eMonitor

New Study Groups
Mobile Devices 2nd Friday, 1:30 p.m.
Mobile Devices II 4th Friday evening, 6:30 p.m.
Open Office, 2nd Thursday, 1:30 p.m.
Windows 7, 4th Wednesday, 1:30 p.m.

Summer
June, 2011
Volume 5 – Issue 6

Subscribe to the eMonitor!

Cloud Computing Demystified – General Session, Jun 16, 2011

Randy Mulanax/Bill James

In the past, both data and software had to be stored and processed on or near the computer. The development of Local Area Networks allowed for a system in which multiple CPUs and storage devices may be organized to increase the performance of the entire system. In an extension to that concept, cloud computing fundamentally allows for a functional separation between the resources used and the user's computer, usually residing outside the local network, for example, in a remote datacenter. Users or clients can submit a task, such as word processing, to the service provider, without actually possessing the software or hardware. The consumer's computer may contain very little software or data (perhaps a minimal operating system and web browser only), serving as little more than a display terminal connected to the Internet. Since the cloud is the underlying delivery mechanism, cloud based applications and services may support any type of software application or service in use today. Consumers now routinely use data intensive applications driven by cloud technology which were previously unavailable due to cost and deployment complexity. In this presentation we will share from our research what that cloud really is and why it will be more of a player in how we use our computers.

Randy Mulanax and Bill James are members of ccokc. They conduct several different study groups within the club. This presentation is based on a recent seminar they attended on Cloud Computing. Both Bill and Randy are retired Federal employees who enjoy computers as a hobby.

Door prizes will include: for visitors one free membership to the club or a $20.00 gift card to Best Buy and for members two $40.00 gift cards from Best Buy.

THE FOLLOWING IS VERY IMPORTANT: In fairness to all, no one will be allowed to register for the drawing after 7:05 pm. You MUST have a current Computer Club of Oklahoma City badge with you to enter the members' prize drawing. If you forget your badge, you have lost it, or it has expired, you will not be eligible to fill out a prize drawing slip. If you need a new badge, or need to renew your membership to the Club, please see or email our Membership Chairman, Jack Milner, at least 24 hours before the General Meeting. No new or replacement badges will be printed the night of the meeting. Jack's email address is members@ccokc.org, and the phone number for the Club's Resource Center is 405-843-4300 (leave a message if there is no answer). This is a firm rule for all meetings, so please be sure you bring your badge with you each month. You are welcome to stay for the presentation.

Carol Bennett
VP of Programs

eMonitor

New Study Groups

Macintosh – 2nd Monday 6:30 p.m. *Cleo Roberts*
Open Office 2nd Thursday - 1:30 p.m. *Neal Baumwart*
Build a Computer 3rd Tuesday - 1:30 p.m. *Randy Mulanax/Bill James*
Social Networking 3rd Friday - 1:30 p.m. *Bill James*
Mobile Devices II – 4th Friday evening - *6:30 p.m. Doris Collins/Randy Mulanax*

My Thoughts, by Bill James, Editor, ccOKC eMonitor

Hi Readers,
I hope you enjoy this month's issue of eMonitor. Your comments and feedback are always welcomed, just drop me a line at wijames@sbcglobal.net and let me know what you think.

Some thoughts this month for those of you that are interested in Shareware/Freeware, etc., of course the bottom line on these type products is 'free'. The popularity of this software is evident in the clubs excellent open office study group. If you have not attended this group, find the time to do so. It meets each 2nd Thursday of the month following "Tips and Tricks". Freeware and Shareware offers some great products just for a donation or some are completely free. They are a great alternative to some other pricey software. However, to use this software requires a bit of expertise to installing and maintaining it. It is more of manual process than what you will find in mainstream off the shelf software. So keep that in mind when you start your research, but if you are just not ready to try Windows 7 and want to update your operating system using your current hardware. There are some choices using a Linux based OS. *(See 'The Other Side of Street' article in this issue of the eMonitor).* Ubuntu is perhaps the number one favorite but there is another one that is similar to Ubuntu's rich features called openSUSE currently in version 11.4. The interesting thing about it is that rather than have OpenOffice for productivity software it offers LibreOffice which you might say is an alternative to OpenOffice. I say alternative because how can you be competitive when both are free? LibreOffice is available for both Linux and Windows based OS's. If you use shareware and are happy with it, consider making a donation to the authors. They will appreciate it.

Screen shots of openSUSE Linux-based OS:
http://tinyurl.com/3wbf7xz
Screen shots of LibreOffice:
http://tinyurl.com/3rph5ub

Sometime in the future during a Club General Session we will look a freeware and shareware. Speaking of General Sessions, this month's General Session will be on 'cloud computing'. A term that you have heard about and maybe you would like to know more about it. Here is an opportunity, because this session will tell you where the cloud is and you might be surprised.

Happy Computing! -- Bill J.

SeniorNet
SeniorNet Users Group (**SNUG**)

News from Charlene Francis For Those 50 +
SNUG is a group of computer users age 50 plus. Together, we have been exploring and learning about computers and the ever changing technology for 16 years. At our weekly meetings, we help each other solve problems and we also share the good news and the bad news about what we do with our computers; or, we may have a presentation given by one of our members or a computer related company Joining this group is a great opportunity to become member of a very friendly and special community that offers benefits not found elsewhere.

When you join our group, there are many benefits including 1 year membership, on the local level in CCOKC (Computer Club Oklahoma City) and on a national (or, international) level, in SeniorNet (SrNet) which is based in San Francisco, CA. Both are non-profit organizations with a strong mission to help others learn about computers. If you want to know more about them, check out their website, www.ccokc.org, and/or www.seniornet.org. Another significant benefit is the SrNet Computer Classes offered by the Learning Center. (Click here for NEW Class Schedule and Registration Form.)

Visitors are always welcome. If you have would like to learn more about us or have a question, please feel free to visit our meeting at time indicated, above or contact Charlene Francis at phone number above, or by email, cfrancis2@cox.net.

Click here for a map to our Meeting location

Center 3000 Building (East End)

Directions to the Computer Club of Oklahoma City location:

From NW Expressway and N. May: North on May to Light (United Founders Blvd.); turn left (West) on United Founders to second building on left side of boulevard, (Center 3000 Building); park on East end of building; enter East end of building; turn right just inside the building door, to elevator; go to second floor; Room 201 "Computer Club of Oklahoma City"

Thanks for your Smart Computing Subscription. Thanks to those who purchased a new (or renewal) subscription to a Sandhills publication. If you are not familiar with the magazines

published by Sandhills Publishing Company, including Smart Computing, check out their website, www.smartcomputing.com. While you are there, be sure to check out the many, many benefits you get when you subscribe to any one of the magazines they publish and if you decide to take a subscription be sure to use our Code Number 6232 or, 6154.

SeniorNet Class Schedule and Registration Form
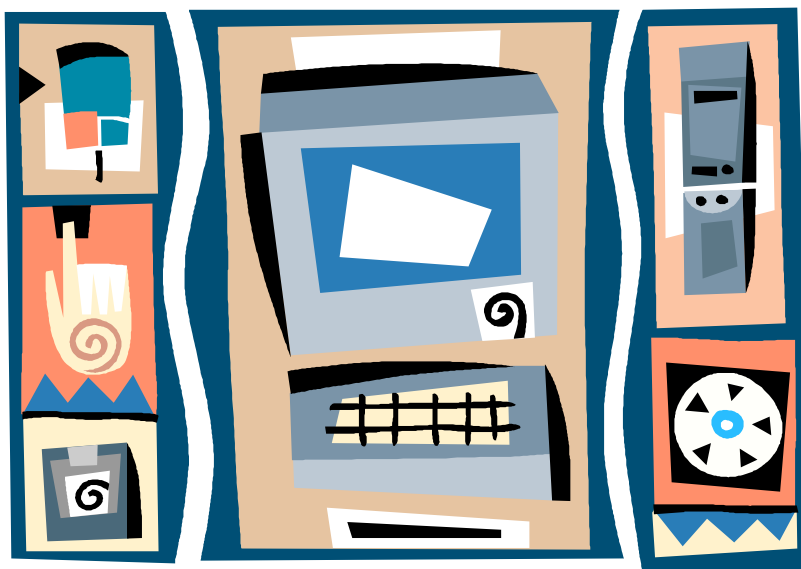
Tips using Microsoft Word and Excel 2007
Sharon Parq Associates, Inc.

Inserting the Date and Time

Undoubtedly, the time will arise when you need to insert the current date or time in your document. This may be in the introduction of a letter or in a header or footer. Word allows you to quickly insert the date or time in several different formats. This information is inserted as a field which can be updated manually or is updated automatically when you print the document.

To insert the date or time into your document, follow these steps:

1. Position the insertion point where you want the date or time inserted.
2. Display the Insert tab of the ribbon.
3. Click Date & Time in the Text group. Word displays the Date and Time dialog box.
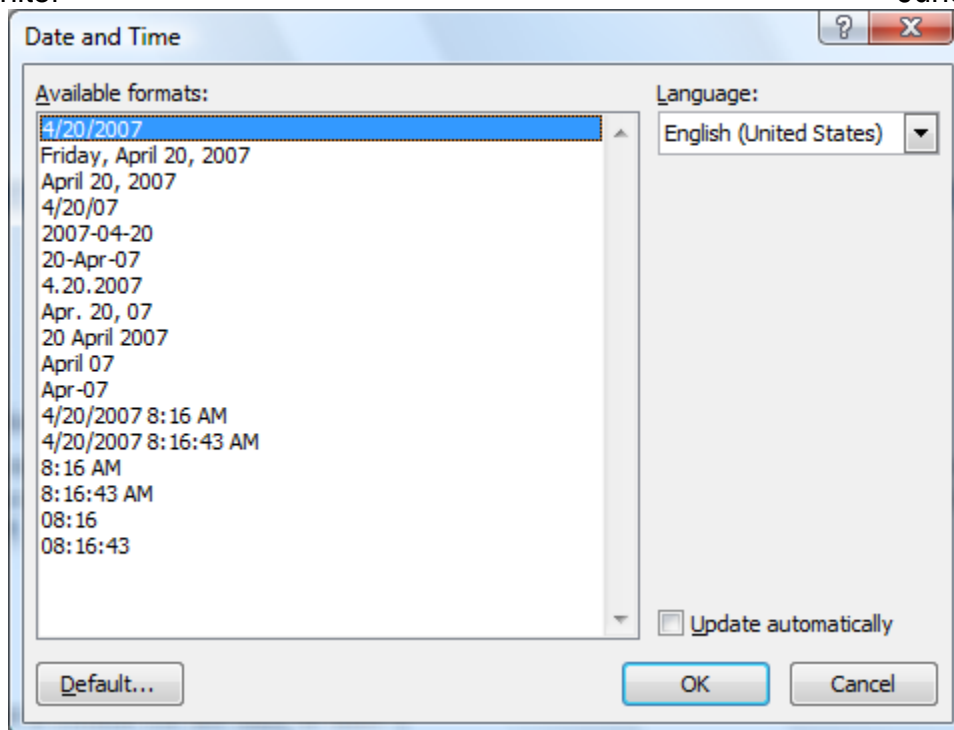
The Date and Time dialog box.

4. Select a format for the date or time.

5. Select the check box at the bottom of the dialog box if you want the selected date or time to always reflect whatever is current. If you choose this, it means that Word inserts the date or time as a field so that it always represents the current date or time.

6. Click on OK. The date or time, as specified, is inserted in your document.

Inserting Tomorrow's Date

You may want to insert tomorrow's date into a cell in your worksheet. This is easily done by simply creating a formula that includes the function for today's date, as in the following:

```
=TODAY() + 1
```

This formula first determines today's date and then adds 1 to it, resulting in tomorrow's date. You can then use Excel's formatting features to display the resulting date in any manner desired.

Besides displaying tomorrow's date, you can modify the formula to display a date at any time in the future. Simply change the formula so the desired number of days are being added to today's date. For instance, if you wanted to determine a date two weeks in the future, you could use the following:

```
=TODAY() + 14
```
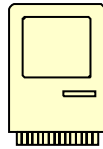
eMonitor

The Macintosh Users Group meets at 6:30P on the 2nd Monday of each month
Cleo Roberts
Come and bring a friend and discuss Mac hardware and software.

eMonitor

Join the

Office 2007 Study Group
Monday, June 13, 2011
1:30 p.m
Resource Center
Continuing discussion on

Microsoft Publisher 2007

COMPUTER CLUB OF OKC
STUDY GROUP CALENDAR
Isaac Franklin, VP of Programs

DAY	TIME	STUDY GROUP	LEADER	EMAIL ADDRESS	PHONE
1st Monday					
1st Tuesday					
1st Wednesday					
1st Thursday	9:00 am	**Social Hour**	Come meet and mix		
	10:00 am	**SNUG**	Charlene Francis	cfrancis2@cox.net	359-5675
	1:30 pm	**Multi-Media**	JP Williams	jpwilliams@sbcglobal.net	634-4255
	6:30 pm	**Linux**	Robert Green	robert@dvns.com	
1st Friday					
1st Saturday					
2nd Monday	1:30 pm	**Office 2007**	Randy Mulanax Bill James	rmulanax@swbell.net/ wijames@sbcglobal.net	739-0035
	6:30 pm	**Macintosh**	Cleo Roberts	cleoroberts@cox.net	632-5848
2nd Tuesday	10:00 am	**Investment Club**	Al Knebel Isaac Franklin Troy Segler	alknebel@cox.net ifrank9999@cox.net tgsegler@cox.net	751-7162 751-3411 773-9253
	2:00 pm	**Board Meeting**			
	6:30 pm	**Access**	Blaine Trimmell Boyd Trimmell	btrimmell@thenerdgroup.com	524-4246
2nd Wednesday					
2nd Thursday	9:00 am	**Social Hour**	Come meet and mix		
	10:00 am	**Windows Tips & Tricks**	Doris Collins	DJCollins1122@aol.com	525-5601
	1:30 pm	**Open Office**	Neal Baumwart	nbaumwart@hotmail.com	840-2138
2nd Friday	1:30 pm	**Mobile Devices**	Doris Collins/Bill James	djcollins1122@aol.com wijames@sbcglobal.net	525-5601 739-0035
2nd Saturday	9:00 am	**Genealogy**	Jim Slade Jim Ike	sladej@swbell.net jeike@atlinkwifi.com	751-2325 350-3120
3rd Monday					

3rd Tuesday	1:30 pm	**Build a Computer**	Randy Mulanax Bill James	rmulanax@swbell.net/ wijames@sbcglobal.net	739-0035
3rd Wednesday					
3rd Thursday	9:00 am	**Social Hour**	Come meet and mix		
	10:00 am	**SNUG**	Charlene Francis	cfrancis2@cox.net	359-5675
	6:00 pm	**Social Hour**	Come meet and mix		
	7:00 pm	**Club Meeting**			
3rd Friday	1:30 pm	**Social Networking**	Bill James	wijames@sbcglobal.net	739-0035
3rd Saturday	10:00 am	**Hardware**	David Robbins	pchardware@sbcglobal.net	681-6685
4th Monday					
4th Tuesday					
4th Wednesday	1:30 pm	**Windows 7**	Randy Mulanax Bill James	rmulanax@swbell.net/ wijames@sbcglobal.net	739-0035
4th Thursday	9:00 am	**Social Hour**	Come meet and mix		
	10:00 am	**SNUG**	Charlene Francis	cfrancis2@cox.net	359-5675
4th Friday Evening	6:30 pm	**Mobile Devices II**	Doris Collins /Bill James	wijames@sbcglobal.net djcollins1122@aol.com	739-0035 525-5601
4th Saturday					
5th Monday					
5th Tuesday					
5th Wednesday					
5th Thursday	9:00 am	**Social Hour**	Come meet and mix		
	10:00 am	**SNUG**	Charlene Francis	cfrancis2@cox.net	359-5675
5th Friday					
5th Saturday					

eMonitor

Astronomy Picture of the Day

Discover the cosmos! Each day a different imge or photograph of our fascinating universe is featured, along with a brief explanation written by a professional astronomer.

New Study Groups

Macintosh – 2nd Monday 6:30 p.m. *Cleo Roberts*
Open Office 2nd Thursday - 1:30 p.m. *Neal Baumwart*
Build a Computer 3rd Tuesday - 1:30 p.m. *Randy Mulanax/Bill James*
Social Networking 3rd Friday - 1:30 p.m. *Bill James*
Windows 7 - 4th Wednesday 1:30 p.m. *Randy Mulanax/Bill James*
Mobile Devices – 2nd Friday 1:30 p.m. Doris Collins/Bill James
Mobile Devices II - 4th Friday 6:30 p.m. Doris Collins/Bill James

FYI -
Do You Need a Reminder When Your Driver License Expire?
The Oklahoma Department of Public Safety has implemented a free e-mail renewal notification system for Oklahomans holding driver licenses and identification cards.

"The desire to have the Department mail out renewal notices comes up almost every year during the legislative session," said David Beatty, Legislative and Special Projects Manager for the Department. "But to mail them includes a significant cost factor that cannot be ignored."

Driver privacy mandates in federal and state law would require a renewal notice to be sent by first class mail, Beatty explained. The combined costs of envelopes, printed notice, and postage along with personnel to process the renewal notices would cost the Department at least $400,000 annually.

"When looking at other mailings the Department does, we estimate that up to 50% of these renewal notices could be returned because of an old address on file at the Department, even though state law requires licensees and card holders to notify the Department within 10 days of an address change," Beatty said. "All of that wasted postage is not an effective expenditure of taxpayer dollars."

Even though people move, changing their residence or mailing addresses, most people keep the same e-mail address. "Unless you choose an e-mail provider that has extremely limited service geographically, an e-mail address can follow you almost anywhere," Beatty said. "A quick e-mail reminder is going to be the most effective and cost-efficient way to jog someone's memory to go renew a driver license or identification card. And with a lean budget year for all state agencies, a method of doing that without any costs attached is even better."

Once a licensee or card holder signs up, a renewal notice will be sent to the e-mail address 45

days prior to the expiration date provided. "If your e-mail address changes, just sign-up again,"
Beatty said. "If we get a bounce or an error on an e-mail, that e-mail address will not receive any
further notifications."

Any Oklahoma resident with a driver license or an identification card can sign-up for the e-mail
notification at the Department's website:
www.dps.state.ok.us

eMonitor

This Month's Articles

THIS AND THAT
By Elizabeth B. Wright

WHO IS IN CHARGE?

Like all despots, Windows wants to keep you ignorant of how things are managed. There are little
hints that someone or some-thing besides yourself is manipulating your programs and data.
Specifically, ADMINISTRATOR PRIVILEGES. What in the world is that all about?
In a nutshell, MS has determined that you are too stupid to be in charge of your own comshuter. It
has created the Administrator profile to "help" you keep your machine safe from other people. But
all it has really managed to accomplish is to prevent you from being able to EASILY control what
will and will not be accessible to users, including yourself. Thus causing you to have to pay for
technical support.

Unfortunately, I am not a Microsoft licensed guru, so I can't really instruct you in the steps/methods
for taking charge of this unwieldy Windows utility. But I can give you the somewhat questionable
benefit of my own experience.

Large data files have always been a problem. Documents and ordinary spreadsheets usually don't
contain very many bytes, but some programs produce larger files than others. With all the fancy
options in the high end software, the file size can actually become fairly large. But the real culprits
are graphics. Over the last few years, since the advent of digital cameras, many of us have placed
many images on our computers. Digital images often take up enormous amounts of disk space.
For my part, I set my camera at the highest image size possible. The result is multiple images, all
of many megabytes. When these are downloaded to the computer, the result is data overload. It
isn't hard to fill up a relatively small hard disk (these days that would be about 250G), especially if
the disk has been partitioned.

Now for my problem: On my machine the second hard disk , Drive D:\, was originally partitioned into two sections. At some point this rather slipped my mind. (Do I hear Microsoft chuckling?) Thinking the second part of the D:\ drive, drive F:\, was probably quite small, I completely forgot it was there. Oh yes, it showed up in Explore (that's what "they" call the file directory now, not to be

confused with Internet Explorer, thank you very much Microsoft). But I just didn't pay any attention to it. As it turned out, it was approximately one-half of the 250G hard drive, more than enough space to hold my graphics files. But not remembering this fact, I checked out the second partition on my primary C:\ drive and found it adequate for my purpose. That's when the trouble began. Utilizing the "move" option for changing files from one location to another, I "moved" all of my graphic files to the second partition on my primary hard drive, drive E:\. This operation physically copied all the selected folders from the D:\ drive to the E:\ partition on the primary hard disk, and then physically deleted all of them from the D:\drive. However, some of the folders did not seem to disappear from the D:\ drive. So being naïve, I simply tried to delete them. But Big Brother popped up and told me I did not have access to these files, flashing some cryptic message about Administrator rights. Well, I own the computer and honestly thought the "Administrator" mantle was draped around my shoulders. Going online with Google, I found a reference to a similar problem. At least someone out there knew what I was talking about. Of course I emailed my CCOKC gurus, Randy Mulanax and Bill James. With the information from these sources I went to the MS "globe" symbol in the lower left corner of the screen, clicked on it and chose the "switch user" option in the menu next to the "shut down" option. This menu is accessed by clicking on the nearly invisible down arrow next to "shut down." Next I switched to the "Administrator" account and again logged onto the computer. Still nothing happened when I tried to delete the offending folders. Well, long story short, somewhere, someone mentioned turning the computer off and restarting it. Yes folks, this time honored, hoary old technique once again worked. Actually when the computer was restarted the folders had already disappeared. All of this probably makes sense to the Geeks and Nerds (ITs as some of them are now known) out there, but I'll bet even some of them have forgotten to do this a time or two themselves. Now I won't guarantee that this is the finite way to solve an Administrator problem, but it does serve as an example of just how frustrating all this advanced technology is for most of us. Oh yes, in the end I somehow now have both "user" accounts on my opening screen. I can choose "Administrator" or "(my User Name)". And the only programs that show up when logged in as "Administrator" are the few that I installed originally. Those programs plus everything else, and there are a lot of programs, show up when I log on using my User Name.   Sooooo,

When in doubt, don't pout.
Call your Tech

eMonitor

$aving Money on Computer Costs
By Berry F. Phillips

Computer costs are related to hardware, software, and instruction. Today, we live in an era of rising prices and necessity has made us more cost conscious than ever. This article will focus on saving by using optional consumer choices that I have regularly used and found satisfactory enough to recommend to my readers.

However, I do not wish to imply there are not good choices using conventional consumer methods of purchase which are of course unfortunately often are more expensive.

Regarding hardware, the system I am using is a refurbished system by the manufacture purchased from an online seller. I was able to purchase the system for half of regular retail cost with a new full manufacturer's guarantee. This system was gone through twice by factory technicians when manufactured and when returned before being sold direct to a customer by an online seller. When a new computer is sold by a retail seller, and it is returned for any reason by a customer it must by law be sent back to the manufacturer. The seller receives a credit for the return.   The manufacturer must then go completely through the returned system and fix any problems before it can be resold as a refurbished unit usually through an online seller. Purchasing a new computer system with a new guarantee through an online seller will also save you money over purchasing from a retail outlet. Online sellers have lower operating costs and can pass the savings on to the online consumer.   I have had good experience with online sellers, TigerDirect.com and Newegg.com. For the purchase of new as well as used hardware, I have also had good experience with the online seller, eBay.com. When purchasing online, it is very important that you know what to purchase.   I would suggest you visit with a technically savvy friend or get help from a computer club if necessary so as to make the correct purchase and avoid mistakes.

Regarding software, it is a bit confusing. There is comware, shareware, and freeware and many are excellent programs. Comware is the most expensive but usually offers more bells and whistles than shareware and freeware in their applications and is purchased retail for the most part and sometimes online for a better price.   Shareware is try it before you buy it. However, can be frustrating as it is often advertised as a free download only to find out after you install it on your system it is shareware. If you are not interested in purchasing the shareware it either disappears or will not function after its free trial date has expired. The last choice being my choice, being quite frugal, is freeware. I own only one application that is commercial software, my operating system, which was loaded on my computer when purchased. The rest of my applications are all freeware; my cost is zero!

How do you know what is the best freeware and safest to download without wasting considerable trial and error time searching applications online? In August 2010, PC Magazine included Gizmo's Freeware in its "100 Top Websites of 2010." Gizmo's Freeware is a non-commercial website staffed entirely by volunteers www.techsupportalert.com. The quality of the site's content and lack of commercial affiliation have contributed to its incredible popularity. As of January 2011 it was rated by Alexa in the top 4000 sites in English speaking countries and in the top 8,000 worldwide.

It is also the most bookmarked site under "freeware" at most of the web's major bookmarking services. Gismo will give you the best and safest freeware downloads. Gizmo recommends the following "outstanding download sites," ZDNet, CNet, Softpedia, Snap Files, File Hippo, Major Geeks, and File Forum. "Recommended sites" are Tucows, Server Fles.com, No-Nags, and topshareware.com.

The last of the big three costs of computing is of course education. Computers both hardware and software are ever evolving at such a rapid pace today that the length of obsolescence is growing shorter. There is a very necessary need to retrain to stay current. In our computer club, we encourage not buying more than you need. There are numerous very good conventional educational sources available for students and IT professionals. However, then tend to be expensive and time consuming. For the average user who wants to develop computer skills as fast as possible and stay current, I strongly recommend joining a computer club like Oklahoma

City PC Users Group which is affiliated with the Association of PC Users Groups For senior citizens, I would recommend joining Senior Net Users Group our affiliate to get up to speed quickly in our lab using special instruction designed for seniors. The nominal cost of joining our club, which also includes great networking with users at all levels of computer literacy that will be glad to help you, is less than the cost annually of one or two hours of conventional computer training. Our Senior Net Users Group has been recognized nationally and is one of the very best.

If you decide to adopt some of my frugal suggestions, I caution you not to tell anyone. I made that mistake years ago. I explained I could not help it because of my Scottish ancestry. I guess it is in my genes.   I have never liked the adjective, cheap; I prefer conservative!

eMonitor

Understanding System Restore
By Vinny La Bash, Regular Contributing Columnist, Sarasota PCUG, Inc., FL
March 2011 issue, Sarasota PC Monitor
www.spcug.org
Vlabash@Comcast.net

Windows 7 has a new and improved version of System Restore that is far superior to the lame utility that came with XP. Setting a restore point was often painfully slow, and it rarely worked as it should have. Windows 7 System Restore easily helps you bring back your computer's system files to an earlier point in time. It's a way to undo system changes to your computer without affecting your personal files, such as e‑mail, documents, or photos.

Sometimes, the installation of a program or a driver can cause an unexpected change to your computer or cause Windows to behave unpredictably. Usually, uninstalling the program or driver corrects the problem. If uninstalling does not fix the problem, you can try restoring your computer's system to an earlier date when everything worked correctly.

System Restore uses a feature called System Protection to regularly create and save restore points on your computer. These restore points contain information about registry settings and other system information that Windows uses. You can also create restore points manually.

System Restore is not intended for backing up personal files, so it cannot help you recover a photograph or video that has been deleted or damaged. You should regularly back up your personal files and important data using a backup program. Windows 7 has an excellent built-in backup utility.

Windows 7 uses the Shadow Copy feature, introduced in Vista. It's vastly superior to the process in XP and earlier versions of Windows. The old way used a simple file filter and copied files around the system which was clumsy compared to the Shadow Copy method. Today, Windows creates a snapshot of your drive which can later be used to restore your system should catastrophe occur. Additional capabilities of Shadow copy include taking snapshots of files even when currently in use. Microsoft has incorporated this feature into Previous Versions which allows restoring a previous

version of an application. Unfortunately, this power is available only in Windows Professional or Ultimate.

The easiest way to bring up System Restore is to type System in the Start menu search box and select it from the resulting list. Another way is to select the Recovery option from Control Panel, or you can simply type **rstrui** in the search box.

Whatever method you choose will bring up the System Restore dialog box that gives you some helpful information. Select the Next button to get a list of restore points. Most of the time you will be using the most recent restore point to get your system working again.
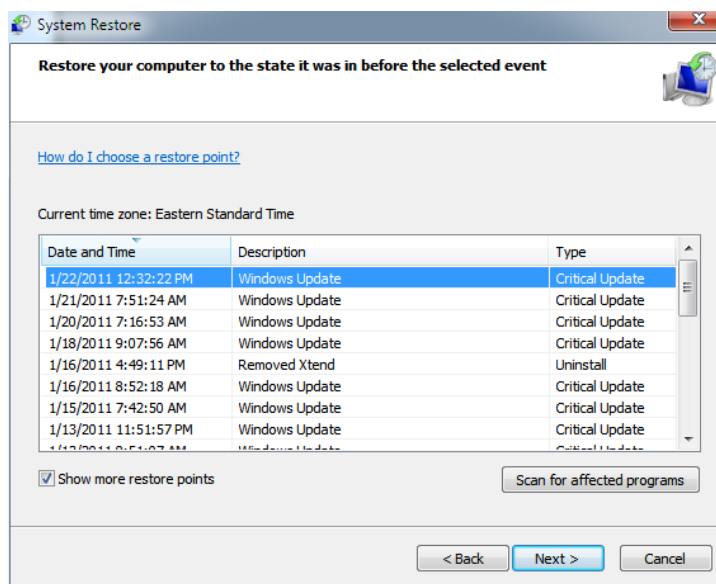
Focus your attention on the Description list. This can give you an important indication of what went wrong. Did your problem begin after installing a Critical Update, a backup operation, or a new freeware program that you couldn't resist?

When you apply System Restore the system creates another restore point so you can undo the change if your problem isn't fixed. You can't undo System Restore however, if you use it in safe mode. But you can run System Restore again and select a different restore point.

Restore points are saved until the disk space Windows allocates to the utility is used up. Then the oldest restore points are deleted as new ones are needed. The easiest way to delete all previous restore points is to turn System Restore off, and then turn it back on again. Don't worry about running out of space.

Many computer problems can be traced to sloppy programs written by people who don't know enough about proper programming techniques to get their utilities published by reliable vendors. It's surprising how many problems are generated by faulty uninstall tools. There are many sound

freeware offerings out in cyberspace, but don't use them unless they come tested and approved by a trusted source like Smart Computing.   :

eMonitor

Updates! Updates! Updates!

By Penny Cano, Member and Instructor for the Dumb & Dumber Workshops – Cajun Clickers Computer Club, LA
March 2011 issue, Cajun Clickers Computer News
www.clickers.org
ccnewsletter@cox.net

"Something popped up on my computer saying I needed an update. I didn't know if it was OK, so I didn't do it." Does this sound familiar? Updates are one of the most important things you can do for your computer. So what needs updating? The answer is almost all the software on your computer. Updates patch security holes that allow access to your computer from outside and correct defects in software programs.

First and foremost is Windows itself. Patches fix security vulnerabilities and program flaws in the Operating System. Most people choose Automatic Updates, which downloads and installs these "fixes" for Windows without them having to worry about it. But Windows is not the only Microsoft program that needs updating. An option you can choose in Microsoft Update allows it to also take care of Microsoft Office suite, Microsoft Works, Windows Live, Silverlight, and a whole host of other Microsoft products installed on your computer that also need updating.

Of equal importance are updates for your Virus/Spyware program or Internet Security suite.

Don't know which one you're using? It's time you found out!! Double click on the icon in the lower right hand corner of the screen and when the program opens look for the date of the latest definition/update. It should be no later than yesterday. The virus program can only remove the "bad stuff" if it can recognize it, and it gets those descriptions in the definitions downloaded from the Internet.

Now what else needs updating? Java, Flashplayer, and Shockwave are three programs that deal with animation on websites. Adobe Reader occasionally has newer versions, but there are updates for the older versions if you prefer to keep them instead of upgrading. Do you have RealPlayer, Quick Time, or iTunes on your computer? Yes, they need updating too. Alternative browsers like Firefox, Chrome, and Safari are on the list. Add e-mail programs like Mozilla Thunderbird and Incredimail. Printer software, Support software from your computer manufacturer like HP Advisor and Dell Support Center, graphics programs like Photoshop….the list is endless.

So how do you determine which update requests to allow? One way is to open the Control Panel and choose "Add Remove Programs" in XP or "Programs and Features" in Vista and Windows 7. Become familiar with the list of programs installed on the computer. (If you can't remember all of

them, at least you have a preference.) If one of these programs requests an update (a popup or notification in the lower right hand corner of the screen), the answer is "Yes, thank you for keeping me current."

Some of the programs aren't so accommodating. Many can be manually updated by choosing "Check for Updates" under "Help" on the program's menu. There may also be a choice under "Options" (Settings, Properties, or some such wording) to automate the process.

There is a website that can help you decide. Http://secunia.com has an online scanner (use "Scan now" in the upper right corner, "Start Scanner" on the next page, and check "Enable thorough system inspection" on the next page before you hit "Start") that will look at your system and list insecure programs. You can also download Secunia Personal Software Inspector (PSI) free for home users.

http://filehippo.com is a source for many of the freeware and shareware programs we use (Adobe Reader, iTunes, Firefox, Open Office, AVG Antivirus, etc). You can download their free Update Checker which will also help keep you up to date with the latest versions of that type of software.
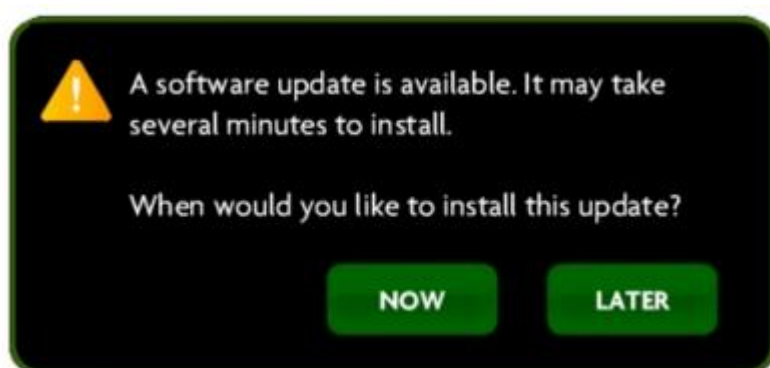
eMonitor

"The technician set up my laptop, now what do I do?"
By Gregory West, Member of the Computer Operators of Marysville and Port Huron, MI, and
Sarnia Computer User Group, Canada
http://gregorywest.wordpress.com/
prospector16@gmail.com

Ah, the wonderment of getting a new computer. No more having to watch others show off their computer skills as they demonstrate their new digital slide show, or listen about how they talk with relatives across three oceans for hours at no cost. With your new computer you are ready to join the online communities around the globe.

Three gigabytes of random access memory, 500 gigs of hard drive, a one year subscription to some antivirus / malware protection software utility and you are "good to go," says the clerk in the computer store.

"But does it come with a manual," you ask?

"The manual is in the OS software," the clerk says as he gets you to sign his copy of the credit card slip. "Have a nice day," he hollers as you lug the computer through the doors towards home.

"Ya right," you mutter under your breath

So many choices, too many decisions, but at least you finally eot it home. Once you open the lid and go to turn on the new computer you realize that you have no idea what you are doing. In fact, you don't know a gigabyte from a Tyrannosaurus Rex, and you couldn't care less. All you want is to go on the Internet and check your email, surf some websites and maybe learn how to get those 265 photos from your digital camera.

"So now what," you say aloud to yourself? "Where do I begin," you ask your dog in desperation as she gives you that puzzled look.

There is an easy way to learn the various computer functions you need to catch up with your computer geek of a neighbour. First, you can take a formal course at your local college. These courses usually range from beginner to advanced. You can also take online courses (courses offered over the Internet), but this takes a special skill, as many people are not used to working alone and need to get out into a classroom set up with real humans. You can also join a local computer group. Here you will find people with similar interests who provide various seminars on tech-related issues.

I have been on a computer since 1972 where an IBM System/360 Operating System was the popular system in data processing centres. Over the years I have received computer training from all methods mentioned about. In fact, today I am taking two computer courses from books that came with DVD training programs

However, if you simply need to know one certain function on the computer, learn a software program, or how to troubleshoot a problem in your computer, I suggest Google's YouTube videos. Computer instructors, tech companies, libraries, schools and many knowledgable individuals upload training videos to YouTube. Here you not only get free training, but targeted training. For

instance, if you need to know how to install a USB flash drive in Windows 7, you simply go to youtube.com on the Internet and there will be many videos to help you through this process.

One tip for searching within YouTube for help, try using the term: "tutorials" with your search. Sometimes this will give you a full training course on the particular subject you are interested in learning. I use YouTube all the time when I need help with a particular computer program. But it doesn't stop there either. I wanted to learn how to winterize my RV and save the hundred dollar fee, so I searched for videos on YouTube and have winterized my own trailer ever since for only the cost of antifreeze

Gregory West is a Mac Instructor for Lambton College. He is also Webmaster at Central United Church, the home of Sarnia's new Community Computer Training Centre at: http://goo.gl/76H15. This is free and open to the public as a community service. Learn at your own speed.

eMonitor

Service Packs Explained (and needed)
By Sandy Berger, Compu-KISS
www.compukiss.com
sandy@compukiss.com

Although most of us still think of Windows 7 as a brand new operating system, it is, in fact, starting to show its age. Windows 7 made its debut on October 22, 2009. Is one and one-half really old? Well, in the computer world, it is not old, but it is certainly full-grown. One sign of this is that Microsoft has just released the first Service Pack for Windows 7.

A service pack is a collection of updates, bug fixes, and enhancements for a software program. As you know, Microsoft routinely offers updates for their Windows operating systems. These updates come out weekly and they patch or, you might say, repair the operating system so that they remain safe from hackers. They can also include improvements or enhancements to the operating system. At a certain point in time, Microsoft gathers all of those updates, adds any other updates and enhancements they have and issues this batch of updates as a service pack. It is also important to note, that when Microsoft issues a service pack, this service pack also makes sure that all of the updates and enhancements work well together and offer good stability for the operating system.

The question that I am most often asked is this, "If I have installed every update that Microsoft has released, do I still need to install the service pack?" The answer is "yes." Often the service pack contains additional updates and/or enhancements that were not included in the weekly updates. Also, a service pack makes sure that all of the updates are put together properly to make your system run well.

In fact, Microsoft thinks that this is so important that they only support the operating system when it has the proper service packs installed. Each service pack should be installed when it is released. If for some reason, they are installed all at the same time, each is installed sequentially.

So, for Windows XP you should have Service Pack 3 installed. Windows Vista should have Service Pack 2, and Windows 7 should have Service Pack 1. To learn what service pack you have

installed, just click on the Start button, right-click on Computer or My Computer, and then click Properties. You will see the service pack listed under the Windows edition.

You can go to the Microsoft website and install a service pack from there, if you happen to be missing one. All service packs from Microsoft are free. If you are using Window 7, the new service pack will be offered to you through Microsoft's automatic update service. This Windows 7 service pack can take up to 30 minutes and will re-boot your computer. I have installed Window 7, Service Pack 1 on several computers without a problem, but you should be aware that installing a service pack is a big update. Microsoft recommends that you back up your computer before installing a service pack. And to be honest, you should be backing up your computer anyway. So if you don't have a backup strategy in place, this is a good time to implement one.

The newest version of Internet Explorer - IE 9 is now in testing and it is already available for free download in a beta version. This is by far, the best version of Internet Explorer that Microsoft has ever released. IE 9 won't run on Windows XP; it requires Windows Vista or Windows 7. Although Microsoft is not requiring Windows 7 Service Release 1 to install IE 9, it is advisable to install this Service Release before you install IE 9.

Service Packs are a fact of life for Windows users. Installing them may be a bit of a pain, but you really need them to make sure that your Windows system is secure and stable and that it performs well.

A "Light Peak" at Thunderbolt
TechTip by Ryan Morse, March 13, 2011
www.geeks.com

Apple has been stealing recent headlines with two product line refreshes in the past few weeks. The bigger of the two was probably the iPad 2, but it's the I/O technology introduced in the new MacBook Pro I'm interested in. Thunderbolt, a collaborative effort between Intel and Apple, dubbed "the fastest connection to your PC experience," is the newest high-speed I/O protocol and in this TechTip we're getting to know this interface and what it's bringing to the table.

History

Intel announced Thunderbolt, which was codenamed **Light Peak** at the time, at their Intel Developers Forum (IDF) in 2009 on a system that was displaying two 1080p HD video streams at once over optical cables (hence the "light" in Light Peak), that used modified USB connectors. Intel intended it to replace the many different cables, especially video cables, on the market and that it would be in PCs by 2010. The cables were initially designed to bundle optical and copper wiring together, pairing the speed of light with the electrical conductivity of copper, to provide a low-latency, high-speed connection that provides power for devices.

What is it

Thunderbolt combines the existing fundamental technologies of PCI   Express
bandwidth and Mini DisplayPort connectors to provide two-channel 10   Gb/s
bandwidth upstream and downstream per port, double that of USB 3.0,   over copper
wire cables with optical cables coming later**.** You will be able to daisy-   chain up to
seven devices together, anything from high-resolution displays to   cameras,
scanners, and data storage devices, all without a hub, because   Thunderbolt
controllers will be able to transmit video and data signals are the same   time over
the same cable. A "power-only" copper cable will carry up to 10 watts of   power at up
to 3 meters and optical cables will be able to carry signals at what Intel   says will be
"tens of meters." If you scoffed at the previously-mentioned 10 Gb/s   bandwidth,
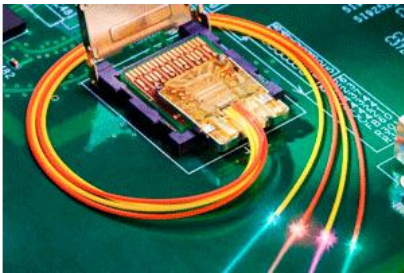
Intel has already demonstrated 700 Mb/s on its prototype
hardware. Since Thunderbolt uses existing technology, it's
designed to work seamlessly with your operating system. A
Thunderbolt device will work as either a PCI Express or
DisplayPort device on a non-Thunderbolt system, which solves
the problem of port-sharing. If you accidentally plug a Thunderbolt
device into a regular Mini DisplayPort, it should work, provided the
device isn't relying on power through that port. You can also use non-Thunderbolt devices in
your daisy-chain by adding them to the end of the chain. You can also use the wide variety of
DisplayPort, DVI, and VGA adapters so your older displays will work with it as well.

Impact

Since Thunderbolt is debuting on the MacBook Pro and will double as the system's Mini
DisplayPort, it's primary use is going to be connecting to   high-
definition displays and HDTVs, but with its ability to handle
extremely high bandwidth transfers, it's perfectly suited for
carrying high-definition audio as well, making it a viable
competitor to both HDMI and FireWire, as its functionality   serves
both of their functions. Intel also claims that Thunderbolt is a
complement to **USB 3.0**, as opposed to being a replacement.   It isn't
clear if Apple is going to phase FireWire out of its products in the future, but Thunderbolt seems
like a logical step forward because it's designed to accomplish the same thing and is twelve
times as fast, and its Mini DisplayPorts consume very little space.

Conclusion

Thunderbolt essentially brings PCI Express connectivity out through Mini DisplayPorts, but it's
not designed for every home user just yet. Instead, it's aimed at the professional and workstation
market segment, especially those who are editing high-definition audio and video.

This may not have an immediate effect on the home user, but as it is said, "a rising tide lifts all
boats."

eMonitor

Reviews

Broadband2Go

By John Roy, President, The PCUG of Connecticut
March issue, The Program
www.tpcug-ct.org
johnroy1@comcast.net

I have been itching to purchase an AirCard® for my laptop computer. We take several trips during the year with our Roadtrek motor home and, while Wi-Fi hotspots are more abundant these days, Instant Internet access is really appealing. Unfortunately for this instant gratification you have to pay a big price. Being frugal I wasn't prepared to commit to a two-year contract at $60 per month for the privilege.

For those of you not familiar with an AirCard, it is a high-speed wireless broadband card that gives users mobile Internet access on their laptops, using a cellular data service. AirCards can be purchased from wireless providers in various styles such as USB, PCMCIA, ExpressCards and as a portable router. It's interesting to note that AirCard is a registered trademark but used generically to describe these devices such as we use Xerox and Kleenex.

Last year my daughter needed daily email and texting capability that her present cell phone did not provide. She already had an iPod Touch but Wi-Fi hotspots were limited. I researched various options to find a minimal cost solution and focused on Virgin Mobile's Broadband2Go MiFi 2200 credit card router. The driving factor was Virgin Mobile had the cheapest data plans without any contract obligations.

The MiFi 2200 router is unbelievably small just like a credit card and can serve five computers at the same time. There is an initial cost of $150 for the device but then you can buy air time to fit your needs. This device is extremely portable and will run four or more hours without a recharge.

After monitoring my daughter's success with the MiFi 2200, and knowing we were taking an extended trip with our motor home, I decided the time and price was right for my purchase. Virgin Mobile sells two broadband products with the same data plan options. In addition to the $150 MiFi 2200 they sell a $80 USB MC760 device. The MC760 plugs into any USB port but unlike the MiFi router it is dedicated to the one computer.

After reviewing the pros and cons for my situation, I chose the MC760. I didn't have a need for sharing my hotspot with five computers, the USB device didn't require a battery, and I saved myself $70. Of course the best part is I was not locked into a contract and could buy time as needed.

Is buying an AirCard from Virgin Mobile a "no brainer" for everyone? The answer is no but it should be on everyone's evaluation list. Here are some key considerations beyond the primary driver of saving money. Their cellular service is the Sprint 3G network with good coverage in populated areas or primary highway corridors but poor coverage in other less populated areas. You should check their coverage map to be sure you will have a good signal for your specific needs.

There is some good news and a little concern on their data plans. Last year they offered a $10 (10 day 100MB) and a $40 (30 day unlimited) plan. This February they increased the $40 plan to $50 and put some speed restrictions beyond 5GB but the deal is better than competing providers. While the price hike was concerning, there is an unpublicized secret you should know. If you purchase either device from Wal-Mart you are offered an optional $20 (30 day 1GB) plan.

How the plans work is when you start using a plan it will end when either the time period or data limit is met. On the $50, 30-day unlimited data plan when you reach 5GB of data use your speed will be limited to 256kbps for the remainder of the time period.

One final note is both devices have several neat software options beyond the basic application.

The MC760 has a micro SDHC memory card slot and the capability of adding an optional antenna to increase range. Documentation is less than meager and only includes startup instructions but once initiated the setup is interactive. Most importantly you can find a detailed manual on line. If you are in the market for an AirCard or curious for more details, visit their website.

http://www.virginmobileusa.com/mobile-broadband/

MC 760

MiFi 2200

eMonitor

eMonitor

Powermat

By George Harding, Treasurer, Tucson Computer Society, AZ
March 2011 issue, TCS eJournal
www.aztcs.org
georgehardingsbd@earthlink.net

You probably carry at least one portable device, a mobile phone. To keep it charged, you need a charger for a home outlet or one for the car. When you travel, either locally or away from home, you must remember to carry one or both of these chargers. It's cumbersome, but that's the price of a mobile device.

Or maybe not! Powermat has a solution for any of your mobile devices, and it doesn't require a charging cord. How do they do this? You charge a Powermat unit, then carry it with you wherever you might be.

Just set your mobile device on one of the panels of the Powermat and your device is charged wirelessly by induction. What does that mean? You don't need to know. It just works.

I received a Powermat for evaluation. It is a small 3" X 3" tri-fold device. It unfolds into three connected panels, two of which are charging panels. The third section is the storage battery that allows the device to be used wirelessly.

You first charge the Powermat with a wall outlet. Then fit your mobile phone or other device with a receiver tailored for your specific type of device. Then simply place the mobile device on the Powermat. You'll hear a beep to indicate that connection is made and that your mobile device is charging. Another beep sounds when your device is removed.

The tri-fold Powermat I received is one of several styles available. Some are smaller, some come with a Power Cube, a unit that connects to your mobile device and is what is placed on the Powermat.

I tried out my wife's Blackberry on the Powermat. The unit comes with a Power Cube which you connect to the Blackberry, then place it on the Powermat to charge. The Power Cube is about one and a half inches square and has a white, smooth surface.

One corner of it has a wire attached with a connector with adaptable heads for almost any receptacle available today.

The wire fits neatly into a groove around the edge of the Power Cube when not in use.
I also received a receiver for my iPhone. A receiver is a shell into which the iPhone fits. It has a compatible plug in its base and a unit on its back similar in function to a Power in function to a Power Cube. Once the iPhone is in the receiver, you need only place it
on the Powermat to charge it.

Powermat announced at CES an agreement that will provide wireless charging capabilities in airports, through the installation of Powermat units in terminal seating. Airports are difficult environments in which to obtain recharges. This solution will benefit the many travelers with mobile devices that need charging in an airport. In addition, Powermat will be working with GM to incorporate in their cars, starting with the Chevy Volt, a charging solution for most mobile devices, without the use of wires.

About: Powermat
Vendor: Powermat
www.powermat.com
Price: tri-fold $130, receiver $40

eMonitor

The Other Side of the Street
By Bill Hart, Member, The PCUG of Connecticut
March 2011 issue, The Program
www.tpcug-ct.org
adrabinowitz@ieee.org

When IBM and Microsoft first released OS/2 in the late 1980s I was keen to try it, and even signed up as a Beta tester. I really wanted to be able to run more than one application at a time, and this seemed to offer a chance.

OS/2 could be described as a GUI-based system supporting any number of virtual machines. Open an application and you opened a virtual machine to run it. It accepted both DOS and Windows 3.0 applications. At last I could run more than one application at a time on one machine; I could run long-running simulation runs in one virtual machine while sending and receiving messages and writing documents in two others, Fantastic!

And then Microsoft, who had left the project, struck in their inimitable way. Windows 3.1 subtly changed the interfaces needed for applications to talk to Windows, so when OS/2 users tried to run the new Windows apps they failed – until IBM was able to catch up. Redmond is still doing this; they have not accepted internationally-agreed document formats, but have invented their own, ignoring the rest of the world. Windows Office apps like Excel or Word will still not accept those formats, and Windows does not recognize any other disk format than those developed by TBOR (The Beast Of Redmond).

So I just LOVE Micros**t (supply your own two letters). When OS/2 faded I looked around for a substitute that was not from Redmond – and chose Linux.

Linux is also fantastic, though, being derived from UNIX (so to speak), it has a somewhat different philosophy from OS/2 or DOS. But I can run many applications at once, as I did with OS/2. AND it has a feature that the miser in me loves – it is free. You can download applications without charge; you can, if you are Guru enough, download the source code for applications and modify them to fit your own needs.

Another nice thing: Linux applications used on the Internet are safer than Windows ones. Steve Gibson of Gibson Research Corporation, makers of SpinRite http://www.grc.com -- take a look) many years ago fell afoul of a hacker who didn't like something he had said and retaliated by putting a "Denial of Service" attack on his site. (That's when you visit a site with an invalid request which takes time to analyze, but you do it so often so quickly that the site is overwhelmed.) During his (successful) exploration to find the perpetrator he discovered that Windows leaves all the ports on the computer CPU open by default -- which is why you need something like ZoneAlarm or some other firewall-type product to keep you safe. When he told Redmond about it they just shrugged their shoulders and said they knew, but it didn't matter.

Linux only opens to the outside world those ports on the CPU which are absolutely essential. So I rarely use Windows to surf the Web any more. I said "so far" because I suppose hackers would be more likely to work at attacking Linux if more people were using it. It's much easier to go after Windows users, who are the vast majority.

There are many varieties of Linux. I usually run OpenSuSE on my desktop. A lot of people like Ubuntu. I have tried it more than once, but it has yet to recognize the Wi-Fi equipment built into my laptop. I finally settled on a variety called PCLinuxOS. (http://www.pclinuxos.com/). Go to download it, and you are immediately faced with another decision: there are many varieties of desktop available.

Like, say, Windows 95, Linux runs a GUI on top of a basic DOS-type machine. And this means that a number of people, having different ideas of what constitutes a really nice GUI, have made, and offer, their own designs. The two most used are probably KDE and Gnome, but there are, as you can see on the PCLinux site, several others, and you can read a description of each before you choose. But if you want to start somewhere familiar, probably the best to start with is the KDE desktop. It is most like Windows in its appearance and behavior. Its descriptive page on the website says of it:

Features:
Kernel 2.6.33.7bfs kernel for maximum desktop performance
Full KDE 4.5.4 Desktop
Nvidia and ATI fglrx driver support
Multimedia playback support for many popular formats
Wireless support for many network devices
Printer support for many local and networked printer devices
Addlocale allows you to convert PCLinuxOS into over 60 languages
GetOpenOffice can install Open Office supporting over 100 languages
MyLiveCD allows you to take a snapshot of your installation and burn it to a LiveCD/DVD
PCLinuxOS-liveusb – allows you to install PCLinuxOS on a USB key disk
----
Sounds a pretty good deal, despite some of the Version Number flack. "Kernel" is the basic Linux system on which this version of PCLinuxOS is founded, "KDE", of course, are supplying the GUI portion and GetOpenOffice will add the free Office Suite to your system. Well worth the price! Anyway, you can experiment if you wish. Download more than one. But make sure they are described as 'LIVE CD'. Those will run entirely from the CD without disturbing your hard disks at all.

Each will come as an ISO file -- a CD image which you can burn with Nero or Roxio or whatever you have. You will end with a bootable CD. Insert it in your drive and reboot the computer. It will provide you with a menu of choices of which the top one is usually the one to pick and the bottom is probably 'boot from the hard disk", which will allow you to chicken out if you wish.

And now you are running Linux, without having disturbed anything on your present computer. Reboot and remove the CD, or choose the "Hard Disk" option, and you are back to Redmond's product. But I hope that you will have found, if you explore a bit before doing that, that you have a wide range of applications -- an Office Suite, Multimedia players, editors, a few games, and Internet applications like Firefox. Try Firefox and you should find that your Web connection has been recognized and you are able to surf -- without bothering about special software to keep you safe from Hacker Harm.

eMonitor

Discounts

Announcing Acronis True Image Home 2010

By Gene Barlow
User Group Relations
Copyrighted October 2009

Acronis recently announced a significant new release of their top rated backup utility, Acronis True Image Home 2010. This new release adds many practical new features to a product already packed with excellent function. The product may be ordered now on our secure web site at www.ugr.com/TrueImage.html for only $29 (as a download) or $29 plus shipping (on a CD).

Here are a few of the new features included:

- Support for Microsoft® Windows 7 – Thoroughly tested to run on the new Windows 7 operating system. It also delivers more comprehensive functionality over Microsoft Windows 7 backup capabilities. So, if you are planning a move to Windows 7 in the future, you need to backup first with True Image 2010.

- Acronis Nonstop Backup – Near-CDP (Continuous Data Protection) is now available to Acronis True Image Home users. You will be able to revert your documents to previous states in time. This may come in handy when you accidentally deleted an important document or made some corrections that turned out to be wrong and you need to return the document to the state in which it was, for example, two weeks ago. When you need to recover a file, a Windows Explorer-like browser with integrated search makes searching for a file you need to recover very easy. But Acronis Nonstop Backup is much more than a versioning tool. It also provides for recovering your system if you ever need that.

- Online backup – you can make your critically important data much more secure by storing it off-site. Because files are stored on a remote storage, they are protected even if your computer gets stolen or your house burns down. So the risk of data loss as a result of fire,

theft, or other natural disasters is practically eliminated. And you can safely recover any corrupted, lost or deleted files on your computer. Integrating online backup into Acronis True Image Home provides a single solution for all your data backup needs.

- Powerful scheduler - The scheduler became more powerful and flexible. We expanded the set of already existing scheduling options. The new scheduler allows you to specify the date when a scheduled task should run for the first time. While scheduling a monthly task, you can use a month calendar for specifying the date (e.g. 1st day of the month) or dates for running the task (e.g. on 10th, 20th, Last day of the month). If you do not need to run a scheduled task for some time, but intend to use it again in the future, you can disable the task for the time being and then re-enable it when required. So it is not necessary to recreate the task from scratch. You can clone a scheduled task and then introduce some minor changes into the duplicate. This may be useful when creating several similar tasks. In combination with a selected backup method and automatic consolidation rules, the scheduler allows implementing various backup strategies.

- Selective validation – Earlier versions of Acronis True Image Home could validate only a whole backup archive. Sometimes this may be inconvenient. Suppose, you have a full backup archive with a size of 20GB and a longish chain of differential backups having sizes of several gigabytes each and amounting to 100GB. In this case Acronis True Image Home validated the whole 120GB archive and this could take quite a long time. Now the program will validate just a single selected differential backup and the full one.

- VHD format support – Virtual Hard Disk (VHD) is a file format containing the complete contents and structure representing a hard disk drive. Furthermore, Windows Backup utility included into Windows Vista (except Home editions) and Windows 7 operating systems now uses this format for backing up an image of the system hard drive when users select the "Complete PC Backup" option. Acronis True Image Home can convert vhd files into tib files and vice versa, recover operating system from vhd files, and even boot from vhd images of Windows 7.

- Booting from tib images containing Windows 7 – Users of the Windows 7 Enterprise and Windows 7 Ultimate can boot from a tib image containing a backup of their system partition. This will allow testing the bootability of the backed up system without actual recovery. If the operating system boots from the tib file, then it will definitely boot after recovery from that tib file.

- Try & Decide New features -- Try & Decide now can protect your system not only to Acronis Secure Zone, but to the protected volume itself, or any other volume. Now users can protect not only a single system partition during Try & Decide session, but as many volumes as needed. This is very handy when the applications being installed make changes on two volumes and in many other cases.

Acronis True Image Home 2010 is available from us for only $29 (as a download) or $29 plus shipping (on a CD) and you get a full new license of the product and not an upgrade license. If you order the product on a CD, you also get our Perfect Backup Approach tutorial to help you understand the best way to do backups. There is also a step by step Starter Guide for installing and using the product for the first few times. The full Acronis User Guide is also on the CD for your use. In addition, I try to help my customers when they have questions about True Image. You also have the normal (first 30-days free) technical support through Acronis to assist you. You can order

your copy of Acronis True Image Home 2010 from us at www.ugr.com/TrueImage.html. Make sure you use the order code of UGTIH2010 when placing your order.

If you are a current user of Acronis True Image, then you will want to get this new release and put all of the new features to work for you. If you have not started a backup plan for your computer, then this is the best product to accomplish this important task on your computer.

In either case, place your order today so that you can enjoy this new product soon. If you have any questions about this article or Acronis True Image Home 2010, please send them to support@ugr.com. I look forward to helping you if I can.

Gene Barlow
User Group Relations   gene@ugr.com
PO Box 911600   www.ugr.com
St George, UT 84791-1600

This is one of a series of technical articles that I distribute to those that have subscribed to this newsletter. You can subscribe at www.ugr.com/NewsletterRegistration.html. Watch for them and learn more about your computer and its hard drive. If you do not want to receive these newsletters, simply reply and ask to have your name removed from the list and I will do so immediately. User group newsletter editors may print this article in their monthly newsletter as long as the article is printed in its entirety and not cut or edited. Please send me a copy of the newsletter containing the article so that I can see what groups are running the articles.

Copyright ©2009, by User Group Relations
All Rights Reserved.

eMonitor

Alpha Software Discount Offer to ccOKC

Alpha Software, one of the original software companies, has been developing database software as an independent software company for 25 years.

We have a customer base of over 1 million customers and have always worked closely with user groups. In fact, the original Boston Computer Society was where we got our start!

To celebrate 25 years of building powerful, yet easy and productive database software, we would like to do something special for user group members.

We have just launched Alpha Five Version 8 – which is the most exciting new product we have ever released.

http://www.alphasoftware.com/AlphaFive/ProductTour/Features_00.asp

In conjunction with our exhibiting at the upcoming SW Computer User Group Conference, we are making 1,000 copies available at very special pricing to User Group members to thank you for the role that User Groups have played in our history and growth. Alpha Five Version 8 is the first all-in-one solution that lets anyone build both web 2.0 and desktop database applications with full reporting, security and connectivity to any SQL backend or to the built-in Alpha database engine.

Alpha Five Version 8 comes in three editions

Desktop – SRP $199,   User Group Members Only Pricing - $29.95
(Builds Windows desktop single user applications)

Professional – SRP $249   User Group Members Only Pricing - $39.95
(Builds Windows desktop multi user applications and web applications using Alpha Five's DBF database engine)

Enterprise - SRP $349 User Group Members Only Pricing - $49.95
Builds Windows desktop multi user applications and web applications using Alpha Five's DBF database engine or against any SQL database)

To take advantage of this special opportunity:

Please email marketing@alphasoftware.com with the words Alpha User Group Special in the subject line (we will then get back to you with a secure ordering URL dedicated to this special "thank you to User Groups" offer). **This offer is only valid for user groups.** We must have all the information shown below.

Please sure to include:
Full Name,
Address,
Telephone,
Email Address,
Street Address,
City,
State,
ZIP,
User Group Name,
President's or Chairman's Name,

Please include which edition of Alpha Five Version 8 you want.

Richard Rabins
Co Chairman and Co Founder
Alpha Software Inc.
www.alphasoftware.com

Check out our Website – www.ccokc.org for more information on our club and its activities. We are also on Facebook with current updates on what is happening at the club.

The eMonitor is a monthly e-mail publication provided to you by the Computer Club of Oklahoma City, The articles provide here are the opinions of the authors. The