google maps, satellite view and Street View, just like on the PC. Nothing seems to be missing.
- **Car Locator**—This is a small GPS program that lets you quickly set the location of your car and then find it later using a directional arrow as you walk with the distance in feet or meters. \$3.
- **Kindle**—This is a Kindle book reader; there are versions available for many other devices including PC's. The library of digital books you own here are identical to your Kindle. If you stay connected on both, it tracks your last read page so you can switch devices and not lose your place. It's wonderfully readable. It's not a substitute for the Kindle if you own one, but it's handy, and if you happen to own a mobile phone, there's no real need to buy a Kindle if you don't want to.
- **Email**—Well, it's email. It's the mail that I get from my mail server. I do reply to email from the phone when I feel I have to, and, since the voice-to-text feature works here as well, it's pretty easy.
- **Calendar**—It's pretty good, completely integrated with Google Calendar.
- **Voicemail**—Google voicemail takes your voicemail messages, translates them to text and places a message on your phone to read or play—your option.
- **Music player**—There's a sync app that detects when you're plugged into a PC and syncs your PC music to the device. There's also a DLNA app that plays media from a network with a media server. Otherwise it's a decent MP3/WMA player that also does videos.
- **Camera**—An 8 Megapixel camera with face detection and panorama stitching. It has two fairly bright LEDs for flash and plenty of manual settings. Very good zooming, as you'd expect with 8MPixels to work with.
- **Camcorder**—The camera also functions as a 720p HD video recorder. The device also has a mini HDMI port for playing to an external device such as a wide screen TV. It comes with a 16GB SDHC card.
- **Slideshow and picture management**—naturally.
- **Password management** I use the PC version of KeePassX, and I was delighted to find they make an Android version. Free.
- **Swype** - I saved this for last. It's an alternative screen keyboard that allows you to enter a word by sliding a finger from letter to letter. It uses error-correcting algorithms to guess the word and presents alternatives. A world record was set on a touchscreen and Swype using a Samsung Galaxy S. The world record text message consists of 26 words and was typed in 25.94 seconds, which corresponds to a speed of 60 words per minute.
- **The few things I don't like** It's a mystery to me that Android applications don't have an exit or close. Instead, they stay running until you either shut down each service manually or turn off the phone. I'd guess the up side to this is that everything launches very quickly. It's so fast in fact that you take it all for granted. I haven't found a disadvantage to this, although I've read complaints that it must be taking up cpu cycles and therefore must be draining the battery and contributing heat to global warming. I guess I doubt all that, but what I really don't understand is why I find apps such as Skype running when I've never used them. There are programs you can purchase to you manage these, but it's also widely held that you'd live a calmer life if you just ignored it all. Finally I did read a built-in tutorial recommending that you turn the phone off once a day to clear out unused programs in memory.

Second, in spite of the claim of 220 hours of standby and 480 minutes of talk time, this thing eats battery. I'll admit I pretty much actively used it all one day for 10 hours and ran the battery down. I used it for phone calls very little. The display, when on, eats most of the battery, so a continuous charge is necessary if you're going to use it for navigation. There's an extended battery for \$50, which is way too much. *

Media Card

When shopping for a digital camera, consider what type of memory card the camera uses. Most digital cameras—including sub-\$1,000 digital SLRs (digital single-lens reflex)—use SD (Secure Digital) cards, which come in different capacities and speeds. The number of images you can fit on a card depends on the camera's megapixel count and the resolution or quality level you select when shooting. Determine the maximum number of images you want to put on the card; that will help decide what capacity card you need. Also, find out if the camera is SDHC (Secure Digital High Capacity)-compatible and will work with high-capacity (4GB) SD cards. Only cameras with an SDHC designation (specs are available on most manufacturers' Web sites) are capable of using a card with more than a 2GB capacity.

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A Free Apple a Day Keeps the Doctor Away

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I had been highly opposed to Apple products for years because of what I feel to be the small-mindedness of Steve Jobs and the Apple management by not making their code available to developers, which would allow software to be developed so there would be more choice at reasonable prices. If so, I'm sure there would be a Mac in my house instead of just seven PCs running various Windows operating systems.

Above, you'll notice I said "had" been. Then I purchased my first iPod, and I was hooked! I did not get the first version iPhone, but I have had the 3GS now for almost two years. It is about the 10th cell phone I've owned and by far the very best. I have been tempted to try an Android phone but so far have had no reason to give up the iPhone. The Apps for the iPhone make it an everyday challenge to find something useful, and typically for free. Why Mr. Jobs can't see that allowing all these people to develop software for the iPod/iPhone/iPad has made his products extremely successful is beyond my understanding. He has still kept control by not allowing anything to be installed except through the iTunes App Store. Even the free Apps. If something similar was allowed for the Mac, I think he would see the popularity of the Mac increase also. I just can't validate paying twice the price for software just because it's a Mac. It's good, but not that good.

For Christmas I was given an iPad by my wife and kids. Now, you want to talk about what I think is the best invention of the 21st century. Since December, I use my PCs at least 50% less. My iPad sits next to me on the couch when it is not in my hand. Email, Messenger and text messaging is with me now wherever I am, between the iPad and iPhone. The two are very similar, but the 9" screen on the iPad is much easier to read and work with.

The iPad comes with several built-in Apps, such as Calendar (to track your appointments), Notes (to keep lists of things), Maps (complete Google maps), Videos (to watch your favorite videos), YouTube, iTunes, App Store and Games. They also include Safari (Apple's Internet browser), Email, Photos (access to your photos, graphics and screen captures), iPod (for music) and Contacts. That's plenty to keep you going until you learn how to start downloading some of the thousands of Apps available, with more coming every day. If you're into anything, there is probably an App for it. Also, there are free Internet music-streaming sites that will allow you to listen to any kind of music whenever you want, with no hiccups.

Apple has also released iBooks, which will probably be a permanent fixture in the next iOS upgrade. In my opinion, it's one of the better (free) eBooks reader programs.

If you're used to using Kindle, Google or any of the other readers, there is an App out there for that, too. I downloaded a free App the other day that makes 23,469 classic books available at your tap. And I did say free.

One App I especially like is the Dragon Speaking App, for both the iPhone and the iPad. There is no need to type. Just start the App, push Record and start talking. It recognizes when you stop, allows you to insert commas, periods and new paragraphs. When you're done with the dictation, tap Copy, then paste it wherever you want, or tap Email and it will send it directly into your email. Oh yeah, did I mention it was free?!

The iPad does not come with a text program, like the iPhone, but there are several free Apps that will take care of this problem. I use one that I am more than happy to pay for but see no reason to do so as the developers do not ask me to. There is a small nonintrusive ad area in the lower left corner and that's it. The same with Messenger.

I am currently using Dragon Speaking with a free App called Documents to create this article. Documents allows you to review and edit Word and Excel documents. I wouldn't expect to be able to work on some gigantic files. I expect a version of Word and Excel to be out soon, assuming Apple will allow a Microsoft App to infiltrate their domain.

Another thing I am really pleased with are Apps available for our younger computer users. My daughter and son-in-law both have iPads, so my 5-year-old granddaughter is well-versed on using the iPad. I typically get her to teach me some secret thing when she comes over on the weekends. I spent a lot of money for the overhead movie system in my Tahoe for her to be able to watch movies, etc., when we are in the car. Lately, though, she would rather have my iPad while we are driving around. There are some excellent educational Apps (free, of course) that help teach her to read, do math, draw and all sorts of other things.

In any case, as I have thanked Bill Gates and the team at Microsoft in the past for making computing enjoyable with Windows, I now need to thank Steve Jobs and the gang at Apple for heading in a new direction and once again making computing enjoyable. I can't wait for the 22nd century to get here!

Sent from Larry's iPad.

✱



Microsoft program stores all types of data

By John Weigle, Editor, Channel Islands PCUG, California, January 2011 issue, The Outer Edge, www.cipcug.org, jweigle@vcnet.com

Microsoft's OneNote was one of the subjects discussed by Toby Scott, Channel Islands PCUG Technical Advisor, at their December 2010 program in December.

OneNote has been compared to a three-ring binder as a place to store all types of information in a searchable form. But it's far more useful than just a binder full of paper, as Scott showed in the demonstration.

OneNote first appeared in the Microsoft Office suite in 2003, but not in all versions, he said. It was in most of the versions of Office 2007 and is in all of the 2010 versions, including Home and Student. It is also available as a stand-alone purchase for about \$75.

OneNote is the perfect place to store "a tremendous amount of random stuff" in notebooks that can all be examined with a single search, Scott said. Each notebook can have tabs to further divide the information.

Notebooks are listed on the left, and the tabs for a notebook run across the top of the program. Pages can also have sub-pages.

"I probably have 10,000 notes of one kind or another I'd like to be able to get to and some of them I can't find anymore," Scott said. OneNote becomes a central depository for this kind of information, he said.

A notebook could cover plans for a trip, he said. When the trip is over and you don't need it anymore, you can delete it with a right click.

The program is quite flexible, he said, because "you can enter data into OneNote almost any way you can get information into a computer." You can cut and paste information, import Word and Excel documents and copy and paste text from an image (for example, a screen shot). Text in an image is searchable.

OneNote wants to tie into SkyDrive, Microsoft's "to the clouds," he said. It gives you 25 Gig of storage but you cannot store files larger than 50 Meg. Stored items can be personal (private) or shared. Users who put information in a shared folder are immediately asked if they want to send e-mails to notify people that the information is there. Anyone can see the shared files, but they can be password-protected to limit access, he said.

It's also possible to copy entire Web sites, and, while the format of the page does not remain, all links remain live. Those who put data in a shared file can give users permission to edit it, but they, not those who visit the shared folder, have the power to limit and grant access permissions.

The cloud version of Office, which includes Word, Excel, PowerPoint and OneNote, can be used from SkyDrive.

Information entered in OneNote is saved immediately so users don't have to remember to save before closing the program.

A search in OneNote looks through all notebooks, lists where the term is found and highlights it in the opened notebook.

Hundreds, if not thousands, of templates are available for OneNote users, including ones for home, school and business. But, Scott noted, "Not all free template downloads are useful."

Text can be saved from many pictures, such as a screen shot of a DOS box, and copied to another spot in OneNote. A search will find the information in the image whether you've copied it out to text or not (the highlight was hard to see on the DOS screen shot, however). This does not work on heavily artistic graphics, like the CIPCUG logo on the society's Web page, however. "There are limits on what you can pick up," he said.

OneNote also defeats attempts to make copying a Web page impossible, Scott noted. In Vista and Windows 7, you can use the clipping tool to mark the portion of the Web page you want and paste it into OneNote, where it's instantly searchable.

Scott also showed a notebook for work where he stores information on problems that are repetitive but don't come up often enough so fixing them becomes automatic. He stores fix-it information in the notebook and can then search for words matching the problem. He can store registry fixes and similar information, keeping the links live all the time.

Another use, he said, is to gather pricing information from a variety of websites for airline tickets and so on, paste it into OneNote and compare all the data in one place. OneNote also adds a "Pasted from ..." tag with information you paste from a website.

OneNote does not pick up CSS formatting and the background images on a Web page so it won't display the information the way you see it on the Web page. Information can also be copied from a PDF file, he said.

Spreadsheets imported from websites are readable, but they don't necessarily import in a spreadsheet format. Scott said that if he wants material from a spreadsheet to be imported into a different spreadsheet, he copies the material into Note Tab Pro. He then does a search for two spaces and replaces them with a tab. He then pastes that material into a spreadsheet, and Excel uses the tabs to create new columns. *

