



Midland Michigan

BITS AND BYTES

January 2013

<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: Wednesday,
January 23, 2013**

**This month's topic:
Windows 8 - The Basics - presented
by Howard Lewis**

**What you missed! December meeting was
the Club holiday party**

Upcoming Events:



**APCUG 2013 Winter Virtual
Technology Conference -
February 2, 2013.
See page 17 for topics and
registration information.**

Program Coordinators

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Bill Tower tower.w@gmail.com

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

President Piper's Ponderings



I know a person who, when selecting a Christmas tree, must examine every tree on the lot. Let's apply this idea to selecting a "computing device" in today's market. The recent CES show offered a ridiculous number of choices. The capabilities of the various devices are all over the map and the price range is accordingly very wide.

Now let's go back to the tree purchases example. I go into the tree lot with some fixed parameters, like how tall a tree will fit in my house, what I am willing to spend on a tree and what "brand" of tree best fits my "decorating" scheme.

So it should be with any computer purchase. What really are your personal needs, and how much can you afford to spend. The list of potential purchase candidates will now shrink to a manageable few. You can check out the top 3-4 candidates and make a reasonable choice.

We also have other marketing forces now in play. The market fragmentation has resulted in no one dominating company or device. The computer economy and the general economy are mixed at best. We have a stratified purchasing population: those with good jobs aren't so selective in their purchases; those without a permanent job aren't buying any computing gadgets. The rest of us have to make the real choices.

So like the current auto shows, there is lots of glitz, glamor and "concept" ideas being thrown out to the computer/tablet/phone consumer. Don't be panicked by all the choices. Select wisely and then come to our monthly meeting and show us your choice.

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

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Useful, useless and strange (in no particular order) Web Sites:

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

If you need to spout off regarding your recent airline flight, here is the site to do it!

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

The federal government doesn't have a monopoly on stupid laws. This site tries to list all of them for each state. Some are real doozies!

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

Marc Adamus is an award winning nature photographer. His website shows some of his magnificent work.

<http://ocean.si.edu/>

The Smithsonian Institution has a great site about oceans. Check it out.

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

Get help and tutorials on your computer, in such a way that the beginning computer user can understand.

Board Meeting

First Thursday of the month
7:00 PM

Chapel Lane Presbyterian Church,
5501 Jefferson Ave., Midland MI

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

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Customizing Labels in Word 2007

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

Among special projects we users can do with Word is creating labels. The word “label” includes all sorts of things like shipping labels, address labels, business cards, name badges, and fabric transfers. Just look in the office stores at the racks of label paper for the range of projects. I began making our return address labels with Word years ago. They were simple: just our name and address. Since then I’ve learned more about how to customize labels by changing the font attributes and adding a graphic to each label. It isn’t difficult, but does require a few special steps to make it successful. A note: Word offers two methods of creating labels, depending on your purpose. One uses the Mail Merge wizard to produce sheets where each label contains different content, such as mailing labels for a list of people. I do use Mail Merge often, and will discuss that in a future article. This article presents a walk- through of the process I use to customize a full page of identical labels.

The first step is choosing the right package of labels for your project. I always actually purchase the labels before starting, which can be done in an office store or on the web, in order to have the vendor name and label product number handy when I start the project. Let’s say I’m going to create a calling card (Why would a retiree need a business card?) which contains name, address, phone, and email address, plus a graphic. I go to an office store and buy a business card label package from the popular company, Avery, possibly product number 8871. The package tells me that these cards are 2 inches by 3 ½ inches and will print ten on each page, just what I want.

Next I open Word 2007 and click the Mailings tab, then Labels. I click Options, change the vendor to Avery US Letter, and scroll to my product number. Once the number is clicked, its attributes show up on

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the right side of the window. Since I want to customize these labels, I do not type the text in the Address box at this time. Instead, I click New Document, which opens a document which shows the outline of the cards I'm going to create. I will create my design in the first (top left) label and copy it to the rest. I plan to create two text boxes in this first label, one to hold the text and one the graphic. To make sure my text and graphic stay where I put them, I start by opening the drawing canvas. If you remember when Microsoft first introduced the drawing canvas, you probably also remember screaming out loud when it appeared because it took over the page, moving all objects out of position. It's tamer now, so proceed. The canvas will be a way of grouping the two text boxes together. With the cursor in the first label, I click the Insert tab, then Shapes. I scroll to the bottom and click Drawing Canvas which opens it within the first label. I click and drag the edges of the canvas to fill the label. I click the Insert tab again, then Text box – Draw Text Box. I click inside the drawing canvas, hold down the left mouse button, and drag diagonally to draw a box. This box will hold the graphic, so I size it accordingly. Next, with the cursor inside the text box, I click Insert – Picture (or Clip Art). I find the graphic I want and drag or copy and paste it into the text box. Then I create another text box next to the first one and type my text in this box. Now I change the font, font size and text effects or colors using the commands in the Font group on the Home tab. If needed, I resize or move the text boxes to create my desired layout.

At this point, I realize that I don't want the two text boxes to have borders around them. To remove these, I select the first text box and click the Text Box Tools (Format) contextual tab - Shape Outline - No Outline. I repeat this process for the second text box, and all the borders are gone. (A contextual tab in Word 2007 or 2010 appears only when the item it relates to is selected. You must select the text box to see its tab.)

Now I need to copy this completed calling card label design to the other cards on the page. Since the drawing canvas has grouped the two text boxes together, I click to select the canvas, not the individual text boxes. I press Ctrl + C on the keyboard to copy the whole card to the clipboard. Now I can paste it into any number of places without having to copy it again. I click in the second cell and press Ctrl + V to paste the card, and so on until all ten cards are filled. When the page is complete, I save it to a folder on my computer for future use. Then I print one page of my cards on a blank sheet of paper so as not to waste a label sheet. I hold this print up behind a sheet of labels to make sure the design will fit correctly within each cell on the label sheet. Then I check the label package and/or printer manual for instructions for loading labels since printers differ. Just to be safe, I load only one label sheet into the printer for the first printing. If all is well, I continue with more copies.

At first reading, this sounds like a complicated process. But, as with many computer tasks, it's the attention to detail that makes for success. Give yourself a few tries, and you will be creating customized labels like a pro.

Windows 8 - The Basics

By Howard Lewis, Midland Computer Club, Midland MI, January 2013, Bits and Bytes Newsletter

With Microsoft's release of Windows 8, there are a number of significant changes in the interface. Many people say that this is the biggest difference in the Windows interface since the release of Windows 95 in 1995 (which is forever in the world of technology). Part of the rationale for the change in the interface is to make a consistent interface between PCs, laptops, tablets, smartphones, etc. With this article, I will introduce some of the major concepts in the Windows 8 interface and will delve into some of the basic usage issues.

Knowing that many of the current applications are desktop specific, Microsoft has two different types of interfaces built into Windows 8. The primary interface is the Start screen which is shown when Windows 8 is first started (**Figure 1**).

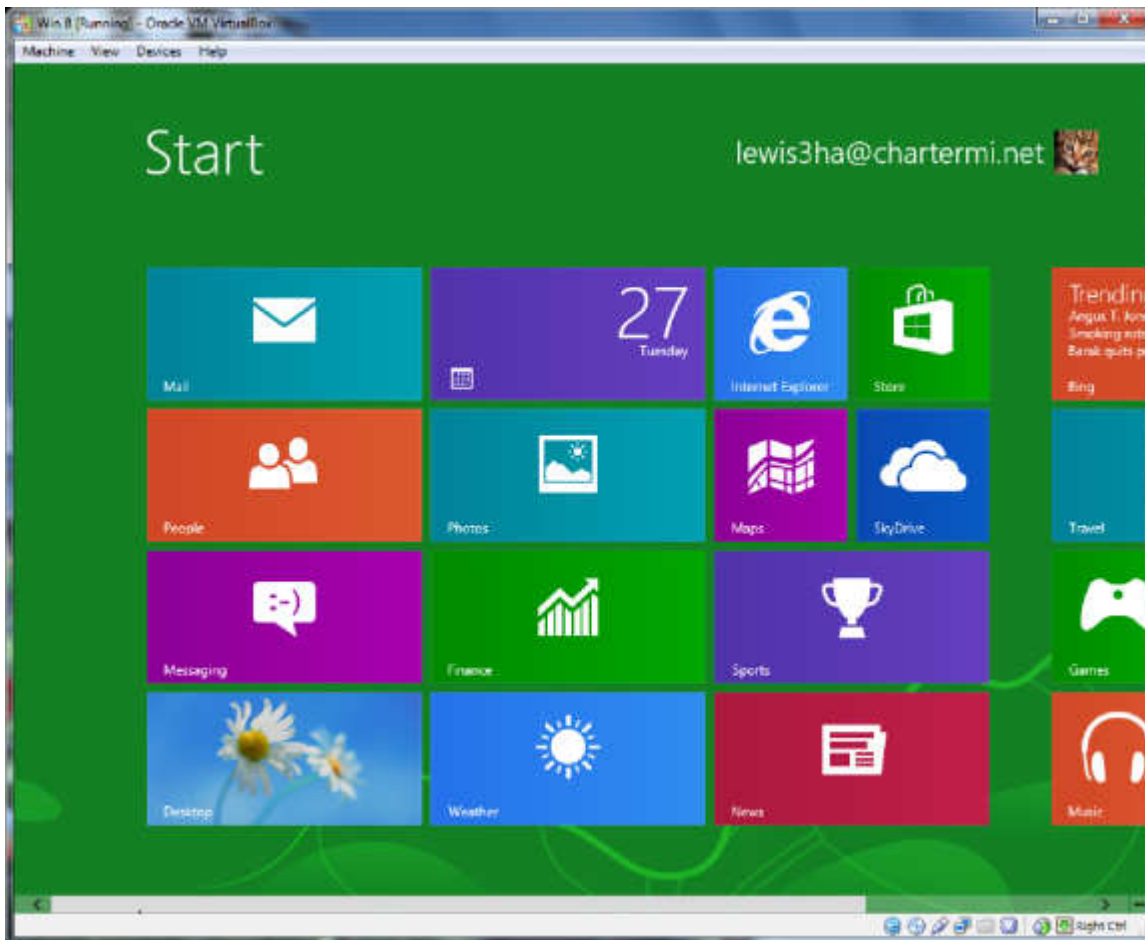


Figure 1 – Windows 8 Start Screen

The Start screen contains Tiles which will launch Windows 8 specific apps. One of the unique things about these tiles is that they can be “live”. In other words, if you have a weather app running in Windows 8, the current temperature for a specific location will be displayed live. The same will be true of stock, sports scores, news, etc. The interface is designed for a touch interface, but can easily be navigated with a keyboard and mouse.

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The second interface is the Desktop screen (**Figure 2**). The Desktop screen looks (and is) very much like the very familiar Windows 7 interface. The one major difference is that the Start menu is missing (replaced by the Start screen).



Figure 2 - Windows 8 Desktop Screen

Almost all applications that have run under Windows versions since Windows XP will run in this mode. Most current Windows users will feel very much like they are working in Windows XP, Vista, or Windows 7. At this point, I probably spend 80% of my time in the Desktop. The default Start screen tiles include a tile (lower left Tile in **Figure 1**) to directly access Desktop mode for easy access. Any Windows applications not designed for Windows 8 will automatically run in Desktop mode. The major changes (and focus of this article) is in the Start screen.

Those who are familiar with smartphones and using a touch device will probably have no problem navigating the Start screen interface. The problem is for those of us who are desktop- or laptop-centric.

If you are using a mouse, the key focal points should be the corners of the screen.

Both the upper-right and lower-right corners bring up what is called the **Charms** bar (**Figure 3**) and it will be located on the right side of the screen.

This bar includes **Search**, **Share**, **Start**, **Devices**, and **Settings**. All of these things were incorporated into the Start menu on previous versions of Windows. The Charms bar is available from both the Start screen and the Desktop.



Figure 3 - Charms Bar

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The upper-left corner brings up the **App Switcher** bar (**Figure 4**). This bar will be located on the left side of the screen.

The App Switcher displays all apps that are currently running in either the Start screen or the Desktop and makes it easy to switch between various apps.

The lower-left corner will allow you to switch between the Desktop and Start screens. The App Switcher is only available from the Start screen.

Fig 4 - App Switcher

When you are on the Start screen or in a Windows 8 app, there are two other bars of interest, one at the top of the screen and one at the bottom. One or both of these bars will appear when you right-click in an app or on a tile. Both of these bars are app/Tile specific, but in certain apps the top bar is called the **Places** bar (**Figure 5**) and the bottom one is referred to as the **App Menu** (**Figure 6**).



Figure 5 - Places

The Places bar allows you to specify information specific to an app, whereas the App Menu allows you to specify certain properties for a tile or app. All of these bars are dynamic and change depending on the focal point of Window 8.

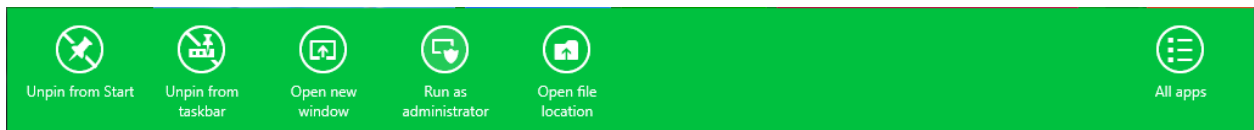


Figure 6 – App Menu

A couple of other important points that have perplexed various users. Windows 8 was originally designed for the computer to not normally Shutdown and therefore would not be turned off. Most modern devices (tables, smartphones, etc.) run using very low power processors, so they can run for 10+ hours without

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being connected to power, plus they also go to sleep very easily to conserve battery. Many people from the desktop/laptop world are used to turning their computers off periodically and will want to continue to do Shutdowns. To accomplish this, simply go to the *Charms* bar, *Settings*, *Power*. From here you can shut down or restart the computer.

Another frequent question is how to close a Windows 8 app (Desktop apps close in the normal manner by clicking the "x" in the upper-right corner of the window). Most Windows 8 apps are designed to run in the background at all times, much like an iPad, etc. Since Windows 8 apps don't have an "x" in the upper-right corner to close the app, you close the app by taking the cursor to the top edge of the screen where the cursor will change to a hand. Now click and drag to the bottom of the screen. This will close the app.

In future articles, I will cover various shortcuts and tips for making Windows 8 even easier.

Microsoft Windows Telephone Scam – BEWARE!!

This really happened to a user group member in California.

One of our members (I'll save him embarrassment by calling him "Jim") has just been the victim of a phone scam involving Microsoft. Not the "real" Microsoft.

Fearing viruses on his computer, Jim allowed the "Microsoft tech support" man on the phone to enter his computer electronically to check. The caller "found" red flags next to items on the computer that indicated viruses and offered to fix the computer -- for a charge. Jim felt uncomfortable with this and said no. The "Microsoft" scammer said he would block the use of the computer if he was not paid. Jim hung up.

Unhappily, Jim discovered afterward that the scammer had indeed done something while connected to the computer so that Jim could not use it or the internet. Luckily, there was no financial or other sensitive information on the computer that could also have been taken by the scammer. If it had, that would have been another story. A very sad story.

However, not so luckily, Jim will not be able to use his computer again for a couple of days until it has been reformatted and all the programs reinstalled.

So, fellow members, this is an updated warning. It CAN happen to you. Jim wants you to know about and to learn from his awful experience. Here is a link at Microsoft that describes various scams using its name: <http://www.microsoft.com/security/online-privacy/msname.aspx>

From the Windows Secrets newsletter < <http://windowssecrets.com/> >:

“Everybody’s Event Viewer has red and yellow flags. Check yours right now and you’ll see them:

Windows XP: Click Start, Control Panel, Performance and Maintenance, Administrative Tools; then double-click Computer Management.

Vista: Do the same, except for the final step. Double-click Event Viewer instead.

Win7: Click Start, type Event, click Event Viewer.

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On the left of the Event Viewer window, expand the Windows Logs/System branch. See the ocean of colored flags? They're mostly harmless, although they look alarming — which is why Windows makes it difficult to find them. It's good fodder for a flimflam."

Links to Microsoft Telephone Scam articles/information:

Microsoft Security & Safety Center - <http://bit.ly/jxOzal>

Microsoft Answers – Virus and Malware - <http://bit.ly/P4w9j2>

InformationWeek Security - <http://bit.ly/Rp7oAl>

abc15.com - <http://bit.ly/RbOedZ>

Note from Judy: I've been on the phone with Jim Evans, APCUG Director, when he's been called by one of these scam people. He's using Skype with me so I was able to hear what the person was saying on his regular phone plus Jim's responses. This has happened twice within the last six weeks or so. The last time, he was really leading the caller on but was having trouble understanding what he was saying. Conclusion, you'd think the scammers would have a better grasp of the English language before they call. The Microsoft telephone-based scams have been around since 2008.

Apple, Google, & Microsoft Create Technology Ecosystems

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

Today's technology is being separated into ecosystems. Will you buy into Apple's ecosystem? Google's Ecosystem? Amazon's? or Microsoft's? Or perhaps you have already bought into one or the other without even knowing it? This is a must read for anyone purchasing a piece of digital equipment or software.

Not only has technology changed over the last few years, but the way we use technology has also changed. There used to be two main camps when it came to technology: PC and Mac. These were built around the two competing computers systems, Microsoft's Windows PC operating system and Apple's Mac operating system. Software was written specifically for each of these systems, so you couldn't use PC software on a Mac or Mac software on a PC. When you bought a computer, you pretty much bought into one of these two types of computers. The PCs and Apple battled it out for years with PC garnering more than 90% of the market and Apple never getting out of single digits.

Now, however, things have completely changed. With the introduction of the iPhone and the iPad, Apple has soared in popularity. Other large companies have become technology powerhouses. Google with their Android operating system and Amazon have both entered the fray, while Microsoft is struggling to keep up.

Previously we were only talking about computers, but now we are talking about smartphones, tablets, and cloud computing. We are talking about entire ecosystems. The choices are mind-boggling. Each of the above mentioned companies is trying to get you to buy into their ecosystem. Each is pretty much proprietary. That means that for the most part, they are incompatible.

Right now, Apple has the largest ecosystem (I call it an ecosystem because it is an entire network or environment where one thing is dependent on another.) Apple's iPhone and iPads run on the iOS operating system. These devices run apps, which are like mini software programs that are purchased from the iTunes App store. There are currently more than 500,000 in Apple's App store. Some are free,

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but many are sold for a fee. These can only be used on Apple devices. If you switch to a Google Android phone or tablet, you cannot use the Apple products that you may have already purchased. You have to repurchase them from the Android Marketplace that has apps similar to those found in the Apple iTunes store.

This ecosystem also extends to storage and services in the cloud (think Internet). Apple has announced a cloud service, called iCloud that lets you store information on Apple's servers and access it from any Internet-connected device. Amazon, Microsoft, and Google also have cloud storage systems available. Since many of Microsoft's followers use Microsoft Office, Google has also developed a set of programs that are the equivalent of Microsoft Office programs, but that can be stored in the cloud and used from any Internet-connected device.

These companies make money from their hardware and their App sales. They give you a basic amount of cloud storage for free, but if you need more storage, there is a charge. You can see why so many companies are battling for supremacy of their ecosystem. It is very profitable.

Each of the current ecosystems is expanding. Apple not only has the software in its App store, but they also have the hardware in their iPhone, iPad devices and Mac computers. Apple recently announced their new cloud storage system and an App store for their Mac computers. Their new Lion operating system which is used for their Mac computers is so similar to the iOS operating system that you have to wonder just how soon the Mac computer and the Apple iPhone and iPads will share an operating system. When that happens, they will have added another component to their ecosystem.

Microsoft is a slightly different story. They don't manufacture smartphones or tablets, but they have a new mobile operating system called Windows Phone 7, which runs on hardware from other manufacturers. Microsoft has an App Marketplace like Apple and Google. They also have cloud storage. The phones that run the Microsoft operating system shine at running Microsoft office programs like Word and Excel. This is a part of their ecosystem. I expect that when Microsoft comes out with Windows 8, it will also be able to run on tablets, so we will soon see tablets running Microsoft software and apps.

Amazon has developed their own app store filled with Android apps. They also have a cloud storage system called Amazon Cloud Drive. They are already into the hardware business with their Kindle e-reader, and I expect that they will soon release a tablet to compete with the Apple iPad.

Blackberry and HP have both entered this competition with operating systems, hardware, and app stores of their own.

It's not that you cannot mix products. For instance, my husband has an Android phone, while we also own an iPad. He obviously can use both, but to do so, he had to learn two different operating systems. On top of that, if he wants to have a certain app on both his phone and our tablet, we may have to purchase it twice, buying a copy for his phone from the Android Marketplace and buying a copy for our tablet from the iTunes store. So not only is it easier to stay within one ecosystem, it is also more economical.

Knowing about these ecosystems may make purchasing a tablet or a new smartphone a little more complicated, because besides assessing the qualities of the hardware, you also have to stop and think about the ecosystem you are buying into. Yet, the number of large companies involved in this rivalry and the constant changes, additions, and improvements they make to their line-ups makes this a very exciting time in the history of technology.

Choosing a Smartphone

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

There are so many different smartphones available today that choosing between them can be difficult. Each phone and each operating system has many different pluses and minuses. So today, I'll give you a brief rundown of what you can expect in a smartphone.

Windows Mobile cell phones are just coming of age and they may well be a good choice in the future. However, right now the choice will probably come down to choosing between the Apple iPhone and one of the many Android phones that are now available.

The Android operating system is upgraded several times a year and new Android phones are released all the time. Apple, however only releases a new iPhone and a big update to their iOS operating system once a year. The new iPhone and iOS updates were released in October.

I have installed Apple's new iOS 5 operating system on my iPad, so I have been able to take an in-depth look at most of the new features. Now I am ready to make my list of the benefits of each.

There is no doubt that that the camera on the new iPhone is superior to almost all the Android phone cameras. The retinoid screen on the iPhone is superior to most Android phones. The exception is the Samsung line of phones with AMOLED screens that rival the clarity and crispness of the iPhone screen.

Apple's new iCloud service will automatically backup your iPhone to Apple's servers and let you sync your iPhone, iPad, and Mac computer. While using iCloud is easier than some of the Android syncing and backup solutions, there were things that I didn't like about iCloud. For instance, you can't actually see your data in the Cloud as you can with solutions like Amazon's or Google's online storage.

One of Apple's biggest features is iTunes and the iTunes store. iTunes makes getting music and video on your iPhone easier than any Android application that I've seen. At this time, both the Android Marketplace and the iTunes App Store have hundreds of thousands of apps. The iTunes App Store, however, makes it easier to find the apps that you want. Also because of Apple's stricter app reviews, Apple's apps are more secure. However, the Android Marketplace has a higher percentage of free apps.

Some of the new features on Apple's new iPhone are already available on Android phones. The most prominent of these is the Notification Center that Apple just added. This is a feature of Android that has been around for a long time and that I love. Now in either operating system, you can just swipe your finger down from the top of the phone to see all of your alerts, notifications, incoming messages, and incoming email.

The most unique feature of the new iPhone is Siri, a personal assistant who will answer verbal questions that you ask. This would, no doubt, be very useful, entertaining, and truly state-of-the-art.

Android phones also have voice capabilities. They use Google's Voice Search. Most screens that popup a keypad for text entry, also have a small microphone. Just press the microphone and speak. It is amazingly accurate and you can use it for everything from entering email text to searching to navigating to a point on the map. Probably not as sophisticated as Apple's Siri, but it works well.

Android phones also have some things that I love that are not available on iPhones. The first of these is the fact that you can get a larger screen size on an Android. All iPhones currently have a 3.5-inch screen. Several good Android phones have 4.3-inch screens. My aging eyes really like the larger screens.

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I also like the four buttons on the bottom of the Android screen. These are very, very useful. There is a Back Key, a Menu Key, a Home Key, and a Search Key. They are always available. They do not change when the screen changes. The iPhone has just one button. Some will argue that this makes the phone easier to use. Yet, this is not always the case. In some applications it is impossible to go back a screen. In others there is an on-screen back button but the location of this button varies with each application. With Android, you can always go back to the previous screen with just one press.

The Android operating system also is more customizable. With Apple, you are restricted to small square apps. With Android you can use many different resizable widgets as well as the standard apps. All of this gives you many different customization options, but also adds to the complexity of the phone. With the iPhone you don't get so many choices. This makes it a bit more restrictive, but also makes it easier to use.

One other difference is that most Android phones have user-replaceable batteries, while an iPhone battery must be replaced by Apple at a greater cost. While this might not be important to the average user it may make a difference to a heavy-duty user.

Well, there are just a few of the pluses and minuses you will have to assess when you buy a new smartphone. Don't worry though; it is hard to make a bad decision as almost all the smartphones on the market today are both capable and useful.

Back To Basics - Mouse-speak

Jim Cerny, Director, Sarasota PCUG, Florida, July 2012 issue, Sarasota PC Monitor
www.spcug.org. jimcerny123 (at) gmail.com

Using your mouse to use your computer is really quite essential. And being able to understand your mouse is a big part of computer communication. Let's review the basic ways to use a mouse and the terms people use to describe its use. And I will even throw in some helpful tips too. People will use "mouse-speak" to try to help you use your computer so you need to understand the lingo.

Simply moving your mouse on your table or mouse pad will move the mouse arrow (or pointer or mouse cursor) to anyplace on your monitor screen that you want. Every mouse has a left and right button, and some mice (mouses?) have a scroll wheel as well. You should have a mouse that is comfortable for you to use. To avoid wrist problems it is best to keep your hand-wrist-forearm all in the same straight line and a wrist support is a good idea. Here are the common mouse terms and what they mean:

"Click on..." – If someone tells you to "click on" something on your monitor screen, they mean move your mouse so that the mouse cursor or arrow is pointing to whatever it is, then press the LEFT mouse button once quickly. In most cases clicking on something will select it, open a menu of choices or execute a menu command. People or computer books may say something like: "click on (or "go to") start - control panel - appearance and personalization - display - adjust resolution". What they are giving you is a list of specific things to click on and the order in which to do it. You cannot get to the end result without clicking on each step along the way.

"Double click on..." – This means to click the LEFT button of your mouse twice quickly on whatever it is. For example, to start a program from your desktop screen you would "double-click" on the program icon to open that program. Double-clicking usually opens a new window or opens a file. Double-clicking always means the LEFT mouse button. It is very important that you do NOT move the mouse the slightest between the clicks! Some people have hand problems and cannot hold the mouse still when they double-

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click. If this is a problem for you, try holding the mouse still with one hand and hitting the mouse button twice with the other hand.

“Drag...” – If you ever played solitaire on your computer (and you should to practice using the mouse) then you probably have “dragged” a playing card from one place to another on your screen. So “dragging” something means placing your mouse arrow on whatever it is you want to drag, then HOLD DOWN the LEFT mouse button while you move the mouse. Whatever your mouse arrow is on will move with your mouse to the new location. Besides dragging playing cards you can drag things like files from one folder to another or drag highlighted text to another location.

“Right-click on...” – This means clicking the RIGHT mouse button, not the left. In almost all cases right-clicking the mouse will bring up a menu of options for whatever it was that you right-clicked on. For example, if you right-click on an empty area of your desktop screen you will get a menu of choices of what you can do with your desktop. If you right-click on a file name you will get a menu of options of what you can do with that file, etc. Get it? Right-clicking can be very helpful to get to options when you do not have a menu bar or other ways of making some selections.

“Hover” – moving your mouse on something, such as an icon or menu ribbon item, and leaving your mouse on that object for a moment, like a helicopter hovering over something on the ground. This may display a small text box with a description of what that object is. You do NOT click to do this, “hovering” the mouse is just resting the mouse cursor on something.

The **“Scroll wheel”** is used by rotating (i.e. spinning) it up or down. If your mouse does not have a scroll wheel, it's no big deal. A scroll wheel will do the same thing as the scrollbar – move your view up or down in your window. So, if you are viewing a web page or a document, the scroll wheel is another way to move your view up or down. In some programs the scroll wheel will zoom-in or zoom-out of whatever is displayed on your screen. Map and photo programs usually use the scroll wheel this way.

Well, those are the basics. But it wouldn't be fun for me if I stopped here. Did you know you can change the functions of your mouse buttons in the Windows Control Panel? (In Windows 7 go to start - control panel - hardware and sound – and then click on “mouse” under “devices and printers”.) Here you can see and change many mouse options. One thing you can do is switch the left and right mouse buttons. PLEASE do not do that! Can you imagine how confused someone else would be trying to use your mouse? Well, it could be pretty funny. But maybe you would like to shorten or lengthen the time needed between your “double-clicks”. You can do that and practice your double-click speed there.

SOME HELPFUL MOUSE TIPS

I like using my LEFT hand to use the mouse, not my right. That way my index finger is only over the left mouse button, the one I use most, and there is NO finger over the right mouse button. Some people have difficulty moving only one finger and sometimes hit BOTH the left and right mouse button at the same time when doing a left-click. This is not good and really confuses the computer and people. Using your left hand prevents this from happening. Also, this leaves my right hand free to write or do something else.

Is your wireless mouse not working? – Check the battery!

When moving the mouse arrow, it is the very tip of the arrow that matters. Even if most of the mouse arrow is on something else, it is only the tip of the arrow that is important. By the way, you can change the size of your mouse arrow through the control panel.

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Speaking of changing, you may notice that your mouse “arrow” may change to a hand, an “I” bar, a cross, or some other image depending upon what program you are using or where you are in the window. Do not panic, it is still your mouse cursor. For example, when you move your mouse to an area where there is text your mouse cursor will change to an “I-bar” which helps you position your insertion point between two specific letters.

Do you have a LAPTOP? – Laptop computers usually have a “mouse-pad” or “touch-pad” built in. This is helpful if you have no other mouse. This built-in mouse-pad however can cause problems. Different places on this pad can have different functions. For example, the right edge of the mouse-pad may act like a scroll-wheel when you drag your finger up or down near that edge. When using the keyboard on most laptops my lower thumb joint hits the mouse-pad and some really funny things happen, like my mouse arrow jumping all over the place. I recommend that you turn off your mouse-pad on your laptop and use a small wireless mouse instead. Your laptop instructions should tell you how to turn off your mouse-pad.

Using a mouse is easy once you get used to it. If you really want to have fun with your mouse, try the Paint program that comes free with Windows. Here is how to get to the Paint program using your mouse: Go to Start – All programs – Accessories – Paint. See – you can now understand Mouse-Speak.

Book Review – Mastering Landscape Photography: Learn By Video

By Mark Mattson, Editor, Computer Users of Erie, PA, June 2012 issue, Horizons
www.cuerie.com, cuerie1 (at) verizon.net

This was somewhat of a different book review than all the others. Not only is it a book, it is also a complete video workshop on a DVD.

The book itself is a 28 page supplement to the DVD training videos. It presents supplemental materials that enhance the learning experience of the DVD. There is also a Glossary of terms at the end to clarify anything you may not be sure of.

The DVD is actually the star of this package. Produced by Austrian-based Video2Brain, it is one of their newest offerings in their series of training packages (release date of this title is December 31, 2011).

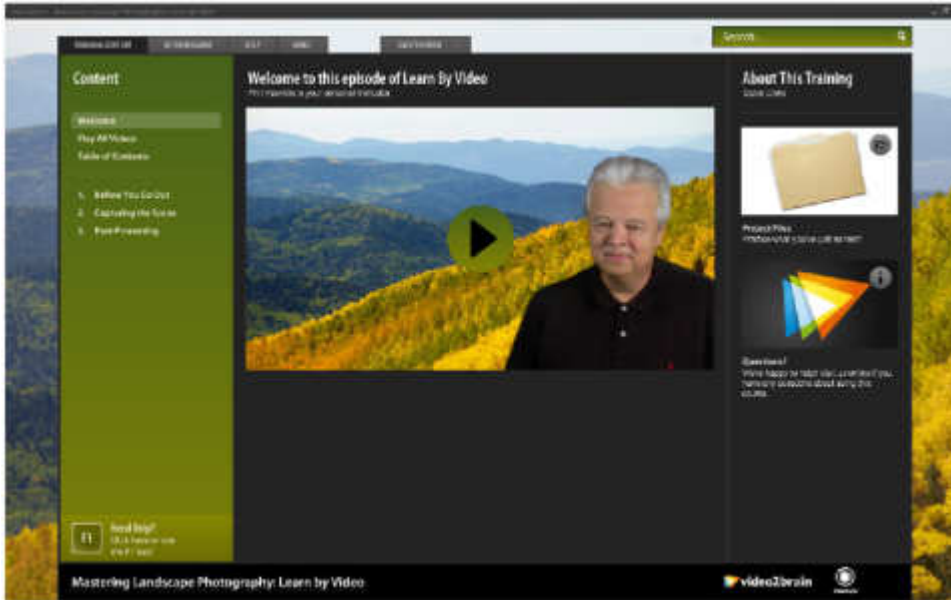
Your instructor for the video lessons is noted landscape photographer Phil Hawkins, who has shot many stunning images in and around the Yosemite area, as well as other subjects during his career (you can check his website at <http://philhawkinsphoto.com/>).

The workshop is comprised of four hours of High Definition video, all of which are accessed via the software player developed to make your learning experience smooth and seamless.

When you first open the DVD, you are presented with the user interface, which looks like this:

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On the left side of the screen is the navigation area, where you can launch specific sections of the training, or choose to play all the videos in sequence. The central area is the video playback window, while the right side contains links to supplemental items.

The video quality is excellent, with saturated colors and high production standards throughout. You can choose to view the videos in the small window, but use the full screen view...you can lose yourself in the view, and almost think you're on location.

The lessons are divided into three main sections:

1. Before You Go Out
2. Capturing the Scene
3. Post Processing

The first section covers the basics needed for successful landscape photography. Phil covers such details as choosing a good tripod, setting your camera for the best quality images, choosing the best lenses, and other vital information.

Capturing the Scene will teach you how to photograph for the best quality images. Topics covered in this section include how to read the histogram, exposure considerations, panoramic image capture, and others.

The final section, Post Processing, presents information on processing your images to further increase the quality of your captures. Here you will learn how to process your RAW files, workflow basics, and other topics. You will even learn how to process images for HDR. The key word to most of the processes covered here is that less is better. That is why you want to get it as close to a finished look in the camera when shooting your photos. Thus the need to view the entire disc, paying attention to all sections, particularly the first two. The less processing you need to do on your images to achieve the final print, the better.

Each section also contains a short Test Yourself section, where you can test your knowledge on what you've learned in each section.

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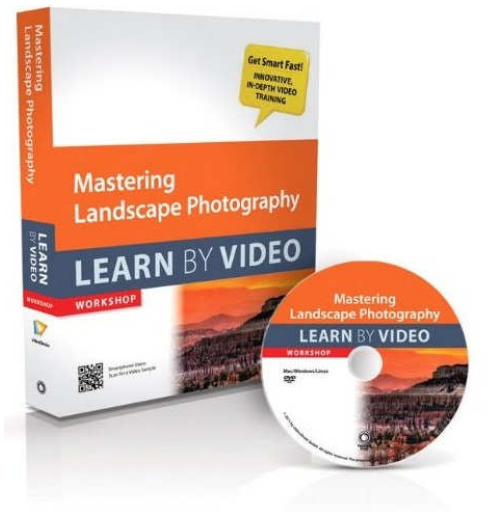
Another advantage the interface gives you is the ability to bookmark sections of the disc you want to refer to at later times. Thus you can refer to sections of the disc you enjoy most, without having to search for them.

Mastering Landscape Photography: Learn By Video is available direct from the publisher, Peachpit for \$27.99. Go to www.peachpit.com to purchase.

Is this video worth the purchase? Definitely, especially if you are hooked on landscape photography, either as a hobby, or a way to make an income. The techniques and information presented are well worth the purchase price, and give you a solid basis to build upon in the future, as your skills improve and grow.

Even though the author lives in the western US (California), the information would apply just as well to anywhere in the world. True, certain locales would require some adaptations or modifications to what is presented here (such as shooting techniques for snowy locations), but you would learn those by experience and growing your knowledge over time.

If you want to learn landscape photography, this is an excellent place to start your journey.





Association of
Personal Computer User Groups



APCUG 2013 Winter Virtual Technology Conference Saturday February 2, 2013		
Time	Track One	Track Two
1:00 pm - 1:50 pm Eastern 12 noon - 12:50 pm Central 11:00am - 11:50 am Mountain 10:00 am - 10:50 am Pacific	Windows 8 -- Mysteries and Misconceptions Explained! Francis Chao, Member Tucson Computer Society, AZ	To 'Cloud' or Not to 'Cloud', that is the Question David Williams, APCUG Director Central Iowa Computer User Group
2:00 pm - 2:50 pm Eastern 1:00 pm - 1:50 pm Central 12:00 noon - 12:50 pm Mountain 11:00 am - 11:50 am Pacific	Freeware and Shareware Marie Vesta, President, APCUG Pasco Area Computer User Group	Using Your Smartphone for Everything Bill James, APCUG Advisor, Region 8 Computer Club of Oklahoma City
3:00 pm - 3:50 pm Eastern 2:00 pm - 2:50 pm Central 1:00 pm - 1:50 pm Mountain 12 noon - 12:50 pm Pacific	Are We Losing This Generation's Photos? Rick Santich, President, MotoPhotos	iPad Basics and a Bit More Greg West, Advisor Region 6 and International Sarnia Computer Users Group
4:00 pm - 4:50pm Eastern 3:00 pm - 3:50 pm Central 2:00 pm - 2:50 pm Mountain 1:00 pm - 1:50 pm Pacific	How to Publicize Your User Group Judy Taylour, Chair, APCUG Board of Advisors Santa Clarita Valley Computer Club	

After registering, you will receive an email with your personal link to access the conference and a link to test your computer to make sure it works with the software. Suggest testing a few days before the conference so you have time to resolve any problems, should they occur. You may also receive a reminder email the day before or the day of the conference.