

THE NEWS MAGAZINE OF THE ALAMO PC ORGANIZATION

PC Alamode

WEB ISSUE

www.alamopc.org
August 2007
\$4.50

The phenomenon of Facebook
page 36

Four-part Internet series
page 38

YouTube revolutionizes the Internet
page 50

General Meeting:
page 9





SAVE ON INK

without the squid farm.


LEXMARK
Canon
EPSON
and more...

Discount Printer Ink

Ink Cartridges ♦ Laser Toner ♦ All Printing Supplies

Huebner Oaks
next to BBQ Galore

San Pedro
next to Hermes Music



The Forum
behind Hobby Lobby

Bulverde Road
inside Loop 1604

210-2-BUY-INK
(210-228-9465)
www.inksell.com

Printer
InkSell.com **INK**



 **New
Life
Toner inc.**

930-9300

5800 Rittiman Plaza
www.toner.net

Reduce Office Cost!
Save Up to 70%
on Supplies
Printer, Fax, & Copiers
Toner, Ink, Ribbons
Free Delivery
Volume Discounts
Money Back Guarantee
Huge Selection

New and compatible Toner & Ink Crtgs

We buy empty toner and ink cartridges.
Ask about the great deals on refurb. printers

**Authorized
Printer Service**
Hewlett-Packard
Xerox
Okidata
Brother

10%

Discount
On Parts and Labor

We also service
Lexmark
Canon
Sony
Computer Service
Coupon 1103



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:

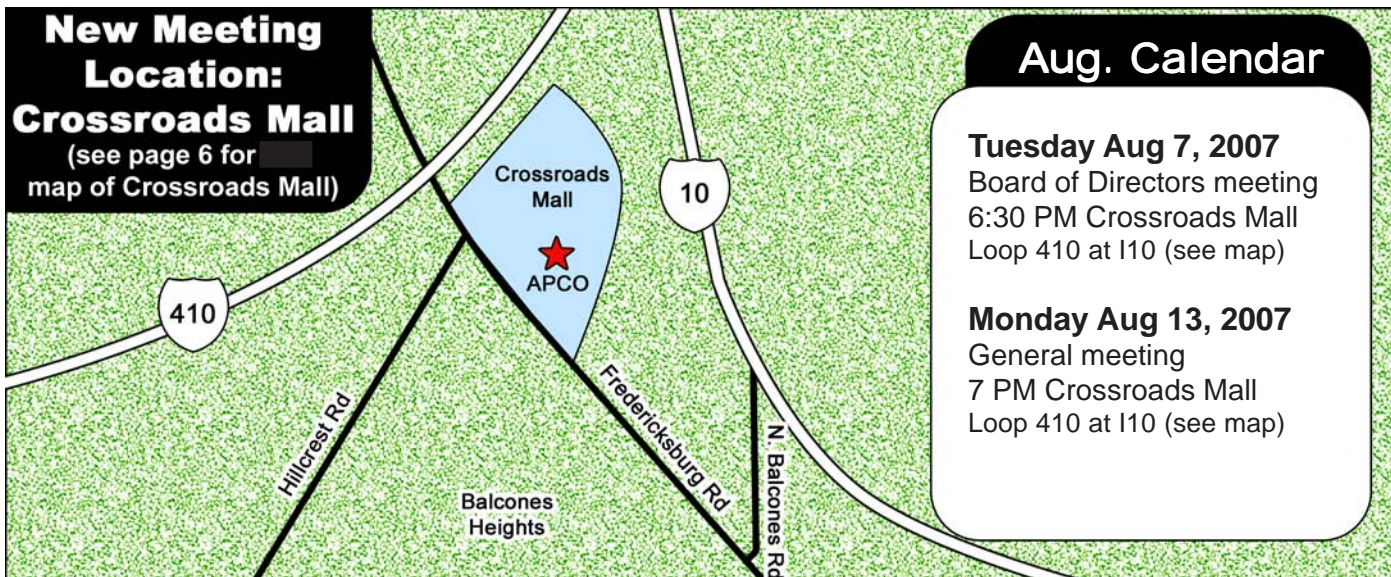
Alamo PC Organization
PO Box 65180
San Antonio, TX 78265-5180

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)



Aug. Calendar

Tuesday Aug 7, 2007
Board of Directors meeting
6:30 PM Crossroads Mall
Loop 410 at I10 (see map)

Monday Aug 13, 2007
General meeting
7 PM Crossroads Mall
Loop 410 at I10 (see map)

This is the Web



columns

The Deals Guy <i>Bob Click</i>	13
Computer Law <i>John Brewer</i>	15
RAM & Reason <i>Rob Rice</i>	17
Windows Tips & Tricks <i>Bill Beverley</i>	19
New Best and Worst <i>Pim Borman</i>	21
PowerTalk <i>Shane Hicks</i>	24
The Switcher <i>Shane Hicks</i>	26
Lazy Webmaster <i>Susan Ives</i>	27
The Graphics Guy <i>Paul Vaughn</i>	29
PC 101 <i>Ron Ingraham</i>	32

departments

PC Alamode Links List	7
Enter <i>Joseph de Leon</i>	7
President's Message <i>Bill Klutz</i>	8
August Program News <i>Bill Klutz</i>	9
Volunteer of the Month <i>Don Robinson</i>	10
Funny Bytes	12

guest contributors

Upgrading with the Joneses	34
The Nightmare	35

Alamo PC Phone Directory	6
Map to Meeting Places	6
Alamo PC Calendar of Events	58
Study Groups and Classes	59-63
Help Numbers	64
Index of Advertisers	65
Classified Ads	65
Membership Application	66

PC Alamode

(501 (C) (3))

Featured this month

The Phenomenon of Facebook	36
The Internet - What is it?	38
The Internet - Internet connections	39
The Internet - Internet addressing	41
The Internet - E-mail and the Web	42
Configuring Outlook Express	44
How I find my "deleted" e-mails	46
Get organized NOW!	48
Can't play online videos - Here's what to do	49
YouTube revolutionizes the Internet	50
A router can help protect your computer	51

PC Alamode (ISSN 1065-3708) is published monthly by the Alamo PC Organization, Inc., PO Box 65180, San Antonio, TX 78265-5180, an independent association of personal computer users, founded in January 1983, and incorporated in January 1984 as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. COPYRIGHT © 2007 by Alamo PC or the author. All rights reserved. No part of PC Alamode may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means — mechanical, electrical, or otherwise — including, but not limited to, photocopying, recording, or information storage/retrieval, without express written permission from Alamo PC. However, unless otherwise indicated, articles may be reprinted by other user and education groups provided the articles are reprinted unaltered and the publication acknowledges the author thereof and PC Alamode. Articles, programs, reviews, and advertisements are compiled without verification of accuracy or applicability to a specific task, computer, or other equipment. Comments or claims are made solely by the individual author and do not necessarily represent the views of Alamo PC or of any other Alamo PC member. Trademarks have been used at random within the publication and are hereby recognized as such.

Periodical postage paid at San Antonio, TX and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to PC Alamode, PO Box 65180, San Antonio, TX 78265-5180.

EDITOR
Joseph de Leon

EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD
Joe Barth
Susan Ives

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Bill Beverley
Bruce Cramer
Shane Hicks
Tim Hoke
Bill Hudson
Susan Ives
Russell James
Larry Lentz
K. Joyce McDonald
Paul Vaughn

INTERIM PRODUCT REVIEW COORDINATOR
David Steward

ADVERTISING
Joseph de Leon

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

editor@alamopc.org

Joseph de Leon, Editor, PC Alamode
editor@alamopc.org

Ad rates effective January 2005

Rate frequency.	1 x	3 x*	6x*	12 x*
	Per insertion			
Full pg. (7 ¹ / ₄ " w x 9 ¹ / ₂ " h)	\$274	\$260	\$246	\$238
Half pg. (7 ¹ / ₄ " w x 4 ¹ / ₂ " h)	144	138	130	121
Half pg. (3 ¹ / ₂ " w x 9 ¹ / ₂ " h)	144	138	130	121
Quarter pg.(3 ¹ / ₂ " w x 4 ¹ / ₂ " h)	74	72	64	62
Bus. card (3 ¹ / ₂ " w x 2" h) **	43	41	39	37

*Consecutive months

**To be paid in advance

product reviews

Computer Crimes	52
Hardware Review: Actiontec Megaplug	53
Software Review: CounterSpy V2	55

Board of Directors

President	Bill Klutz	532-9122 (Home)	president@alamopc.org
Secretary	David Steward	662-8606 (Home)	secretary@alamopc.org
Treasurer	Billy Samples	646-0047 (Home)	treasurer@alamopc.org
Education	Linda Bianchi	226-2460 (Home)	education@alamopc.org
Operations	Cary Hall	736-0700 (Learning Center)	learncenter@alamopc.org
Marketing	TBD (Steve Tech)	675-2880 (Home)	marketing@alamopc.org
Communications	TBD		communications@alamopc.org

Executive Service Officers and other important numbers

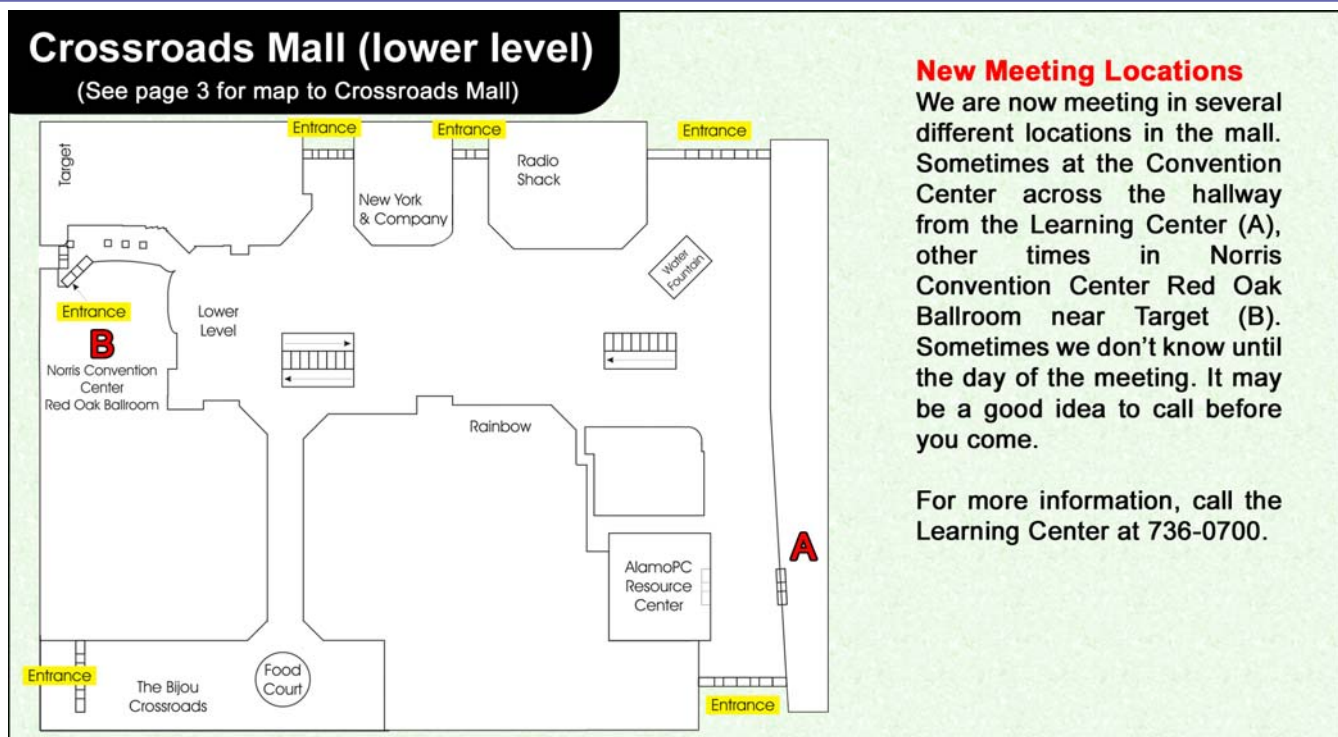
Learning Center, Crossroads Mall

736-0700

FAX 736-0032

Learning Center Manager	Cary & Jean Hall	736-0700 (Learning Center)	learncenter@alamopc.org
Past President/Programs	David Steward	662-8606 (Home)	dsteward@texas.net
Member Records	Steve Tech	675-2880 (Home)	membership@alamopc.org
Public Relations	Susan Ives	694-4582 (Home)	suives@texas.net
Product Review Coordinator	TBD (David Steward)	662-8606 (Home)	reviews@alamopc.org
Study Groups Coordinator	Linda Bianchi	226-2460 (Home)	education@alamopc.org
Special Projects	Joe Brazell	370-2207 (Office)	projects@alamopc.org
Registrar	Linda Bianchi	226-2460 (Home)	Registrar@alamopc.org
Webmaster	Mike Bianchi	226-2460 (Home)	Webmaster@alamopc.org
Lab/Network Administrator	Gary Grieve	492-5066 (Home)	netadmin@alamopc.org
Trade Shows	Steve Tech	675-2880 (Home)	stephentechnr@yahoo.com
APCUG Representative	David Steward	662-8606 (Home)	dsteward@texas.net
Editor, PC Alamode Magazine	Joseph de Leon	unlisted	editor@alamopc.org

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



PC Alamode Links List



Paloozahead

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

Impress your friends with a stage performance on the Lolapalooza stage, a three-day festival featuring today's hottest bands. Upload your favorite picture, pick an outfit and music, then let the show begin.



Interactive Narratives

<http://www.interactivenarratives.org/>

Interactive narratives are informational and storytelling experiences designed and produced for the web. They leverage great design, visual journalism and rich-media content.



I'd like to welcome a new member and contributor to the PC Alamode. Courtney Jewett is a senior English major at Baylor University who is pursuing a career in journalism.

She will be working on a series of articles about a social networking Web site called Facebook.com. Once the domain of mainly students, the site is gaining popularity as a way to dig up background on prospective hires and potential mates.

In upcoming articles, Courtney will examine the role Facebook plays in the life of the student and the advantages of participating. She'll also discuss how Facebook is affecting the dating world, and improving the love lives of college students everywhere.

Help me in welcoming Courtney as our latest contributor and new member!

Joseph de Leon, Editor

editor@alamopc.org



Joseph de Leon, Alamo PC

Joseph has worked in the graphics industry for 9 years and teaches graphics and web classes at San Antonio College.

President's Message

Bill Klutz

"August" - A Ghastly Month, Election Process Continues

At the July General Meeting, David Steward had an Adobe representative provide a presentation on some Adobe products, via a live Internet connection (computer demo of product capabilities and voice commentary). It was held in our Learning Center, and seemed to be well received (since no questions were presented). On-line chat (typing) and telephone were available to submit requests for information or questions.

At the time of this writing (late July) our Programs official has not informed me of the presenter for the August General Meeting, he has been negotiating for an AT&T representative. (We have also been hoping for some time to have Gene Barlow, a General Computer Information specialist [expert in Hard drives, backups, and computer vulnerabilities that may come from the Internet], friend to User Groups, and software vender). Check the website or Learning Center for the latest information, but plan to come and bring some friends.

As I have previously stated, the definition of aghast is struck with terror, amazement, or horror. SHOCKED (as was my state last year at the same meeting) would again describe my condition at the start of last month General meeting, since some actions impacted the future of Alamo PC - July is Alamo PC's annual month for nominations for Board positions that are vacant or expiring.


My June message indicated the Elections Committee would try to seek members willing to serve at the BOD level, but since we have operated with vacant positions since Oct 2005 (despite numerous pleas from me in past messages), it would appear the task may again prove to be difficult. Each member was reminded of their stake in this process - they are also responsible for identifying individuals willing to serve at the BOD level, and would be given the opportunity to submit names at the July General Meeting.

I was somewhat disappointed when nomination from the floor were requested, and again not a single name was provided from the approximately 70 individuals who were present. Sadly, I had to also report to those present that the Election Committee search had again not produce one single name from among our members. We seem to be content with no nominations and at least one board position that has remained vacant since October 2005. I only hope that some board members who have expressed a desire for a break may be willing to continue for at least another term. There are no guarantees it will happen!

Elections: The election process for Oct 2007- Sep 2008 (Floor Nominations/ Election Committee Names - Submitted NLT Jul 9th [Gen Meeting]; Bios - posted to website ASAP & included in Aug ALAMODE; Voting - Aug 1 until midnight Aug 31; New Board Members identified ASAP - Names available to members ASAP in Sep [Website & at Gen Meeting Sep 10th] and included in the Oct 1 Alamode) will continue. Since no names were forthcoming, no bios will be needed. The remainder of the process will continue, however, the voting portion will only take place to allow individual members the opportunity to provide "write-in" names. Individuals will be contacted to see if they will serve and names will be appointed to vacant board positions based on number of submissions [highest to lowest], and only after individuals currently serving in positions about to expire have had the opportunity to indicate they will continue to serve.

I continue to ask current members to consider what this organization has to offer, what it has done for you, and what it can do for others. You are our best source of free advertising. Perhaps by thinking about it, you will be prompted to renew your membership and provide some much needed support, at various levels in the organization - marketing, advertising & sponsors, software for evaluation, general meeting set-up & tear-down, trade shows, learning center volunteer, class teacher, etc. Please remember for this organization to survive WE must each continue to be a supportive member, through renewals and participation at some level.

Continue to consider some of the following items available to members (and please talk to others about them): free class benefit - enroll in one or more of the classes; the "Wish List" - if a class you would like to have isn't on the list, make it known to the people at the Learning Center so they can put it on the list of classes that people have requested; one membership for the family - entitles one family member to vote, but it entitles each family member, in



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

the household, to enroll in free classes during, the time the membership is current, "The Dr. Is In" - Friday AM hands-on help with computer problems, at the Learning Center; monthly presentations about current issues in the computer hardware and software; etc.

We continue to review member requested classes to determine if and when a new area of study should be scheduled. If you have a suggestion, let the Director of Education know <education@alamopc.org>. That is how several classes have been started, including the one in the next paragraph.

Don't forget about our popular Digital Camera & Photography classes (4 different levels, each repeated once during the year). Picture opportunities are available throughout the year, not just during holidays. After taking one or more classes, every picture day should be considered a "Photo Holiday," and produce good results.

We are still trying to improve member retention, although new members have almost been sufficient to offset non-renewing members. (At present, almost all of our new members are derived from "walk-in traffic" at the Learning Center.) We want membership to continue to "grow" through each member renewing and trying to encourage others to join. (Please remember that you can help someone to join through the online process. They don't have to come to the Learning Center.) If you do not choose to renew, send a comment or two as to "Why?" to membership@alamopc.org, or to me (president@alamopc.org or privately wlklutzjr@juno.com). I appreciate all communications, especially those on how we can improve the Alamo PC Organization and increase member interest!

As, I have said before, the future of OUR organization will always rest in the hands of its members. Whether WE continue (or not) depends on OUR interest and involvement. 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 look forward to seeing members and guests at the August General Meeting. I am not sure if it will be in our Learning Center (LC) or a Norris conference facility (hopefully across from our LC). Check the website for the latest information.

August Program

Bill Klutz

A presenter has not yet been confirmed for this month's General Meeting. Check www.alamopc.org for the latest information on presenter and meeting location, or talk with one of the Learning Center desk personnel at 210-736-0700.

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

Student Practice Lab

Polish those new skills - A specific time period for students taking Alamo PC Courses to use Computer Lab (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. Seating is limited and on a first come, first serve basis.

Call (210) 736-0080, or (210) 736-0700

Volunteer of the Month

Don Robinson



Alamo PC Organization now offers members private or semi-private tutorials

- 🖱️ Keyboarding/Typing
- 🖱️ Basic Computer Skills
- 🖱️ Microsoft Word

Rates for one student

\$35 per hour

\$300 for 10 hours

Rates for two or three students

\$20 per student per hour

\$150 per student for 10 hours

Enjoy private instruction on days and at hours that fit **your** schedule at our modern facility in Crossroads Mall.

Call or visit the Learning Center to register
(210) 736-0080

The Doctor is In



Each Friday from 9:00am until 12:00 noon

Diagnose your software and hardware problems

Trouble shoot major applications

Run tests

Solve Operating System mysteries

For information call 736-0700



Owner must
stay with
computer dur-
ing repairs

ComputerFest is a collection of local and statewide dealers under one roof offering rock-bottom prices on all your computer needs. All of our dealers are independent wholesalers, so each conducts business separately. Most of the dealers will accept credit cards, but with cash you can usually get the best deals. And new products are almost always backed up with a warrantee, so you and your wallet can always feel comfortable with your purchases.

What you can find at the show:

New Complete Systems
New Hardware
Newest Software Titles
Printers, Monitors, Scanners
Ink-Jet Recharge Kits
Imaging Devices
Internet Services
Used Hardware
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:

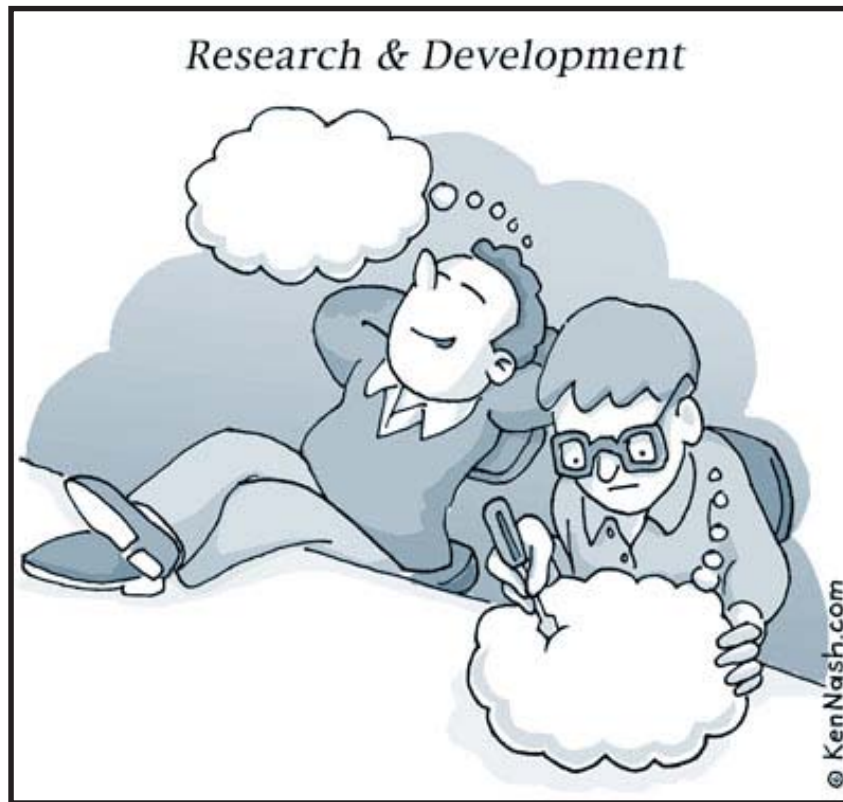
Sept. 29, 2007
Dec. 8, 2007

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



Funny Bytes

Ken Nash & Randy Glasbergen





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.

I've had my fill of Earthlink as an ISP. Talking to techs with bad English is frustrating, not to mention ongoing e-mail problems. The final decision came when my phone became accidentally disconnected by Bell South. After it was reconnected, but no DSL, the tech I spoke to had me unplugging and plugging wires, and finally asked me to unplug the very line I was talking on from the wall plug (I asked if she was sure before I did it), and she never called me back. Also, their price was too high. I finally decided on AT&T who offered the best deal I found, but I still have to rely on techs speaking bad English. My new e-mail address is <bobclick at bellsouth dot net>. (I hope that strange formatting will avoid address spiders). Already I ran into poor tech support. I was three days late getting my DSL up and running because their own network had problems, and their tech support was slow getting someone to the house for further troubleshooting. They do not enter the house without a charge, but will check up to the outside box. She called the office for DSL light and I was finally in business.

*Help For The Sight Impaired

I saw this article in ComputerWorld about the efforts of the city of Stockholm to provide voice instructions for guiding the blind, or people with poor vision, to wherever they want to go without other help. It is a serious undertaking and sounds promising. See it here: <http://www.computerworld.com/action/article.do?command=viewArticleBasic&taxonomyName=Mobile_and_Wireless&articleId=291724&taxonomyId=15&intsrc=kc_li_story>.

*What About The Centralizing Of Medical Records?

I'm sure you've read about the desire for a centralized database of medical records for every individual so doctors can have quick access to your complete records. This interesting article talks about some of the efforts <<http://www.informationweek.com/story/showArticle.jhtml?articleID=199702199>>. Yet, that has not even come close to fruition so far. Everybody has a different approach including the many companies trying to develop products to accomplish it. Then there's the HIPPA law, along with other concerns about confidentiality, and your medical records. I worked in a UAW retiree office for two years helping retired members with benefit problems. Most were trying to get medical bills paid. Calling insurance companies and medical centers was an exercise in frustration after the HIPPA law took affect. You had to hope for a friendly person who would try to work around that law to solve the problem, even after telephone permission from the subscriber. The office person on the other end couldn't actually see us both sitting there and often refused to help.

When I ran the Medistick product a few months ago (a USB Flash Drive to contain your personal medical information in PDF format for doctors to access), I thought that was a good idea, but now I'm not so sure because of the different software and office procedures used by doctors, and their efforts to keep office costs down. When I tried a new cardiologist last year I mentioned various doctors I had seen in the last few years. He wanted to contact them all for my records to do his homework. On my next visit, he had done that and most used paper records, but he gave me two CDs with medical information from other offices saying his soft-

Continued on page 14

The Doctor is In



Each Friday from 9:00am until 12:00 noon

Diagnose your software and hardware problems

Trouble shoot major applications

Run tests

Solve Operating System mysteries

For information call 736-0700



Owner must stay with computer during repairs

ware was not compatible with their format. Those were extremely important medical records that were useless to him that way. I visited those offices to get my records on paper, although it was difficult to find a helpful secretary.

If I had a USB Medistick, how would a doctor want my medical information organized and formatted to be useful? It's a safe bet that few doctor's offices will put that information on your Medistick since they are concerned about the time to prepare it for you.

So far, even President Bush's intervention has had little affect on the push for centralization of medical records. We are the ones suffering the repercussions of this lack of coordination. If I could simply get a report on the office visit, or procedures performed, from that doctor's office, perhaps I could type it up myself on the Medistick if there was a centralized format. As you know, there are other problems if you want to record doctor data for your own reference since they often aren't willing to give it to you. Also, the public is very suspicious about any governmental control of that information, and who would be exceptions to the rules, such as a prospective employer? If you got sick on a distant vacation, seems like that central database could be invaluable to a doctor or ER.

***Be Aware!**

These are announcements I received, but I have not tried any of them.

***Keep Track of Your Ink**

AVPSoft.com has announced APFill Ink Coverage Meter 4.2. You can determine the cost of a document, and if needed, optimize the pages to spend less ink or toner and consequently money. APFill Ink Coverage Meter is ideal for home users who have a color printer, or print shops that print a large number of copies. Usually printer owners rely on the printer manufactures that describe ink usage as being 5% ink coverage of an A4 page. With APFill Ink Coverage Meter in place, you will know the exact ink coverage and determine the accurate cost of a printed copy based on such properties as paper density, paper format and original color density.

APFill users can measure the ink coverage of the highlighted screen area when, for example, they preview the page in a graphic editor before printing. It's also possible to measure the ink coverage for every single page, or for the entire document in either PostScript or PDF format with CMYK separation up to 8 color spots. There's also a 'Selected area surface measurement' feature, allowing you to measure the area filled in with a specified color. The measurement results can be displayed in either pixels or any user-defined units.

APFill Ink Coverage Meter 4.2 is available for \$79.95 (US) for a single-user license. We offer user group members a 10% discount on the purchase of APFill Ink Coverage Meter. The coupon code is APFILL10PR.

The product requires Windows 2000, XP, 2003 and Vista. Registered users are entitled to free upgrades and technical support. Additional information on the product, as well as its 30-day evaluation copy is available from <<http://www.avpsoft.com>>.

Product page link: <<http://avpsoft.com/products/apfill/>>

Direct download link: <<http://www.avpsoft.com/download/apfill.exe>> (2.55 Mb)

***Another Data Recovery, But Its Free!**

Smart Data Recovery is an effective and powerful, easy-to-use software program that enables the recovery of lost data. Restore your important files absolutely free. Smart Data Recovery is compatible with almost all kinds of data storage devices from computer hard drives to digital cameras. It supports flash drives, floppy disks, memory sticks, PC cards, multimedia cards, and secure digital cards. Smart Data Recovery restores all sorts of files, including electronic documents and pictures. It restores files from FAT32 and NTFS hard drives and has a really simple interface with Windows operations systems.

Even if the partition table is lost, the program gives you a chance to retrieve your important files. Smart Data Recovery applies a simple yet powerful algorithm that allows restoration of your lost data quickly and effectively. Smart Data Recovery also recovers any deleted files, including MS Office files, images, MP3 and zip files!

Smart Data Recovery runs on Windows NT/2000/XP/2003/Vista. The current version is downloadable free at <<http://www.smartpctools.com>>. 820 kB. There are other interesting Freeware products listed on their Web site.

***PDF Anyone?**

Acrobat is costly and there are cheaper ways to create a PDF. PDF995 can be found at <<http://www.pdf995.com>>. (There are three free downloads that are adware). People who have used the product say it produces a different file size, but works as well as other PDF software. The free versions display a sponsor page in your web browser each time you run the software. If you prefer no sponsor pages, you may upgrade by obtaining individual keys for each product at any time for \$9.95 each, and also get e-mail support.



Blogging and shield laws

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>

The first amendment to the US Constitution contains a number of important personal rights. It reads as follows: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances." Analysis of the amendment confirms why the courts have been given the task of interpreting the language through the years.

One of the important parts of the amendment is freedom of the press. In order to protect the press, approximately 31 States have enacted "shield laws." Journalists are protected by a qualified (limited) First Amendment right protect their confidential sources. Many of the federal circuits have held that a qualified privilege exists. However, journalists are frequently challenged to reveal their confidential sources. This privilege has received attention recently in the New York Times Co. v. Gonzales case that involves the phone records of Judith Miller. An interesting variation to this issue is whether Internet journalists have the same protection as print journalists. A recent case in California has examined this issue. The case involved some Internet web site and Apple Computer.

Apple brought an action in California alleging that persons unknown caused the wrongful publication of secret plans on the World Wide Web to release a device that would facilitate the creation of digital live sound recordings on Apple computers. In an effort to identify the source of the disclosures, Apple sought and obtained authority to issue civil subpoenas to the publishers of the Web sites where the information appeared and to the email service provider for one of the publishers. The publishers moved for a protective order to prevent any such discovery. The trial court denied the motion on the ground that the publishers had involved themselves in the unlawful misappropriation of a trade secret. A California Court of Appeals held that this was error because (1) the subpoena to the email service provider could be enforced consistent with the plain terms of the federal Stored Communications Act (18 U.S.C. §§ 2701-2712); (2) any subpoenas seeking unpublished information from petitioners would be unenforceable through contempt proceedings in light of the California reporter's shield [note: California has a shield provision in the State Constitution] and (3) discovery of petitioners' sources is also barred on this record by the conditional constitutional privilege against compulsory disclosure of confidential sources. The Court of Appeals issued a protective order.

The Electronic Frontier Foundation is directly involved in the litigation. The following is extracted from the EFF web site. "The whole mess began in December 2004, when Apple filed suit against 20 unnamed and presumably unknown individuals, referred to in the court filing as "Does," for leaking confidential materials on an Apple product under development to several Web publications. As part of its investigation, Apple subpoenaed Nfox -- for communications and unpublished materials obtained by PowerPage publisher Jason O'Grady. A Santa Clara trial court upheld the subpoena in March of 2005 and the EFF appealed.

"In a 69-page ruling, the 6th District Court of Appeal ruled that bloggers and webmasters are no different in their protections than a reporter and editor for a newspaper. "We can think of no workable test or principle that would distinguish 'legitimate' from 'illegitimate' news," the judges wrote.

"Any attempt by courts to draw such a distinction would imperil a fundamental purpose of the First Amendment, which is to identify the best, most important, and most valuable ideas not by any sociological or economic formula, rule of law, or process of government, but through the rough and tumble competition of the marketplace," they wrote.

Continued on page 16

David's Essential Domains

Website Hosting Starting at \$3.95/month!



Economy	Deluxe	Business
\$3.95/mo.	\$9.95/mo.	\$29.95/mo.
50MB storage	1GB storage	2GB storage
1 GB transfer	15 GB transfer	30 GB transfer
50 e-mails	unlimited e-mails	unlimited e-mails

Domain Names

.COMs starting at \$7.85!


FREE with every domain:

- FREE! Change of Registration
- FREE! Parked Page w/ Domain
- FREE! Domain Name Locking
- FREE! Status Alerts

Website Tonight

Click 'n build your site online, in minutes!

- Hosting is built in
- 5 Page Site - \$4.95/mo
- 10 Page Site - \$8.95/mo
- 20 Page Site - \$12.95/mo
- 100+ professional templates



SECURE SSL Certificates
Build trust, build confidence, and build your online business—with a Secure SSL Certificate!



TRAFFICBLAZER™
Prepare your site so the search engines find it!

<http://www.davidsessentialdomains.com>

"Today's decision is a victory for the rights of journalists, whether online or offline, and for the public at large," said EFF Staff Attorney Kurt Opsahl in a statement. Opsahl argued the case before the appeals court last month. "The court has upheld the strong protections for the free flow of information to the press, and from the press to the public."

"Apple argued its right to trade secrets trumped Constitutional rights, and it had exhausted other sources to determine the source of the information, even though Apple had not deposed employees who were in a position to know, Kevin Bankston, a staff attorney for the EFF told internetnews.com. The lower court decision agreed, and said Apple's trade secrets rights would trump any journalist's rights to source confidentiality.

"Bankston said the ruling is a win for anyone who uses email. "A lot of people will hear about this decision and think it doesn't affect them since they are not journalists, but it has a broader impact because of the number of email providers, particularly the number based in this district," he said.

"The court read Federal privacy law to forbid civil litigants like Apple from subpoenaing an individual's e-mail from e-mail providers. Instead, the court said civil litigants must subpoena you directly, and if you are a journalist, you can assert your rights of confidential sources.

"So they have to subpoena you rather than doing an end run around your rights and going straight to your e-mail provider," said Bankston.

If Apple chooses to appeal, the case goes to the state Supreme Court. Thus far, the sources for the original story have not been revealed, "and hopefully based on this decision they never will," said Bankston.

This is an interesting issue. The California case is far from over and this issue will continue to be litigated across the country.

GLOBAL TRAVEL TRENDS

We're Going Places!

Global Travel Trends has designed a fun, work from home, Associate Travel Agent Program, to provide an opportunity for people all over the world, a way for them to change their lives for the better.

Take advantage of tremendous savings when planning a family vacation or a romantic trip for two by visiting our website at www.greatratetravel.gttrends.net and click on the "Travel Center" button.

Rudy & Debra Flores

Associate Travel Agents

(832) 259-9910

(832) 372-4527

greatratetravel@sbcglobal.net

**** Cruise for \$40 a day***

**** All-Inclusive Resorts for \$30-\$50 a day***

**** Upgrades on Flights, Car Rentals and Hotels***

STOP PAYING RETAIL! BECOME A TRAVEL AGENT! SAVE & EARN!

TO LEARN MORE, WATCH THIS MOVIE:

www.gttmovie.com/greatratetravel



The storage revolution is here Again!

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>

Anyone who has been around computers for a while should be able to see the difference; not long ago, say the early nineties, data storage meant hard drives and floppies. Then a small revolution happened with Iomega's introduction of Bernoulli disks and later, Zip and competitor's SyQuest drives. These re-writable disks could hold 100 megabytes of data as opposed to the floppy's 1.44 megabytes. CD-ROMs were also bursting onto the scene and all the while the hard disk kept getting smaller in size, larger in capacity and ever faster.

Just ten years earlier, a similar revolution occurred when Sony introduced the good old 3.5" floppy diskette. Smaller, more durable and with a larger capacity than the 5.25" flexible diskette, I can still remember people calling them "hard disks" because of the hard plastic shell, in contrast to the flexible envelope of the 5.25" they were accustomed to. The hard disk that we know today had also arrived in home PCs about this time, adding to the confusion that techs had to wade through as people struggled to get a grasp of the new terminology. Of course, the 5.25" flexible disk had created an even earlier revolution when it was developed by Alan Shugart for Wang Laboratories in 1976. It replaced IBM's 8" disk, which held around 500 kilobytes of data.

Currently we are going through yet another storage revolution, but where this one differs from the others is, not only in media, but also in what is being done with that media.

The world on a disk

Our current revolution has its roots in the mid- and late-1990s with the introduction of the CD-ROM and the CD re-writable disks. CD burners have given home computers the ability to archive hundreds of megabytes of data. The first CDs mainly served to ship software that had outgrown the floppy disk, but soon, programs that were previously not possible because of their size suddenly became widespread, such as the Encyclopedia Britannica on CD. Within a few years, the CD and the CD burner put the capability of large data storage into the hands of the home user. Large home video files can be burned to CDs using, for example, the SVCD format, which gives decent quality and can be played on many of the newer home entertainment DVD players. Those home entertainment DVD players have also picked up the ability to read and write DVDs and CDs, allowing for the first time a likely replacement for the much beloved VCR.

While Windows has been around much longer than some people would have expected, Linux continues to gain in popularity and has demonstrated a remarkable flexibility in the hands of the Open Source community. Take for example the LiveCD. A LiveCD is a complete operating system (usually Linux but others are available) on a CD or even a DVD that can be booted and ran without any installation on the hard drive. Just pop it into the CD drive, reboot your computer and if it is setup to be able to boot from a CD (most are these days), the LiveCD will boot up instead of Windows, or whatever is on the hard disk. These are excellent for learning, data recovery, special configurations, or just trying out a new operating system or program. And the beauty of it is that many are available for free. The LiveCD List at this writing is displaying 232 LiveCDs and DVDs. Several are optimized for specific uses, such as servers, security, diagnostics, forensics, gaming, and a host of others.

Continued on page 18

The Doctor is In



Each Friday from 9:00am until 12:00 noon

Diagnose your software and hardware problems

Trouble shoot major applications

Run tests

Solve Operating System mysteries

For information call 736-0700



Owner must stay with computer during repairs

Technology changed in a flash

In the late 1980s, Toshiba & Intel introduced flash memory and by doing so created a revolution that has spawned large waves throughout technology. From computing and photography, to aerospace and medicine, flash media has left few fields untouched. For computing, the flash drive has had the greatest impact. The size of a lipstick case, it is used not only to store and transfer files, it also can be used to play music or run presentations. By acting as a key or by using your fingerprint, it can even secure sensitive data. Examples are the iKey 1000 and the Cruzer™ Profile.

Flash drives have been a mixed blessing as far as security is concerned. On the one hand, flash drives can be found in pens and watches, making data theft extremely easy. On the other hand, flash drives can be used as a portable data vault with its contents securely encrypted.

Concerned about leaving sensitive information behind on borrowed computers? Lexar has introduced the JumpDrive Traveler, a flash drive that enables Internet browsing from a computer without leaving history or session information. Portable Firefox is a similar idea that is a fully functional version of the Firefox Web browser optimized for use on a USB key drive.

Computer on a stick

Like the LiveCD, a USB flash drive can be used to boot a computer (providing the computer has the capability and it is enabled) and run an operating system on it. However, this approach is still in its infancy as few computers can boot from USB. Also, not all flash devices are bootable. However, expect change to come rapidly.

What is available right now is Migo, (remember the flash drive in a wristwatch?). Migo fits on a flash drive and allows you to take your desktop environment with you. E-mail, Internet favorites, calendars, files and folders can all be accessed by just plugging into a USB port.

While solid-state flash memory hard drives are a current reality, they are still too expensive and their capacity too small for much of the market. This reality keeps the door open for further refinement of old technologies.

Flash to the competition

Not all that looks like flash is flash. The IBM/Hitachi Microdrive has been around for a while now; a miniature hard drive just like the one in your desktop computer it has given the Compact Flashcard, which is the same size, a serious run for its money. But that has not stopped the competition from taking a crack at building a true ultra-small hard drive as well. Cornice has developed a drive with a 1" form factor that is less than a quarter inch thick. Available under the MPIO label, these drives are inexpensive and very durable. The 1.5 gigabyte MPIO HS100 looks like a flash drive but costs less than many flash drives of the same size. It also contains a true hard drive, complete with a spinning platter.

New uses for old technology are also seeing a mini-revolution. Aluminum hard drive cases with USB and Firewire connections allow one to convert that old hard drive, or laptop drive, into a type of flash drive. Just pop the drive into the case and plug it into a USB or Firewire port and you have an extra hard drive. So, you want more capacity? For under \$100, one can buy a 30-40 gigabyte notebook hard drive and an external enclosure and you have a small portable storage device with BIG capacity.

Yet, through it all the resilient hard drive has been with us. It too went through a revolution only a few short years ago. While its demise had been predicted because the theoretical limits on its capacity had been reached the industry achieved a breakthrough so that soon half a terabyte of information will be stored on a conventional hard drive.

While the current data storage revolution shows no sign of abating, brace yourself, the next revolution is just around the corner. But you can bet that the good old hard drive will continue getting smaller in size, larger in capacity and ever faster.

Website links

The LiveCD List: <http://www.frozentech.com/content/livecd.php>
 JumpDrive™ Traveler: http://www.lexar.com/newsroom/press/press_01_08_04d.html
 Portable Firefox: http://johnhaller.com/jh/mozilla/portable_firefox/
 iKey 1000: <http://www.safenet-inc.com/products/tokens/iKey1000.asp>
 Cruzer Profile: <http://www.sandisk.com/retail/cruzer-profile.asp>
 Migo: <http://www.4migo.com>
 MPIO: <http://www.mpio.com/>



Internet Part XI

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.

The Internet brings the world to your doorstep, but it also brings hoaxsters, scam artists, and phishers. Without the right protection, your computer is subject to getting sick from a virus. Viruses come in these different shapes and forms. E-mail virus: This kind of virus reproduces itself by going into the recipient's Address Book, taking down names, and e-mailing itself to tens or hundreds of people at once. It's important to remember that no virus can spread inside an e-mail message. Viruses travel by e-mail, but not inside messages – they travel in files attached to e-mail messages. Time bomb: This is a virus that is programmed to lie quietly in wait on a computer until the appointed hour, when it "explodes" and causes damage. Trojan horse: This virus masquerades as one kind of program but is really another. The game you thought you downloaded turns out not to be a game at all, but a virus. Trojan horses travel on the Internet by stealth, not by reproducing themselves quickly like other viruses. Worm: This is a virus that quickly makes copies of itself on many computers. Worms infect a security hole in a network, and when they are inside the network, quickly copy themselves from computer to computer. Code Red, the most notorious worm, copied itself to a quarter-million computers during one day in July 2001. Viruses slow Internet traffic. They clog computer networks. They make computers run more slowly by tying up a computer's processor. They destroy important files. Always be on the alert for viruses, and make sure that antivirus software is installed on your computer.

Block Web Sites

If you have trouble accessing a Web site, turn off your pop-up blocker. If that solution doesn't solve your problem, then try to access the Web site later. Other options to solve this problem include, going back to the Home Page, Updating your Browser or other application, employing work around for Internet Explorer 7, and calling your Internet Service Provider. To protect your children, there are several ways to restrict Web surfing at home. If you use Internet Explorer, consider its built-in Content Advisor. The feature includes the option to block specific Web domain names. Another way to block particular sites is via Windows' HOSTS file. The file maps Web addresses to specific IP numbers.

In Windows XP, the HOSTS file is in the following location: C:\windows\system32\drivers\etc.

Windows will prompt you for a program to open the HOSTS file. Choose Notepad. You can add Web addresses to the file. To block an address, enter it along with the IP number "127.0.0.1." Attempts to go to the site will reach the false IP number and fail. As an example, add the following line to block MySpace: 127.0.0.1 www.myspace.com. The HOSTS file generally works with Internet Explorer and Firefox. However, your browser may ignore the file if you're connecting through a router. If you use a router, you may have another option. Most routers can be set to block specific Web addresses. Others can even block sites based on keywords. But the names of these features vary by router manufacturer. Site blocking could be in categories like parental control, blocked sites or Internet access policy. Look for it in your router's manual or configuration menu. Most firewall programs also can block sites. Examples include Agnitum's Outpost, Jetico's Personal Firewall and Zonelabs' ZoneAlarm. Each can be had in a basic free version. Finally, you might consider using dedicated parental control programs, such as CyberPatrol (\$40), CYBERSitter (\$40) and Net Nanny (\$40). They offer many other features in addition to site blocking.

Bookmakrks

Bookmarks (or Favorites) are one of the best features of Web browsers. They make it a snap to return to a favorite site on the Internet. Unfortunately, the Web is always changing daily. A site you visited yesterday may not be there tomorrow. It's easy to end up with a list of dead sites in your Favorites, or, you might also end up with duplicate sites in it. You can use AM-DeadLink <aignes.com> to keep them all well organized on your computer and to weed out dead links and duplicate sites. It works with Internet Explorer, Firefox and Opera.

Greeting Card

If you like using digital greeting cards, then check out the following web sites: Blue Mountain <www.bluemountain.com>, Rubber Chicken Cards <www.rubberchickencards.com>, Hallmark <www.hallmark.com>, NeFunCards <www.netfuncards.com>, EGreetings <www.egreetings.com>, and American Greetings <www.americangreetings.com>.

HTML Editor

You can use Word to create HTML Web page documents. You can also use all of Word's formatting commands to create your Web page. You can format fonts or paragraphs and insert graphics, tables, or whatever might meet your needs. The simplest way to create a Web page in Word is just to create a Word document as you normally would, then choose File, Save as Web Pa[g]e. Use

Continued on page 20

the Save As dialog box (as normal) and instantly you have a Web page document on your disk. You can also use Word to load an HTML document, such as some Web page you may have saved to disk. Just use the Open command and choose the HTML Document option from the Files of Type drop-down list. If you want to save an HTML file as a Word document, choose File, Save as Word Document from the menu. Another way to create a Web page without really doing any work is to use one of Word's built-in wizards. To do so, follow these steps: choose File, New and click the Web Pages tab. Next open the Web Page Wizard icon. Word may beg for its installation CD so be prepared to insert it. Now follow along through the wizard and click the Finish button. Now you're done with this task. Eventually, the Wizard ends and your document is roughed out on-screen. You now need to customize it, edit the document, select text by triple-clicking it once, and then type in new text appropriate to your Web page. You should keep on editing and preparing the document as you normally do. You could take advantage of Web Layout View -- a preview mode Word uses to best show you how your Web page will look on the Internet. To activate Web View, choose View, Web Layout from the menu or click the Web View button on the lower-left corner of the document window.

Internet Explorer (IE)

In general, if you want IE to run faster, you need to get a faster Internet connection. But if you're stuck with a slow connection, and you're a bit desperate, there's one trick that will speed up IE -- but at a price. You can turn off graphics. When you tell IE to load a page without the graphics, the browser displays an empty box where the image would be. That's a bit like going to the Louvre and seeing only empty picture frames, but if you want to get through quickly, it may help. Choose Tools, Internet Options and the Internet Options dialog box opens. Click the Advanced tab and then scroll down to the Multimedia section and deselect the Show Pictures check box. Finally, click OK to close the dialog box.

Internet Explorer 7

Computer users can now download the new Internet Explorer (IE) 7 from Microsoft's web site. It is a significant leap forward from IE6. In brief, its new features include: session saving; new RSS (RSS feeds offer a great way to quickly check news and updates from different sites without visiting all of them.); subscription choices and display feeds; less memory usage; new manager for extensions and themes; inline spelling checker; and one click undo of closed tab. It also has a built-in antiphishing tool using a local or Google-maintained blacklist.

Online Programs

In case you haven't heard, programs are moving from the desktop to the Internet <www.google.com/accounts> and many are free. You can write letters and put your budget in a spreadsheet. Consider storing your documents online so you can access them anywhere. You can even share them with other friends. Why wait around for Office 2007 when you can use Google's Docs & Spreadsheets? Google's programs aren't as advanced as Office, but you'll have everything you need and without all the confusion. To get started with Google's programs, simply log in using your Google account. If you don't have one, you can create one in mere minutes.

Promotion Codes

Promo codes, or promotional codes, are essentially online coupons. Many retailers have a place during their checkout process where you can enter a promo code. When you enter a code, it will automatically adjust the price you pay at checkout. Promo codes, like real coupons, expire. Typically, online promo codes work for around a week. Then, they simply don't work anymore. So if you see a promo code, you ought to use it as soon as you can. It's not just the big retailers that use promo codes. For example, there's a promo code offer now for my e-mail subscribers. If you buy my books, shirts, caps, laptop bags, throws, or even a sneaky mirror, you can save 10%. These codes are generally sent out to regular customers via mail or e-mail. The retailers know that the codes will be shared with family and friends. This is good viral advertising for the stores. So, you don't need to be a preferred customer to use the codes. However, you do need to know how to get your hands on the codes. This task is easy because there are many sites that do nothing but list promo codes.

At these sites, you can search by category or by Web site. You'll find that there are often multiple codes for a site. Unfortunately, you can probably only use one per order. You'll probably need to do some calculations to figure out which is the best bet. You may get a percentage off your order, or you may get a specific dollar amount off the price of it. Other codes entitle you to free shipping. This option is probably a good one, but your order could take more than a week to arrive at your home. However, this feature is no good for last-minute shopping. As previously mentioned there were a lot of sites where you can get the codes. Here are six sites. You should check each one because they probably list different offers: CoolSavings; Coupon Cabin; Current Codes; Keycode; and NaughtyCodes. You'll also find that many sites offer printable coupons in addition to promo codes. The coupons look just like the ones you clip from the newspaper. They're color coupons, but you can print them in black-and-white. To be safe, before going to the grocery store or a restaurant, you should first go online and check for any coupons and then enter in your ZIP code to tailor the results to your specific location. You'll also find coupons for other local businesses.

To access a favorite Web site quickly, you just need to click and drag the icon alongside the URL in your browser's Address Bar to your Desktop. You can then right-click the new Desktop icon and rename it. This tip is particularly useful for keeping track of individual auction items, where the address can be very long.



Google — The Rest of the Story

Pim Borman
SW Indiana PC Users Group, Inc.

My first digital camera was a 3.1 megapixel Olympus C-730 Ultra Zoom. With its 10x optical zoom lens I hoped to take candid pictures of squirrels feeding at the corn spike on the back fence. To my disappointment they turned out on the fuzzy side. I blamed the optics, until it was pointed out to me that a hand-held camera is too unsteady at that zoom level.

Lesson #1: It takes a tripod for best results at elevated zoom levels.

Indoor pictures, especially those I took at our monthly meetings, were never as bright and sharp as some of those taken by others, even after processing with a photo editor. The pictures were underexposed due to the inadequate flash and small lens diameter. To compensate, the camera used a large aperture (affecting sharpness) and amplified the signal from the CCD as much as possible (to an equivalent of ISO 400 maximum in this camera). Amplifying the signal also amplified the electronic noise inherent in all electronic systems, resulting in a mottled background. The camera minimized the mottling by blurring the image.

Lesson #2: Higher ISO specifications are meaningless unless the CCD chip has a higher signal-to-noise ratio.

Otherwise it takes a stronger (external) flash, and/or a larger lens for better light gathering. If you already have an old SLR film camera with several large lenses you may be better off with a new SLR camera body that accepts your lenses. More expensive and bulky, but it will get the best results.

Digital pictures don't always turn out as intended. Taking a picture of a roomful of people may end up with people in the back of the room barely visible while the ones up front are overexposed. Often a part of the picture can be rescued by severely cropping to retain the group in the foreground only. Unless you start out with a large excess of pixels, the remaining edited version may not have enough pixels left for a sharp image of reasonable size, resulting in blurriness or even pixelation. 7 megapixel images can be cropped smaller than 3 megapixel ones.

Lesson #3: Get as many pixels as you can afford. You can always discard the excess later.

My next camera was a Casio EXZ-750 with 7.2 megapixels and no more than 3x optical zoom. I already knew that higher zoom levels gave unsatisfactory results. Much more compact than the Olympus, with a large LCD screen and an optical viewfinder for bright outdoor use. According to the PC magazines it provided outstanding image quality. I did see a comment somewhere that its low-light performance was marginal and I should have paid heed to that. As it turned out, the camera performed beautifully under daylight conditions, but flash pictures taken in semi-dark rooms invariably showed the multicolored mottling due to background electronic noise in the chip. I have not found a photo editor (yet?) that corrects that problem, other than by blurring the picture to make the mottling less visible.

On the other hand, with the higher pixel count I took a daylight picture of a squirrel on the back fence from the kitchen door with 3x zoom and cropped it back tightly without losing quality. One night I surprised a raccoon raiding the bird feeders. It may have been a youngster, at least it did not show any fear and allowed me to walk right up to it and snap some flash pictures. Under these close-up conditions, with plenty of light from the flash, the pictures were sharp without mottling of the dark background. Still, the new camera did not solve my problem with the unsatisfactory performance in open areas under low light conditions.

Lately many camera manufacturers have started to emphasize higher light sensitivity of their cameras in terms of ISO values. Both my Olympus and the Casio had a maximum of ISO 400 speed. I took some trial pictures with both my cameras, changing the ISO setting from 100 to the maximum 400. As a target I used my 40-year old, seldom-used, set of Encyclopedia Britannicas, in dark-brown imitation-leather bindings and gold lettering on the spines. Sitting in their own bookcase in a dark corner of the den they make a perfect test image. It only confirmed lesson 2: higher ISO settings by themselves don't help. They just amplify the noise as much as the signal.

And then I read about the new Olympus SP-550 UZ camera. All-new technology! 18X optical zoom! Includes wide-angle! New Dual Sensor-Shift and Digital Image Stabilization! Up to ISO 5000 sensitivity (with reduced image size) and up to 1/2000 second shutter speed! I liked my old Olympus and this seemed to be everything I needed to solve my problems. I was ready to order but hesitated at the last moment. It sounded almost too good to be true, and frequently that turns out to be true.

Continued on page 22

Lesson 4: First find out all you can about a new camera from an independent source.

PC World and PC Magazine were no help, since the camera had only recently become available. I found a terrific Web site, Digital Photography (www.dpreview.com) with in-depth reviews of just about any digital camera on the market. More detail than you knew existed, sure to uncover any shortcomings. Its summary opinion of the Olympus SP-550 UZ was deadly. In essence: a camera designed by the marketing department, out to establish the best-looking list of specifications without regard to actual performance. A detailed series of test images showed how the performance of the camera rapidly degraded with increasing ISO values, even well below ISO 1000, let alone 5000. The dual image stabilization didn't work well at the high zoom levels where it is most needed. Even under the best conditions, images were not as sharp as with competing cameras.

Lesson 5: Image stabilization may not work as well as promised, especially at high zoom levels when it is most needed.

Having found dpreview to be a goldmine of information about cameras, I checked to see which make and model they liked best, especially under low-light conditions. Their clear choice was the Fujifilm FinePix F31fd camera, a minor upgrade of the previous F30 (<http://www.dpreview.com/reviews/fujifilmf31fd/>). In many respects it looked and acted like so many other compact digital cameras, but it boasted of having a Super CCD and a new Real Photo Processor. Also, ISO 3200 maximum, 6.3 megapixels, 3x optical zoom. The review showed that, as in other cameras, the image quality at the highest ISO settings was unacceptable, but it still found that "this camera has Class-leading high ISO performance; superb results up to ISO 400, surprisingly good ISO 800 performance." This is presumably due to a higher signal-to-noise ratio of its CCD chip. As a result its performance at low light levels is superior. In other respects the camera is unremarkable. It lacks an optical view finder and its LCD screen is hard to see in bright light. It uses more expensive XD picture cards that have lower writing speeds than SD cards.

Lesson #6: Digital cameras come with a minimum of built-in memory. Buy at least 512 MB of removable additional storage. SD picture cards are less expensive and faster than XD cards, but are not interchangeable. Check to see what the camera uses.

At half the (street) price of the new Olympus, I bought the Fujifilm camera. Test pictures of my encyclopedia confirmed its superior low-light performance. That is also clear in the first indoor group pictures I have taken with it. For outside pictures I still prefer the Casio, mostly because of its convenient optical view finder.

Lesson #7: An optical or miniature LCD viewfinder is essential for accurately framing pictures under bright conditions.

Finally, if you are a stickler for perfection get a digital SLR camera with a set of high-quality lenses. You'll never be satisfied with the small pocket cameras. But even with less than absolutely perfect technical quality, an interesting picture is still worth at least a thousand words!

Volunteers Wanted

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

STUDY GROUPS

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



The miniPC: The smallest Windows / Linux PC ever
* small spaces * CAR COMPUTER * any room * point of sales machine *



BASE MODEL FEATURES:

- * Window XP computer
- * dimensions: 6.5 in X 6.5 in X 2.5 in !!!!
- * 1.4 GHZ Pentium M (Celeron)
- * 512 GB RAM
- * 40 GB hard drive
- * DVD / CD-RW combo drive
- * 10/100/1000 (GIGABIT) LAN
- * 2 x USB, 1 X firewire (IEEE 1394) ports
- * DVI video output - VGA adapter included
- * TV output, S-video & component **HDTV out!**
- * Sound: stereo out, mic input, internal speaker
- * Software included: Nero CD burning, Drivers, Windows XP, full Office suite (Open Office)
- * **Unlimited expansion** via USB and firewire

UPGRADES

CPU	up to 1.7 Ghz
Hard drive	up to 160 GB
RAM	up to 1 GB
b / g wireless LAN	
Optical Drive DVD Recordable	
Install your own OS	subtract \$50



ALL this for just \$599
(Only \$549 if you install your own operating system)
Call Jason, 210-669-2156

Wonderful: Microsoft's free Virtual PC

I've been using it for three weeks. It's perhaps the best way to play with new utilities, for instance, try out a different anti-virus program, or just fiddle with Windows.

I run another copy of Windows XP within Windows XP. Some people load up Vista in the virtual machine while others play around with Linux.

It takes no super skill set to install or use, and provided you have enough RAM (I'll say about 1GB), the VPC will run happily. I was worried that it would slow down my PC. I have just one VM window running, and even at that, it's open only when I was using it. Overall, with 2GB of RAM on my PC (and 512RAM allocated to the VM when it was running), I didn't experience any sluggishness.

If it doesn't suite you, or it slows down your PC, just uninstall VPC like you would any other application.

You can get around the XP licensing issue (and activation) of two versions of XP on one PC easily. Some people (not, uh, me) call Microsoft for an activation and try to explain to the overseas tech person that yes I have this copy running on a PC, but all I'm trying to do it set it up on the same PC using Microsoft's VM product. Chances are good they won't understand a word you're saying, not be able to find "VM Product" on their tree-based help chart, say screw it in their language, and give you the activation code.

Or you could just rely on XP's 30 day activation deadline. As the deadline approaches, delete the XP virtual machine (it's only a big swap file) and start again with a new installation.

Get Microsoft's Virtual PC
<http://snipurl.com/virtualpc1>

Read how to install and use VPC
<http://snurl.com/usevpc>

Blurbs from Bass

By Steve Bass, PC World Columnist and Author, Stevebass@earthlink.net



More free utilities

Shane Hicks, (certified certifiable)

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

This month, I'm going to once again scour my different sources in order to provide you with another batch of useful (and FREE) utilities to make your computing lives easier and more complete.

The first utility, Portable Apps Suite 1.0, is at <http://portableapps.com>. From their site, their product is described as allowing you to "carry your favorite computer programs along with all of your bookmarks, settings, email and more with you." You can use this application on any Windows computer, without leaving any personal data behind. It will work with any hardware you like (USB flash drive, iPod, portable hard drive, etc). Plus, it's open source, so any hardware vendor or software developer can use. Best of all, it's FREE. The software comes in three versions: Base, Lite, and Standard. Each has a 1MB, 105MB, and 260MB footprint, installed.

Next, we have the Torpark browser (<http://www.torify.com>). Using this tool, which is designed to fit on a USB drive, you can anonymously surf the Internet. All requests are passed through the Tor network, so performance can be slow at times—but the basic version of the software is FREE. The features of the base version are: performance speeds of 0 ~ 40 Kbps, anonymous surfing, and Tor Network Access. It comes preconfigured and is Open Source code.

Are you tired of the Microsoft utilities that don't give you a full inventory of your systems? Then try WinAudit 2.1, found at <http://www.pxserver.com/winaudit.htm>. This utility will run a complete scan of the hardware and software on your computer. It's a self-contained application, meaning that you don't have to install or configure the software on your system. It is designed to work with all versions of Windows, including Vista.

Have you ever taken a DVD on a trip and lost it? Have you ever had one of your discs damaged beyond repair by a few simple scratches? Well, there's a FREE way to make sure you don't lose your investment. Simply download a copy of Eric Petit and Laurent Aima's Handbrake from <http://handbrake.m0k.org/>. This utility allows you to rip commercial DVDs to a format that's playable on a Mac, iPod, Windows, or Sony PSP.

Are you sick of having to pay your annual tribute to Norton or McAfee for the privilege of using their anti-virus products? You don't have to—even if they did come preinstalled on your system. So, out with the old and in with the new!

There are two anti-virus programs that I recommend when looking for a FREE resource tool. The first is Grisoft's AVG anti-virus. You can download this software from <http://free.grisoft.com>. Their latest version is compatible with Windows Vista. However, AVG doesn't support 64-bit applications. If you need 64-bit support, you should take a look at Alwil's Avast anti-virus. You can pick up a copy of this at <http://www.avast.com/eng/download-avast-home.html>.

If your system comes with Norton AV or McAfee pre-installed, you're going to run into some problems when installing your new anti-virus products. Norton software is infamous for not going peacefully into the night. Even when you remove the software using Add or Remove Programs, remnants remain (to include Symantec's Live Update). To remove Norton, use the Norton Removal Tool (<http://service1.symantec.com/SUP-PORT/tsgeninfo.nsf/docid/2005033108162039>). Unfortunately, this utility removes all the Norton products from your system, forcing you to reinstall any Norton software you actually wanted.

McAfee provides a manual way to remove their products at (<http://ts.mcafeehelp.com/faq.asp?frames=1&docid=68717&CategoryId=245&chat>).

Computer Problems?

Call Now to get your computer working for you!

Cramer's Computer Services

(210) 865-2933

www.pcpro4u.com

In-Home/On-Site Service Specializing in:

- Troubleshooting & Repair
- Virus/Spy ware Detection & Removal
- Hardware Upgrades
- Networking & More



The Switcher



...the ongoing tale of a Man and his Mac
Where are you on the Web?

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

You just finished designing your webpage. You finally decided to take the leap and start your own blog. What good are either of these if no one can find you on the Internet? There are some things you can do to bring in your audience.

Common sense probably tells you that you need to show up in the Search Engines. To raise your ratings, employ the following techniques:

I know that Flash, graphics, and other media rich content make your site more appealing to users. However, these items don't make you more appealing to Search Engines. To draw their attention, focus on providing plain text on your pages. Coding with standard HTML is a good start. When you use graphics, make sure to also have a text description of the graphics as well. If you're providing streaming media, make sure to comment about the contents of the media on your page as well.

Search Engines place a lot of emphasis on Keywords. Select appropriate Keywords related to your topics and use these words in your descriptions on your page. The higher these words appear in your documents, the more emphasis a Search Engine will place on those words. If you are unsure what words you need to use, you can use the Keyword Selector Tool (<http://inventory.overture.com/d/searchinventory/suggestion/>) to provide you with some options.

Also, make certain you include titles and headers in your documents. Search Engines rely heavily on these as well. Put your Keywords in these areas. While many use their company name in their titles, this doesn't help with your Search Engine placement. Instead, use a title that applies directly to the content of that page. In your blog, the appropriate use of Keywords in your section headings can also enhance your Search Engine listings and bring you the traffic you're looking for.

Another way to increase your hits is through a bit of social engineering. Get to know others with sites similar to your own and offer to exchange links. In doing so, you can drive traffic from their site to yours, and vice-versa. You can determine which sites are linked to yours by visiting Who Links to Me (<http://www.wholinkstome.com>) or by doing your own investigations using the different Search Engines.

You'll become more recognized the more social you become. If you participate in on-line user groups, mailing lists, or other forums, insure that you've included your web address in your signature block.

An area that I've seen getting increased attention is social bookmark sites like Digg (<http://www.digg.com>). This site highlights web pages that are submitted and ranked by users. In fact, you may even see a "Rank my site on Digg" link on various web sites or articles that you find on the Internet. You can get your own site on Digg by providing a link on your pages. Access the HTML required to do this at <http://digg.com/tools/buttons> and you're well on your way.

Of course, if you don't have good content on your site, it won't matter how many people you've brought in. Think about the points you want to get across and concentrate on things that you know about. Also, make sure to focus on your target audience.

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.

Student Practice Lab

Polish those new skills - A specific time period for students taking Alamo PC Courses to use Computer Lab (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. Seating is limited and on a first come, first serve basis.

Call (210) 736-0080, or (210) 736-0700

Create content that will gain and maintain their interest. From there, differentiate yourself in the community by presenting your topics in a unique and value-added way. You'll gain greater fame if you're a fresh voice in the community, not just another one of the drones with mimicked views on the same topics. Finally, and especially if you're running a blog, post new content often. You'll lose the traffic that you've fought so hard for if your content is stale. Why would anyone want to continue viewing your site if you haven't had anything new to say?

Don't waste your money on these Search Engine optimization companies. I've seen far too many individuals sign expensive contracts with these companies only to be largely disappointed. You'll quickly find yourself questioning what exactly these companies are doing to warrant such a high investment in their services. In fact, some of the tactics that these companies employ to get you a higher ranking may be seen as inappropriate by the Search Engines and get your site banned from their service.

You've probably visited web pages in the past which appear to have a lot of blank space at the bottom of their pages. If you bother to mouse over these portions of their pages, you may find they've included a string of attempted Keywords (only colored the same as the background of their page). This practice is not viewed as legitimate and can get you in trouble.

You can learn which practices are acceptable by viewing the Webmaster Guidelines from the different Search Engines. You can find Google's policy at <http://www.google.com/support/webmasters/bin/answer.py?answer=35769>. Yahoo! provides information on how to improve your placement rankings with their service at <http://help.yahoo.com/help/us/ysearch/ranking/ranking-02.html>. The MSN/Live Search equivalent can be viewed at http://search.msn.com/docs/siteowner.aspx?t=SEARCH_WEBMASTER_REF_GuidelinesforOptimizingSite.htm.

News Brief

Time Killing Videos

Check out "High Power Job," a video about an occupation that makes me grateful I'm a safe and sound writer.

<<http://www.glumbert.com/media/highpower> >

The Slinky Humans video held my attention for the full five minutes. (But what in the world it's doing at a Sea World Amusement Park is beyond me.) But it appears they've taken a cue, so to speak, from Mummenschanz.

<<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iAPBaXLJvYI>>

<<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QO3B6hESM3I> >

You know how I like magic, right? Well here's a brilliant bit of it with just the correct amount of misdirection.

<<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=voAntzB7EwE>>

Blurbs from Bass

By Steve Bass, PC World Columnist and Author, Stevebass@earthlink.net



Getting found

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!

The best thing you can do is to structure your Web site so that it is more likely to be picked up by search engines and categorized correctly.

Meta Tags

First, look at the meta data. Meta means “higher level.” In Web design, it denotes information that does not show up on the screen but tells the Internet how to handle the document.

Two of them are sometimes used by search engines to find, categorize and prioritize sites and you should use them as a matter of routine. Place meta tags within the <HEAD> tag, right after the <TITLE> tag. The two you need to use are “keywords” and “description” Here is the format:

<meta name="description" content="San Antonio Vocal Arts Ensemble (SAVAE): Baroque music from Mesoamerica and Middle Eastern music in Aramaic, Hebrew and Arabic from the time of Christ.">

For the description, aim for about 25 words. Avoid marketing hype and include key words that people may be searching for.

<meta name="keywords" content="SAVAE, San Antonio Vocal Arts Ensemble, El Milagro De Guadalupe, Virgen De Los Indios, . . . Aramaic, Hebrew, Arabic, Second Temple, . . . plainchant, colonial, Dorian, Phrygian, Lydian, renaissance, missionary, Mesoamerican, Virgin Mary, Dead Sea Scrolls, . . . Iago, Early Music, Classical Music, Christopher Moroney, . . . huehuetl, teponaztli, huilacapitzli, . . . ayacaxtli, omichahuaztli">

Keywords should relate to your site – in fact, it helps a lot if they are actually mentioned in the text of the page. The upper limit is 1,000 characters. Put the most important ones first.

There is no guarantee that search engines will use your tags – some do, some don’t – but including them can’t hurt.

Title Tag

I am surprised at the number of Web pages that fail to take advantage of the <TITLE> tag. If you bookmark a site, the <TITLE> tag is listed as the name of the bookmark or favorite place. If visitors bookmark several pages from your site, the title helps tell them apart. Search engines list the title and may use the words in it as the most important key words.

Hint: Some search engines alphabetize their results by title, so pick something near the top of the alphabet. Don’t “spam” search engines, though, by calling your site “AAAAAA something.” They are onto this and may drop your listing.

The <TITLE> tag should be no more than 80 characters, including spaces. It may get lopped off in some listings, so put the most important information first. Look upon the title as a mini-advertisement for your site: it may be all a visitor coming from a search engine has to go by. Each page in your site should have a different title to distinguish it from the others. You cannot use HTML code in your title – only text.

Search Engine Submission:

Search engines typically have robots or spiders that sweep the Web looking for sites and pages to include. Catalogs have a human behind them, selecting sites. In either case, most will have a link that allows you to “suggest a site” to include. Take advantage of this, even though the best positioning in search engines and catalogs usually goes to organizations that pay for higher placement. To learn more about search engines and how to get a good listing, visit Search Engine Watch.

Paid inclusion

You can pay money to have your search engine request processed faster, have greater prominence or (in some cases) get listed at all. You can bid on being listed first for selected key words. It can get expensive. Yahoo commercial listings, for example, are \$300/year. Non-commercial sites can get listed for free, but Yahoo decides which ones get included. Some paid listings are invoiced on the basis of click-throughs – every time someone clicks on a link, you get billed.

This is a call you have to make.

Continued on page 28

Reciprocal Links, Banner Exchanges and Web Rings:

Some people set great store by exchanging links with other Web sites. I am ambivalent about this. I am always eager to get my sites listed on directories that specifically pertain to my site's area of concentration. A genealogy site, for example, would want to be included on "Cyndi's List" of 182,500 genealogy links. Everyone goes there for that kind of information. However, my belief is that asking hundreds of sites to link your site in exchange for you listing theirs is a waste of time. If I like a site, I list it. If I don't, I don't. No obligation on either side.

In banner exchanges, you submit an advertising banner to a service. So do others. The free service provides a script that automatically rotates all the banners through your site. You don't get to choose the content or the design of the banners, and often there is a requirement to display them prominently on your front page. Look at an example at neobanners.com/.

Web Rings are formalized link exchanges that centralize the administration of managing hundreds of links on related topics. They are best suited to nonprofit and hobby sites, although small businesses not in competition with each other may find them useful. The biggest free service is at webring.com - go there to get the details.

Word of mouth

Don't forget to advertise your site by more traditional methods. Put it on your business cards and letterhead. Include it in your signature block on e-mail. Tell your friends.



SAN ANTONIO • PC-HELP

(210) 748-5311 • SAPCHELP@ATT.NET

Seniors — Computer troubles ?

We understand that making the jump to computers, E-mail and the Internet can be a real challenge.

When you are stuck or your computer just doesn't seem to be working as you expected, call us. In the comfort of your own home, let us help you work through the problem. We provide on-site service for the individual PC user and small to medium size business.

Call PC-Help today!

SE HABLA ESPANOL

(210) 748-5311

9 AM - 4 PM • Monday - Friday



Softening Portraits

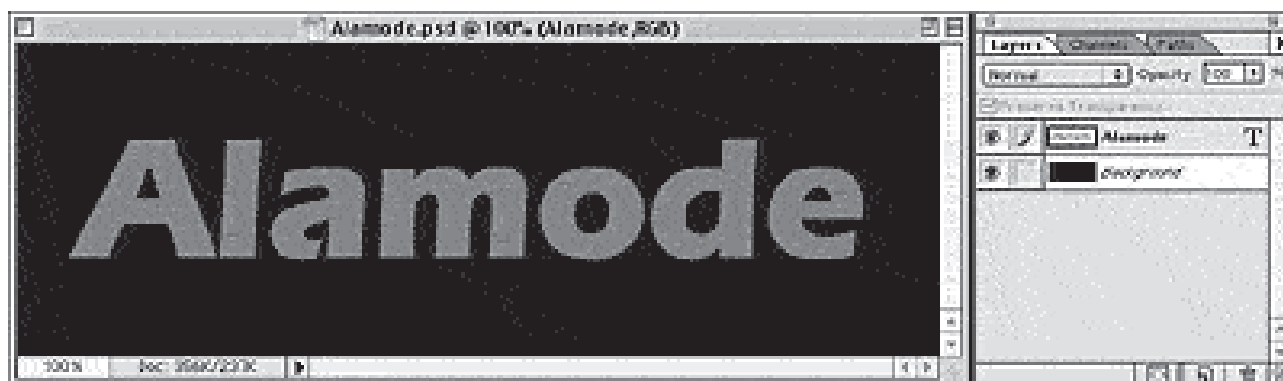
The Graphics Guy

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>.

Adobe Photoshop is full of whizzy effects and filters that can do wide variety of things to your images. One that you may have noticed is the Chrome filter (from the menu it's Filter: Sketch: Chrome). This sounds like a nifty filter to make all of those cool chrome effects that we have all seen, but you never seem to get the results you had in mind. This month, I'll discuss a way of creating a chrome text that will dazzle.

First, make a new document in RGB mode, set your background to black and then add some text with the text tool. In my example I'm using the word 'Alamode' (figure 1).

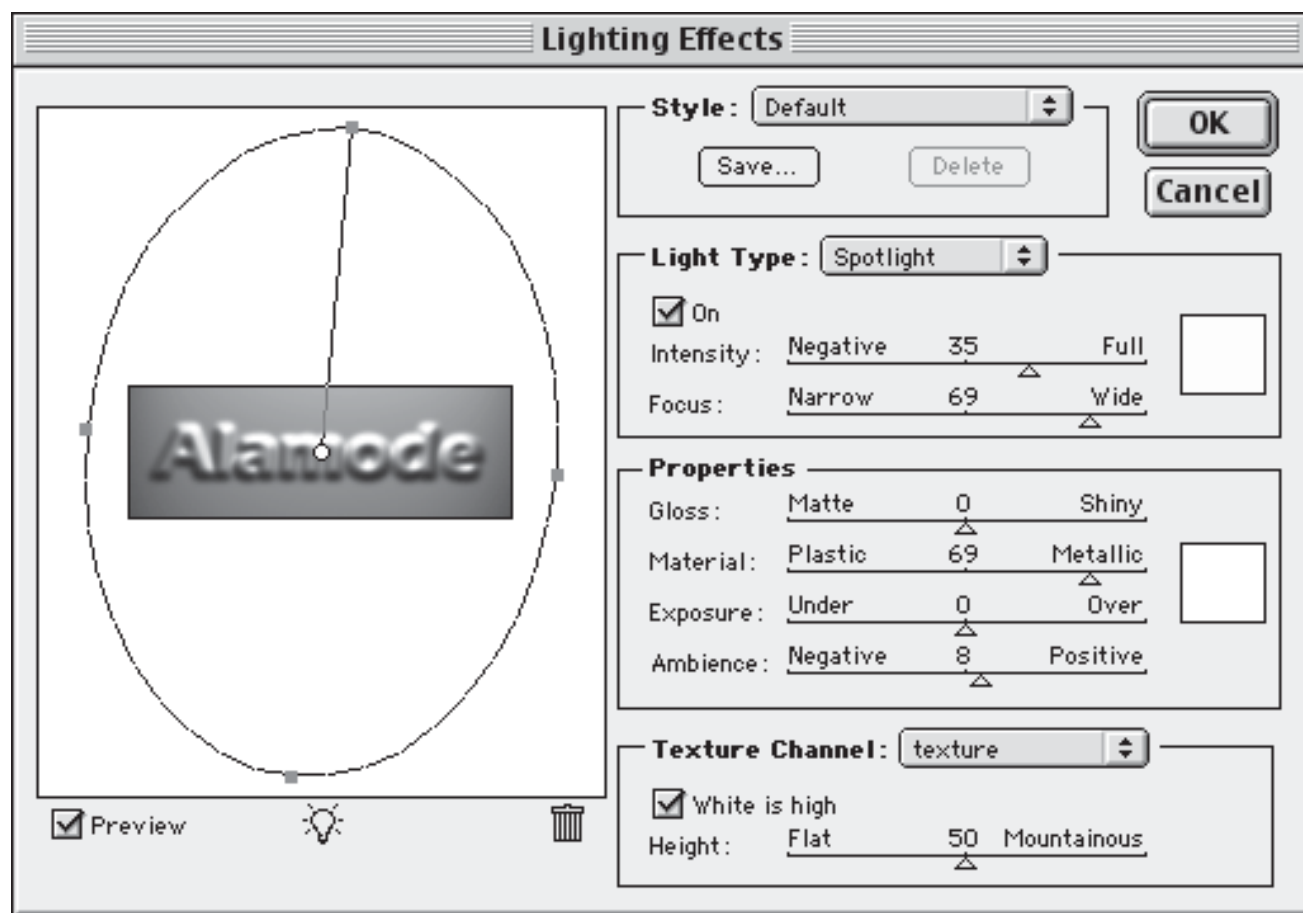


Use a 50% gray color for the text, and use a bold font for the best effect. Next, we need to make a texture channel for the lighting effect we're going to use. To do this, select the text by Ctrl-Clicking (Command-Click on the Mac) the text layer (you can also do this through the menu by choosing Select: Load Selection; then pick 'alamode transparency' in the channel pop-up menu). Then to make a new channel, pick Save Selection from the Select menu, and name the new channel 'texture.'

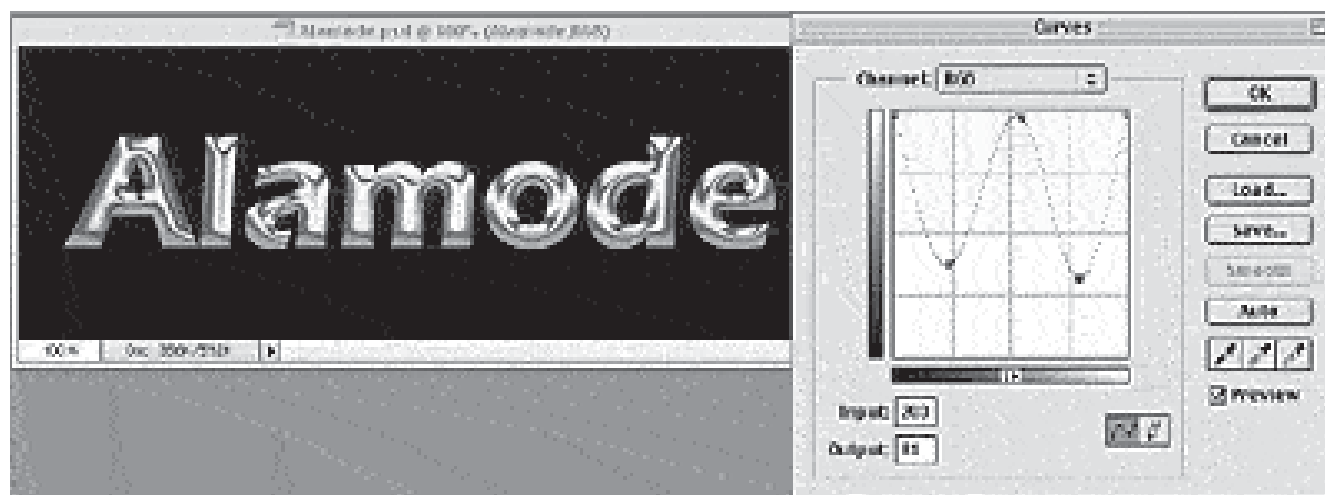
In the Channels palette, you will now see the 'texture' channel. Select that channel by clicking on it. You will notice that you now see white text on a black field, this is normal. If you have a selection still active, deselect it by choosing Select: Deselect from the menu. To finish the texture channel, use the Gaussian Blur filter (from the Filter menu choose Blur: Gaussian Blur) to soften it (figure 2). In my example, I used a 5 pixel radius blur.



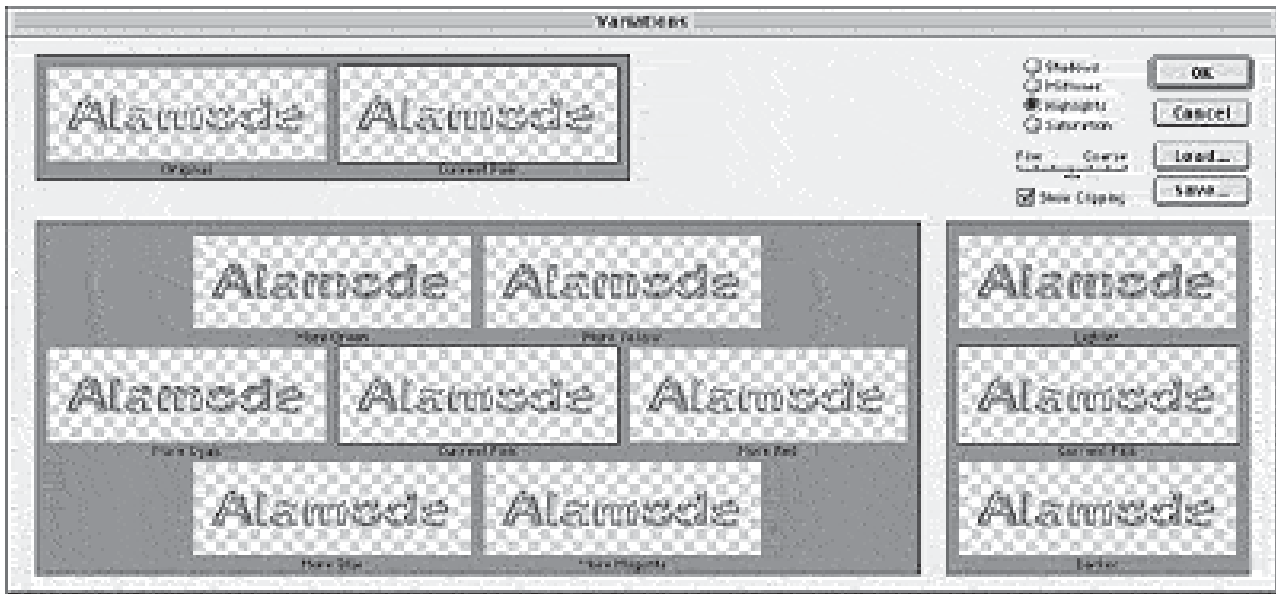
At this point we are going to use the Lighting Effects filter to make some highlights. Select the RGB channel and then click on the Layers palette (usually the Layers and Channels palettes are docked together) and select the text layer. Now, pick Filter: Render: Lighting Effects from the menu (figure 3). Everything will look pretty flat gray until you change the Texture Channel pop-up menu to be the 'texture' channel that we made previously. Change the light to be over all of the text and click OK.



This gives us a nice embossed look, but to get the chrome effect select Curves from the Image: Adjust menu. Make the curve into an M or W to bring out your chrome highlights (figure 4).



Color can be added in various ways, my favorite is with the Variations (from the menu it's Image: Adjust Variations). Add color to the shadows, midtones and highlights until you get your desired effect (figure 5).



News Brief

Free Directory Assistance

There are two new, free directory assistance services you can use on either your cell phone or home landline.

I like Google a little better because it'll dial the number for me. Details:

<<http://blogs.pcworld.com/tipsandtweaks/archives/004120.html>>

In the other hand, TellMe is faster and easier to use, and definitely has a better voice presence. Unfortunately, what spoils it is that it won't connect me. Details:

<<http://www.tellme.com/products/TellmeByVoice>>

<<http://betafeedback.tellme.com/forum/b-gb/m-1171475327/>>

Either way, their both free and useful.

Blurbs from Bass

By Steve Bass, PC World Columnist and Author, Stevebass@earthlink.net

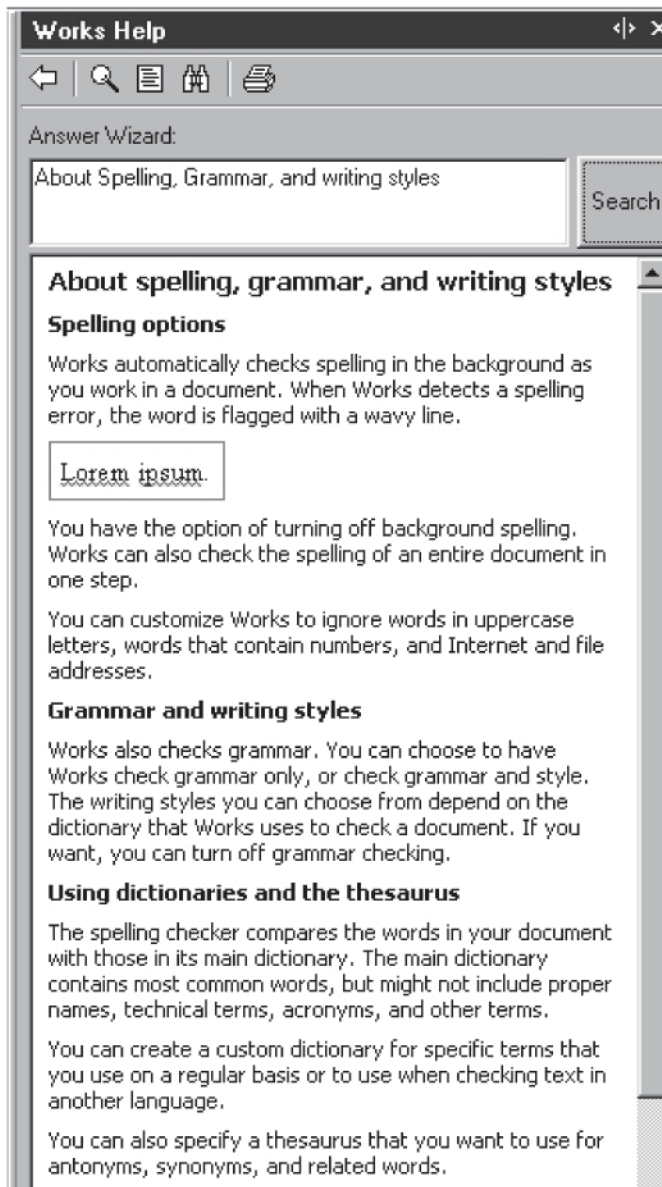


Microsoft Works - Word Processing Docs

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>

You've created a document, shifted sentences or paragraphs around, selected fonts and colors, and in general have it looking just the way wish. One area that you may have overlooked deals with your spelling and grammar. Not all of us are proud of our abilities in these areas. Works gives you an out, to assure that there are no spelling goofs in the document, and will if requested, make suggestions regarding its grammatical construction. Let's look at spelling first.

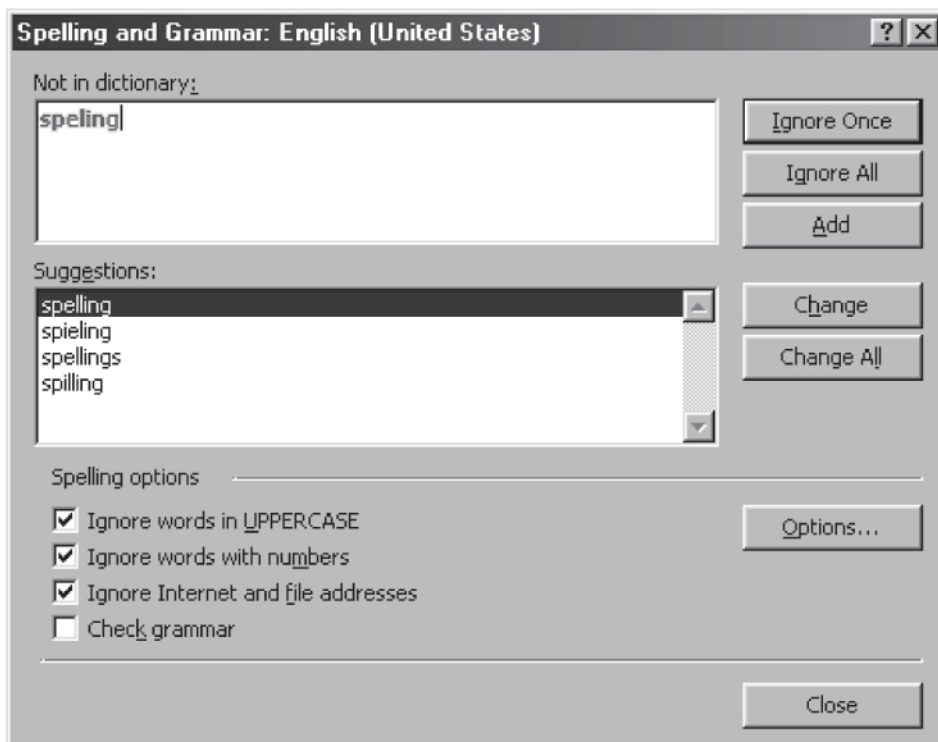


On the left column check out the Help window beginning with **Spelling Options**. The main thing to note here is that Works automatically checks spelling in the background while you work. You may find it annoying to constantly see the wavy lines beneath your words. You might prefer to wait until you have completed the document, and then run the spell checker. However you decide this, the questioned spellings will appear with the wavy underlines. What do you do with them?

When misspelled words are identified you need to click on the Spell Check Icon on the menu bar. It's the ABC above a check mark on the right end of the window at left. I have placed the result-

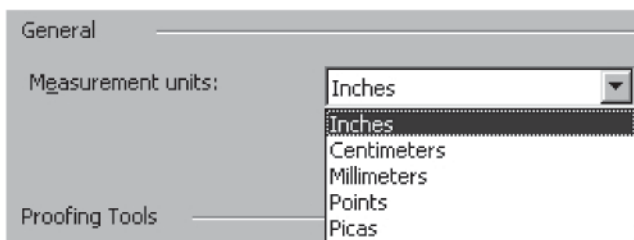
ing window at the top of the next page. I do this sort of thing on occasion in order to preserve the readability of the item under discussion. I could reduce it in size to column width, but it would be very hard to read. In the document related to this window I deliberately misspelled some words, **speling** being one of them. As you see, I'm told that the word in question is not in the dictionary. I may simply type the word correctly and the spell checker will correct it in the document. The suggestions area offers possible choices for the correction. You may have to look closely, but the highlighted word is the correct one. Then to the right I have the option to **Change** just this instance, or **Change All**. Perhaps the document is fairly long and I've waited until finished to run the Spell Checker. If I misspelled it once, I probably did so throughout the document. Using the second option would correct every instance. Each time you select **Change**, the word is automatically corrected and the wavy lines disappear.

There are some special features of the Spell Checker that may be seen in this window. Beginning at the top right radio button, you may tell it to ignore this instance, or all instances where this word appears. If the word was identified as being spelled incorrectly, when in fact it is a technical term or some other type which is not in their dictionary, this is where you have



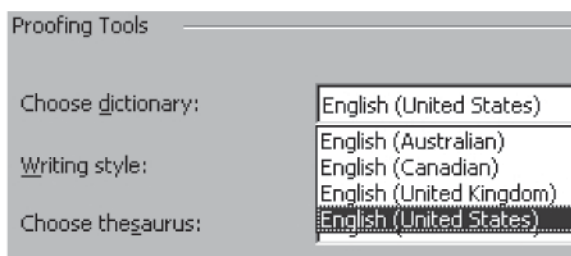
the option to have it ignore it. If it happens to be a word that you will use frequently, you may **A**dd it to the dictionary by simply clicking that button.

You can see above that you may select options to fit your requirements, such as ignoring those words mentioned. Each of those would otherwise invoke the wavy lines, when in fact they are as you wish them to appear.



The **O**ptions radio button adds several choices to this window. A **G**eneral option allows you to pick the units used on the Ruler. Inches is the default and most logical for most users.

A major addition to the choices is a check box for Background spell checking. Uncheck it if you wish to do your spell checking when the document is finished.



The Proofing tools offer the choices you see for the various English dictionaries available. You didn't know ours wasn't the only version of English used in the world?.

The **W**riting style tool lets you choose between Grammar and Style or Grammar only. The Style tool can be very irritating if you don't write in a style very close to their norm. You may wind up with a lot of green wavy lines all over the place. I'm not sure whose style they're comparing one to. They say that the styles you can choose from depend on the dictionary Works uses to check a document.

The Thesaurus tool offers you the same choices for

language as the dictionary.

I haven't mentioned it yet, but in addition to being able to turn off the background spell checking, the last check box will allow you to turn off the grammar checker completely.

Check the bottom of the Answer Wizard on the previous page for tips on using the dictionaries and thesaurus. Lawyers, doctors, scientists, and engineers would want to add the words peculiar to their speciality to customize the dictionary to their needs.

Important Database, Spreadsheet, and Word Processor share the same dictionaries. If you add a word to your personal dictionary in Spreadsheet, the same word will be added to the dictionary used in Database and Word Processor. We'll be moving on to the Database and Spreadsheet in future articles.

One final note regarding the Works Help Answer Wizard on the previous page. Not visible in this graphic is an option at the very bottom to view a tutorial. If you haven't found this yet, by all means take a look at it. It can be a big help to anyone new to Works.

Another valuable tool appears in fairly fine print on the opening page of the Works Task Launcher.

Works Word Processor

Create great-looking letters, reports, form letters, flyers, and resumes. The Word Processor is your home base for all your writing tasks. Or, learn more about [Works Word Processor on the Web?](#)

Check the Web. It's interesting.

Upgrading with the Joneses

By Elizabeth B. Wright, a member of ccOKC and a frequent contributor to the eMonitor, Computer Club of Oklahoma City, www.ccokc.org, james@qns.com

How much time are you spending upgrading, both hardware and software? New operating systems, programs that won't run on older systems, changes in the internet, memory hog programs and graphic cards? If you are keeping up with the trend toward power, then all of these things probably apply to your computer life. But are they worth it?

For myself, I have found that so much time and money have been invested in trying to keep up with the times. Keeping up with the Joneses doesn't even apply here. Just trying to stay current on the internet is enough to make most of us upgrade, upgrade, upgrade. But all of this has come with a severe penalty.

I find it is taking much too much of my valuable time and that not enough of that time is being spent productively. If there wasn't a deadline for this column, would I even find the time to write it? Some big changes in direction are in order I think.

Until Microsoft makes everything we already own completely useless, I find that most of what I need to do with the computer can be done with much older programs. For instance, if I want to be sure someone can open and read a document; I still save it as ASCII text.

Oh yes, we have .pdf and other so-called portable text formats, but so what? The most portable is still the above mentioned ASCII. The output is usually in exceedingly small files. There is no formatting possible, but if you are merely transmitting information, what need is there for more than an old-fashioned typewritten letter?

Most word processing programs still offer the option of saving the file as a .txt file. Personally, when I want to be sure the file can be accessed by someone else, I type it in Notepad. I've even been known to use really archaic programs, just for kicks.

If you are earning your living with mathematical programs such as accounting, then where do you draw the line on updating? Does your older software do the job, and does your older computer do that job fast enough to ensure that you meet your deadlines so you can get paid for your work?

But if your clients upgrade their software and you find that you must submit spreadsheets, etc. to them in a new format, then you are caught in the trap. So far most new programs will read some of the data from older versions of their software, but when will that change? About the same time as the printer manufacturers found out they could make more money selling ink rather than printers, one can only assume that the software companies were probably thinking "why can't we do something like that?"

When it comes to graphics however, don't even think about using older software and computers, unless of course you have all the time in the world to wait for changes to take place when you are enhancing your photos. Once again, if this is your job, you simply can't afford to be slow. But even for hobbyists, speed is really essential to graphic manipulation.

Where is the bottom line on speed versus money? Each of us has to decide on the point at which we achieve the balance of using our computers for productive output without further upgrades. It is just as easy to write this column on my oldest computer, but since working with photos is my hobby; my fastest computer will have to be used.

However, from now on, the two machines will be used to do a specific job, rather than keeping everything on just one of them. As for the internet, as long as it can be accessed with something other than the computer dedicated to the photos, then that is the one that will be used.

Hopefully I can keep my useful work separate from the internet, the object being to avoid contamination as much as possible. But I'm not sure how long the older, slower computer will serve my internet connection. If you are limited to one computer, you might look into removable hard drives in order to keep your data safe from the bad guys out there. But that takes us back to the money issue.

 <p>Compatible inkjet Cartridges starting at \$5</p> <p>www.tdinksales.com tdinksales@satx.rr.com</p>	<p>L & M Bookstore 1716 N. Main Ave.</p> <p>Qwik Pack & Ship 1205 N. Loop 1604 W Suite 221</p> <p>Great Northwest Postal Center 8745 Grissom Road</p> <p>American Shipping & Mail Boxes 8452 Fredericksburg Rd</p> <p>Ink Spot 6420A Bandera Road</p>
---	--

The Nightmare

By Berry F. Phillips, a member of ccOKC and a frequent contributor to the eMonitor, Computer Club of Oklahoma City, www.ccokc.org, bfpdata@1access.net

My computer growled like some prehistoric monster rebelling at being awakened from a deep slumber and then checking my financial data online almost by habit. Terror pulsed through my veins as I no longer existed; all my personal data had been deleted!

I then checked to see if my credit cards were in my wallet, which gave me a momentary feeling of security that I still existed. However, the panic returned when I remembered the credit cards while having a physical reality actually have only a cyber reality. What did I do wrong? Do you suppose the last time I kicked my computer out of frustration caused this animosity? On the verge of hysteria, I shouted, "I am too young to be cyber terminated and deleted into nonexistence!"

Looking for something to save me from termination, I am very appreciative of the National Cyber Security Alliance (NCSA) for their contribution to this article. NCSA is a go to resource for cyber security awareness and education for the home user, and small business, and education audiences. NCSA is a private partnership whose sponsors include the Department of Homeland Security, Federal Trade Commission, and many private-sector corporations and organizations.

"The widespread availability of computers and connections to the Internet provide everyone with 24/7 access to information, credit, financial services, and shopping. The Internet is also an incredible tool for educators and students to communicate and learn.

Unfortunately, some individuals exploit the Internet through criminal behavior and other harmful acts. Criminals can try to gain unauthorized access to your computer and then use that access to steal your identity, commit fraud, or even launch cyber attacks against others. By following the recommended cyber security practices outlined here you can limit the harm cyber-criminals can do not only to your computer, but to everyone's computer.

However, there is no single cyber security practice or technological solution that will prevent online crime. These recommended cyber security practices that highlight that using a set of practices that include Internet habits as well as technological solutions can make a difference. The National Cyber Security Alliance's Top Eight Cyber Security Practices are practical steps you can take to stay safe online and avoid becoming a victim of fraud, identity theft, or cyber crime."

Here are the eight NCSA cyber security practices to stay safe online: "1. Protect your personal information. It's valuable. 2. Know who you are dealing with online. 3. Use anti virus software, a firewall, and anti-spyware software to help keep your computer safe and secure. 4. be sure to set up your operating system and Web browser software properly, and

update them regularly. 5. Use strong passwords or strong authentication technology to help protect your personal information. 6. Back up important files. 7. Learn what to do if something goes wrong. 8. Protect your children online."


Upon awakening after having once more dozed off in front of my computer while online, I saw my personal data that confirmed I really did exist. I am alive! I have not been deleted! It was only a nightmare. I simply must stop watching those late night horror movies, kicking my computer in frustration, and improve my online security practices to avoid cyber fireworks.

Volunteers Wanted

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

STUDY GROUPS

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



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

Alamo PC logo

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

\$20.00

Call the Learning Center at 736-0700

This is the Web



The Phenomenon of Facebook - Redefining social networking

By **Courtney Jewett**, a senior English major at Baylor University, who is pursuing a career in journalism.

What do Hillary Clinton, Tony the Tiger, and millions of college students have in common? They all have profiles on the contemporary social network known as Facebook.

As a college student, and avid Facebooker, I intend to share my knowledge and experiences with the site in order to uncover the reasons behind Facebook's widespread success.

Continued on page 37

As Facebook.com explains, the purpose of this “social utility” is to keep friends connected and help people network in a safe online environment.

Mark Zuckerberg, an extremely intelligent student of Harvard University, created Facebook three years ago. At the age of 19, Mark and his college friends launched the site, which began as a place to connect Harvard students.

Today, Facebook has connections to universities across the globe, with over 25 million registered users. If you have a high school or college age child, chances are they're very familiar with this popular site.

The Facebook logo, consisting of the word "facebook" in white lowercase letters on a blue rectangular background.

Once a fixation only among college students, Facebook is quickly expanding in the hope of connecting a diversity of users. Anyone with a valid e-mail address can register and create a free Facebook profile.

The site is successful because it is changing the ways in which the world can communicate.

Through Facebook, users create a profile where they can express their interests, activities, favorite movies, shows, books, quotes, and basic contact information. They can search for their friends and co-workers, and then click to add them as their ‘Facebook friend’.

There are countless ways to participate on Facebook, such as uploading pictures, ‘tagging’ or identifying ‘facebook friends’ that appear in your pics, sending messages, writing on friends’ walls, customizing your profile, writing notes to publish on Facebook, and updating your status to allow your friends to know exactly what you’re up to at any given time.

With all of these opportunities to connect, it’s no wonder people (especially students) are spending hours on this site, and visiting it repeatedly in order to stay updated with what’s happening in the lives of their Facebook friends.

Through Facebook, I am connected with 73 different networks, and hundreds of people, from the U.S to Australia. I can see what my friends who are currently studying abroad are up to, and view pictures of their adventures.

Some of my favorite professors are now Facebook users. The site is an excellent tool for professors to get to know their students on a more personal level. It’s not uncommon for students to ask academic questions through Facebook messaging instead of e-mail, or to write friendly comments on their professor’s wall.

Employers are also discovering the benefits of Facebook, and can search for the profiles of potential employees. Therefore, it’s smart to keep a clean profile, and to be aware of who you are associating with through the site. Many sororities, fraternities, and campus organizations monitor the profiles of their members and discourage pictures of drinking, and inappropriate behavior.

Facebook’s privacy settings and methods of connectivity separate it from Myspace, and all other internet social networks. Myspace, which has similar features to Facebook, emphasizes individuality and expression through more personalized profiles. Facebook focuses on simple, safe connectivity.

Facebook corresponds more with real life than Myspace, as users typically add people they already know as their ‘Facebook friends’. Myspace, users are often contacted by random locals.

In upcoming articles, I’d like to further examine the role Facebook plays in the life of the student, as well as the advantages (and maybe one or two disadvantages) of the site. Lastly, we’ll uncover how Facebook is affecting the dating world, and improving the love lives of college students everywhere.

The Internet

What Is It?

By **Hilton Kaufman**, a member of the Chicago Computer Society, Illinois,
www.css.org, hmkaufman@earthlink.net

Hilton Kaufman serves as the technical support person for the procedures writing unit of an Illinois state agency, where higher level technical support personnel are concerned with the details of Internet connections and services. As such, he uses the software provided to him to create forms, convert documents into PDFs, advise members of his unit as to how to use the available software, and similar tasks. For his home computer, he can go all out and get a powerful machine that allows him to do things like playing games and surf the web without getting in trouble. He has prepared a number of articles aimed at novice users on the basics of standard computer programs.

The Internet is one of those things that is a bit tricky to define and explain. It is a network of computer networks that provides various services, such as e-mail and the World Wide Web, with a hierarchy of naming conventions to consider. No one can tell exactly how many computers are part of the Internet at any moment as individuals are constantly signing on and off.

There is also the historical aberration that the intended structure of the Internet is not how it works today. It was supposed to be a bunch of independent connections and multiple possible routings so that if one part went down, say the area in lower Manhattan about five years ago, messages could go through on another route. Now everything goes across country on a backbone consisting of maybe five or six parallel main trunk lines.

It also was once for government and educational use only. Many government functions now use newer networks with connections totally separate from what we know as The Internet. They may or may not permit connection to the Internet for routine matters, but severely limit who can get into the secure internal networks. Schools seem to find that the Internet works fine for them. Much of the Internet involves commercial entities today.

While the Internet was originally designed for use within the United States of America, it is quite international in scope. How it works in various countries may or may not be subject to various controls. However someone with the right equipment might be able to tap into a satellite that carries Internet signals. Yet a very great portion of Internet traffic is in or at least involves the United States

It is the services on the Internet that make it interesting to the ordinary user. Historically it was used for short messages and moving files from one location to another. The messages might be nothing more than a notice that a file was ready to be transferred or that it had been successfully received. It grew into something in which anyone could bring useful files to their local computers and send complex messages with files often attached.

The technology for providing and receiving many services has changed and made more complex, yet more user friendly. Internet capable technology is often used in local networks called Intranets, which may or may not be connect to the overall Internet. Different individuals work with the Internet in ways that may be unique to them. The ordinary person does not know or care how it works, just that he or she can use it for the desired services, such as sending e-mail messages.

The Internet can be something mysterious and quite technical. It can also be something that appears easy to use. This may depend on what one wants and what is loaded on a particular computer. Very often a company that one uses to connect and receive services tries to make things look as simple as possible to the end user.



The Internet

Internet connections

By **Hilton Kaufman**, a member of the Chicago Computer Society, Illinois,
www.css.org, hmkaufman@earthlink.net

Hilton Kaufman serves as the technical support person for the procedures writing unit of an Illinois state agency, where higher level technical support personnel are concerned with the details of Internet connections and services. As such, he uses the software provided to him to create forms, convert documents into PDFs, advise members of his unit as to how to use the available software, and similar tasks. For his home computer, he can go all out and get a powerful machine that allows him to do things like playing games and surf the web without getting in trouble. He has prepared a number of articles aimed at novice users on the basics of standard computer programs.

The method of connection into the Internet varies somewhat among users. At various points, telephone lines, coaxial cables, UHF relays, satellite shots, and a few other methods might be utilized to make the actual connections. It is even possible to bring a lap top computer into a coffee house and reach an internet connection starting with a radio link.

Typically a home or small office user will connect through a company known as an Internet Service Provider or ISP. These could be small local companies or giants, such as AOL, Earthlink, and AT&T-Yahoo. A large company establishes local routing centers known as Points of Presence or POPs to allow for local calls into the system. Small ISPs have local numbers but might also use POPs if covering an area of more than just a few miles. A large ISP might have over 2,000 POPs.

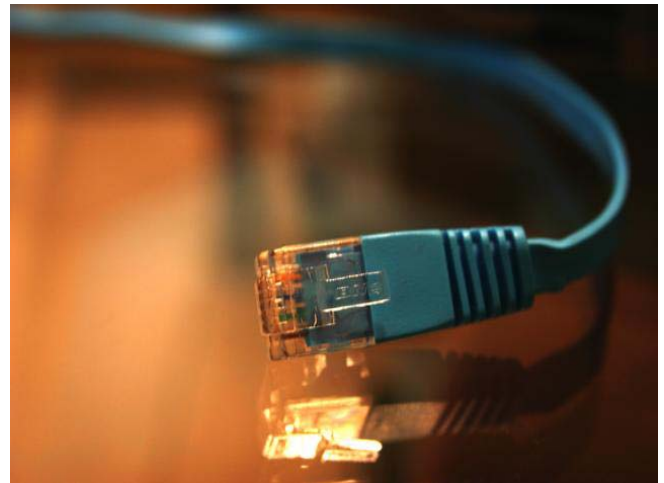
POPs have some equipment that receives the connection from the individual user and routes it to the server, a powerful dedicated computer, at the actual ISP location. The ISP then routes the message toward where it supposed to go, probably eventually through another ISP and POP. Trunk lines owned by a few major long distance telephone service providers are used to send messages across country in this process.

There are also sites known as redirection services. In some ways, they can be used to hide where a message is coming from and going to, but do have other purposes. For example, one can frequently change ISPs based on availability in local areas and price, but keep a constant address with a redirection service. These services might also provide things like a personal web site, useful software, and online storage.

I live in Chicago, Illinois and use a redirection service in California. My ISP also is in California. If I receive a message, it is somehow sent to the redirection service in California; it then goes through my ISP; then to a POP somewhere in Chicago; then through my telephone switch center about three or four miles from where I live; and eventually to my computer.

The person sending me the message might live nearby, but use a different ISP. While the telephone switching center might be the same, the POP and ISP locations would be different. Another major ISP is located in Minnesota. Different trunk line connections would be used to send the message there and then over to by redirection service in California.

A small ISP might go directly into the trunk lines or work through a larger wholesale ISP. Various capacity heavy duty lines go to the ISPs which break down the capacity for individual users. The smallest of these heavy lines is known as a T1 and could be sufficient for a small ISP. A larger ISP or a POP for a major ISP might use a T3 line. Single user service over a T3 line would make normal broadband service look extremely slow, but costs thousands of dollars per month.



Continued on page 40

All of these connections take place in seconds.

Government entities, schools, large businesses, and some others might connect in to the Internet in other ways. A unit of government might have a connection to the Internet through a major ISP or might connect more directly into the trunk lines.

In Illinois, all Internet service for agencies under the governor is supposed to go through a Department of Central Management Services. A worker in Chicago searching for something at another site in Chicago would have to go through Springfield. The central agency probably connects to the trunk lines. The central agency for a state that centralizes its computer operations, as does Illinois, might be a computer operations agency or the state library.

Even municipalities might go through a state service. For example, to get to the Brooklyn Museum site at one time, one had to go through a single site that served the entire State of New York. I tried this once from a Chicago Public Library public computer and received the message that the New York state computer was down; I then had to go the old fashioned encyclopedia that was on a shelf about 10 feet away to learn what I wanted.

Firewalls are used to protect data inside a network from outside tampering or prying. They can also be used to control what gets out. Firewalls can be set up at various levels to control access. In the other direction, if I send a message about something to one of my doctors, it will reach them among other messages on their hospital computers; but I cannot get in to see confidential information. One of the hospital systems, VA, can retrieve medical records across country, but no one else can get in. The other can exchange records among three hospitals and numerous scattered clinic sites.

Schools often act as small to moderate size ISPs. Faculty, staff, and students usually have internet privileges through the school. The schools might connect directly through the trunk, a large ISP, a state service, or another school. The main state university might serve as a central point for other schools in the state and have a direct connection to the trunk.



We specialize in individual and small business tax preparation

Laura B. Grover, E.A.
 Tax Preparation & Financial Consulting
 14350 Northbrook Drive, Suite 240
 San Antonio, TX 78232

(210) 402-6100
 Fax (210) 402-2888

laurab@lauragrover.com
www.lauragrover.com

Enrolled to practice before the Internal Revenue Service



The Internet

Internet addressing

By **Hilton Kaufman**, a member of the Chicago Computer Society, Illinois,
www.css.org, hmkaufman@earthlink.net

Hilton Kaufman serves as the technical support person for the procedures writing unit of an Illinois state agency, where higher level technical support personnel are concerned with the details of Internet connections and services. As such, he uses the software provided to him to create forms, convert documents into PDFs, advise members of his unit as to how to use the available software, and similar tasks. For his home computer, he can go all out and get a powerful machine that allows him to do things like playing games and surf the web without getting in trouble. He has prepared a number of articles aimed at novice users on the basics of standard computer programs.

Each individual or computer on the Internet has an individual and unique address in the system. Part of this address might reflect how messages to and from this address are routed, but it is possible to buy or rent what is known as a domain name. Within the system, everything is routed by numbers, but there are tables available to many servers that translate the easier for mere humans to understand names to the proper routing numbers.

There is a regular hierarchy to how these names work and are assigned. Generally if you control a domain name, you can control the individual names under it. There are individuals who only use one individual name under a domain name. This might be done to advertise a company or service. An ISP might have thousands of names under its domain.

An international agency, called ICANN, that is subject to control by the U.S. Department of Commerce if it gets out of line, assigns the high level domains, such as .com. There are between 100 and 150 of these high level domain names. An authority for each of these high level names registers the specific domain names. Every nation-state has its own high level name, such as .de for Germany (Deutschland). Some are general or for certain types of users, such as .com and .edu.

ICANN also arranges for several high level servers in different locations to have the master list for the system. I believe that there are currently seven of these servers. If one is lost or compromised, the others can still function and quickly correct the data on the other ones. Much of this information is also fed down the line to other name translation servers on a regular basis.

The rules as to how a domain will be issued under a specific high level varies with the issuing authority. They may contract the administration out to a service, such as VeriSign, that does this for a profit. Sometimes the rules are strict and might require an actual presence, type of entity and/or citizenship to use a domain name with a particular national high level name. In other cases, it may simply be whether or not one is willing to pay the required fee. The small pacific island nation of Tuvalu covers much of its government expenses by selling .tv domain names through VeriSign. Tuvalu is not even mentioned in the online advertisement for .tv domain names.

Specific names work a bit different for e-mail than for the World Wide Web. Typically an individual will have an e-mail address, but not a uniform resource locator (URL) for the Web. The e-mail format is a bit easier to explain, so I'll start with it.

In an e-mail address, the individual name is to the left of an at "@" symbol, which separates the two parts of the name. Immediately after the @, the specific part of the domain name follows. A dot, or period, separates this from the high level domain name. An example might be something like Joe.Individual@example.com. There may or may not be dots and capitals in the individual part of the name. There is always at least one dot in the domain name.

The individual web site services that go through the consumer ISPs as a free feature are a bit weird looking. Any business would probably have and use its own domain name. With web sites the domain name comes first, followed by a slash and then the individual part of the name. You can control the specific page naming from whatever level you are able to work. It will probably not have names of individuals. It may or may not start with www. If it is directly at the domain name level, it might default to a specific page name, such as index. A technical requirement of the web sort of requires that http:// appear before the actual URL. The frequently seen www is not required. Letters such as http or htm, to indicate how the site is coded, are at the end. An example might be <http://example.com/index.htm>.



The Internet

E-mail and the Web

By Hilton Kaufman, a member of the Chicago Computer Society, Illinois,
www.css.org, hmkaufman@earthlink.net

Hilton Kaufman serves as the technical support person for the procedures writing unit of an Illinois state agency, where higher level technical support personnel are concerned with the details of Internet connections and services. As such, he uses the software provided to him to create forms, convert documents into PDFs, advise members of his unit as to how to use the available software, and similar tasks. For his home computer, he can go all out and get a powerful machine that allows him to do things like playing games and surf the web without getting in trouble. He has prepared a number of articles aimed at novice users on the basics of standard computer programs.

The Internet is a network of networks used to transmit messages, which might be web pages. Somehow things arrive at where they are supposed to go. It is the services that go over these networks that make the Internet useful. The two best known services today are e-mail and the World Wide Web.

Different Internet connections work in different ways. If your computer can get to the Internet, it will most likely have a piece of software known as a browser. The browser helps make the connection to the Web and translate a bunch of code into what looks like a web page. It is possible to work without a browser, if you know a bunch of Unix commands and do not want anything fancy.



The best known browser is Internet Explorer. It comes with most PCs today. Macs from Apple come with a browser called Safari. A PC might also come with a browser called Netscape. A computer that I bought a few months ago has both Internet Explorer and Netscape. There are other browsers that you can purchase or download, such as Opera, that are reputed to work better. I find that Internet Explorer works fine for me.

The `http://` of a web address might not have to be typed into the browser and tells the Internet that you want something on the World Wide Web. Letters, such as `htm` at the end of address indicates that the site follows a standard type of coding. Most browsers will assume you want the Web unless you enter something different and automatically insert this coding. It is not necessary to type in some of the stuff at the very end of the address. Usually browsers are not used to get to other Internet services.

The World Wide Web is a way to find and send pages of information. People, businesses, schools, government agencies and others establish their presence and put up sites with whatever they want. Some are reliable and some are pure junk or worse. Many ISPs will allow subscribers to put up personal web pages, that are usually pretty identifiable as personal pages.

Colleges, universities, and government agencies will usually maintain websites as part of their mission. These tend to be pretty reliable sources of information. Stores and other business are usually advertising what they sell and are good in their way. There are also spoof pages that may look like the real thing or go to places such as porno sites. Much of the information on the Web is advertisement supported. The World Wide Web is a wild place with some good stuff and some horrible things.

There is so much out on the Web that special services known as search engines are used to find information. At one time, there were a number of these engines, each with its own quirks. A few years ago, one called Ask Jeeves was considered pretty good. Now most people use either Google or Yahoo. Microsoft is also pushing one that they have, but it has not yet grown as popular as the others. You type in a word or two and some hits appear. If you are lucky, the first hit gives you what you want. On the other hand, you may get thousands of hits, with none looking very likely.

Continued on page 43

In addition to the browser, some software also usually resides on a computer to allow for special features of Web sites. These are things such as Flash, QuickTime, and Adobe Reader. They might allow for movements on the page, video clips, stable or locked pages of text and graphics, and similar things.

E-mail is a message system that holds items on a central server until requested. If you want, this server could be in your house, but is usually at an ISP or similar location. A computer being used as a server must remain on constantly. Anything sent to you, is held on this server until you request it. You send messages in the other direction by using someone's e-mail address. Those message will go to the server for that person.

If someone is online, a message might reach the intended party in seconds. If the person is not online, it can sit on the server indefinitely. A message and response can take under a minute if both parties are available.

One can use a mail reader, or client in Tech-speak, to receive, read, respond to, and send e-mail messages. Usually, a mail reader will accept all messages on the server. Another way to get the messages is go to a special web site and select the ones that are wanted. If you get 30 messages, 20 of them might a type of junk known as spam. You can open the 10 that you want and delete the 20 that you do not without them ever being on your machine. With the web site method, messages can be retrieved from the server from any computer, even in a foreign country.

The most common e-mail reader is probably Outlook Express from Microsoft. It comes with the operating system on a PC or a download of Internet Explorer. I even used it when I had a Mac a couple years ago. There are others that are fancier and do some things that Outlook Express does not do.

News Brief

Gotcha! Geek Squad Caught Stealing Porn

In a three-month sting, the Consumer-ist loaded a PC with porn, set it up with a keylogger, and asked the Geek Squad to install iTunes. The hidden program recorded everything and produced a very revealing video. Watch as the tech pokes around, finds what he wants, and copies files to his flash drive.



<http://snurl.com/geekpornsqad>

Blurbs from Bass

By Steve Bass, PC World Columnist and Author, Stevebass@earthlink.net

Configuring Outlook Express



By Dick Maybach, Columnist, Brookdale Computer User Group (BCUG)
Brookdale, NJ, www.bcug.org, n2nd@att.net

You can greatly improve your e-mail experience by properly configuring Outlook Express, which is the default Windows e-mail client. Outlook, which is included with MS Office, is a completely different program, but it has a similar user interface for e-mail. The two programs are similar enough that you should have no trouble adapting these procedures to your version. You should modify them as you get more experience with your particular mix of e-mail messages.

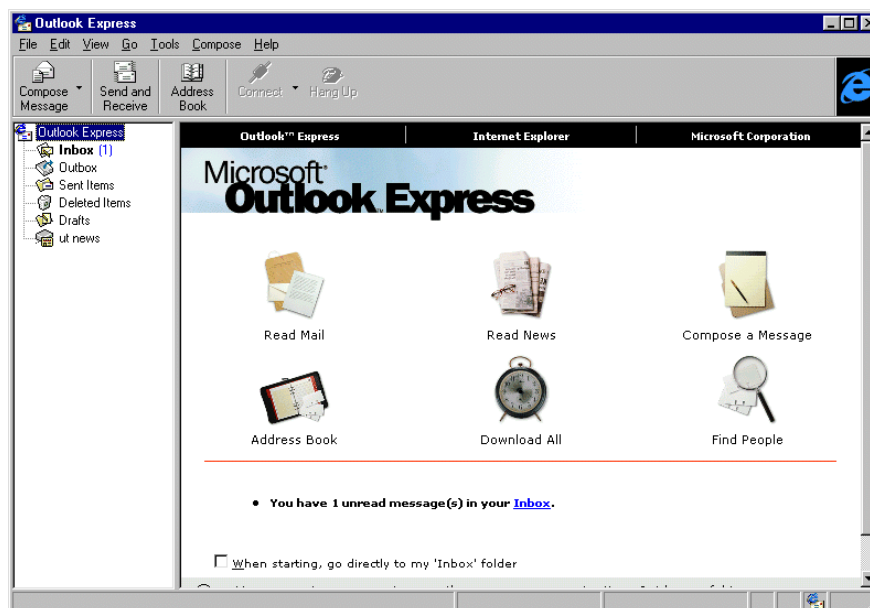
By default, Outlook Express has X folders. You should add to these to organize your e-mail messages to make them easier to find in the same way that you organize your file system by using folders there. Set up a separate folder for each major category of e-mail that you send and receive. With Outlook running, click on "File", select "New", and then click on "Folder...". Put the desired name in the "Name:" box and select "Personal Folders" in the "Select where to place the folder:" box. Move the messages in your Inbox to the appropriate folders. While you're at it, delete any you don't need. You will probably find some messages that don't belong in any folder; just leave these in the Inbox. Consider having Outlook Express empty the Deleted Messages folder every time you exit the program.

You will now set up a series of rules that tell Outlook where to place incoming messages, using the following procedure. Click on the Organize icon and then the Rules Wizard menu item. Click on the New... button to create a new rule or the Modify... one to change a rule. Assuming you are creating a new rule, the first screen asks you what kind of rule you want, which is usually "Check messages as they arrive." At the bottom of each screen is a window showing the rule as you've defined it so far. You can click on any underlined terms in the rule to change them. (When you are defining a new rule, you must define these before you can go the next screen.) The second screen lets you specify for which conditions you want to test. In the third screen you set what to do with the message, and the fourth one lets you add any exceptions. Finally, name the rule.

First, establish the rules to move incoming messages to the desired folder. Make the following choices for the rules screens. Screen 1 – "Check messages as they arrive". Screen 2 – "from people or distribution list". (Select the names from your address book.) Screen 3 – select both "move it to the specified folder" and "stop processing more rules". (Click on specified and select an existing folder or create a new one.) Screen 4 – you probably won't need any exceptions. Screen 5 – give the rule the same name as the folder. Repeat this until you have specified folders for all the people from whom you regularly receive mail.

By default, Outlook indicates junk mail by showing it in gray and adult content in purple. (I love that we use the new-speak term "adult" to describe content that most of us lose interest in by the time we leave adolescence.) To get rid of it, set up the following rule. Screen 1 – "Check messages when they arrive". Screen 2 – "suspected to be junk e-mail or from Junk Senders". (You will see a message asking if this is to be applied to every message you receive; select "Yes".) Screen 3 – "move it to the specified folder", probably "Deleted Items".

Continued on page 45



Screen 4 – no exceptions. Screen 5 – name it “Junk Senders”. Repeat this procedure, but for screen 2 select “Containing adult content or from adult content...”.

You will probably find that these filters are not very effective. The following step is quite effective in eliminating spam, but it deletes all messages sent to you on a “copy to” (cc) or “blind copy to” (bcc) list. I use bcc routing on the Roundtable and Hardware SIG meeting notices.

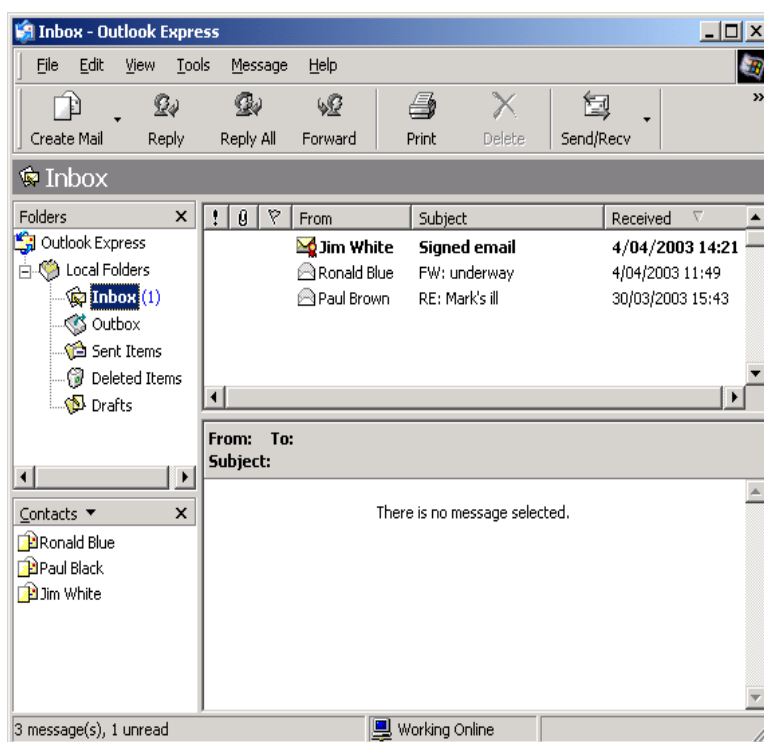
Unless you have set up a rule to route messages from me to a folder and then to stop processing other rules, Outlook will delete these meeting notices. Repeat again but select “Where my name is not in the To box” in screen 2. Monitor the results of this rule in case you need to add exceptions. Note also that if you don’t have your incoming mail sent to folders as above, you will need exemptions for every correspondent that uses cc or bcc routing.

If you follow my suggestions, you are sending all suspect e-mail to the Deleted Items folder. On my PC, everything in this folder is erased each time I exit Outlook, which means that you should look before you exit, at least for a month or so.

By the way, I find that many such messages attempt to access the Internet when you open them. I think that they are just downloading graphics, but I don’t want to take a chance that they are doing something sneaky. After I download my e-mail I disconnect so I can abort such actions. (If you have high-speed access you probably can’t easily do this.)

Your last step is to order your rules list. The rules moving the desired e-mail to the correct folders should appear at the top of the list. Since they stop checking other rules after they move a message, they will prevent the spam filter rules from throwing out messages from people with whom you regularly correspond. To do this, click on “Rules Wizard...” and use the “Move Up” and “Move Down” buttons to sort the rules. You will have to reorder the rules each time you add a new one.

You will probably find that some spam still gets through. You can add to your junk senders list by right clicking on the message, selecting “Junk e-mail, and clicking on “Add to Junk Senders list”. However, many spammers change their e-mail address with each message, making this ineffective. In such cases, see if you can identify the junk in some other way, perhaps by looking for specific words or in one of the fields (address, header, etc.). Keep in mind however, that your goal is not to completely eliminate spam, but to reduce it to a manageable volume. Don’t let yourself become obsessed.



**20+ YEARS
SERVING
SAN ANTONIO**

TAKE IT TO BJ's - THE LAPTOP SPECIALIST!
IF WE CAN'T FIX IT, NO ONE CAN!

AWARD WINNING SERVICE SINCE 1982

Residential, Corporate,
Education, Government,
No job is too small.

WE SERVICE ALL BRANDS!

- New/Refurbished Notebooks
- Accessories Notebook Drives
- Ac/Adapters Wireless Solutions
- Batteries Networking
- Parts/Memory LCD'S/Screens



YOUR MOBILE COMPUTING PRO!

BJ ASSOCIATES OF SAN ANTONIO

10823 GULF DALE, ISOM AND 281N NEAR THE AIRPORT
HOURS: 9-6 MON-FRI Carry in/On-site
EMERGENCY/AFTER HOURS SERVICE AVAILABLE

210-344-4563 San Antonio
800-366-7104 Metro and out of Area
www.bjassociates.com info@bjassociates.com

TOSHIBA

IBM

DELL

Gateway

SONY



COMPAQ

How I Find My "Deleted" E-mails

by **Tom Thiel**, President, Lake-Sumter Computer Society,
www.lscs.us, tthiel5@Comcast.net

Old E-mails are one of my most frequent retrievals from my backed-up files. My current rate of e-mail accumulation is about 20-30 a day. I've forced myself to maintain my accumulated e-mails in my Inbox and Sent E-mails folders to a maximum of not more than 1,000 each. So periodically I just arbitrarily "loped off" the oldest one-half to one month or so of e-mails. I try to manage some of these by placing them into other folders but that isn't very effective for me.

What this procedure means is that frequently I find myself wishing I still had that old "deleted" e-mail. (The latest one was the Acoustica e-mail sending us Spin it Again software.)

How do I retrieve that e-mail after I've "deleted" it from my Inbox or Sent Items? Here is how I do it with Internet Explorer 6.

Sometime ago I found out where IE stores my e-mails. What I did then was to move the place where my e-mails are stored by default to a folder named "Toms e-mails" in my "My Documents" folder. (How to do this is briefly outlined in the addendum at the end of this article.)

My basic backup procedure is to frequently, at least once a week but usually more frequently, and usually daily with very active folders, copy the contents of my My Documents folder to an external USB connected 300 GB Maxtor drive and to other similar portable USB drives (a 100 GB SimpleTec, and a 40 GB Pocketec hard drive) that are stored away from my computer.

When I do this of course I am backing up the current contents of all my e-mails at the moment the My Documents backup is performed. (Actually, any true backup procedure will work.)

So, when I want one of those old e-mails that had been arbitrarily "loped" off the tail end, I do the following:

1. Open Outlook Express and set it to Work Offline so that new e-mails are not loaded in with old ones (only needed if you are continuously on-line). You may set IE to Work Offline as follows: With IE open select File, and then check Work Offline. No new e-mails can come in under this mode.

2. Now close OE.

3. With Windows Explorer I find the folder "Toms e-mails" in My Documents and rename it to "Toms e-mails Today"

4. Then I try to guess what backup might have the particular e-mail I'm looking for from among the various backups I have on the external USB drives.

5. With Windows Explorer I find the folder "Toms e-mails" on that external backup copy.

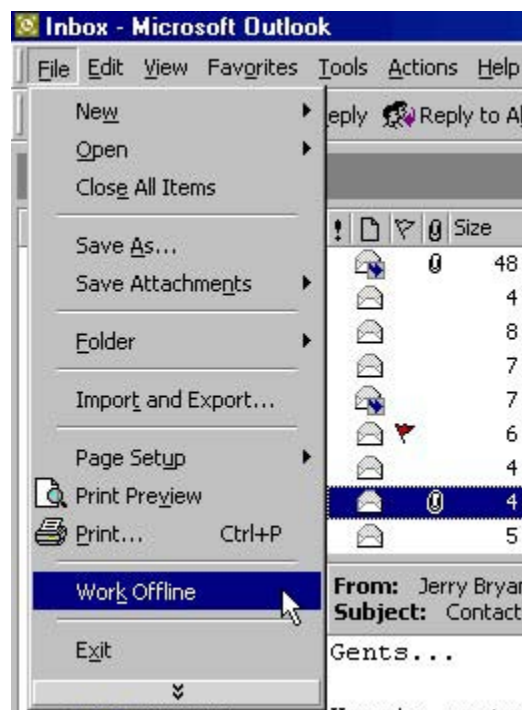
6. Then I Copy that folder and Paste it into my current My Documents folder.

7. I now see two email folders in My Documents; "Toms e-mails" which just was Pasted from the backup copy and the folder "Toms e-mails Today" which had been renamed earlier.

8. Next I open IE again.

9. It asks me "Do you want to work online?"

10. Be sure to say NO!



11. I then try to locate the desired e-mail; sometimes I use IE's Find capability to do this. Hopefully, I have guessed correctly and I find the desired e-mail the first guess.

12. I open it and then copy it to my Desktop by choosing File and then Save As and Save To Desktop.

13. Now I close IE and with Windows Explorer find the folder "Toms e-mails", the one I just loaded from the backup, and from which I retrieved the desired e-mail, and I delete it.

14. Next I rename "Toms e-mails Today" back to "Toms e-mails"

15. Then I open IE and say Yes I want to Work Online.

16. I find the e-mail that I had copied to my desktop and double-click on it to open in IE. I can then save it back into my current e-mails and do whatever I wanted to do with it.

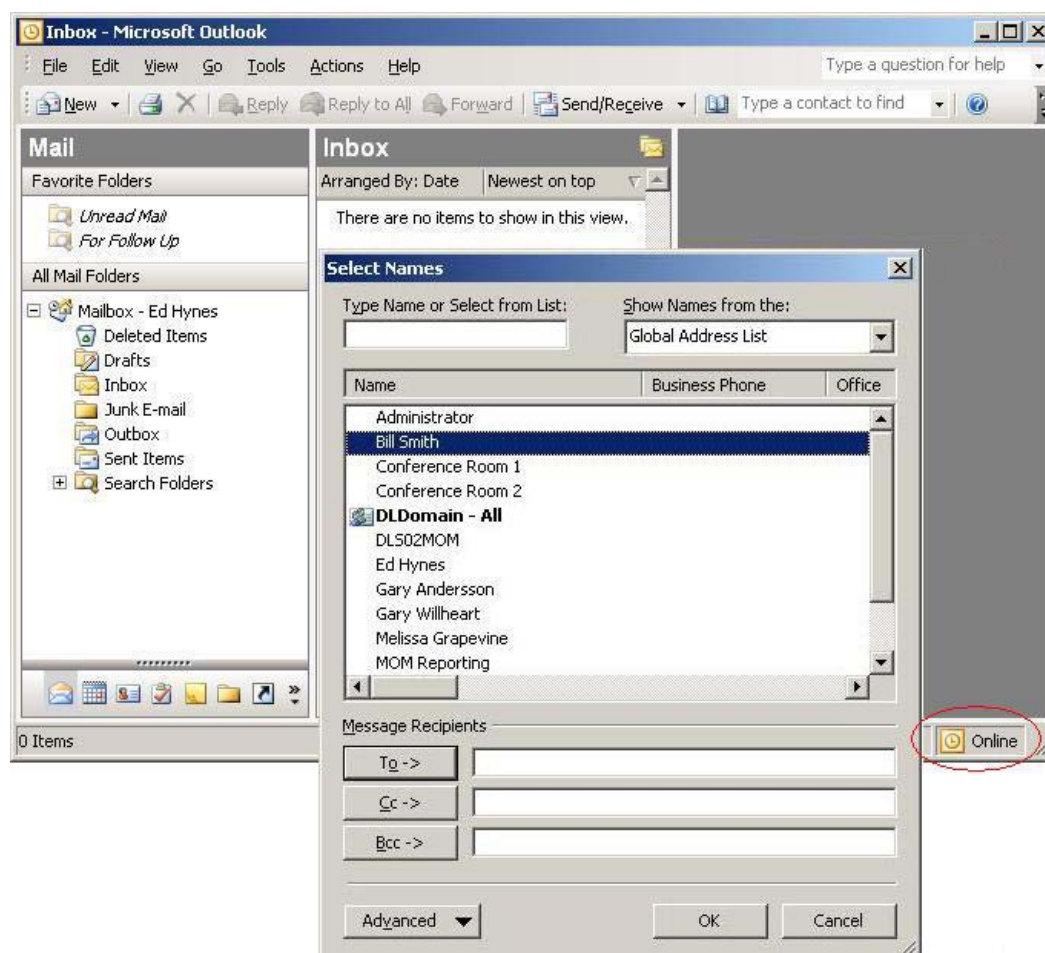
And that what I do to find that old "deleted" e-mail! Of course it only works for so long as you maintain those backup copies – in my case about six months.

Addendum: How you may change the default location where your e-mails are stored in Outlook Express.

In OE, first select the Tools menu, and then Options tab. On the pop-up screen, click the Maintenance tab, then click the Store Folder button.

Outlook Express will show you where it is currently keeping your e-mail files.

You may then select Change and a Browse window will appear where you may choose to indicate the new place you wish to store your e-mails.



Get Organized Now!

By Sandy Berger, CompuKISS,
www.compukiss.com, sandy@compukiss.com

With today's complex world and multi-tasking, it is not surprising that we all seem to have too much to remember. The time-honored "to-do list" is still a suitable way to keep all of your tasks remembered and organized. Now the to-do list has gone high tech with Gubb an online list-maker.

Gubb is simple, effective, and free. Just surf over to www.gubb.net and click on the large Start Here button. Enter your email address and the username and password that you want to use. Gubb will present you with preformatted lists or you can create your own from scratch. Each list can have a different background color or you can make them all the same.

Gubb made PC Magazine's list of the 10 worst application names, but don't let the name throw you. Gubb is a winner despite its name. Gubb's clean and simple interface makes it easy to create lists and to add, edit, or delete items. Important items can have one, two, or three stars. You can sort items by priority, date due, completed items, or alphabetically. Especially useful is the ability to rearrange items in a list by dragging and dropping them. You can also drag and drop the lists themselves to position them on your screen. If your lists get too long, you can collapse them so you see only the title, opening them to full length as you need them.

If crossing items off your list as you complete them gives you a sense of satisfaction, Gubb will let you perform that task quite easily. Just click in the check box next to each item and Gubb puts a line through the item and marks it as completed. Gubb can also move the item to a completed list automatically or you can set it up so that you can archive your completed items at the end of the day, or any time of your choosing. If at anytime you need to see if, or when, you completed a task, you simply click on the name of the list to look at all the completed items and the time and date that you marked them complete.

These features alone make this Web service worthwhile, but there is more. You can share your lists with others. You can email or text message items right into your lists. You can have any of your lists emailed to yourself or to others. If you have an Internet-connected cell phone, lists can also be sent to your phone. So if you were in a grocery store and needed your shopping list, with the right equipment, you could access it from Gubb on your cell phone. All this may sound a bit complicated, but Gubb has done an exemplary job of keeping all these tasks easy to do.

My husband and I have each created multiple lists. We also have several lists that we share. Since we work together, this has really helped keep us organized both at home and at work. He can add items to my office or home lists and I can add anything I like to his office or home "honey-do" list. Gubb is helping us keep synchronized as well as organized.

Gubb is not perfect, but it is close. My complaints are pretty minor. I would love the ability to create several categories within each list. I would also like to be able to easily see if my husband added something to my list or vice versa. The program offers 3 shades of each of the following colors: blue, red, yellow, green, orange, pink, and gray. That's 21 colors to choose from so I am really being picky when I say I would like to be able to use purple, turquoise blue, and lime green for my lists. Okay, I know I am being hard to please, but maybe the Gubb creators will accommodate my wishes.

A recent survey showed that 25% of New Year resolutions are completely forgotten, but now you can use Gubb to resurrect your "I am going to be more organized." resolution. Sometimes getting organized means buying shelves, bins, baskets, and folders, but if you have an Internet-connected computer, Gubb will help you get organized without any expense. Go ahead. Do it. It will feel great to get all those scraps of paper and to-do notes off your desk and to get all those to do items off your mind. I know, because Gubb has helped me do just that!

Can't Play Online Videos -- Here's What To Do

By Sandy Berger, CompuKISS, www.compukiss.com,
sandy@compukiss.com

Recently I was installing some software at a local business when one of the workers approached me with a problem. She could not play a video on her computer even though co-workers could play it on their computers. The same problem appeared a few days later when I was troubleshooting some computer equipment for a local church and the Pastor could not view a news video on his computer. Since this seems to be happening all over my town, I thought it would make a good topic for a column. So here's the scoop.

Generally, each video you find on the Web will play only using the software that it was formatted for. If you try to play a video and you don't have the proper software, you won't be able to view the video. The area where the video would normally appear will be blank, usually showing either a gray or black square. However, on or near the blank video screen you will see a link that will lead you to the website where you can download the necessary software.

Many of the online news services are now using software called Flash for their videos. To view a Flash video, you need software by Adobe called Flash Player. Just click on the link to get to the proper place on the Adobe website to download the software. If there is no link available, you can access the download by clicking on the "Get Adobe FlashPlayer" button on the front page of the Adobe website at www.adobe.com. It's a free program and it will provide additional functionality to your computer, so don't hesitate to download it.

To get the player, click on the Download or Download Now button. You may have to scroll down the page to see the button, and you may have to agree to their policy. In most cases, the software will download and install automatically. (If it does not install automatically there will be step-by-step instructions for installation.)

One thing that the website may not tell you is that you may have to restart your computer for the new video software to be fully integrated with the computer. So if the software seems to have downloaded and installed, but you still don't see the video, close all the open windows and programs, and restart the computer.

While many online videos use the Flash software that I just talked about, others may use Windows Media Player, Real Media, or a program called QuickTime. If you are using a Windows computer, you will have Windows Media Player already installed. It comes with the Windows operating system.

The Real Player is a free program that can be found at www.real.com. The QuickTime Player is a free program from Apple that can be downloaded at www.quicktime.com. Even though it is an Apple program, it runs on Windows computers as well as on Macs. Both of these pieces of software are downloaded in a manner similar to that of the FlashPlayer.

Be aware that both RealPlayer and QuickTime will offer you an advanced version that you can purchase for a fee. Although you may want to purchase these programs in the future, it is perfectly alright to start with the free versions. The additional features in the paid versions will give you the ability to handle advanced video functionality, but everything you need to play online videos is included in the free versions.

You can download these video software programs as the need for them arises. Or if you like you can download all of these programs before you need them so you will be able to play almost all of the videos on the Web. These programs do not interfere with each other and will simply stay on your computer until they are needed.

Now you're all set to watch all the videos on the Web. Enjoy!



Paying too much for healthcare?

discounted fees on:

- ♦ doctors
- ♦ dentists
- ♦ prescription drugs
- ♦ vision care
- ♦ chiropractors
- ♦ alternative health care
- ♦ and more

visit online:
<http://ushealthadvisors.net/davebobst>

USHA
United Service Association
For Health Care

You Tube

Revolutionizes the Internet!

by Linda Gonse, Editor & Webmaster, Orange Country IBM PC Users' Group, California,
Editor@orcopug.org, www.ocropug.org

Just when I thought creative ideas were running out for ways to use the Internet, along comes YouTube, www.youtube.com. Its content includes movie and TV clips, music videos, and amateur works — such as video-blogging. The innovative site's popularity is staggering. Almost 20 million visitors browse YouTube each month, according to Nielsen/NetRatings. And, in confirmation of YouTube's originality, Time magazine named it the "Invention of the Year" in 2006.

Although I only discovered YouTube in December 2006, it was founded in February 2005. In about a year and a half, YouTube has been so successful Google sealed the deal to buy it in November 2006 for \$1.65-billion! Not bad for a site that was launched with a video of a co-founder's cat playing with a dangling string!

Now, "Users upload 6500 new videos to the site every day," according to a January 2007 Time magazine article. Many of the videos are taken with home camcorders and cell phones. In fact, videos that showed L.A. police repeatedly punching a suspect on the ground, a college student being tasered, and an outraged comedian yelling disparaging ethnic descriptions, were shown on television news after first being uploaded to YouTube. These homemade videos, which were a sensation on the news, initially prompted me to check out the site.

Incredibly, YouTube viewers watch 100 million videos each day — up from 10 million last year. The most-watched clip, with over 36+ million views is a compilation of head-butt animations inspired by the one Zinedine Zidane administered in the 2006 World Cup soccer game.

YouTube is free. You only need to sign up if you want to leave comments about the videos, rate them, or upload your own.



[Pickup to Electronic Snare Drum](#)

00:46

Added: 1 week ago
From: [mekarer](#)
Views: 520,994



1744 ratings



[Slamball accident](#)

01:17

Added: 6 months ago
From: [mcburger](#)
Views: 1,014,178



4962 ratings



[Change One Thing - OneTube For Obvious](#)

05:17

Added: 1 week ago
From: [OneTubeGroup](#)
Views: 173,383



1094 ratings



[Chinese Food on Christmas](#)

03:18

Added: 2 weeks ago
From: [BrandonHarrisWalker](#)
Views: 289,677



2419 ratings



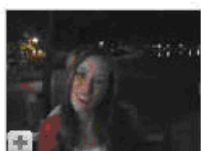
[Power Tool Drag Racing 4](#)

02:55

Added: 5 days ago
From: [slamer123](#)
Views: 543,127



968 ratings



[Nerdcore For Life Trailer](#)

04:09

Added: 1 week ago
From: [NerdcoreForLife](#)
Views: 503,157



1521 ratings



[Vader Dad](#)

00:45

Added: 5 days ago
From: [wwwBLACK20com](#)
Views: 1,001,437



4356 ratings



[The 12 Days of Christmas](#)

05:47

Added: 1 week ago
From: [Zipster08](#)
Views: 1,291,520



4852 ratings

A router can help protect your computer



By **Sandy Berger**, CompuKISS, www.compukiss.com, Sandy@compukiss.com

A few years ago, you had probably not heard the term “router”, unless you used one in your wood-working class in high school. Today, you hear much more about the word “router” when it is used in conjunction with computers and the Internet. In the computer world, a router is an important piece of equipment and one that is making its way into everyday terminology. So I would like to tell you a little about what a router is and what it can do for you.

A router is a hardware device that connects networks of two or more computers and forwards data across a network of computers. Devices like network printers can also be hooked up to a router. Routers that you might see in home and small business use are generally small rectangular or square devices about 6” to 8” in size. This type of router will have ports on the back where you can hook in computers, broadband modems, and other devices. A router has lights that indicate its status and the status of the connected devices. Wireless modems often have small antennas. Routers can usually sit on a desktop or the floor, but they can also be hung on a wall.

You can think of a router as a kind of traffic cop that stands on the corner and routes the traffic to their final destination. Just as a traffic cop knows which direction a car is coming from and which way it wants to go, a router knows what data comes from each of the computers, what data each computer has requested, and what data to return to each computer. Routers are the workhorses of the Internet. They make sure that your email gets to your intended recipient rather than one of the millions of other computers. Within a smaller network routers make sure that the data or the webpage that you request is returned to your computer and not the computer of your co-worker or other family member.

While routers have been used for years in the Internet and by businesses, the proliferation of home networks has brought the router into the home and into the realm of the average computer user. In a home, a router typically is used to share an Internet connection. It connects a home network of two or more computers with the network of your Internet Service Provider (ISP), giving each of your computers Internet connectivity. Your ISP issues you one address on the Internet, called an IP or Internet Protocol address. If you have multiple machines at home, a router lets you share that single IP address.

The router watches the traffic going out and waits for the response to the outgoing traffic. It then routes the incoming traffic to the proper computer within your home network. Since the router is watching all the traffic, it knows what information you have requested and only allows incoming traffic that is expected. So if your computer has requested a Web page, it will allow that Web page to come into your computer. Other traffic that has not been requested is tossed aside and not allowed to come in.

This ignoring of unexpected incoming traffic has an interesting side effect. It actually protects your computer from many malicious attacks from the outside. So the router, since it protects all the computers on your network, is considered a hardware firewall. In fact, a router plus the firewall that is built-into Windows will, in my opinion, give the average user all the protection that they need. That is, provided that they follow safe computing procedures, like not opening unexpected email attachments and running a good antivirus program.

For heavy duty computer users who want to make sure that their computers are completely protected, third party software firewalls, like those offered by Symantec, McAfee, and Zone Alarm, do offer the added safeguard of watching the traffic flowing in and out of each software program on your computer. However, these firewalls can slow down your computer. They often ask the computer user to permit or deny permission for programs that request Internet access. If you are just an average Joe, it can often be very difficult to determine if you should grant or deny that permission since the names of the files are often nebulous. I can’t tell you how many times I have been called to repair someone’s Internet connectivity only to find out that they had inadvertently told the firewall to deny Internet access to a program that can’t function without it.

So having a router not only lets you share an Internet connection, it also protects your computer without slowing it down. As a matter of fact, even if you only have one computer, you can still use a router between your broadband Internet connection and your computer to help protect your perimeter. With the price of small routers falling to under \$50, a router can be a wise investment for today’s computer user, even if they have to pay someone to come in and set it up for them.

Computer Crimes

Susan Ives, Alamo PC

Women's Place, by Linda Grant

Paperback, Fawcett, 1994, \$5.99, 248 pages

Private investigator Catherine Saylor and her partner, Jesse, are hired to go undercover in a software company where the women are being harassed. While Jesse handles the technical aspects, such as stolen passwords, Catherine insinuates herself into the company. The harassment escalates, a woman is murdered, and Catherine becomes the next target.

This is a compelling case study of sexual harassment in an industry where women were – and still are – in the mi-

nority. Interesting look at the software industry, just as corporations were starting to drift away from their mainframes and over to networked PCs. Good writing, tense plot, interesting characters. This is an excellent series. Recommended.

Disclosure, by Michael Crichton

Paperback, Random House, 1993, \$7.99, 496 pages

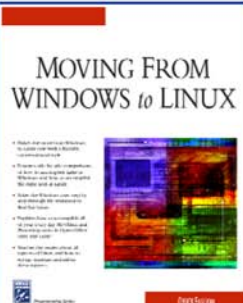
A happily married executive at a Seattle computer company is seduced by his new boss; when he declines, she claims he started it. He counters with a sexual harassment suit. The company, on the verge of a delicate merger, has a hidden agenda in try-

ing to resolve the case quickly (I won't give it away!)

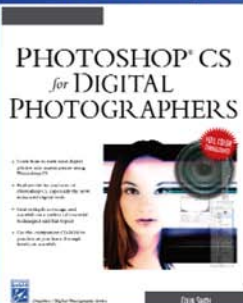
Crichton says in an afterward that it is based on a true story, and the role reversal, although disturbing in places, helps you think more deeply about sex and power in the workplace. Lots of high-tech details, especially virtual reality-enabled databases and the process of bringing a new product to market. The miniaturization foreshadowed in the plot – tiny cell phones and DVD players – has come to pass. Made into a 1994 movie starring Michael Douglas and Demi Moore. Recommended.

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 and Lockhill-Selma), (210) 344-7776, tries its darnest to keep the recommended books in stock.

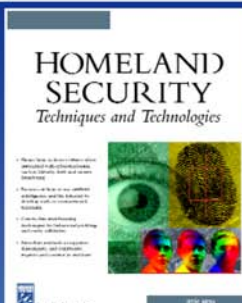
COMPUTER BOOKS THAT DELIVER



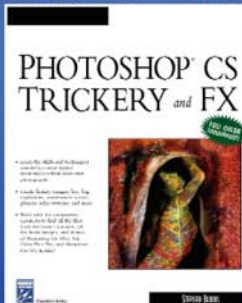
1-58450-280-0 \$44.95



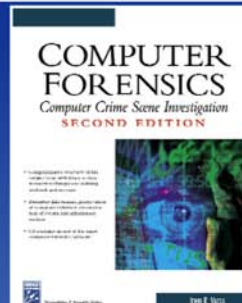
1-58450-321-1 \$39.95



1-58450-328-9 \$49.95



1-58450-297-5 \$39.95



1-58450-389-0 \$49.95



1-58450-387-4 \$41.95



20% OFF AT WWW.CHARLESRIVER.COM

ALSO AVAILABLE AT AMAZON, BARNES & NOBLE, BORDERS, AND OTHER FINE RETAILERS.



Hardware Review

Actiontec Megaplug

\$70

Manufactured by Actiontec

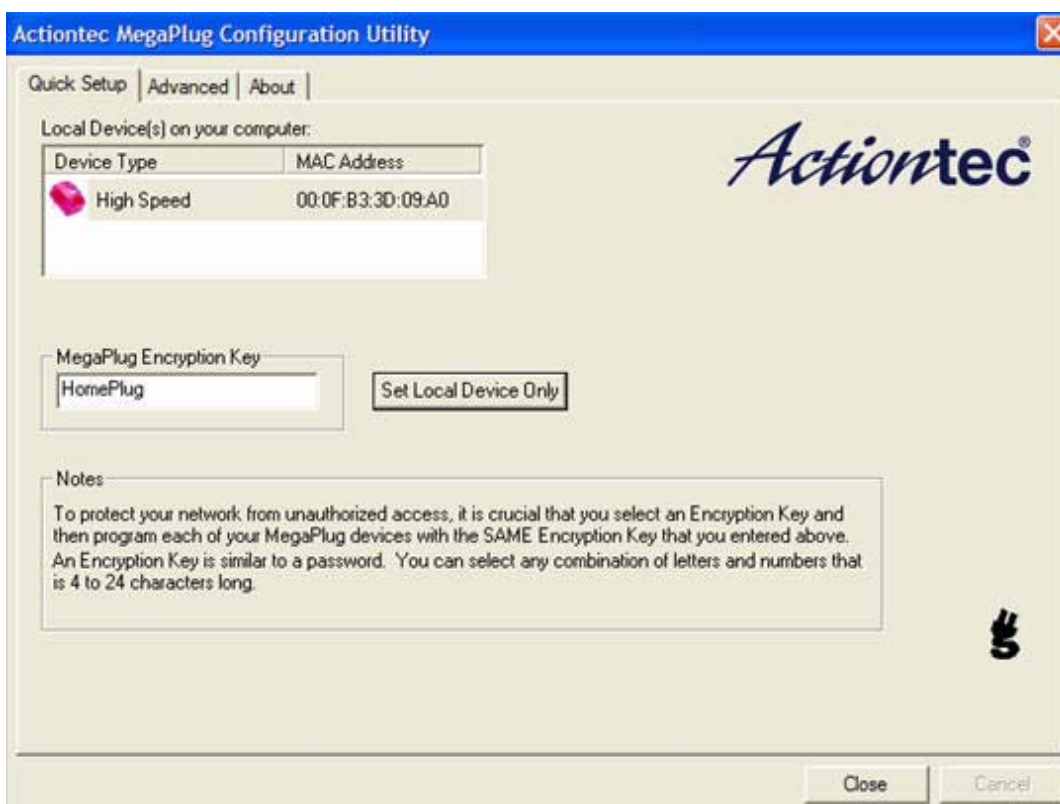
Reviewed by Terry Currier, President, WINNERS, www.windowsusers.org, tcurrier@aol.com



I do like the idea of networking through the power lines. Setting up an Ethernet network is not too difficult, but running the wires thought the house can be. Setting up a wireless network is also not too bad (the latest hardware setup makes it easy), and the signal can go through the walls. At least up to a certain degree, governed by how many walls and the distance. Ethernet is also the fastest network connection, but what if you can not just run a cable to where you may want to connect, or you get no wireless signal? Powerline networking is perfect for these situations.

The old maximum powerline speed was 14Mbps, the MegaPlug from Actiontec is now up to 85Mbps. Using the MegaPlug 4-Port Hub with the MegaPlug Ethernet Adapter makes it easy to extend your network wherever you need to connect. A USB hub extends the range of your USB ports and adds more ports. That is kind of what the MegaPlug 4-Port Hub does. You run one Ethernet cable to it from your router to it's WAN plug. This gives you more Ethernet ports, and allows you to use the already hidden electrical wires to connect to your network. This is especially great if you are constantly short one cable slot on your present router.

According to some reviews with a wireless network you can effectively connect up to about 150 feet. I don't have one myself. I always wonder what the neighbor can pickup even with firewalls. With a powerline network I don't have to worry about that. The signal can cross circuit breakers (wall plugs), but not circuit boxes. So no one outside of my home can steal information. If I do need to secured my computer Actiontec includes software for 56-bit DES Data Encryption.



The only software I had to install was for the computer using the wall plug connection. If a computer is hooked up to the MegaPlug Hub then it would have to install some software for it. Using the powerline network, I downloaded a file from the Internet and achieved a speed of 438Kps which is really good. Below is a comparison of copying a file:

Copy a 415Kb file from main computer

- With Ethernet connection to laptop took 56 seconds.
- With Powerline to laptop took 3 minutes 48 seconds.
- With Powerline to laptop through two surge protectors took 5 minutes 10 seconds.

They tell you not to use a surge protector with it, but with their error correcting software I had no problems. In fact, I connected it from one surge protector through another and it worked. However, it did slow it down.

Powerline networking says it is good up to 990 feet. I could not test it for that far, I didn't have enough cord. What I can say is that it worked perfectly in all of my electrical outlets. Plugging it into my garage outlet about 70 feet away, the connection still had no problems. I then plugged in a 100 foot power cord, and two 50 foot power cords. These three cords were good quality power cords. I still had one more 50 foot power cord of which the gauge was not a high quality; it was made for light duty work. It did still work though. It was fun stringing the cords down the street just to see how far I could get (my neighbor came out asking what I was doing). It took me four houses down and the connection was still pretty good. I could get email and do things on-line with no problems. However, testing the same file download with the lower quality power cord it would have taken 77 minutes to finish. Taking it off so I would still be 270 feet from the network, the same file took 22 minutes to download.

Conclusion

When you need to connect to a network and your wireless router is not enough, this is the perfect answer. More than that it's secure. Their support is very good, with a toll free number to call. Best price I found was at Newegg.com with the MegaPlug 4-Port Hub at \$70, and the wall plug adapter at \$47. www.actiontec.com

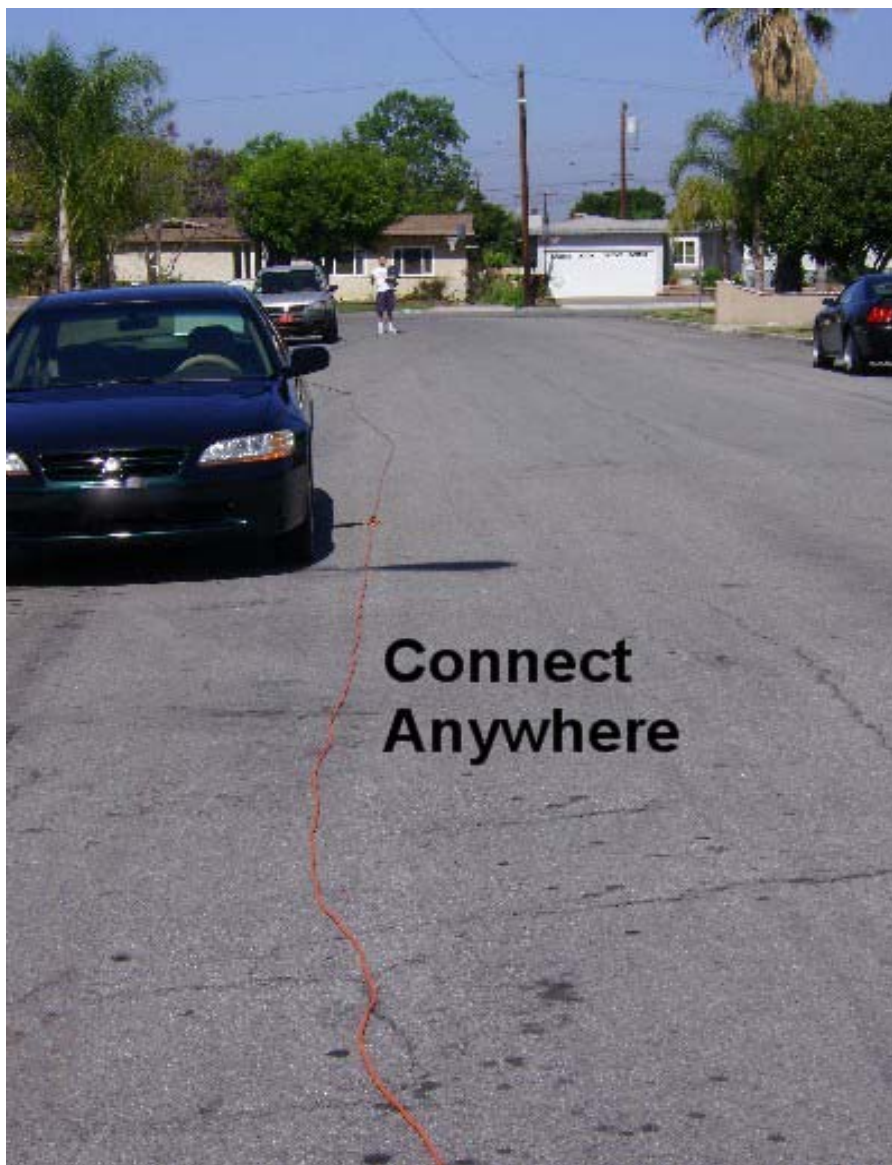
Minimum System Requirements

Router, Gateway, or other device with HomePlug capability

Microsoft Windows 98SE, Me, 2000 or XP

TCP/IP Network Protocol Installed

Internet Explorer 4.0+ or Netscape 4.0+



WaterWare

Home and Small Office
Computer (Win & Mac) Support



support@waterware.net
In business since 1983

- All Types of Computer Training
- Hardware & Software Installation
- Web Page Development
- Your Location / Your Schedule

210-219-2560

www.waterware.net
Durand C. Randy Waters

Software Review

CounterSpy V2

Published by Skype

Reviewed by Lou Torraca, President, The TUG, Hawaii, <http://www.the-tug.org/>,
Af06hi@gmail.com

CounterSpy V2 was completely rebuilt with a revolutionary new design. More powerful and effective than ever, CounterSpy's award-winning spyware detection and removal is now merged with our all-new VIPRE™ antimalware technology to create the industry's first hybrid antispyware engine.

- Heavy-duty antispyware protection treads lightly on system resources.
- Kernel-level active protection.
- Hybrid design combines antimalware technology with our award-winning spyware detection and removal.
- Deep-rooted malware is exterminated at boot time, before Windows loads.
- Incremental definition updates greatly reduce update downloading time.
- Vista compatible: Integrates seamlessly with the Vista Windows Security Center.

Sounds pretty good doesn't it? The description above from Sunbelt Software caught my eye and I decided to check it out. What follows is a list of the features, system requirements, some suggestions before your install and a blow by blow that recounts my download, install and use of CS. As always, I recommend you backup your files and/or set a restore point before you begin.

Features

CounterSpy contains the following key features:

- **System Scan** - The scanning engine checks your entire computer by using in-depth scans of your computer's hard drives, memory, process, registry and cookies. It uses a continually updated database of thousands of known spyware signatures to provide you with ongoing and accurate protection. You can scan for spyware manually or schedule times for CounterSpy to scan your computer.
- **Active Protection** - Active Protection guards your computer's privacy and personal information from hidden spyware threats before they can attack. Active Protection acts as a series of security checkpoints, comparing any unknown activity with the most up-to-date database of spyware threats at Sunbelt's Research Center - stopping new spyware in its tracks.
- **System Tools** - My PC Explorers let you explore and manage key elements of your system that are normally hidden and difficult to change. My PC Checkup helps secure your computer by updating your computer settings to recommended security levels. The History Cleaner is a privacy tool that removes all Internet History usage logs and 75 different activities. The Secure File Eraser is a powerful deletion tool that completely erases any files you want removed from your computer.
- **First Scan** - Before your computer completely boots up, CounterSpy deletes tough to remove or locked files and catches spyware before it has a chance to run on your computer.
- **VIPRE** - VIPRE is an antivirus technology that enables CounterSpy to further analyze each suspect item, using heuristic and detection definition files.

System Requirements

Make sure your computer meets one the following system requirements in order to run CounterSpy effectively:

Operating System Requirements:

- Windows 2000 Professional and Windows XP Professional/Home SP2, Vista
- Intel Pentium II processor (or compatible) at 133 MHz or higher with at least 128 MB of RAM
- 32 MB of available hard disk space
- Internet Explorer 5.0 or higher Recommended
- Intel Pentium III processor (or compatible) at 1Ghz or higher with 256 MB of RAM.

(I wouldn't recommend the minimum and as for the recommended, I'd go for at least 512 MB of RAM.)

Before Installing CS make sure to uninstall any other anti-spyware programs and restart your computer. Also, close all other Windows programs, including programs displayed in the Windows system tray. (I didn't uninstall my other antispyware as I don't have them scheduled to run, I do it manually.) One note-CS turns off Windows Defender, but you can turn it back on as I did, and didn't have any problem running it.



Computer Experts

Is your PC acting strange?
Wonder if it has a virus?
We've been fixing weird problems
since 1995. For PC or Mac
solutions, Call the experts...

Computer Experts
(210) 771-7075

Installing CS

I downloaded CS to my desktop, then did a scan with my AVG and clicked on it to open the installation wizard. After CS is installed and you have restarted your computer, double-click the icon on your desktop or click Start; then, select All Programs>Sunbelt Software>CounterSpy>CounterSpy. The Getting Started setup wizard opens. The wizard guides you through the initial steps needed to configure CS. After you complete the Wizard and open CounterSpy, the main page is displayed.

It provides general summary information like the last time you ran a scan, when the next scan is scheduled to run, important information, etc. Notice that it also contains buttons for you to access the three main features that are covered next—System Scan, Active Protection, and System Tools. You can also update your security risk definitions by clicking the link in the Important Information box. The updated version is displayed above the current status box along with the software version number. The key thing to note on this page is the red text next to Current System Status: Some Items Require Attention. This text alerts you to the status of key items in the list below; for example, if you have not run a scan, or if Active Protection is disabled.

System Scan

Click the System Scan button on the main page to open the System Scan page. Scanning is CounterSpy's main function. The System Scan page allows you to set scan options, perform scans, access the scanning schedule page, access the Manage Quarantine page, view scan details, and extend your subscription for updating security risk definitions. Take a note of the Scan Options listed on the left side of the System Scan page. You can select from three system scan options: Full System, Quick, and Custom. For the purposes of this review, you should use the default setting, a Full System scan, to scan your computer's processes, registry, drives, and folders.

To scan your computer

- Click Spyware Scan on the main page; then, set the scan options on the left side of the page. I recommend you select Full System scan.
- Click Scan Now. CounterSpy starts scanning your computer. After the scan is complete, the CounterSpy Spyware Scan Results summary window opens.
- Review the summarized information; then, click View Results. You go to the Spyware Scan results page.

Scan Results

After your computer is scanned, a scan results dialog box is displayed. Click OK, to open the Scan Results page. Review the items listed on the page; then, take actions against spyware threats. The dropdown lists under recommended actions provide you with several options. You have four options to choose from when managing the scan results: Ignore, Quarantine, Remove, and Always Ignore. To set a single action for all spyware threats, click the link: Set a single action for all spyware threats; then select the action from the Recommended Action drop-list.

Scheduling Scans

The Manage Schedule link on the System Scan page allows you to set the scanning schedule. The Spyware Scan page offers four main selections: Add a new schedule, view/edit a current schedule, enable/disable a current schedule, or delete a schedule.

When you click the Add New or View/Edit buttons, the schedule wizard opens. Use this wizard to set the dates and times as well as the scan options for the scheduled scan. The options below the Scheduled spyware scan drop-list change depending on the selection you make. Also, CounterSpy must be closed for the scheduled scan to run.

Working with Active Protection When software is installed, or when a change is made to your computer, an internet setting, or an application setting, Active Protection quickly reacts to analyze the change. CounterSpy decides to allow the change if it is not threatening, block the change if it is known spyware, or ask you to decide.

(Place Active Protection graphic here)

Click the Learn about Active protection monitors... link to open a page with detailed information about Active Protection Monitors. Active Protection helps protect your privacy and identity, as well as prevent unauthorized programs from taking control of your computer. It works much like a series of security checkpoints in your computer. It monitors system changes, application changes, and internet activity, watching for anything that could be potentially hazardous.



When Active Protection prompts you for action, a small Notice alert window is displayed in the bottom right corner of your computer screen that includes information concerning the change. This enables you to make an informed decision regarding the notice. You can quarantine the item, allow the action, or block the action. You also have the option of remembering the action you select and/or sending feedback to ThreatNet, a community that connects hundreds of thousands of CounterSpy endusers together so they can share and identify spyware risks. These popups will probably bother you, as they did me, at first, but I think they should show up less frequently as the program learns which are ok based on your checking the remembering box.

System Tools

CounterSpy contains four unique system tools to help you maintain a clean, smooth running computer: My PC Explorer, My PC Checkup, History Cleaner, and Secure File Eraser.

My PC Explorer

My PC Explorers enable you to explore and manage key elements of your system. Use them to view and modify settings on your computer that are normally hidden and difficult to change. My PC Explorers are powerful tools. Use them to find out what applications are currently connected to the internet, what programs automatically start when windows starts, to see and modify which applications are changing your Internet settings, and much more.

My PC Checkup

My PC Checkup helps tighten computer security. It updates your computer settings to recommended security levels. It thoroughly scans your computer for over 1000 different settings, suggests recommended changes, then, allows you to execute the recommended changes.

The first time you run My PC Checkup; there could be many recommended changes. Subsequent My PC Checkups will contain mostly suggested changes.

History Cleaner

The History Cleaner is a privacy tool that removes all Internet History usage logs and 75 different activity histories from the most popular windows and Internet applications. History Cleaner enables you to delete your Web browsing and search history, and Windows temporary folders and your search history. You can also erase the history stored by many popular applications, such as Windows Media Player and MSN Messenger.

Secure File Eraser

The Secure File Eraser is a powerful deletion tool that completely destroys files you want to remove from your computer. The Secure File Eraser completely removes all traces of selected documents, images, music, movies, or applications under 10MB in size.

Summary

As you can see, this program does a huge bunch of stuff in addition to just protecting your computer from spyware, malware, etc. The more you use it and review the help program, the more features you will find. To get your fully functional copy of CS, visit www.sunbeltsoftware.com.



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.



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

August 2007

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Class 4 of 6 *PRR* Internet & E-Mail 1 - 3 P.M.	2 Student's Practice Lab 9:00 A.M. - Noon (a/r) HGSI 6:30 - 8:30 P.M.	3 *PRR* Small Business Server 2003 8 - 10 A.M. Dr. is In 9:00 A.M. - Noon Class 1 of 5 *PRR* Photoshop Advanced 1 - 4:30 P.M. PC Alamode Magazine & PDF 7 - 9 P.M. (Call may be canceled)	4 *PRR* MOSE (Adv) 8:30 A.M. - Noon Class 5 of 6 *PRR* Windows XP 1 - 3 P.M. C++ 2:30 - 4:30 P.M.
5	6 Genealogy 7 - 9 P.M.	7 Class 1 of 4 *PRR* Introduction to Digital Photo Editing 9 A.M. - 11 A.M. BOD 6:30 P.M.	8 Power Internet 10 A.M. - Noon Class 5 of 6 *PRR* Internet & E-Mail 1 - 3 P.M. Home Page Jumpstart 5:30 - 7 P.M. <i>Canceled class To Be Announced when it starts again</i>	9 Student Practice Lab 9:00 A.M. - Noon	10 Dr. is In 9:00 A.M. - Noon Class 2 of 5 *PRR* Photoshop Advanced 1 - 4:30 P.M.	11 *PRR* MOSE (Adv) 8:30 A.M. - Noon Class 6 of 6 *PRR* Windows XP 1 - 3 P.M.
12	13 General Meeting @ Crossroads 7 - 9 P.M. Presenter: AIGT will discuss their new services: Dissidia, Tetris, and Game Theory	14 Class 2 of 4 *PRR* Introduction to Digital Photo Editing 9 A.M. - 11 A.M. Class 1 of 6 *PRR* Windows XP 1:30 - 3:30 P.M. Alamo Coders (DotNET - Web Development Technology) 7 - 9 P.M.	15 Class 1 of 6 *PRR* Introduction to Windows 10 A.M. - Noon Class 6 of 6 *PRR* Internet & E-Mail 1 - 3 P.M.	16 Student Practice Lab 9:00 A.M. - Noon	17 Dr. is In 9:00 A.M. - Noon Class 3 of 5 *PRR* Photoshop Advanced 1 - 4:30 P.M.	18 *PRR* MOSE (Adv) 8:30 A.M. - Noon C++ 2:30 - 4:30 P.M.
19	20	21 Class 3 of 4 *PRR* Introduction to Digital Photo Editing 9 A.M. - 11 A.M. Class 2 of 6 *PRR* Windows XP 1:30 - 3:30 P.M.	22 Class 2 of 6 *PRR* Introduction to Windows 10 A.M. - Noon (a/r) WordPerfect 7 - 9 P.M.	23 Student Practice Lab 9:00 A.M. - Noon	24 Dr. is In 9:00 A.M. - Noon Class 4 of 5 *PRR* Photoshop Advanced 1 - 4:30 P.M.	25 *PRR* MOSE (Adv) 8:30 A.M. - Noon Learning Center Desk Staff Meeting 1 - 3 P.M.
26	27 CorelDRAW X3 6 - 8 P.M.	28 Class 4 of 4 *PRR* Introduction to Digital Photo Editing 9 A.M. - 11 A.M. Class 3 of 6 *PRR* Windows XP 1:30 - 3:30 P.M.	29 Class 3 of 6 *PRR* Introduction to Windows 10 A.M. - Noon	30 Student Practice Lab 9:00 A.M. - Noon	31 Class 5 of 5 *PRR* Photoshop Advanced 1 - 4:30 P.M.	PRR = Pre-Registration Required

AlamoPC Organization



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 McAleander
<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: ★★ - ★★★

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: ★ - ★★★

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.

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.)

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 Dynamics CRM (Customer Relationship Manager) version 3.0 (www.Microsoft.com/CRM). The group will prepare for the three CRM certification exams. The study group is lead by Microsoft MVPs (Most Valuable Professional) in CRM, Larry Lentz. There are only 15 MVPs for CRM in the world. More information on the Microsoft MVP program can be found at www.Microsoft.com/MVP. The group has recently completed its study for the CRM 3.0 Applications exam and are now starting study for the CRM 3.0 Customization exam. The group 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 Small Business Server Special Interest Group, APCO SBS SIG, held its November meeting, Friday November 3rd, at the Alamo PC Learning Center in San Antonio, Texas. Naturally we started off with our traditional Taco Talk with tacos supplied by Albert Obar. Our main attraction was Peter Gallagher, Microsoft Small Business Server Support from the Las Colinas (DFW) regional office. Peter explained many things including how to configure e-mail enabled Public Folders to

save attachments to SharePoint document libraries. Apparently one has to do it a bit differently in SBS than in a non-SBS SharePoint server. He also explained how to set up a Site-to-Site VPN using ISA on SBS. Apparently that also needs a little extra TLC in SBS due to the ISA being on the Domain Controller. All in all, Peter spent about 2 hours imparting his vast knowledge on the group. Afterwards the group adjourned to Mamacitas Mexican restaurant for lunch where we continued to pelt poor Peter with questions. Peter has promised to come down again, hopefully in February.

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 ★ - ★★★

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 Alamo 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 Email will NOT be covered in this course.

Instructors: Andy Roca, Donna Dudley

When: Six sessions, Wed.; 10 a.m. to noon

Set 1) March 14, 21, 28, April 4, 11, 18

Set 2) May 16, 23, 30, June 6, 13, 20

Set 3) August 15, 22, 29, Sep 5, 12, 19

Set 4) October 10, 17, 24, 31, Nov 7, 14

OR

Instructors: Cary Hall, Jean Hall

When: Six sessions, Mon.; 10 a.m. to noon

March 12, 19, 26, April 2, 9, 16

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 days Tue. or Sat. Choose one set

Instructors: Audrey Henkin, Ed Henkin

When: 6 sessions, Tue. 1:30 to 3:30 p.m.

Set 1) March 13, 20, 27, April 3, 10, 17

Set 2) May 15, 22, 29, June 5, 12, 19

Set 3) August 14, 21, 28, Sep 4, 11, 18

Set 4) October 9, 16, 23, 30, Nov 6, 13

OR

Instructor: Don Robinson

When: 6 sessions, Sat. 1 to 3 p.m.

Set 1) March 31, Apr 7, 14, 21, 28, May 5

Set 2) May 26, June 2, 9, 16, 23, 30

Set 3) July 7, 14, 21, 28, Aug 4, 11

Set 4) Sep 15, 22, 29, Oct 6, 13, 20

Fees: Registration fee is \$10.00

This class will use the Easy Windows XP book, purchase of the book will be helpful and is recommended but is not required.

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 Alamode 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
stephentechnjr@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@yahoogroups.com>." Or, if you're reading the electronic version of the PC Alamode 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@yahoogroups.com>

Technical Rating: ★ - ★★ ★★

CoreIDRAW 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

<stephentechnjr@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. This class will include field trips to interesting local spots to learn photography techniques. Topics of discussion may include understanding your camera manual, camera optics, composition, tips, choosing the right camera, lighting, how to take night shots, silhouettes, portraits, action shots, and close ups.

Instructor: Joe Davis

When: Class meets once a week for 3 weeks - choose one set:

Set 1) Tuesdays, January 16, 23, 30 9 am to 11 am (some sessions may be longer)

Set 2) Tuesdays, July 10, 17, 24 9 am to 11 am (some sessions may be longer)

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

Where: Computer Learning Center

Technical Rating: ★ - ★★

Digital Photo Editing Classes \$

A series of Photo Editing Classes ranging from basic to advanced skills The Microsoft Digital Imaging 2006 software is not required for these classes but it would be helpful to have on your home computer. Students will need recordable CD's or Flash / Thumb drives to be able to save their class work.

Intro to Digital Photo Editing \$

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.

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

Instructor: Joe Davis

When: Class meets once a week for 4 weeks - choose one set:

Set 1) Tuesdays February 6, 13, 20, 27 9 am to 11 am

Set 2) Tuesdays August 7, 14, 21, 28 9 am to 11 am

Fees: registration fee \$10

Where: Learning Center

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

Technical Rating: ★ - ★★

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.

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

Instructor: Joe Davis

When: Class meets once a week for 4 weeks - choose one set:

Set 1) Tuesdays March 6, 13, 20, 27 9 am to 11 am

Set 2) Tuesdays September 4, 11, 18, 25 9 am to 11 am

Fees: registration fee \$10

Where: Learning Center

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

Technical Rating: ★ - ★★

Advanced Digital Photo Editing \$

This class is for the student who is very serious about digital editing. It involves the manipulation of photos whether they are new or old. We learn to use the tools to do everything from making greeting cards to photo refinishing.

Prerequisites: Students must have completed either the Introduction to Digital Photo Editing Class or the Digital Photo Editing Class or completed one of Joe Davis' prior Digital Photo Editing classes

Instructor: Joe Davis

When: Class meets once a week for 8 weeks - choose one set:

Set 1) Tuesdays April 3, 10, 17, 24 May 1, 8, 15, 22 9 am to 11 am

Set 2) Tuesdays October 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 November 6, 13, 20 9 am to 11 am

Fees: registration fee \$10

Where: Learning Center

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

Technical Rating: ★ - ★★

Open Source And Freeware Software

Students will learn how to download, install, configure and use Open Source and Freeware applications such as Mozilla Firefox, Open Office, AVG Free Antivirus and many others.

Instructor: Tod Bruning

TodBruning@Hotmail.com

When: The first four Tuesdays in May 6:30 to 8:30 pm

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 - \$

Photoshop CS2 Classes are open to any Alamo PC member who has Photoshop 7, CS, or CS2. Students must have one of these software programs on their home computers. All students are provided a CD with images we will use in the classes plus written lessons to go by and practice at home. Texts will be recommended for those who want to purchase their own as reference.

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. 2) Students need the Software for Photoshop 7 or Photoshop CS or Photoshop CS 2 on their home computers to join these graphics instruction classes.

Beginning Photoshop CS2:

This course includes Lessons on Tools and Palettes, Adobe Bridge, Resolution, Cropping, Tonal Range, Color Cast, Restoring Images, Colorizing, Cloning Layers, Channels, Extract, Gradients, Camera Raw, Vanishing Point, PDF Presentations. New Students need to attend free CS2 workshops on Thursdays (or a different day if scheduled) during the beginning session to receive extra help (lead by Jane Montgomery) from 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.

When: May - June; Thursdays May 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 June 7, 14, 21, 28; 1 to 4:30 pm

Tuition Fee: \$90 for new students \$50 for returning students

Intermediate Photoshop CS2:

Lessons on Typographic Designs, Paths and Shapes, Clipping Groups, Layer Sets, Adjustment Layers, Liquefy Filter, Actions Palette, Layer Styles, Adjustment Layers, Contact Sheets, Picture Package, Text Along Path, Creating Links

When: set 1) Fridays March 2, 9, 16, 23, 30; 1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

set 2) Fridays July 6, 13, 20, 27 and Thursday July 26; 1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Tuition Fee: \$25 for the course

Advanced Photoshop CS2

Lessons on Rollovers, Animations, Warp Tool, Image Adjustments, Creating Curled Edges, Lighting Effects Creating Patterns, Creating Pencil Sketches, Creating Posters and Post Cards

When: set 1) Thursdays April 5, 12, 19, 26 and Friday April 13; 1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

set 2) Fridays August 3, 10, 17, 24, 31; 1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Tuition Fee: \$25 for the course

Fancy Photoshop CS2 Class 1

Lessons on Custom Brushes, Stamping, Painting, Design Techniques, Creating background, Papers, Template Designs, Photomerge, Creating Kaleidoscopes, Hangovers, Frameups

When: Fridays September 7, 14, 21, 28 and Thursday Sep 27; 1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Tuition Fee: \$25 for the course

Photoshop Holiday Lessons

Holiday lessons using all of the procedures in CS2 (or possibly a Playing Cards class instead)

When: Fridays October 5, 12, 19, 26 and Thursday Oct 25; 1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Tuition Fee: \$25 for the course

Photoshop Calendar Class (taught by Jane Montgomery)

When: Fridays November 2, 9, 16, (skip the 23rd), 30; 1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Tuition Fee: \$25 for the course

Instructor: Beverly Bihn assisted by Jane Montgomery

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

Where: Learning Center

Technical Rating: ★★-★★★

eBay - Bid with Confidence: An Introduction to Internet Auctions

The four session class will allow you to buy and sell at Internet auctions effectively and with confidence using the eBay A system. The class will cover searching & browsing, registering, buying, selling, how to research your items to buy or sell, how to evaluate your prospective customers and sellers, basic html, digital photo hosting and much, much more! You will also actually use the system in a real-time mode and you can feel the adrenaline rush during the last few seconds of our auctions. Automobile and real estate are excluded.

Instructor: William Hudson
WilliamTheRebel@gmail.com

When: Four sessions, choose one set: (Preference will be given to those who have placed their name on the waiting list for this class)

Set 1) Tuesdays April 17, 24, May 1, 8; 7 to 9 pm

Set 2) Thursdays April 19, 26, May 3, 10; 7 to 9 pm

Where: Learning Center, Room 1

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

Technical Rating: ★

Microsoft Excel

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.

Prerequisites: Students should be familiar with operating a mouse, keyboard and Windows Operating

System. Knowledge of another program such as Microsoft Word is helpful.

When: Four sessions, choose one set
Set 1) Thurs May 3, 10, 17, 24; 7 to 9 pm
Set 2) Thurs June 7, 14, 21, 28; 7 to 9 pm

Where: Learning Center

Instructor: Cheng Yuan

Pre-registration: Yes, Call Learning Center at 210-736-0080

Technical Rating: ★ - ★★★

Home Page Jumpstart

This is a general introduction to developing your own Internet web page. It is not a course on HTML. Includes a 20+ page manual, training disk, and a walk through the development process.

Contact: Susan Ives

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

When: ONE session, the second Wed. of the month 7 to 9 pm. Class does not meet each month, please check the calendar or call the Computer Learning Center to confirm meeting dates 210-736-0080

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, 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
Set 1) March 28, Apr 4, 11, 18, 25, May 2
Set 2) May 16, 23, 30, Jun 6, 13, 20
Set 3) July 11, 18, 25, Aug 1, 8, 15
Set 4) Sep 12, 19, 26, Oct 3, 10, 17

Instructor: Don Robinson

Fees: Registration fee is \$10.00

Where: Learning Center

Pre-registration: YES call 210-736-0080

Technical Rating: ★

Power Point class

Microsoft's PowerPoint presentation program is the defacto standard for making presentations to a large audience. This class will show students how to create a PowerPoint presentation, how to add graphics and photos, business graphs, and sound clips. We will also learn how to use special transitions and animations in presenting your slide show to an audience.

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

Contact: Learning Center 736-0700

When: No class in July. Two sessions, 2nd and 3rd Wed. 7-9 pm of Odd numbered months

Instructor: Wade Forrester

Where: Learning Center

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

Technical Rating: ★ - ★★

Movie Maker

A fun class learning to use the Movie Maker program included with Windows XP, to create slide shows with voice, music, text, and special effects. It is a very simple program, yet will do fades, wipes, special effects, sound, and moving text, etc.

Contact: Joe Davis

When: Class meets once a week for 4 weeks - choose one set:

Set 1) Tuesdays June 5, 12, 19, 26 9 am to 11 a.m.

Set 2) Tuesdays November 27, Dec 4, 11, 18 9 am to 11 a.m.

Where: Learning Center

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

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

Technical Rating: ★ - ★★

Microsoft Word

Students will become familiar with and understand Word's basic functionality, menus, toolbars, icons and shortcut keys. Students will learn how to create, view, format, save and print a Word document. Also work with templates, multiple documents, insert files, objects and pictures and email documents.

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

When: 4 sessions per class

MS Word Basics: The first four Tuesdays in June 6:30 to 8:30 pm

MS Word Advanced: to be announced


Instructor: Tod Bruning

TodBruning@Hotmail.com

Where: Learning Center

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

Technical Rating ★ - ★★



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

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.

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: ★

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.

Advertisers Index

BJ Associates of San Antonio	45
Charles River Media	52
Computer Experts	55
Computer Fest	11
Cramer's Computer Services	24
David's Essential Domains	15
DV Nation	22
Global Travel Trends	16
Holiday Ink	34
Inksell	IFC
Laura B. Grover, E.A.	40
New Life Toner	IFC
SA PC Help	28
United Service Association for Health Care	49
Water Ware	54


Classified Ads

E-mail your ad to the Editor, PC Alamo at: editor@alamopc.org. Copy deadline is 10th of month preceeding publication. Classified ads are free to members of Alamo PC.

For Sale 3 Camera Bags - Universal Style 5" wide X 9" long X 6" deep, Sony DSC F828 case with shoulder strap Lowepro Micro 100 Trekker. All in good condition. Contact Bob Ramert rpramert@sbcglobal.net.

Wanted Classified ads from members of Alamo PC. It costs nothing and it's a good way to sell or buy any computer-related item.

Wanted Non-profit organization seeks donated working, or small repair cost, copier(s) . Latest model with low operating cost (toner & drum) preferred. Pickup of item will be arranged. Call 210-532-9122 to provide make, model, features available or additional information.



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

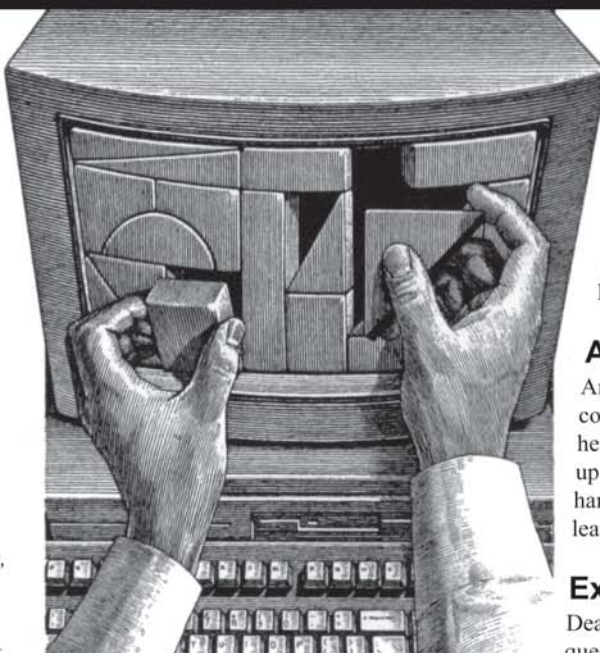
Every month you can attend a presentation meeting, which is open to our 2,500 members. Local and national companies provide the first glimpses of new products and discounts on existing products. There are also drawings for FREE hardware and software.

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.

