

Midland
Computer
Club

BITS AND BYTES

April 2012

Newsletter of the Midland Computer Club

<http://mcc.apcug.org/>

GENERAL CLUB MEETING 7:00 P.M.

4th Wednesday of the month at the
Midland Community Center
2001 George St., Midland, MI

This month's date:
April 25, 2012

**We will be meeting in Room 101.
Senior Center entrance will not be
open. Come in the Community Center
main entrance and down the hall
towards the Senior Center, or use the
back hall that leads to the Oasis Pool.**

This month's topic:
Disaster Recovery in the Digital Age - Laura
Hammel

What you missed!
In March, Howard Lewis presented Setting Up and
Securing Your Home Router.

Upcoming Activities:
May - Adobe® Photoshop® Lightroom® - Bill Tower

Program Coordinators
Howard Lewis lewis3ha@chartermi.net
Bill Tower stressed@tir.com

Please let Howard or Bill know of topics you
would like covered at future meetings.

President Piper's Ponderings



I recently have seen five examples of
how technology is changing and
affecting our daily lives.

I attended a high school function in
which the top students were being
honored. All the proud parents were
gathered to see their children receive an award. But Mr.
Marsh was absent; he was traveling on business and was
currently in Switzerland. No problem. When his daughter
was up next, the principal gave a signal to his secretary
who called Mr. Marsh with Skype on an iPad. In seconds
he was on the line. The secretary held up the iPad and
Mr. Marsh could see and hear his daughter speak. When
her twin spoke 20 minutes later, the process was
repeated, flawlessly. Really cool.

Our Board, recognizing the pervasiveness of Google and
the constantly changing apps they offer, has suggested
we devote one or more meetings to examining some of
these apps. I counted 46 on their home page. How many
could you name? How many do you use? Would you be
willing to spend 5 minutes at a meeting telling the group
how you use one of the apps?

The new Windows 8 operating system has two givens: (1)
veteran users hate it when they first try it, and (2) these
same users come to love it. Love it or hate it, the fact is
that Win 8 represents the future. I recall how users
struggled with the 'new' Win 95; I recall how much I
struggled with the first GUI, Win 3.1; I recall how much I
hated to leave the DOS command line.

Facebook is a force that is with us. Like much new
technology, it can be used for both good and evil. But it is
the new medium of communication. It reminds me of
when having and using an email address was thrust upon
us. So learn it but use it wisely. The latest Secret Service
scandal vis-à-vis Sarah Palin is another example that
everything we say, electronically, may come back to
haunt us.

(continued on Page 2)

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Board Meeting

Next board meeting will be
 7 p.m., May 8, 2012, at
 Chapel Lane Presbyterian Church,
 5501 Jefferson Ave., Midland MI

President Piper's Ponderings (cont. from Page 1)

Finally, blogs are reportedly on the decline by both large and small companies. They have been replaced by Facebook, Twitter and Tumblr, which require less time and resources.

(The above comments are the opinion of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Midland Computer Club.)

Useful, useless and strange (in no particular order) Web Sites (submitted by Howard Lewis):

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

If you've ever thought about making your own brew, here's your chance.

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

Have some time to kill? Here are some volunteering options that you might find interesting.

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

Learn about a variety of scams and frauds and report those that you may experience.

<http://tinyurl.com/7dnhbk59>

Nature can be interesting. This video shows how an acorn, in over eight months, becomes an oak seedling.

<http://tinyurl.com/7pmau3h>

Leap day has come and gone, but how much do you know about its origin? This video explains that and what will happen in the future

Membership Enrollment Form

NAME _____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ ZIP _____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____

Membership dues FAMILY (\$20) STUDENT (\$15) New Member _____ Renewal _____

Please fill out the above form and mail it along with payment of check or money order to :

MIDLAND COMPUTER CLUB
 1816 Bauss Ct
 Midland, MI 48642-4023

Attn: Membership Chairman

You may also pay for membership at a regular club meeting

Tips, Tricks & Techniques (submitted by Howard Lewis)

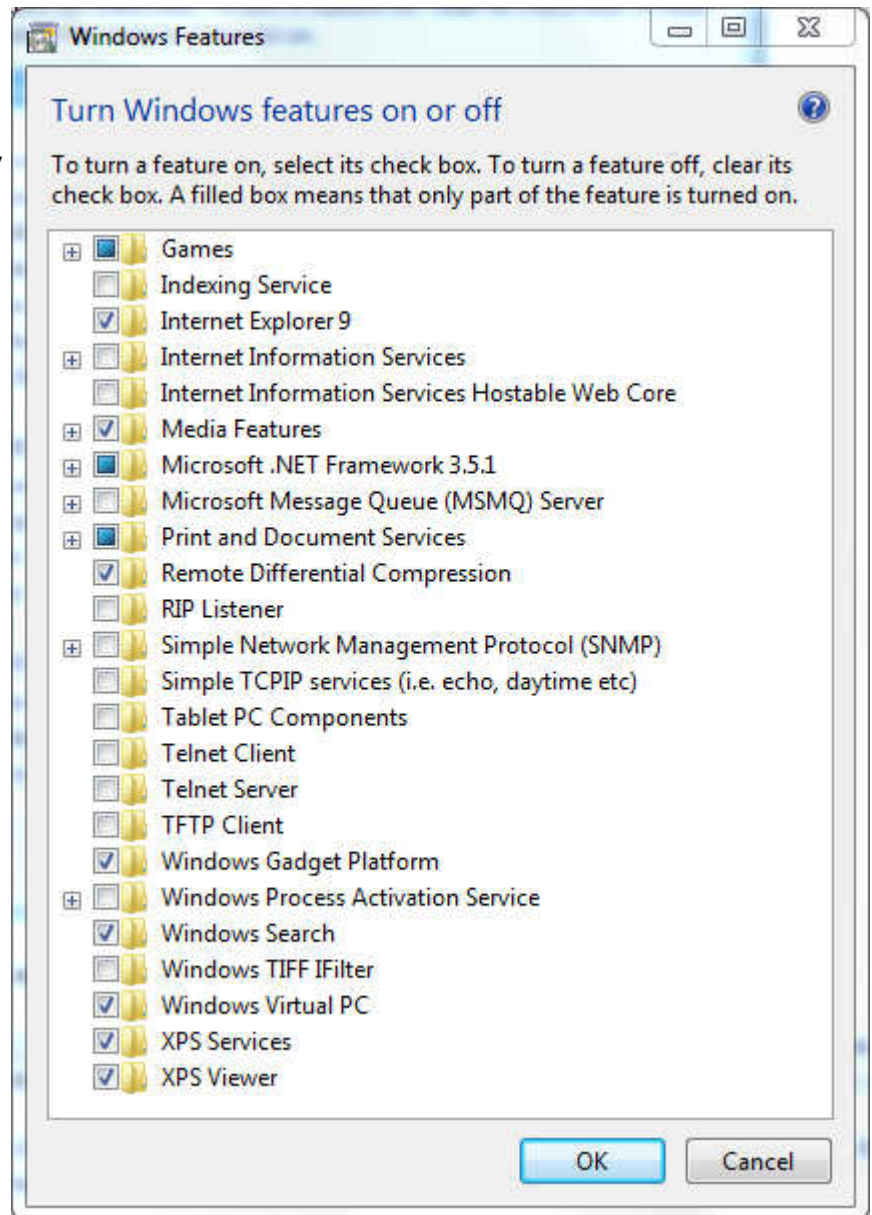
Turning Off Windows Features

Windows XP (and all previous versions of Windows) allowed you to turn off only a limited number of the actual features that Windows installs. This was called the **Windows Components Wizard**. But Windows Vista and Windows 7 changed all of that significantly and renamed it **Windows Features**. While you cannot turn off everything that Windows installs (why would you install Windows in the first place!), the list has been significantly enhanced (See Figure).

To access the **Windows Features** tool, simply click on the *Start* button, type *Windows Features* into the **Search Box** and press *Enter*. You may have to give Windows Administrator access to run this feature.

Once the list has been populated, you can then uncheck the boxes that you would like to turn off — e.g., you probably wouldn't want to turn off printing and then try to print something.

If you turn off something and then find you cannot perform that action, you can always turn the feature back on.



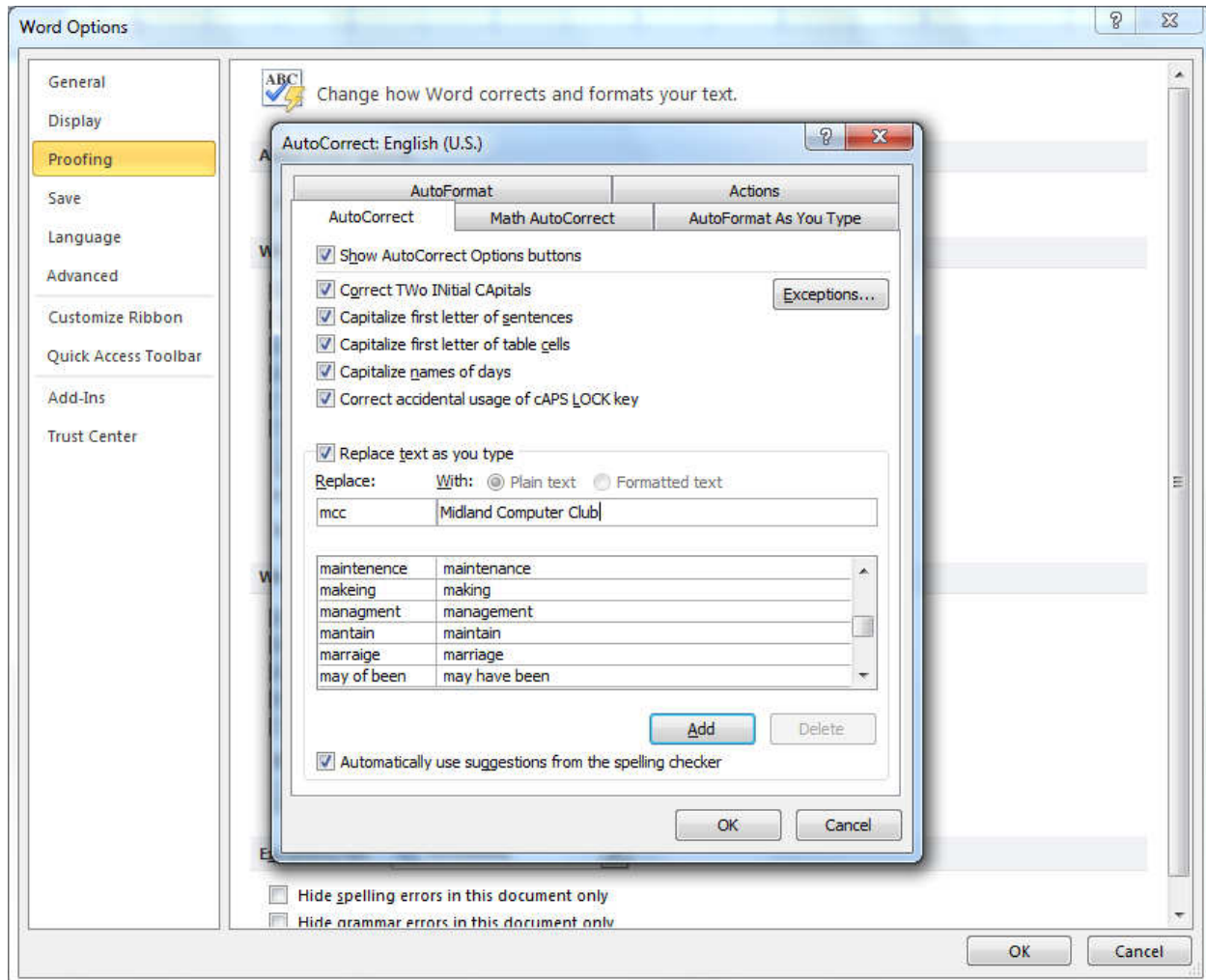
Use AutoCorrect To Speed Up Your Typing

Microsoft Word's AutoCorrect feature is a useful tool to correct spelling errors while typing. However, it can also be used to replace abbreviations with the term the abbreviation is for. For example, instead of always having to type in Midland Computer Club, you could use AutoCorrect to replace mcc with Midland Computer Club. To setup AutoCorrect to make this change do the following:

1. Click *File* and select *Options*.
2. In the left pane, select *Proofing* and then click on *AutoCorrect Options*.
3. Make sure the *Replace text as you type entry* is selected.
4. In the box beneath **Replace:** type the abbreviation (*mcc*) in the left portion and the words you would like inserted for the abbreviation (*Midland Computer Club*) in the right portion.
5. Next, click *Add* and then *OK*.

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Now when you are typing, whenever you type `mcc`, it will be replaced with Midland Computer Club. Sometimes you may wish to simply use `MCC` in your document. To handle that particular situation, type the abbreviation, press space key (this will cause the full term to be inserted), and then press the Undo shortcut key (`CTRL-Z`). This will undo the substitution and let your abbreviation stand as is. This can be used for any term that you use a lot and you wish to speed up the entry.



Quicker Searches In Google

When you type some search terms into Google, you will probably end up with a boatload of results that are not necessary. One way of narrowing down your search is to limit your search to a specific site. For example, if you are researching a problem that you are having with Windows, you can limit your search to the Microsoft website. To use this feature, you simply type in the term **site** followed by a **colon** and then the **url** of the site. In the above example, you can limit your Windows research by appending the term `site:microsoft.com` to the terms you have already used to define your problem. Notice that when using the term, no spaces are placed around the colon.

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Articles in this Newsletter have been obtained from APCUG with the authors' permission for publication by APCUG member groups. The Midland Computer Club has not verified the information contained in the articles nor tested procedures/recommended software. Articles do not necessarily reflect the views of the Midland Computer Club

Tips and Tricks for Enhancing the PC Visual Display, Part 1

By Bonnie L. Snyder, Member, Pikes Peak Computer Application Society, CO

February 2012 issue, Bits and Bytes, <http://ppcompas.apcug.org>, [BonnieLS21 \(at\) gmail.com](mailto:BonnieLS21@gmail.com), <http://tvvip.org>

If you are in need of assistance in seeing the screen on a PC, there are several options available to help you do this. If you are using Windows 7, for instance, there is a built-in screen magnifying program that is head and shoulders above the one in Windows XP. You can run it at any time (provided your video can use the Win 7 Aero display) by pressing Windows key – plus on the keyboard. Pressing Windows key – plus additional times will increase the magnification with each press, and Windows key – minus will decrease the magnification with each press.

Once you are in the magnification program, you can set up the program with the options you want. To do this, go down to the taskbar and click on the magnify icon. A window will open toward the top of the screen and an icon that looks like a “gear” will allow you to choose your options, including having the magnification load automatically at startup. You can change options on the fly by using Windows key – L for Lens mode, Windows key – D for Dock mode, Windows key – F for Full screen mode.

An interesting freeware program you might want to try is aRuler for Windows. It works under Win XP and Win 7. Initially it loads a ruler that you can use to help focus on the line of text you wish to read. It is configurable in length, and the ruler's visual display can be changed to the user's preference. It also includes a screen magnification option from 1X to 4X.
< <http://www.arulerforwindows.com/> >

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One of the things that can cause visual fatigue when reading on a computer screen is the brightness of the display. There is a freeware program called Tinted Window which works in both Win XP and Win 7 that can mitigate this problem. Once loaded (it is a Java executable so it doesn't install), Tinted Window comes up in a small window. Right-click on that window and you can set up the color of the tint you wish. The window also allows for full screen or just a lens. < <http://www.softoxi.com/tinted-window.html> >

Product Review: Digitz® Wireless EZmouse

By David Kazmer, Member, SCV Computer Club, California

April 2012 issue of the DATALINE, www.scvpcg.org, [scvcomputerclub \(at\) gmail.com](mailto:scvcomputerclub@gmail.com)

Many years ago I got my first notebook PC and found out about all the gadgets it would take to be prepared to use it at any location. There were so many cables that the notebook case almost wouldn't fit under an airplane seat. Since then, the new technologies that emerged, especially wireless, have taken a lot of the bulk out of the case. One of the remaining bulky items was the mouse, until I discovered the wireless Digitz EZmouse.

The first attraction was the flat, slim design, perfect for my notebook case. It is a small rectangular shape just 4" long by 2.1" wide, by .7" thick and weighs just .132 lbs, but that is just the tip of the iceberg. It is very comfortable to use, as you don't have to arch your hand as with other mice. The shape fits under my hand very nicely, and the two long skids on the bottom glide very smoothly on just about any surface. There are the standard two buttons and scroll wheel, plus pressing down on the scroll wheel is the third button.

One of the amazing features is that it does not require any conventional batteries! The unit contains two lithium-ion polymer batteries, one internal and one attached through a USB connector.

The external battery, about 1.25" by 2.25", fits into the rear of the mouse and detaches for charging from any PC USB port. A red LED by the scroll wheel will blink when the external battery has about 15 minutes left. A complete charge would take about two hours and will operate the mouse for about five to six weeks of normal use. While the external battery is detached and charging, the internal battery will keep the mouse operational for up to three days. To facilitate possible charging access space problems, the USB connector on the external battery is attached by a swivel, and there is an LED at the back of the battery to indicate the progression of the charging. Life expectancy of the batteries, based on normal use, is about eight years! This innovation is impressive.



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Stored in the mouse is the wireless 2.4G nano-receiver which plugs into any computer USB port. Also, if the mouse is not used for about 20 minutes it will go into a sleep mode to save the battery; just click the mouse to wake it up. The optical sensor is 1600 DPI for high accuracy. A felt carrying bag is included. The mouse is both PC and MAC plug-and-play compatible.

Ready for the icing on the cake? The top cover can be replaced by one of your own design by ordering it from Digitz and sending them a JPG picture of your choice! Check <http://shop.ezmouse.com/us/> for more details and an informative video. If the display does not appear in English, just click on the small American Flag icon.

SCV Computer Club Rating (0-5, 5 being best)



Digitz EZMouse

www.digitzgroup.com / <http://shop.ezmouse.com/us/>
info@digitzgroup.com

\$49.95 (Free shipping – USA and Canada)

Facebook's Privacy Policy

By Constance Brown, President, Canton Alliance Massillon User Group, Ohio
March 2012 issue, The Memory Map, <http://www.camug.com>, Constanceb (at) camug.com

Did you know that Facebook's privacy policy is more than 1300 words longer than the United States Constitution without the amendments? *That Facebook had 400 million registered users in May of 2010, half of whom login daily? That Facebook has ** 800 million users as of February 2012? That people spend more than 500 billion minutes there each month? How private are your communications on Facebook?

It used to be that you set up your privacy policy when you joined Facebook and could revise it from time to time. Now Facebook "has revised its privacy policy to require users to opt out if they wish to keep information private, making most of that information public by default. Some personal data is now being shared with third-party Web sites."

If you want to protect your privacy on Facebook, you have to engage a lot of buttons and select many controls. The new privacy policy itself is *45000 words long. To enjoy privacy you will need to press 50 buttons and make 170 selections. Not exactly easy and certainly time consuming. You will have to make sure to select to show information only "to me" or "to friends." You will not want to share with "friends of friends."

"Under the Account Settings option, in the Facebook Ads tab, two options are automatically turned on to share some information with advertising networks and friends. Anyone who wants to keep this information private must uncheck the boxes in that tab.

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“Facebook has also added a feature, called community pages, which automatically links personal data, like hometown or university, to topic pages for that town or university. The only way to disappear from those topic pages is to delete personal data from Facebook.”

**“Facebook does not sell user’s information. They provide targeted advertisement.

From Richard Allan, Facebook policy director.

“Q. Do you ever think of selling any user information that’s held in facebook? [sic]

“A. No... Facebook has a business model. We looked at it and there are three ways you can run a service like ours.

“You could charge people subscriptions. And we decided early on, we didn’t want to do that and we never will. That we’re not going to charge people to subscribe to the service.

“The second way would be to sell data. And we looked at that and said that’s not a very good business model because nobody will trust you.

“So the third way is to show people advertising. So they can use the service freely, but they get ads on the page. And that’s what we do. Those ads are targeted according to your age, interest, where you live... but the advertiser doesn’t get the data. They get to show the ad to you.

“Richard Allan is a former Liberal Democrat MP, a UK political party with a position of cultural liberalism and civil liberty. Now he works for Facebook, which is at the centre of a contentious debate on what role sites of its ilk play in free expression and free speech.

*May 2010 New York Times

**Bitcoinmedia

Geek Busters! Part Deux

By Bryan Lambert – www.geeks.com



In this week’s [Tech Tip](#) we’ll look at some common “techy” misconceptions that we’d like to dispel with “[Geek Busters!](#)” - sending myths into hiatus! Without further preamble, I give you our items for this week’s Tech Tip Geek Busters!



#1 Facebook wants to charge you money for its service

It seems like a week doesn’t go by that the rumor mill churns yet again that [Facebook](#) wants to charge you some kind of fee for its service. Basically, put them out to pasture - Zuckerberg and company loves your information that we all (maybe too) freely give out to want to charge us for the privilege of paying him to give it. So, feel free to grouse about the latest changes to the format but know that for now and into the foreseeable future, **That Facebook is content to just be happy mining YOUR data.**

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#2 Apple “invented” the PC (or the MP3 player; or the Tablet computer).

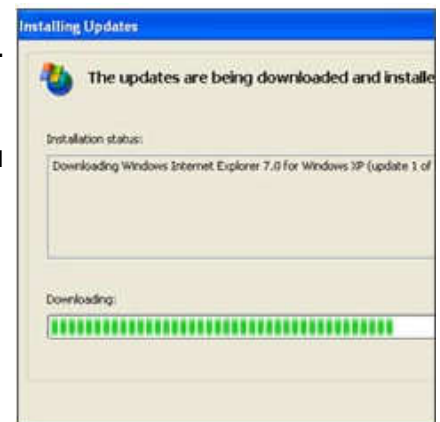
All of these are an astounding no. Apple marketed one of the first Do It Yourself (DIY) personal computers (for an astounding \$666.66 (no, Steve Jobs is not the Antichrist either) and had a strong foothold in the market well before IBM unleashed its version of the PC onto the world a few years later - but many companies marketed computers well before Apple (some notable examples are the MITS Alter; HP 9100 (and even if you want to dig further back you can find examples like Honeywell’s Kitchen computer and even the DIY Simon that you could purchase the plans for).



Ditto for MP3 players (remember the Genica Tavarua) and **tablet computers have been around for ages** (it just took Apple to make them fun and bring them out of the business world and into our lives - with tons of knock-offs coming on its heels screaming “me too! me too! ”).

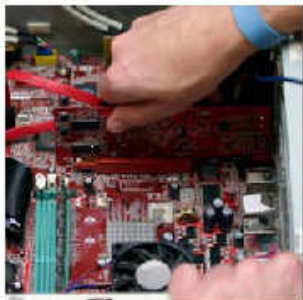
#3 Running Windows Updates will ruin my computer

Actually, quite the opposite may be true - if you avoid running updates, especially security updates, you put your computer at risk. While it is true that every once in a while an update has some - unexpected consequences - for the most part you are better safe than sorry running the update. However, it has to be said that if you update an entire operating system, then there is the strong possibility that many of your favorite programs will not migrate well to the newer version of the operating system (not that this has ever held me back - thank goodness for Virtual Machines and especially for XP Mode on Windows 7)



#4 Dell (or Apple, or HP, or Acer; or “insert companies name here”) manufacturers their own computers

While some companies may still ASSEMBLE some of their computers to order, most computer companies no longer own any manufacturing facilities or make their own computers. There are a few exceptions, but for the most part, large computer companies have third party manufacturers build their computers (which is why some of the largest BUILDERS of computers are companies that you may have never heard of, such as Quanta Computer, Compal Electronics and Hon Hai Precision (aka, Foxconn Electronics)).



Be assured that the computer you are probably reading this Tech Tip on was more than likely not actually MADE by the company that is on the label. This is one of the big reasons computers are basically considered commodity items (yes, even that shiny Apple PC - rolling off the same assembly line with Dell, HP, etc.) and tend to have similar repair rates (which also means that they also tend to use many of the same OEM parts and components as well). **This doesn’t mean that your computer was made poorly; or even that one computer may be “better” than another - it just means that they are all pretty much the same.**

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In Conclusion

We hope you liked this week's Tech Tip! While urban legends and myths run rampant in the tech arena, rest assured that we here at Tech Tips have your back and are ready to beat back the hounds of ignorance and set a world on fire with Geek Busters!

Streaming Media

By John Somers, member, ICON Users Group, MO

March 2012 issue, The ICON – Newsletter of the Interactive Computer Owners Network

www.iconusersgroup.org , [Jesomersmail \(at\) mail.com](mailto:Jesomersmail@mail.com)

“Streaming” is listening to music, watching a TV program or movie as it is being delivered to you over the internet. The technology is very difficult (say geek intensive) but it works well for many of us and is an alternative to cable or satellite delivery of the signals. Several years ago Bill Gates said famously or infamously, “The internet, who needs it!” And this year Steve Jobs said, “We are in the post PC era”. More and more people use the internet and communicate over smart phones and tablets and do not use computers as we know them. Smart phones and tablets are indeed computers but without a large monitor and a keyboard.

Streaming of music began in the mid to late 90's as personal computers became more powerful and the networks connecting them became capable of supporting faster data rates. As these trends continued, it became possible to stream TV programs and eventually movies. This is different from buying or renting a TV program or movie which is downloaded to your computer for you to watch at your convenience. The driving force is us—we do not want to be tethered to the radio or TV stations schedule or have to go to a movie theatre or to a store to buy a DVD. We want to watch what we want when we want it. Time shifting has become more sophisticated compared to the days of the VHS or Beta (remember them?) Netflix recommends 5 Mb/s or more for the best audio and video experience.

First, the sources. (And I will write only about common and legal methods/sources of content, not about illegal/pirated sources of content—mostly or completely off-shore now and clearly violating copyright.)

All the websites listed in this article are .com's unless another domain is listed. (Example: Pandora.com)

MUSIC: Pandora, Spotify, 8tracks, Deezer, fizy, Grooveshark, Last.fm, Mflow, MOG, Pandora, Qriocity, Rhapsody, Slacker, Thumbplay, we7, WiMP and Zune are among the streaming music sources. This list is probably not complete as things change practically daily. Pandora and Rhapsody are among the best known. Pandora is free but you get ads. There is a paid version (\$3.50/month) without ads. You get to choose your artist or genre or composer or song and they deliver that or similar material to you. It is also available on many automobiles and on tablets and smart phones as well as computers. For details of how each of these services work and if you need to download a player, and whether they are free or pay I refer you to their websites. Which, if any, you choose, is a very personal choice: what works for you. Your computer will understand

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the format as all send MP3's and other common music formats. Only Microsoft uses Windows Media Audio files for music but Zune (Microsoft's service) streams in MP3, AAC, MP4, mp4, mov, and WMA formats.

TV Programs and Movies: some commercial, some not. Zune, Netflix, Atom.com, blip.tv, Break.com, Citytv.com.co, DaCast, EngageMedia, Flickr, iFilm, imeem, Metacafe, MoboVivo, Multiply, MyVideo, Openfilm, Phanfare, Qik, Revver, RuTube, ScienceStage, sevenload, showmedo, Tudou, Twango, U-verse, Veoh, Vahoo Video, Youku, and YouTube are among sources for streaming video on-line.

I want to emphasize the commercial ones with commercial TV programs and movies and those most used: Netflix, Hulu, and HuluPlus, and Amazon. You can also get TV in Win7 with Media Center set for TV. Some networks are increasingly moving you to their site for the TV programs (CBS on Hulu for example). Disney-ABC, NBC and Fox own Hulu. Netflix is an independent company which began renting DVD's by mail and more recently began streaming. You may be aware of the upset when they tried to separate the DVD service and the streaming and charge more for streaming.

Hulu free gives you the latest 5 episodes of your favorite TV programs. For \$7.99 monthly (HuluPlus) you get the full season and sometimes more than one season. Movies are the current ones and many older ones (Some services claim 10,000.) You get to choose. It's not the manager of your local Cineplex choosing. Once released on DVD they become generally available if the service has negotiated rights to the flick or to the studio's films. There clearly is conflict between Netflix, Hulu and Amazon and other streaming services and the studios. The movie companies are terrified about what happened to the music industry and only grudgingly cooperate.

How do you get the signal from your router/wireless access point to your TV and what equipment do you need? The simplest way is by registering your device with the service using your Xbox, Playstation 3, Wii, Blu-ray DVD player, smart phone, or other internet/wireless enabled device. Yes, you can use a computer and the HDMI output on your computer to the HDMI input on your TV. You can also use an Ethernet cable network or route the signal through a power line network. If you want to see other internet material on your big screen TV (using it as a giant monitor), you need a "smart" TV. Remember the signals on the internet are different from those on your cable/satellite/or over the air TV station, and a "brain" is needed for the conversion automatically. Some Smart TV's are wireless enabled, and Sony and Samsung make wireless adapters for their TV's. I presume other manufacturers do so also.

Amazon now has two forms of video access: Amazon Instant Videos and (Amazon) Prime Instant Video. The former provides rental or purchase of videos which may be watched by streaming or downloaded to your computer and watched later. Prime Instant Video provides unlimited streaming of thousands of movies and TV shows without commercials if you are a Prime (\$79/yr) member. Not all videos in the Amazon Instant Video store are in the Prime instant video catalog. Videos in the Prime Instant Video catalog can only be watched by streaming and are not available for downloading. There is a great deal of information on the Amazon site. Start on the upper left side of the home page where it says "Instant Video" and on the following page on the

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right side below “Start Your one Month Free Trial” is “Help and FAQ’s.” Click there and on the following page in the middle in blue is a link “Amazon Instant Video” and then on the next page in the middle is “Watching Videos” which gives several choices depending on whether you will be using a computer or an internet connected device. When you (tired yet?) go to your choice, you will get details of connection methods and possibilities.

The easiest way to connect is the HDMI cable from computer to TV and there are adapters to convert the business end of the HDMI to composite cables (3 cables, Red and white audio and yellow video) if your set requires those connectors.

Roku, a streaming device, available for about \$50 from roku.com has comprehensive connection directions. The Roku XD/S has HDMI and component output for high fidelity video on new and older televisions.

Nintendo has just announced that Hulu and HuluPlus can now be streamed on the Wii (they previously just had Netflix) but you will need to download an “app” from their website.

Redbox and Verizon have announced they will start a streaming service, no details yet.

I will mention iTunes since everyone knows them. They stream radio stations, podcasts, and iTunes University (lectures from many U’s; there is a huge list on their site) but not TV programs or movies. Those are rentals. If you rent a TV program or movie from them, it is downloaded to your machine (not streamed). You have it for 30 days, but once you start watching you only have 48 hours (TV) or 24 hours (movie) to watch it. From iTunes.com, download iTunes 10.5 for Mac/PC.

Important to remember: not all services carry all content (programs, movies), and not all devices other than computers (and Roku?) will display all content. Check their websites before plunging in. Apple TV and Google TV seem to be especially limited but other devices may be also.

The bottom line is that the power of computers, the capacity of operating systems, and the capabilities of the networks have improved to the point that streaming has become possible for almost everyone.

The DAM Book, 2nd Edition—A Review

Reviewed by Mike Morris and Bert Broekstra, Front Range PC Users Group (FRPCUG), CO March 2012 issue, k-Byte™, <http://www.frpcug.org>

Peter Krogh, 2009, 496 pages. O’Reilly Media, Sebastopol, CA, <http://shop.oreilly.com/product/9780596523589.do>. Print ISBN: 978-0-596-52357-2 or ISBN 10: 0-596-52357-2

Rating: Fourteener (connect to <http://www.frpcug.org/reviews.html> for rating descriptions. This review is also available on that web page). Rating description also included below.

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This book is eligible for the User Group discount from O'Reilly

In the interest of full disclosure:

1. This book was provided at no charge to the reviewers under the O'Reilly User Group Program (and is now part of the FRPCUG library)

This review contains contributions from 2 reviewers, although written by one (Mike Morris)

In his Introduction, the author, Peter Krogh states that "This book is written for people who are serious about their photographs." He also says "The approach described in this book is not for the casual photographer." Once you start reading the book, the full implications of that statement become clear.

The book is an extraordinary source of information on how to manage many digital photographs—or any "digital assets," including audio and video files, which he mentions only briefly. This is not a book about photo editing—by Photoshop or any other photo editing software application (although he talks about Non-destructive, or Parametric Image Editing in chapter 2).

The key elements of this book, in our opinion, are:

- Chapter 3 Metadata
- Chapter 4 Organizing and Naming Files and Folders
- Chapter 7 Ingestion Workflow

In fact, "workflow" is the primary lesson we obtained from this book. Each of us established different workflows to suit our needs, but both were based on careful study of the author's recommendations. For example, my colleague uses the raw format a great deal, whereas I do not (yet). I developed one workflow for the scans of many very old family photographs, and a different workflow for my own photos. The family photograph workflow includes metadata entry to capture as much information as possible about the people and places in those photos. Sadly, many of the people and places in those old photos are no longer identifiable—an excellent demonstration of why Krogh's management techniques are so important.

Metadata, usually defined as "data about data," is fundamental to managing digital photos. Krogh's discussion of this topic was the best we have seen anywhere. He talks about ". . . broad classes (of metadata) . . . mostly measured in how much effort it takes to create the information." That was very important lesson for both my old family photo scans and my own photos. For example, I established a Baseline metadata template that I apply to all of the scans and a different Baseline metadata template that I apply to my photos. In either case, that takes very little effort. Then I add image specific metadata that takes more time.

The use of metadata makes it unnecessary to try to squeeze descriptive information into the file name. The author states emphatically that "The file name does not have to carry important content information about the file." That turns out to be more difficult to understand than you might think. I had to send detailed instructions on how to access the metadata to family members with whom I have shared those old photos. In several cases I even had to recommend a (free) software application that they could use for that purpose. Those family members were expecting to see a description of the photo's content in the file name (an expectation shared, I suspect, by

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the overwhelming majority of casual photographers).

In his discussion of "The Fine Art of File Naming," the author describes a file naming approach for both the camera original files and what he calls "derivatives (edited photos)." You may not need as many derivatives as the author (unless you are a professional photographer), but his approach (perhaps modified, as I did, to suit your needs) will work equally well for the serious amateur photographer.

Naming a file is not however, the starting point for managing digital photos. That starting point is when you download the photos from your camera(s) to your computer. In Chapter 7, Ingestion Workflow, the author describes a process that includes applying a unique name (in place of the usual combination of letters and numbers), applying "bulk" metadata, backing up the photos, and other tasks.

One criticism of this book, and it is a mild criticism, is that it took me some time, moving back and forth between chapters 3, 4 and 7 (and, to a lesser extent, Chapter 8, Working Files Management) to gain enough of an understanding of Krogh's concepts so that I could adapt them to my less complex needs.

For example, my folder structure for the old family photo scans is very simple—just one folder. However, for my photos, I create a new folder for every photo "event." I define a photo "event" as any occasion where I take photos. It could be a family get-together, a trip into the mountains or just any time I use my camera. Within each of those events I create 4 subfolders: Camera Originals, Working, Archive, Delivery. While it is not necessary to describe in detail in this review the differences between those folders, it is worth noting that I evolved that structure after reading The DAM Book and evaluating the author's recommendations. It is also worth noting that the Camera Originals are just exactly that. They contain no edits and no metadata. That is my preference.

There is much more to this book. Chapter 5 talks about image storage hardware and Chapter 6 talks about backup software and backup strategies. There are chapters on cataloging software and cataloging strategies. The final chapter talks about "Data Migration," which covers how to move many previously unorganized photos into an organized file structure, how to move photos from one storage medium to another and a section on converting film to digital files.

This book is a "must-have" for anyone with more than a passing interest in digital photography. It is an excellent book.

*Ratings Key

- Sandpit—Avoid
- Small hill—Not recommended
- Foothill—Average
- Timberline—Excellent
- Fourteener—Must have

