

Midland
computer
club

BITS AND BYTES

May 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:
May 23, 2012

This month's topic:
**Why would I want to use Adobe®
Lightroom® - Bill Tower**

What you missed!
Disaster Recovery in the Digital Age - Laura
Hammel

Upcoming Activities:
June meeting - Simply YouTube - Howard
Lewis, Carol Picard, Larry Piper

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

Erasmus is sometimes credited with being the last man who knew everything. Regardless of who it was, the concept is easy to grasp. Knowledge, or at least the appearance of it, has also been a source of power—check out the early astronomers and their ability to predict the seasons. But knowledge, like the universe, is constantly expanding. And in our present world no one can know even a miniscule portion of any subject.



Lately I have been struggling, as I am sure you are, with this expanding knowledge in the computer world. Actually much of the frustration has come from the constant barrage of problems: broken printers, broken PCs, Firefox browser is now bloated, Kodak is dropping its photo storage, the Cloud is changing almost daily and cell phone providers continue to gouge us. Then there are the daily ads that tout the latest tablet, TV or other electronic gadget. What is a average geek to do?

As a reality check, the MCC Lab 'teaching' sessions have been fresh breeze to my technology frustrations. I have had two chances to meet with new computer users. While it is hard to believe how little some people know (and in fact need to know) about the world of technology, I think they may be better off not knowing or worrying about all the latest 'stuff'.

Finally on this knowledge gap, two other articles crossed my desk this week. One was on how people waste money on their cell phones and the other on how financial illiteracy dogs the Millennials generation, viz, pay-day loans and college debt.

So on balance, I have to consider myself, and very likely most of my generation, very lucky on our level of

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Board Meeting

Next board meeting will be
 7 p.m., August 14, 2012, at
 Chapel Lane Presbyterian Church,
 5501 Jefferson Ave., Midland MI

President Piper's Ponderings - Continued from Page 1)

knowledge. We are a far cry from Erasmus, but we know enough to not make stupid mistakes and we use multiple sources to help us find out what we need to learn—remember libraries, newspapers and social contacts?

So get outside and smell the roses. That will help put the rest of your life in perspective.

(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://duckduckgo.com/>

If you are tired of Google's search ads and their tracking policies, you might want to check out DuckDuckGo as a search engine.

<http://tinyurl.com/78altfg>

Gizmo's TechSupportAlert website has a good article on what to look for in determining how safe a website may be.

<http://tinyurl.com/c95aqcg>

If you've never thought about it, a lot goes on each day on the Internet. This infographic documents what happens in a typical day on the Internet.

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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

Useful, useless and strange (in no particular order) Web Sites - *Continued from Page 2)*

<http://mentalfloss.com/>

Mentalfloss is the site where knowledge junkies get their daily fixes.

<http://vimeo.com/34750078>

Did you know the Internet has (on average) 4½ years of information on you! Find out how it is accumulated and how it is used.

Tips, Tricks & Techniques *(submitted by Howard Lewis)*

Faster Searching in Internet Explorer and Firefox

If you are using **Internet Explorer** or **Firefox** for your web browsing, you can use the Search key shortcut (**F3**) to speed things up. Once you have brought up a page on a website you can simply push the **F3** key to open the **Search** box. In **Firefox** this box is located at the bottom of the window, while in **Internet Explorer** it is near the top. To find the next instance of the phrase you are searching for in Firefox, simply press **F3** again and it will go to the next occurrence (this does not work in Internet Explorer – you must press the *Next* button located beside the **Search** box).

Windows 7 Calculator Versatility

If you use the **Calculator** in Windows 7 (**Figure 1**), you may or may not have discovered that it can do more than the simple operations of previous Windows calculators. By clicking on the *View* menu item, you will see the other viewing options which are available (**Figure 2**). Some of the options are scientific mode or statistical mode (among others). You can also perform unit conversions, calculate time between two dates or open a worksheet to allow you to calculate mortgages or fuel economy. The simple Windows calculator has come a long way from the earlier basic model.

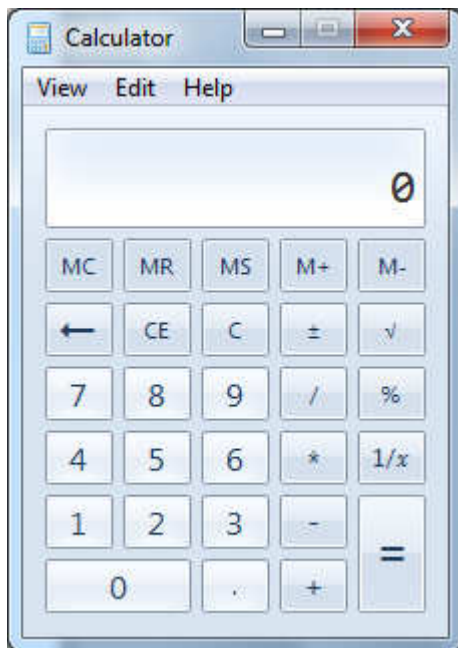


Figure 1

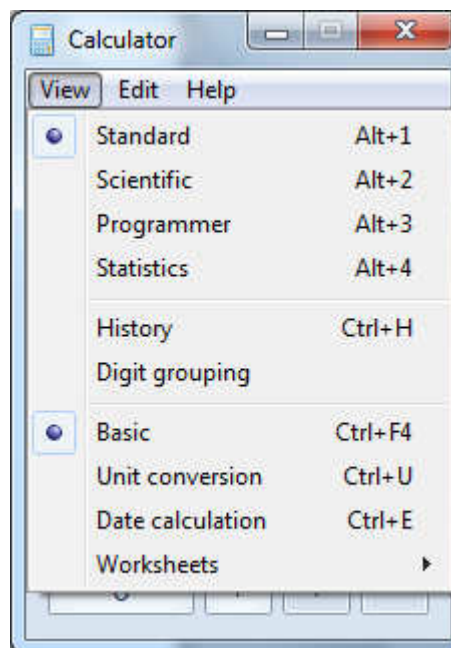


Figure 2

(Continued on page 4)

(Tips, Tricks & Techniques - Continued from page 3)

Repair Windows 7 System Files

If your Windows 7 computer is acting flakey, you may have some corrupted system files. You can try rebooting the computer, but if this doesn't work, you should try to repair your system files.

Windows contains a utility to assist in the repair of the system files. This utility is called **sfc** (which stands for System File Checker). To run this command, you will need to open an elevated command prompt and type in the command with the **scannow** attribute.

Here are the steps:

Click on the *Start* button.

In the **Search** box, type in *command*.

This should highlight an entry in your program list called **Command Prompt**.

Right-click on *Command Prompt* and left-click on *Run as administrator*.

After responding to the Administrator security prompts, the **Administrator: Command Prompt** window will open.

At the command prompt, type in *sfc /scannow* and press *Enter*.

The system will now verify the integrity of the system files and repair any files that have been corrupted.

The scan may take some time to perform, but hopefully your system will function properly once completed.

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By Terry MacLennan, Member at Large, Sauk Computer Users Group, IL

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Convert Books for eReaders

By Len Nasman, Editor, Bristol Village Computer Club, Ohio, January 2012 issue, BVCC newsletter
www.bvcc.org, bvclub (at) bvres.org

It was not exactly a Christmas present, but I now have a new Kindle Fire. We had accumulated a bunch of reward points on our PNC Bank account, and I discovered that unused points were expiring every month. Looking through the rewards catalog, I discovered that I had enough points for a Kindle Fire. So, since the price was right, I ordered one.



It seems that if you are more than 21 years old, how to use these new-fangled things is not instantly obvious.

The Kindle Fire seems to assume that you already know how to use it, so no instruction Manual was included. Of course there is a manual available on the Kindle, but until you know how to use the Kindle, you cannot read the manual.

Anyway, I eventually got to the point where I was ready to look for free books on the Internet and add them to the Kindle.

Free Books from Project Gutenberg

My first step was to go to the Project Gutenberg web site to look for free books.

The good news about Project Gutenberg is that they now have file format options for ereaders, including Kindle.

Once a book file has been downloaded to a folder in the computer's hard drive, the question is how to copy into the ereader.



Using Calibre to Move Books

Fortunately, I discovered a free program called Calibre

<http://calibre-ebook.com/>

that makes it almost easy to convert books and send them to different ereaders like Kindle, Nook, Android and others.



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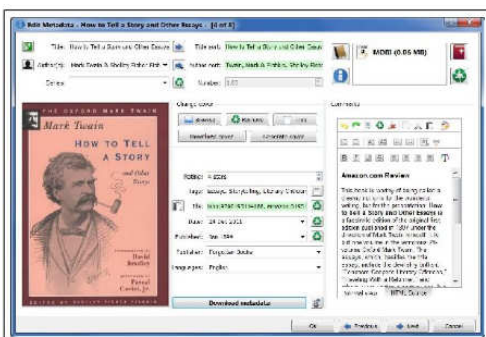
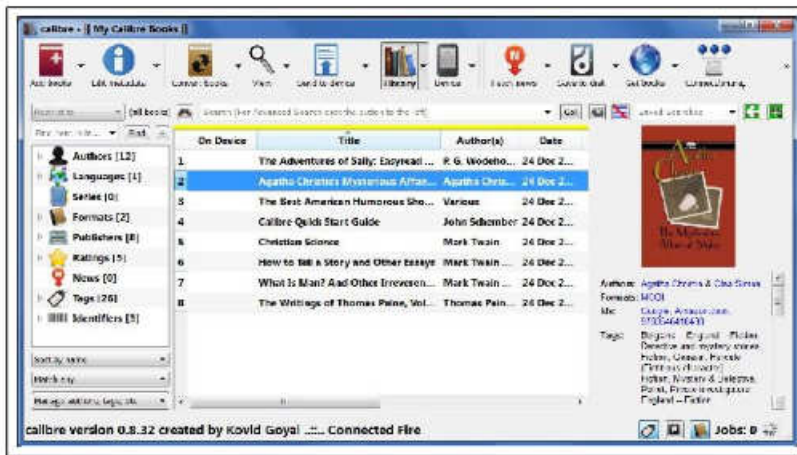
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Before you start using Calibre, you need to create (using Windows Explorer) an empty folder for storing the book files you will be using with Calibre.

After your empty Calibre book folder has been created (using Windows Explorer), the Calibre installation process will ask you what eBook reader you have and what folder you will use for your Calibre book list.

The upper left corner of the Calibre window has a tool for adding books. If you downloaded books from Project Gutenberg, you locate the files and add them to your Calibre list.



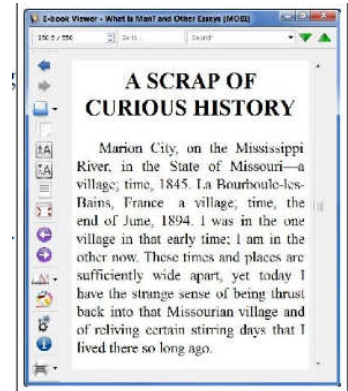
Calibre provides an option for downloading cover art and information for the books on your list. Calibre refers to this as 'metadata.'

First select a book and then click on the Edit Metadata tool. There is a button in the Edit Metadata window for downloading data. When this is selected, Calibre searches the Internet for info about your book. When it finds book info in more than one location, it shows a selection list for you to pick from. You will also have the option to choose a book cover that will be displayed in your Calibre list and, in my case, eventually on the Kindle Fire list.

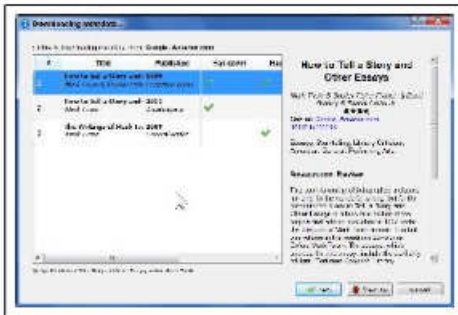
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You also can read a book on your computer. Double clicking on a book in the Calibre list will open an eBook viewer right on your computer screen. (This is an option for those who travel with a laptop computer and want to use their laptop as an ereader.)



After the Calibre book list is in place, it is time to send the books to the ereader. In the case of the Kindle Fire, a USB to mini connector computer cable was not supplied. Rather than buying this from Amazon, I got one on EBay and for a couple of dollars (including shipping).



When the Kindle Fire is connected to the computer, it appears in Windows Explorer just like another disk drive. However, Windows Explorer is not used to move books to the Kindle. This is done directly from Calibre. Calibre talks directly to the ereader through the USB cable. There is a tool in Calibre that will show your ereader book list.

If you download a book from Project Gutenberg in the Kindle format, you are ready to go. If not, Calibre provides an option to convert book files to the MOBI file format that Kindle uses.

When you are ready to send books to the ereader, select the Calibre Send to Device tool. That's it. Happy reading.

Crime and Conflict Over the Internet

By Greg Skalka, President, Under the Computer Hood User Group, CA, October 2011 issue, Drive Light
www.uchug.org, president (at) uchug.org

Recently my family and I were in Las Vegas and while we were there, another hacking incident hit the news. Zappos.com, an online shoe and clothing retailer, announced that they had been the victim of a cyber-attack. Being based in nearby Henderson, the reports on this company that I was previously unaware of (you can imagine how much online shoe buying I do) dominated the Las Vegas local news. Customer address, phone and email information had been stolen, but fortunately credit card info and account passwords remained secure.

This was just one more incident in an increasing trend of crime and conflict conducted over the Internet.

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Reports of hacked computers and stolen commercial data have become commonplace. The Internet appears to be a prime medium for crime, with organized crime elements taking advantage of the easy access and anonymity. I've so far avoided being part of one of these data thefts from a major company that I've entrusted with some of my personal information, but it is probably just a matter of time until I'm a victim too. I'm also under siege on a smaller scale, receiving several scam emails every day. Most are such obvious scams that I almost have to laugh. Is the head of the FBI or Secretary of State Hillary Clinton really going to email me about claiming foreign funds I previously knew nothing about? I have seen some pretty realistic emails from banks (mostly ones I don't do business with, but a few that I do), advising me to click on a link to avoid a loss of account access. A little restraint and outside research show even the most polished of these to be fakes intended to trick you out of personal information or plant malware on your computer.

The worst of these online scams try to use your own friends and family to trick you into lowering your guard. I recently received an unsolicited email from my sister, which was also addressed to a number of other family members. It contained only a vague greeting and a link. I recognized it as a scam, but my wife did not.

Fortunately, it appears the link only led to a Viagra-peddling website, as repeated cleanings of her computer turned up no malware. It appears that someone gained access to my sister's email account and used it to send this message to everyone in her email address book. After receiving this sham email herself at work, she changed her email account password and sent a warning out to all her contacts. That showed good web etiquette. I receive similar emails periodically from a friend's account, but he never responds to my warnings about his email account being hijacked. If you lose control of an email account in this way, at least let the provider know so the account can be closed. If you simply abandon the compromised account, you'll likely leave a zombie account out there to continue pestering your friends.

In addition to the criminal element, the political conflicts of our world are starting to creep into the Internet.

While electronic personal communications can play a positive role in exposing repression around the world, and can be a tool for change towards more open and free political systems, the access to information can also be a weapon. Enemies of our country and way of life hack our government and commercial web sites to steal information and deny legitimate access. Our businesses and institutions may be under attack through the Internet by factions related to or agents of China, Russia or our middle-eastern adversaries. Our own government has formed cyber warfare elements and acknowledges that future battles may include skirmishes in cyberspace. It is speculated that the Stuxnet worm, which appears to have targeted uranium processing facilities in Iran, may have been the product of U.S. or Israeli intelligence agencies. Palestinian hackers steal and release account information from banks and institutions in Israel, leading some in Israel to do the same with information on Palestinians.

Where will all this lead? I'd hate to see the "Information Superhighway" that was supposed to be our free and open Internet turned into the electronic equivalent of the highways in "Mad Max", where danger lurks everywhere and lawlessness abounds.

And speaking of laws on the Internet, we have recently witnessed online protests over U.S. Internet piracy legislation. A number of prominent web sites, including Google and Wikipedia, conducted partial shutdowns or redirections to protest pending legislation and solicit support from their users. The Stop Online Piracy Act (SOPA) and Protect IP Act (PIPA) are bills under consideration by the U.S. Congress to protect intellectual property. Opponents claim the proposed legislation would harm free speech and reduce technical innovation on the web. I acknowledge online piracy is a problem, but also don't want a solution at the expense of an open Internet. Hopefully our own government won't soon be in the censoring business. We all have an interest in how this issue is resolved.

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With all this conflict on and over the web, it makes me wonder if I'm taking all the reasonable measures I can to protect myself and my assets as I use the Internet. It is sometimes difficult to determine where "reasonable" fits in between "it won't happen to me" and a bunker mentality. As I've moved my finances and shopping online, I've realized I've become more dependent on the Internet. By conducting all my banking activities, including bill payment and monitoring of accounts, on the web, I hope I've not made myself more vulnerable in the process. Am I safer not having bank statements mailed to me, or am I now more open to theft by hacking or scams? How would I access my money in a web-only bank account if the Internet should for some reason go down? It is great to be able to surf where I want, but does that surfing potentially expose me to malware that could capture my account information when I bank with the same computer? Is it paranoid to consider using a separate computer for banking and another for other web access?

It is exciting to think that the whole world can be accessed through that little RJ-45 Ethernet jack on your cable or DSL modem. It should also be sobering to consider that the whole world could be there in that connection.

Tablets of Clay

The crooks are not only after us on the Internet, but also in our electronics stores. Over this last Christmas, a number of iPad purchasers got the wrong kind of tablet. In Canada, a number of customers that purchased iPads at reputable stores like Best Buy and Walmart later found the box contained not a tablet PC but a slab of modeling clay. In perhaps more than a dozen reported cases, it appears crooks purchased iPads at these stores with cash, replaced the items in the box with the same weight in clay and expertly resealed the boxes. The boxes were returned to the stores for refunds, and since they appeared to be unopened, they were replaced on the shelves to be purchased by unsuspecting customers. The first customer discovering this switch was thought to be a scammer by the store, but after additional cases were discovered, he was reimbursed and given an iPad.

Dynamic Pricing Gives Different Pricing to Different People

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

If you walked into Wal-Mart to purchase a camera and the sales person told you the camera you were interested in was \$300 and then he offered it to the next person in line for \$200, you would probably be aggravated. If the clerk explained that your higher price was based on the fact that he thought you were a very interested buyer who was ready to make a purchase, while the other person was not a serious buyer, you might be even more outraged.

Yet, that is exactly what is happening with online shopping. Online retailers are using cookies to track your moves. Although cookies are relatively harmless and unobtrusive, they show the retailer exactly which items you have looked at and how often you have viewed them. Retailers can also use click loggers, ad sites, and computer-generated statistics to track your shopping. If you look at the same item several days in a row, the retailer might decide that you will soon be ready to buy and raise the price.

This happened to me recently, when looking for a bird feeder for my husband for father's day. After several days looking at the item and mulling the purchase, the price of the bird feeder suddenly went from \$42 to \$51.

This is what is commonly referred to as dynamic pricing which is, in effect, changing the price of a good based on what the retailer thinks a buyer is willing to pay. If you think about it, you realize that dynamic pricing has been around for eons. In a street market hundreds of years ago, a person who was a better haggler may have paid less for the same item as someone who simply agreed to the first price given.

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Today's online dynamic pricing is the practice of charging consumers different amounts based, not on their haggling ability, but on their characteristics as consumers. Evidently, as long as this does not include discriminatory criteria, like charging someone with blue eyes more than someone with green eyes, this is perfectly legal.

After all, airlines have been doing it for years. They typically charge more for flights that are popular with business travelers and they also have complex pricing schemes to fill unused seats. This year the St. Louis Cardinals introduced dynamic pricing for tickets to their ball park. This allows the Cardinals to charge more for "hot" games on popular days. A recent look at ticket prices showed that an infield pavilion seat for a Saturday night game was selling for \$42. The same seat on a weeknight might be a little as \$13.50. It was said that a few years ago, Coca Cola did a test with their vending machines that charged more for soft drinks when the outside temperature rose.

Dynamic pricing doesn't always go against you. For instance, it might be advantageous if you are booking a last minute flight or looking for a cheap ticket to the Cardinal's game. When dealing with dynamic pricing online, however, the instances that I saw in my recent shopping have all been leading toward higher pricing. There is, however, something that you can do to counteract this when it goes against you.

When they raised the price on my bird feeder, I decided to check out the price of the feeder using another web browser that didn't have a cookie identifying me. Sure enough, the price was back to \$42. I was able to see the two different prices at the same website side by side when using two different web browsers.

You can do the same thing, just download a new web browser like Firefox (www.firefox.com), Chrome (www.google.com/chrome), or Opera (www.opera.com). These are all free. Then visit the website in question and look at their prices without logging in or giving any personal information. If you have been using one of these alternative browsers and want to use them for a price comparison, you should clear your cookies before you start your price search. A setting for doing that is usually found in the browser's Tools menu.

Dynamic pricing is not going away anytime soon. It looks like it will be a vital part of both off-line and online commerce for years to come. So get used to it, but don't get taken in by it.

Undeliverable Email Messages

Submitted by Gini Pedersen, Instructor, FREE Internet and Computer Classes, San Diego
Reprinted from the Seniors Computer Group, CA, March 2012 newsletter, Bits and Bytes
www.scgsd.org , <http://www.iteachyou.com>

REASONS EMAIL MESSAGES YOU SEND OUT MAY BE RETURNED AS 'UNDELIVERABLE'

REASON #1

You mistyped the intended recipient's email address. This also happens if you include a space in the address or fail to add the .com, .net, or other ending to the email address.

POSSIBLE SOLUTION -- Send the message again after correcting the email address.

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REASON #2

The intended recipient's ISP's (Internet Service Provider's) email system may be offline (usually temporary).

POSSIBLE SOLUTION -- Send the message again perhaps hours or days later.

REASON #3

The intended recipient's email mailbox may be "full" or "over quota" (or similar wording).

POSSIBLE SOLUTION -- Send the message again perhaps days later after the intended recipient's email mailbox is no longer full.

REASON #4

The intended recipient's email address is no longer valid.

POSSIBLE SOLUTION -- Contact the intended recipient to get a new email address.

REASON #5

The intended recipient's ISP's email system (more common with Yahoo) deems that everything sent to multiple recipients at once MAY be spam. I notice this with my Net Happenings newsletter that I send out once a month. The only way around this is to individually (by email) let the intended recipient know that they may need to check their Spam or Trash folder, click on a message from your email address and click on a "Not Spam" (or similar) button or link on their screen. Exact wording varies with different ISPS' email systems.

POSSIBLE SOLUTION -- Send messages one at a time to each intended recipient -- painful unless you have an automated program for accomplishing this.

REASON #6

Some of the intended recipients use the "white list" concept to control email spam. This means that if the exact address of the sender (example: abc@xyz.com) isn't ALREADY in their contact list/address book, the message will be rejected. This message never even makes it into the intended recipient's email INBOX.

POSSIBLE SOLUTION -- Tell each rejected intended recipient to add your exact email address to their Contact/Address list so it won't be rejected in the future.

REASON #7

Next, an outgoing or incoming email server MAY have a limit on how many intended recipients may be included in the BCC field at 1 time. This happens to me if I try to send my newsletter out to too many email addresses at the same time using either gmail.com or cox.net -- even though all recipients' email addresses are listed in the BCC field. That is why I now send them out through my school's email server -- after I've asked permission to send so many at one time.

POSSIBLE SOLUTION -- Call your ISP or check the HELP file in your email to find out why these messages are being rejected.

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REASON #8

And, finally, if the intended recipient has (even accidentally) in the past tagged a message from you as Spam, it will thereafter automatically go into their Spam folder.

POSSIBLE SOLUTION -- Personally contact the rejected intended recipient explaining that they may have to "untag" messages from your email address as "Spam." Again this was often done accidentally sometime in the past.

Managing the "Autos" in MS Office 2007/2010

By Nancy DeMarte, Regular Columnist (Office Talk), Sarasota PCUG, Florida
February 2012 issue, Sarasota PC Monitor, www.spcug.org, [ndemarte \(at\) Verizon.net](mailto:ndemarte@verizon.net)

I can't count the number of times I have begun a list in a Word document by typing "1," only to look up to find that my 1 is now indented by a quarter inch and the text by a half inch, which was not what I wanted. I was experiencing the frustration sometimes caused by a feature of Microsoft Office programs called AutoCorrect. First, let me say that I am a big fan of the automatic editing and formatting concept. MS developers spent a lot of time interviewing users about their most common errors. Then, to make the programs more efficient, they added to Word, Excel, and PowerPoint a feature that makes these corrections while the user is typing. In some cases, however, when the automatic correction is not what I intend, I lose time undoing it. Therefore, early in my Office experience, I learned how to customize the "Autos" to my needs.

AutoCorrect and Auto Format

If you want to see what AutoCorrect and AutoFormat actually control in Word, click the Office button, and then Word Options. (File tab, then Options in Word 2010). Next click Proofing in the left pane, followed by the AutoCorrect Options button. This window has 5 tabs at the top. Exploring the content of each one will give you a good sense of what can be auto-corrected or formatted. You can adjust the checkboxes to create the auto corrections that fit your style. Here are my five favorite options, which I always keep checked:

1. "Correct the accidental use of the cAPS LOCK key" tops the list. It's too easy to hit that Caps Lock key without noticing it until a whole paragraph has been typed. (AutoCorrect tab)
2. "Replace text as you type" gives you access to the extensive list of commonly misspelled words and other typical errors, along with their corrections. For example, if you type "teh" for "the", it is automatically corrected. You can use the list as is, delete items, or add your own typical misspellings with the correct ones. (AutoCorrect tab)
3. "Replace fractions (1/2) with fraction character -- ½" and "Replace ordinals (1st) with superscripts (1st)" make a document look more professional in an instant. (AutoFormat tab)
4. "Allow text to be dragged and dropped" is a feature that many Office users are not aware of. You can move small groups of text from one place to another on a page by simply selecting the text, placing the mouse pointer anywhere in the selected area, and holding the mouse button down for a second or two until a small dotted rectangle appears near the mouse pointer. Without letting go of the mouse button, drag the text to its new location. When a vertical dotted line shows you where it will appear, let go of the button. This is the quick alternative to cut and paste. (Word Options --- Advanced)
5. "Show Tooltips on hover" gives you immediate definitions for command buttons by merely moving the mouse pointer over the item and reading the information that appears. (Word Options – Display)

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Here are my five least favorite Auto options, which I keep unchecked:

1. “Capitalize first letters of table cells” is an option I don’t want because I use tables for so many different purposes. (AutoCorrect tab)
2. “(Replace) Internet and network paths with hyperlinks” is good idea, but I often include a website or email address in a document with no intention of having it linked to the web. (AutoFormat and AutoFormat As You Type tabs – uncheck both)
3. “(Apply) automatic numbered lists” addresses the situation I mentioned in the first paragraph. If I am creating a numbered list, I may want to put my numbers at the left margin to save space, rather than have them indented. (AutoFormat As You Type tab)
4. “Use Insert key to use overtype mode” is one of my most annoying features of Word. Overtyping mode means that to change a group of text, you merely type new text starting where the old text begins; the new replaces the old. But because the Insert key is located just above the Delete key on the keyboard, it is often pressed accidentally, engaging overtype mode. The next words typed will overwrite whatever is ahead of them. You can see the problem. (Word Options – Advanced)
5. “Automatically create drawing canvas when inserting Auto shapes” can cause a lot of frustration. The drawing canvas, introduced in Office 2003, allows you to keep shapes together in complex diagrams. It turned out to be hard to control, however, and in 2007 was relegated to optional status. (Word Options – Advanced)

AutoRecover

Before you leave Word Options, click Save in the left pane. Here, in the Save Documents area, you will find several options which you can edit to your preferences. Here are the two most important:

- “Save files in this format.” – The default choice here is .docx, which is the file type for Word 2007 and 2010 documents. If you normally save your documents as the Word 2003 or earlier file type, .doc, then this is the place to set the file format so it will affect all future documents except those you change manually. Click the down arrow to get the list and choose .doc.

“Save AutoRecover information every 10 mins.” -- In Word, Excel, and PowerPoint 2007 and 2010, your work is automatically saved periodically to protect it in case of an unexpected power outage or other disruption. The default is 10 minutes, but you can lessen or increase the time between saves. A shorter time keeps your files safer, but might slow down the program’s response time. A better solution might be to save work manually after you complete important sections using the keystroke shortcut, Ctrl+S.

The “Autos” can be very useful as long as you set them up to match your style.

Using Windows Task Manager to Get Out of Potential Harmful Situations

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There is an easy method of getting your computer out of two situations of potential harm. To do this, we will use the operating system's built-in program called the Task Manager.

The first situation is when you have too many programs running at one time and the computer locks up. This lockup can also be caused by a single program that for one reason or another, fails to run properly. Reaching over and hitting the power button may seem to be your only option but there is a much better choice.

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The second situation occurs when you are on a webpage and one of those realistic looking but totally phony "security alerts" pops up on your monitor screen warning you of imminent danger of viruses and other malware that "it" has detected on your computer. These scare popups trick many naive people into clicking on them only to find out that now their computer truly is infected and control has been lost. You are totally helpless when you have clicked on one of these so-called "security" scam programs.

You absolutely must not click anywhere on these pop-ups including buttons that say something to the effect of "No Thanks," "Decline" or even "Continue Unprotected." But, instead of clicking one of those, you may decide, almost instinctively, to click the "X" in the corner of the pop-up box. Doing any of these actions is almost like turning your house alarm off, opening the door and saying "come on in" to the masked bandit standing outside. Paying the "bandits" for their "security program" which is holding your computer hostage is an extremely poor choice. Do you really want to pay the thieves with your credit card and its number?

But you are now stuck in a situation where you may try to click off the web page by clicking on its "X" in the upper right hand corner. But you soon find out that that won't work as you first need to close the window (the pop-up in this case) that is on top.

Hard shutting down the computer by using the power button may seem to be your only option but again there is a better alternative.

Your best friend in both situations is the Task Manager. To open this built-in program, press and hold the CTRL and ALT keys with your left hand, then tap the DEL key with your right hand.

In Win XP, this will automatically open the Task Manager while with Windows 7 it will take you to a page with a list of options. Click the bottom option and it will open the Task Manager which looks nearly identical to the XP one. From here, everything is the same for both systems.

Along the top edge of the Task Manager is a row of tabs. Click the Applications tab, if it doesn't happen to automatically be on that tab. When you have opened it up, you will see a listing of all the programs and web pages that are running.

If your computer is locked up, look for any programs that are "Not responding." Click the program one time to highlight it then click on End Task at the bottom. This should close the nonresponsive program and free your computer.

If the computer remains locked up, use the same method to close all of the remaining Programs that are running then shut down as you would normally. Everything should be back to normal when you reboot the computer.

A hard shutdown with the power button is absolutely the last resort as this could potentially damage files.

To close a web page with the dangerous fake security warning pop-ups, use the same method by highlighting the web page in the list then clicking End Task. This will safely shut down the web page with its pop-up without installing the malware "security program."
