

THE NEWS MAGAZINE OF THE ALAMO PC ORGANIZATION

PC Alamode

WEB ISSUE

www.alamopc.org
October 2006
\$4.00

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page 36

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Alamo PC Organization

Alamo PC Organization is a non-profit organization whose mission is to increase its members knowledge and effective use of personal computers through presentations, instructional programs, other membership services and access to the expertise of other members.



To register for a Class, Study Group or Sr. Comp classes call:

Registration number **210.736.0080**

If you **didn't receive your issue** of *PC Alamode* or have questions about your **membership** e-mail:

membership@alamopc.org

If you have questions about Alamo PC call:

Learning Center number **210.736.0700**

If you have comments about classes call

Linda Bianchi **210.226.2460**

If you have questions about advertising call

Joseph de Leon
send e-mail to editor@alamopc.org

Please send change of address and other correspondence to:

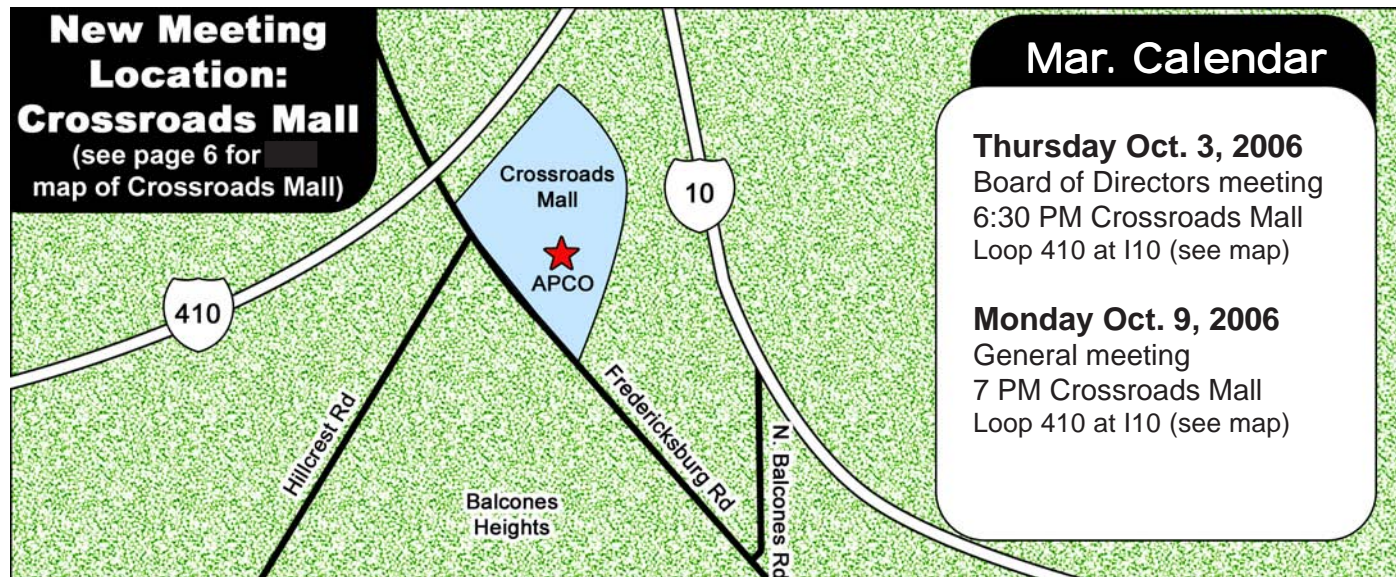
Alamo PC Organization
PO Box 65180
San Antonio, TX 78265-5180

Meetings

Monthly program meetings are normally held the second Monday of the month. Meetings are held at the Crossroads Convention Center (across from the Learning Center) located in the lower level of Crossroads Mall, Loop 410 at the intersection with I-10 starting at 7:00PM. Open to all members and the public.

The Board of Directors meets normally on the Tuesday prior to the monthly General Meeting. The BoD meets at the Alamo PC Learning Center located in the lower level of Crossroads Mall, Loop 410 at the intersection with I-10 starting at 6:30PM. Any changes will be announced via the Voice Mail/Hot Line (736-0700) and on the Calendar of Events. Open to all members.

New Meeting Location:
Crossroads Mall
(see page 6 for map of Crossroads Mall)



Mar. Calendar

Thursday Oct. 3, 2006
Board of Directors meeting
6:30 PM Crossroads Mall
Loop 410 at I10 (see map)

Monday Oct. 9, 2006
General meeting
7 PM Crossroads Mall
Loop 410 at I10 (see map)



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PC Alamode

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PUBLICATION SUBMISSIONS: Please check with the editor regarding submitting ads. **Deadline for submissions is the first of the month preceding publication.** e-mail to:

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*Consecutive months

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product reviews

Books

Computer Crimes *Susan Ives*
The OS X files

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Board of Directors

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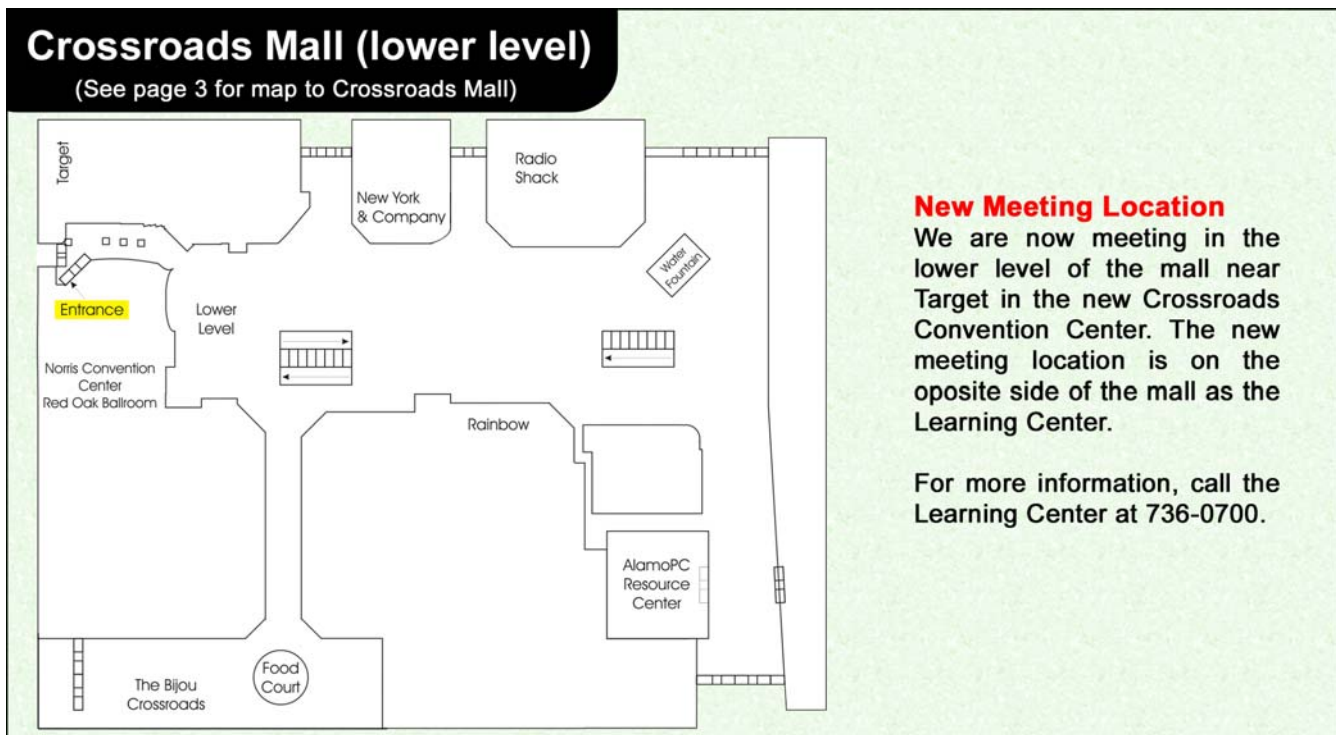
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736-0700

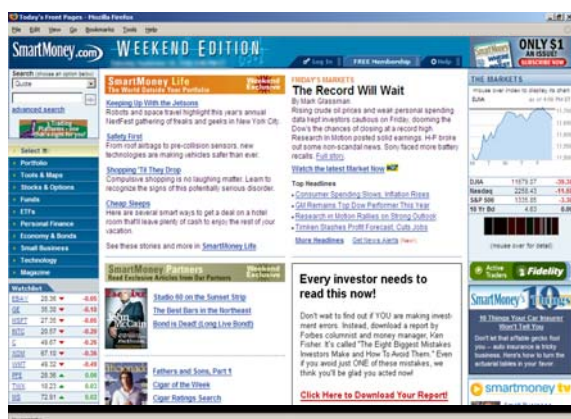
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For Study Groups and Classes, phone: 736-0080 or 736-0700



PC Alamo Links List



Smart Money

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

SmartMoney has daily stock and mutual fund recommendations, hourly market updates, personal finance investing research tools and advice.



Pod Show

<<http://podshow.com/>>

PodShow lets you choose what you listen to and when and where you listen to it. Hear thousands of programs on every topic imaginable, waiting to be downloaded, played, and enjoyed by anyone, anywhere, anytime.



Happy Halloween! I thought it would be in the season's spirit to play with the design of the front cover. While this month's issue is about Internet topics, I thought a Web would be a fun way to represent the World Wide Web, while paying homage to the day of the dead.

You'll notice that I have decided to use a different layout for much of this issue. It's a one column design.

That goes against basic print design principle, which uses columns to make it easier for a reader to find the next line. The longer the line, the more likely a reader's eye will drift up or down to the wrong line.

Columns also help to fit articles into a tighter space and can be used to distinguish one article from another, a practice called bastard column. One story might run two columns, while a nearby article could be three. That prevents the reader from seeing one giant article on a page.

One column design is unheard of in print, but this is no longer a print magazine. Several issues ago, I went to a two-column format. That was because several readers described how difficult it was to scroll along three columns. They all asked for single columns.

I compromised by going to a two-column design. Over the past few months, more readers have told me how they hate double scrolling to read an article.

I've got the message loud and clear!

Joseph de Leon, Editor

<editor@alamopc.org>



Joseph de Leon, Alamo PC

Joseph has worked in the graphics industry for 8 years and teaches graphics and web classes at San Antonio College.

President's Message

Bill Klutz

October - "Fest, Skys, Fun, Corel"

October should bring to mind several thoughts. One is Oktoberfest - the German festival that has been copied in many parts of this country; October Skys - a movie about young boys who build and shoot home-made rockets during the summer, and the later good fortune for some to be individuals associated with the US space program; October is Halloween fun - (no explanation should be necessary); October and Corel - the scheduled presenter for the October Alamo PC General Meeting.

I am sure there will not be "waning interest" for this meeting or the two which follow it (November - Microsoft should be here; December - AMD should be here). I only wish the same enthusiasm could be shown for each meeting, and the organization in general (the Board of Director positions as a specific). The evidence at hand continues to show otherwise.

Current members, through the monthly declining numbers and difficulty in obtaining much needed support from individuals, for the organization prove the point. The recent Election process was another "proof." The Election Committee could not produce any names; not a single name was provided during the "Floor Nomination" phase; and only four names were obtained during the online "write-in" phase (Aug 1- Aug 31). Each was contacted to see if he/she would serve. Three declined and one is currently serving (no commitment on continuing to serve).

The Coastal Area Users Group that I have used as an example of "waning interest" - President resigned in Jul '05, Program chair resigned in March, VP and Treasurer term expired in August (person also moved in late Aug) has "done good!" August elections produced a "fill" for each vacant position. Wish we were as fortunate.

Although I have asked before, I once again ask each member to consider being just a little more actively involved with the Alamo PC Organization. As I have said before "this is OUR organization, and if WE want it to continue, WE must continue to be a member and try to participate at some level." If not, circumstances will decide the fate of this organization.

Consider taking advantage of the free class benefit by enrolling in one or more of the classes. (If a class you would like to have isn't on the list, make it known to the people at the Learning Center. They will put it on the "Wish List" of classes that people have requested. One membership entitles one family member to vote, but it entitles each family member in the household to enroll in free classes during, the time the membership is current.

For our popular Digital Camera & Photography class, and others who have a digital camera and/or are into photography, I thought I would share something that I saw the other day. In Google, enter www.popphoto.com to get a sub-list of additional items listed at the site that may be of interest to you. Then pick the original entry and look for an area of interest or free tips/courses on photography. Also, you might want to check the Hewlett Packard website (hp.com), for more related free courses on cameras and photography.

I am sad to say we are continuing the trend of not retaining members at the level we need. Also, new members are not sufficient to offset non-renewing members. Each month we have a net loss of about 50. (I think you can do the math!) If you do not choose to renew, please comment and tell us "Why?" (Please send an E-Mail to membership@alamopc.org), or to me through the organization account president@alamopc.org or privately wkklutzjr@juno.com. Also, if you have anything (comment, question, statement, concern), please make someone aware of it (preferably me). I welcome all communications, especially those on how we can improve the Alamo PC Organization and increase member interest! If membership continues to fall, the BOD will have to address changes that the organization will be required to make, if we are going to continue to have an organization. Remember, this is OUR organization. If you want to have your voice heard, attend a BOD meeting, General Meeting, write or call someone.

This future of OUR organization is essentially in the hands of its members. As I have stated before, "Whether WE continue (or not) depends on the interest and involvement of each member. But, it primarily depends on membership renewals and/or financial support. Without those, we will not be able to meet our financial obligations and 'business decisions' will have to be made that will affect everyone."

I hope this month's article can spur more interest in OUR organization, as I don't believe there is more I can say on the matter. All I can say at this point is "PLEASE GIVE US SOME HELP!" We are (and have been) paring the financial expenditures as much as possible, but that is only slowing a process that seems to have been decided by the position of many current and former members "withdraw support because I don't have a printed magazine in my hands!"

Consider that those few individuals willing to serve are becoming tired and are increasingly overworked. Don't be surprised if you see more board positions become vacant during the coming year, than currently exists. I truly hope that is not going to be the case, but we have individuals currently serving who have not made a decision (mid Sep) on whether they will continue. If they don't, it will truly impact the future of this organization. Much needed work will not be done unless others are willing to take on more work than they should currently have.

Hope to see many members at the Oct General Meeting. For the past two, we have had only 39 and 36. For those who missed Ebay Services of Texas at the Sep meeting, you missed an interesting presentation and some funny stories.

October Program

David Steward

A program has not been confirmed for October.
Please visit <http://www.alamopc.org>
for more information.

News Brief

Alamo PC member Most Valuable Professional



Lentz Computer Services is proud to announce that owner Larry Lentz has passed the Microsoft Business Solutions certification exam for CRM 3.0 Applications. With this comes the designation of Microsoft Business Solutions Certified Professional (MBSCP) - CRM. Larry was awarded the Microsoft Most Valuable Professional (MVP) for Microsoft Dynamics CRM in January and is one of only 15 worldwide.

Lentz Computer Services specializes in networking for small businesses through Microsoft Small Business Server and Microsoft Dynamics CRM.

News Brief



Alternative-fueled auto runs circles around muscle cars

Ian Wright has a car that blows away a Ferrari 360 Spider and a Porsche Carrera GT in drag races, and whose 0-to-60 acceleration time ranks it among the fastest production autos in the world. In fact, it's second only to the French-made Bugatti Veyron, a 1,000-horsepower, 16-cylinder beast that hits 60 mph half a second faster and goes for \$1.25 million. The key difference? The Bugatti gets eight miles per gallon. Wright's car? It runs off an electric battery.

STUDY GROUPS

Call the Learning Center for schedule information 736-0700 or see page 59-63.

Volunteer of the Month Russell James



THE DOCTOR . . . IS IN

EACH FRIDAY FROM 9:30 TO 12 NOON
DIAGNOSE YOUR SOFTWARE & HARDWARE PROBLEMS

TROUBLESHOOT MAJOR APPLICATIONS
TROUBLESHOOT HARDWARE, RUN TESTS

SOLVE O/S MYSTERIES
PROVIDE ASPIRIN AS NEEDED
MAJOR SURGERY ACCOMPLISHED BY OTHER FACILITIES

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Imaging Devices
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Multimedia Upgrades
Shareware
Diagnostic Equipment
Cables & Connectors
Bare Bone Systems
Computer Related Books
Refurbished Systems, Monitors

Location:

Live Oak Convention Center
8101 Pat Booker Road
San Antonio, TX.

Show Dates and Times:

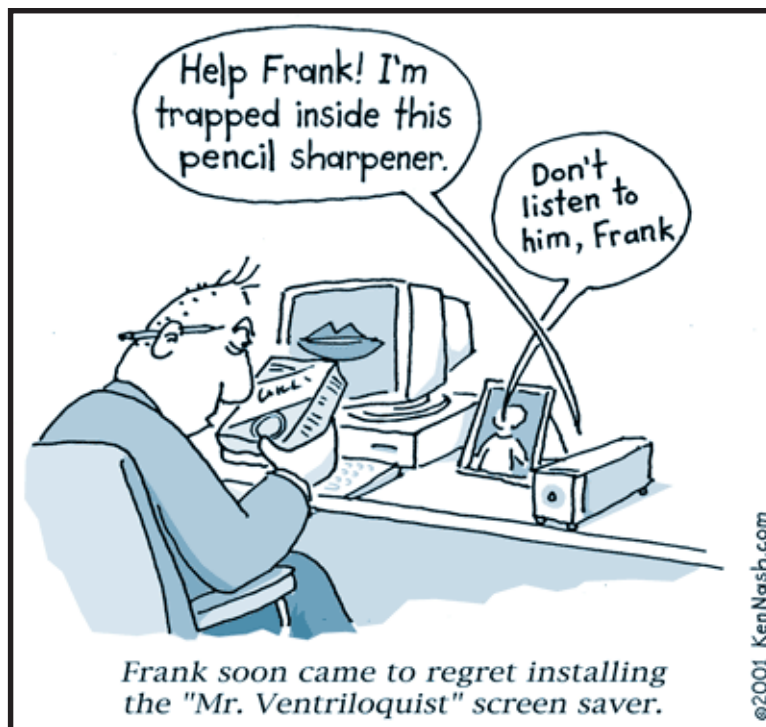
Dec. 9, 2006

more info at <http://www.pcshows.com/>



Funny Bytes

Ken Nash & Randy Glasbergen



News Brief

APCUG Digital Photo Contest

You have until September 30 to submit your photos. Let your imagination look through your viewfinder! Photos may be submitted in each of four categories:

People and children

Animals

Landscape / Flowers

Still Life

Note: Landscape can be mountains, sky, sea, flowers, desert, trees, etc. Still life is any object not shown in motion: architecture, automobiles, boats, sculpture, historical objects, etc.

FAQs

Why do I need to submit 4 copies and 1 CD-ROM?

Each judge (and there are 3) will receive a copy for judging; 1 copy is for displaying at the annual conference – the "Photo Idol" will be chosen from the Conference attendees; and the picture(s) on the CD-ROM will be used to upload the pictures to <www.apcug.net>, etc.

Why do I need to print the photos, why can't someone just print them from the CD-ROM?

Your personal printer or printing service (COSTCO, Walgreens, Wal-Mart, etc.) produces a unique print and we want the pictures to look and be judged as the person who took the pictures wants them to look.

An entry blank for this contest is available at:

<<http://www.apcug.net/events/photocontest/index.htm>>



Volunteers Wanted

Call the Learning Center to volunteer to assist ongoing classes. For more info, call 736-0700.



From the Deals Guy

Bob (The Cheapskate) Click, Greater Orlando Computer Users Group

This column is written to make user group members aware of special offers or freebies I have found or arranged, and my comments should not be interpreted to encourage, or discourage, the purchase of any products, no matter how enthused I might sound. Bob (The Cheapskate) Click <Bobclick@mindspring.com>. Visit my Web site at <<http://www.dealsguy.com>> for past columns and some interesting articles.

*Caution - Remember that I have not tried any of the following products in this column, so be sure to do your homework.

*Need More Windows Maintenance?

Advanced WindowsCare v2 Personal: A Click a Day Keeps All PC Threats Away!

IObit.Com announced the release of the newest version of Advanced WindowsCare v2 Personal. It is a multi-purpose Windows care tool that is intended for solving an entire list of computer problems: Removing spyware and adware, preventing security threats, privacy protection, fixing Windows registry errors, temporary files cleanup, startup cleanup, repairing Windows, speeding up system, etc. The program is 100% free.

The newest version has a multitude of improvements and is easy to use. There is an updated database, online search function is added to "Startup Manager" and "Help" is linked to "Support" page. One click and the program is ready to start a comprehensive examination of your OS. Secondly, the program features a special restore center, which is always ready to undo all of your changes automatically. Just one click in the RestoreCenter and a user can undo all of his/her changes. Thirdly, Advanced WindowsCare v2 Personal contains the Auto-Update option, which helps you to be abreast of new threats. Apart from that, the program has a built-in module, which is always ready to give you a preliminary assessment of your computer configuration. You can save the latter as a text file.

IObit says the program is the only one capable of challenging Microsoft's new service—OneCare. Advanced WindowsCare v2 Personal is compatible with all major anti-virus and firewall solutions. Apart from doing very hard work for keeping all intruders out of your files and keeping your Windows safe and sound, the program has some artistic merits. For example, the interface allows you to switch between varieties of themes. Advanced WindowsCare v2 Personal runs under Windows 2000 and XP and is available as a free download at <<http://www.iobit.com/BetaDownload.html>> 4.08 (Mb)

Product page link: <<http://www.iobit.com/AdvancedWindowsCarePersonal/index.html>>

E-mail: <support@iobit.com>

Web: <<http://www.iobit.com>>

*Don't Let Your Printer Control You, You Control IT!

Regulate Printer Usage with O&K Print Watch Version 4.00. It allows users to specify printing "budgets" for users, groups, and printers, and limit document printing by pages, cost or keywords used in the name of a document. Combining the features of a network print spooler and a print job register, this program lets users control print jobs, paper usage and collects statistics from the print servers. The latter is helpful in creating a company-wide chargeback plan that ensures that all users pay their fair share of the printing budget.

Unlike the standard print manager in Windows, O&K Print Watch correctly counts the number of printed pages and offers an excellent mechanism to set limits on printer usage. O&K Print Watch creates a wide array of reports, which are available for viewing even from a web browser. New to version 4.00 is a radically improved mechanism that enables users to set limits on printer usage and an ability to view printed jobs as images. Users will also discover an ability to organize users into groups and set up printing rules for each group individually.

You can set up a rule to limit printing based on the number of pages in a document. Or, you can specify keywords and no document with these keywords in its name will ever be printed.

O&K Print Watch 4.00 runs under Windows NT4/2000/XP/Server 2003. The company offers a flexible licensing policy based on the number of printers that can be monitored by the program. Discounts are available to educational institutions, and a 20% discount is provided to all DealsGuy readers by using any order link from our buy page <<http://www.prnwatch.com/registration.html>> and insert the coupon code "REGJY". Additional information on O&K Print Watch, as well as its free 15-day evaluation version, is available from <www.prnwatch.com>.

DealsGuy note: It appears the printer(s) are required to be connected to a print server to work properly.

Product web site: <<http://www.prnwatch.com/okpw.html>>

*How Good Is Your Link Collection?

FREE Link-Popularity Checker!

This tool allows you to instantly check the Link Popularity of your Website as well as all of your competitors. It is said that Google heavily favors Websites with many links. Now you can instantly compare yourself to the competition and see how many more links you need to climb to the top of Google's rankings. Save countless hours with this and many other useful tools available for FREE at: <<http://www.monthlyreport.org>>.

*What's Hiding On Your Disk?

How about discovering everything that's hidden on your hard drive? "Disk Investigator" will do just that. It can also help you recover lost data. Display the true drive contents by bypassing the operating system and directly read the raw drive sectors. You can view and search raw directories, files, clusters and system sectors; verify the effectiveness of file and disk wiping programs and undelete previously deleted files. This free software is available at <<http://www.theabsolute.net/sware/dskinv.html>>.

I found the above in The DataBus, (newsletter of The Dayton Microcomputer Association) some time back thanks to Robert Lewis of who found this one.



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How Does One Track The Origin of Spam?

John Brewer, Computer Club of Oklahoma City

John Brewer practices law in Oklahoma City, is a member of the Governor's and Legislative Task Force for E-Commerce, and enjoys issues relating to eBusiness and cyberspace. E-mail him at <johnb@jnbrewer.com>

Spammers are ingenious people. They hide the origin of the spam and are masters of obfuscation. Recently, litigation has been filed under federal law. It is interesting to investigate how the spammers were identified. A recent article in the New York Times turns on the light regarding this method of tracking.

"The government's first criminal case under a new law outlawing some types of spam e-mails was based on low-tech investigative methods: Authorities followed the money. Investigators said Thursday they tracked defendants by purchasing a weight-loss product for \$59.95 and waited to see who collected the money."

"The cyber scam artists who exploit the Internet for commercial gain should take notice," said Jeffrey G. Collins, the U.S. attorney in Detroit. Federal law now makes it a felony to use falsehood and deception to hide the origin of the spam messages hawking your fraudulent wares."

Court papers described a nearly inscrutable puzzle of corporate identities, bank accounts and electronic storefronts used to send hundreds of thousands of e-mail sales pitches for fraudulent weight-loss products. The FTC said angry consumers forwarded more than 490,000 e-mails from the operation from January until April -- more than from any other spam outfit worldwide during the same period. Beales called it a dubious distinction."

CNet News reported that "according to court documents, the four men are accused of generating hundreds of thousands of different e-mails that hid their identities and advertised a weight loss patch. The e-mails were sent out under a variety of company names, including AIT Herbal, Avatar Nutrition and Phoenix Avatar, identified collectively as the Avatar Companies. The e-mails were allegedly sent to millions of e-mail accounts over the course of several years."

However, the CNet article also reported that the federal law has not eliminated spam and that the volume of spam has actually increased since the implementation of the law. "Despite the existence of Can-Spam, companies that monitor the volume of junk e-mail believe that the legislation has done little to discourage the distribution of spam. E-mail service company MessageLabs reported that more than 67 percent of all e-mail sent in April 2004 was considered spam, up from 59.9 percent in February and 52.8 percent in March, when volume temporarily dipped. The Feds bringing the heat against these spammers and their clients is a great victory for everyone who's been victimized by spam," said Mark Sumner, chief technology officer for New York-based MessageLabs. "At the same time, with spam volumes increasing 30 percent since the Can-Spam law went into effect, there is a whole new contingent of spammers in operation. These contemporary spammers are now dressing up their messages so they appear to be legitimate. In spite of effective lawsuits, complaints and arrests, spammers are still finding ways to beat the system."

The Federal Trade Commission announced in an April 29 news release that "that the deceptive claims violate the FTC Act and that the spoofing and failure to provide an opt-out capability violate provisions of the recently enacted CAN-SPAM Act. At the FTC's request, U.S. District Court Judge James F. Holderman entered a Temporary Restraining Order requiring an end to illegal spamming and deceptive product claims and freezing the defendants' assets.

In addition, the FTC announced a second action against an Australian company, Global Web Promotions Pty Ltd., an Australian company that the FTC alleges is responsible for massive amounts of spam in the United States." Global Web not only advertised a diet patch similar to the one in Phoenix Avatar, it also claimed its human growth hormone products "HGH" and "Natural HGH" could "maintain [a user's] appearance and current biological age for the next 10 to 20 years." Experts cited by the FTC dispute the claims, and the FTC alleged the claims are false. The products do not contain growth hormone of any sort, according to papers filed with the court. The products are shipped to consumers from within the United States. The diet patch was sold for \$ 80.90 and the HGH products cost \$74.95.

"In both cases, the FTC introduced as evidence thousands of examples of the defendants spoofing a wide array of victims, including AOL, Microsoft Network, and other companies and individuals. Spoofing involves forging headers on e-mail to make it appear that they came from an innocent third party. Undeliverable e-mail is returned to the innocent victim, often flooding their servers and interfering with normal operations. This process not only is prohibited by the CAN-SPAM Act, it also has worked real hardship on innocent businesses."

"The FTC charged Global Web Promotions Pty Ltd., Michael John Anthony Van Essen, and Lance Thomas Atkinson with violations of the FTC Act and the CAN-SPAM Act. The FTC has filed a motion requesting that the Court issue a Temporary Restraining Order barring further illegal spam and stopping illegal sales and shipment of products. The Global Web Promotions Pty case was brought with the assistance of the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission and the New Zealand Commerce Commission."

Finally, it looks like some spammers may be headed for the slammer. No one will be disappointed and maybe prosecution of slammers will give future spammers pause to think about their activity ... or will they just become more clever in their pursuit of the dark side?



Enter the Dragon: Comodo Free Desktop Security Tools

Rob Rice, Computer Club of Oklahoma City

Rob Rice is a computer specialist working in Anchorage, Alaska. Rob can be contacted at <articles@isp.com>

Every once in a while a company manages to push my button. Symantec is the latest after having bought my beloved Sygate Personal Firewall and then immediately yanked it from the market. Having paid for the Pro version, I can no longer install it; since it requires authorization - I am dead in the water.

Still, a nice thing about capitalism is that where there is a void, it will get filled. Enter the Comodo Group, with not only a worthy alternative to Sygate's Personal Firewall, but a whole suite of security products for free!

The Comodo Group gets its name from the Komodo dragon, a metaphor for the Internet, with a "C" instead of a "K" to acknowledge a commitment to commerce, communications, and dot com. Comodo is the "2nd largest Certification Authority for ensuring Identity Trust & Assurance" on the Internet. In other words, they are the folks that make that little yellow padlock on your web browser work. The Comodo Group is the real deal with headquarters in Jersey City, USA (Yes, they have a real mailing address unlike some so-called security products offered on the web) with global offices in UK, Norway and India.

So why is Comodo giving away product? While the company does more than just issue SSL (Secure Sockets Layer) certificates, but apparently they feel the need to build brand identity. According to Melih Abdulhayoglu, the President and CEO - Comodo Group:

If we are able to write good software and give such valuable software for free, our name will be known in the market place, we will build our Comodo brand and this brand will be associated with security. And this will help us sell more Digital Certificates and other services we have as we will have a big brand!

Simple enough! So what are they offering? Again from the Comodo website:

- Comodo Firewall
- Comodo Verification Engine
- Comodo AntiVirus
- Comodo AntiSpam
- Comodo BackUp
- Comodo iVault

Comodo Personal Firewall 2.0

FREE lifetime license

Sleek design gives an at-a-glance overview of your security status

1. Highlights - displays the latest Comodo news and information about updates
2. Traffic - high visual overview of the last minute of traffic history in terms Applications and Network protocols
3. System info - information about your system in terms of the Hardware and details of all network Adapters in your computer.
4. View Alerts - Get in-depth details on the high severity risks that the firewall has detected.
5. Update License - One click activation of your free-for-a-lifetime Comodo license.
6. Computer Security level - customize firewall security by using the slider to quickly move between preset security levels
7. Check the security of your firewall's configuration with Comodo's online vulnerability scanner, HackerGuardian.
8. Security Monitoring - get an immediate heads up on the status of the firewall's major components.
9. Protection strength - your overall security level determined by the settings you have chosen

Comodo Firewall, rated by PC Magazine Online as an Editor's Choice, constantly monitors and defends your PC from internet attacks. It's easy to install and use and passes the industry's most stringent firewall "leak" tests. Unlike some other 'free' firewalls, this is not a stripped down version but is the full, completely functional product. This free solution comes complete with continual updates that are free forever!



System Requirements:

Windows 2000 (ALL)
 Windows XP (ALL)
 Windows 2003 (ALL)
 64 MB available RAM
 32 MB of available free hard disk space

Comodo Verification Engine

FREE for life

VerificationEngine anti-phishing and identity assurance tool for Microsoft Windows offers an extremely simple way to differentiate legitimate web sites from fraudulent ones. Place your mouse cursor over a site logo. If it is authentic, a green border will appear around your browser. So if you really wish to be sure you are looking at the real www.paypal.com site rather than a clever imitation created to steal your identity, install VerificationEngine now!

Comodo AntiVirus

FREE lifetime license

- On Access Scanning - Always on, real-time protection against threats
- On Demand scanning - Take control by running instant scans on any file, folder or drive
- Automatic Daily Updates - Up-to-the second protection against the latest threats
- Email Scanning - Automatic checking and disinfection of incoming and outgoing mail
- Process Monitoring - Continuously scans your PC's memory for viruses
- Worm Blocker - Monitors and intercepts suspicious mass mailing attempts
- In- depth Reporting - Comprehensive logs of all scans performed
- Pro-active virus defense - Submit suspicious files for analysis by the Comodo AntiVirus team
- Easy, User Friendly interface - Sleek design provides fingertip access to all major settings.
- Scan Scheduling - Timetable scans to run when you choose
- Dedicated Quarantine Facility - Isolate suspected files where they can do no harm
- Advanced Heuristic detection Engine - Protection against unknown viruses
- Scan Removable Devices - CD's, DVD's, external drives, USB devices, digital cameras
- Scans Network drives - protection from any potential threats on your network
- Scans Compressed Files - there's no hiding place for viruses, even in a .zip file
- Does not hog system resources - Maximum Protection with no slow down of your PC

System Requirements

Windows XP (SP2) / Windows 2000 (SP4 or later)
 50 MB available space on your hard drive
 128 MB RAM
 Intel Pentium 300 MHz processor (or equivalent)
 Note - Not compatible with Windows 9x systems
 Comodo AntiSpam
 FREE license

Install **Comodo AntiSpam** for free and reclaim your inbox. Our powerful challenge-response technology authenticates the sender of every mail – a system that automated spam bots can't get around. This is the full product, not stripped down 'cripple ware' and is free forever to the end user.

- Total Spam Elimination
- No hassle set-up
- Sender based authentication
- Thwart the Spam Bots
- Works with your existing setup
- Automatically authenticate your address book
- Instantly migrate custom black and white lists
- One click Bandwidth Optimization
- Pro-active Spam defense
- Maximum Protection – Minimum Drain
- Independent Authentication Database
- Independent Quarantine Database
- Protects all your email accounts
- Stay spam free WHEREVER you access your mail from
- Never miss a message
- Failproof



- E-Commerce friendly
- You're protected – stay protected!!

System Requirements

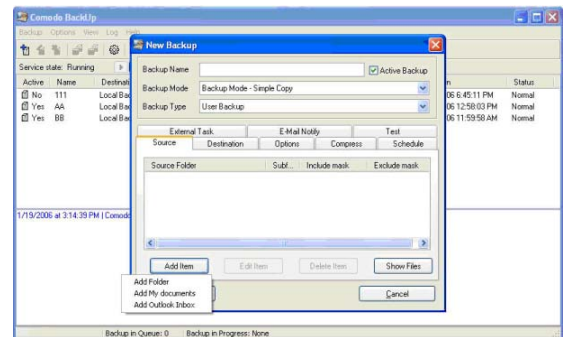
Operating Systems: Windows 2000/XP
 Processor: Pentium 100 MHz or higher,
 System RAM: 32 MB RAM
 Hard Drive: 21 MB of HDD free space
 Internet Browser: IE 6.0 or above.
 Comodo BackUp
 FREE lifetime license

Comodo Backup is the straightforward and powerful utility that allows users to quickly and easily create backup copies of critical files. Free of charge, it includes complete file and folder-duplication to local network drives and FTP servers, intelligent incremental backups, e-mail reporting, extensive report logs, real time back ups with “synchronization” mode, advanced rule-based filtering, flexible scheduling of backups, space-saving archiving capabilities, and more.

- Easily backup files or folders anywhere on your computer, network, CD-RW or FTP server
- Protect yourself against ever losing those critical files that took hours to create
- Quickly recover your data in the event of data loss
- Schedule backups to run automatically at a time that suits you
- Synchronized backup feature - save a file and it gets copied instantly
- Send E-mail notifications to team members about the status of a backup job
- Save Disk space by compressing your backups as ZIP files
- Configure in minutes with our intuitive interface

System Requirements

Windows XP (Service Pack 1 or later) or
 Windows 2K (Service Pack 3 or later)
 Intel Pentium IV with 133 MHz processor
 64 MB RAM
 12 MB free hard drive space
 Microsoft Internet Explorer 5.01 or above
 Comodo iVault
 FREE license



iVault saves time by providing instantaneous logins to any username/password secured web pages such as online banking and email account sites. It also doubles up as a 256 bit secure storage for private and confidential information such as credit card details and social security numbers and protects against the very latest key-logging Trojan Horse viruses.

- Instantly login to your favorite websites and applications
- Speed up surfing - No more forgotten passwords
- Single point of storage for all your confidential information
- 256 bit encryption of credit card and bank account details
- Secure Password Generator instantly creates complex passwords
- Supports multiple users on a single machine
- Anti Keylogging feature- stop hackers monitoring your personal data
- 'Drag 'n' drop' interface - Windows ease of use

Comodo i-Vault can protect and manage:

- Website password details
- Software access passwords
- Credit card numbers and PIN details
- Bank Account Details
- Telephone banking codes
- E-Mail account passwords
- Computer logon passwords
- Personal Contact details
- Cell Phone PIN codes
- And much more..



Phew! That is a lot of stuff! And I must admit I have yet to test all of these free products. Not for a lack of desire but because we are talking about six programs! I will say that I am about half way through my testing of the firewall product and it does seem to perform as advertised. But don't wait around for me, grab these six freebies and let me know what you think of them!



Symptoms and Cures



Bruce Cramer, Alamo PC

A+, Network+, Microsoft Certified Professional (Windows XP). Bruce is retired from the Army. He is the owner/operator of PC Pro Computer Services <www.pcpro4u.com> where he provides in-home/on-site computer services. He is a regular at the Doctors Is In on Friday mornings, at the Learning Center and has never met a piece of malware that he couldn't get rid of. Bruce can be reached by e-mail at <service@pcpro4u.com>. See his ad for PC Pro Computer Services on page 29.

As viruses and spyware evolve and get tougher to combat more stringent measures have to be taken to stay safe from them. I can remember when as long as you had “some” type of antivirus application to check the floppy disks you inserted in your computer you were “safe”. Today with the proliferation of broadband connections, email and Internet surfing you can get attacked by malware in too many ways. The problem is that most people don't recognize the symptoms of a malware attack. In this article I will discuss a few symptoms that you can look out for and cures for ITDs (Internet Transmitted Diseases) before they get a chance to bring your computer to it's knees.

Symptom #1: Is your computer running slow, does it take a while to boot up? This is a sure sign that too much is going on behind the scenes. Most systems today come with plenty of RAM or random access memory, to deliver all the resources you may need for your basic computing needs. However, malware is known to insert itself in your computers startup menu meaning it is running from the time your computer boots up and is there for the whole show taking up valuable resources that are needed by other legitimately installed programs. There are different methods to see what processes are running on your computer. Lets start with Microsoft's msconfig.

By clicking on the start button in the bottom left of your screen, then clicking on run and typing in “msconfig” (not available in Windows 2000) you will be presented with a menu that has several different tabs on the top. If you click on Startup you will be presented with a list of the items that startup with your computer. The ones with a check mark next to them are actually the only ones running when your computer starts up. Now comes the tricky part, deciding which ones are needed and which ones aren't. You will find that many are needed such as your antivirus, firewall, possibly your mouse and other hardware that you may have attached to your computer. You may find several that are not needed and some that are potentially dangerous. I do not advise that you use guesswork in this area. Many times I find myself going to google.com for the answer. Simply go to www.google.com and type in the unknown item name. Usually you find many good answers. If it is a legitimate file leave it alone. At times I have found a checkmark and next to it is a blank line. If the item is not identified it is a sure sign of something evil lurking, uncheck it. Another way to find out what is going on is to push Alt+Ctrl+Del at the same time. Your Task Manager will come up showing you what is currently running. Click on the Process tab and you will see lots of things running. Don't be alarmed, there is naturally a lot going on in the background that you are unaware of. However some of it might not be so good. Again picking these processes apart good from bad is not an easy task. I recommend that you go to a site like <http://www.liutilities.com/products/wintasksp/processorlibrary/> where they have an exhaustive list explaining many process. Once you identify a bad one simply click on End Task. I do this a lot because if a malicious process is running it is hard if not impossible for an antispyware program to effectively get rid of it. Once you've ended the task your antispyware application should be ready to finish the off the malware.

Symptom #2: You can't get to the website you want to or your home page keeps changing. You've been hijacked! Browser hijacking is a common form of malware. While not critical to computers operation it can be very frustrating and annoying. To resolve this issue you will need the help of an antispyware application. As I may have mentioned before no one antispyware application is top dog. There is an application that is specifically designed to remedy problems like browser hijackers but it does take some knowledge of computers. The application is called Hijack This. It is a free download from <http://www.spywareinfo.com/~merijn/downloads.html>. The program will show you items that run from your registry, Internet Explorer and other areas. This application isn't to be run by the faint of heart. There are several forums that you can post Hijack This logs to and experienced users will advise you as to what items should be checked to remove. That said there are a few antispyware applications that can also remove browser hijackers.

Spy Sweeper by webroot - <http://www.webroot.com/> has been on the top of anti-spyware killers lists for some time now and really gets the job done.

Be leery of a program that you have not installed popping up and telling you that you are infected with malware. Most likely the application will tell you that it has found malware on your system and offer to remove it after you purchase it. Many of these programs are rouge software simply out for your money. There is an huge list that goes into detail about such programs at http://www.spywarewarrior.com/rogue_anti-spyware.htm



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- ♦ vision care
- ♦ chiropractors
- ♦ alternative health care
- ♦ and more



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Internet, Part IX

Bill Beverley, Alamo PC

Bill is retired military and an intermediate computer enthusiast who has been an APCO member for seven years. He has contributed for the past six years.

If you visit a Web site and start hearing background music or unwanted audio, try pressing the Esc key, which often eliminates this audio. The exception is Flash movies, which keep playing the soundtrack no matter how hard you try to Esc.

Web Navigation

If you want to see more of the Web and less of Internet Explorer (IE), get rid of the Standard Buttons Toolbar. Right click at the top of IE and clear the check mark from Standard Buttons. Without the back and forward buttons, you'll need a different way to navigate using the mouse or the keyboard. On the keyboard, press Alt and use the left and right arrow keys. To use the mouse, you'll need one with a wheel. Using it press Shift and turn the wheel.

Web Pages

Similar to the foregoing tip, you can add a favorite web page/site to your browser's Favorite or Bookmarks list. There's also a second option to quickly access frequently used web pages/sites. Consider adding a shortcut to your desktop for that web page/site by right-clicking a blank area of the web page when in your web browser. Next choose Create Shortcut from the shortcut menu and then click OK in the confirmation box. A shortcut will appear on your desktop. The next time you want to get to this page just double-click the icon. Windows will then open your browser, initiate the Internet connection, and take you to this page.

Web Page Building

To create a Web page from scratch in Word, use the Web Page Wizard by choosing File, New. Click the Web Pages tab in the New dialog box. Double-click the Web Page Wizard icon. After a moment, you'll see a prototype Web page and the Web Page Wizard dialog box. Now click the type of Web page you would like to create. The prototype in the background changes so you can see what your Web page choice looks like. You can also click another type of Web page by a click on Next. The Web Page Wizard asks what visual style to use for the Web page so choose a visual style. Again, the prototype changes so you can see precisely the style you choose. Click another visual style if you wish and then click the Finish button. Follow the directions on the Web page itself to enter the text, graphics, and hyperlinks.

Web Page Printing

If using Microsoft IE and wanting to print a selected passage from a Web page, just highlight the desired text, use Ctrl + P, and in the Print window, click on Selection from the Print Range selection, and then OK. This same capability does not exist with Netscape Communicator. To change what gets printed on the bottom of Web pages that you print using IE, from within it, select File and then, Page Setup. You just need to enter special codes into the Header, what gets printed at the top of the page, and the Footer, what gets printed at the bottom of the page boxes. For example, to have the Web page's address printed, you would enter "&u" without the quotes. You can combine codes, too. To see a list of codes, click on the question mark in the upper right corner in the Page Setup menu and then, click on either the Header or Footer box. Often, pages are cut off on the right when you print them. To overcome this problem, print in landscape orientation rather than portrait. Landscape prints 11 inches wide, rather than 8.5 inches wide, however it usually requires more sheets of paper. To change the orientation in WinXP Home, click File, Print, Preferences, the Layout tab, select Landscape and click OK. WinXP Pro, 98/Me and 2000 are similar. If you just need part of the page, print only it by highlighting that portion of the page by clicking at the beginning of your selection. Then go to the end, press Shift and click again. Then click File, Print, and, under Print Range, click Selection, OK.

Web Page from a Word Template

You can save a lot of time by creating Web pages from Word templates. Instead of doing the layout work yourself, you can let Word do it. After you have created a new folder to hold your Web page, follow these steps to create a Web page from a template: Choose File, New to open the New dialog box. Now click the Web Pages tab. You'll see several template icons. Next click a couple of icons and look in the Preview box to get a glimpse of the Web pages you can create. Finally click the template you want and click OK. You get a generic Web page with sample text and perhaps a placeholder graphic. Your job now is to replace the generic text with your own words. You can call on all the formatting commands in Word, import clip art, and do what you will to make this Web page a lively one.

Webmaster

If a webmaster, you're probably always on the lookout for ways to enhance your pages. One of the most comprehensive webmaster-oriented sites on the Internet is Hits4me <<http://www.hits4me.com/default.asp>>. Hits4me offers numerous free tools for webmasters.

Web Search Tactics

Whenever you are using search engines, there are a few simple techniques that will enhance your results. First fine-tune your search entries. Use the "or" operator to widen your search, e. g. if seeking information on "dogs," then type in "dog or canine." The "and" operator is used to limit the number of returns to your query. Second, most computer users are familiar with the major search engines. But, you can achieve better results by using a "metasearch" engine that passes your query to several of those major search engines. One such metasearch engine is <www.altavista.com>. Third, should you be successful in your search, don't always take them as gospel.

Web Site Check

To know how popular your web site is compared to other web sites, you should try a freeware program called Link Popularity Check. All you have to do is download it at <www.checkyourlinkpopularity.com/> and install the program. Then enter your web site address along with the addresses of any competitors you want to check for comparison and run the check.

Web Site Logs

If using Win2000 as a Web server, you can check logs of Web site activity to see who contacts your site, when they visited, what pages they viewed, and what errors, if any, were returned. Logs are automatically saved in the \System32\LogFiles\W3SVC1 folder of your Win2000 Professional directory. Each file is named using the year, month, and day, so a file created today is named 020219.log. To open the file, just double-click it.

Web Site/E-mail Owner Identification

If you need to identify the owner of a web site, the easiest solution is to search with the standard URL. To do that, go to the Whois site maintained by Network Solutions. In the search box, enter the domain name without the www. However, there are potential problems with this method. Even if you have the standard URL, it may be private. At least one company will hide the registrant's Name for a fee. Also, some sites are registered with false information. If all you have is the Internet Protocol (IP) number, it is still usable in many cases. The IP number is the Web computer's actual address. For instance, an IP number would be something like 66.210.246.140. Click on the IP number opposite the name that begins with NET.

If the site in which you are interested is hosted on another firm's computer, you likely will get the host company's information. Will that company give you the data for which you're looking? It may well have a policy against providing any one with this information. You can trace e-mails this way, too. First, you need the header information off the e-mail you want to trace. You'll find instructions for accessing the headers in the various e-mail programs. Look for the word "Received:." You'll find two or more paragraphs beginning with "Received." The bottom one is the originator. Use the IP number there to find the originating computer. It probably belongs to the sender's ISP. ISPs usually act to stop the e-mails, but often will not give you the sender's name.

Web Site Shortcut

If you go to a Web site regularly, put a shortcut to it on the desktop. Right click an empty area of the Desktop and then click New, Shortcut. In the textbox, enter your favorite web site address <www.website.com> and then click Next. Now type a name for the shortcut, such as APCO and click Finish. This action puts the shortcut on the desktop. Double click it when you want to open IE and go to the site. This tip works in Win98/ME/XP.

Web Sites Toolbar

You can place a button on the IE 6 Toolbar for other web sites. To show it, you right-click an IE Toolbar and select Links. The Links toolbar normally contains shortcuts to Microsoft sites. You'll want to remove these to make room for your own. Simply right-click each link and select Delete. To add links, visit each site and drag the icon from the Address bar to the Links toolbar. You normally see about five before a small arrow appears. Click the arrow to view additional links.

Wiki

Wiki <www.pbwiki.com> is an unusual name for a collaborative Web page. Information is posted to the page, and then others can add to or edit it. Possibilities of a wiki are endless. Some people use them to collaborate on projects. Other people use them for sharing. Experiment, you'll never know until you try! Creating a wiki is a lot of work. However, PBWiki takes care of most of the work for you. After signing up, you can begin adding text and pictures to your page. Then you can share it with family or friends.

If you have IE and want to transfer favorite web sites from one computer to another, on the Favorites menu in IE, click Organize Favorites. Next open the Folder drop-down list at the top of the dialog box. This list will show you the path to your Favorites folder, for example C:\Windows\Favorites. Now using My Computer or Windows Explorer, find your Favorites folder and copy it to a floppy disk. On your new computer, find your Favorites folder and copy the old Favorites folder from the floppy disk to the folder containing the Favorites folder on your new computer. Because both folders have the same name, you'll be asked if you want to overwrite files with the same name. Click Yes to All and your old favorites will be on your new computer. Another option is to use free online services such as Yahoo! Yahoo's Companion will keep your favorites in one place if you have a Windows computer. E-mail services such as Hotmail offer this same service. Most Internet browsers have the ability to import and export your favorites or bookmarks.



Report from Search Results on Form

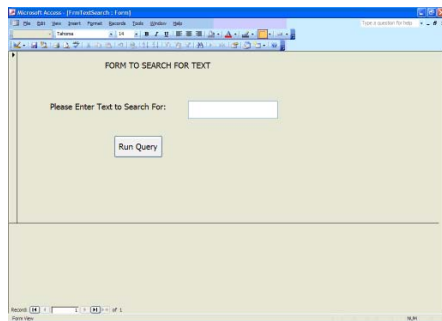
by James D. Duncan, CPA

James is a member of the Computer Club of Oklahoma City and an expert in Access and Excel. He can be contacted at bj4duncan@aol.com

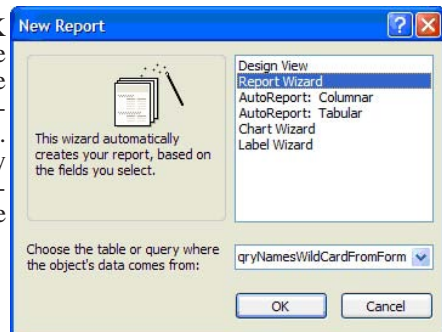
Two months ago we designed a query that we could give a parameter and get a list of matching items. Last month we added a form that a user could use without confusion. This month we will build a report from that form that called the query.

Here is the form from last month. This form let the user enter what text they wanted to search for. What we will do is build a report that uses the query as the source. Then we will put a button on this form to run that report.

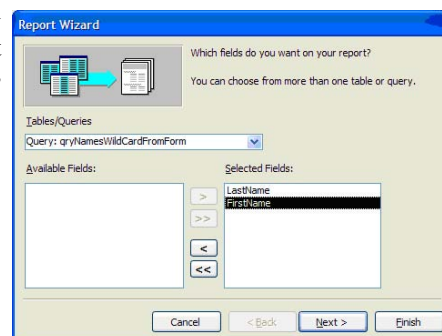
1. First we will create a report using the report wizard. Move to the report section. Select new report and we will let the report wizard help us. Choose the report wizard and choose the query that we used last month.



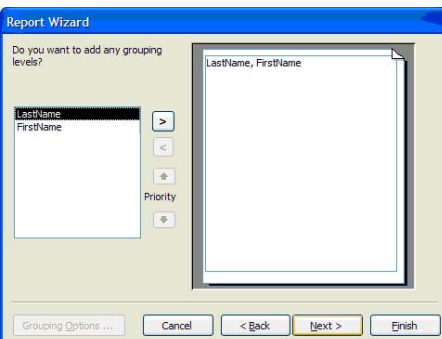
2. Click on the OK button. Then we will move all the fields over to the Selected Fields side. We can do this by pressing the >> button. Then press the Next button.



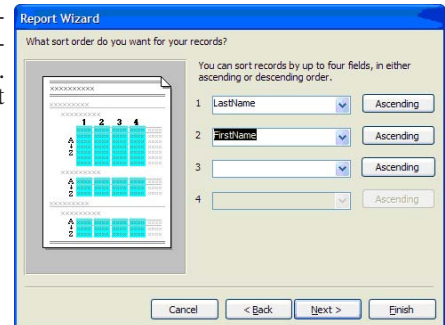
3. I did not do any grouping so just pressed Next on this screen.



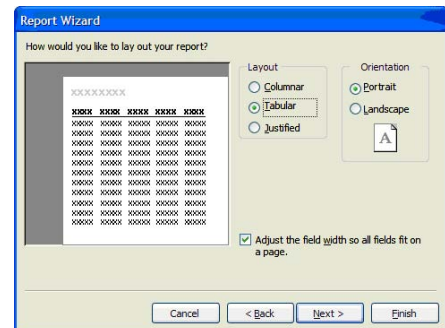
4. I used LastName and FirstName for the sort order. You will want to choose what ever fields you want the report to be ordered in. Then press Next.



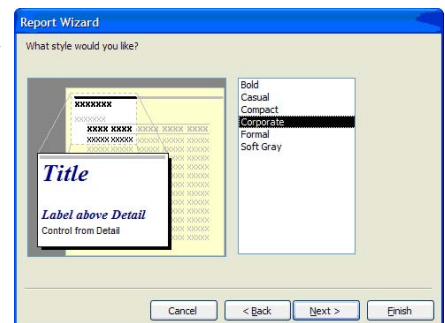
5. I usually do a Tabular layout with Portrait as the orientation. You can choose what fits your needs.



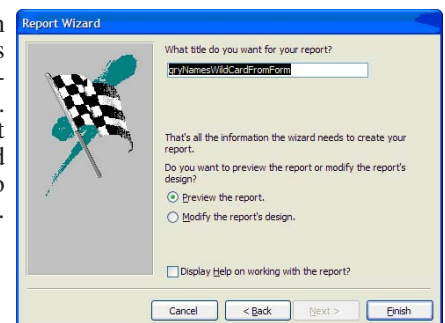
6. On the style page I go with corporate. You can pick and see what style fits your needs. It will show you as you pick. Then press the Next button.



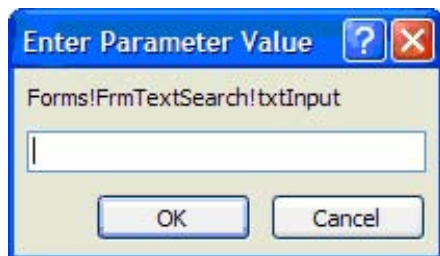
7. I replace the first three letters (qry in this case) with rpt to conform to naming conventions and press the Finish button.



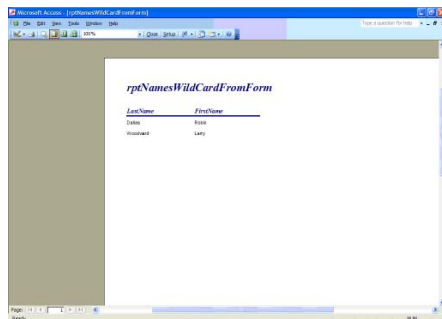
8. This will then run the query and ask us the following question from that query. The query does not know what the field on the form is yet so we give it some help.



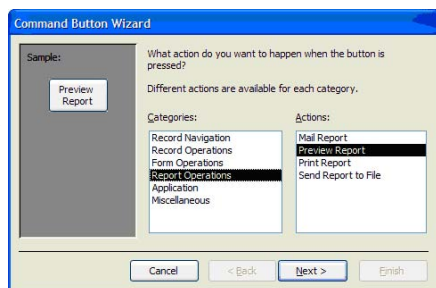
9. Enter an “a” and the following screen appears. This is the report with the query as its source. Not pretty and the title and headings need some work but something to see at this stage.



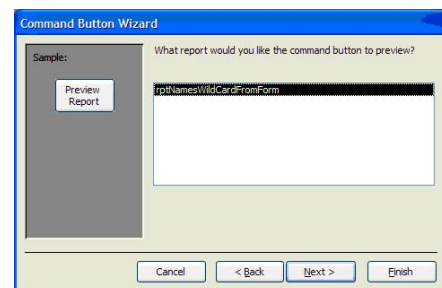
10. Now, go back to the form and we will put a control button on to call the report. From the toolbox select the command button. Click on the form, drag and drop the button on the form. When you release the mouse the command button wizard starts. Select the Report Operations and Preview Report and press the Next button.



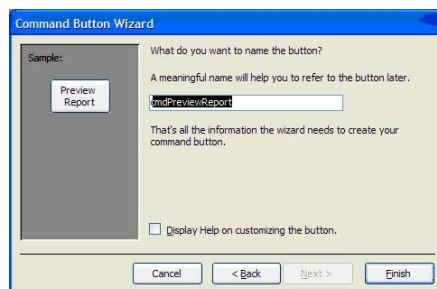
11. Select the report name from the list and press the Next button.



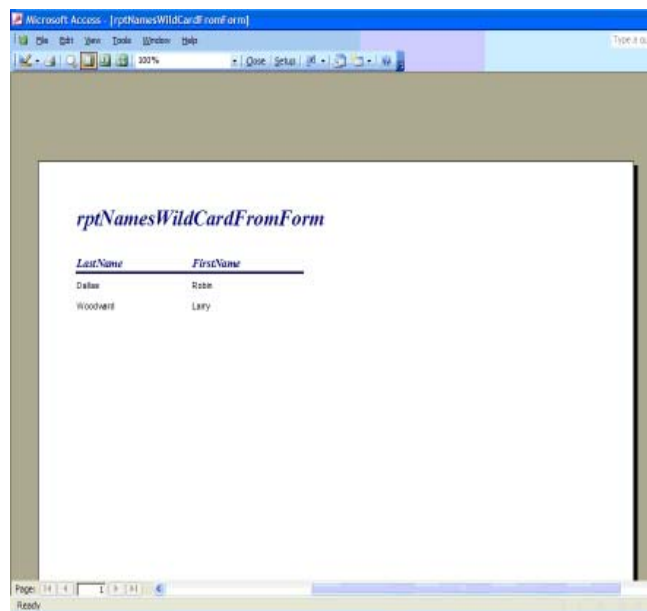
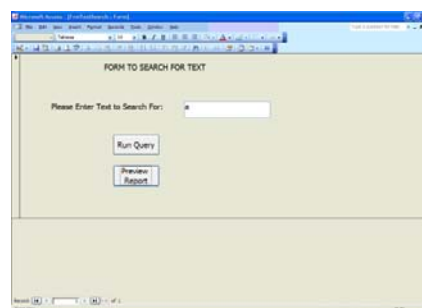
12. I change the name to have cmd in the front of it. This tells me this is a command button.



13. Click on the Finish button and we are ready to run the report from the form. Probably want to save here. It is always a good idea to periodically save your work. Run the form and we have the following.



14. Enter an “a” in the text to search for field. Press the Preview Report button and you should get the following.



This is the same as before except no questions about the source of the query this time. Amazing, huh?

That is all folks! Nothing to it, when you know how and now you know how. Practice is the key. Try new things. Do not be afraid to try things and do not be surprised when they do not work. It is called experience.

Pass it forward. Help someone and do not tell them. I like to mow my neighbor's yard when they are gone on vacation. I take my edger and tidy up the renter's front yard when I collect the rent. Put an extra 10 dollars in the collection plate on Sunday. Buy the kids fund raisers even from the second kid that comes along. Wash the dishes for the wife or girlfriend when they don't expect it or even better do it when they are gone and then do not admit to it.



Rootkits

Shane Hicks, (certified certifiable)

Shane uses a PC. E-mail him at <shane@vpwn.com.>

Remember rootkits? I talked about Sony's in May, when they installed hidden software on Windows users' computers when certain copy protected CDs were played on these systems. But rootkits aren't limited to Sony's efforts. They're used to spread viruses, Trojan horses, or spyware to your computer system.

What is a Rootkit?

I found some great definitions at <http://www.sysinternals.com>. They are classified depending on whether they survive reboot and whether they execute in user or kernel mode.

Persistent Rootkits

A persistent rootkit starts each reboot. Since the code executes automatically every time the system starts or the user logs in, the code must exist in a persistent store (i.e., the Registry or file system), and configured in a method to execute without user intervention.

Memory-Based Rootkits

Memory-based rootkits have no persistent code and don't survive reboot.

User-mode Rootkits

User-mode rootkits primarily modify the output from certain Windows API calls. These can be calls from file system exploration utilities, like Windows Explorer or the Command Prompt. The output can also be modified from communication that moves between user-mode clients and kernel-mode services that affect the file system and Registry.

Kernel-mode Rootkits

Kernel-mode rootkits can not only intercept native APIs in kernel-mode, but they can also directly manipulate kernel-mode data structures. These rootkits are hidden and will not display in process management tools like Task Manager or Process Explorer.

Detection

Since this malicious software is so dangerous, detecting it on your system is very important. However, few detection tools have received much attention. Here is a list of what is presently available:

1. RootkitRevealer, at <http://www.sysinternals.com/utilities/rootkitrevealer.html>, is an advanced utility for detecting rootkits. It is good for detecting persistent rootkits and detects all those found at <http://www.rootkits.com>. The Sysinternals website also provides a lot of additional information that you can use to learn about rootkits.
2. F-Secure's BlackLight is located at <https://europe.f-secure.com/blacklight/>. It's being distributed as Freeware until September of 2006.
3. IceSword is under development by a Chinese programmer. Though it is currently only available on Chinese sites, the English version can be downloaded from <http://www.xfocus.net/tools/200509/1085.html>. It's considered the toughest of all the antirootkit tools and has yet to be defeated. It even detects the Hacker Defender, one of the most popular rootkit tools used by hackers on the Internet today. It is presently the target of several hacker organizations, but IceSword's author is confident they'll have a difficult time defeating his work.
4. GMER is available at <http://www.gmer.net/>. It comes from Poland and combines the utilities offered by two of Sysinternals offerings: RootkitRevealer and Process Explorer. It will scan running processes, services, as well as registry keys and detect rootkits.
5. Hook Explorer from iDefense is at <http://labs.iddefense.com/labs-software.php?show=19>. According to PC World, it's good for finding files that have hidden themselves behind legitimate programs, like firewalls. Such programs might include key-stroke capture programs that are used to steal your passwords or credit card and other sensitive information.

In order to gain a better feel for these tools, I decided to take a trial run of three of these tools. I used Sysinternals RootkitRevealer, F-Secure's BlackLight, and IceSword. In comparison, the scan for RootkitRevealer took quite a bit of time. The messages that it gave me in the GUI were confusing and gave me some concern, at first. I thought I was infected. Then, I went and read the message boards on their website and discovered that the errors I was getting from their tool were common errors associated with common Windows functionality. The BlackLight utility had a one-button scan, was quick, and told me there were no problems. Assuming it was thorough, this was my favorite of the three. Finally, I found the interface for IceSword to be a bit confusing. I wasn't quite sure what I was supposed to do with it and there wasn't any clear way that I could find to use it to scan the hard drive for installed rootkits. I did find a button that would allow me to reboot and set the program to run as a service in the background to protect from future rootkit invasions—so I think that's a major plus!

The Switcher



...the ongoing tale of a Man and his Mac Macstuff

Shane uses OS X. E-mail him at <mac@vpwn.com>.

I found some more stuff for the Mac while looking around this month. Here's what I've got that I think you might find interesting:

FREE SOFTWARE

Information on WinSwitch 3.2.1 can be found at <http://wincent.com/a/products/winswitch/>. This handy little application lets you modify the appearance of the Fast User Switching menu in OS X, and even allows you to launch certain applications or documents automatically when you switch between those different users.

You can find AppleJack 1.4.2 at <http://applejack.sourceforge.net/>. From their own site, "AppleJack is a user friendly troubleshooting assistant for Mac OS X." It runs in Single User Mode (SUM) from a menu-based system to repair your disk, repair permissions, validate the system's preference files, and get rid of possibly corrupted cache files.

GrandPerspective 0.94 is located at <http://grandperspectiv.sourceforge.net/> and allows you to graphically see what's using up the space on your hard drive. With it, you can easily see what files and folders are taking up the most space on your system.

MemoryStick 1.5, and some other cool little programs from Matt Neuburg, can be found at <http://www.tidbits.com/matt/>. This program in particular let's you know how much RAM is being used by your system by displaying your Mac's memory allocation. I suggest you check this program out, along with some of his other stuff.

Another program is Memtest 4.13 found at <http://www.memtestosx.org/>. It is the self-described best utility for testing defective memory for the Mac OS. The site states that it is best at detecting intermittent problems that other utilities often fail to detect.

SMARTReporter 2.1.5, and some other fine utilities by Julian Mayer, can be found at <http://homepage.mac.com/julianmayer/>. The SMARTReporter can utilize the SMART technology found on most modern hard PATA and SATA hard drives and inform you of impending failure.

QuickImage CM 2.4 is located at <http://www.picture.com/software/macosex.php>, along with some other cool stuff. This OS X application allows a quick method of viewing images that you download via e-mail or from the Internet. What's cool about this is that it allows you to do this without launching any other applications (i.e. you get to view the images in the Finder!)

If you've ever designed web pages, you've probably come across the need to determine the hexadecimal value of a particular color. That's where ColorTagGen 1.0, found at <http://www.radproductions.net/>, comes in. Simply select the color in OS X's Color Picker and this little application will give you both the hexadecimal and the RGB code in one of several formats. From there, click on the Copy HTML button, and the code is copied for easy pasting into your own HTML code.

MAC TIP

I came across some Mac troubleshooting tips recently that I thought were interesting.

The problem from the user was this: While attempting to use the Disk Utility to repair permissions on his iMac running OS X 10.3.9, the repair would soon stop and the user would get the message "Disk Utility has lost its connection with the disk management tool and cannot continue. Please restart OS X." When the user would restart, it didn't help.

The solution to the problem was found by using Apple's Discussion Forum's (<http://discussions.apple.com/index.jspa>). This is a great site where Apple users from around the world can go to post their questions, problems, and solutions to anything Apple.

It seems this error is springs from a series of updates applied to OS X and iTunes / QuickTime. You see, when iTunes is updated, the old version of iTunes leaves behind receipts. These receipts cause the error when First Aid is run when launching the Disk Utility.

To fix the problem, quit iTunes and move it from the Applications folder to the Desktop. From the /Library/Receipts folder, delete all the receipts for every iTunes entry EXCEPT iTunesX.pkg and iTunesPhoneDriver.pkg. Then, place iTunes back in the Applications folder.

Now, when you run Disk Utility, you should be able to repair your permissions.



Updating your Web site

Susan Ives, Alamo PC

Susan Ives is a former president of Alamo PC. She archives these columns on her Web site, <www.susanives.com/>. If you visit, you can cut-and-paste the code instead of retyping it from the magazine – the ultimate in lazy Webmastering!

BLOG is short for Web Log and is a free and easy way to get timely information onto the Internet. It is a combination of software tools and web hosting that allows anyone to keep and maintain an online journal without having to learn complicated computer or Web design skills. It's a personal publishing system that gets your thoughts into cyberspace instantly. There's no way to count the number of blogs, but estimates start at a million and go up from there.

Seeing a blog is more enlightening than reading about them, so have a look at my newest blog at lazywebmaster.blogspot.com. In fact, you can finish reading this column there. The first thing that you will notice is that it is arranged chronologically, with the newest entry on top. This diary format is the defining characteristic of blogs. They are intended for instant and frequent communications.

I found that the service called Blogger, owned by Google, is the easiest to use, especially for beginners. Another good free service is Journal Space. With all of the blog services the first thing to do is to set up a free account, which essentially means giving the service your name and e-mail, selecting a password and a name for your first blog.

The blog name will become part of the address - yourblogname.blogspot.com. In Blogger, you can have unlimited blogs. Journalspace gives you one, and your user name becomes your blog address, so pick it carefully. So you don't get confused, Blogger is the name of the service and the address you visit to manage your blog. Blogspot is where the blog is actually hosted, and the address that your visitors use. They are the same service.

The other required action is to pick a blog template, or the look and feel of your blog. The service will give you a set of templates from which you may choose (and easily change if you change your mind.) More experienced users can download other templates from third-party sites, design their own templates or modify the ones provided (they are created in HTML and Javascript: you have access to the code.)

That done, start blogging! Each entry is called a post. You type in your post, then publish it (click a button) to make it go live onto the Internet. If you want, add a few hyperlinks and format the text, just as you would with a word processor. There's even a spell checker (hint, hint.) That's it. You can master the basics of blogging in about five minutes.

But why stop with the basics?

Most blog hosts allow you to post pictures onto your blog. Blogger doesn't have an innate photo capability so you have to use a third-party program or service to transfer photos to your blog.

Hello, from Picasa Software, is a free program that is installed on your computer. You can download it from www.hello.com. Hello is sort of an instant messenger optimized to facilitate sharing photos with friends, but an added feature is a "bloggerbot" (bot is shorthand for robot) that sends pictures to your blog. It's quite simple to use. Master this in about a half hour.

Another way to add photos to your blog is through another blog (are you confused yet?) BuzzNet is a photoblog, sometimes called a Moblog. The MO stands for mobile: many people use these to share photos taken on their mobile phones. You can send photos by e-mail over the wireless access protocol, or WAP, as well as using BuzzNet's easy Web-based interface.

After you set up your free account with BuzzNet you can upload up to 60 photos per month. If that's not enough, you can buy more photo storage (100 more images in a month for \$5; \$15 for 300 images, or go for it and get their premium service - no banner ads, custom templates, password protected galleries and 250 photos a month - for \$36 a year.)

BuzzNet is optimized for photos rather than text; it's set up more like a gallery, although there are ways to add comments to photos. One of the options is "Blog This!" which will send a photo and text to your Blogspot blog with the click of a button.

BuzzNet is especially handy if you are traveling and are using someone else's computer - at a cyber café, for example. Since the interface is Web-based, you don't have to worry about installing any software. Hint: if you do a photo blog while traveling with a digital camera, get a USB-based card reader (something like the SanDisk 12-in-1 Memory Card Reader, about \$35) so that you can read your memory card directly into the alien computer. If you are in the US and taking photos with your digital camera this is not necessary.

I set up a BuzzNet account: you can see my moblog there at susanives.buzznet.com. Sign up for your own BuzzNet account at www.buzznet.com. If photos aren't enough, how about audio? Both Blogger and Journal Space allow audio blogs, which are sound files that you call in from any telephone and are automatically posted to your blog. These work through 3rd parties and are considered "add-ins" to the blog. You can listen to one at lazywebmaster.blogspot.com. I used a service called audioblogger www.audioblogger.com which is free and lets you post an unlimited number of 5-minute long messages by calling them in over your phone. Some other audioblog services allow much longer posts - up to an hour! - and allow you to record them on your

computer using a microphone. Some people are actually doing full-length "radio" shows using audioblogs. Sometimes this is referred to as "PodCasting," as people download the audio from the blog onto their MP3 players (an iPod, for example) so that they can listen to it away from their computer. Video blogs (Vblogs) are also starting to show up. Look at www.audioblog.com for more info: their service is \$50 a year. This really just skims the surface of blogging. You can set up team or group blogs that multiple people can post to. You can enable a feature that allows others to add comments to your blog. There are blog communities that interact with each other.

Most blogs, including Blogger, will automatically set up an RSS (syndication) feed for you.

If you have your own Web space, Blogger allows you to integrate it with your web content so that it uses your URL.

Blogging can be serious business. Last summer, Express-News military reporter Sig Christenson maintained a daily blog from the battlefield in Iraq. They can also be silly and superficial. What you blog is up to you.

For personal use, a blog can be used for vacation photos - while the vacation is still happening! They can be used for family photos - a wedding? New baby? Or even just to post your musings. If you have the Google toolbar installed, there is a Blog button on it. If you click it, it will automatically post a link to the page you are currently viewing to your BlogSpot blog. Many people use this feature to share interesting sites with friends.

But blogs can be used for business, too. They are an excellent way to get current news up onto the Web fast; even someone with no technical skills can do it without waiting for the office Web guru to fit you into her busy schedule.

Here's a warning. Any free service, blogs included, can go out of business. Weblogs, a free service started by blog pioneer Dave Winer, suddenly shut down last summer, leaving thousands of bloggers homeless.

Give it a look. A blog might be all you need, or it could be a trendy and useful add-on to a full blown Web site.



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The Graphics Guy

Layer upon layers in Photoshop

Paul Vaughn, Alamo PC

Paul Vaughn is a freelance graphic artist, writer and web designer who has yet to object to anything smart. If you would like to see the Graphics Guy address a specific topic, email Paul Vaughn at <paulv@mac.com>.

Layers have been a feature of **Adobe Photoshop** since version 3 of the program came out in 1995. This feature has been refined over the iterations of the program to include *Adjustment Layers*, *Layer Masks*, *Vector Shape Layers*, *Text Layers* and even *Layer Styles*. This now indispensable feature has even made it into the consumer version of the application, **Photoshop Elements**. For those of us who started with **Photoshop** before there were layers, and have seen these features added gradually with each new version it has been a fairly manageable learning curve. For newer users this can be a dizzying miasma of concepts and jargon that easily intimidates. This month, we'll try to sift through the layers and see if we can unearth the basic concepts behind this very useful tool.

First we should talk about exactly what a layer is. If it helps, think of each layer as a sheet of clear tracing paper over the base background image. Things that you do to one layer don't necessarily affect other layers or the background. This opens up a world of possibilities for manipulating separate parts of a composition. Some of this selective adjustment of your images can be accomplished with **Photoshop's** selection tools, but layers lend you additional flexibility. The *Layers* palette is your control center for selecting and working with layers, while the *Layers* menu gives you access to extra commands and functionality.

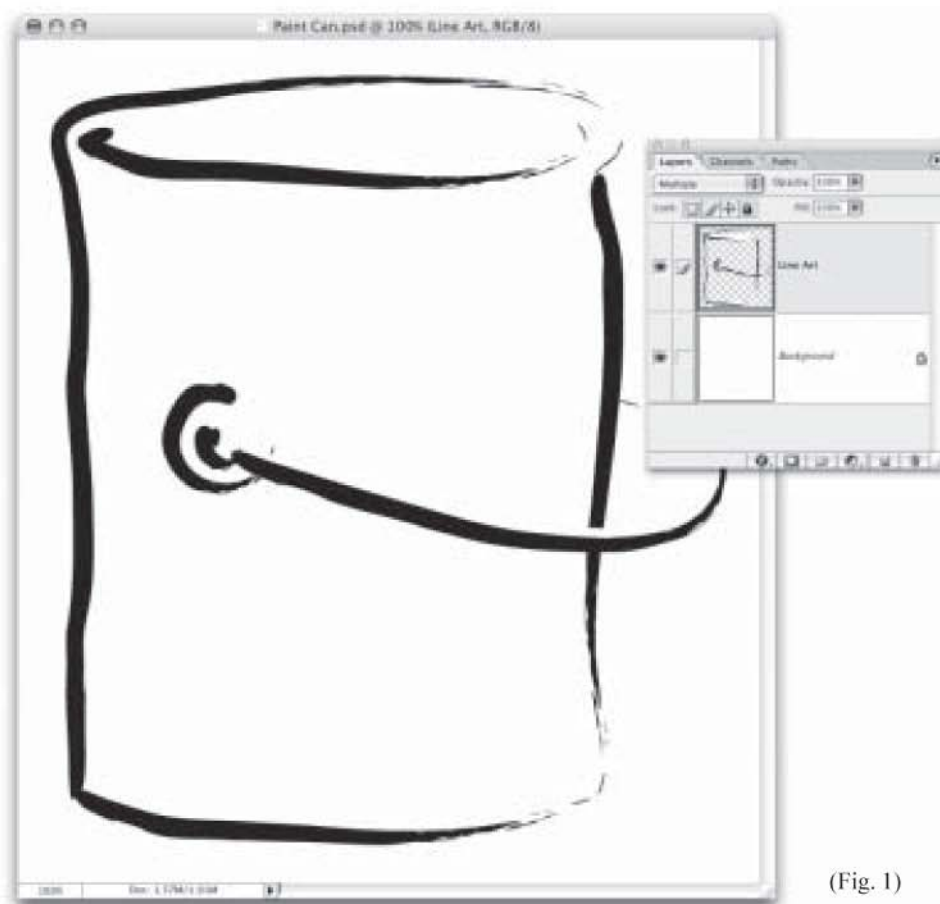
There are several ways that you can create a new layer. The easiest is to make a selection and then *Copy* and *Paste* it on

top of another image. You can also use the *Move* tool to drag one image onto another document to generate a new layer. Some tools and functions in **Photoshop** automatically create a new layer by default, the *Text* or *Shape* tools for example. You can also click the *New Layer* icon on the *Layers* palette or select *New Layer* from the *Layers* menu.

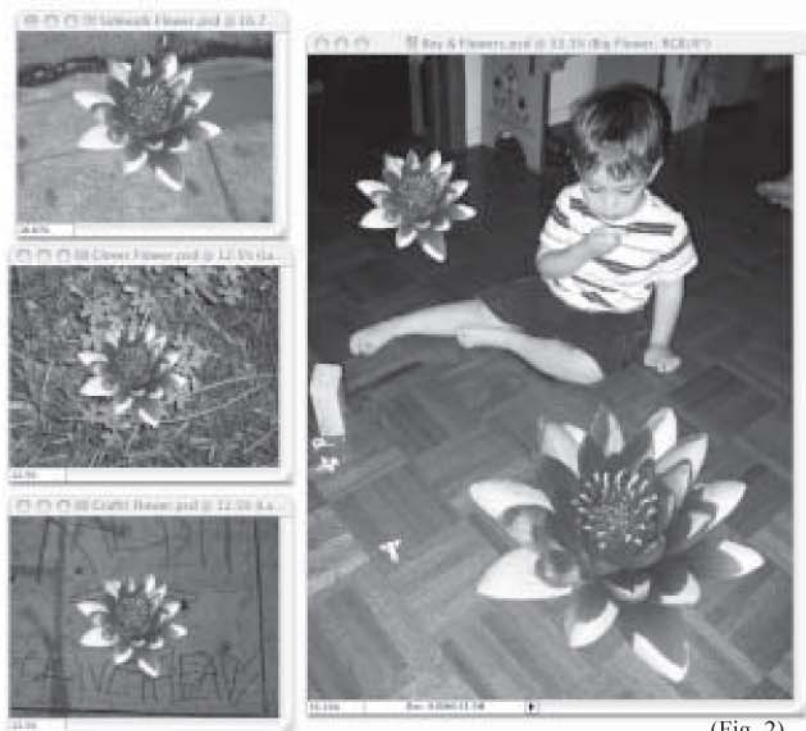
The *Layers* palette shows the layers of the file stacked in order (**Fig. 1**). The one at the top of the list will be visible 'above' the ones below it. To the left of each layer is an eyeball icon, clicking this toggles that layer's visibility. The box next to it indicates whether you are working on the layer or it's mask and let's you link one layer to another. At the top of the palette is the Blending Mode pop-up, by default set to *Normal*. *Normal* basically just shows the one image over the other. Other modes will composite the two images in a variety of different ways including lightening or darkening the underlying image. Next to this is the *Opacity* slider. This changes how much of the underlying image is seen through this layer, 100% means the layer is opaque, 0% makes the layer completely transparent. The lower the number, the fainter the layer appears. This is useful if you want to subtly ghost one image over another.

Below that is an area that is labeled *Lock*. Clicking any of these icons will lock various aspects of the layer: transparent pixels, the pixel fill colors, positioning or all of these. Left of that in *Photoshop*, but not **Elements**, is the *Fill* slider. This is similar to the *Opacity* slider, except that it does not change the opacity of *Layer Styles*. Again, very cool effects can be achieved with this function.

At the bottom of the *Layers* palette is a row of icons. From left to right they are *Layer Style*, *Layer Mask*, *New Layer Set*, *New Adjustment Layer*, *New Layer* and *Delete Layer*. **Photoshop Elements** skips a few of these as well. These functions are also available in the *Layers* palette menu (the triangle



(Fig. 1)



(Fig. 2)

at the top right of the palette) or in the *Layers* menu.

Having an element in your composition on its own layer allows you to move the layer around at will or put disparate pieces together (Fig. 2). You use the *Move* tool or the arrow keys to move the layer around. Any painting, scaling, rotating or other manipulations to that layer will not affect the image below. The *Layer Styles* let you add common effects like drop shadows (Fig. 3), glows and textures. When you add a *Layer Style* you will see an icon on that layer with a drop down triangle and a list of the *Layer Styles* below. Double-clicking the icon or the *Layer Style* listing will allow you to edit

the settings. *Layer Styles* are available in **Photoshop Elements** through the *Layer Styles* palette. There you will find many cool predefined effects, the settings are editable, but less so than in the full version of **Photoshop**.

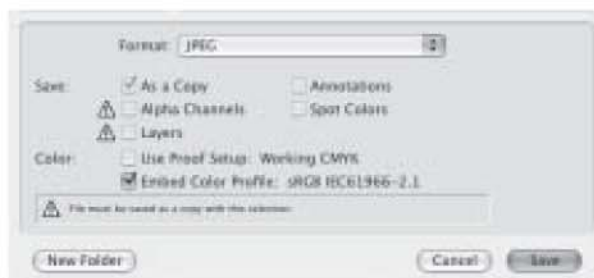
A very important thing to remember when you are working with layers is that there are only a few file formats that will preserve the layers. **Photoshop's** native *PSD* file format is the best choice (Fig. 4). **Photoshop CS**, 7 and

Elements 2 will let you save layered *TIFF* or *Photoshop PDF* files. Few programs take advantage of this new aspect of the *TIFF* specification. Many older programs will be confused or overtaxed by layered *TIFF* files so there is no compelling reason to use it. A layered *Photoshop PDF* is useful if you want to do further work with the file in **Adobe Acrobat Professional** to add animation or interactivity, but most users should stick to the *PSD* format.

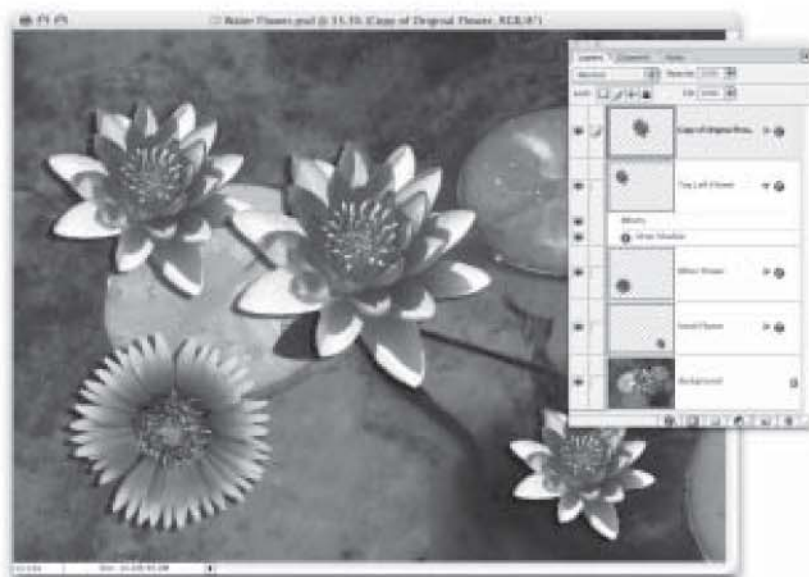


(Fig. 4)

Photoshop will warn you in the *Save* dialog box if the file format you have chosen does not support layers (Fig. 5). Choosing a non-layered file format will get **Photoshop** to save a flattened copy



(Fig. 5)



(Fig. 3)

of the file, no layer information will be preserved in the copy. The *Flatten Layers* command (*Layer > Flatten Layers*) merges all of the layers into a single background layer. Usually you will save a flattened copy of the image for subsequent use in a layout, presentation, web page or whatever and keep the layered **Photoshop** file if you want to edit your image later. You can print a layered file without flattening it first.

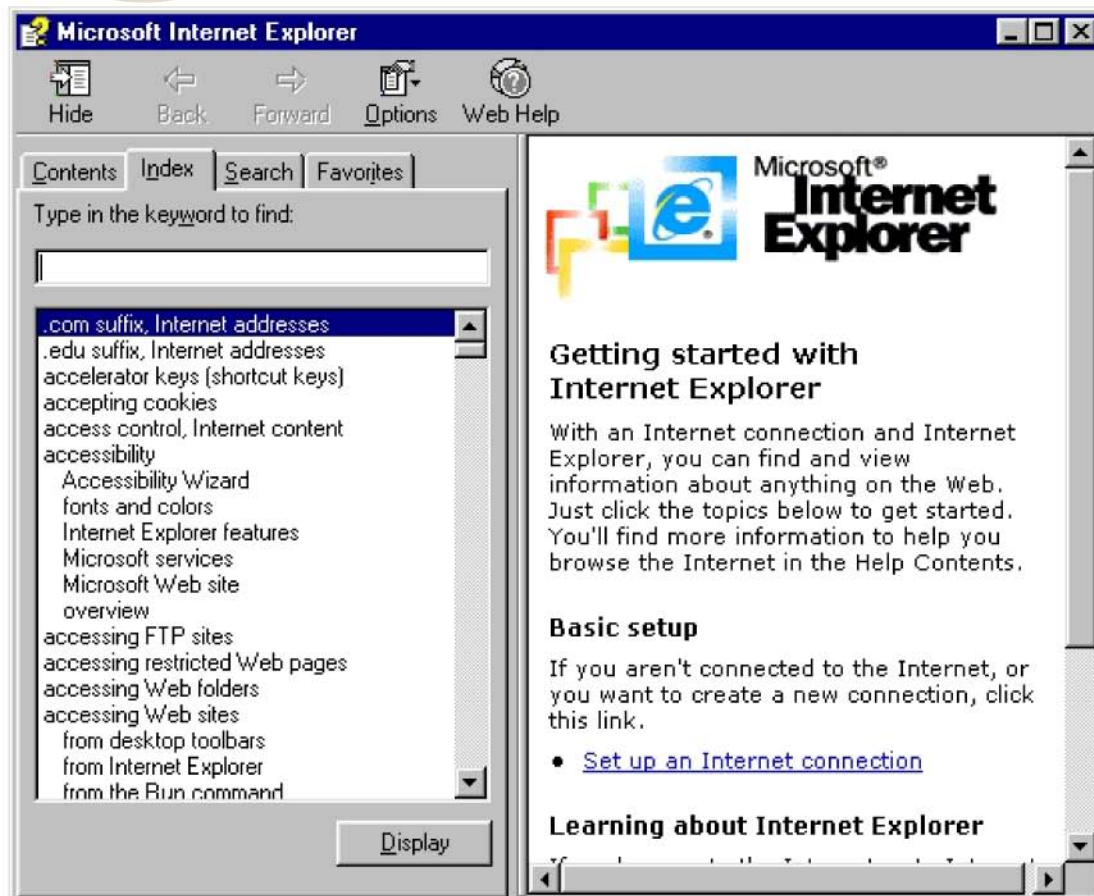
Layers add a level of creative flexibility that you will cherish if you enjoy working in **Photoshop**. The more you understand how **Photoshop's** layers work and what you can do with them the more you will wonder how you dealt with out them.



Internet Explorer - Connections

Ron Ingraham, Space Coast PC User Group

Ron is a member of Space Coast PC Users Group. Instructions in this column were created on a Windows 98 system. E-mail Ron at <ringram728@earthlink.net>



The Internet Explorer Help Menus offer a wealth of information in a variety of formats. The screen above is what first appears when you click on the Help menu, Contents and Index. You should be familiar with the basics of this function, since it remains virtually the same throughout most Microsoft Windows programs. The Keyword Search option allows you to enter a word of interest. If it appears in the Index, you are given the option of clicking on the Display Button, which will display the associated text in the right hand window, where 'Getting started' appears above.

Clicking on the Contents tab opens the window at the right. These subject areas have as many as five or more subheadings which provide detailed descriptions of the related functions or procedures. If I haven't made any of these things clear in the previous articles, here is your means of getting the information from

Microsoft.

The Search Tab allows you to enter a word. As an example, I entered URL. This produced a list of eight items dealing with URLs. The first of these was how to 'Access FTP Sites directly'. This may seem an obscure fit, but URL appears in the early text on this subject. By going thru the rest of the list, you may find exactly the answer you seek.

As a matter of interest, one of the items on the list deals with terms that appear in Netscape and IE, their similarities and differences. This is presented in a tabular format



of value to those who use both of these browsers.

The second item in the drop down menu is Tip of the Day. This produces a window or dialog box just above the Taskbar. Very useful tips appear here, such as this: "You can move your cursor into the Address Bar by pressing Alt + D". At the extreme right of this window is a "Next Tip" button. I was unable to reach the end of the available tips, all of them similar to this one..

Those of you using Netscape, or possibly Mozilla, who wish to try out Internet Explorer, should check out the help topic seen below.

Tips for Netscape users

Whether you are switching from Netscape Navigator or just want to use more than one browser, it's easy to learn and use Internet Explorer. From keyboard shortcuts to bookmarks, you can make the transition simple and fast.

- Keep unique and separate settings for Internet Explorer and Netscape Navigator. If you installed another Web browser after installing Internet Explorer and Internet Tools, some of your Internet Explorer settings may have changed. For more information, click:

[Resetting Internet Explorer settings](#)

- Compare terms in Navigator and Internet Explorer. If you've used Navigator in the past, you may find that words for common actions or features are different in Internet Explorer. For more information, click:

[Browser terms in Navigator and Internet Explorer](#)

- Keep all of your bookmarks as favorites. Internet Explorer automatically imports all of your bookmarks (without altering your bookmarks as they are displayed in Navigator) as Internet Explorer favorites. For more information, click:

[Sharing bookmarks and favorites](#)

- Use your favorite keyboard shortcuts. Internet Explorer and Navigator share many of the same keyboard shortcuts. In addition, Internet Explorer is fully accessible using the keyboard, so you can park your mouse if you want to. For more information, click:

[Internet Explorer keyboard shortcuts](#)

- Customize how Internet Explorer

The functions are very similar in each of these browsers. However, the terminology describing these functions varies from one to the next. For example, you save your preferred URLs in Netscape as Bookmarks. In Internet Explorer, they're Favorites. You can see that one of the tips above deals with keeping them in either or both browsers.

If you click on Online Support, you'll open a web

page, a portion of which appears below.

Welcome to Microsoft Help Support



[Windows XP Service Pack 2 \(SP2\)](#)

Microsoft Windows XP SP2 contains new security features that help defend your computer against viruses, worms, and hackers. Learn how to prepare to install the service pack, and how to take advantage of the new security features after installing SP2.



[Downloads & Updates](#)

Find software updates, Service Packs, patches, device drivers, and downloadable Microsoft products.



[Search the Knowledge Base](#)

Search Microsoft's database of support articles. If you already know the Knowledge Base article identification (ID) number, try our [Knowledge Base Article ID Number Search](#).



[Product Support Centers - Support Information and FAQs by Product](#)

ult.aspx?pr=ie

On the left of this screen are additional sources for online help, seen below. As you can see, the list is

Top Support Centers

Internet Explorer
Office XP Suite
Outlook
Outlook Express
Windows 2000
Windows 98
Windows Media Player
Windows Millennium Edition
Windows XP

More Support Centers...

Support Options

Self Support Options ▶
Downloads & Updates ▶

quite comprehensive, covering most of the applications you might have. Each of these has the following or similar areas of interest: Highlights and Top Issues, Step-by-step Instructions and How-To Articles, Downloads and Updates, Downloads, Updates, and Utilities, and finally Support Webcasts. These link to various articles in the Knowledge Base and elsewhere. Check it out. Microsoft might actually surprise you. □

Are You Concerned About Loss of Personal Data?

By **Carlisle Barnes**, Newsletter Editor, Bowling Green Area Microcomputer User Group, KY <Newcarlislebarnes@insightbb.com> <<http://www.bgamug.org/>>

The advanced state of Information Technology is one of the great blessings of modern times. Today it is built into our economy, and it would be hard for both individuals and corporate America to do without it. However, along with the blessings to us have come curses. These curses are going to get considerably worse unless some dramatic changes are made in the way stored information is handled by the majority of organizations.

Computer spam, pfisheng/phishing schemes and other e-mail con games, as well as a multitude of ever changing computer viruses are obvious curses to everyone using a computer on-line. Great effort is being expended to get these curses under control. Very good and still improving anti-virus programs are available. Bill Gates said recently that spam will be completely under control within two years. (It will be interesting to see if Bill is right about that.) The point is that something positive is being done to correct those Internet curses.

However, one of the worst of current IT curses is identity theft, and very few positive things are being done to stop it. Identity theft is not associated with the Internet as are many other IT curses, but it has become very much associated with computers because of the casual way in which CD's, laptop computers, and portable hard drives are often handled. People who would never ever consider leaving a collection of gold coins laying in the back seat of a car, or leaving a thousand dollar bill on a table while going to get another cup of coffee, seem to have developed very little concern about leaving a portable computer, a container of CD's, or even a portable hard drive in all sorts of places where they can be easily stolen. (Home?)

Unlike sensitive data handled by military or military contractor organizations, the personal data stored in files of civilian Government organizations, major universities, insurance companies, credit card companies, and etc. are often treated as casually as advertising material. A recent extreme example is shocking and deserves examination.

Not long ago, a Veteran's Administration senior analyst took home electronic data from the office to do after-hours work on his personal computer. He had done this numerous times before. The data included names, Social Security numbers, and dates of birth on 26.5 million veterans. These data list essentially all military personal who have served following the Second World War. The analyst's laptop and a Government owned external hard drive (along with all the data under discussion on it of course,) were stolen in a May 3 burglary of his home. He reported the theft within an hour of discovering it. VA Secretary of Veterans Affairs Jim Nicholson made a public announcement of the theft on May 22.

Jim Nicholson appeared before the House Committee on Veterans Affairs to explain the situation. While accepting a certain amount of personal responsibility for the data breach, Nicholson expressed anger toward the analyst who took the data home "without permission." Further, he said "As a veteran myself, I have to tell you I'm outraged. Frankly, I'm mad as hell." Afterward, he fired the analyst involved. For what appear to be justifiable reasons, the analyst is now suing to be reinstated.

What Nicholson did not report, and later insisted that he did not know, was that the analyst had been taking data home as part of his regular work routine since 2003. (Is the VA a good place to work?) Furthermore, existing documents dated September 5, 2002 show that the analyst -- lead programmer within the Policy Analysis Service -- was officially permitted to take the external hard drive home for "work-related projects." Specifically, he had a property pass allowing the laptop and accessories to be removed from the building and also a permit allowing him to access any Social Security numbers on the hard drive. It later turned out that there was yet a third document allowing him to remove various materials from the VA building.



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A certain amount of security could have been provided for these “take home” documents, by encrypting them. However, a reasonable up-front cost for the systems, services, processes, and procedures to encrypt 100,000 or more customer records is estimated to be about \$500,000. VA working personnel probably couldn’t justify that sort of expense to their budget group.

Once files have been stolen, it is difficult to determine if the data have been used illegally. The computer and VA hard disk have now been returned, apparently without data loss, but if it is eventually considered necessary to contact all affected veterans and to provide them with credit-checking services, then there will be an estimated taxpayer cost of at least \$100 million.

The fiasco was not quite finished when Nicholson appeared at the congressional hearing. It was revealed at that hearing that Pedro Cadenas, the VA’s chief information security officer, had resigned by e-mail 30 minutes before the proceedings began. Nicholson said he was completely unaware of Cadenas’ intentions. Evidently, Nicholson has learned many things rather late.

On June 28th, not quite two months after they were stolen, the computer and external hard drive were turned in to the FBI Office in Baltimore, Maryland. A tipster, in response to the \$50,000 reward being offered, had let a US Park official know that the equipment might be recovered. Quickly then, the stolen items were turned in to the FBI. The tipster was not identified, nor was it clear if either he or anyone else would receive the \$50,000 reward. Furthermore, no one has been arrested for stealing the equipment, unless that particular information is being held secret for some reason.

Inspection of the hard drive by the FBI does not indicate access to the data during the time that the drive was in the possession of the thief. Superficially then, no data were compromised and there is perhaps nothing to worry about.

Unfortunately, if the thief was a computer expert, knew what he had, and wanted to make illicit use of the data, then he could have transferred everything on the external hard drive to another hard drive without leaving a record. While that is possible, it seems improbable and it seems unlikely that there is reason for continued concern. However, can we be absolutely sure?

Those of us who served in the military, or worked for military contractors are quite well aware of the way in which sensitive intellectual material is handled by these organizations. While current practices are unknown to the author, not very many years ago, there were at least five security levels. Restricted meant that the information was not to be given to unauthorized people, was certainly not to be made available to newspapers or to other media, and was not to be left anywhere where it might be stolen. The only people allowed to see the material were those with a need to know about it. Confidential material classification, one step up from Restricted meant that the material was not to be made available to anyone not having appropriate clearance i.e., clearance by appropriate investigators. Except when being used in a cleared area by cleared personal, the material was to be locked in a desk or file cabinet with a safety bar and a combination lock. All desks and cabinets were to be regularly checked by guards. Secret material was to be handled in somewhat the same way, but clearance was more difficult to obtain, storage was in a secure safe, not in cabinets or desks, and material was to be guarded twenty four hours a day, and seven days a week. Top secret material was of course even more closely guarded, and investigations for personal clearance were carried out by FBI personnel; in general all security was substantially tightened. . Then there was “Special Clearance” which need not be discussed here, but which was very tight indeed.

It is absolutely shocking to note that as serious as identity theft can be, hardly anyone handling social security numbers, driver’s license numbers, medical history facts, educational information, and etc., etc. is required to treat personal information in their possession with a level as high as military Restricted. As this article was being written, yet another security breach occurred at Ohio University, Athens, Ohio. There were several resignations from the school staff as a result, but it is one more case of “locking the barn door after the horse is gone.”

If current sloppy handling of private data continues, then it is only a matter of time until identity theft becomes a disaster.

This article by your newsletter editor is as close as you will get to a BGA-Bytes editorial. However, your editor considers the matter to be a lot more serious than it is being treated by many people and particularly by most public officials.

If you would like to encourage your congressmen or other public officials to put some teeth into privacy laws and into laws concerning the handling of private information, then may I encourage you to write and let them know how you feel.

To help you get started in sending letters, here are three addresses of interest. There are numerous others on the Internet.

U. S. Senator Mitch McConnell, 361A Russell Senate Office Building, Washington D. C. 20510

U. S. Senator Jim Bunning, 316 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington D. C. 20510 U. S. Representative Ron Lewis, 2418 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington D. C. 20515



E-mail enabled Queues

by **Larry Lentz**

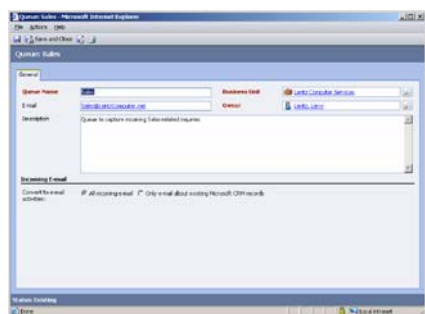
Microsoft Dynamics CRM MVP

Recently our Microsoft CRM study group took a deeper dive into Queues. Queues are a sort of like public folders where Cases and Activities can be stored and then picked up by users for further action. These are great in a Customer Service scenario where cases can be placed in a queue and picked up by the next available Customer Service Representative.

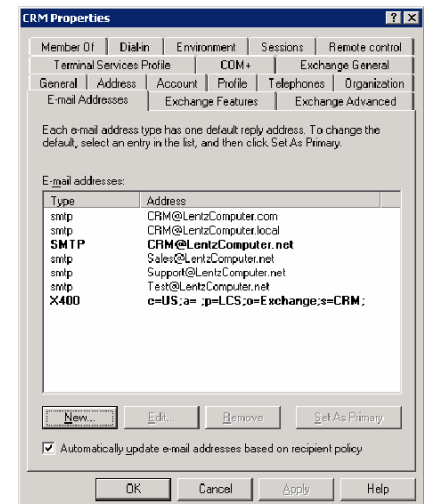
Queues can also be assigned an e-mail address. Messages addressed to the queue appear in the associated queue and can be picked up by any user. A good example of how this can work would be a Sales queue. Inquiries or orders addressed to Sales@yourcompany.com would go into the queue. From there, any Sales Representative could pick them up and follow through with the sale.

Creating a Queue is fairly simple. With the CRM web client, select Settings from the Navigation pane, then Settings again, and then Business Units. Here you will find Queues. Select New to create a new queue. Very little is required, just the name of the queue, a User to be the Owner, and the associated Business Unit. That's all you need for a simple service queue. If you want to e-mail enable the queue, it becomes a bit trickier.

The first step is to assign an e-mail address to the queue. This is an optional field on the Queue form. You could assign the e-mail address of a user such as joe@mycompany.com. Then e-mail addressed to Joe would also show up in the queue. However, if you want to set up a Sales queue you have a bit more to do.



When you initially install the CRM E-mail Router on your CRM server, it asks for the mailbox the router is to use to process messages. I had created a user and e-mail mailbox called, likely enough, CRM. To create the e-mail address for our Sales queue, we added an additional e-mail address to the CRM account. This is done from the user's properties form, E-mail Addresses tab. Messages addressed to Sales@LentzComputer.net will actually go to the CRM mailbox.





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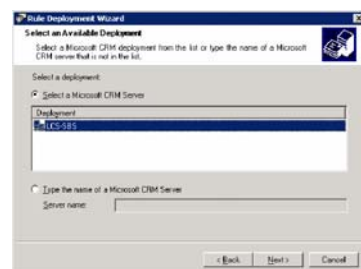
The next step is to run the Rule Deployment Wizard. This can be accessed from Server Management, Advanced Management if you are running Small Business Server and the CRM Small Business Edition. Otherwise you'll have to access it from Start -> All Programs.



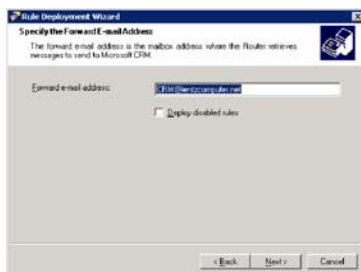
The wizard starts off with the Welcome to the Rule Deployment Wizard screen. Simply click Next to proceed.



Then you are asked to select the CRM server.



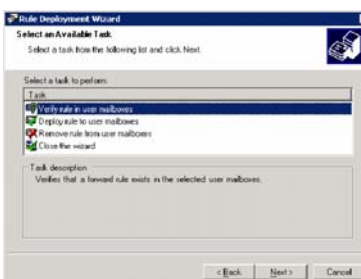
Then you must specify the e-mail address that will be used to by the router to retrieve messages to route to CRM. In my case, it's CRM@LentzComputer.net. Then click Next.



The Select Users dialog box then lets you select the appropriate users and Queue to configure. In our case, the account CRM has several entries including Sales. We select Sales and hit next.



Next we select what the Rule Deployment Wizard is to do from the Select an Available Task form. We select 'Deploy rule to user mailboxes'. Hitting Next completes the process with a couple of more windows to wrap it up.



Something to be aware of when configuring e-mail enabled queues is the Owner of the queue specified on the Queue form must be a CRM user with full access. When experimenting with this in our study group, we assigned the Administrator account as the owner. However, the Administrator was selected for Restricted Access Mode. Restricted Access Mode users do not consume a CRM client access license. However, they also may not own e-mail enabled queues. They can own them but e-mail won't be routed to the queue. We unselected Restricted Access Mode and our queue was able to receive e-mail.

Now when a message is sent to Sales@LentzComputer.net, it goes to the CRM mailbox. If you configure your Outlook to view the CRM mailbox, you can see messages enter and then disappear a bit later as the router dispatches it to the appropriate Queue.

The Queues are viewed by users from My Work, Queues on either their Outlook or Web CRM clients. Users can select items from the Queues and 'Accept' them. Once accepted, they will go into their In Progress personal queue to be worked on.

E-mail enabled Queues can be a great tool for organizations that may have departments where several users might need access to a pool of messages such as Sales, Info, Support, etc. Setting them up is actually pretty easy, once you know the steps.

Larry Lentz is a Microsoft Dynamics CRM MVP, an MCSE + Internet, an MCSE on Windows 2000, a Microsoft Certified Database Administrator, an MCSA: Messaging on Windows Server 2003 and Exchange 2003, and Past President of Alamo PC. He is the owner of Lentz Computer Services, www.LentzComputer.net, which he founded in 1989. LCS is the first Microsoft partner in San Antonio to earn the Microsoft Small Business Specialist designation and is a Microsoft Certified Partner. Larry has over 24 years as a computer professional and specializes in Microsoft Small Business Server and CRM. He chairs the Alamo PC CRM Study Group (MCSE Advanced SIG) affectionately called 'The Geeks' and the Alamo PC Small Business Server Special Interest Group (SBS SIG). Larry is available for presentations on technology for small business and can be reached via e-mail at Larry@LentzComputer.net



Web junkie

Web 2.0 and Portable Computing

By **John Abbott**, member of the Bentsen Grove Resort Computer Club, Mission Texas
<John@bgrcc.com> <www.bgrcc.com>

Portable Computing has always lagged behind the rest of the computing market. This is probably because there are currently less mobile devices than computers. But that is about to change. According to Steve Rupel (leading PR company on the planet) billions of mobile devices will reach the market this year and by 2010 there will be 50 million of them sold quarterly.

Mobile device? You won't be calling them Pocket PC or Cell Phone long; maybe PCC for Personal Communication Center. The merger of all forms of digital communications is rapidly taking shape. Cell phones now contain very limited access to the web, receive very limited email, and take limited resolution pictures – oh and they work as phones too. With smaller and more low powered devices quickly coming on scene these limits will expand exponentially.

My project over the past month has been the installation of an Operating System on a USB Flash-memory Device (UFD). I started with a full blown Linux distribution on a USB 80 gigabyte micro hard drive. Well after some real torture and lots and lots of reading I managed to get it operational. However, in editing the boot file I managed to misspell something and now I've got to start all over again.

But I did find a couple of small Linux distributions: Damn Small Linux and Puppy Linux. I downloaded the ISO files for each and started working on a flash drive. Today I managed to get the thumb drive fully functional. Along the way I've learned a lot about what I still need to learn about executing from a CD or a UFD. But DSL in a tube really works.

Why do this? Well because I know that Web 2.0 is going to dominate the future of the web. With more and more of the platform being located on the Internet, less and less will be required on your local computer. The computer will take on more and more of the role of thin client (from a client/server relationship where all the applications are on the server). This in turn will have a direct impact on the cost of computers which will no longer have to come with expensive 3rd party software. So I created a portable thin client.

Web 2.0 (platform on the web) will take away a great deal of the chest thumping over O/S because the web interacts with all operating systems. The feature rich web already offers on-line mail processing that works perfectly with thin client or host computer. I am an advocate of Google's Gmail. I can access it on the web where it neatly threads my messages and stores up to 2.5 Gigabytes of mail in the in-basket or in the search able archive. From within that mail system I can also originate chats with my friends and maintain my calendar. I can make my calendar or part of it accessible to colleagues for event coordination.

I can use Zohowriter.com for my word processor. Zoho is a full strength word processor with all the power you find in Works, Word or Open Office (or any of the dozen or so word processors available). I am able to store my documents on-line, download them to my computer, publish them on the site so they can be collaborated by associates whom I have previously arranged access. I can upload files from remote files (my computer or yours) and modify and store or simply store them on-line. And as an added feature I can use Zoho as a mail client; sending, receiving and originating email. Zoho automatically assigns you an email account when you register (free).

There will be some who say: "well I can have several programs open at once on my desktop." And my response would be, fine, I have multiple web pages open on my computer as I use Zoho to write this. I have a page set up with Wikipedia to check facts, the weather, my Google mail, my personal mail web account, XM radio playing great jazz. And in a few moments I'll open another and watch the news on TV – all from my thumb drive. I sure hope my Gizmo or Skype phones don't ring during the news!

Web 2.0 and The Evolution of the Small Office/Home Office (soho)

By **John Abbott**, member of the Bentsen Grove Resort Computer Club, Mission Texas
<John@bgrcc.com> <www.bgrcc.com>

Will the evolution of Web 2.0 have any lasting effect on the proprietary software vendors? I believe so to a limited extent. There are a myriad of new Web 2.0 companies springing up hourly. Each offering something unique to attract users. For some, this will prove satisfactory enough that they will no longer purchase proprietary mail programs or word processors, and possibly even spread sheets.

The advent of Open Office has most certainly put a dent in the profit margins of Microsoft's Office Suite. There is a new look coming from Microsoft Office that adds a lot of eye candy to their existing Suite, but not a lot of additional function. I believe that between Open Source and the Web 2.0 companies the bottom line at Microsoft will feel their presence.

Even though Microsoft is reacting to the popular features of Mozilla's Firefox browser by copying most of them into Internet Explorer 7. IE7 still doesn't have several of the most advanced features of Firefox like ad blocking and several extensions made available for free download. And the folks at Mozilla aren't sitting around waiting for Microsoft to catch up, they are already beta testing Flock, a Web 2.0 oriented browser with blogging and social tagging built into its rich function package. However, if you don't consider yourself a true Web 2.0 Juggernaut then you may not enjoy it as much. It is designed to accommodate the blog grabbing and social bookmarking of web sites.

Google is clearly among the leaders in Web 2.0 features. They offer on line mail, on line calendar, financial portfolio tracking, the best search engine on the planet, news aggregated to your personal interests, image search, even a Linux search engine or a couple of other specialized search engines. And Google was the company that forced the email providers into offering 2 Gigabites of storage for their mail. [<http://www.google.com/intl/en/options/>]

But there are other companies close on the heels of Google. My current favorite is inbox.com inbox offers personalized email, with spell checker, rich text (font control) manageable folders and the absolutely best spam system on the Internet. You can set your Spam to capture any mail not from someone in your address book. Or you can set it to challenge anyone not in your book and then hold that challenged mail in an "Unverified" folder where you can accept or permanently reject it. Along with the email, you are offered 2 Gb of storage with folders containing your various upload/download type .: music, documents, pictures or files. And if that weren't enough, inbox also offers a calendar that emails you up to 3 reminders on calendared events. [<http://www.inbox.com>]

Another great company is Zoho. Zoho derives its name from SOHO (small office/home office) and it has laid in virtually everything one would need. The Zoho stable contains email, spread sheets, planners, collaborative white boards etc. Their banner program is Zoho Virtual Office and it is complete with reminder calendars, email, a virtual drive (only with XP) Instant Messaging, task management, and all of it can be collaborative for up to 10 users. Not all of the features are available on the free packages, but small version is available for you to try before you buy. [<http://www.zoho.com>]

The only thing missing from a small office/home office would be a telephone. Ah, but you can have that on-line too. From full service phone systems like Packet8 to totally free Gizmo and Skype. The packet8 system will give you an adapter to plug your phone into, or you can buy a Uniden phone system with a base phone and up to 10 wireless handsets for \$79. Or you can use your current phone connected into their free adapter and your up - both systems carry a \$20 a month fee for caller ID, three way calling, and your choice of area code and depending on where you live you can keep your phone number. If you want to get exotic if you buy their VideoPhone and then the same \$20 a month. [<http://www.packet8.net/>]

But for the true Web 2.0 user, Skype or Gizmo reign supreme. Each is totally free, and has adapters for a web camera. Of course, if you are not calling another SIP subscriber you will have to buy an outgoing AND an incoming outside line. I prefer using Gizmo because it has superior audio setup and a test point to call to check for echo suppression or the lack thereof. [<http://www.gizmoproject.com>] [<http://www.skype.com>]

And finally for setting up those conference calls you can always use the services of Gizmo which offers a free conference system. For those using Gizmo, it is entirely free. For those checking into the conference from their cell phones or land line phone they will pay the standard rate to their provider. There is a great company called Live Office that gives you much better control (mute, mute group, roll call etc) and it too is absolutely free and the quality of the connection much improved over Gizmo. And should you need to step up to a toll free call in system, Live Office offers them for a variety of rates.

<<http://freeconferencing.liveoffice.com/>>

And now you are equipped to take your entire home office with you in a USB thumb drive. And depending on the version you use, it can all be automatically encrypted. SOHO has become portable and secure.

Why Do You Get So Much Spam?

by Vinny La Bash,
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Sarasota Personal
Computer Users Group,
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The earliest recorded instance of what may be described as spam occurred on May 3, 1978. A sales representative for Digital Equipment Corporation (DEC) named Gary Thuerk sent a message to everyone on the Arpanet data base (now known as the Internet) on the West coast of the United States. Thurek wanted to notify the recipients of an open house that his company was hosting a demonstration of new models of the DEC-20 computer.

In 1978 the Arpanet had a certified "acceptable use policy" which said it couldn't be used for anything except research and education. Thuerk's action was a very clear violation, and when DEC got a very strong response from the Arpanet community objecting to the misuse, the company promptly promised to stop. Spam would not appear again for many years.

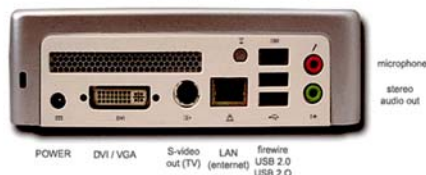
Today, estimates of the amount of email that is defined as spam range from 66% to 94%. Whatever the actual figure is, the good news, if you want to call it that, is that spam appears to be leveling off.

Congress has passed anti-spam legislation. Spam receivers are angry, Internet Service Providers try to filter out spam messages, and spammers are loathed by the general community of internet users. Why do spammers continue to operate in the face of all this general repugnance?

In an article for Wired Magazine, Brian McWilliams provides a very depressing answer. McWilliams discovered a security flaw on a website operated by a group selling pills guaranteed to enlarge

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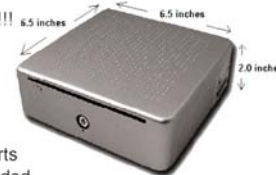


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the male sexual organ. The reporter found that over 6,000 orders for the product had been placed in a time span of about a month. Business and medical professionals, athletes, and even women bought the pills. Many buyers made multiple purchases at \$50 per bottle, despite an obvious lack of credit card security on the site. The web site provided no way to contact the company except by placing an order.

Being a good reporter, McWilliams was not deterred by the company's efforts to hide behind fake registration data, disconnected phone numbers, and phony email addresses. Eventually he revealed that the company was owned by a 19 year old high school dropout, and a neo-Nazi adherent.

The business appears to be highly profitable, net costs being about \$15 per bottle of pills, but according to the FDA, there is no credible evidence that the product works.

Now you know why you get so much spam. It's because people who should know better respond to it and buy products from these companies.

Selling products of dubious value is not the only kind of spam on the net. This week alone I have won three European lotteries, and there are at least a dozen people in Nigeria who each want to give me \$12 million dollars for helping them launder money. Notification came just yesterday that Bill Gates is going to give me \$500,000 because I forwarded a few emails for a good cause.

Perhaps the best way to reduce the number of people buying from spam is to educate people about the problem. Unfortunately that takes time, but if we don't take the time to tell people why they shouldn't buy from spam, they will continue doing it.

If you are responding to spam, please stop. Be part of the solution, not part of the problem.

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Internet Fraud

by **Bob Schneider**, Editor of the PC Keyboard, the newsletter of the Spring Hill Teaching Computer Club, Hernando County, Florida
<www.sthcc.net> <Drbob1012@hotmail.com>

Internet fraud continues to be the fastest growing crime in America (and perhaps the world). The most common technique for fraud today is “phishing.” This means that some nefarious person connives you into providing financial account information. They do it by mailing thousands of spam emails to lists of email addresses they have accumulated. Perhaps one of your friends sent a neat joke to 40 acquaintances, including you (your friend’s email itself is, of course, spam). Someone out there farms email address. They love it when your friend sends out those appeals and jokes—because they know that every email address they capture (including yours) is current and good. They then send a message like the one below (actually received by the author) to those thousands of email addresses. It matters not if you have PayPal or not. Many of the emails will hit someone who does, and they only need a lot of money from a few suckers to make the effort worth while. Of course, they substitute various bank names for PayPal, too.

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Visit our Privacy Policy and User Agreement if you have any questions.

http://www.paypal.com/cgi-bin/webscr?cmd=p/gen/ua/policy_privacy-outside

The first link (to “account records”) does not go to PayPal, but goes to www.doctori.biz/pp, a site run by thieves, waiting for you to log in and provide your user name and password for PayPal, or your bank account or other financial service. The login page will look exactly like that of your financial institution. Once you finish “updating” account information, you will be sent to that actual financial site where you can log in and see that everything is in order. The second link (to “Privacy Policy”) is a real link to your financial service. It is another part of their smoke screen. But at three o’clock the next morning, there may be some new account activity. The next day, when you log in, you will likely find that everything is no longer in order.

For your internet and financial safety, never respond to an email asking you to check your account. If you are curious, call your financial institution. Also, you can always log in to your account the usual way (not by clicking on a link you receive in an email) and check anything you wish.

A final note: tell your friends to stop broadcasting your email address to the world, to spammers, pornographers, body part enlargers and thieves. Tell them they can comply with your request if they stop forwarding jokes, requests and other such to you and their other friends. Better yet, send them a copy of this article. They deserve it.

Real Simple Syndication

RSS EXplained

By Phil Shapiro, member of the Capital PC User Group, Virginia Macintosh Users Group, Washington Apple Pi, Young Hackers and Scholars Libre Users Group <pshapiro@his.com>

The author is a former president of Virginia Macintosh Users Group and worked as the Washington DC Regional Coordinator for Community Technology Centers' Network, an international network of more than 1000 organizations bringing technology and technology training to underserved communities.

He can be reached at <<http://www.digitaldivide.net/profile/pshapiro>> and at <pshapiro@his.com> His blog is at <<http://philsrssfeed.blogspot.com>>

RSS - really simple syndication -- is a labor-saving tool that allows people to tune into information sources that interest them. The information source could be a blog, a podcast, a videocast or any web site that includes RSS feeds.

The value of RSS accrues when you subscribe to multiple RSS feeds. You can then monitor multiple information streams with a minimum of effort.

There are many different software tools for subscribing to RSS feeds. One of the most popular is a web site named Bloglines. Some web browsers let you subscribe to RSS feeds. Safari 2.x and Firefox are two browsers that do. Firefox lets you to subscribe to RSS feeds using something called Live Bookmarks. You can also use a Firefox extension named Sage to subscribe to RSS feeds.

RSS's primary value is that it brings information to you without you having to visit multiple web sites. In a knowledge economy, anything that streamlines the flow of information from producer to consumer gives benefit to both producer and consumer. You tune into the information you do want, and tune out the information you don't want.

Some Examples of How RSS Simplifies Peoples' Lives

I asked some technology consultants to explain how RSS brings value to peoples' lives. Curtis Brown at MissionMovers.org, in Seattle, is a strong believer in RSS. He explains, "RSS has invaded every part of our life, but we just don't know it. RSS is an information delivery method that gives added convenience to both senders and receivers of the information."

As an example, RSS feeds can be used by a nonprofit organization to distribute different kinds of information to different people. One RSS feed could be the organization's calendar of events or classes. Another could be a call for volunteers. A third feed might be information for funders. The more feeds an organization offers, the more narrowly tailored the information delivered to people served by that organization or supporting that organization.

Here are some other examples of RSS feeds. A used car dealer can have an RSS feed that details newly arrived used cars. A public library could have an RSS feed of newly purchased books. A police department can have separate RSS feeds for different neighborhoods, giving up-to-date information on safety concerns in each neighborhood.

Curtis Brown explains that information received in an RSS feed can be filtered by keyword and colorized in text. So you have control over the RSS feed. You decide the ways in which that stream of information is going to serve your needs.

Curtis explains that RSS feeds become immensely useful when people work collaboratively in a wiki. (A wiki is a web page that different people can edit.) Changes to the web page can be monitored via an RSS feed. This allows anyone participating in the wiki to have a clear idea of who is adding the most value to the wiki. RSS allows for better monitoring and gives added transparency to the collaborative process.

Curtis goes on to explain that there are two kinds of RSS feeds -- static feeds and dynamic feeds. A static feed might be sports scores or the feed from a single blog. A dynamic feed is a stream of information where there is searching going on to pull out specific pieces of information to add to the stream.

It's also possible to combine several RSS feeds into a single new feed. One web site that let's you do that is rssmix.com. Why would want to do that? Suppose you live in a metropolitan area with several different library systems spanning several counties. Each library system provides an RSS feed of the events happening within their library system. You'd like to keep track of library events in multiple counties. rssmix.com would let you combine RSS feeds in that way.

Another RSS enthusiast, Bruce Roy, in Sydney, Australia explains - "I have found the RSS facility in The Next Generation of Genealogy Sitebuilding (TNG) very useful for the family tree site. It enables people interested in following the family tree to get information about changes to the tree without having to check the website's "What's New?" or wade through the data."

One other advantage of RSS is that it lets you tune out mainstream media and tune into alternative media and personal media. If you find the CBS Evening News a touch thin in how it covers the news, with RSS you have an alternative source of news where news stories don't need to be squeezed into 45 second slots.

Another RSS enthusiast, Winthrop Morgan, in the Washington DC-area had this to add:

"Regarding your request for examples of how RSS brings benefits into peoples' lives, I highly recommend you consider including Join Together Online as a great Win- Win- Win model.

Join Together Online (JTO) (<http://www.jointogether.org>) has long been a pioneer in using the Internet to support people working on substance abuse and gun violence issues. Every month, one million JTO web pages are viewed by over 350,000 people.

JTO uses RSS feeds to not only help their web presence spread, but also to provide vital to support state, municipal, and nonprofit drug treatment and prevention program managers and their audiences. While these programs' web masters might have a modest web presence, they lack the wherewithal to continuously produce new content, or even gather and republish it. Without new content, their audiences lack a reason to come back to their Web site. The JTO RSS service enormously increases both the return visit value of these sites and the presence of authoritative information in this highly charged information space.

To keep the RSS feeds fresh and riveting, JTO employs a small editorial staff who aggregates both online and offline news on substance abuse funding, policies, and more from authoritative sources. They edit this news down to its essential content, and then republish it via RSS, as well as to users of their site and subscribers to their e-mail news services."

RSS Relieves Cluttered Email Inboxes

If you have traditionally received a lot of your information via email, RSS can provide some relief to your inbox. Would you like to follow a particular email list, but can't stomach subscribing to one more email list? If that list is on Yahoogroups, you can follow the list via the list's RSS feed. An excellent free tool for reading RSS feeds is Bloglines. (<http://www.bloglines.com>)

RSS feeds are almost always spam-free. The provider of the RSS feed doesn't want you to unsubscribe from the feed -- so they treat you with respect.

Ben Sheldon, in Lowell, Massachusetts, passes along this RSS tip: "Google still only offers email news alerts, but this utility lets you use create an RSS feed out of any Google News search term. [<http://www.justinpfister.com/gnewsfeed.cfm>] I aggregate my name, my projects (DigitalBicycle, ServiceSpeak), and my street and city so that if something happens I should know about, I will."

If you're still with me, I'll pass along a few small tips of my own. I use RSS, Bloglines and my Digg.com account to keep track of what Digg stories my friends are digging (i.e. voting for.) I just copy the RSS feed from the bottom left of <http://digg.com/users/pshapiro/friends> and then paste it into Add Feed in Bloglines.

Between Katie Couric and the 50 friends I have on Digg, which do you think provides the richer quality of information to me? Right. Just for kicks I subscribe to the Associated Press RSS feed, so I'm in the loop with whatever Katie knows.

I also use the free service at Squeet.com to send me an email whenever one of my friends submits a story to Digg.com, so they don't have to let me know about their submissions. That email alert capability might well come to Digg sometime.

I use RSS to keep me posted on new items of interest to me that are posted to Del.icio.us. For example, if anyone submits an item to Del.icio.us with the tag digitalstorytelling, I find out about that really easily in my Bloglines account.

That puts me in touch with anyone doing digital storytelling anywhere on the planet. And I don't even have to subscribe to another email list to be in touch with them. I like that.

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Distinguishing Forests from Trees in Search Engine Results

By Gabe Goldberg, APCUG Advisor and HCIL Media Fellow, <gabe@gabegold.com>

Some people cherish details without grasping the big picture. They can't see the forest for the trees, always miss the landscape's glory. Searching the Web can feel like this. Search engines cheerfully deliver millions of search result hits without revealing patterns or gaps in the data. Even worse, hardly anyone looks beyond the first screen of search results. Researchers are investigating how organizing search results provides contextual and visual cues that make searches more powerful.

We all know people who cherish tiny details but never quite grasp the big picture. They're figuratively unable to see the forest for the trees, missing the landscape's glory while obsessing over whatever grows in front of their nose.

Sometimes searching the Web feels like this. Google or any favorite search engine can cheerfully deliver a thousand -- or two million -- search result hits yet not reveal patterns, groupings, or gaps in what it quickly but mindlessly displays. Making things worse, hardly anyone looks at search results beyond the first screen or two; we either settle for one of the first few links, or add search words to prune our results. But this runs two risks.

First, we may miss a key Web site that for some reason isn't highly ranked by our search engine. Not everyone knows that search engines rank results using proprietary criteria; even worse, ranking methods often change without notice, so identical searches days or weeks apart may yield very different results. Second, there's no clue or cue about search result patterns. And the human mind can't grasp a thousand -- let alone two million -- links to see what they might collectively reveal.



Enter Bill Kules and Ben Shneiderman, respectively Graduate Research Assistant and Computer Science Professor at the University of Maryland. They're investigating how organizing the display of search results provides contextual and visual cues that make searches more powerful.

Their technology, partially supported by an AOL Fellowship in Human-Computer Interaction, is ideal when searchers are unsure of the target or goal. This is a variation on the famous Supreme Court quote: searchers may not know what they're looking for, but they recognize it when they see it.

Results, arranged in meaningful and stable categories using structures created by Kules' SERVICE program (as opposed to the ad hoc clustering used by some commercial search engines), are shown in a compact listing in the left side navigation bar. Important text (title, snippet, URL) is arranged for efficient scanning and skimming. SERVICE retains benefits of the traditional ranked results list, while adding an overview.

The list allows efficiently scanning and skimming title/snippet/URL -- which remains a critical task. The categorized overview adds another perspective on results, showing their distribution across categories. The overview also lets users explore results, narrowing them to a single category or subcategory.

Categorizing results is proving to change peoples' search style. For some searchers, the categorized overview simplified formulating queries. They issued a somewhat broad query and then browsed the appropriate category. Others used the overview to organize exploration of results, first perusing results in the Business category, then Science, Health, etc. Other users only used categories when frustrated by normal searching.

An interesting surprise is that empty categories -- which might have been expected to include results -- are in fact meaningful in some searches. For more information visit

<http://www.cs.umd.edu/hcil/categorizedsearch>.

This article originated on the University of Maryland's Human-Computer Interaction Laboratory Web site, www.cs.umd.edu/hcil/, and is copyrighted by the university. All rights are reserved; it may be reproduced, downloaded, disseminated, or transferred, for single use, or by nonprofit organizations for educational purposes, with attribution to the university. It should be unchanged and this paragraph included. Please e-mail Gabe Goldberg at gabe@gabegold.com when you use it, or for permission to excerpt or condense.



The Insiders' Guide to Craigslist

by Richard O. Johnson, TUGNET, CA <ry@theskillspool.org>

If you're not using craigslist, it's time you joined the crowd. This phenomenally successful community bulletin board serves over ten million online users in a single month, and, except for modest fees in three cities for help-wanted ads, all its services are without charge.

If you're one of the uninitiated few, you use craigslist by posting your needs or interests in any of various categories, like jobs, for sale, services, housing, personal, etc., or by reading and acting on posts submitted by others. The craigslist for the Los

Angeles area is at <<http://losangeles.craigslist.org>>.

Beyond its imperfect documentation, craigslist support is in practical terms non-existent (understandably so, in view of its enormous popularity and its staff of just eighteen). That's one of the reasons for writing this Guide.

Posting

Posting is straightforward. You just find the prominent "post to classifieds" link (it's at the upper-left corner of the main page), drill down to the appropriate category, and fill out the simple form.

The first page to which posters are directed will invite them to create an account. You don't really need an account, but it'll take only a minute or so to set up, and can make things a lot easier. So do get that account.

Should the need for which you posted be met right away, that's the end of it. In most cases, however, you'll want to re-post. Without re-posting, your post will stay up (in Los Angeles) for between 10 and 30 days, depending on the category, but you don't want to wait nearly that long. Posts appear in chronological order (last submitted on top), and readers will typically stop perusing after about two days' worth of posts.

(You can always edit your post, but editing won't move it up as will re-posting.)

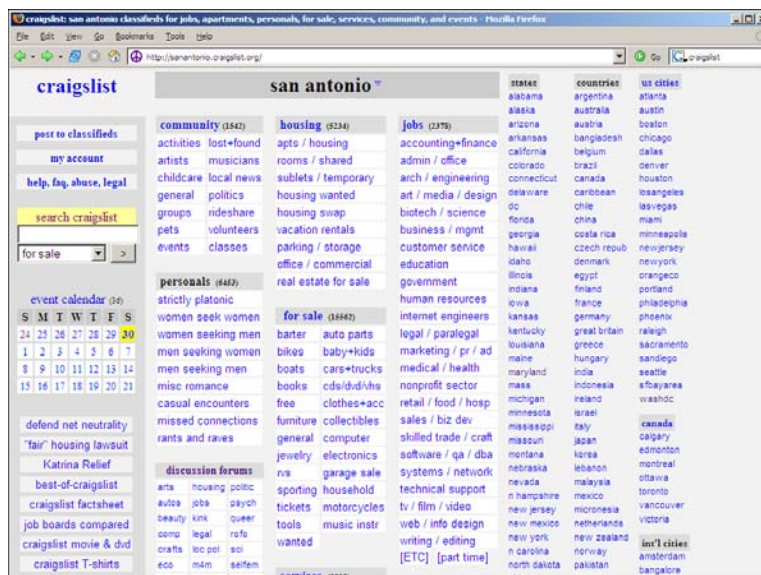
Another way to improve your response rate is to post in more than one category. But don't do that before reading about craigslist's...

Restrictions

Craigslist is replete with rules and regulations. Trouble is, they're not particularly easy to find, they're not all in one place, and, worst of all, some of the most crucial ones are not published at all (until you're found to be in violation, and by then you may be "blocked")!

If you want to see what rules are written down, find the craigslist Terms of Use, Frequently Asked Questions, and General Posting Guidelines. But bear in mind that other unstated rules may bear equally on your submissions. Here are the most important craigslist rules:

You may not post "essentially the same item" before deleting the old item. This applies even when posting in a different city or category. So if your post lends



itself to more than one category, you need to alternate the categories. (You may possibly be able to get around this restriction by using different email addresses.)

Craigslist confuses this issue by appearing at one point to sanction posting "in multiple categories." This suggests that in some circumstances such multiple posts may be accepted. So if you want to try it, go ahead. The worst that can happen is that your second post will be refused.

You may not post the same item more than once in 48 hours. This rule is not strictly enforced. That is, if you delete and re-post your Thursday noon post at 8 am Saturday, chances are there will be no problem. But it's unwise (and really unnecessary) to post as often as daily.

Your post may not contain a link "to a commercial website or auction." This is an example of a rule I haven't been able to find anywhere, until I was blocked for violating it! Note that craigslist does not define what makes a website "commercial." My listing on the web of free summer shows, that contained a small link to my organization, was deemed to be "commercial." You'll be safe if you don't link to any website, but instead invite the reader to email you for more information (very easily done--see below). Linking to a webpage without any links on it is also safe.

Posting Tips

Craigslist makes it easy as pie for its users to respond to your posts. If you want phone calls, simply include your phone number in the writeup. If you want emails, craigslist will "anonymize" your email address, never to be seen by responders. These folks will click on a link to respond, and that response will go to craigslist, and then to you.

Each anonymized email response will refer to the unique number for that particular post. So if you're running several similar posts, you can easily track your responses to see which ones are most effective.

The body of your post can be either in plain text or HTML. If you choose plain text, craigslist will automatically convert any Web addresses starting with http:// to links (but exercise care before including a Web address--see above). You can't otherwise mix plain text and HTML (don't add a few HTML tags to a plain-text submission).

You can add photos or other graphics to your post, in one of two ways.

If your post is under the heading of "for sale/wanted," you'll be invited to add a picture from your hard disk. Otherwise (providing you're submitting in HTML), you can add graphics with the tag. See craigslist's FAQ for more details.

How Best To Post

The following assumes you're using Windows, and have postings suitable for several categories. (You can adapt these guidelines to other circumstances.) Performing these steps will reduce the re-posting process to about a minute a day, while giving you maximum exposure.

Compose your posts. If possible, create an entirely different post for each category. If sufficiently different, posts promoting the same transaction may display simultaneously without a problem.

Create your account, by using the link on the "post to classifieds" page.

Create three bookmarks for your browser. One will be your account page, another will be the craigslist post page, and the third will be the browse page (the craigslist main page for your locality), for reviewing others' posts.

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Submit your posts.

Wait two or three days.

Open your account page. Decide which post you'll want to re-run. Click on that post.

You'll be given two choices, Edit and Delete. If you want to re-run the post in exactly the same category, choose Delete. Then go back to your account page, click on the deleted post, and you'll be able easily to re-run it.

If you want to re-run the post in a different category, click on the Edit button, to bring up your "raw" post. Then using Ctrl-A and Ctrl-C, copy that raw post to the Windows clipboard. Go back to your account page and delete the post. Finally, open the post page that you've bookmarked [step 3 above], and post in the appropriate new category.

Wait a day, and repeat steps 6 through 9.

If you're promoting the same transaction in several different categories, it may be to your advantage to stagger the posts. To this end you'll want to keep one or more initial posts for a longer interval than the others.

Browsing Tips

Here are two tips for using craigslist to take advantage of others' posts.

A little known source of great bargains consists of offers on craigslist to sell unwanted gift cards. This situation stems from the fact that many holders of gift cards either paid nothing for them, or paid well below the face value. For example, DiscoverCard distributes merchant gift cards at half price through its "Cashback" program.

To secure such a bargain, visit your bookmarked "Browse" page, and execute the "for sale" link. Then in the keyword search box, enter "gift card" (with the quotation marks), and pick out the offers that appeal to you. Don't hesitate to bargain with the seller for a lower price. (Aim at no more than 50% of face value.)

Once you've made a deal, be sure you meet the seller at the store, to verify the amount of credit remaining on the card.

Craigslist has joined forces with Google Maps at www.housingmaps.com, to help you better locate available housing throughout the country. You'll be able to specify your price range, and you'll see at a glance whether there's a picture or pictures of the property. Once you make your preliminary selection, you'll be taken to the original craigslist post.

Richard Johnson is a writer and editor, and founder/administrator of FREE FOR ALL The Skills Pool, a 29-year-old membership organization (<http://theskillspool.org>). He is a volunteer with TUGNET HelpContact for assistance with Internet Explorer, Outlook Express, and Gmail. He welcomes feedback, at rj@theskillspool.org.



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Website Accessibility for Disabled Users

No Mouse Allowed?

by **Dorothy Cushway**, Member of the Web Enthusiasts of Victoria, Canada
December 2005 Web Edition, Big Blue & Cousins

When creating a website for your business or personal use, do you ensure that the site is accessible to all? Do you know what accessibility involves for website design? Have you used the many tools and evaluation programs available to test your website for accessibility?

In June of 1998 the U.S. passed Section 508 to ensure all US Federal websites are accessible in the U.S. Canada hasn't implemented this drastic policy so far, however, the Federal Government has an initiative called the Common Look and Feel which is aimed at ensuring all Canadian Government websites are accessible by December 2004.

If you are wondering what website accessibility is all about and why this can be an issue, try using only a keyboard to move through a website on different links—No Mouse or Clicking Allowed!

If you can move through the site reasonably well then it may be fairly accessible to most users of adaptive/assistive technology. Many people in the world, who use the internet for research, email, information, banking, or chatting, use Adaptive/Assistive Technology. There can be many different types of hardware and software such as JAWS (Job Access with Speech) (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Job_Access_With_Speech) used by visually impaired, Magnification software such as ZoomText (http://www.synapseadaptive.com/aisquared/zoomtext_9/zoomtext_9_home_page.htm) to enlarge the screen data or Dragon Naturally Speaking (<http://www.nuance.com/naturallyspeaking/>) to use hands free. There are many more types of software/hardware that are used to view websites as well.

If a website is not accessible to these users, this can sometimes create problems for them if it is information they require for their job, or wish to have for research, or serve as a learning tool. Website Accessibility is supported by most software companies by going to the accessible area of the



website. For example, if you go to Accessibility on Macromedia.com (<http://www.macromedia.com/help/accessibility.html>) , or Adobe Accessibility (<http://www.adobe.com/enterprise/accessibility/main.html>) you will find out the necessary information to move around programs, create accessible documents, and websites, etc. Also, accessibility is about assisting a person to better use a computer and this also affects the aging population as discussed at the Hewlett Packard and IBM web sites.

As you can see, there are vast numbers of companies that are providing adaptive/assistive solutions for users like yourself to learn from. When creating a website, and you are ready to test for accessibility, you should follow the WAI W3 — Web Accessibility Initiative Guidelines by ensuring Priority 1 and 2 indicators are fixed WAI (<http://www.w3.org/WAI/>) and WAI Resources (<http://www.w3.org/WAI/Resources/>). There are also many website checkers that you can use to find out if the website may not be particularly accessible. Here are a few sites you may want to check out: Watchfire (<http://webxact.watchfire.com/>) , Hermish (<http://www.hermish.com/>) or, from Toronto, the program called A-Prompt (<http://aprompt.snow.utoronto.ca/>) . Also, here are some Section 508 Accessible Tools and Resources (<http://www.section508.gov/index.cfm?FuseAction=Content&ID=122>) to assist in making your website accessible,

As you may have figured out, I have a passion for Adaptive/Assistive Technology and like to educate and inform as many people as I can. All of my knowledge and learning has been gained through the support of my office, as well as many courses I have taken online from Dr. Norman Coombs (<http://www.rit.edu/~easi/index.htm>) .

I feel that if everyone becomes aware of what website accessibility is, it will only make the internet more user friendly for everyone. The wealth of information that is available will make everyone's life easier if they have access to it.

JAWS (Job Access with Speech) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Job_Access_With_Speech

ZoomText http://www.synapseadaptive.com/aisquared/zoomtext_9/zoomtext_9_home_page.htm

Dragon Naturally Speaking <http://www.nuance.com/naturallyspeaking/>

Macromedia.com <http://www.macromedia.com/help/accessibility.html>

Adobe Accessibility <http://www.adobe.com/enterprise/accessibility/main.html>

WAI <http://www.w3.org/WAI/>

WAI Resources <http://www.w3.org/WAI/Resources/>

Watchfire <http://webxact.watchfire.com/>

Hermish <http://www.hermish.com/>

A-Prompt <http://aprompt.snow.utoronto.ca/>

Section 508 Accessible Tools and Resources <http://www.section508.gov/index.cfm?FuseAction=Content&ID=122>



The Future of Broadband Access

By Bob Hewitt, Editor

The Journal of The Computer Club, Inc., Sun City Center, Florida

<<http://suncitycentercomputerclub.com/>> <rsh1916@juno.com>

This may end up to be a case of who gets there fastest with the mostest. The goal is Broadband. Just about all computer owners want it. Many cannot afford it. But every provider wants to get the biggest share of the pie. The telecommunications industry was in the driver's seat first with dial-up. Then came cable as a carrier and telecom countered with DSL. Up rose Wi-Fi, Broadband Wireless Mesh, and finally BPL (Broadband over Power Line).

Pew Internet and American Life Project released a survey finding that about 55 per cent of internet-using Americans enjoy a broadband connection at home or at work.

Since computers have overwhelmed the marketplace, it may be somewhat misleading to lump them together.

The goal of computer mavens is the most speed per dollar expressed in Kbps (Kilobits per second), Mbps (Megabits per second), or preferably MBps (Megabytes per second). The latter conforms to the standard measurement of file size and gives an operator an instant impression of the time involved in achieving a download or a transfer, depending on the speed of his CPU or internet connection.

Because their infrastructure was already in place, the telephone and cable industries became the leaders in delivering internet resources to their subscribers at \$10 to \$50 per month depending on speed. But then came the advent of wireless transmission, commonly called Wi-Fi, with its short range signal providing access principally to portable (laptop) PC's—a significant advantage to travelers who were charged a small amount for access.

Almost paralleling the transition from fixed telephone to cell phone, Wi-Fi evolved into wireless mesh internet which has sparked a huge demand for municipal

wireless broadband. Fifty four localities, including major cities, are in the process of establishing or already have established such services.

Tempe, Arizona established a wireless access network last November, covering 40 square miles, with an access cost of \$30 a month per subscriber or \$3.95 per hour.

Manassas, Virginia became the first citywide Broadband-Over-Powerline site last October when it opened a 10 square mile site available to all at \$29 per month.

Philadelphia has contracted with Earthlink to cover its 135 square miles with wireless internet service---the cost to Earthlink an estimated 10-million dollars and a cost to residents an estimated \$20 per month for service. It's assumed that Earthlink will amortize its investment by income from advertising.

The excitement over wireless broadband is heightened by a comparison of download speeds available. The fastest of the three Wi-Fi formats now in use (the 802.11g) is 54 Mbps (megabits per second) or 7 Megabytes per second which is 18 times faster than the cable modems of today. Further is the recent approval of the IEEE

(Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers) for the new 802.11n Wi-Fi format which may be two years before activation but could achieve data processing speeds of 600Mbps; an almost incomprehensible 75 Megabytes per second—200 times today's cable modem speed.

At that rate, one could download 80 minutes of music in 10 seconds or an entire opera in 30.

The wired communications industries are not unaware. Witness the fact that they have spent millions of dollars lobbying state legislatures to kill off community internet. Over the past few years, no less than 14 states have enacted legislation that bans or places limits on municipalities from building community internet projects. Florida Governor Jeb Bush signed a law last June that prevents cities from offering broadband if there are competing private services.

There are anti-competitive issues at the federal level, also. Republican Representative Pete Sessions of Texas introduced an anti-community internet bill which would prevent any city in the country from providing internet access if a private company offers internet services nearby—even if the private company serves as little as 10 per cent of the residents.

Republican Senator John Ensign of Nevada introduced the Broadband Investment and Consumer Choice Act which would severely hamper cities' ability to build and manage wireless networks.

In response to Ensign's bill, Republican Senator John McCain and Democrat

Frank Lautenberg introduced legislation that gives municipalities free rein to offer broadband and would overturn state laws banning such activities.

Now that President Bush has lent his support to a broad set of proposals to get every corner of the country access to broadband connectivity by 2007, it will be interesting to watch both sides welcome that goal as supporting their particular positions.

The big question for the public is cost. There have been no definitive publicly-available figures on installation and maintenance of the cutting-edge WiFi mesh application.

Jupiter Research has estimated that the average cost of building and maintaining a wireless network is \$150,000 per square mile over five years. Bert Williams, vice president of marketing for Tropos Networks, which has successfully provided mesh based WiFi hardware in several locations around the world, says, "We usually talk in terms of \$75,000 per square mile for our gear." Adding the ongoing costs for backhaul and system management, he believes the total to be closer to \$100,000 per square mile, while Sky Pilot Networks quotes \$50,000.

A long and vigorous battle is ahead involving the established vs the un-established. But one thing is certain. Everyone is going to end up with a piece of the pie. For this is still early in the digital age and there is plenty to go around.

muniwireless.com

informationweek.com

zdnet.com

vnunet.com

jupitermedia.com

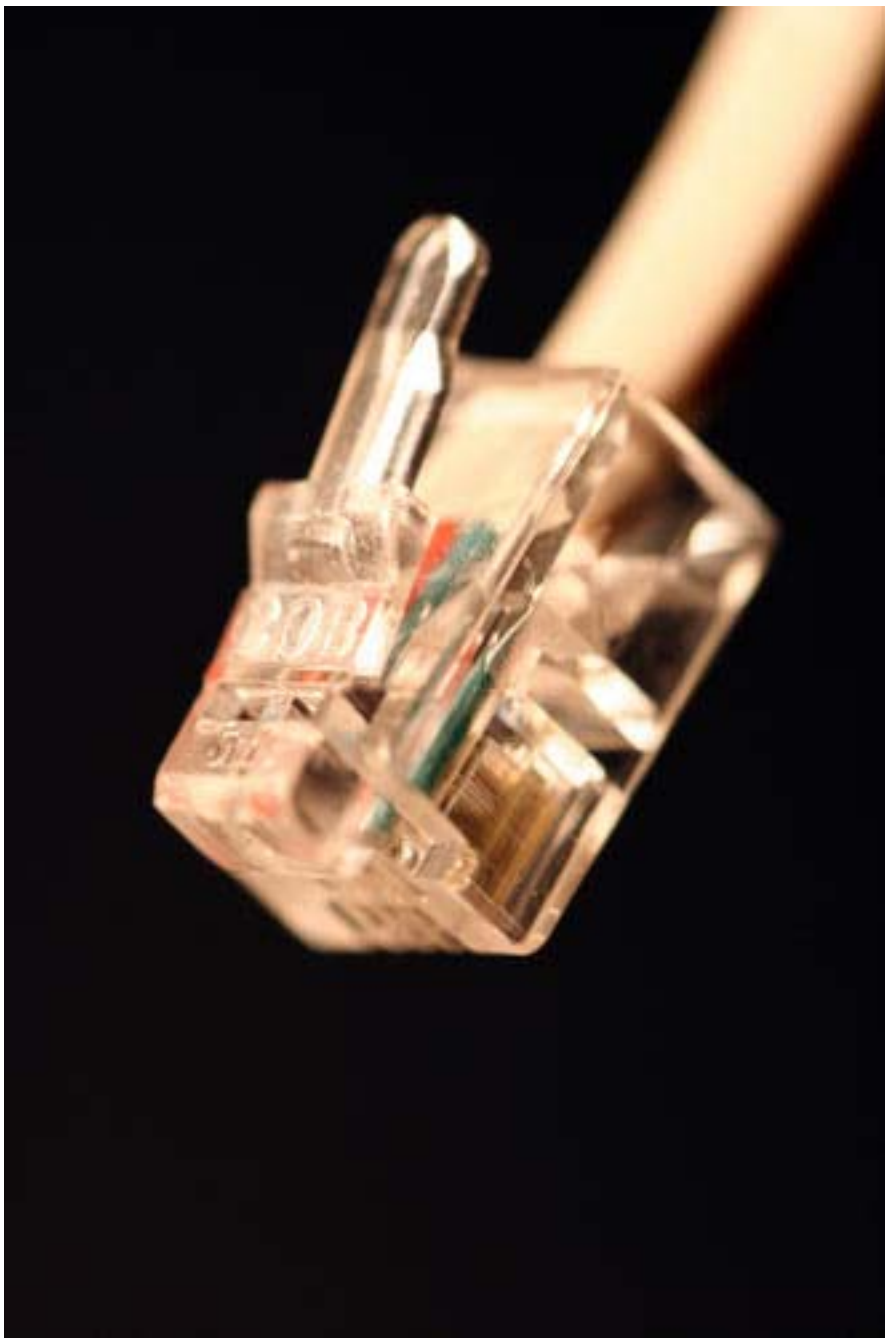
arstechnica.com

eetimes.com

mercurynews.com

slate.com

eweek.com



Online “My Family Health Portrait”

By Ira Wilsker, APCUG Director; Columnist, The Examiner, Beaumont, TX; radio & TV show host

WEBSITES:

<http://www.hhs.gov/familyhistory>

<https://familyhistory.hhs.gov>

<http://www.hhs.gov/familyhistory/download.html>



Recently, a relative in another state was hospitalized via an emergency room admission. His new wife of just a year did not have much information on the family health history, so urgently needed by the physicians in order to diagnose and treat my relative. Urgent phone calls followed, gathering the requisite family medical history to enable the appropriate diagnosis and treatment. Philosophically, what if a comprehensive family medical history could have been immediately available? This circumstance is not unique, but a reasonable solution has been available for over a year at www.hhs.gov/familyhistory, courtesy of the U. S. Surgeon General's Office

This site explains the necessity of such data with the statement, “Health care professionals have known for a long time that common diseases - heart disease, cancer, and diabetes - and even rare diseases - like hemophilia, cystic fibrosis, and sickle cell anemia - can run in families. If one generation of a family has high blood pressure, it is not unusual for the next generation to have similarly high blood pressure.

Tracing the illnesses suffered by your parents, grandparents, and other blood relatives can help your doctor predict the disorders to which you may be at risk and take action to keep you and your family healthy.” In order to accomplish this task, the Surgeon General offers two simple options; one an online web maintained version hosted on a secure server (that is what the “https” means in the internet address) at <https://familyhistory.hhs.gov>, the other a 1.6mb downloadable “Zip” file which may be stored on a home computer, and utilized in the privacy of the home.

The files created in either version can easily be exchanged among family members via email or disc.

In the online version, a family history can be newly created, or an existing version can be uploaded from the home computer to the secure Surgeon General website where the data can be managed, and then saved back on the home computer; no personal information is saved or captured by the government computer, protecting the privacy of the user.

It should be noted that much effort has gone into the creation of this web based service, in that it explicitly works equally well with almost all known browsers, including Internet Explorer, Firefox, Mac Safari, Netscape, and many other browsers.

The first step in using the online version is to “Create a Family History”, or to “Load a Saved Family History” if a file had been previously created. The preliminary step is to create a personal profile, where basic information such as name, gender, height, and weight are entered.

The personal profile continues with a simple checklist of major common diseases (such as heart disease, cancer, and diabetes), and age of onset, followed by a fill in the blank chart of other diseases. After the personal health history is created, there is then an opportunity to create a family profile.

The family profile states "Only add family members that are biological (blood) relatives (not adopted or step-relatives)." Similar fill in charts are presented to complete the information for the other family members. Data can be modified, added, or deleted at any time. Once the user has completed entering the basic family information, a button "Go to My Family" takes the user to the basic "Family Health Portrait" where a family health tree can be displayed or printed; this family tree contains symbols and abbreviations immediately recognizable by a health care practitioner as a basic family health history.

Other family members, such as aunts, uncles, and other blood relatives can be added to the list as well. Other family members listed on the family tree can have their own personalized family tree created at this point, and the entire file can be downloaded to the user's computer, leaving no personal data on the HHS computer.

If for privacy or other reasons, the user does not wish to enter personal family health data to the secured website, the downloadable version is a self-contained version of what is available on the website. Once uncompressed with any zip utility (built in to Windows XP), the file is easily and quickly installed.

The software does require the Microsoft ".Net" utility, version 1.1 or later, available for free at windowsupdate.microsoft.com. Once installed, the entire process is completed in the privacy of the home, with no personal data leaving the computer, unless the user desires to send the data files to other family members to complete or use as a basis for their own family health history.

With this information readily available both within a family unit, and shared with other blood relatives as appropriate, family health histories can be easily maintained, and distributed or printed as needed.

Many times we cannot recall family health problems that family members may have had which may give us a predisposition, or otherwise genetically affect us. With this free service and software from the Surgeon General, we may all be better able to provide our health care professionals with the information that may prove so vital to our health care and treatment.

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Not your grandma's telephone

By Susan Ives

If you make a lot of long distance phone calls – especially calls overseas – check out VOIP. It can save you a bundle.

VOIP stands for Voice Over Internet Protocol. You might also hear it called IP telephony, or Internet telephony. VOIP lets you make regular voice phone calls using your Internet connection rather than the public-switched telephone network (PSTN) that you currently use.

I spoke with Covita Moroney, one of the founders of the San Antonio Vocal Arts Ensemble, about her experience with VOIP.

SAVAE's last CD was "Ancient Echoes," which features the music of Jesus' time. Because the music is sung in Aramaic, Arabic and Hebrew, SAVAIE hired a language teacher, an Egyptian who lives in Berlin. He made several trips to San Antonio when Ancient Echoes was under development but has had trouble getting a visa since September 11th.

SAVAIE's next CD will also be sung in Middle Eastern languages and Covita and her husband, Christopher, wanted to keep their accents sharp. Their bright idea: continue their language lessons over the telephone! It was a brilliant concept, but also an expensive one.

Covita discovered VOIP. She uses a service called Skype and now pays 2.3¢ a minute for calls to Europe.

I tried Skype about a year ago, but only in its computer-to-computer mode. That's free! My brother works for a company that does business in China and England. Because of the time difference, he found that he had to talk to his counterparts after normal business hours.

He was looking for a computer-based solution but found that IM – instant messenger – applications would not work from behind a firewall. Skype uses a different system: P2P, or Peer-to-Peer networking, the same system that is used for file sharing in applications like Napster.

Skype worked from behind the firewall and allowed him to talk to China from his home computer, for free. Free! He used me to practice on. His company ultimately decided to use phone cards: more expensive but more flexible.

Since then, Skype has added computer-to-phone connections. They call this service "SkypeOut." Using PayPal, Covita bought credits in 10 Euro increments (\$13.56.) This is good for almost 10 hours of talking to Berlin.

Calls within the continental United States, Canada, Western Europe and Australia are 2.3¢ a minute. So are calls to Monterrey and Mexico City; other calls to Mexico are about 11¢. There is no rhyme or reason to the rate structure: a call to Israel is 4¢ a minute to a land line, 14¢ to a mobile phone. You can see the entire list at www.skype.com/products/skypeout/rates/all_rates.html >

The Moroneys use a Mac. They have a Plantronics headset (www.plantronics.com/skype) that plugs into the USB port of their computer. I've tried it using a cheap -- \$10 -- stereo headset with a built in boom mike plugged into the headphone jack of my computer. It works fine. The sound quality is great, better than on our brand-new 5.8GHz digital Motorola phones.

Covita confirms that the sound quality is excellent, an important factor for the intensive language practice she and her husband are doing. The network is entirely digital.

If you're using a PC you'll need to be running Windows 2000 or XP, have a machine that runs at least 400MHz and, of course, have a sound card and a microphone or headset. Skype claims it will work on a dial-up connection; all of the other services described ask for broadband.

The software is free from their site, www.skype.com. It's easy to figure out and there are plenty of help files in case you run into problems.

Unlike other VOIP services, SkypeOut does not require a contract, making it a good starting point for people interested in experimenting with the technology. The main drawback to Skype is that the person initiating the call must do so from a computer.

For other services, costs range from about \$15 to \$35 a month for local and long distance calls within the continental US. Overseas calls are generally extra and vary in price from the low Skype rates to about double that. There is often a setup fee, plus the requirement to purchase either telephone adapter or special phone that hooks up to your computer through your router (yes, you need a router, too). Figure on at least \$100 to get started. You will pay if you cancel a year-long contract.

So why sign a contract if Skype is so cheap and easy? The advantage other VOIP services give your IP phone is its own regular phone number. Anyone can call you from any phone.

Most services include ALL of the services that your local telephone company charges extra for: Caller ID, call waiting, call forwarding, voice mail, etc. Some will forward your phone messages to e-mail, as a wav file. For a modest fee (generally, \$5.00 a month) you can get additional phone numbers in other area codes. If your aging parents live in Florida or a son is in college in Boston, get an extra number within their area code and they can call you for free. Some services allow you to designate one phone number outside your area code as a "freebie" for calling in.

New VOIP companies are cropping up all the time. The established telecom companies seem to be the most expensive with the fewest features. AT&T CallVantage is \$29.99 a month; Verizon's VoiceWing is \$34.95. If your VOIP company goes belly up, with Local Number Portability you should be able to transfer your phone number to a new provider.

If you want to explore some of the more fully-featured services, visit their Web sites:

Packet 8: www.packet8.com

VOIP Net: <www.voip.com>

Vonage: <www.vonage.com>

Lingo: <www.lingo.com>

SpeakEasy: <www.speakeasy.com>

AT&T: <www.usa.att.com/callvantage/index.jsp?>

Verizon: < www22.verizon.com/ForYourHome/voip/voiphome.aspx>

Also look over the features carefully. Not all of them have E911 services for emergency calls. If you call to a particular overseas location, check the rate structures carefully. VOIP Net seems to have excellent rates to Mexico. Lingo has 2¢ calls to Israel. I'd be happier with a system that uses an adapter to connect my current phone rather than be forced to buy an expensive proprietary phone that only works with a particular system.

One of the biggest drawbacks to VOIP is that it requires a computer, an Internet connection and electricity. If your computer goes down, your Internet connection poops out or the electricity fails – no phone.

Covita's experience was so positive I bought my 10 Euros worth of long distance and immediately called friends in Jerusalem on their mobile phone. It was much clearer than

calling on my cell phone. I talked for 10 minutes for \$1.20. What a deal! I still have more than 9 Euros remaining.

Then I tried calling my brother and got an error: #13501. I logged onto Skype's live help and in a minute or two was chatting with Kris. It's an outage, he said. Try again in two or three hours. Five hours later and Skype was still down. Not good enough. From what I hear, this is a common problem with all of the providers.

The service providers hype that you can get rid of your POTS (plain old telephone system) and do all your calling through a combination of cable modem and VOIP. I'm not quite that adventurous.

If you want to learn more about the technology behind VOIP some good sites are:

FCC: <www.fcc.gov/voip/>

VOIP WIKI: <www.voip-info.org/tiki-index.php>

How Stuff Works: <computer.howstuffworks.com/ip-telephony.htm>

VOIP Watch: <andyabramson.blogs.com/voipwatch/>

If you do a lot of long distance calling, VOIP could save you hundreds of dollars a year. It's worth a look.

Susan Ives is a past president of Alamo PC. Her Skype user ID is suives.

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Computer Crimes

Susan Ives, Alamo PC

Faithfully Executed, by Michael Bowen

Hardback, St. Martin's, 1992, \$17.95, 230 pages

Former diplomat Richard Michaelson is commissioned by the White House to investigate anomalies in the execution of a hired hit man convicted of murdering a Pentagon computer programmer who was working on a secret project to determine whether electronic voting machines could be tampered with to rig an election.

A hot issue today is whether or not we need a paper trail for electronic voting machines. Just a tiny change to the proprietary code could alter election results and there is no way to conduct an audit — except by running the same computer

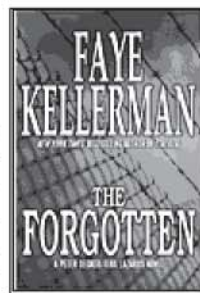


program! This insightful mystery anticipated the problem a decade before it hit the news. Not many technical details, but nonetheless a thoughtful look at the intersection between technology and politics.

The Forgotten, by Faye Kellerman

Hardback, W.C. Morrow, 2001, \$24.95, 363 pages

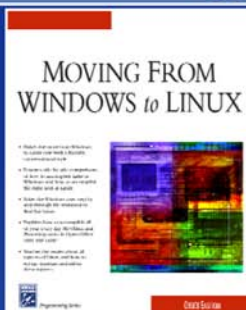
Los Angeles Police detective Peter Decker takes it personally when a troubled young man desecrates the Jewish shul his family attends. Decker suspects the kid has accomplices in a white supremacist group but he can't prove it, and the boy seems to be contrite. Six months later the teen is brutally murdered at a nature camp run by a pair of psychologists, and Decker catches the case.



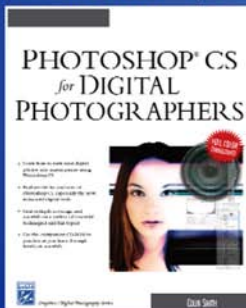
The technological hook is that the psychologists have hired a hacker to break into the computers that house standardized tests, such as the SAT and Iowa tests; they use their advance-knowledge to coach rich students to score well. The scanty tech talk is woefully inaccurate: in one paragraph, the detectives say that you can read "the pixels" in a web site's cookie database just by visiting the site. Pixels, of course, are picture elements and have nothing to do with cookies. A casual user could not look at a site's cookie files — you would have to hack into the log files on the server. Nonetheless, this is an excellent series with complex characters and gripping plots. Read it, but not for the computers.

Susan Ives, past president of Alamo PC, claims that computers are a mystery to her: Remember the Alibi Bookstore at 8055 West Ave. #101, San Antonio, TX (at the corner of West Ave. and Lockhill-Selma), (210) 344-7776, tries its darndest to keep the recommended books in stock.

COMPUTER BOOKS THAT DELIVER



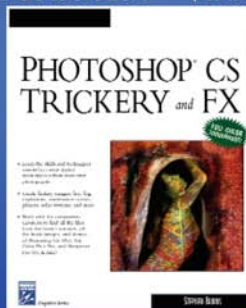
1-58450-280-0 \$44.95



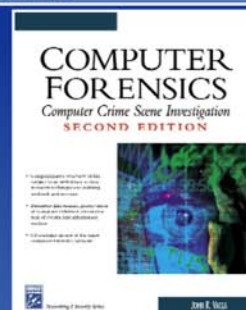
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Book Review

The OS X Files: How to Become a Mac OS X Power User (Panther Edition)

By Bob LeVitus

\$29.99 US

Published by Wiley

Reviewed by Shane Hicks, Alamo PC

This book claims it can turn me into a Mac OS X Power User. That's a pretty hefty claim. Let's see if this book lives up to its cover! This is a light read at 482 pages. It has fifteen chapters in four parts.

Introduction

I like the doctor's definition of a power user—basically, someone who can do more with their Mac than you can. I also like the fact that the author admits to knowing a lot about the Macintosh, after working with it for 15-years, but is still learning new things. This is an attitude that I like to see in the computer industry—you never know all there is to know and you never stop learning! This book is designed to show what the Doctor has learned in his experiences with the Mac. This book is for any Mac user, with a focus on topics of interest to the intermediate to advanced user.

The Book

The first chapter is an overview of the Mac. Of interest is a listing of additional resources accessible from the Internet to learn more. After all, as the author states, you never stop learning and a power user will read everything they can get their hands on.

This author is a fan of being mouse independent, so he covers the importance of learning the shortcut keys available in the OS. Chapter 2 is on the Finder and the Dock. There are good tips on using custom icons and associating them with your programs and files.

Chapter 3 provides a good summary of the OS X file system and how folders are organized. It talks about keyboard shortcuts and placing items in your Dock.

Chapter 4 talks about the importance of back-ups and provides some information on third-party applications available for purchase to perform these back-ups.

The next chapter covers on-line resources—many pay-as-you-go.

Chapter 6 covers the Classic (OS 9) environment.

Chapter 7 is a chapter on hardware. It talks about RAM usage and how to monitor it so that you know when you need to buy more. The author also discusses several additional components that can be added to the standard computer to make the Mac do more.

Chapter 8 provides useful troubleshooting and information on fixing common problems.

Chapter 9 contains some cool tips on customizing your Mac interface, but most involve the use of third-party tools to accomplish the tasks.

Chapters 10 and 11 are on UNIX, but have a surprisingly little focus on powerful things to do with UNIX. The major tips deal with viewing video files.

Chapter 12 is a tiny chapter on users and groups.

Chapter 13 talks about using AppleScript and provides some useful resources for downloading pre-made scripts, so you don't have to do any of the programming yourself.

Chapter 14 provides a list of software the author feels power users should own.

Finally, Chapter 15 contains several tips the Doctor collected on his web site from other users. This is probably the most useful chapter in the book.

Summary

Well, if you've seen my other reviews of Macintosh books, you're probably wondering why this one is so short. All I can say is, "Lack of content!" For a book that promised to make me a power user, it really didn't have much substance.


The book is not poorly written. In fact, I liked the Doctor's demeanor and style. As always, I enjoy and good sense of humor and a writer that doesn't take themselves too seriously. But I expected some hardcore content in this book—not common sense references or pointers to additional sources of information.

I'm irritated when books tell me to buy something additional to accomplish what I bought the book for. I'm also irritated when a book is little more than a list of additional resources that are available on the Internet. I'm competent enough that I could've done a search on Google and found most of this information. Even the tips the author provided are generally published monthly in the Mac magazines. As a power user, reading everything you can, you're probably already getting these magazines.

Why pay an additional \$29.99 for the same stuff?

If I were you, I wouldn't.

AlamoPC Organization

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2 Genealogy 7 - 9 P.M.	3 Class 2 of 8 **PRR** Advanced Digital Photo Editing 9 - 11 A.M. Class 1 of 6 **PRR** Windows XP 1:30 - 3:30 P.M. BOD 6:30 P.M. Class 1 of 5 Excel Intermediate 7 - 9 P.M.	4 Class 1 of 6 **PRR** Introduction to Windows 10 A.M. - Noon Class 1 of 6 **PRR** Internet and Email 1 - 3 P.M.	5 Student's Practice Lab 9:00 A.M. - Noon Class 2 of 8 **PRR** Digital Camera & Photography 9 - 11 A.M. (a/r) HGSI 6:30 - 8:30 P.M. Net Web Development 7 - 9 P.M.	6 *PRR* Small Business Server 2003 8 - 10 A.M. Dr. is In 9:00 A.M. - Noon Class 2 of 8 **PRR** Adv. Digital Camera & Photography 9 - 11 A.M. Workshop *PRR* Photoshop 12:30 - 4:30 P.M. PC Alameda Magazine & PDF 7 - 9 P.M.	7 *PRR* MCSE (Adv) 8:30 A.M. - Noon Class 1 of 6 *PRR* Windows XP 1 - 3 P.M. C++ 2:30 - 4:30 P.M. Class 5 of 6 *PRR* HTML 4 - 8 P.M.
8	9 Columbus Day General Meeting @ Crossroads Convention Center 7 - 9 P.M. Presenter: Corel	10 Class 3 of 8 **PRR** Advanced Digital Photo Editing 9 - 11 A.M. Class 2 of 6 **PRR** Windows XP 1:30 - 3:30 P.M. Class 2 of 5 Excel Intermediate 7 - 9 P.M.	11 Power Internet 10 A.M. - Noon Class 2 of 6 **PRR** Introduction to Windows 10 A.M. - Noon Class 2 of 6 **PRR** Internet and Email 1 - 3 P.M. Home Page Jumpstart 5:30 - 7 P.M.	12 Student Practice Lab 9:00 A.M. - Noon Class 3 of 8 **PRR** Digital Camera & Photography 9 - 11 A.M.	13 Dr. is In 9:00 A.M. - Noon Class 3 of 8 *PRR* Adv. Digital Camera & Photography 9 - 11 A.M. Workshop *PRR* Photoshop 12:30 - 4:30 P.M.	14 *PRR* MCSE (Adv) 8:30 A.M. - Noon Class 2 of 6 *PRR* Windows XP 1 - 3 P.M. Commodore 1 - 4 P.M. Class 6 of 6 *PRR* HTML 4 - 8 P.M.
15	16	17 Class 4 of 8 **PRR** Advanced Digital Photo Editing 9 - 11 A.M. Class 3 of 6 **PRR** Windows XP 1:30 - 3:30 P.M. Class 3 of 5 Excel Intermediate 7 - 9 P.M.	18 Class 3 of 6 **PRR** Introduction to Windows 10 A.M. - Noon Class 3 of 6 **PRR** Internet and Email 1 - 3 P.M.	19 Student Practice Lab 9:00 A.M. - Noon Class 4 of 8 *PRR* Digital Camera & Photography 9 - 11 A.M.	20 Dr. is In 9:00 A.M. - Noon Class 4 of 8 *PRR* Adv. Digital Camera & Photography 9 - 11 A.M. Workshop *PRR* Photoshop 12:30 - 4:30 P.M.	21 *PRR* MCSE (Adv) 8:30 A.M. - Noon Class 3 of 6 *PRR* Windows XP 1 - 3 P.M. C++ 2:30 - 4:30 P.M.
22	23 AARP Tax-Aid class 9 A.M. - 4 P.M. with lunch break CorelDRAW X3 6 - 8 P.M.	24 Class 5 of 8 **PRR** Advanced Digital Photo Editing 9 - 11 A.M. Class 4 of 6 **PRR** Windows XP 1:30 - 3:30 P.M. Class 4 of 5 Excel Intermediate 7 - 9 P.M.	25 AARP Tax-Aid class 9 A.M. - 4 P.M. with lunch break Class 5 of 6 **PRR** Introduction to Windows 10 A.M. - Noon Class 4 of 6 **PRR** Internet and Email 1 - 3 P.M. EBay Intro. to Internet Auction (Canceled) (a/r) WordPerfect 7 - 9 P.M.	26 Student Practice Lab 9:00 A.M. - Noon Class 5 of 8 *PRR* Digital Camera & Photography 9 - 11 A.M. (Dot) NetNuke Portal 7 - 9 P.M.	27 Dr. is In 9:00 A.M. - Noon Class 5 of 8 *PRR* Adv. Digital Camera & Photography 9 - 11 A.M. Workshop *PRR* Photoshop 12:30 - 4:30 P.M.	28 *PRR* MCSE (Adv) 8:30 A.M. - Noon Class 4 of 6 *PRR* Windows XP 1 - 3 P.M. Learning Center Desk Staff Meeting 1 - 3 P.M.
29	30 AARP Tax-Aid class 9 A.M. - 4 P.M. with lunch break.	31 Class 6 of 8 **PRR** Advanced Digital Photo Editing 9 - 11 A.M.  **PRR** Class 5 of 6 Windows XP 1:30 - 3:30 P.M. Class 5 of 5 Excel Intermediate 7 - 9 P.M.				

October 2006



The Learning Center

Alamo PC Organization classes and study groups

COMPUTER CLINIC

The Doctor Is In

Each Friday morning, volunteer "Computer Doctors" share their time at the Computer Learning Center to handle technical hardware and software questions and solve problems. They attempt to troubleshoot hardware and sort out software problems on site. If the problem is beyond their means, the member is referred to one of the repair shops that advertise with Alamo PC. The repair shop does charge for the problem. We do the work at the Computer Learning Center as a member-to-member benefit, with donations requested.

What to bring with you:

- Your Alamo PC membership card
- Your computer and all connecting cables, cords, software drivers or programs related to the problem area
- You do not need to bring your monitor, mouse, or keyboard unless you are having a specific problem with those items. Make sure you have the keycode for all of your software.
- If you are having problems with your scanner, printer, or something that hooks up to your computer; bring that item in addition to your computer etc. plus all connecting cables and software (don't forget the keycode for your software)

When: Every Friday 9 am to noon

Where: Alamo PC Organization
Computer Learning Center

Prerequisites: Bring your hardware and all connecting cables, cords, software drivers or programs related to the problem area

Tuition fee: Donations for this service are requested, the funds are used to purchase testing and other equipment to use at the Dr Is In sessions.

Technical Rating: ★

STUDY GROUPS

Student Practice Lab

A specific time period for students taking Alamo PC Courses to use Computer Lab One (Classroom One) to practice their class assignments. Students may also make up missed class days, if the instructor has provided the course material to the individual. The Practice Lab is monitored and the instructors will help when possible. The Practice Lab is for Class Work Only. Those abusing the system will be asked to leave. Seating is limited and on a first come, first serve basis. If necessary a time limit will be imposed.

Lab Instructors: Joe Gentry, Sarah Thomas
When: Thursday mornings, except Holidays, 9 am to Noon.

Where: Computer Learning Center

Pre-registration: No

Technical Rating: ★

C/C ++ Study Group

Please note we are currently a study group and no longer a Class. C/C++ Study Group Our group consists of 3 to 6 regular members who meet twice a month to discuss their plans and progress on development of software for experimental use. We do not plan to offer C or C++ courses in this study group. To join the study group, get acquainted with some of its members and consider preparing a brief presentation of your planned or current efforts.

Contact:
Bruce McAlexander
<mcalexb@satx.rr.com> 210-680-0231
Murry Adams
<mnadams@texas.net> 210-696-0047
Carl Deneke
<cdeneke@Texas.net> 210-496-6397

When: First and Third Saturday, 2:30 pm

Where: Learning Center.

Pre-registration: No

Technical Rating: ★★ - ★★★

Commodore Users of SA

Contact: Diana Jones
830-303-1220

When: Second Saturday, 1-4 pm

Where: Learning Center.

Pre-registration: No

Technical Rating: ★ - ★★★★★

Genealogy Study Group

For everyone interested in using their computer for genealogy. We will discuss currently available genealogy software, their pros and cons and meeting participants views as to best software to use for both beginners and advanced genealogists.

Contact: Jim Collier
<jcinquiry@earthlink.net>
210-710-5660

When: First Monday, 7-9 pm

Where: Learning Center.

Pre-registration: No

Technical Rating: ★ - ★★

HGSI Study Group

The premise of the HGS Investor SIG is, "Knowledge becomes stronger when passed on to others." We have created an environment for continuing education and open discussion between well informed members and guest speakers in matters of using Fundamental and Technical Analysis for the buying and selling of equities. Meetings are held on the First Thursday of each month in the UBS Conference Room, in Suite 300 at 200 Concord Plaza Drive, at 6:30PM to 8:30PM. If you wish to be added to our mailing list or for more information, contact below.

Contact: Maynard Burstein
<maynardb@juno.com> 735-3288

When: 1st Thursday, 6:30-8:30pm

Where: UBS/Paine Webber, 200 Concord Plaza Dr. Suite 300

Pre-registration: Call Maynard

Technical Rating: ★ - ★★★★★

Technical Content Ratings

- ★ For the beginner, no experience necessary and no prerequisite.
- ★★ Assumes some basic familiarity with the subject but is not a technical course.
- ★★★ Assumes that the student is somewhat familiar with the subject and will discuss.
- ★★★★ Assumes that the student is competent in the material and will be technical.

STUDY GROUPS (cont.)

DotNET Study Group

This is a study group for those interested in developing Windows and Web applications using Microsoft's .NET technology. We will use development modules and applications for the DNN Portal using VB.NET and C# as a basis for demonstrating .Net development. Guest speakers occasionally present new technology and development tools available for .Net Developers. Door prizes (books, software, shirts, etc.) are distributed at most meetings.

Contact: Joe Brazell 345-2207

When: 1st Thursday, 7-9pm

Where: Learning Center

Pre-registration: No

Technical Rating: ★★★

DotNetNuke Portal Study Group

Learn DotNetNuke portal software for hosting your website. Focus on hands-on configuration and use of the DNN 3.x portal. The class will discuss the portal framework and configuration of a DNN site. Setup web pages, insert modules on the pages, modify and edit the look of the pages and data in the pages. Modules include Calendar, Announcements, Forums, Blogs, Contacts, Links, Surveys and HTML.

Contact: Joe Brazell 345-2207

When: 7PM – 9PM Sept. 29, Oct. 27 (no November or December meeting)

Where: Learning Center

Pre-registration: No

Technical Rating: ★

MCSE Advanced Study Group

The MCSE Advanced SIG, affectionately known as 'The Geeks', is currently studying Microsoft's new ISA Server 2004 in anticipation of it's being included in the soon to be released Service Pack 1 for Small Business Server 2003. The SIG meets every Saturday morning from 8:30 until noon. Space is limited and the subject matter is very advanced. Therefore membership is restricted. Please contact Larry Lentz before attempting to attend.

Contact: Larry Lentz, MCSE on NT & W2K, MCDBA, MCSA:Messaging
<Larry@LentzComputer.Net>

When: Every Saturday, 8:30-noon

Where: Contact Larry

Pre-registration: Yes - contact Larry

Technical Rating: ★★★★★

Small Business Server Study Group

The Alamo PC Organization Small Business Server Special Interest Group (APCO SBS SIG) celebrated its first birthday on Friday, July 8th. We had a record turnout of 24 despite several 'regulars' having to be out of town or taking care of clients. The technical portion was a brief discussion of how to configure Internet Over the Internet (RPC over HTTP).

Our next meeting will be on Friday, August 5th. After the Taco Social we will have a discussion of WSUS, Windows Software Update Services.

For more information, please contact group chair, Larry Lentz at Larry@LentzComputer.net, or visit the group web site at <http://www.LentzComputer.net/SBS.>

Power Internet Study Group

Current Internet users can learn more. Each month a different Internet application will be discussed, such as 64 bit computers, SATA HDD technology, e-mail, browser use, MS Outlook, and virus protection in communications. This is a good place to share interests and insights about your experiences on the World Wide Web.

Contact: John Woody
<jwoody@texas.net>
210-494-5684

When: 2nd Wednesday, 10am-noon

Where: Learning Center

Preregistration: No

Technical Rating: ★★

WordPerfect Evening Study Group

We demonstrate projects and features of the latest version of WordPerfect. We also like to work on real life situations with our members who have questions.

Contact: Cynthia Thompson
210-655-1058

When: 4th Wednesday, 7-9pm

Where: Call Cynthia for directions

Pre-registration: Yes - Call Cynthia

Technical Rating: ★ - ★★★★★

Technical Content Ratings

- ★ For the beginner, no experience necessary and no prerequisite.
- ★★ Assumes some basic familiarity with the subject but is not a technical course.
- ★★★ Assumes that the student is somewhat familiar with the subject and will discuss.
- ★★★★ Assumes that the student is competent in the material and will be technical.

CLASSES

Alamo PC offers Free and Fee-Based classes. Classes showing a \$ next to the title indicate that either a Registration Fee or a Tuition Fee will be required.

Student Practice Lab

A specific time period for students taking Alamo PC Courses to use Computer Lab One (Classroom One) to practice their class assignments. Students may also make up missed class days, if the instructor has provided the course material to the individual. The Practice Lab is monitored and the instructors will help when possible. The Practice Lab is for Class Work Only. Those abusing the system will be asked to leave. Seating is limited and on a first come, first serve basis. If necessary a time limit will be imposed.

Lab Instructors: Joe Gentry, Sarah Thomas

When: Thursday mornings, except Holidays, 9 am to Noon.

Where: Computer Learning Center

Pre-registration: No

Technical Rating: ★

The next three free or low-cost classes provide instruction on the basics of using a computer, the Windows Operating System, and how to use Adobe Acrobat to obtain your PC Alamode online magazine. The successful completion of the Windows XP class (or classes) would then enable those students to take the other classes offered by Alamo PC.

Introduction To Windows - \$

The Introduction To Windows class is designed for people who do not have a computer yet or have just obtained one and don't know how to "turn it on". Students will learn about the parts of the computer, acquire keyboard and mouse skills used in many software programs, and some word processing. Instruction proceeds at a slower pace than most computer courses and time is allotted for "hands on" practice. Taking the next course, Windows XP, will still be necessary for students who want to be productive with their computers, but the students will be better able to understand what the Windows XP Instructor is teaching. Internet and e-mail will NOT be covered in this course.

Instructors: Andy Roca, Donna Dudley

When: Six sessions, Wednesdays; 10 am to noon, choose one set:

Set 1) May 24, 31, June 7, 14, 21, 28

Set 2) August 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 Sep 6

Set 3) Oct 4, 11, 18, 25, Nov 1, 8

Fees: Registration fee is \$10.00

This class will use the Easy Windows XP book, purchase of the book will be helpful and is strongly recommended but is not required. The book may be purchased from Alamo PC for \$20

Pre-registration: YES Call Learning Center at 210-736-0080

Where: Learning Center

Technical Rating: ★

Windows XP - \$

Our Windows XP course reviews the fundamentals of using a computer, and provides instruction on using the Microsoft Windows XP operating system. In this class you will learn how to: Open, Close, Save, Delete, Copy, and Move files; work with Files and Folders; customize your Desktop Layout; and to Resize and Move program windows. You will also be introduced to several "free" programs already on your computer, including: Wordpad - for basic word processing; Paint - for basic graphics work; Computer Solitaire and other games; and a Calculator.

Prerequisites: Students should have completed the Introduction To Windows course or have the equivalent knowledge. Choice of two class sessions:

Instructor: Audrey Henkin

When: 6 sessions, Tuesdays 1:30-3:30 pm; Choose one set:

Set 1) May 9, 16, 23, 30, June 6, 13

Set 2) August 15, 22, 29, Sep 5, 12, 19

Set 3) October 3, 10, 17, 24, 31, Nov 7 OR

Instructor: Don Robinson

When: 6 sessions, Saturdays 1-3 pm; Choose one set:

Set 1) May 27, June 3, 10, 17, 24, July 1

Set 2) August 5, 12, 19, 26, Sep 2, 9

Set 3) Oct 7, 14, 21, 28, Nov 4, 11

Fees: Registration fee is \$10.00

This class will use the Easy Windows XP book, purchase of the book will be helpful and is strongly recommended but is not required. The book may be purchased from Alamo PC for \$20

Pre-registration: YES Call Learning Center at 210-736-0080

Where: Computer Learning Center

Technical Rating: ★

Adobe Acrobat - PDF Class

How to download, install, and use Adobe Acrobat Reader. How to view the PC Alamo magazine online or download it to your computer or a CD. Students who want to download the magazine to a CD in class should bring a blank CD-RW (a read / writeable or recordable CD)

Instructor: Steve Tech
stephentechnr@yahoo.com

When: first Fri. of the month, 7 pm to 9 pm

Pre-registration: YES Call Learning Center at 210-736-0080

Where: Computer Learning Center

Technical Rating: ★

APCO Retro (Antique Computer Users Group)

We're initially only going to meet on-line, through the mailing list I've established using Yahoo! Groups. Membership is limited to Alamo PC members, but anyone can join the list by sending a message to <apcoretro-subscribe@yahooogroups.com>." Or, if you're reading the electronic version of the PC Alamo where this text appears, you can join APCO Retro simply by going to

<<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/apcoretro/join>>

Contact: Shane Hicks

<shane@absolutepowercomputing.com>

When: Anytime

Where: Cyberspace

Pre-registration: Must sign-up on <APCORETRO@yahooogroups.com>

Technical Rating: ★ - ★★★★★

CorelDRAW I Class

This basic class discusses basic tools and effects, concentrating on fills, blends, envelopes and other special effects for the next few months.

Contact: Steve Tech

<stephentechnr@yahoo.com>
210-675-2880

When: 4th Monday, 6-8pm

Where: Learning Center

Pre-registration: No

Technical Rating: ★★

Digital Camera & Photography Class

Digital Cameras have become an integral part of our computerized lifestyle. They come in all shapes and sizes; some are simple, some not. Yet many of us look at this wonderful tool and think, "Now what is that doohicky for?" Sometimes learning to use our digital cameras can be a confusing and frustrating experience and the manual may even make it worse. Then when you do figure out how to use the camera, the photo never seems to come out quite right. Learn how to use your digital camera, plus all the tips and tricks to get better pictures when you take them. Topics of discussion may include camera optics, composition, tips, choosing the right camera, lighting, how to take night shots, silhouettes, portraits, action shots, and close ups. This class will include field trips to interesting local spots to learn photography techniques.

Instructor: Joe M. Davis

When: Class meets once a week for 8 weeks on Thursdays 9 -11 am (some sessions may be longer)

Choice of two class sessions:

Thurs., Aug 3, 10, 17, 24, 31, Sep 7, 14, 21 OR

Thurs., Sep 28, Oct 5, 12, 19, 26, Nov 2, 9, 16

Pre-registration: YES Call Learning Center at 210-736-0080

Where: Computer Learning Center Plus Field Trips

Technical Rating: ★ - ★★

Intro. To Digital Photo Editing Class Advanced Digital Photo Editing

Students will learn the basics of digital photo editing using Microsoft Digital Imaging 2006 and if time permits, extra tips and tricks about matting and framing plus interesting uses for your photos. The photo editing basics used in this class can be applied to almost any photo editing program. The Microsoft Digital Imaging 2006 software is not required for the class but it would be helpful to have on your home computer.

The Introduction Class may include:

Remedial computer work as it relates to the use of Image 2006. Any computer skills that will be essential for success in Image 2006. We will learn how to place files into the work area. How to control the work area. We will learn the use of the essential photo editing tools such as; color balance, sharpening focus, removing red eye, crop, straighten photo, etc. We will advance as far as the students prior experience allows.

The Advanced Class may include:

Learning the work area of our program. We learn the use of the tools that are available with Image 2006. We learn to use the tools to do everything from making greeting cards to photo refinishing.

Prerequisites: Students should have completed the Windows XP course or have the equivalent knowledge.

Instructor: Joe M. Davis

When: Class meets once a week for 8 weeks on Tuesdays 9 -11 am

Introduction: Tuesdays, Aug 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, Sep 5, 12, 19

Advanced: Tuesdays, Sep 26, Oct 3, 10, 17, 24, 31, Nov 7, 14

Pre-registration - YES Call Learning Center at 210-736-0080

Where: Computer Learning Center

Technical Rating ★ - ★★

Photoshop Classes for use with Photoshop 7, CS, CS2 - \$

These courses will teach you how to modify and combine images to create realistic composite images. You will learn to use several tools for selecting parts of images, and will move, duplicate, and resize images. You will also learn to use layers, and to apply layer effects and filters to create special effects. Additionally, you will use painting tools and blending modes to create blending effects, and will perform adjustments to enhance images. A CD with the images for the entire class is provided. Photoshop Classes are offered as

Technical Content Ratings

- ★ For the beginner, no experience necessary and no prerequisite.
- ★★ Assumes some basic familiarity with the subject but is not a technical course.
- ★★★ Assumes that the student is somewhat familiar with the subject and will discuss.
- ★★★★ Assumes that the student is competent in the material and will be technical.

three separate classes, teaching the basic tools, palettes and procedures. Instruction class "A" using Photoshop 7. includes adaption for Photoshop CS and CS2. Instruction class "B" with different lessons and text, using Photoshop 7 includes adaption for Photoshop CS and CS2 Photoshop Basic Instruction for Photoshop CS and CS2 (focuses on CS and CS2 but those using Photoshop 7 can take this class).

Prerequisites: 1) Students need to have completed the Windows XP course or have the equivalent knowledge to be able to function properly and progress in these graphics programs This is Not a course for beginning computer students. 2) Students need the Software for Photoshop 7 or Photoshop CS or Photoshop CS2 on their home computers to join these graphics instruction classes.

Instructor: Beverly Bihn assisted by Jane Montgomery

When: Instruction class "A" using Photoshop 7 includes adaption for Photoshop CS and CS2 will meet 8 weeks on Thursdays, 12:30 to 4:30 pm Jan 4, 11, 18, 25, Feb 1, 8, 15, 22 Year 2007.

When: Photoshop Basic Instruction for CS and CS2 will meet 8 weeks on Fridays, 12:30 to 4:30 pm Jan 5, 12, 19, 26, Feb 2, 9, 16, 23 Year 2007.

Fees: \$90 for New Students, \$50 for Previous Students who have attended a Photoshop 7, Instruction Class A or B class, or CS2 class.

Pre-registration: YES Call Learning Center at 210-736-0080

Where: Learning Center

Technical Rating: ★★-★★★

Photoshop Workshop for use with Photoshop 7, CS, CS2 - \$

Written creative lessons are given to participants and demonstrations of the lessons are given during class for students to follow. Extra exercises at the end of the lessons encourage students to do similar tasks on their own without demonstrations. They can bring a blank recordable CD or a jump drive, to copy the images for the lessons to take home for more practice.

Prerequisites: 1) Students need to have completed the Photoshop Instruction Class A or Photoshop Instruction Class B, or have the equivalent knowledge with the permission of the Instructor. 2) Students need the Software for Photoshop 7 or Photoshop CS or Photoshop CS2 on their home computers to join these graphics instruction classes.

Instructor: Beverly Bihn assisted by Jane Montgomery

When: September on Fridays (Sept. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29) from 1 to 5 pm Working on "fancy" procedures beyond the basics.

When: October on Fridays (Oct. 6, 13, 20, 27) from 1 to 5 pm Working on more "fancy" procedures beyond the basics.

Fees: Tuition fee: \$25 per month

Pre-registration: YES Call Learning Center at 210-736-0080

Where: Learning Center

Technical Rating: ★★-★★★

eBay - Bid with Confidence: An Introduction to Internet Auctions

This 4-session class shows you how to buy and sell at Internet auctions using the eBay system (excludes real estate and automobiles).

Contact: Learning Center 736-0080 <learncenter@alamopc.org>

When: Date and time. To be announced. Call the Alamo PC Computer Learning Center at (210) 736-0080, or (210) 736-0700 to place your name on a Waiting List for the class. You will be notified when the next class is available.

Where: Learning Center, Room 1

Pre-registration: Yes

Technical Rating: ★

Excel Class - Basic

This class is intended for people who want to do significant projects or develop skills for the workplace. As such it moves at fairly brisk pace and includes homework assignments. Students will become familiar with Excel 2000's basic functionality, menus, toolbars, icons and shortcut keys. Learn how to create, format, save and print an Excel spreadsheet. Also, understand and use formulas, work with worksheets and workbooks, and learn the basic productivity elements of Excel. The Excel 2000 Class will use the Excel 2000 Step By Step book. This book will be helpful but is not required.

Contact: Bill Eastridge <weastridge@satx.rr.com>

When: First four Tuesdays of odd numbered months (Jan, Mar, May, etc.) 7-9pm **no class July, Aug.**

Class will resume Sept.

Where: Learning Center

Pre-registration: Yes

Technical Rating: ★ - ★★★

Excel 2000 Class - Intermediate

This class is follow-on to the Excel Basics Class and is intended people who want to do significant projects or develop skills for the workplace. It covers conditional formatting, absolute addressing, sorting, subtotaling, filtering, charting, functions and other subjects as time permits. The Excel 2000 Class will use the Excel 2000 Step By Step book. This book will be helpful but is not required.

Contact: Bill Eastridge <weastridge@satx.rr.com>

When: First four Tuesdays of Feb., June and Oct. 7-9pm

Where: Learning Center

Pre-registration: Yes

Technical Rating: ★★★

Home Page Jumpstart

A general introduction to developing your own Internet web page. It is *not* a course

Student Practice Lab

A specific time period for students taking Alamo PC Courses to use Computer Lab One (Classroom One) to practice their class assignments. Students may also make up missed class days, if the instructor has provided the course material to the individual. The Practice Lab is monitored and the instructors will help when possible. The Practice Lab is for Class Work Only. Those abusing the system will be asked to leave. Seating is limited and on a first come, first serve basis. If necessary a time limit will be imposed.

Lab Instructors: Joe Gentry, Sarah Thomas

When: Thursday mornings, except Holidays, 9 am to Noon.

Where: Computer Learning Center

Pre-registration: No

on HTML. Includes a 20+ page manual and a training disk. Not hands-on.

Contact: Susan Ives

<suives@texas.net> 210-694-4582

When: 2nd Wednesday, 5:30-7pm

Where: Learning Center

Pre-registration: No

Technical Rating: ★ - ★★

HTML and Beyond Class

Learn how to design, build and manage your own web site using HTML.

Students should attend the Home Page Jumpstart Class and have familiarity with the Windows Operating System. The Six (to Eight if needed) Session class will begin a new cycle each March and September.

Contact: Mike Bianchi

<webmaster@alamopc.org>

When: Saturdays, 4-8 pm

Where: Learning Center

Prerequisite: Home Page Jumpstart Class, familiarity with Windows

Pre-registration: yes

To register e-mail Mike at

<webmaster@alamopc.org>

Technical Rating: ★★

Technical Content Ratings

- ★ For the beginner, no experience necessary and no prerequisite.
- ★★ Assumes some basic familiarity with the subject but is not a technical course.
- ★★★ Assumes that the student is somewhat familiar with the subject and will discuss.
- ★★★★ Assumes that the student is competent in the material and will be technical.

Internet And E-Mail - \$

The Internet and E-mail course will cover basic techniques needed to effectively and enjoyably "surf the net." Students will learn how to find information on the net, download files, applications and graphics, and how to purchase items from "e-commerce" sites. Depending on student interest, the class will learn about important Internet issues like privacy, credit card security, and information reliability. Depending on time constraints, students may also cover more advanced topics like using the Internet for long distance communication, "Web Cams," and enjoying "streaming" audio and video.

Prerequisites: Students must have completed the Windows XP course or have the equivalent knowledge.

When: 6 weeks, Wednesdays, 1 to 3 pm

Choose one set:

Set 1) May 24, 31, June 7, 14, 21, 28

Set 2) August 2, 9, 16, 23, (skip Aug 30)

Set 6, 13

Set 3) Oct 4, 11, 18, 25, Nov 1, 8

Instructor: Don Robinson

Fees: Registration fee is \$10.00

Where: Learning Center

Pre-registration: YES Call Learning Center at 210-736-0080

Technical Rating: ★

Power Point class

This course features a structured curriculum for Microsoft PowerPoint. Students will be introduced to PowerPoint and will experience hands on development of an entertaining PowerPoint presentation. Emphasis will be placed on Inserting Graphics, Text, Layout, Titles and Slide Transitions.

Contact: Learning Center 736-0700

When: Dates and time to be announced

Where: Learning Center

Pre-registration: Yes

Technical Rating: ★

Word 2000 Class

Become familiar with Word 2000's basic functionality, menus, toolbars and shortcut keys. Students will learn how to create, view, format, save and print a Word document. Optional textbook: Word 2000 Step by Step book (this will be helpful but is not required). Student should have basic knowledge of Windows and be familiar with operating the mouse and keyboard.

Contact: Linda Bianchi at

education@alamopc.org

When: To be announced

Where: Learning Center

Pre-registration: Yes, call Learning Center at 736-0080

Technical Rating ★ - ★★★

Private or Semi-Private Tutorials - \$

Develop your skills at your own pace and at a time that fits your schedule. Introductory private tutorials for one, two, or three students. Choose from:

- Microsoft Word
- Microsoft Excel
- Basic Computer Skills, or
- Keyboarding/Typing

Contact: Learning Center (210) 736-0080 or 736-0700

When: Days and hours are arranged between the student(s) and teacher.

Where: Learning Center

Fees: 1 student: \$35 per hour, 10 hours for \$300. 2 or 3 students: per student—\$20 per hour, 10 hours for \$150

Pre-registration: Yes—call or visit the Learning Center

Technical Rating: ★

Student Practice Lab

A specific time period for students taking Alamo PC Courses to use Computer Lab One (Classroom One) to practice their class assignments. Students may also make up missed class days, if the instructor has provided the course material to the individual. The Practice Lab is monitored and the instructors will help when possible. The Practice Lab is for Class Work Only. Those abusing the system will be asked to leave. Seating is limited and on a first come, first serve basis. If necessary a time limit will be imposed.

Lab Instructors: Joe Gentry, Sarah Thomas

When: Thursday mornings, except Holidays, 9 am to Noon.

Where: Computer Learning Center

Pre-registration: No


Technical Content Ratings

★ For the beginner, no experience necessary and no prerequisite.

★★ Assumes some basic familiarity with the subject but is not a technical course.

★★★ Assumes that the student is somewhat familiar with the subject and will discuss.

★★★★ Assumes that the student is competent in the material and will be technical.



100% gray cotton golf shirts with pocket and embroidered full-color Alamo PC logo

Available at the Learning Center in a wide variety of sizes.

\$20.00

Call the Learning Center at 736-0700

Visit the Alamo PC Learning Center

Media Center

Learn all about computers with hundreds of books and dozens of video tapes. Enjoy our large selection of techno-fiction.

A comfortable seating area is available.

Call (210) 736-0700

Help Numbers

Can you help a new member with a new computer? Are you proficient in software not listed? Can you help with a title currently showing only one volunteer? Call Linda Bianchi at 226-2460 or email her at <education@alamopc.org>.

1 Look down the list for the software program you need help with; note the number in front of the title.

2 Then look down the list to the right for the corresponding number for the person who may be able to help you.

Please observe the times given by the volunteers name to call for phone help.

Step One

1 Computers for Beginners

2 Windows 98

3 Windows XP

Microsoft Office

4 Word

5 Excel

6 PowerPoint

7 Publisher

8 WinFax Pro

Corel Office

9 WordPerfect

10 CorelDraw

11 Quattro Pro

12 Paint Shop Pro

Photoshop

13 Adobe Photoshop

Internet and E-mail

14 Internet Basics / ISP Connection

15 Web Page Development

16 Internet Explorer

17 MS Outlook Express

18 Opera

19 Mozilla

20 Dreamweaver

21 .Net

22 Flash

23 RoadRunner

Open Office

24 OpenOffice

Financial

25 Quick Books

26 Quicken

Auction Online

27 eBay

Genealogy

28 Family Origins for Windows

29 Genealogy

Communications / Management

30 Time&Chaos

31 Act

32 Goldmine

Data Base

33 Access

34 AlphaFour

35 dBase

36 Paradox

37 MySQL

Networking

38 Networking

Other

39 Hardware / Setting Up A New PC

40 Maintenance and Security

41 Home Help

Step Two

Expertise	Name	Phone	Availability	E-mail
(1, 5, 6, 3, 12, 23, 26, 38, 41)	John Bolton	658-3060	6pm-9pm M-F	
(1, 3, 14)	Joe Barth	696-5783	7pm-9pm Tu, Th, Sat	jbarth@swbell.net
(2, 3, 4, 16, 17, 23, 29, 38, 39, 40, 41)	Bruce Cramer	865-2933	9am-3pm M-F, Sat	service@pcpro4u.com
(3, 5)	Bill Eastridge	223-8743	10am-6pm M-F, Sat, Sun	
(4, 15, 17, 33)	Bill Hudson	490-6513	7pm-10 pm M-F, Sat, Sun	bhudson3@satx.rr.com
(4, 9, 14, 27)	William Hudson	824-6910	3pm-8pm M-F, Sat	rwsh@earthlink.net
(19, 24, 30, 37)	Chris Montgomery	490-2415	7pm-9pm M-F / noon-6pm Sat, Sun	
(3, 16, 17)	Ted Ressler			catechist@gmail.com
(1, 3, 14, 16, 17, 40)	Don Robinson	497-3737	9am-5pm M-F, Sat, Sun	dl7266@swbell.net
(10)	Stephen Tech, Jr	675-2880	5:30pm-9pm M - F	stephentechjr@yahoo.com
(9)	Cynthia Thompson	655-1058	7pm-9pm M-F / 10am-4pm Sat, Sun	cynthom@satx.rr.com
(4)	Christel Villarreal			christel.villarreal@gmail.com

If you are unable to find help in the list above, consider contacting the desk staff volunteers at the Alamo PC Computer Learning Center. 736-0700 or 736-0080. 10am - 4pm M-F, Sat Remember these volunteers are all levels of expertise and some may not be able to answer your questions, but may be able to find someone who can.


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Classified Ads

E-mail or snail mail (address on page 3) your ad to the Editor, PC Alamode at: editor@alamopc.org. Copy deadline is 10th of month preceeding publication. Classified ads are free to members of Alamo PC.

- For Sale** Old dusty computer found in my garage. No power source, no mother board, no RAM. It's basically a plastic box full of dust. \$2,000 or best offer. Call 555-5555
- For Sale** Invest in antique computer junk. Box of old 5.25" disks. Paid \$45, will take \$600, plus delilvery fee. Call 555-5555
- Wanted** Classified ads from members of Alamo PC. It costs nothing and it's a good way to sell or buy any computer-related thing.
- Missing** Alamo PC members from the classifieds section. Answers to the name of 'Apconian.' Last seen about 8 issues ago. Reward: free classified ad.



100% gray cotton golf shirts with pocket and embroidered full-color **Alamo PC logo**
Available at the Learning Center in a wide variety of sizes.

\$20.00

Call the Learning Center at **736-0700**

Alamo PC Organization has your Number!

Your membership number entitles you to a full year of membership privileges. Established in 1983, this non-profit, all-volunteer organization is dedicated to helping members keep up with trends and technologies.

Monthly Meetings

Every month you can attend a presentation meeting, which is open to our 2,500 members. Local and national companies provide the first glimpses of new products and discounts on existing products. There are also drawings for FREE hardware and software.

Award-Winning Magazine

When you join Alamo PC, you'll receive its award-winning magazine, *PC Alamode*, each month. You'll learn of group activities and you'll enjoy the reviews of new products from your fellow members. Regular columnists will give you insight to this fast-paced, dynamic industry. As a member, you can sell your outgrown stuff in our FREE Classified ads section.

Special Interest Groups and Classes

Alamo PC offers more than 30 Study Groups and classes on specific software programs for beginners to expert. These small groups typically meet once a month in one of our two hands-on computer labs or classrooms and provide an opportunity to get answers in an informal setting. There are groups for word processing, Web design, graphics and programming and even study groups to help you get Microsoft Certified. You can attend as many SIGs as you'd like and, as you become experienced, even lead one!



Internet (www.alamopc.org)

Alamo PC is on the Internet, and more importantly, Alamo PC can help you get on the Internet too. If you're already on the Internet, attending one of Alamo PC's Internet SIGs will help you to become a savvy Internet surfer.

Alamo PC SeniorComp

Are you age 45 or older and not into computers or the Internet yet? Let us help. Contact Alamo PC today and sign up for the very next class. Classes are hands-on at a pace to match your learning style.

Expert Help

Deadlocked with a computer problem or question? Get access to personal help from expert Alamo PC members. Just call! If you need someone to diagnose hardware and software problems, try "THE DOCTOR IS IN," a free clinic where members bring in their computers and allow our experts to help diagnose and often fix many PC ailments.

APPLY FOR YOUR NUMBER -- JOIN NOW!

To join, return the application below or sign up online at www.alamopc.org. Your \$45 dues covers your entire family!e. You may use your credit card or send your personal check. If you need more information, call (210) 736-0700. Shortly after joining, you'll receive a membership card entitling you to all rights and privileges and discounts. **JOIN TODAY!**

GIFT MEMBERSHIPS NOW AVAILABLE: Call 210-736-0700 for details.



Membership Application -- Apply for your number today!

PLEASE ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS. This information will be kept in confidence - it will be used for planning purposes only

FIRST: _____ MI _____ LAST: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

PHONE H: _____ W: _____ FAX: _____

DATE OF BIRTH: ____/____/____ OCCUPATION: _____

EMPLOYER: _____ TITLE: _____

E-MAIL: _____

Please accept my membership for: ☐ 1 year - \$45 ☐ 2 Years - \$85 ☐ 3 Years - \$125 ☐ New Member ☐ Renewal

Method of payment: ☐ Check ☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard ☐ American Express

Credit Card # _____ EXP DATE: ____/____/____ SIGNATURE: _____

Make checks payable to Alamo PC Organization and mail to: **Alamo PC, PO Box 65180, San Antonio, TX 78265-5180**

IMPORTANT ☐ I do not authorize Alamo PC Organization to release my name address and phone to selected vendors

PCA JAN05

Alamo PC Organization, Inc.

Renew Now!

Isn't it about time for you to consider all the benefits of membership with Alamo PC? Renew your membership before the year is over!

For more information call the Learning Center at
210.736.0700



Consider A Matching Donation, or a Donation To Alamo PC Organization

Increasing members knowledge and effective use of personal computers, and providing other membership services and access to the expertise of other members, does not happen without an associated monthly expense. In recent months, although member dues and ads have offset the majority of the required monthly expense, and cost-saving measures are constantly being reviewed, the total amount of monthly funds generated has been less than the monthly expense. The shortfall has had to come from reserve funds, which have been severely depleted. We would like to offer everyone the opportunity to help rebuild the reserve fund.

If you employer has a "Matching Donation" program, please consider that you can double a donation amount by participating. All donations are tax deductible and can be dropped off at the Alamo PC Learning Center in Crossroads Mall (near the underground parking entrance, accessed from Fredericksburg Road) or mailed to **Alamo PC Organization, PO Box 65180, San Antonio, TX, 78265-5180**. Checks, Money Orders, etc., should be made payable to **Alamo PC Organization** and identified as "Donation."

On-line donations can be made at <<https://training.alamopc.org/donations>>. If you do not have on-line access, credit card donations can be made by mail if you legibly provide the following information on a piece of paper: Full Name, Address, City, State, Zip, Phone Number (to verify you want your card charged), Name of Card, Card Number, Card Expiration Date, Donation Amount, and your usual Signature. Please help us keep our membership dues low, meet our monthly expenses and rebuild the reserve fund.

