

THE NEWS MAGAZINE OF THE ALAMO PC ORGANIZATION

# PC Alamode

**MEDIA ISSUE**

[www.alamopc.org](http://www.alamopc.org)

November 2008

\$5.00

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**Hulu Offers Free TV and Movies over the Net**  
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**Saving pictures that show on your computer**  
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**Video Games - Not Just Entertainment**  
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# Alamo PC Organization

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



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

Registration number **210-736-0080**

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

[membership@alamopc.org](mailto: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 **210-561-2278**

**If you have questions about advertising call**

Joseph de Leon  
send e-mail to [editor@alamopc.org](mailto:editor@alamopc.org)

Please send change of address and other correspondence to:

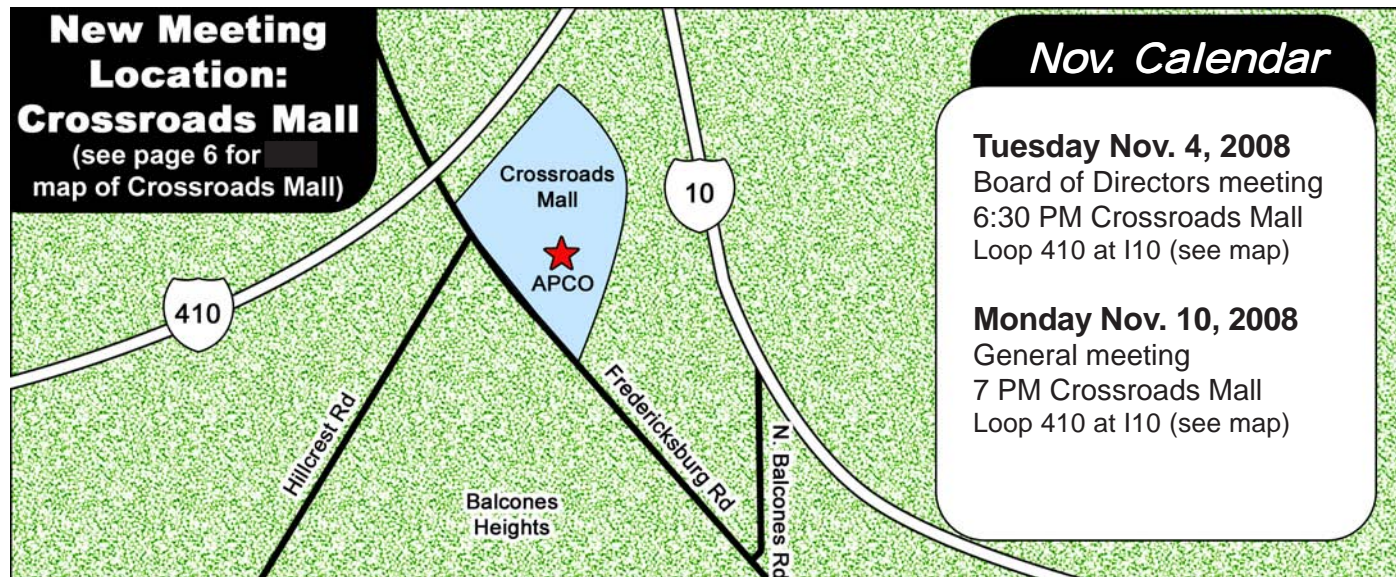
**Alamo PC Organization**  
**PO Box 65180**  
**San Antonio, TX 78265-5180**

## 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)



## Nov. Calendar

**Tuesday Nov. 4, 2008**  
Board of Directors meeting  
6:30 PM Crossroads Mall  
Loop 410 at I10 (see map)

**Monday Nov. 10, 2008**  
General meeting  
7 PM Crossroads Mall  
Loop 410 at I10 (see map)



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# PC Alamode

(501 (C) (3))

## Featured this month

The big DTV transition  
 The switch to digital TV  
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 Converting CD-based Music to Audio Files  
 Recording audio  
 iPod replacement  
 The Bad Guys Win for All the Wrong Reasons  
 Saving pictures that show on your computer  
 The Cartridge Family  
 Video Games - Not Just Entertainment Any More

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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 © 2008 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.

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

editor@alamopc.org

Joseph de Leon, Editor, PC Alamode  
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### Ad rates effective January 2005

Rate frequency.	1 x	3 x*	6x*	12 x*
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Half pg. (7 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> " w x 4 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> " h)	144	138	130	121
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Bus. card (3 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> " w x 2" h) **	43	41	39	37
*Consecutive months		**To be paid in advance		

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Computer Crimes  
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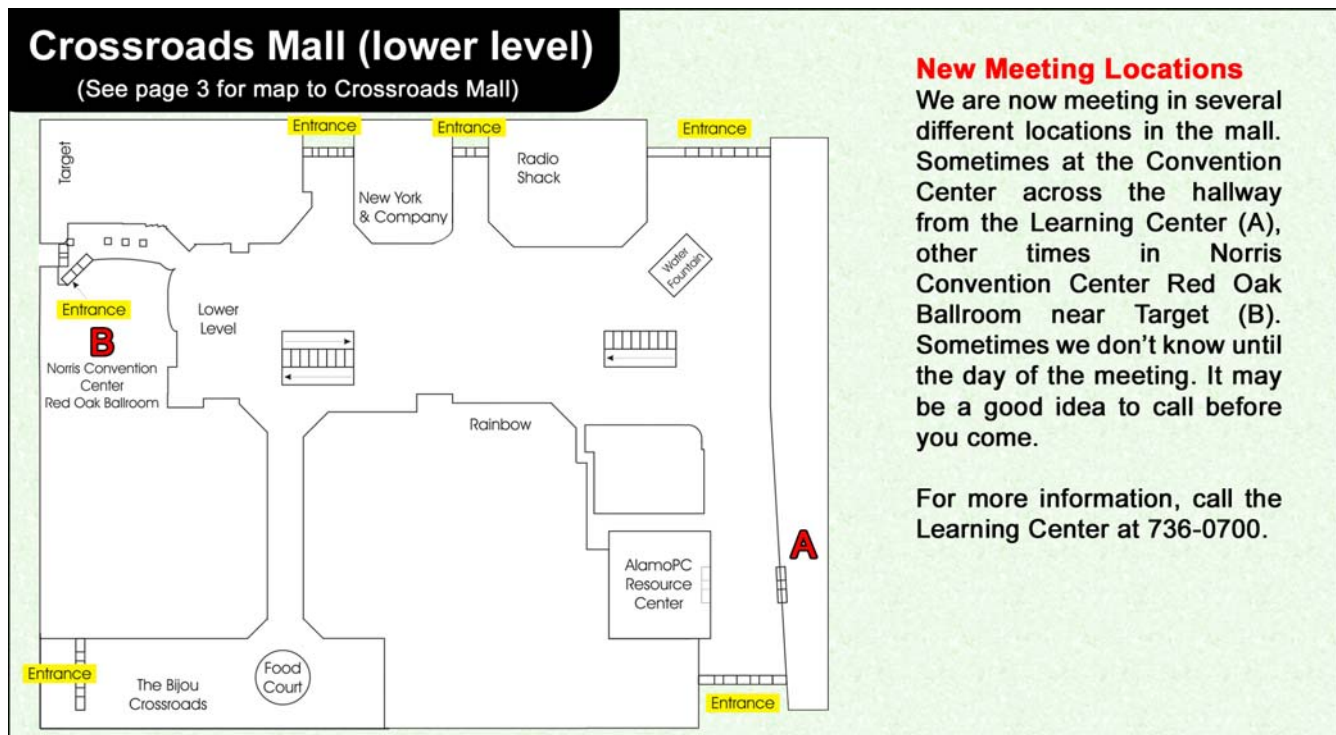
#### Learning Center, Crossroads Mall

736-0700

FAX 736-0032

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



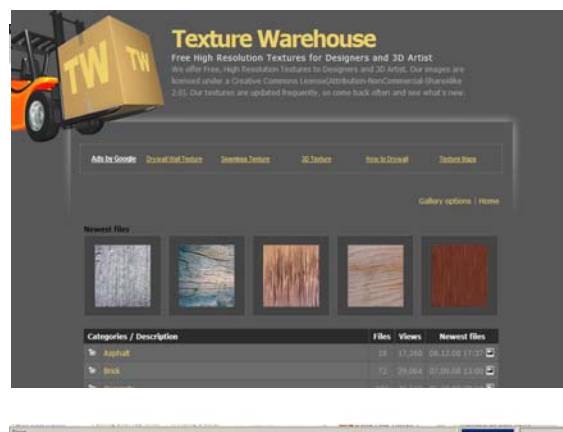
# PC Alamode Links List



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## Texture Warehouse

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

Free, high-resolution textures for designers and digital artist. These images are licensed under a creative commons license. The site is updated frequently, so check often to see what's new.

I have some news for you that is important! Please read the entire message.

Alamo PC Organization will be closing the Crossroads Mall Computer Learning Center by the end of December. This is NOT the entire organization, JUST the Learning Center. The reasons for closing are numerous including; falling membership, lack of students, volunteers, new members, and the high cost of maintaining this facility. (Rent, telephones, internet, insurance, and utilities just to name a few) An announcement regarding sales of equipment, furniture, etc. will be forthcoming in the next few weeks.

All Classes and Study Groups held at the Learning Center will cease to meet after November 15th, unless the individual Class or Group leaders make arrangements to continue elsewhere. Alamo PC is continuing to look at options to maintain a Learning Center on a smaller scale elsewhere, If you can help please contact [membership@alamopc.org](mailto:membership@alamopc.org)

The High Growth Stock Investing Study Group will continue to meet and private tutoring will still be available. The Dr Is In Computer Diagnostic Clinic will hold it's last session on Friday November 14th. Questions, comments or helpful suggestions regarding the closure may be referred to [membership@alamopc.org](mailto:membership@alamopc.org) You ask the desk staff to pass comments along.

It has been a real honor and pleasure to work with all of you and I hope Alamo PC will find some means to continue classes and to let you know soon if that is a possibility.

Thanks,

Linda Bianchi  
Director of Education, Alamo PC Organization

Recently, APCO sent out a message indicating December would probably the timeframe for closing the Learning Center.

The PC Alamode will continue in its electronic format as usual. It's unfortunate the club can no longer maintain the Learning Center, but I'm glad the Alamo PC Organization will continue to support the magazine.

If you have any suggestions or comments, please let us know!

**Joseph de Leon, Editor**  
<[editor@alamopc.org](mailto:editor@alamopc.org)>

# President's Message

Bill Klutz

## "November" - Daylight, Election, Veterans, Turkey, News

This month marks at least four things that should be of interest to many: 2nd - Daylight Saving Time Ends: Date range was expanded last year to help provide more daylight for individuals (Clock movement: Fall Back!); 4th - General Election Day (USA): Essentially ends, the process which has been ongoing for months - who wants to be in the political arena and/or occupying some public office. Until election day, we will continue to be bombarded with media messages to convince the American people that "I am the one you should vote for in the this election," especially true at the presidential level! The American people can only hope and pray that the correct choice is made by the people who voted; 11th - Veterans Day - A time to reflect and give honor to those who served/serve in our military forces, especially those who have seen the devastation of war. (As we consider this, keep in mind that those who served in WWII, and survived, are leaving us at the rate of about 1000 per day. Soon they will only be a memory, for those few who may choose to remember and/or think about WWII); 27th - Thanksgiving: no explanation should be necessary, but generally it stands for a time soon after this country was begun, when many wanted to thank those already on this new soil for helping make it possible. (We should "give thanks" everyday, especially to those who have helped us, even in some small way, as life is sometimes short. Don't be in the category often identified by "I wish I had ....")


The October BOD meetings had five members present. (One was still plagued by health issues.) A confirmation that the monthly General Meeting would have a Microsoft presenter was viewed by all. (The approximate 60 who were present seemed to enjoy the presentation, but it again affirmed that overall interest in the organization has waned. As I have previously stated, this fact is confirmed by the ever declining membership and not having had a full compliment of board members (one or more vacancy) for the past three years.

The October BOD meeting focused discussions on the financial status of the organization, the ever declining membership, declining class participation, major expenses, etc., and the future of the Alamo PC Organization. At the conclusion of the discussions, it was once again painfully obvious that the Learning Center, and its associated expenses, was the largest drain on funds. With that in mind, board members agreed: that the Learning Center location and "Dr. Is In" operation should continue to operate until classes are concluded this year (approximately mid November), and then work to terminate operations in the current location by December 31st. (Until then, a location with donated, or very low rent, should be sought to house the office area, and the associated requirements and equipment. If sufficient donated space can be obtained, an down scaled Learning Center may be anticipated); Currently, monthly General Meetings are to continue, but depending on how things develop in the coming months, a requirement for bi-monthly or quarterly meetings should be anticipated; The magazine (PC Alamode) will continue in its present form through the December 2008 issue. After that, depending on what can be worked out with the current editor (or a volunteer who may desire to take over that role), it is currently planned to continue the PC Alamode in a scaled down mode, and perhaps different format; Membership fees are being addressed as well as how best to be fair to current members. (If there is a clamoring for refunds from current members, then the organization may no longer be able to financially function and would suffer its demise very quickly.) These are some of the more pressing issues the board is attempting to address, along with numerous other smaller things that must also be considered and perhaps added to the "To Do" list.

To try and inform members, the following was conveyed to desk staff volunteers, class teachers, those attending the October General Meeting, and posted to the web site during the first half of October:

- Alamo PC Organization will be closing the Crossroads Mall Computer Learning Center by the end of December 2008. This is not the entire organization, just the Learning Center. The reasons for closing are numerous including; falling membership, lack of students, volunteers, new members, and the high cost of maintaining this facility.

- An announcement regarding sales of equipment, furniture, etc. will be forthcoming in the next few weeks. All Classes and Study Groups held at the Learning Center will cease to meet after November 15th, unless the individual Class or Group leaders make arrangements to continue elsewhere. The Dr Is In Computer Diagnostic Clinic will hold it's last session on Friday November 14th.



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

*Continued on page 9*



- Questions regarding the closure may be referred to [membership@alamopc.org](mailto:membership@alamopc.org)

The six individuals currently serving on the board have committed to continue through December. After that, there are no guarantees. It may be a continuation on a month-by-month basis, but with only six individuals currently willing to serve, and one vacant position for the past few years, the future of OUR organization appears to be in serious jeopardy.

It is now late in October, and I am hoping that we will have a presenter for the October General Meeting (have not been so informed). Since things can change, even at the last minute, check the website for the latest information about the General Meeting. On the day of the meeting, call the Learning Center for the most current information on location and presenter. I can only hope that David will have made the latest information available for the staff to pass along to those who may call.

Since almost all of our new members have been obtained from walk-in traffic at the Learning Center, that will be severely degraded after the end of this year. Unless we have members helping to obtain new members, at some point in time fund will no longer be available to allow the Alamo PC Organization to continue.

During the past few months, we have also suffered the loss of volunteers who have been diligent in giving a few hours each week to be a part of the Learning Center "Desk Staff." With a move to another location, we will still need volunteers to help with phone calls and questions that may arise.

We are still trying to improve member retention, but it has not been very successful - the member number total continues to slowly decline. If you do not choose to renew, send a comment briefly explaining as to "Why?" to [membership@alamopc.org](mailto:membership@alamopc.org), with a copy to me ([president@alamopc.org](mailto:president@alamopc.org), or privately to me - [wlklutzjr@juno.com](mailto: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 additional 'business decisions' will have to be made that will affect everyone." With our past trend of fewer members each month, it may be sooner than later! I hope it does not come to that, as it will be like the loss of a friend or family member, and will impact those in the community desiring to learn about computers or improve their computer skills.

## November Program

Bill Klutz

It is late October, and I have not been informed whether or not there will be a corporate level presenter for our November General Meeting. The meeting location (Norris Conference center, across from our Learning Center, or in our Learning Center) will be determined at the November board meeting (depending on the presenter identified). Since things can change at the last minute, check the Alamo PC web site ([www.alamopc.org](http://www.alamopc.org)) for information on the presenter and meeting location. BUT, on the meeting day please talk with one of the Learning Center desk personnel (210-736-0700/0080). Make plans now to come and bring some friends, as we hope to have an interesting presentation, and possibly "gifts."

## Volunteer of the Month

### Marge Fraley



## 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.

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### Location:

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

### Show Dates:

November 8, 2008  
December 13, 2008





# Funny Bytes

Ken Nash & Randy Glasbergen





# Installing Mac OS X 10.5

**Shane Hicks, (certified certifiable)**

Shane runs Windows Server 2008 on his iMac... so take that!  
You can e-mail him at [shane@vpwn.com](mailto:shane@vpwn.com).

Well, if you've read my byline recently, you've noticed that I'm back to using a Macintosh full-time. Actually, I'm using two. The first is a 20" 2.66GHz iMac with 4GB of RAM and a 320GB hard drive. The second is a 17" 2.6GHz MacBook Pro with 4GB of RAM and a 200GB hard drive. The MacBook Pro is my everyday machine, the one I use to write my articles.

I purchased the iMac from a client, so it'd already been configured with all of their user information and settings. So, the first thing I needed to do with the iMac was to perform a clean installation of Mac OS 10.5 using the iMac recovery DVDs that came with the system.

## The install started at 5:35PM

With Mac OS running, I inserted the first DVD into the drive and rebooted the system. My client had "upgraded" the iMac to the Bluetooth keyboard and mouse. I was surprised when the iMac realized this, and the first screen directed me to insert batteries into the mouse and power it on. After that, I selected English as my language and formatted the hard drive. The system informed me that I'd need to have Disc 2 of the installation set in order to complete installation, then proceeded to check the consistency of the media currently in the drive. This took a long time.

Once it finished, the computer reported 1 hour and 45 minutes left in the installation process. The system rebooted and prompted for Disc 2.

This process ended at 6:45PM and required another reboot.

At that point, the Mac reported that it was searching for keyboard and requested that I power it on. I located the power button on the upper corner of the keyboard and pressed it. The system then paired with keyboard.

The next screens allowed me to select my country and the language of my keyboard. Then, I was asked if I wanted to transfer any information from an existing Mac. I clicked past this, entered my Apple ID, and continued to registration.

I was asked if I would use the system at home, in business, or even in a home business. I chose to report a Home Business with an MIS/IT focus. Next, I entered my user name, a short name, and a password with a password hint.

The next step was a new one for me. Since the iMac has a built-in camera, it asked to take my picture to associate. I thought this was a cool feature.

I was then asked to sign-up for a trial of .Mac. I declined.

At that point, the installation was finished. It was 6:55PM.

The next thing I did was check for updates. The iMac located 11 items, taking approximately 655MB of space on the hard drive. I installed all the updates and rebooted again.

*Continued on page 14*


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**The time was 7:20PM.**

During the reboot, the make needed to make firmware updates to both the ATI Radeon graphics card and the Aluminum Bluetooth keyboard.

Another 45MB of new updates appeared once the OS reloaded.

The time was 7:35PM.

I rebooted again, set the Date/Time and Time Zone, and configured Airport (the wireless adapter built-in to the iMac) to connect to our home wireless network. At this point, the computer was up and ready to use.

The installation and initial configuration ended around 7:45PM, taking just slightly over two hours to complete.

Now, time to run Boot Camp and install Windows!

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## VISTA – Part VIII

### 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.

Vista's replacement will be Windows 7, which may be out on the streets in 2010. Unfortunately what will be included in Win7 is not clear at this time. In the meantime, WinVista installed properly on a machine with hardware powerful enough to support it, works quite well according to many users. Most of the problems people have with Vista come from: 1. Buggy hardware drivers that haven't been updated, 2. The junkware that most mainstream computer makers put on their machines sold at retail or online, and 3. Attempts to make Vista work with outdated peripherals and software. The recent release of Vista's first service pack, a roll-up of tweaks, security patches, and bug fixes, smoothed out a lot of the problems. Vista has been on the streets for sometime now and hardware developers have worked the kinks out of flawed drivers that were released early in Vista's life cycle.

Here are some thoughts before you purchase Vista. 1. Microsoft has just released its Vista Compatibility Center Web site. You can quickly see which of your peripherals will run under Vista. 2. Microsoft recommends 1 gigabyte of RAM for Vista. However, you should probably double that number. Down the road, you might want to do video or photo editing with Vista. 3. Vista is very heavy on graphics. Vista takes about 15GB of space on the hard drive. Most computers today come with a hard drive of 160GB or more. That size is more than enough, unless you're storing a lot of videos. 4. The other major component is the microprocessor. Microsoft recommends a 1 gigahertz chip. Virtually everything sold today exceeds that number.

5. If you need an easy way to view and manage your movies, music and photos, look no further than Media Center. There's a Media Center Edition of Windows XP. With Vista, Microsoft made Media Center a program. It is available with Vista Home Premium and Vista Ultimate. You must set up Media Center before using it. The process helps you configure your display and speakers for optimum results. It also scans your computer for media. After configuring Media Center, you're ready to watch movies or listen to music and peruse your photos. If your PC has a TV tuner card, Media Center can also record shows. A program guide helps you schedule recordings.

### Drivers

Drivers are an important issue with upgrades. Without new drivers, Vista may not know its way around your hardware. The computer maker likely will include new drivers with the upgrade kit. For example, this is true of Dell and HP. You can also check retailers' Web sites for Vista drivers. For peripherals like printers, check the manufacturers' Web sites. Before you upgrade, be sure to back up your files. The Vista installation process includes the option to transfer files and settings. It walks you through the process of backing up to CD, external hard drive or other storage. Unfortunately, installed programs are difficult to transfer. Usually, it's best to reinstall programs from the original discs or downloads. Generally, the upgrade kits do not come automatically. You must request yours using the retailer's site or a paper form. The deadline for the Express Upgrade program is March 31. An easy way to get started is Microsoft's Get Ready site. It links to many retailers' individual Express Upgrade pages.

### Health Report

Vista can run a complete and well-organized diagnostic report highlighting potential problems. In the Control Panel, click System and Maintenance Performance Information and Tools. In the Tasks list along the left, click Advanced tools. The last item on the resulting list is Generate a system health report.

### Magnifier

The magnifier is available in both WinXP and Windows Vista. It's usually accessed through the Start menu. In XP, it's Start, All Programs, Accessories, Accessibility, Magnifier. In Vista, it's Start, All Programs, Accessories, Ease of Access, Magnifier. The magnifier can be docked on any edge of the screen. The magnifier comes with its own settings window. This lets you customize the magnifier. It also has controls for turning it off. But this settings window can be minimized to your taskbar.

### Run command

Windows Vista does not have the Run Command found in WinXP. If you use the default Start menu in Vista, as opposed to the Classic Start menu, the Run command doesn't appear in this operating system. To change that situation, right-click the Start button and choose Properties. With the Start Menu tab active, now click the Customize button in the upper right. Next scroll through the list of options and check Run command and click OK twice. The Run command will appear in the lower-right corner of the Start menu.

*Continued on page 16*

## Starting Excel 2007 from the Vista Start Menu

You can use the Start Search box at the bottom of the Windows Vista Start menu to locate Excel on your computer and launch the program by clicking the Start button on the Windows taskbar.

When the Windows Start menu appears click the Start Search text box and type ex. When Microsoft Office Excel 2007 appears on your computer, click the Microsoft Office Excel 2007 option that

appears in the left Programs column on the Start menu. You can also launch Excel from the Vista Start menu by clicking Start, All Programs, Microsoft Office, Microsoft Office Excel 2007.

## System Information

To see what version of Vista is installed on your computer, to include make and model of your machine, the memory on your system, and other important data, open System Information. For this tip, click the Start button, select All Programs, click Accessories, System Tools, and then click System Information. All of the basics are listed in the System Summary section. You can click the plus (+) signs next to Hardware Resources, Components, and Software Environment to view detailed information about each expanded category.

## Tagged Files

Windows Vista allows you to easily tag files for improved organization and search. First, open Windows Explorer and find the file you want to tag. The Details Pane shows details associated with the file at the bottom of the window. If the Details Pane isn't turned on, turn it on by going to Organize > Layout > Details Pane. Click the Tags area of the Details Pane to add a tag. Type your tag, and be sure to click the Save button to save your changes. Once you tag a file, you can use Vista's instant search to find the file quickly.

## Task Manager

If your computer is running slowly with a little detective work, you can track down the cause and get it up and running full speed again. The Windows Task Manager offers a quick and easy way to check the load on your Central Processing Unit (CPU). To open it, press Ctrl, Alt, Del (in Vista, you must then click Start Task Manager). Next click the Performance tab to see graphs slowing CPU usage. If your processor consistently runs at more than 50% of capacity, you may have a real problem. To distinguish between your system's CPU usage for Windows and its CPU usage for any applications, select View, Show Kernel Times. Windows breaks the CPU usage graph into a red line for Windows and a green bar for applications. Click the Processes tab to view all your currently running processes, the micro-programs that make up your applications, and to display the CPU usage for each one under the CPU column. Reinstall any program that you discover is eating up processes unnecessarily or find and install a less processor hungry alternative. Task Manager's Performance tab provides a quick snapshot of your computer's Random Access Memory (RAM) use, too. In WinXP, if the Total Commit Charge regularly exceeds the Total Physical Memory, your system must frequently rely on the slower, hard drive, aka virtual memory or swap file. The greater this reliance, the slower your performance. (In Vista, click Resource Monitor and then the Memory bar near the bottom of the window to view your Commit Charge by application.). The most effective way to cure memory bottlenecks in your computer is by adding RAM. If you suspect that your hard drive is slowing down your computer, click, Start, Run (in Vista just Start), type perfmon, and the press Enter to open XP's System Monitor or Vista's Reliability and Performance Monitor. If your system is running XP but you don't see % Disk Time, right-click Counter near the bottom of the window and select Add Counters. Then choose PhysicalDisk under 'Performance object,' and select % Disk Time. If counter consistently runs higher than 40 to 50 percent, your drive may be hindering your computer's performance. If you're running Vista, you can check on your disk use in the Disk graph under Resource Overview.

## Thumb Drive

You can format thumb drives in FAT32. Both PC and Mac will be able to read it. Furthermore, most files you use will be readable in both systems. To format the drive in a PC, plug it in to a USB port and click Start, Computer in Windows Vista, or Start, My Computer in XP. The drive will show up in either. It may be marked as a drive, as removable storage or by its name. Right-click the drive, click Format. Under File System, select FAT32 and do a full format. You can also format the drive in a Mac. Again, insert it in a USB port. Go to Go, Applications, Utilities and open Disc Utility. On the left, select the thumb drive. Click Erase at the top of the right panel. In the Volume Format box, select MS-DOS File System. Also, choose a name and click the Erase button at the bottom right. To use the drive on a PC, insert it in a USB slot. To find the drive, click Start, Computer in Vista, or Start, My Computer in XP. You can also find it in Windows Explorer. To load files, drag and drop them on the drive. Using the drive on a Mac is even easier. Insert it in a USB slot. A white thumb drive icon will appear on the desktop. Find the files or folders you want to put on the drive. Drag and drop the files or folders on the icon. You will also want to move files from the drive. In the PC, go to Computer or My Computer and double-click the drive. The list of files and folders will be shown. Drag and drop them in their new home. For the Mac, find and open the folder where you will put the files. Double-click the white icon on the desktop. Drag and drop the files on the target folder. It is important that thumb drives be removed properly. On your personal computer, right-click the icon in the notification area. You may have to move the mouse over the icons. The correct icon will say Safely Remove Hardware. Follow the instructions to remove the drive. On the Apple, drag the icon to the trash can. It is then safe to remove. If you have multiple thumb drives, you probably have an organizational problem. You can fix it with Microsoft's USB Flash Drive Manager. If you want to carry your favorite programs with you, try MojoPac. It turns a thumb drive into a little computer.



## Getting a domain name

### Susan Ives, Alamo PC

Susan Ives is a former president of Alamo PC. She archives these columns on her Web site, <[www.susanives.com/](http://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!

**T**o have a home page on the Internet you need at least two things: a Web address and a computer to host your site. I covered the host computer back in June, so let's talk about your domain name. A domain name is a Web address. Mine is [susanives.com](http://susanives.com). How do you get a domain name? You buy it. More about that later.

The Internet actually uses IP addresses to route information. An IP might look like 123.45.678.9. Most people can't remember a random string of numbers, so they give it a nickname that is easier to recall. You don't go to the supermarket and buy *Lycopersicon esculentum*: you buy tomatoes. Same principle. This is called the DNS (Domain Name System).

The last two or three characters are called the TLD (Top Level Domain). The original TLD are .com (commercial), .org (an organization) and .net (having to do with the network.) These three domains are available to everyone: I'm a .com, even though I am just a person.

Others are reserved for specific types of organizations: .mil for the military, .edu for educational institutions and .gov for government. I can't be a .mil.

A few years ago seven new TLDs were added: .biz (small business); .name (a personal site, which uses the format [susan.ives.name](http://susan.ives.name)); .pro (professional, such as doctor and lawyer) and .info (an information resource) are unsponsored domains. Three others, .coop (co-ops), .aero (aerospace) and .museum, are sponsored by interest groups and closely monitored by governing councils. More are in the works.

Every country also has a two-character TLD. The United States is .us, Canada is .ca and Mexico is .mx. You can get a full list at [checkdomain.com](http://checkdomain.com). These are sometimes called ccTLDs, for country code. I could be [susanives.us](http://susanives.us) if I wanted to.

Some countries, like the United States, restrict registration to people and organizations that actually live in that country. Others have opened theirs up to anyone. Moldova, which has the TLD .md, has developed a tidy little business selling domain names to doctors – get it?

Generally, domain names must be between 3 and 63 characters in length. Some TLDs allow you to have two character domain names but most require at least three. Some are more restrictive (.cc domains can have no more than 45, for example) and some browsers and e-mail programs can only recognize 26 characters, even if your domain is longer. The character count does not include the TLD extension (.com, .net, etc.)

They can only contain letters (aAzz etc.), numbers (0123 etc.) and a dash (-). No spaces are allowed and you cannot start or end a domain with a dash.

It doesn't make any difference whether the letters are upper or lower case, although the convention is to make domains all lower case. It's less confusing.

Every domain name has to be unique: I have [susanives.com](http://susanives.com) and you can't have it. You could have [susanives.net](http://susanives.net), if it's available, though.

The bit you are working on here is called the second level domain. The beginning part – www – reflects the protocol. WWW means World Wide Web, or a Web site. When you register a domain you are registering all of the protocols – e-mail, ftp, etc.

Although some people complain that all the good domain names are taken, there are still plenty out there. If your creativity needs a spark, check out Name Boy. Enter in a word or two and it will come up with a few hundred possible available domain names. Another way to check if your preferred domain is available, use the search engine like the one at Network Solutions.

The main criteria for a domain name are that it's meaningful, memorable and easy to communicate, both in print and by word of mouth. Run it by some friends and colleagues to see what they think. Especially for a business, your domain name is as important as your company name, so spend some time developing a good one.



The .com TLD is well known -- .net and .org are also in the public conscious. In other countries, their own domains, such as .au for Australia or .uk for United Kingdom - are top-of-mind. In the United States, .us is less well known but still useable. I'd think twice before using one of the new domains. If you have a business, try to come up with a good .com name before you slide down the comfort scale to a .biz.

Domain names have been deregulated, so they are now cheap. I often use a site called GoDaddy which sells domains for \$8.95 a year. The suggested retail price is \$35 a year, but you can get them as cheaply as \$4.95.

It is easier, if you are new at this, to have your domain registered and set up your Web hosting at the same time through the same company. However, you can register your domain now through any of the registrars and then have it transferred to your host site when you are ready. Make sure to keep all the information you need to accomplish this when you originally set up the domain. Print out a copy and put it in a folder.

You can do all your ordering online, using a credit card or PayPal. You can register the domain for periods of 1 to 10 years. I recommend registering for at least two years. You will get a reminder two months before your domain expires that it is time to re-register.

Some people recommend registering several different variants of your domain while you are at it, to make sure no one else gets a free ride on your good name. If you are registering susanives.com, grab .net, .org and .us while you are at it, and maybe even get susan-ives in all its variations. This is more important for a business than for an individual. You can have all of the variants flip over to the main site. This is called domain forwarding; most registrars offer it for free.

If you want to learn more about domain names a good source is Domains Magazine. It's geared to people who buy domain names for resale but has a lot of good advice for the Lazy Webmaster as well.

## Computer Briefs With Pim Borman

# Needles and Haystacks

Finding the needle in a haystack is the proverbial example of an impossible task. Wrongly so. Spread the contents of the haystack out over a large area and get 1000 helpers to each check a small amount of hay. The needle will be found in less than no time. It is a basic example of parallel processing.

According to WIKIPEDIA (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SETI>), as far back as 1960 astronomers were speculating that any intelligent life forms present in the Universe might be detected by electromagnetic signals reaching us from space. Some astronomers started a Search for Extra-Terrestrial Intelligence (SETI) on a limited scale that over the years grew to include multiple radio-telescopes searching more and more radio bands for significant signals.

It soon became clear that looking for intelligent signals amongst the enormous volume of recorded data was even worse than finding a needle in a haystack. Parallel processing to the rescue! With an untold number of personal computers worldwide, capable of Internet access and sitting idle most of the time, an enormous amount of potential processing power was going untapped. The University of California at Berkeley (UCB), with sponsorship of The Planetary Society, started project SETI@home in 1999 to put many of those computers to work. They found many volunteers willing to download a small program on their computers, running in the background, to analyze small chunks of radio-telescope data for signs of intelligence and return the results. As of now there are some 3 million contributors, but nary a sign of intelligent life yet. In any case, the enormous amount of computer processing by this project far surpasses what the best supercomputer might be able to do, at least until quantum computers will have been perfected.

The success of SETI@home inspired many other volunteer computing projects supporting worthwhile scientific causes. According to The Economist (12-8-2007) these include design of drugs against AIDS, search for new prime numbers, climate modeling and many others. It requires some snappy programming skills to send small chunks of a large problem to thousands of computers, provide them with the means to perform a set task, return the results, and combine the results for final evaluation before sending out a new crop of queries. That task has been made easier with a dedicated program, BOINC (Berkeley Open Infrastructure for Network Computing), made available by UCB. Over 40 BOINC projects are in operation, including many life sciences, Help Conquer Cancer, and Discover Dengue Drugs.

Impressive as the computer power may be that is being exerted on these projects, there is still room for significant improvement. The short history of the PC not only includes a dramatic improvement in CPU processing speed, but also in auxiliary components that speed up graphics performance. In response to the extreme image rendition requirements of computer games, fast graphics cards have become available that use special processing chips and hardware to relieve the load on the Central Processing Unit. Rendering the millions of pixels that make up a screen image is perfectly suited to parallel processing, a task for which the graphics chips are optimized. Further adapting these chips to participate in general purpose programming may be a way to increase the parallel processing power of a desktop computer anywhere from 10- to 50-fold. NVIDIA and AMD, the largest graphics-card manufacturers, are working on it. Nvidia has already set up a product line for non-graphics applications and is developing a specialized programming language to go with it.

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## 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 wrote about Hewie Poplock and Mike Ungerman of Central Florida Computer Society working on the live meeting technique whereby members could join the meeting on line if they couldn't make it in person. I also gave you the URL to see the video of a meeting. They wanted everybody to know that it was not originally their intention to do this work, but Dave Dockery of Tampa Bay Computer Society <<http://www.tampa-bay.org>> convinced them to give it a try since he has been doing it successfully for some time. They are still trying to get the technique perfected and <<http://www.ustream.tv>> is just one of the URLs they use for a monthly or SIG meeting, but while it's a lot of work, it has its rewards. Check <<http://www.cfcs.org>> for meeting information.

#### \*Another Type Of Upgrade

As most of you know, I live in a hurricane prone area. In self-defense, I've been installing hurricane protection on my windows and doors that are not already hurricane code rated. Remembering the year we had those three hurricanes one after another pass right over our heads, I recalled the dungeon affect with the plywood on the windows. I decided that Lexan would be a better covering as it would let the light in, and I could also see outside with little problem. It's taken a while, and some dollars, but I'm happy with the results. Even my wife can easily install the panels in just a few minutes to be ready for a storm. It also helps lower the price on my insurance, although my "hip" roof lowered that the most. A hip roof is a roof slanted on all four sides, with no gable ends.

Updating the insulation in our attic has helped lower our power bill considerably, although choosing the right company to do that job took a lot of questions for the insulation companies before we chose the right one. We wanted one who would also find and seal other spots where air could leak from the living area into the attic, and they found several important places that needed to be sealed. Our A/C ductwork had already been serviced for leaks a few years ago. Our power bill is now much lower than last year. The next project was new windows with low-E glass filled with argon gas, making them more energy efficient. It won't be long until the power company will be paying us each month. <G> However, I am also looking into a small photovoltaic system in the hopes it will help with our effort. Finding reliable installation and purchase information has been difficult.

#### \*A Word of Caution:

I have not tried any of the items listed below so do your homework if you're interested.

#### \*Share Your Artistry With The World

Acoustica <<http://mixcraftlive.com>> has introduced a free service allowing anyone to upload their music, podcasts or sonic creations to share with the world. The site allows artists to create an account, upload artwork and publish up to 100 megabytes of music. Each artist account has a forum and a blog to help foster a community and fan database. Each song can be ranked and, if popular enough, can appear on the top song charts. Artists can pdate an event calendar with their 'gigs' so that their fans can ind out when the next performance is. The service is completely free and canbe used by anyone wishing to showcase their sonic creations recorded with Mixcraft.

Mixcraft is a multitrack music recording studio for Windows computers and has recently been awarded the Computer Music Value Award and the Keyboard Magazine Key Buy Award. It is seen as the Windows equivalent of Apple's Garage Band for price and functionality. MixcraftLive.com adds even more value to the software and is intended to showcase the musical skills and talents of artists recording with Mixcraft.

*Continued on page 20*

## 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>

Mixcraft now includes an additional 574 new music loops and over 300 new sound effects which are automatically downloaded on demand. These sounds are free to all Mixcraft customers. The loops include 13 exciting new Song Kits; Breakbeat, Crunk, Drum N Bass, Electro House, Film Score, House DJ, Jungle Drum N Bass, Progressive Euro, Southern Hip Hop, Synth House, Tribal House, Underground Hip Hop, and Urban Street Mix!

**\*Would You Believe Eyeball To Eyeball?** (I can't remember where I read this one.)

Eyeball Chat is a free product that you can use for talking on the phone and seeing each other at the same time; that is, if you are both using the product. At <http://www.eyeballchat.com>, you can download the software to accomplish all this. Of course, there is more to it than that, but at least this product is free for you to experiment with. Check out their Web site and you will find further information.

**\*Do You Love Games?**

MyRealGames has launched a free gaming portal that provides downloadable and online casual games. The portal <http://www.MyRealGames.com> is aimed to ensure a great pastime for audiences of all ages. Arcade, puzzles, shooters, dress-ups, sports and more are all free now. The portal also features free games, which were only available in "try-before-you-buy" versions before. MyRealGames.com can be recommended to those who are tired of advertisements in games because they don't have disturbances like annoying banners between levels. The only thing obligatory is a visit of the site after a user exits a game. The games are available in both 2D and 3D, and have three working languages.

With more than two hundred games, MyRealGames.com has something in stock for everybody. If you're an arcade game lover, don't forget to check out Space Bubbles. There are extraordinary power-ups and amazing bonuses to discover within every puzzle! Enjoy endless hours of bubble blasting action: <http://www.myrealgames.com/files/space-bubbles.exe>.

Exercise your billiard skills with the help of Billiard Masters or Cool 3D billiards, which you can play against computer or friends. The atmosphere of a comfortable place makes the game even better. Join billiard club at: <http://www.myrealgames.com/files/billiard-masters.exe>.

Try Nuclear Bike. Complete levels as fast as possible to achieve maximum score points. Speed up! Traffic police can't catch you here: [http://www.myrealgames.com/en/play\\_online\\_nuclearbike.html](http://www.myrealgames.com/en/play_online_nuclearbike.html)..

**\*Here Is Another Free Defrager, This One Has Rave Reviews!**

IObit is proud to announce the release of Smart Defrag. Smart Defrag was in development for 1 1/2 years, tested by over one million users, and is now available to all PC users for free. Most users cannot clearly know the current fragmentation status of their hard disk, and have no good control over performing the defragmentation. "We have taken care of PC users' needs in our free Smart Defrag" says Hugo Dong, president of IObit.

## Visit the Alamo PC Learning Center

### Can you help teach?

We're looking for someone to teach one or more of the following classes:

**Digital Camera; Photo Editing; Movie Maker; Microsoft Digital Image 2006**

Please call (210) 736-0700

### 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.



Smart Defrag features include:

- An "install it and forget it" feature that works automatically and quietly in the background of the computer.
- Besides defragmenting, it also places the frequently used data into the fastest area of the disk.
- Smart Defrag has the industry's leading defragmenting engine, specially designed for modern, large hard drives.
- Free for home, organization, and business and 100% safe from any spyware, adware and virus.
- Designed for Windows 2000, XP, Vista and future Windows 7.

Smart Defrag is now available in English and other languages. More information and free downloads are available at <<http://www.iobit.com/iobitsmartdefrag.html>>.

#### **\*Everybody Talks About It, But Here is More Than Talk**

Other than spam, a frequently discussed subject is the privacy of your computer. There is a place on the Web where there is help. Check into <<http://www.saltmeadow.com/privacy>> where you will find seven tools for working on the privacy of your computer. Some of them you may already know about them, and others you may not. Best of all, it is a collection of all freeware for your use.

**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

## PC 101

## Microsoft Works - Task Launcher

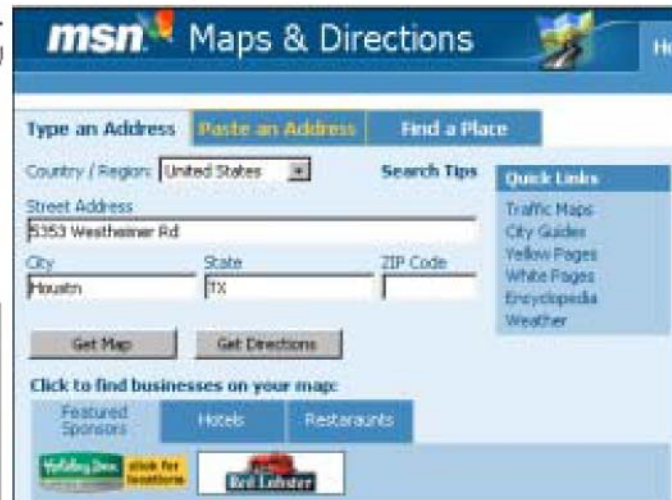
## Ron Ingraham, Space Coast PC User Group

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>

When I began this series on Works, I tried to address those functions you're most likely to use. In doing so, I

skipped over some areas which may be of equal value to you.

The first option in the Task Launcher, a portion of which is seen at the left, is E-mail and Internet. In the right column you can see the list of things you can do on the Web. Clicking on any of these while connected to the Internet will open the related program. For example, clicking on the first option, Address finder, and then Start this task, opens the MSN Maps and Directions Program. You see there are three tabs from



which to select. If you have a source from which to paste an address, use that tab. Otherwise, just type the



Continued on page 23



desired address into the space provided on the first tab. I typed in a hotel address in Houston where my son hid out from Rita. Very quickly the map appeared, pin-pointing the location as just west of I-610 and the Galleria. Of course, being a Microsoft program, you are also offered (for a fee) a more extensive program, Streets and Trips 2005 with GPS locator.

As with Map Quest you may request driving directions. These are usually good enough that you can dispense with the maps and just follow the directions.

The third tab, Find a Place, allows you to locate a place in Australia, Brazil, Europe, in a World atlas, or North America, the default.

Business Finder Works in the same way as Address finder.



#### **Car rental on the Web**

Use this handy wizard to reserve a car. Choose your pick-up and drop-off points, rental dates, car size, and accessories, and request special rates.

 [Start this task](#)

Car Rental on the Web takes you to Expedia.com with a complete selection of choices as seen in the graphic above. Expedia also provides the next service, Currency Conversion. Pick any currency of interest, convert to or from American dollars.

Concerned about your growing debt situation? Money Central.msn.com will help you find out how much you're paying each month and whether your ratio of debt to income is acceptable or too high.



#### **Encarta Online, search on the Web**

Get quick, easy access to information on a fascinating variety of topics. Search more than 16,000 articles and links to World Wide Web resources.

 [Start this task](#)

Need some quick facts? Don't have your encyclopedia handy? Just click on this option to have immediate access to the MSN Encarta encyclopedia online. Type anything you wish in the search box. If Encarta doesn't find what you're looking for internally, it will suggest other pertinent sites.

Getting into Genealogy? Beginner or old hand, the MSN Groups site is worth a look. There is a listing of 3336 groups, from all over the world. One nifty feature is the option to change the display language. I haven't quite figured out how it works, but gather that some

groups are displayed in their native language. You may be able to change that display to English.



#### **Family history on the Web**

Discover facts about your ancestry, get genealogy advice, and chat with other researchers.

 [Start this task](#)

Mixed in among the 44 or so choices here you can find links to your email client or web browser. I must say that it did a much better job going to Outlook Express than to Mozilla Thunderbird, even though both choices are offered. Perhaps if I had fewer messages stored in my inbox it would have worked better. It quit on June 17th with a total of 1148 messages. I know, I should clean it out more often!

It's difficult to describe all of the options available to you from just this one list. In addition to the few I've mentioned, you can check on financial things, such as Rent or Buy Analysis, Vehicle Payment Calculators, various Stock Market sites, Tuition Savings Calculators, and a Retirement Expense Calculator.

One that I found of particular interest is the Place finder on the Web (World Wide).



#### **Place finder on the Web (World Wide)**

Find any place anywhere in the world. Just enter a geographic name or point of interest to get a map.

 [Start this task](#)

MSN Maps, you may type in the name of any place in the world, and they will pop up a map. I have a cousin who lives in northeastern England. I knew the name of the town was Middlesbrough. I typed in that alone and immediately had a detailed map of the vicinity. This could be of great value to genealogists when seeking an accurate location of your ancestral roots.

Those of you who are into digital photography can find a number of useful sites, whether you're looking for picture frames, photo gifts (such as T-shirts with personalized photos on them), photo greeting cards, or tips on improving your skills.

As always, the best way to learn these things is to jump in and give them a try. I've only scratched the surface on this one small area included in your Works program. We'll keep looking at it in future articles. I hope I'm not boring you with too much detail, but believe many of you find this approach helpful.





## Gadgetaholics

Computer Hysteria

### Berry Phillips, Computer Club of Oklahoma City

Barry is a member of the CCOKC and a regular writer for the CCOKC website and the eMonitor

One stormy night, a long, long time ago, at the witching hour, I was reading "scifi" being a bibliophile at one of my favorite haunts that seemed to be a kind of nocturnal magnet. At the long table next to me, a strange conversation was going on that I could not cipher. I glanced out of the corner of my eye to see if they might be aliens but there were no antennas or a third eye on their foreheads. However, they could be humanoids! I then confessed to the strange group I had been listening and understood nothing that they were talking about and was curious about their group. (I did not ask them whether they were aliens wanting to be polite.)

They explained they were "BBSers" who were humans of a strange tribe called "Geeks" who seemed to enjoy the fact that I could not understand their conversation with a strange kind of hilarity. Well I was relieved they were not aliens but simply strange human "Geeks" and perhaps disappointed at the same time but still curious. I had been warned many times in my life that curiosity killed the cat, but I always reminded those skeptics that cats have nine lives!

The female Geek explained that they were all "SysOps" (System Operators) running local Bulletin Board Systems ("BBSes") in our area. While they were friendly to me, I sensed some social discomfort since they apparently preferred to interact with machines (computers) more than people unless of course they were members of their "Geek" tribe or the same breed of cat whichever you prefer. I further categorized them in my mind as "machine people."

Further, the female "Geek" said that I was a natural for computers since I was a reader. I then became paranoid thinking that she might be a humanoid using some kind of "Vulcan mind link" to know that I was a bibliophile. She further explained that she had seen me reading several times previously at our haunt during their various "Geek" tribal meetings. She then seemed to be determined to take me on as a "Geek"

transformation project especially when I explained that I was not technical and knew then nothing about computers and was from a liberal arts background. I soon learned that "Geeks" love challenges!

Let the learning begin! The Bulletin Board System (BBS) was created from software that allowed remote users to connect via an analog phone line run by a "SysOP" to perform various social and recreational tasks and communicate with others on the system. Remote users could perform functions like downloading software ("Shareware" was very popular.) and data, uploading data, listening to music, playing games, reading news, and exchanging messages with other users.

From the early 1980s to the mid 1990s, "BBSes" were run as a hobby free of charge by the "SysOps" while other BBSes charged their users a subscription fee for access. Internet Service Providers often had BBSes as part of their service to subscribers. The BBS was a local phenomenon

and in many ways was a precursor to the World Wide Web and the Internet.

To avoid costly long distance charges, many "BBSers" were from the same area and often would meet socially but also were a bit reluctant to leave their computers for very long, lest they experience acute machine withdrawal.

The BBS survives today as a nostalgic hobby and via telnet offers free email accounts, web interfaces, ftp file downloads, irc chat, and all the protocols on the Internet. The website [www.textfiles.com](http://www.textfiles.com) has a collection of historical data involving the history of the BBS.

As we celebrate Thanksgiving, perhaps we should take a moment to give thanks for the many humans past and present (not aliens) that work directly and indirectly in the Information Technology Industry that are responsible for the evolution of the computer revolution that has so transformed our human lives.

I have learned that "Geeks" really have inherited the Earth, and Geeks are NOT TURKEYS!



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## Two problems solved

**Elizabeth B. Wright , Computer Club of Oklahoma City**

Elizabeth is a member of the CCOKC and a regular writer for the eMonitor

**F**ran Crane helped me with the antivirus and firewall problem. For now I have switched to AVG for antivirus, and have purchased Kerio firewall from Sunbelt Systems. Although it hasn't yet been installed, it will be in the near future.

And as for the conflict between the external WD hard drive and my HP DVD burner, well it's funny what a little memory jogging can do. It finally dawned on me to look at the back of the DVD device because something was reminding me that it is both Firewire and USB cable ready. Yes, it is, yes I removed the USB connection and replaced it with the Firewire, and yes, now both of my devices are up and running at the same time. I now can transfer files from the WD to my DVD burner. Obviously I still don't know what was causing the USB conflict, but who cares? If I need to know that in the future, I will pursue it at that time.

The computer, like the wheel, has changed our lives beyond our wildest dreams. Many of us have no experience in accounting, not much in writing and virtually none in the arts. I'm not talking about all you superpeople out there. Just those of us who can't balance a checkbook, can just write a decent letter, can manage a simple arts and crafts project and can barely manage a point and shoot camera. But read on.

Most of us aren't any smarter about our money because we can use computer programs to help us prepare tax returns, but I venture to say perhaps we do understand the worksheets and forms a little better if we input all the information ourselves into tax software. It is certainly true in my case. In the past, my husband did all of our tax preparation the old fashioned way, filling out the forms by hand and doing the math.

I hid my head in the sand during this process. With the advent of tax preparation programs such as TurboTax and TaxCut, some of us are getting more familiar with the process of filing our returns. In our case, my husband collects all of our pertinent material, then I operate the computer as he reads the information to me. What this has done is teach me what documents need to be in our possession in order to accurately file our tax return. Until we started doing it this way, I didn't know a 1099 from a W-2. Also, I am what you might call, mathematically challenged and just the papers alone with numbers on them have always frightened me.

But I no longer have that fear. Even if I don't know much about math, at least I know the significance of the papers we receive from various sources and what the numbers on them relate to, income tax wise. Although I don't particularly enjoy the process, at least this time of the year doesn't cause as much stress as in the past.

As for writing, the computer has made it so much easier to develop and organize our thoughts. Making changes is a snap and we can even make our "stuff" look good. We can keep multiple copies of our creations as well as easily print them for distribution. Some people still fail to utilize the spellcheck part of their word processors, but for the most part, it has become easier to make legible and understandable documents to share with others. Naturally our penmanship has suffered, but mine was never very good anyway.

Advancing our skills in the arts is a bit trickier. We can learn more about many forms of art by accessing the internet. We can find information about increasing our abilities in any art form if that is our aim. We most certainly can find all kinds of help with art appreciation, as well as learning more about the world at large. And if we aren't learning more about the science of photography since the introduction of digital cameras, then we just aren't trying.

Ansel Adams and others made photography into art, so the two areas seem to overlap now. With so many wonderful digital imaging programs available, it is a shame if anyone fails to take advantage of what they have to offer. Merely making so-so photos look better is an achievement, but turning a picture into a personal masterpiece is a real thrill. And most anyone can do it.

### 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.

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## Access: Performing a find function

**James D. Duncan , Computer Club of Oklahoma City**

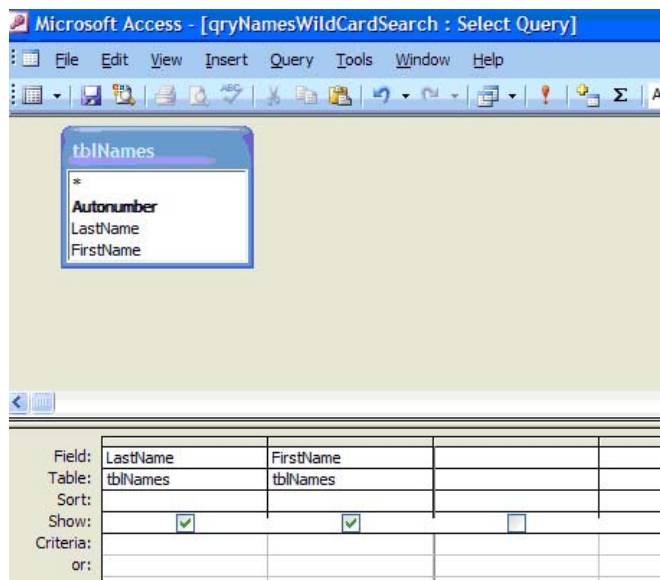
James is a member of the CCOKC and an expert in Access and Excel.

Queries in Access are usually looking for specific values or ranges. I have currently been working on searching for items that contain so set or subset of values. By using wild cards we can find a set of characters contained within a string.

For example, let's put some names in a table.

tblNames	
LastName	FirstName
Smith	Ralph
Best	Katy
Best	Jessie
Woodward	Larry
Ford	Robert
Dallas	Robin

Now, Create a quick query using this table.

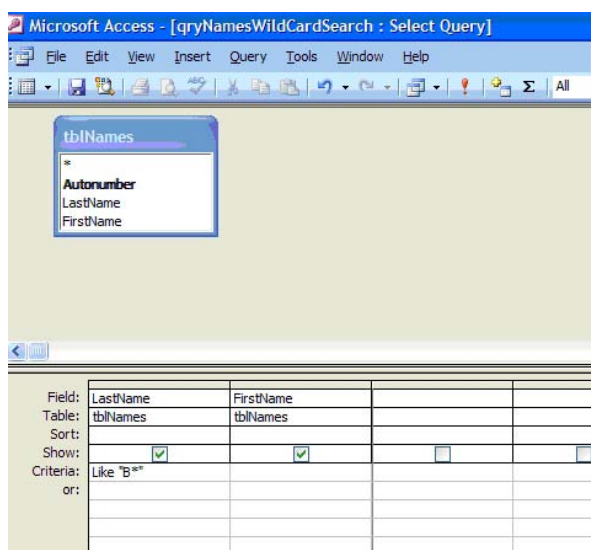


All we have done here is drag the Lastname and FirstName field to the grid. If we run this we will get a list of the last names and first names.

qryNamesWildCardSearch	
LastName	FirstName
Smith	Ralph
Best	Katy
Best	Jessie
Woodward	Larry
Ford	Robert
Dallas	Robin



But what if we wanted all the LastNames that began with “B”. That is easy too. In the criteria of the LastName column enter like b and press enter. Access will format the criteria to read “Like “b\*”. The asterisk after the b is called a wildcard. This statement tell the field to display all the items that begin with b and ignore any other characters after that.



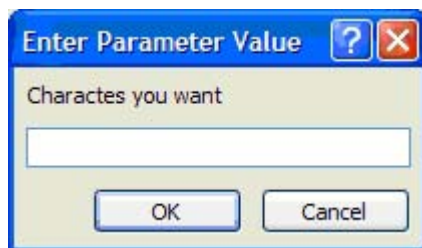
Run the data sheet view and we get a list of the Last names that begin with b.

Now if we wanted to search the LastName field for the characters “es” we just modify our search criteria to have the wild card “\*” in the front and one in the back. The criteria would be “like \*es\*”.

qryNamesWildCardSearch	
LastName	FirstName
Best	Katy
Best	Jessie

In this case we get the same result. You will get a different set with real data. This example is fine for a couple of runs. Now if you want to get prompted for the characters you are looking at let’s change the criteria just a little.

Enter Like "\*" & [Characters you want] & "\*" into the criteria of LastName. Now you get a prompt and do not have to change the criteria for what you want. The prompt looks like this.



Enter the letter s and you get every LastName with an s in it.

Look in help for wild card and you will get a list of all the possibilities for searching using this method. Then just go WILD and create away. This then is incorporated into a form and used to populate a report and you have some real power and nice reports.

Get out there and put this to practice. Generate some errors, search the help for that little clue that corrects your code and makes your program run as you expected it too. This is United Way Fund drive time. I volunteer my time to a United Way Fund agency. They are doing exceptional work for the community. I feel humble to do a very minute part to give back to the community. When you help another you can hold your head up a little higher. You can affect how the community gets shaped.

qryNamesWildCardSearch	
LastName	FirstName
Smith	Ralph
Best	Katy
Best	Jessie
Dallas	Robin



# Home-brewed ergonomics

## John R. Chait D.C. , Sarasota PC User Group

Dr. Chait is a practicing chiropractor in Sarasota and is the SPCUG ergonomic consultant. As an avid computer enthusiast, Dr. Chait knows first hand how important proper interaction between the user and their PC can be. He stresses this in his ergonomic tips column and his lectures. <drchait@hotmail.com> For more ergonomic tips, visit <<http://chaitchiropractic.com/links/Ergonomics/>>

Millions of Americans are suffering from back and neck pain for which they can't find a specific cause. Most of these cases are due to "repetitive stress" from occupational or personal equipment overuse.

The human body was not meant to stay in one constrained position for prolonged periods of time. It requires regular motion and activity for normal circulation and to keep muscles relaxed and loose.

The result of prolonged static postural stress and strain is tired, fatigued muscles and eventually joint, nerve, or disc injury. The pain may start suddenly or gradually, but the problem was inevitably "brewing" for months, years or even decades! Your body is very resilient and a symptom can be the last thing to show up.

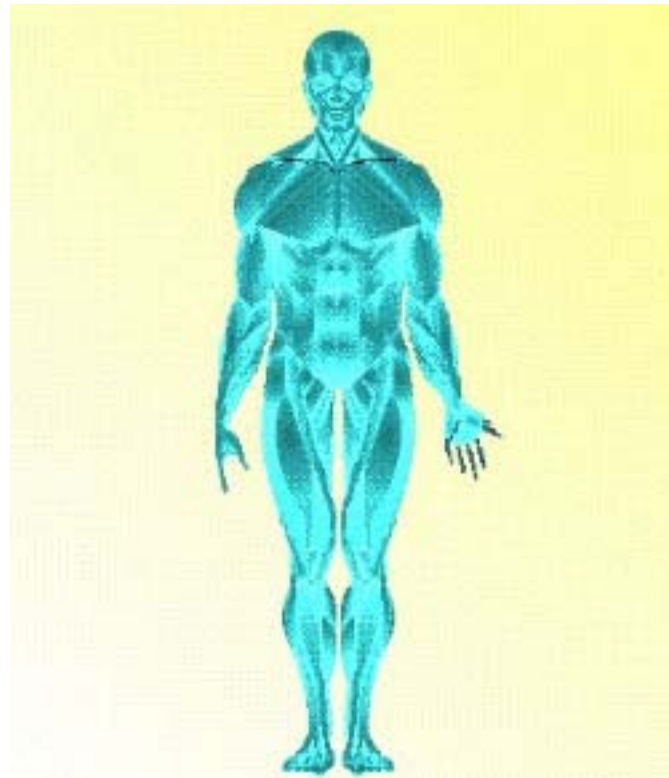
What types of symptoms or disorders are associated with repetitive stress?

- \* Neck/shoulder tension
- \* Muscle tightness and spasm
- \* Headache
- \* Tendonitis of the wrist & forearm
- \* Carpal tunnel syndrome
- \* Mid back or shoulder blade pain
- \* Lower back pain
- \* Sciatic pain

## Ergonomic Checklist

### Chair

- \* Is your seat height adjustable?
- \* Are your feet firmly on the floor?
- \* Are hips at the same level as your knees?
- \* Is there a good lumbar support?
- \* Do you have arm rests?



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### Desk/Computer

- \* Is your desk or keyboard at a height where your wrists are not bent?
- \* are your elbows flexed 90 degrees?
- \* are your shoulders relaxed, not "shrugged"?
- \* Is the center of your monitor at nose level?
- \* Is there glare on your computer screen?
- \* Do you have a document holder?
- \* Do you have a headset?

### Proper Lifting & Bending

Repetitive lifting and bending can be dangerous if not performed correctly. The following rules will minimize the likelihood of a problem.

- \* Lift with your back straight.
- \* Avoid bending or twisting while lifting.
- \* Keep the object as close to your chest as possible.
- \* Keep things that need to be moved at waist level whenever possible.
- \* Avoid lifting or bending first thing in the morning or if you have been sitting for a prolonged time.
- \* Besides utilizing good technique, muscle strength and coordination is necessary to avoid injury. In particular, leg strength (such as from practicing squats) is necessary to avoid improper lifting mechanics.

### Breaks

It is essential to break the cycle of repetitive stress and strain, muscle fatigue, and pain. To do this we should recharge our muscles and take strain off our joints and discs every 20 minutes. Even if just for 10-30 seconds!

### Exercises

- \* Neck extensions
- \* Shoulder blade squeezes & rolls
- \* Standing reach upwards
- \* Take a walk
- \* Take a deep breath, and let it go!

The human body may take months, years or even decades to show symptoms from repetitive stress. This indicates that prevention is the most effective protection against this syndrome. Prevention should take place in the form of following all the ergonomic rules and getting regular spinal checkups by your Chiropractor.







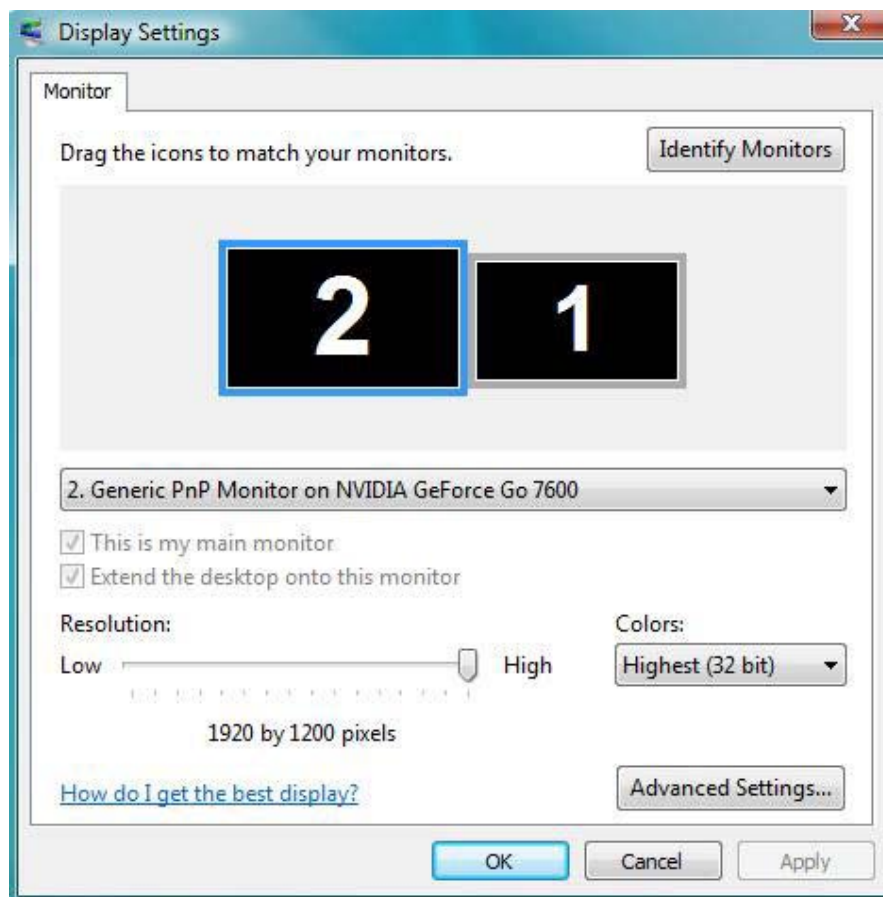
## When Two (Or More) Is Better Than One

### Vinny La Bash , Sarasota PC User Group

Vinny (SPCUG President in 1996-97-98) is a retired IBM'er and teaches computer part time at the Sarasota Vocational Technical Institute. <labash@spcug.org>

My old CRT monitor was bulky, heavy, and generated too much heat. So I swapped it for a wide screen flat panel display. Shortly after, I decided to ditch my desktop because it was bulky, heavy, and generated too much heat. Investigation into the current crop of portable devices available on the market led me to say nay to all of them. Instead, I commissioned a local computer store to build a 17" laptop for me. It was the only way I could get a machine with the exact mix of hardware, software, and performance capabilities I wanted without all the extra "junkware" that commercial vendors load onto their systems.

Plugging my flat panel display into the laptop's video output gave me a pleasant surprise. With no foresight, planning or intention, I now had a dual monitor system. Since nothing that's worthwhile having in this life comes without effort, there was still some work to do.



Until you get to the Display Settings dialog box, there is no way to know which of your monitors is #1 or #2. Either one can be the left or right monitor, and either one can have low, medium or high resolution. It doesn't end there. Either one, but only one can contain the Taskbar. You decide by checking the box that says This is my main monitor. In the illustration, the main monitor is # 2. If you want #1 to be your main monitor, left-click on the 1 and check the box. Windows will automatically uncheck the box which made #2 the main monitor.

With #2 as the main monitor, getting to #1 is as simple as dragging your mouse pointer off the right edge of #2 and see it magically appear at the left side of #1. Drag the mouse from right to left to return to #2. To get the display to match the actual physical relation of the monitors to each other, drag the monitor icons to match the physical positions of your displays.

Experiment with the settings, and while getting everything to work the way you want, you will discover that control is unexpectedly intuitive.

Laptops are much easier to set up with a second monitor because Windows automatically takes care of the hardware. You never worry about which monitor is which if you have to disconnect the second monitor temporarily. Default settings consider a second monitor as an additional output to use in place of the laptop's display. You don't need to mess with the display toggle option as you would when using a projector. The familiar Display Properties dialog box easily does the job.

Dual monitor setups with desktops are more complicated than laptops. That's the drawback, but you don't need to be a geek to set it up. I'm tempted to say "Even a caveman could do it", but let's not go there.

You need two monitors and two video outputs on your computer. Check your user manual or look at your motherboard to determine what kind of video capabilities came with the machine. If you have a low end machine, it's most likely equipped with integrated video on the motherboard. If that's the case, you'll need to disable the video on your motherboard and install one video card with two video outputs or two video cards.

One video card with dual outputs is in most cases a superior solution to dual cards. Multiple cards bring up the specter of video driver conflicts and poor video quality or crashes as a result of these conflicts. A single video card eliminates driver conflict issues along with additional complications. The more powerful your video card, the more power it consumes, and the more heat it generates. A second card may stress your power supply to the point of breakdown. Even if it doesn't, you still need to find a way to remove the excess heat. Unless you really want the additional performance that only a dual card setup can give, go for the single card solution.

Choosing a flat panel monitor avoids the bulk, weight, and heat of old fashioned CRT monitors. Flat panels have the additional virtues of being more stylish, and have you ever tried hanging a CRT display on a wall? Having two monitors the same size avoids having to resize applications when moving from one to the other even though it's a minor inconvenience. Make sure the video outputs from your computer match the video inputs on your monitor. A VGA output goes to a VGA input. Newer monitors will have DVI or HDMI

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# Media Issue

## The Big DTV Transition

by **Sister Dorothy Robinson**, OSB, OMUG Newsletter Editor,  
The Olympia Microcomputer User Group, Washington,  
<http://www.oly mug.org>, [newsletter@oly mug.org](mailto:newsletter@oly mug.org)

Computer users often speculate about how digital technology will affect us and our world. We are now entering the final stage of a rather large digital transition, that of digital television signals. Didn't know this transition was going on? You're not alone.

*Continued on page 33*



On February 16, The Olympian ran an Associated Press article on the digital television transition that is happening in the United States. The article said that in about a year, on February 17, 2009, all analog TV broadcasts will end in this country. If a TV does not have a digital tuner, or is not connected to cable or satellite or other paid services, it will need a digital converter box to receive and display digital signals. About 13 million households would be affected—those with older TVs (no digital tuner) or receiving signals only over the air as in the past. This is because analog tuners can't decode and display digital signals.

Options, said The Olympian, for continuing to receive TV signals after February 17, 2009 are to buy a digital converter box (\$40-50, according to this AP article), a new TV with a digital tuner, or get connected to a paid service. The federal government is offering \$40 coupons, up to two per household, good on the purchase of a converter box. You can now call 1-888-388-2009 or apply online at <http://www.dtv2009.gov>. There is also an option online to print out an application and mail it in. You may want to apply early.

<http://www.9wsyr.com> says "You will still need an over-the-air antenna in addition to the converter box to receive a digital signal on your analog television set. Your current antenna should work the same as before. Many major chains have been certified to sell the converter boxes, including Best Buy; Circuit City; Kmart; Sam's Club; Wal-Mart; Sears, Radio Shack and Target."

Best Buy, according to [centredaily.com](http://centredaily.com), "will stock an Insignia-branded analog-to-digital converter box exclusively, retailing at \$59.99."

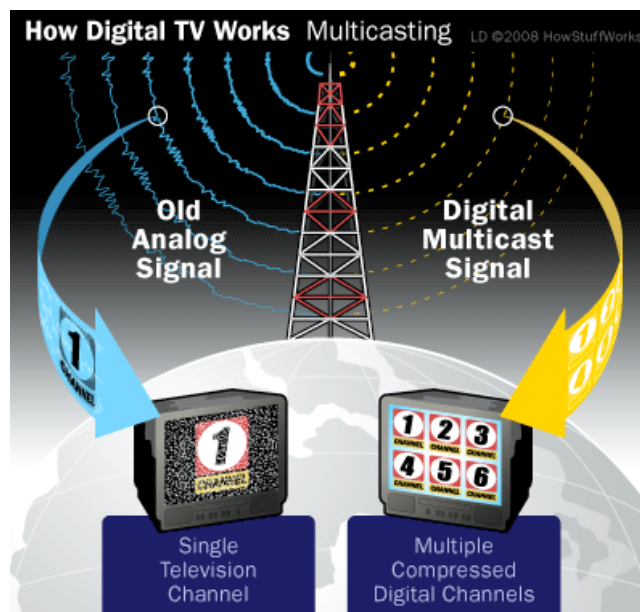
PRNewswire.com states "Converter boxes at \$49.97 are on shelves now at Wal-Mart already."

According to [radioshack.com](http://radioshack.com), you can find a Zenith converter in stores for \$59.99. It is looking like the difference between the price of the converter box and the coupon will be \$10 and up.

The Olympian article said the reasons for the changeover are to allow for auctioning off excess airwaves (digital broadcasting is much more efficient so there will be an excess), for new wireless services, and "possibly" providing emergency air networks for disasters. Digital signals can also provide better picture definition—but that depends on whether high definition programs are being broadcast and on whether a TV is set up to receive high definition programs. Digital signals can support high-definition (HDTV) broadcasts—but is not the same as HDTV.

From How Stuff Works, <http://electronics.howstuffworks.com/hdtv1.htm>, comes this information: "Some people believe that the United States is switching to HDTV—that all they'll need for HDTV is a new TV and that they'll automatically have HDTV when analog service ends. Unfortunately, none of this is true." If you want more information on how HDTV works, check this site at the link above.

The government website at <http://www.dtv.2009.gov> has this to say about the reasons for the changeover: "Digital broadcasting promises to provide a clearer picture and more programming options and will free up airwaves for use by emergency responders." It says nothing about auctioning off air wave spectrum or the intricacies of HDTV.




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The Benton Foundation page at <http://www.benton.org/index.php?q=node/1257> has information on the background and time-line for DTV transition. It states:

"Digital television (DTV) is a new, more efficient technology for transmitting and receiving broadcast television signals. But DTV signals are not compatible with today's analog TV sets in most American homes. Under the Telecommunications Act of 1996, the amount of spectrum given to television station owners was doubled. The policy rationale for this was to enable the stations to transition US consumers to digital TV without interruption of analog broadcasts. But after ten years of digital TV broadcasts, only a small number of US households have made the switch to DTV, delaying the return of valuable spectrum that could be used by emergency officials and auctioned to offset federal deficit spending."

Included in benton.org's time-line called "Getting to February 2009: Implementing the Digital TV Transition," is this step:

"January 28, 2008 The FCC must conduct the auction of the licenses for recovered analog spectrum, commencing the bidding no later than this date, and is to deposit the proceeds of the auction in the US Treasury no later than June 30, 2008."

In other words, this is happening right now, if things are proceeding on schedule.

CNN.com's take on this topic in January of 2006: ([http://money.cnn.com/2006/01/04/technology/pluggedin\\_digitaltv/index.htm](http://money.cnn.com/2006/01/04/technology/pluggedin_digitaltv/index.htm)):

"Once TV stations switch to digital transmission, they will return to the government a big chunk of the radio spectrum they currently use to transmit their analog channels. Some of that spectrum will go to first responders—police, fire and public safety officials—so they can better communicate with one another. Breakdowns in emergency communication slowed the response to the September 11 terrorist attacks and Hurricane Katrina. New spectrum should help.

The rest of the spectrum will be auctioned off to the highest bidders—probably tech companies. The sale of this valuable, scarce real estate is expected to bring in about \$10 billion, maybe more. That will help reduce the federal budget deficit."

CNN also talked about the new technology and services that will likely be developed using this increased air availability, for example, cheap wireless broadband access virtually everywhere. Referring to an historical parallel, it states:

"Scheduled for 2008, the auction will be the biggest spectrum sale since a 1994-95 spectrum auction. That sale helped boost the mobile phone industry, boosting the number of cell phone subscribers in the U.S. from 24 million to 200 million. It also helped drive down the cost of wireless minutes from an average of 47 cents a minute to 9 cents a minute, according to analysis from financial services firm Stifel Nicolaus."

Whether we like it or not, the DTV revolution is on its way. The best we can do is prepare ourselves. For many of us, the \$10 or \$20 needed to buy a converter box is not a problem. Unfortunately, some people on fixed or low incomes will find it very difficult to get ready for the change. For them, the TV screen may go dark at midnight on February 17, 2009.



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# The Switch to Digital TV

By Sandy Berger, CompuKISS, [www.compukiss.com](http://www.compukiss.com), [sandy@compukiss.com](mailto:sandy@compukiss.com)

The switch to digital is on the way. On February 17, 2009, U. S. broadcast stations, who are currently broadcasting in both analog and digital, will turn off their analog signals and will transmit only in digital. What's this mean to you?

Most consumers who get their television from a cable or satellite provider won't notice a difference. Cable and satellite companies are not required to make the transition, so they can continue to broadcast in both analog and digital. Eventually, though, if your cable company moves to all digital, you will not be able to get the cable straight from the wall, but will need a box from your cable company. Most cable customers already have a cable television box, anyway. Don't worry about that now, your cable company will notify you, if and when that happens. And it may be years down the road.

The people who will be most affected by the transition to digital are those who get their television "over the air" with rabbit ears or an antenna in the attic or on the roof. Older analog televisions will not be able to pick up the digital signal. You don't, however, have to go out and buy a new TV. You simply will need to add a digital-to-analog converter box to your television. These boxes are already available in stores like Wal-Mart, Best Buy, Circuit City, RadioShack, and Target. They will be priced between \$40 and \$70.

Luckily for those with rabbit ears and old televisions, the government has created a \$1.5 billion coupon program to subsidize the cost of the converter boxes. This program is being overseen by the National Telecommunication and Information Administration agency. Each household, regardless of how they receive their television, is eligible to receive two \$40 coupons. The coupons are available now. As I write this, over 5 million coupons have already been requested.

To get a coupon you can apply online at [www.dtv2009.gov](http://www.dtv2009.gov) or call the 24-hour hot line, 888-DTV-2009 (888-388-2009). You can also mail a coupon application to P.O. Box 2000, Portland, OR 97208-2000. The program itself expires on March 31, 2009. The government is trying to get everyone ready as quickly as possible, so be aware that the coupons expire three months after they are mailed to you. Since many television stations are already broadcasting in digital, you can use the converter box immediately.

If you are still asking why we are doing this, the official government explanation is that switching to digital TV will free up parts of the valuable broadcast spectrum for public safety communications such as police, fire departments, and rescue squads. The bigger reason, though, is that some of the spectrum will be auctioned to companies for advanced wireless services. This, of course, will be very lucrative for the US Government.

It may also be a good thing for consumers, as well. With the digital converter box, even your old analog television may give you a better picture. You will also be able to see more channels as some broadcasters will choose to multicast programs. Multicasting means that a broadcaster can split up its signal into several channels, each with a different set of programs. This type of programming is only available with digital broadcasting.

One thing to remember is that digital television is not high-definition television. Although high-def TVs will display digital television, you do not need a high-def TV just because of this transition. Digital broadcast television includes both Standard Definition (SD) and High Definition (HD) formats. You can watch both standard definition and high definition programming on an analog TV hooked to a digital-to-analog converter box, but the high definition won't give you the full high definition quality that you would receive on a high definition television.

If you have a newer TV that you purchased in the last few years, it may already support digital. Look at the markings on the television to find out if it has a digital tuner built-in. Words like "Digital Tuner or Receiver", "DTV", or "HDTV" indicate that it will display the digital programming. However, if your television says "HDTV Monitor", "Digital Ready" or "HDTV Ready", you may still need a converter box.

If you need more information on the move to digital television, check out the Federal Communication Commission's DTV Web site at [www.dtv.gov](http://www.dtv.gov). They have done a good job explaining everything you need to know.



# Hulu Offers Free TV and Movies over the Net

By **Ira Wilsker**, APCUG Director; Columnist, The Examiner, Beaumont, TX;  
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One of my readers recently emailed me about an offer he received via email (probably a spam email) about a \$50 program that will allow him to view what was described as satellite TV over the internet, without paying a monthly fee. According to the email, with this program, he could discontinue his cable or satellite service, and watch over 3000 channels on his computer. I researched the product he referenced and found that it was a multilevel marketed program that was, in my opinion, deceptive in that it did not offer real satellite TV, but instead only offered a software utility that could receive the thousands of streaming videos already available for anyone to view for free, and that often required no special software to view. I strongly recommended to the reader that he not purchase the product, and instead just search for streaming video, and to keep his current TV provider.

In researching this service I came upon a recently released and legitimate way to view thousands of TV programs and movies over the internet, for free, and only using any of the common internet browsers. This free service (registration required) is the Hulu service available online at [www.hulu.com](http://www.hulu.com). Hulu was founded in March of 2007, and is a joint venture owned by NBC Universal, and News Corp, and financed by \$100 million of venture capital. As I type this, Hulu is offering advertising supported content from over 50 sources, such as Fox TV, NBC, MGM, Sony Pictures, Warner Brothers, Lionsgate, 20th Century Fox, and other providers. The content available for viewing includes TV shows, full length feature films, and clips. Several full length, prime time shows are available on Hulu the morning after they air, and include such popular shows as The Simpsons, and The Office. There are also dozens of classical TV shows, available as full length episodes, including such favorites as Miami Vice and Buffy the Vampire Slayer. If users are willing to put up with unobtrusive ads, often in the lower right corner of the image, or standard TV type commercials, they can watch for free such full length feature films as Ice Age, Three Amigos!, and many others. Hulu is headquartered in Los Angeles, with research and development being done in China.

Hulu will play on almost all current browsers as they are currently configured, and require no special software or add-ons to utilize the service, and requires a broadband connection to view the videos. Almost all computers already have Adobe's Flash Player installed, but if not, Flash Player is a free download from Adobe at [www.adobe.com](http://www.adobe.com).

Once registered at [hulu.com](http://hulu.com) (free registration), a broad selection of videos becomes available for viewing at will. As I type this, there are about 11,200 full length TV episodes and feature clips available, with more being added daily. Currently available for viewing are almost all of the episodes of The Simpsons, 30 Rock, The Office, Knight Rider, House, Medium,

## WEBSITES:

<http://www.hulu.com>

<http://www.adobe.com> - Adobe Flash Player



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Bionic Woman, American Dad!, Buffy the Vampire Slayer, 24, Prison Break, Heroes, about 160 full length children's cartoons (Woody Woodpecker, Spiderman, Astro Boy, and many others), and other TV shows of all genres. For those partial to Saturday Night Live skits, there are about nearly 500 available, including such contemporary issues as presidential politics. TV wrestling fans would appreciate the over 300 matches available for viewing, while NBA fans can view over 140 clips from professional basketball games. A collection of recent (2008) full length college football games, including many of the bowl games are available for viewing, including the 2007 and 2008 Sugar Bowl, Cotton Bowl, Fiesta Bowl, and others, enough to satiate any college football fans, and keep them glued to the computer screen for days on end. Soap opera addicts will appreciate the well over 100 clips from Days of Our Lives. In total, Hulu lists 25 different TV genres for every taste, making something available for everyone. The large assortment of TV shows (and movies as well) can be displayed by clicking on "Type" (TV or Movie), and then "Genre"; this will display only those selections that meet both criteria. Simply clicking on the image of the selection will play that selection. All of the TV shows can be displayed in one window alphabetically at [www.hulu.com/browse/alphabetical/tv](http://www.hulu.com/browse/alphabetical/tv), and can be run by clicking on their titles. All of the TV shows can also be displayed in one window, sorted by genre at [www.hulu.com/browse/genre/tv](http://www.hulu.com/browse/genre/tv).

Hulu is not just about TV, but also full length feature films, clips, and trailers. As I type this, there are 760 movies available, of which 80 are full length feature films, the remainder being shorts, clips and trailers. According to Hulu, the most popular full length films viewed by members are Ice Age, Master and Commander: The far Side of the World, The Girl Next Door, The Jerk, Usual Suspects, Planet of the Apes, Weekend at Bernie's, Dragon – The Bruce Lee Story, Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea, Three Amigos!, All Dogs Go to Heaven, and dozens more. Movies are divided into 10 genres, including action and adventure, animation, comedy, crime and mystery, documentary and biography, drama, family and kids, horror and thriller, music, and sci-fi and fantasy. Movies can be selected by genre, or by studio. Opening [www.hulu.com/browse/network/movies](http://www.hulu.com/browse/network/movies) will display movies alphabetically by studio, with full length features being clearly indicated. Each of the movies shown is hyperlinked (click on the title) directly to the movie. Similarly, all of the movies can be sorted by genre, and displayed in one window at [www.hulu.com/browse/genre/movies](http://www.hulu.com/browse/genre/movies).

Hulu is about to roll out "HD" (High Definition) videos, and currently has 20 HD movie trailers available to demonstrate the service at [www.hulu.com/hd](http://www.hulu.com/hd). Since HD video carries more data than conventional video, the system requirements are higher to view HD. In order to view the HD videos, the computer must have a minimum of Flash Player 9.0.115.0 (a free download from Adobe, available for most operating systems), a 2.5Mbps or faster broadband connection (many of the basic broadband services are incapable of operating at this speed, and a premium or upgraded broadband may be required to view HD), a fast processor (3Ghz minimum for Windows or Linux, or a 1.83Ghz Intel Core Duo for Mac). Almost all modern computers of recent manufacturer meet the minimum RAM and video requirements to view HD videos.

While not a substitute for cable or satellite TV, Hulu can provide countless hours of entertainment for free. Since new content is frequently added, and additional providers are being solicited, Hulu has the potential for becoming a major entertainment resource.

## SNL Digital Short: The Japanese Office

Saturday Night Live

Excerpt (s.33 : ep.12) | 04:05 | ★★★★★

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Main

Reviews

Discussions

# Converting CD-based Music to Compressed Audio Files

By Mike Moore, Editor, Bowling Green Area Microcomputer User Group, Kentucky, [www.bgamug.org](http://www.bgamug.org), [ml.moore@insightbb.com](mailto:ml.moore@insightbb.com)

I spent the equivalent of two or three days in January, working a few minutes at a time, converting all of our CDs to MP3 format. I had been dreading this project, thinking that it would take too much time, but it really was not that bad and the results are going to be worth it.

A few years ago I purchased a 400-CD jukebox type CD player. This device does have the capability of displaying a short line containing the album's title, using a standard PC keyboard, but the process is complicated with problems. It's easy to get CDs in the wrong slot and of course, you can only play them in the room where you've physically situated the jukebox unit.

In the past few years, we've been getting away from the album and becoming more focused on individual songs. This lamentable trend has been fueled by the 99 cent price point associated with downloading music by the song. Artists and producers alike have vilified this process, claiming that the artistic sum worth of songs on an album is greater than the tunes taken as individual songs.

I can buy into this sadness, to a point. I remember the smell of vinyl LPs, unwrapping the cellophane outer wrap, and the incredible detail the producers went into in packing artistic value into the finished product, right down to the order the songs appear on the album. These days, you just Google the album or artist title and download the Jpeg, that's about it. For a fee, a program called iTunes will do this for you automatically.

So why would a guy spend the time to rip (compress) the tracks of a CD or other ancient audio product to MP3 files? There are a few good reasons to do this.

For one thing, the devices that play music have become decentralized. What I mean by that is if you can imagine your computer as the "record player," then it's not much of a stretch to think of playing music anywhere in the house, car or workplace.

Doing this in the past meant locating the song you want (which may or may not be an easy task), finding the CD (or tape, or LP) it's recorded on, and hoping that it's not damaged.

Then once you've got it, you carry it to where ever you want to hear it. For me, this was often the car, and a car is a great place to scratch or otherwise ruin a CD, and I've also known friends whose entire CD collections have been stolen from vehicles. Physically moving music and other files from player to player is sometimes humorously referred to as "Sneaker Net"

But once you begin to think of your songs and other media in terms of compressed MP3 files, they become at once more searchable, more replaceable, and more portable.

Compressed audio files, though the wonder of a shared internet database called Gracenote (formerly CDDb), contain informational tidbits that can be searched. On the other hand, ordinary music tracks on a Compact Disc have no information associated with them at all, not even the name of the song. By converting CD-ROM music to MP3 files, your database can pull up a playlist for you using information encoded in the MP3 file. Most ripping software (such as C-Dex, available at <http://>



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cdexos.sourceforge.net/) will query the CDDb so that you won't have to manually type in the names of the songs or the name of the CD.

Compressed audio files can be stored on any hard drive in the house and can be made available on inexpensive MP3 players, iPods, and Multimedia computers that attach directly to your sound system. There is usually no special hardware to buy - you can just feed the stereo output from your computer's sound card to the audio input on your TV or stereo amplifier.

Most of the MP3 player devices out there do not require a lot in the way of software - you generally plug them into a computer, they assign themselves a drive letter, and you can just copy your songs to the devices as if they were another hard drive. There are even self-contained wireless hard drives (see: <http://www.apple.com/airportexpress>) that will broadcast your music wirelessly to any networked computer in the house!

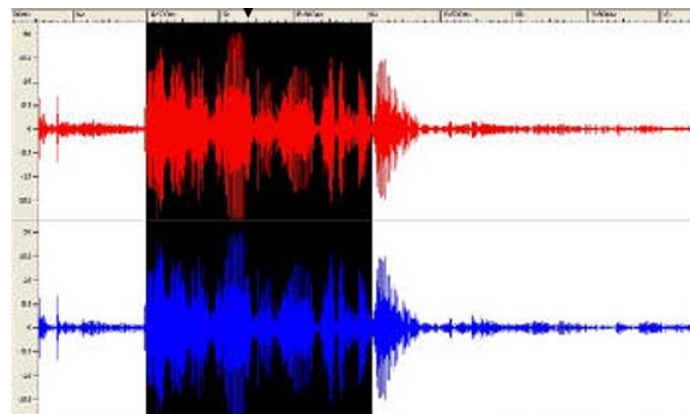
Compressed audio files cannot get scratched like CDs do, and if your iPod or MP3 player is stolen or accidentally formatted (happens all the time!), or even if your entire CD collection is stolen, it's no longer the end of the world. You just re-copy the files back to another device and you're good to go.

Though not exactly small, compressed audio files do lend themselves much better to e-mail. A typical MP3 music file is around 3 to 6 megabytes, which is just under the threshold of being too large to send to someone using dial-up internet. If both ends of the connection have high-speed, it's no problem at all, as this amount of data can be transmitted by most DSL and cable internet services in about 10 or 20 seconds. The MP3 compressed format is "lossy" in the sense that some of the music data is lost during compression, compared to the original recording, however I've never been able to tell the difference between a compressed song and a non-compressed track on a CD. The data you lose is not data that manifests as part of the music.

By the way, the songs as recorded on CDs you buy are very large - 50 to 80 megabytes would not be uncommon. For those of you audiophiles who need compression but don't want any data loss, consider using the FLAC mode of compression (See <http://flac.sourceforge.net> for information). FLAC stands for "Free Lossless Audio Codec"

So, there are a host of reasons why we would want to compress our audio collection, but what is the downside? The only problem I can think of is that most automotive and older CD players cannot recognize the MP3 or any computer generated music format. Some of the newer CD players can, but it's not something that people generally know. So, for example, when I transferred an audio book selection to CD for my wife, she found that the CD player in her car refused to play the media, even though her car is not that old. My car, a Chevy Monte Carlo, played the disk without a problem even though it's an older car than hers. So in this situation you may want to take advantage of software that does the reverse of ripping - it would take MP3 files and lay them down on the CD as if they were ordinary Audio CD tracks. iTunes and many CD-writing utilities such as Nero will do this for you.

Now does anyone wanna buy a used 400-CD jukebox player?



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# Recording Audio

By **Bart Koslow**, Software Review Coordinator, Thousand Oaks Personal Computer Club, Thousand Oaks, CA, <http://topcc.org/>, [review@topcc.org](mailto:review@topcc.org)

Nowadays it is no problem to record video from a TV broadcast, VCR or other source using a Digital Video Recorder. When I began to look into recording music broadcasts

off the air, I found that there were external Audio recorders, but they were expensive, beginning in the \$250 range and up. This is twice as much as a similar Video Recorder.

Since I wanted to create CDs from the broadcast music and I had DVD/CD burners on my computer I decided that using my computer was a better and cheaper alternative.

One possibility was a TV/FM card for my computer which may be purchased for \$30 to \$40 and up. However, I found a cheaper method. My stereo system was only a few feet from my computer, so I connected an audio output from my audio receiver to the line in on my computer sound card. I happened to have a cable with two RCA connectors on one end going to a single stereo connector on the other end. Just what I needed, I connected the RCA connectors to audio out on my receiver and the stereo connector to the line in on my sound card on the computer.

Now all I needed was a program that could access the sound card and record the input.

I hit the jackpot. Roxio Easy Media Creator has just the program. Not only that, but,

once you complete your recording, Roxio has a basic sound editor that enables editing the sound files, and programs to burn the files to a CD or DVD. The Roxio program will

access a number of inputs besides the line in. You may access your phone line, CD player, microphone input, and other inputs including Internet Radio broadcasts received

on your computer. You may also decide which type of file format to record, WAV, MP3, or WMA, what fidelity to record, and where to save the recorded file. In addition, there is a recording level meter and control.

Once I turned on my stereo receiver and accessed the Roxio recording program, everything went well. I recorded a long broadcast for a few hours and then my computer told me I had a problem and had to close the Roxio program. I lost my whole recording, but now I knew it worked and tried again.

This time I closed all the programs I did not need and disconnected from the Internet to get less interference when I recorded. After editing the recorded audio file, I successfully burned it to two CDs.

If you have music cassettes or even VCRs with music, you may use this technique to transfer music to CDs. If you have cable or satellite TV service with accompanying radio, you may use the above procedure to record from your set top box to your computer. I have satellite service with SIRIUS radio, and am now recording live and historical music broadcasts that interest me.

I next discovered that in many cases I could bypass an external stereo receiver, set top box, or recorder by using Internet Radio which may be played using Windows Media Player, iTunes Player, Real Player or other free media players. All you have to do is find the radio station that is broadcasting the music you wish and then enter the URL for its streaming audio broadcasts in the Player software. I did a search using Google and found there are numerous Internet radio station locators, found the station I wanted and entered the URL. Now I had the music coming in directly to my computer from the Internet with no intermediary device. In order to save the music I again resorted to Roxio's "Capture Audio from Sound Card" program and changed the input from "Line In" to "Stereo Mix," and recorded the broadcast to a file. Edit the audio file and burn it to a CD and I was finished. It all worked like a charm.

Now, I do not need a Stereo Receiver, external recorder or even have to add a TV/ FM card to my computer.

The simple solutions are always the best ones.



# iPod

## Replacement

by **Sandy Berger**, CompuKISS,  
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**T**oo many technology stories are sad tales of aggravation and obsolescence. So today I'm going to tell you a story about a digital device with a happy ending.

About 2 years ago, I decided to purchase an iPod. After shopping around, I found that the iPod nano was selling for \$149 just about everywhere. However, the Sam's Club in Cary had it for \$138.77. So why pay more? When I made the Sam's Club purchase, the store clerk offered me a service policy, which I immediately rejected. When he asked why I wasn't interested, I told him that I had learned from past experience that most of these insurance policies were a waste of money because they were expensive and didn't cover the problems that I might actually have with the item. He assured me that this policy was different. For just \$14.88, I could get a 3-year policy that gave me a new iPod for most anything that went wrong with my iPod, including a battery that ran out of juice. My husband suggested that since I am a heavy-duty iPod user, I should go ahead and purchase the policy. Since I use my iPod in the car and at home in a dock every day, I was fairly sure that the iPod battery would give out before the 3-year deadline, so it seemed like a logical move. I purchased the policy. Yet all the time I was wondering if the clerk was just a good salesman or the policy was really that good.

Last month, I found an answer to that question. My iPod started acting weirdly. It was completely freezing up. No matter what button I pressed, it gave no response. Although I had encountered problems like this with computers, I was surprised to find my iPod acting just like a Window's computer. In computer world we call it the blue screen of death. I don't know if it has a name on the iPod, but it turned out to be a similar type of aggravation.

At first it didn't seem like much of a problem because Apple had a solution. Just turn the Hold button on and off a few times, then press and hold the Menu button and the center of the scroll wheel at the same time. Hold them down for about 10 seconds until the Apple icon appears on the screen. This worked great, restoring the iPod immediately, without losing any of my audio programs and music. Unfortunately, the freezes became more and more frequent. I was having to perform this reset 4 or 5 times a day so it became a real pain.

It was time to go back to Sam's Club, but I agonized with that. How could I show them the problem since it happened only sporadically? My discomfort turned to glee when the Sam's Club clerk didn't even try to duplicate the problem. She asked me for the receipt and earbuds and charging cord that came with the iPod. Once I produced those, she promptly refunded the price of the iPod plus the price of the insurance policy. I could have just kept the refund, but instead I headed over to the electronic aisle to pick out a replacement.

My old model iPod was no longer available, but I was also pleasantly surprised to find that the new models were selling for exactly the same price I had paid for the older model. On top of that, the new iPod nanos had twice as much memory, larger screens, and the ability to play videos. This was turning out to be really good! For exactly the same price, I was able to purchase a new, more capable iPod with a new 3-year insurance policy.

Talk about a happy ending..... I am now enjoying watching video podcasts on my new iPod in addition to using it for audio podcasts and music. If anything happens to it in the next 3 years, I can get another replacement. While I don't usually purchase insurance policies for digital equipment, this one turned out to be a real winner.

# Sometimes the Bad Guys Win for All the Wrong Reasons

By Andy Marken, Marken Communications,  
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On the one hand information wants to be expensive, because it's valuable. The right information in the right place just changes your life. On the other hand, information wants to be free, because the cost of getting it out is getting lower and lower all the time. So you have these two fighting each other." -- Steward Brand, 1st Hackers' Conference, 1984

Hollywood loves sequels.

They love proving they know what the consumer/viewer wants.

But they really had to reach when they heard some Doom9er yahoos had not only hacked their precious AACIS DRM (Digital Rights Management) code.

The audacity!

Nothing to do but reach into the archives and take a page from one of the immortals...Mack Sennett.

Yep...nothing to do but call in the Keystone Cops...that'll teach them.

Had they hacked it, passed it around amongst themselves the industry wouldn't consider a change.

But what good is it to hack something that is hack-proof if no one knows about it?

They had to share their bragging rights.

And they did with postings at Diggs, on t-shirts and everywhere they could find the opportunity to expose themselves.

You know that wasn't going to sit well with Tellywood's guardians!

## Take It Down Dude

They sent in their best armed with cease & desist letters to anyone, everyone who posted the elegant 32 digit code.

Great...another riot on the Web !

We need to note that creative people need to be paid for their work...writers, artists, animators, actors, makeup artists, best boys, post production folks, underwriters and yes even studio execs.

No pay...no play !

The problem is the world doesn't want content protection.



Figure 1 - Calling All Cops – The minute the AACIS lawyers got the word that their DRM had been not only cracked but posted, they sprang into efficient action...they sued everyone! Source – Keystone Studios Archives

*Continued on page 44*

Consumers don't want content protection.

Hell...they aren't too happy people are buying each other off to keep two blue formats alive!

All they want to do is watch the content when they want...where they want...how they want.

AACS had a better idea.

You want a copy to watch on your TV...buy it.

Want a copy to take to your cabin...buy it.

Want a copy to shut the kids while you drive to visit grandma...buy it.

Want a copy in the family room and bedroom...buy it.

Tellywood knew a gentler, kinder security solution wasn't the answer.

Tried that with CSS (Content Scrambling System).

Sucker was busted before the ink was dry!

### Slow Acceptance of New

So what if DVD took off like a rocket!

The technology shot past every PC/CE technology in consumer sales...ever.

Even with multiple formats, people snapped up players and burners.

Discs flew onto the shelves and out the doors like crazy.

And a huge underground pirate industry grew...trust us, these guys know pirates!

HighDef was their opportunity to get back in control.

The new DRM was impressive...

Ok so maybe industry officials – music, theater – knew it was a bad idea but still...

Ok so the real pirates weren't worried after all they go to the source to get their content...keep their mouths shut...keep a low profile...make money.

Doom 9ers?

They have no lives.

They want bragging rights.

The fact that the 32-character sequence is useless is of no consequence.

After all you need to write a complete program around it to start copying HD movie discs. The key only unlocks movies made before April.

So who benefits?

Aaahhh... AACS lawyers.

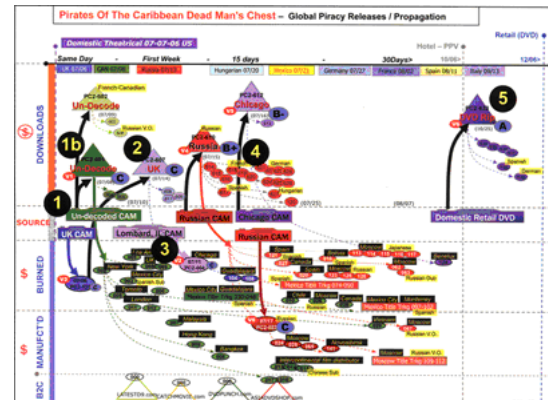
Oh yeah and the bragging rights folks.

### Download Practicality

They could also post the movies on the Web instead of making us rip our own copies but...

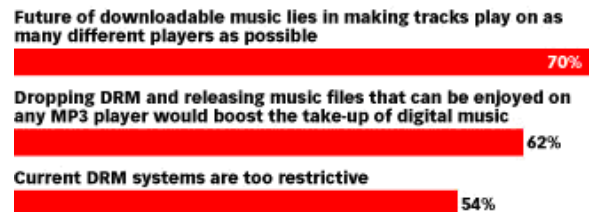
A 2-hour HD DVD download over DSL takes about 3 days.

Cable 18-19 hours.



**Figure 2 - The Fine Art of Pirate Tracking** – Hollywood has spared no time or expense in tracking their loss of content. They know precisely how quickly ripped off copies will be in the hands of the buying public. True most of it comes from India and China but still there are those pesky hackers who have to learn a lesson...the hard way! Source – Walt Disney

### European Music Executives' Opinions Regarding Digital Rights Management (DRM), December 2006-January 2007 (% of respondents)



Source: JupiterResearch, February 2007; BBC, February 2007

**Figure 3 - Yeah But** – The music and motion picture industries speak in whispers about the fact that DRM isn't working. Problem is they haven't figured out a way to simplify the process, procedure and still ensure they are properly compensated. That's still a work in progress. Source – JupiterResearch, BBC

*Continued on page 45*



Fiber about 2.5 hours.

Maybe that's why video downloads are still "a work in progress"

Will it happen?

Sure.

But most consumers don't want the hassle.

All folks want to do is watch their real world escape movies...or their educational shows...or their documentaries.

They don't want to jump around these beautiful new discs to watch all the outtakes...director's comments...interactive games...online updates!

They want to ... watch the movie !!!

People don't really want to be technology troubleshooters on top of their regular job...even if their regular job is IT.

So what was so great about the Doom9ers efforts and the AACs Keystone Cops response?

The kids showed the industry – content creators, hardware/software folks – that the money-making AACs DRM was little better than CSS.

Fortunately the blue technology hasn't taken off like the proverbial rocket ship so the industry can make a course correction without ticking off millions of folks who laid out big bucks for their players and movie libraries.

Won't as long as there are super-cheap DVD players and a gazillion of decent quality movies on DVD to buy...rent...rip !

### Better Solutions

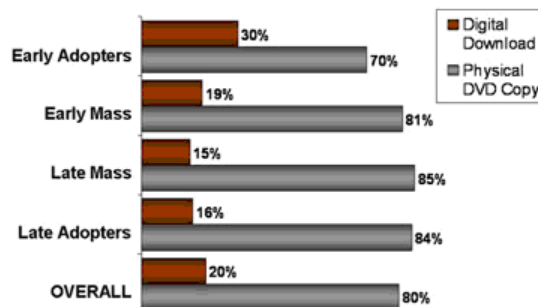
One of the best – and most expensive – solutions is watermarking (see Wikipedia).

When you buy or rent the content it is coded to you.

If it finds it's way "into the channels"...busted!

There are a lot of technical and cost issues involved so it will probably never emerge from the lab.

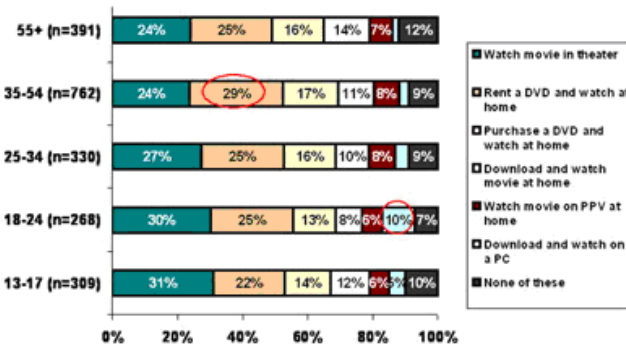
### Video Download vs. Physical DVD



Source: CEA Survey Online, '06

**Figure 4 - Consumer Preference** – While digital downloads of movies gets a lot of attention as the solution for entertainment of tomorrow, consumers just haven't bought into the idea yet...even early adopters. It will probably be one of the viable options in a couple of years but until then people still want their discs. Source – CEA

### Movie Preference: By Age (Q3/06)



Source: Digital Media Habits  
© 2006 Parks Associates

**Figure 5 - Entertain Me** – The entertainment options are out there but regardless of age more than 50% of consumers will either go to the theater or pick up a disc to watch at home. Downloads? All in due time. Source – Parks Associates

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## Shades of Valenti

Since the DVD CCA (Copy Control Assn) lost in court they figured what the H\*\*\* they'll do what governments' do...legislate !

Cute little amendment for "their" license would say your stuff – movie or game – wouldn't work unless there was a disc in the system...sheess !!!

We were so certain Jack Valenti had been put to rest. We now believe in unholy spirits...exorcism anyone?

The best solution and the one Sennett and his people should ultimately agree is good is Mandatory Managed Copy.

Don't get your undies in a bunch...it only sounds restrictive.

With Managed Copy you buy the disc and watch it.

Want to play it on your TV top player...done.

Send it around the house to watch everywhere...done.

Need a copy to take with you in the car to shut the kids up or to take with you on your business flight...done.

There is even a formula for secure copy electronic distribution when the pipes beef up or you become a lot more patient.

Gee...it works for the consumer...and the content folks!

## Consumers Aren't Evil

Of course the AACS will say that all of those devious consumers are going to knock-off copies and give them to their friends...neighbors...family members...

Some might.

But my gawd most folks never made a copy of their VHS tapes or DVDs.

You may like them but take the time, trouble, expense to rip 2-3 copies?

Nope!

Oh sure Doom9ers and a few acne-infected kids might to make a few bucks.

But have you looked at the cost of the burners?

The media?

Expensive at least for another year!

Doom9ers will still say it's restrictive. Remember...consumer content wants to be free!

But they don't care a monkey's armpit about the consumer.

Or the content owner.

All they want to do is brag about something...anything!

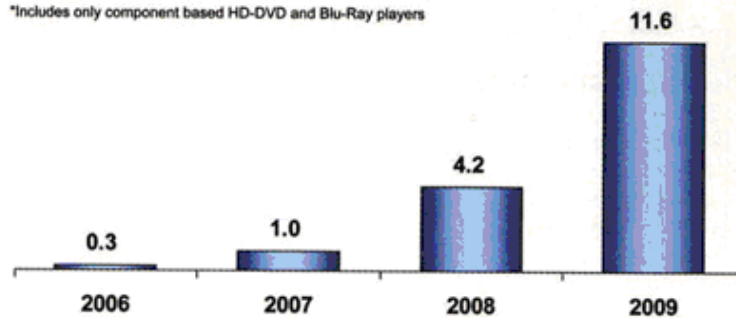
Consumers?

All they want to do is buy, rent their movies and watch them where they want...how they want...when they want.

## Next Generation DVD Forecast\*

### Millions of Units

\*Includes only component based HD-DVD and Blu-Ray players



Source: CEA Sales and Forecasts, 12/06

Figure 6 - Thanks Doom9ers – While hackers show their prowess by cracking the new AACS DRM, consumers are still content to watch their movies on current DVDs. Despite the hype and noise, it will take years for HD DVD and BD to become the viewing solution of choice. Source – CEA

*Continued on page 47*

## Doom9 Benefit

By muddying the waters with their hacking expertise before a gazillion HighDef players and discs were in the market, Doom9ers made Tellywood and the PC/CE industry rethink their solution.

Managed Copy suddenly looks very appealing.

A helluva lot more appealing than having to carry your one disc with you everywhere!

If and when the gentler, kinder solution is implemented, will the AACIS lawyers still have a job?

They can turn on the pirates who quietly follow content producers who make the big bucks selling bootleg discs on the sidewalks, street corners and thru the mail.

They can tighten up their internal security and make it more difficult to get to the content.



**Figure 7 - Protecting The Flight** – By developing an efficient, effective and consumer-friendly DRM solution, Hollywood will be able to turn their attention to more important things like keeping pirates from boarding early.

## Penryn

### Computer Briefs With Pim Borman

With the introduction of Intel's Penryn Core 2 Duo and Extreme CPUs Moore's Law stays right on track. Thanks to further miniaturization to 45-nanometer elements, the chips have significantly lower power consumption, a feature that will be even more desirable in the five new Penryn-based CPUs for laptops that have now been released. The new Penryn-based systems are not significantly faster than systems with Intel's previous-generation processors, but outstrip those with the currently fastest AMD chip, the 2.2 GHz 9500 quad core Phenom CPU. Intel has introduced a new instruction set for the Penryns, called SSE4, that can greatly speed up applications written to work with it. That may take a while yet. Adobe is updating its next version of Premiere Pro video editing with SSE4 support. (PC World, March 2008)

Only two years ago I bought a new desktop screamer using the then-tops AMD Athlon 64 X2 Dual-Core processor. My pride in the new system didn't last long, as usual, as the AMD CPU was left in the dust by new Intel processors. Nevertheless, I doubt that even now my run-of-the-mill programs make use of all the special capabilities of the dual-core CPU. Photo editing with Adobe Photoshop Elements or The Gimp happens instantly, faster than I can think of what to do next. So who needs any more power?

PC World's 25th anniversary issue (March 2008) quotes from the March 1991 issue:

"These five screamers are amongst the fastest - and the costliest - systems you can buy. We pick the best of the lot and answer the obvious question: Who needs this much power? - We reviewed four blazing 486 PCs in the March 1991 issue, starting at \$8300, and decided that they were simply too fast for most people."

Famous last words!

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# Saving pictures that show on your computer

by **Dick Carricato**, member of the Tri County Computer User Group, Florida, [www.tccug.net](http://www.tccug.net), [d\\_carricato@bellsouth.net](mailto:d_carricato@bellsouth.net)

These days we are bombarded with beautiful pictures on our computers, and when I see a great picture I'm not happy until I have it stored away in my own computer where I can use it when I want to.

The usual technique used to extract and save pictures from the web, from e-mail, or from any other source that places a picture on the computer screen, is simply to right click on the picture and select "Save picture as..." This will often open the 'My Pictures' folder where the user can select a folder in which to save the picture.

This is a very straight forward, simple, and easy to remember technique for those situations where it works, and if it worked all the time this article would end right here. However, it often does not work. Sometimes web authors make it difficult for you to copy their pictures, and a right click on one of those pictures produces a grayed (not available) "Save picture as..." selection. Pictures in PDF documents in general cannot be copied, and for that matter, even highlighted text can't be copied from most PDF documents. Very often when an e-mail picture is right-clicked the "Save picture as..." selection is available, but when that option is selected an error box appears saying, "The system cannot find the file specified."

The remainder of this article will be devoted to a single method that allows the user to copy and save any image that shows on his computer screen. This method involves the use of the Windows Print Screen function. Of course, everyone remembers how to use Print Screen (Prt Scn) because we have discussed it in the past. Just in case you have forgotten I'll review it here.

The Prt Scn key is located to the right of the function keys at the top of the keyboard. When Prt Scn is pressed it copies a picture of the entire display to the Clipboard. Pressing Alt-Prt Scn copies an image of the Active window to the Clipboard. Remember that the active window is the one with the bright title bar, and it got that way by clicking the mouse anywhere within the window. The Clipboard is just a section of memory that Windows uses for all Copy and Paste operations. Information is copied from any Windows program to the Clipboard by using the Copy command. Information is pasted to any Windows program from the Clipboard by using the Paste command.

The next time a nice picture shows up on your screen, right-click on it and attempt to save it by using the "Save as..." command. If that fails, click once in the window where the picture is located; maximize the window to make the picture as large as possible, and then press Prt Scn. (In rare cases you might have to hold the Shift key while pressing Prt Scn.) This places the entire window, including the picture that you want, in the Clipboard. The rest of the procedure requires a graphics processor, and fortunately the Windows Paint program will do just fine. It can be found by clicking Start, (all) Programs, Accessories, Paint (or mspaint). To put a shortcut to Paint on your desktop, right click and drag it to your desktop, let go, and select copy here.

So far all we have done is to discover a picture, maximize the window that contains it, and press Prt Scn. Next, open Paint by double clicking the Paint icon on the desktop. In Paint, click Edit and select Paste. Now the entire window that you copied above is visible in the Paint window

Pick up the selection tool from the group of tools along the left side of the Paint window. To do this, click on the dotted line rectangle. Move the mouse pointer to the upper left corner of the Picture. Then press the left mouse button and drag to the bottom right corner of the picture. This selects the picture that you want to keep. Copy this to the Clipboard by right clicking within the selection and (left) clicking on Copy.

Now you have what you want in the Clipboard, and all that you don't want is visible in Paint. Click File and New, and answer the query to save the garbage with 'no'. Click Edit and Paste to get the picture alone into Paint. Click File and Save as.... Be sure to select a file type of JPEG for your picture. If you don't, Paint will save the file as a bitmap (.BMP) which is quite large, ranging from 1 to 5 megabytes depending on the size of the picture. The JPEG file will be only about 5% of the size of the bitmap file.

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# The Cartridge Family

by **Grant Fuller**, a member of Big Blue & Cousins,  
Canada, [www.bbc.org](http://www.bbc.org), [newsletter@bbc.org](mailto:newsletter@bbc.org)

**W**e're beat. I hate to admit it. I come from more innocent times when fairness was something to strive for. Family values were not measured by the Sopranos but by families with more law-abiding objectives.

"I hate to give up without a fight but I do not hold much hope for us. If you have a printer that functions well by refilling cartridges, keep it. Repair it when it becomes necessary and show it your unconditional love."

I hate to give up without a fight but I do not hold much hope for us. If you have a printer that functions well by refilling cartridges, keep it. Repair it when it becomes necessary and show it your unconditional love. The new printers come with chips on the cartridges that the "dealers" say are for telling us when our ink levels get low. Those chips also tell the printer to stop printing after a certain number of nozzle firings or page counts and I strongly suspect that one of my printers is set to refuse a cartridge that was removed and replaced.

I bought some replacement cartridges that were substitutes at a much better price than the gouging name branders, but the trick to beating the dealers required me to remove the chip from the old cartridge and put it on the new one. This is much easier than it sounds, an exacto knife can pop the chip out of its little plastic holder, and it can then be slipped into the ready and waiting slot on the new cartridge.

I replaced the colour cartridges and the printer began flashing lights in the tank bed as each cartridge was replaced. It took me a while to figure out what it was trying to tell me but I should have known right away. I assumed that my chip replacement skills were not up to par or maybe I had been swindled while attempting to swindle the other swindlers. Out of curiosity, I took one of my black cartridges out (this printer has two blacks) and checked it for ink, still lots. I replaced it and the blinking light began on this slot as well. The same thing happened with the other black.

Apparently, there is more going on with this little chip than meets the eye. Well, actually, nothing meets the eye, it's all too small, but this new aggravation raises the stakes. Now the ink re-filling industry has a chip resetter that we can buy which presumably sets the chip to its original state where it says to the printer, "I am brand new and full." I have not tried this but I would like to hear from anyone who has, preferably, if you have had success. If I can find a way to beat these printers I own, I will keep them in good repair. The price of ink for inkjets is beyond outrageous and some people are getting very rich. I can only try to imagine what wonderful gifts we would find under the tree of the Cartridge Family this year.

## Student Practice Lab

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# All a-Twitter?

"Twitter is a free networking blogging that allows users to send 'updates' (or 'tweets'; text-based posts, up to 140 characters long) to Twitter website, via short message service, instant messaging, a third-party application such as ."

That's how Wikipedia describes the latest rage in digital jabbering (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Twitter>). presidential candidates use the service constantly, undoubtedly hoping to reach younger voters. Find out what Barack Obama (<http://twitter.com/BarackObama>) Hillary Clinton (<http://twitter.com/HillaryClinton>) up to. Ron Paul (<http://twitter.com/RonPaul2008>) to be the only Republican who twitters. John McCain is noted by his absence.

As the Twitter site (<http://twitter.com>) puts it,

"Twitter is a service for friends, family, and co-workers to communicate and stay connected through the exchange of quick, frequent answers to one simple question: What are you doing?"

Indeed.

Thanks to The Economist (Feb.2, 2008) for enlightening us about this service.

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# Video Games - It's Not Just Entertainment Any More

By **Gene Komaromi**, a member of the Computer Club of Green Valley, Arizona, <http://gvcc.apcug.org/>, [genek6@gmail.com](mailto:genek6@gmail.com)

In the past, we've commonly thought of computer games, especially those played on game machine platforms, as pure entertainment. Times have changed and many games have become educational as well as physical training devices.

Learning has become fun for both kids and adults. Here's some information that will keep you ahead of the digital gaming curve.

**DS - Handheld Games for Senior Citizens**  
Nintendo has a hot selling hand held video game machine called the "DS" for "Double Screen." The device opens with two visible screens, one is a display screen and the other is a "Touch Screen" which serves as the controller interface. The DS has a series of games designed with "older" users in mind. They are Brain Age, Big Brain Academy and Flash Focus.

All three have been recommended by AARP, and Brain Age has been shown to improve mental performance in independent tests. Brain Age and Big Brain Academy have a series of games, practice exercises and tests that are designed to improve and evaluate cognitive skills, and best of all "they're fun." They chart and graph improvement and will keep records for several individuals.

Have you ever had a problem with that vision test on your driver's license exam? Then Flash Focus was made for you. It too has games and exercises, but instead of improving your brain they improve your eyes.

## Wii Want to Play

The hottest new gaming console is the Wii, another product from Nintendo that has games designed for the older kids, real older kids. The game controller is a little motion sensitive device that straps on the user's wrist. Participants interact with the game by moving their arms.

In the Detroit area, aerobic classes and movies have been replaced by Wii in many senior citizen centers. "Bowling" seems to be one of the most popular games. I've played it, and yes, it's exactly like the real thing. The motion of your arm, as you approach a virtual bowling alley, allows you to curve the ball and add some spin. Wii bowling leagues are springing up all over the country. Nintendo is about to release an exercise program for the Wii that uses a floor pad as a controller.



# Disruptive Open Source Programs

The prestigious British weekly news magazine, *The Economist*, carries a 14-page special report on Innovation in its October 13th, 2007 issue. As you might expect it is about innovation in entrepreneurship, not the kind associated with the name Edison and symbolized by a light bulb. Besides, Edison did not invent light bulbs but only improved them to make them practical and marketable.

Of the different kinds of entrepreneurial innovation the articles discuss, a particular one caught my attention. Referring to Clayton Christensen, author of *The Innovator's Dilemma - When New Technologies Cause Great Firms to Fail*, *The Economist* writes: "... even successful firms can get into trouble by trying to please their best customers. Because there may be only a handful of highly profitable, high-end buyers who want and can afford more features and better performance, firms can invest heavily in trying to deliver what this elite group wants, even though the resulting products may end up being beyond the reach of the majority of customers." That opens the door to producers of "inferior" but perfectly adequate, lower priced products to compete successfully and to dislodge the incumbents to market niches. Christensen calls this "disruptive" innovation, as opposed to innovation due to product improvements or novel marketing techniques. As examples he mentions how personal computers took over most of the tasks of IBM's mainframes and Digital Equipment's mini-computers and how Nucor's highly efficient mini-mills outdid US Steel's blast furnaces.

Another such disruptive innovation that comes to mind is the development of Open Source software in competition with expensive, overly elaborate programs currently in use by the majority of computers in the Western world. Most users of MS Word never use, or even know or care about, its many arcane features and could save themselves a lot of money by using the free OpenOffice.org's Writer that has most of the same features. Even simpler, but perfectly adequate text processors are available for free, such as Abiword. The OpenOffice suite also includes perfectly adequate offsets for most users of MS Excel spreadsheet, PowerPoint presentation manager, Database, and Drawing programs. Recently IBM announced that it would open up its Corel Office suite, and in particular the powerful Lotus spreadsheet program, to the Open Source community and participate in Open Source program developments.

Firefox already has taken over a large corner of Microsoft Internet Explorer's browser market, based on its simplicity, ease-of-use, and the perception that it is less susceptible to virus attacks. The Thunderbird email program is giving MS Outlook Express a run for its money with easy plug-in access to spell checkers in multiple languages and the expectation of greater safety in everyday use.

Most of the powerful image manipulation features provided by the expensive Adobe Photoshop program are available for free in The Gimp, another Open Source program free for the downloading. Many free programs are available to convert documents back and forth to PDF format, long the carefully preserved domain of the expensive Adobe Acrobat program. There are long lists of other Open Source programs capable of performing just about any function required by users, including an excellent simple checkbook and bookkeeping program, GNUCash and a good genealogy program, GRAMPS. Interestingly, almost all Open Source programs run just as well in Linux, without the need to invest in the performance-hogging, malware-susceptible, expensive MS Windows operating systems, Vista in particular.

Open Source programs, including the Linux operating system, are making only slow inroads in the Western world, especially the USA, due to the overwhelmingly strong marketing legacy exerted by Microsoft. The rest of the world, in which the USA seems to occupy an ever-diminishing niche, is less overwhelmed by Microsoft and mostly can't afford its expensive, excessively complex products. Open Source programs are widely used in Asian countries like India and China, and stand to gain further in features and reliability due to inputs from highly capable local programmers. Those countries are only now entering the computer age with literally billions of potential computer users about to acquire their own systems. There is no question what software those new computers will use. Meanwhile, in the Western world Open Source programs have found early adopters amongst government offices at several levels with limited financial resources for software, that have growing needs for use in computers that are already available at low cost.

It may take some time, but the advance of Open Source software is unstoppable because it makes perfect sense. Smart major computer companies, such as IBM and Sun Microsystems, recognize this and have decided to switch, rather than fight. Microsoft, mostly dependent on software sales, may well end up being disrupted like the lamplighters of long ago. Tux, the Linux mascot, might paraphrase the Borg, the StarTrek cyborgs that "assimilated" whole planet populations: "You WILL Be Disrupted... Resistance is Futile."

(Thanks to Louis Ritz from *The Economist*)

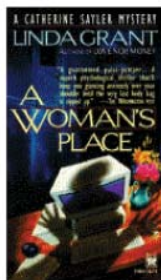
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# Computer Crimes

Susan Ives, Alamo PC

## A Woman's Place

By: Linda Grant,  
Reviewed by Susan  
Ives 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 minority. 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.

## Monkeewrench

By: PJ Tracy, Reviewed  
by Susan Ives Hardcover, Putnam's, 2003,  
\$23.95, 384 pages



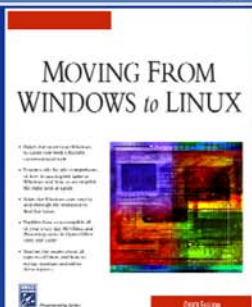
The staff of Monkeewrench software is devastated when three local murders follow the scenarios of the beta release of their new computer game, Serial Killer Detective. They are an oddball crew, college friends who had been traumatized by a friend's murder. In fear for their own lives, they changed their names, skipped town and developed a game where the killer is always caught. Initially hesitant to blow their cover by calling the St. Paul police, they come to the sober realization that there are 17 more scenarios available for download from their

Web site - and 17 more potential victims. The killer could be one of the beta testers, their old nemesis come back to haunt them - or one of the Monkeewrench crew themselves.

P.J. Tracy is the pseudonym of a mother-daughter writing team. This is their first book and it is a sure-fire winner. The plot was fast-paced, the ending a shocker, and the Monkeewrench crew crackled with tension and energy. The technical challenge of figuring out which beta testers have progressed far enough into the game to have knowledge of the fatal scenarios is a clever puzzle that database gurus will enjoy. Highly 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 Ave. and Lockhill-Selma), (210) 344-7776, tries its darnest to keep the recommended books in stock.

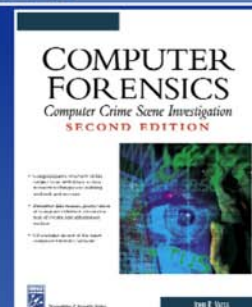
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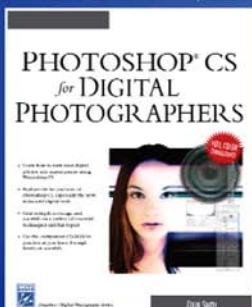
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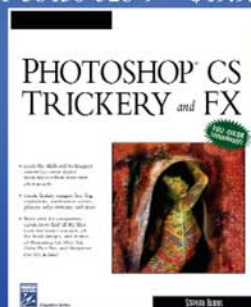
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## Hardware Review

### PCTV HD Ultimate Stick

Published by Pinnacle

Reviewed by Bill James, APCUG Director; Editor & Webmaster, Computer Club of Oklahoma City, [www.ccokc.org](http://www.ccokc.org), [bjames@apcug.net](mailto:bjames@apcug.net)

Some computer products just have a ‘wow’ factor on first sight; the Pinnacle PCTV HD Stick is one of those devices. It is a TV tuner on a USB stick and not just any TV tuner but one that is capable of pulling down Standard Definition (SD) and High Definition (HD) content to your PC.

On seeing the Pinnacle presentation on their PCTV HD Stick at the APCUG Convention in 2008, I have been itching to get my hands on one. I was imagining a new widescreen computer monitor coupled with this device as a means of having a really cheap HDTV. So I purchased a new widescreen monitor (22") and the PCTV HD Stick. The USB device comes in 3 flavors, PCTV HD (\$69.99), PCTV HD Pro (\$99.99) and the top of the line PCTV HD Ultimate (\$129.99). There is also an internal card version (\$79.99). All these devices are designed for Windows XP and are Vista Certified.

There is a separate device with similar features for Mac users (\$129.99). I opted for the ‘Ultimate’ model because of its onboard memory DVR and software. More on that later, but the Ultimate is a plug and play that allows you to start watching and record SD and HDTV almost immediately.

### Packaging

The packaging contains a mini remote control including batteries, a portable telescoping high-gain antenna, A/V adapter cable, A/V adaptor cable, a USB extender cable and the usual manuals and CDs. With the Ultimate model you also get a neat soft leatherette carrying pouch.

### Setting Up

Setting up the PCTV Ultimate could not be easier. This model has all the software preinstalled including the Personal Video Recorder (PVR) that allows you to record up to 2 hours of video. You just plug it in and follow the onscreen instructions and start enjoying live TV within seconds. The on-board memory on the Ultimate can also be used to store additional files. You run setup once, even if you use the device on a different PC, the settings and preference are stored on the device.

You have 3 options in setting up the PCTV:

- 1) Antenna (for digital/analog TV reception);
- 2) Cable (analog TV reception);
- 3) Capture from Cable/Satellite Set-top Box.

For this review we will be using Option 1 – Antenna (digital/analog TV reception). During setup, the PCTV will scan for SD and HD signals via the included antenna. The antenna is designed for digital and analog TV reception in regions with fair to good signal coverage. When using the antenna, it should be fully extended in the upright position as high as possible and near a window. The base of the antenna is magnetic so it should not be placed near a cathode ray tube monitor, television or similar equipment as the electromagnetic field of such devices might deteriorate the signal quality. Also be careful with the magnetic base around other objects that are sensitive to magnetic forces – i.e. PC hard drive. In my region I was able to download all the local SD and HD stations available within my region via the antenna.

### Software

When you first install the PCTV HD Ultimate Stick, it checks whether all the required drivers and the .NET 2.0 Framework are already on your computer and, if necessary, installs them. After the initial startup, every time you start the program, a TV screen appears immediately on your desktop. The integrated memory on the PCTV HD Ultimate Stick is divided into 2 different areas or drives.



*Continued on page 55*

- A re-writable memory area (removable media area) with the TVCenter Pro program and available memory for recorded shows or other user data. The drive is labeled PCTV flash.

- A read-only memory area (CD-ROM area) contains the drivers. This drive is labeled PCTV Start

Also included in the package is Pinnacle Studio QuickStart that allows you to edit your recordings or home movies and transfer them to DVD, complete with custom menus and soundtracks.

### Controls

The package comes with a full-featured remote control. Although small in size it does give complete control of the PCTV. If you elect to use Windows Media Center, the included remote will not work. You will have to purchase a compatible Windows Media Center remote that is available from Pinnacle.

### Display

The first time Pinnacle TVCenter Pro is accessed, you will see the Player. This screen can be full-screen or resized to suit. There are navigation icons that select settings, channels, TV or Radio and the program guide.

### FM Radio

As sort of an added bonus, during setup PCTV stick also scans for available internet radio signals for play back on your PC. It categorizes them by genre rather than call letters. Unfortunately, the software does not provide any other information regarding the available stations or for the music that is being played.

### Picture Quality and Sound Quality

The quality of picture and sound is dependent on your monitor and speakers. The PCTV HD stick is capable of providing digital sound, SD and HD quality picture that if is available within your region.

### Windows Media Center

If you have a PC equipped with Microsoft Windows Vista Home Premium or Ultimate or Windows XP Media Center Edition 2005 and you want to watch and record TV using the Windows Media Center application, then you will have to run TV setup in that application. I'm running Windows Vista Ultimate on my PC and using the Windows Media Center software for my TV viewing and recording, but you can use either product. There is not a conflict between the included software and Windows Media Center. However, the Windows Media Center software overrides the included TVCenter Pro software for TV viewing and recording.

The included remote does not work with Windows Media Center; however you can select channels directly by keyboard input and/or by mouse when viewing TV via Windows Media Center. You can also opt to purchase a compatible Media Center Remote control that is available from Pinnacle for \$29.99. Again, to get the PCTV HD stick to work with Windows Media Center is the matter of selecting the TV setup in Windows Media Center and following the onscreen instructions. Window Media Center will recognize the device and do its own scan and download a TV guide that is used to identify the channels and for time shifting. The time shifting feature allows you to record your favorite TV shows and play them back at a later time. Windows Media Center does not support some of the onboard memory features of the PCTV HD Ultimate stick.

### Conclusion

I now have my cheap HDTV and so far I have not been disappointed. The PCTV HD is pulling free off the air HD signals and displaying them on my monitor in full HD. The PCTV HD Ultimate Stick is a slick ultra-portable USB device that will allow you to watch and record SD and free HD TV. The TV tuner and personal video recorder software run directly from the Stick's on-board flash memory, so you can plug it into any PC and start watching and recording TV in seconds – no installation required.

It supports both analog (NTSC) and digital (ATSC) TV signals. The tuner hardware is also ready for ClearQAM (unencrypted digital cable).

You can record up to 2 hours of TV directly to the stick for playback on any PC and save recordings to your hard drive in MPEG-1/2 or DivX formats or even direct-to-DVD.



## Software Review

Easy Media Creator Suite (v.10)

Published by Roxio

Reviewed by John Roy, President, The PC Users Group of Connecticut, [www.tpcug-ct.org](http://www.tpcug-ct.org), [johnroy1@comcast.net](mailto:johnroy1@comcast.net)

Roxio, a division and brand of Sonic Solutions, has been a leader in burning software for many years. I personally have used the product since it was distributed by Adaptec several years ago. The CD/DVD burning software today far exceeds the basic functions that existed in those early days. Roxio Easy Media Creator (EMC) will accomplish so much more than the basic burning tasks and is now a full featured suite.

Doing this review has allowed me to explore and appreciate the many applications within this suite. Because EMC is so comprehensive I will provide an overview in this article but follow up with more details in future issues of our newsletter.

Before I start boasting about some of these neat applications I must discuss some installation issues. The product would not install on my primary computer! After trying several times to install under various scenarios I checked for possible solutions using Roxio's web product support and also their user forum. None of those sources provided any clues so I connected with technical phone support. I was quite surprised that the wait time was very small and the technician was professional and extremely competent. Unfortunately after almost two hours of phone support the problem was not solved.

The tech support effort involved major system modifications including deletion of all files associated with my original EMC version 9, my Nero burner software, a complete registry purge line by line of anything remotely associated with or influenced by Roxio software, removal of all anti-virus software and firewalls, elimination of all startup files except system essentials and running registry clean utilities. Nothing worked! A trouble report was left open but I never received any further calls. In their users forum I did find one other person with the exact same problem and no solution.

Fortunately I have a couple of other computers at my house so I tried installing the version 10 on both an older desktop and on my primary laptop system. The install went smoothly on both of those systems. So until I get a chance to rebuild my primary desktop I won't know if I can ever use the latest version on it. On a side note before trying to install EMC version 10 I had version 9 successfully working. After all the system changes I could no longer load my EMC version 9. So now I struggled with that problem for a few days. Once again not finding any online solutions I contacted a phone support tech who was able to direct me to a download utility that cleared the problem and allowed me once again install version 9.

While the above debacle was frustrating don't let it deter you from considering the purchase of this capable applications suite. So let's look at why you should consider owning this product.

Once you get past the install you will see a super clean interface with applications divided into seven primary areas; Audio, Data and Backup, Copy, Media and Devices, Photo, Video, and Tools. Each application provides another set of choices. Audio has (13), Data and Backup (5), Copy (5) Media and Devices (2), Photo (9), Video (11), and Tools (8). Now that is a huge chest of applications at your

*Continued on page 57*



## dvnation.com

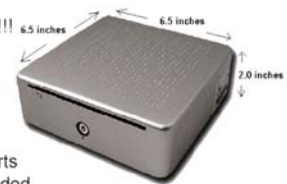
The miniPC: The smallest Windows / Linux PC ever

\* 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**



disposal. If you were to purchase each primary application separately it would cost you a few hundred dollars. This package sells for about \$100 but if you watch for sales you can buy it for much less.

When you think of Roxio and burning software the primary reason most people purchase the product is for those tools. The Copy and Data and Backup modules take care of those basic requirements along with some other goodies. For anyone familiar with an older version, you will still find the original Creator Classic still there but spruced up. That old standby is quite the workhorse. You select the type and size of disc you want to burn and it will keep you updated on available space as you move files or folders you want to burn into a holding area. Once your files and folders are selected you can burn your CD/DVD directly or make an image for later burning. Of course you have advanced options to define the type of disc, speed, copies, etc. You can also make a bootable or multimedia disc and go directly to creating disc labels of your burn project.

The backup module provides capability to be selective of the files you want backed up or restored and at what frequency. If you want more powerful options then you will be provided an upgrade link. A range of backup devices and media including Blu-ray discs and HD DVD discs are supported. Large files can be automatically spanned across multiple discs as required.

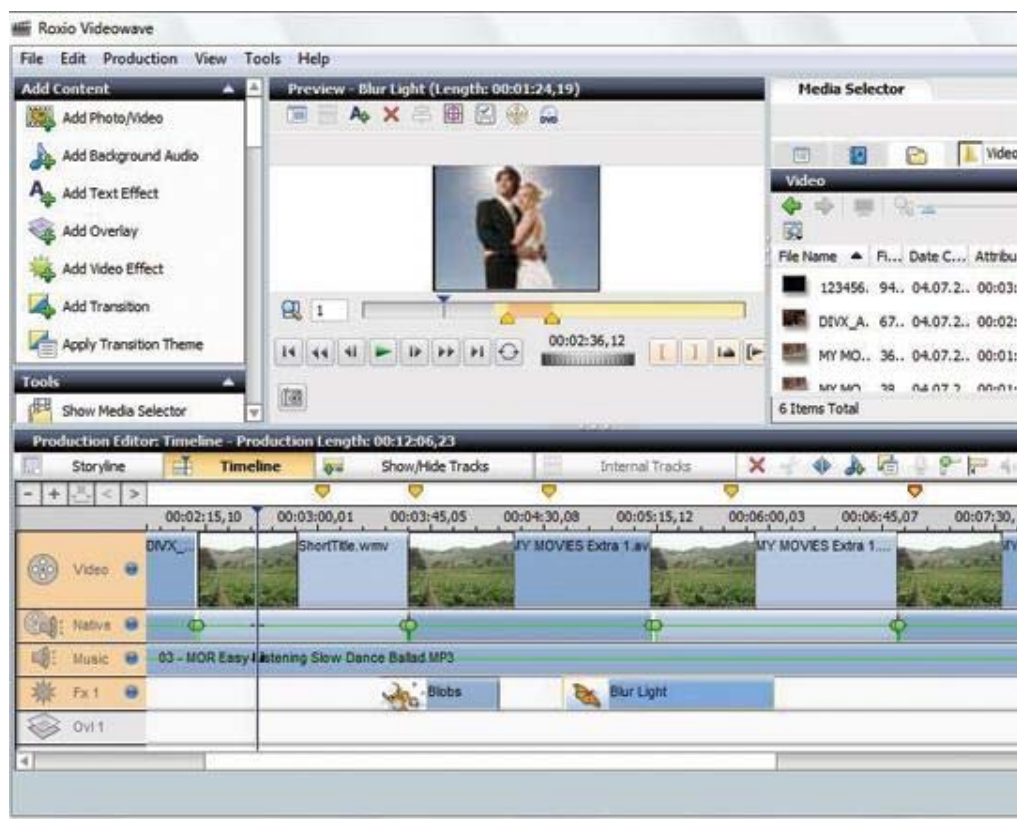
The Audio module provides thirteen selections that cover just about everything you could possibly want to do with audio. All the expected tools are there to rip CD's into MP3 files or create audio CDs from other formats. You can make custom CD's with fades, effects and mixing. Tools are there to edit song information and to do batch conversions to formats of your choice. One module allows you to instantly capture any audio playing on your computer, including streaming radio. There is one utility "Convert LPs and Tapes" that I was especially enthused about. At our meeting we have had the question of how to convert LPs and Tapes asked many times in the past. While there are several methods to accomplish this, Roxio EMC has made it easy and crystal clear with this application. So for those of you that have a desire to do this you should give Roxio EMC serious consideration.

The Photo application contains a full featured photo suite with powerful editing, effects and touchup tools. It is complete with all the ancillary things you want to do with photos such as creating slideshows, panoramas, albums, greeting cards, calendars and layout templates. You can quickly optimize a group of photos for sending email.


The Video application is another full featured suite for importing, editing, customizing and exporting video into various formats. Included is CinePlayer a full featured video player. The features are similar to those found in Pinnacle Studio or Adobe Premier. While some of Roxio EMC tools are not as robust as the leaders you will find some tools not available in the others. The fact that it may not be as flexible as the stand alone programs it will be easier for the novice. If you are a true video buff then even if you own other video software you would also want to have EMC in your software chest.

The smallest stand alone module is Media Manager that enables users to easily browse, manage, share and protect their media files. The final application module is Tools. This module is used for creating disc labels, obtaining drive information, erasing discs, creating virtual disc drives and a few other assorted utilities. Roxio EMC is Vista compatible and includes gadgets for doing things directly from the desktop.

I'm certain most computer users will find enough applications on Roxio Easy Media Creator to make the investment worthwhile. If this review has captured your interest pay a visit to Roxio's website at <http://www.roxio.com/>. They have some great videos that will demonstrate these neat features



# November 2003

<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>Saturday</i>
						<b>1</b> MCSE (Adv) 8:30 A.M. - Noon *PRR* Programming C++ 2:30 - 4:30 P.M.
<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> Genealogy 7 - 9 P.M. (Cancelled)	<b>4</b> Internet & E-mail 10 A.M. - Noon, class 5 of 6 *PRR* Windows XP 1:30 - 3:30 P.M., class 5 of 6 *PRR* Board of Directors 6:30 - 9:30 P.M. (Members are welcome to attend)	<b>5</b> Introduction to Windows 10 A.M. - Noon, class 5 of 6 *PRR* Windows XP 1 - 3 P.M., class 5 of 6 *PRR*	<b>6</b> Student's Practice Lab 9:00 A.M. - Noon (a/r) High Growth Stock Investing 6:30 - 8:30 P.M.	<b>7</b> Small Business Server 8 - 10 A.M. *PRR* Dr. is In 9:00 A.M. - Noon Photoshop, Advanced 1 - 6 P.M., Class 5 of 6 *PRR* PC Alamo Magazine & PDF 7 - 9 P.M.	<b>8</b> MCSE (Adv) 8:30 A.M. - Noon *PRR*
<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> General Meeting @ Croasacada 7 - 9 P.M. Presenter:	<b>11</b> Internet & E-mail 10 A.M. - Noon, class 6 of 6 *PRR* Windows XP 1:30 - 3:30 P.M., class 6 of 6 *PRR* Alamo Coders (DotNET - Web Development Technology) 7 - 9 P.M.	<b>12</b> Power Internet, 10 A.M. - Noon Introduction to Windows 10 A.M. - Noon, class 6 of 6 *PRR* Windows XP 1 - 3 P.M., class 6 of 6 *PRR*	<b>13</b> Student Practice Lab 9:00 A.M. - Noon	<b>14</b> Computer with problems Dr. is In 9:00 A.M. - Noon (Last Day for "Dr. is In" Clinic at this Learning Center) Photoshop, Calendars 1 - 3 P.M., *PRR*	<b>15</b> MCSE (Adv) 8:30 A.M. - Noon *PRR* Programming C++ 2:30 - 4:30 P.M. (Last day for classes at this Learning Center)
<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> IBD / Vector Vest, 6 - 8 P.M. (Cancelled)	<b>20</b> Student Practice Lab 9:00 A.M. - Noon (Cancelled)	<b>21</b> Computer with problems Dr. is In 9:00 A.M. - Noon (Cancelled)	<b>22</b> MCSE (Adv) 8:30 A.M. - Noon *PRR* (Cancelled) Learning Center Desk Staff Meeting 1 - 3 P.M.
<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> CorelDRAW X3 7 - 9 P.M. (Cancelled)	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b> WordPerfect 7 - 9 P.M. (a/r) (Cancelled)	<b>27</b> Happy Thanksgiving  Closed for the day.	<b>28</b> Computer with problems Dr. is In 9:00 A.M. - Noon (Cancelled)	<b>29</b> MCSE (Adv) 8:30 A.M. - Noon *PRR* (Cancelled)
<b>30</b>						
Alamo PC Organization						
PRR = Pre-Registration Required						

# The Learning Center

Alamo PC Organization classes and study groups

I have some news for you that is important! Please read the entire message.

Alamo PC Organization will be closing the Crossroads Mall Computer Learning Center by the end of December. This is NOT the entire organization, JUST the Learning Center. The reasons for closing are numerous including; falling membership, lack of students, volunteers, new members, and the high cost of maintaining this facility. (Rent, telephones, internet, insurance, and utilities just to name a few) An announcement regarding sales of equipment, furniture, etc. will be forthcoming in the next few weeks.

All Classes and Study Groups held at the Learning Center will cease to meet after November 15th, unless the individual Class or Group leaders make arrangements to continue elsewhere. Alamo PC is continuing to look at options to maintain a Learning Center on a smaller scale elsewhere, If you can help please contact [membership@alamopc.org](mailto:membership@alamopc.org)

The High Growth Stock Investing Study Group will continue to meet and private tutoring will still be available.

The Dr Is In Computer Diagnostic Clinic will hold it's last session on Friday November 14th.

Questions, comments or helpful suggestions regarding the closure may be referred to [membership@alamopc.org](mailto:membership@alamopc.org) You ask the desk staff to pass comments along.

It has been a real honor and pleasure to work with all of you and I hope Alamo PC will find some means to continue classes and to let you know soon if that is a possibility.

Thanks,

Linda Bianchi

Director of Education

Alamo PC Organization



## Alamo PC Coders

Alamo Coders is a FREE San Antonio area IT professionals Users Group that focus on the tools, technologies, and programming languages that help a software developer/architect/manager in today's industry. If you would like to learn more about software development or the tools that are involved in that process, or if you just want to learn more about what Alamo Coders has to offer the San Antonio area IT community, then please join our group.

More information about this group may be found at <http://www.alamocoders.net/Home/tabid/36/Default.aspx>

**When:** Second Tuesday of every month

**Time:** 6:00:00 PM: Food, drink, meet & greet

6:30:00 PM: Presentation

7:30:00 PM: Q&A, meet & greet

**Location:** ALL meetings are held at New Horizons Learning Center, 8200 West IH 10, Suite 500, San Antonio, Texas 78230, (210) 308-8200.

**Directions:** New Horizons is located at 8200 West IH 10, Suite 500. From IH 10 West Exit Medical/Callaghan. Take the turnaround and remain on the access road. The New Horizons building is located on the right side pass Benihana. Turn right on Mid-Horizon Boulevard the parking garage is located on the right side. From IH 10 East exit Medical/Callaghan. Remain on the access road. The New Horizons building is located on the right side pass Benihana. Turn right on Mid – Horizon Boulevard the parking garage is located on the right side. Parking for New Horizons students is provided in the parking garage or on the parking area under the trees.

## 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.

**Contact:** Maynard Burstein

<maynardb@juno.com> 735-3288

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

**Where:** Contact Maynard for location

**Pre-registration:** Call Maynard

**Technical Rating** ★ - ★★★

## Private or Semi-Private Tutorials - \$

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

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

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

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

**Where:** Learning Center

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

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

**Technical Rating:** ★

## 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

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

## 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.

# Help Numbers

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

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

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

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

## Step One

- 1 Computers for Beginners
- 2 Windows 98
- 3 Windows XP

### Microsoft Office

- 4 Word
- 5 Excel
- 6 PowerPoint
- 7 Publisher
- 8 WinFax Pro

### Corel Office

- 9 WordPerfect
- 10 CorelDraw
- 11 Quattro Pro
- 12 Paint Shop Pro

### Photoshop

- 13 Adobe Photoshop

### Internet and E-mail

- 14 Internet Basics / ISP Connection
- 15 Web Page Development
- 16 Internet Explorer
- 17 MS Outlook Express
- 18 Opera
- 19 Mozilla
- 20 Dreamweaver
- 21 .Net
- 22 Flash
- 23 RoadRunner

### Open Office

- 24 OpenOffice

### Financial

- 25 Quick Books
- 26 Quicken

### Auction Online

- 27 eBay

### Genealogy

- 28 Family Origins for Windows
- 29 Genealogy

### Communications / Management

- 30 Time&Chaos
- 31 Act
- 32 Goldmine

### Data Base

- 33 Access
- 34 AlphaFour
- 35 dBase
- 36 Paradox
- 37 MySQL

### Networking

- 38 Networking

### Other

- 39 Hardware / Setting Up A New PC
- 40 Maintenance and Security
- 41 Home Help

## Step Two

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

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


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Inksell	IFC
Laura B. Grover, E.A.	40
New Life Toner	IFC
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## Classified Ads

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

- For Sale** Windows XP Professional disk. New and unopened. Discount. Contact Carl Marmion at 494-6797
- 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](mailto: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.



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

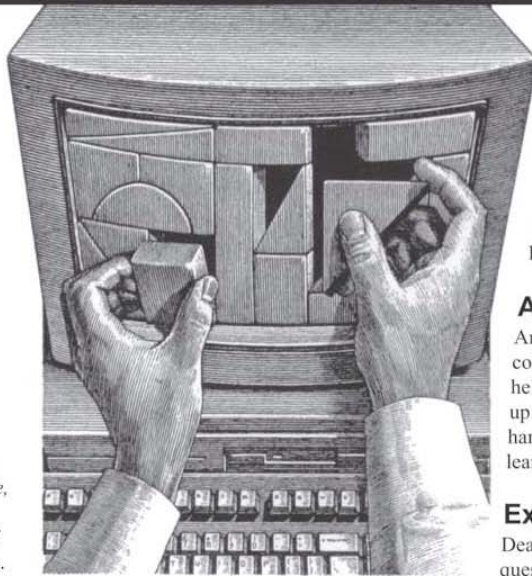
Every month you can attend a presentation meeting, which is open to our 2,500 members. Local and national companies provide the first glimpses of new products and discounts on existing products. There are also drawings for FREE hardware and software.

## 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](http://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](http://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 year - \$120

☐ 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

# 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 your 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.



