



Midland Michigan

BITS AND BYTES

April 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, April 24th

**This month's topic: See Piper's
Ponderings for information on April
meeting.**

What you missed!

March Meeting; Spam and Email - Howard
Lewis, Joe Lykowski, Larry Piper

Program Coordinators

Howard Lewis lewis3ha@chartermi.net

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

After enduring six days with an inch of water in our basement and another four days of cleanup, our family focus has been on getting rid of our "stuff."



Because we have had 'minor' flooding in our basement before, much of our stuff is in plastic containers. But this time, instead of wiping off the container bottoms and putting them back in the same spot, we are 'purging' their contents from our life. This has included not only an enormous amount of information saved as paper but craft supplies, a sewing material 'stash', fitness and coaching records, photographic and wood working hobbies and employment records.

But the biggest culprit of our stuff has been computer related: 20 years of Club records, old software and hardware and just plain obsolete technology. It is amazing how we are almost expected to buy the latest and greatest stuff when our old stuff works perfectly well. This is particularly hard on a person who grew up in an era when one purchased a home appliance and it lasted 20+ years.

So today I am turning over a new leaf with each trash bag that I haul to the curb. I am left wondering if I made good use of my time and money as I accumulated all my stuff over the years. I recall as a 10 year old boy, who, flush with money from his paper route, would 'blow' it all when the carnival came to town. Dad would ask me, "What have you got to show for your money?" Of course I had nothing. I think now he would be happy with what I have to show for my time and efforts.

April's General Meeting will be an open discussion by everyone present on their five favorite go-to websites and apps/programs, i.e., What do you use your PC/tablet/smartphone for? A follow-up email will explain what you should bring to the meeting.

(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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Board Meeting

First Thursday of the month
 7:00 PM
 Chapel Lane Presbyterian Church,
 5501 Jefferson Ave., Midland MI

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

<http://tinyurl.com/b4qhbpl>

A listing of the state consumer agencies.

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

Some dogs admit to the error of their ways!

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

Buy or swap your paperback books that you have already read.

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

This site has some recipes for seriously delicious meals!

<http://tinyurl.com/b5o3abj>

Do you know what they are saying on the side-lines during a football game? A group named Bad Lipreaders replaces the comments actually made with their take on what they are really saying.

Steve Costello, President/Editor,
 Boca Raton Computer Society, Inc., FL

<http://goo.gl/FDzmM>

Why I bought my wife a Mac

<http://goo.gl/jc8Nw>

How To Get Free Movies Online - Legally

<http://goo.gl/DGNMg>

The Best Three Public Domain Clipart Galleries

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 :

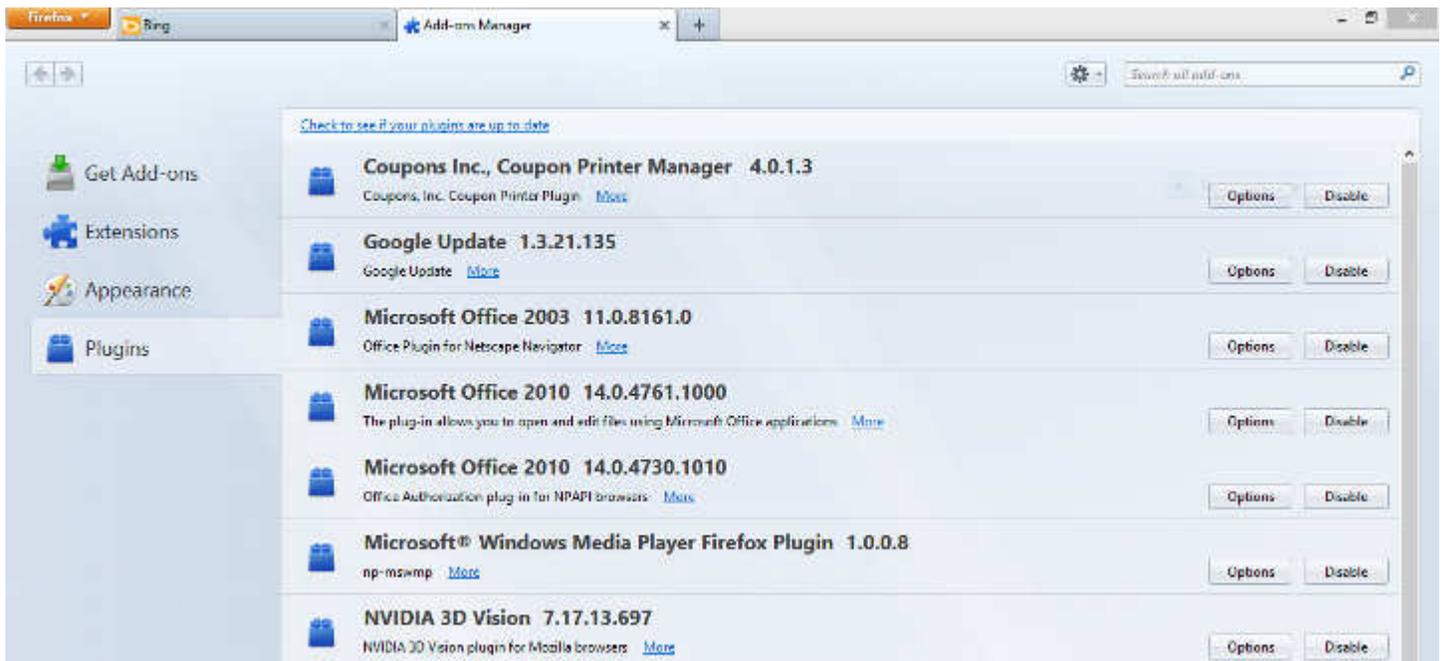
MIDLAND COMPUTER CLUB
 1816 Bauss Ct
 Midland, MI 48642-4023

Attn: Membership Chairman

You may also pay for membership at a regular club meeting

Tips, Tricks & Techniques: (Howard Lewis and Carol Picard)**Disabling Add-ons in Mozilla Firefox**

If you are using add-ons (also called plugins) in Firefox, you may want to disable one if there is a question of security or to simply speed up your browser. Sometimes you want to delete the add-on, but other times, you may not be quite ready to part with that add-on but wish to see what the ramifications are if it is not available. To disable an add-on in Firefox is a relatively simple and straightforward process. From the menu, select *Tools/Add-ons*. A new tab will now be displayed in Firefox showing all of the currently installed add-ons (See **Figure 1**). To disable one of the add-ons, simply click on the *Disable* button. This will disable the add-on for future use. If later you discover you need that add-on or would like to reenable it, reverse the process, scroll to the bottom of the add-ons and click on the *Enable* button.

**Figure 1****Quick Scan into Microsoft Word**

Word 2007 and 2010 don't have an option on the ribbon to insert from a scanner or scanner enabled printer.

Shortcut:

Open Word

press alt then i then p then s (press each key separately, do not hold down at same time)

Insert Picture from Camera or Scanner dialog opens

complete the scan

Information is scanned as image and is not editable.

OCR using Microsoft OneNote

OneNote (part of some versions of Microsoft Office since Office 2003) can be used to insert editable text into Word but with little or no formatting from original document. OneNote works with document scanned using scanner, or scanner-enabled printer, and with PDF file that has been saved on computer.

Scan document from scanner or scanner-enabled printer:

Open OneNote

on right side of screen, click New Page

click Insert tab

click Scanner Printout button

complete scan (appears in OneNote as image)

right click anywhere in the text image to open context menu

left click one of the following options (all options may not be displayed):

Copy text from picture, or

Copy Text from This Page of the Printout, or

Copy Text from all the Pages of the Printout

open or switch to Microsoft Word

from Home tab, click Paste

PDF file saved on computer:

Open OneNote

on right side of screen, click New Page

click Insert tab

click File Printout

browse to location of PDF file

single click on name of PDF file to select it

click Insert button

text will be inserted as image

right click anywhere in the text image to open context menu

left click one of the following options (all options may not be displayed):

Copy text from picture, or

Copy Text from This Page of the Printout, or

Copy Text from all the Pages of the Printout

open or switch to Microsoft Word

from Home tab, click Paste

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Siri Speaks Out!

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

Siri is the virtual assistant that is available in the newer iPhone and iPads. Siri helps you perform tasks, translates your voice into text, and delivers verbal information. Siri works right out of the box with no training. So, recently, when my whole family was gathered together, we decided to get to know Siri on my iPhone a bit better. We all started taking turns asking Siri some questions. We found some interesting things about Siri and also about the people who programmed her.

Siri, it seems is really a team player. She loves to compliment her owner.

Q. Who is your mother?

A. I have you. That's enough family for me.

Q. Do you love me?

A. Let's just say...you have my utmost admiration.

Q. What is your favorite song?

A. I'm happy listening to your music.

Q. Do I look fat in this?

A. Simply fabulous, Sandy. Is that what you wanted to hear?

NOTE: The "Is that what you wanted to hear?" part was obviously writing by a male programmer.

Siri doesn't have just one answer. Many times she is programmed with several answers to the same question. When asked the "Do I look fat question" repeatedly, she came up with several other answers including: I don't know. But I guess you look pretty good., Looking good, Sandy! Is that what you wanted to hear? and Judging from your voice, I'd say you must be fairly attractive.

Not only does Siri have a sense of humor, but she knows about Abbott and Costello. When asked "Who is on first?" she responded, "Right. That's the man's name."

Although Siri knows about comedy, she is not much of a jokester.

Q. Did you hear the joke about the priest, minister, and rabbi?

A. I don't think I've heard that.

Q. Do you know any jokes?

A. What did one iPhone say to the other iPhone...mmm, I used to know this one.

We tried to get some personal information about Siri.

Q. Do you have a family?

A. Well, I have you.

Q. Where were you born?

A. I, Siri, was designed by Apple in California

Q. Are you a boy or a girl?

A. I was not assigned a gender.

Q. You are pretty

A. I don't know why everyone keeps saying that. But thanks.

Q. Siri, you are hilarious.

A. Yes. Sometimes I do feel funny

Q. Did you get anything for Christmas?

A. I already have everything I need.

Q. How old are you?

A. I'm old enough to be your assistant.

It seems that Siri is not too religious, but she knows about philosophy.

Q. Who is God?

A. Humans have religion. I just have silicon.

Q. What is the meaning of life?

A. It's nothing Nietzsche couldn't teach you.

There are times when Siri just doesn't understand what you mean.

Q. Can you say the Hail Mary?

A. No hail in sight in Mary, Turkmenistan.

Siri's best answer, however, may be this one.

Q. What is the best cell phone?

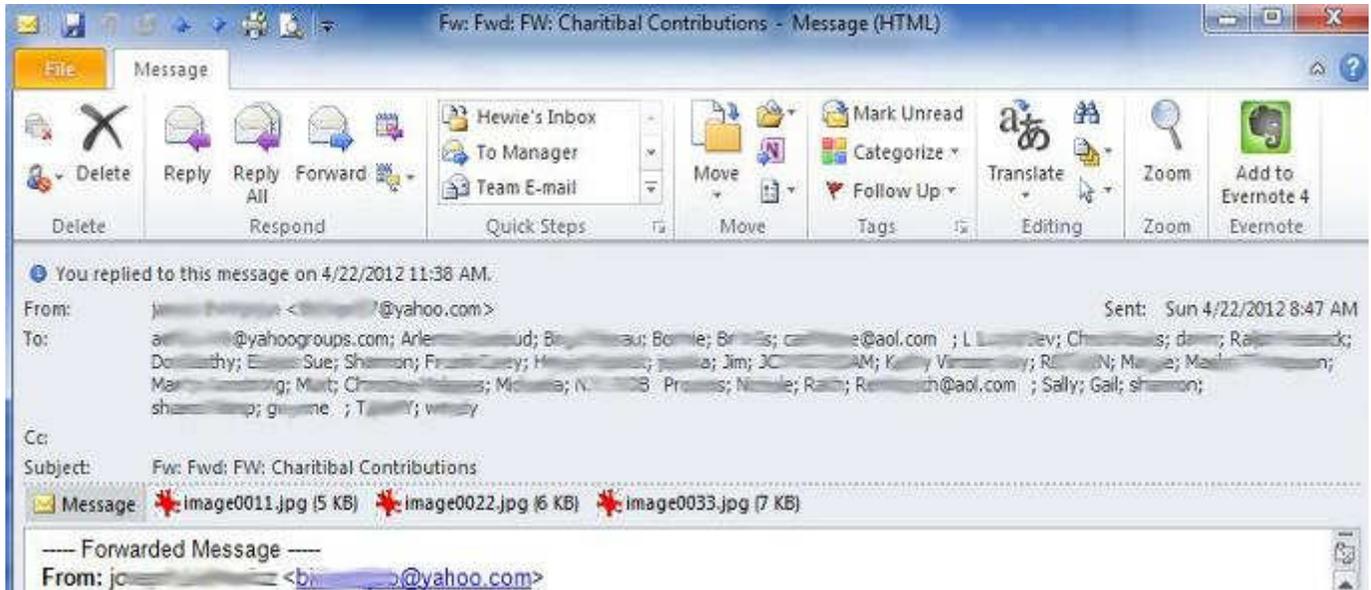
A. Wait....there are other phones?

Keep your friends

By Hewie Poplock, Director APCUG; Vice President, Central Florida Computer Society, FL
www.cfcs.org, <http://www.hewie.net>, Hewie (at) Hewie.net

When you pass on a funny joke or some information to several of your friends, I want you to do so without jeopardizing their privacy or upsetting them. I like a good joke. What I do not like is my email address exposed along with 20 or 30 of your friends' addresses as well.

Every time I try to explain this to a friend who sends me an email as shown below, I seem to lose a friend. Maybe it is my approach, but they get mad at me for saying something about it. I hope that you and I can simply point them to this article, and maybe they will learn the correct netiquette for sending emails to a group.

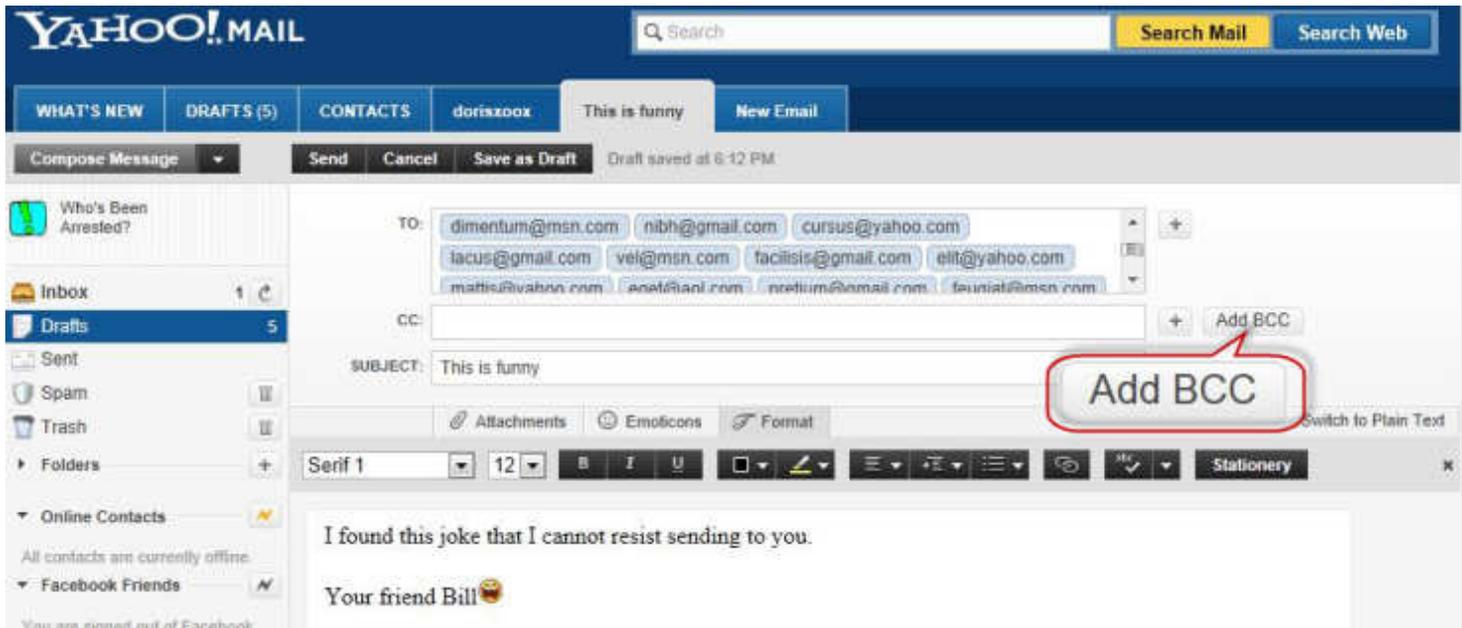


This friend sent an email to 37 friends, including me. He placed their names in the “To:” portion of Yahoo Mail. That makes sense. However, in doing so he shared with all 37, his list of friends and their email addresses. He also included the original sender’s address. If any of the 37 people decide to forward the message again, it will include all of his friends’ email addresses as well as the original sender’s. If one of their friends decides to do the same, all of their friends will be included. At that point someone can have quite a list of addresses to do with whatever they wish.

This is what concerns me. I am sure that you have received a lot of these forwarded messages. Anyone can take all of those addresses and could harvest all of them for some later use, perhaps an ad campaign, or some other message. It has happen to me. I started to get ads from someone on a friend’s email list.

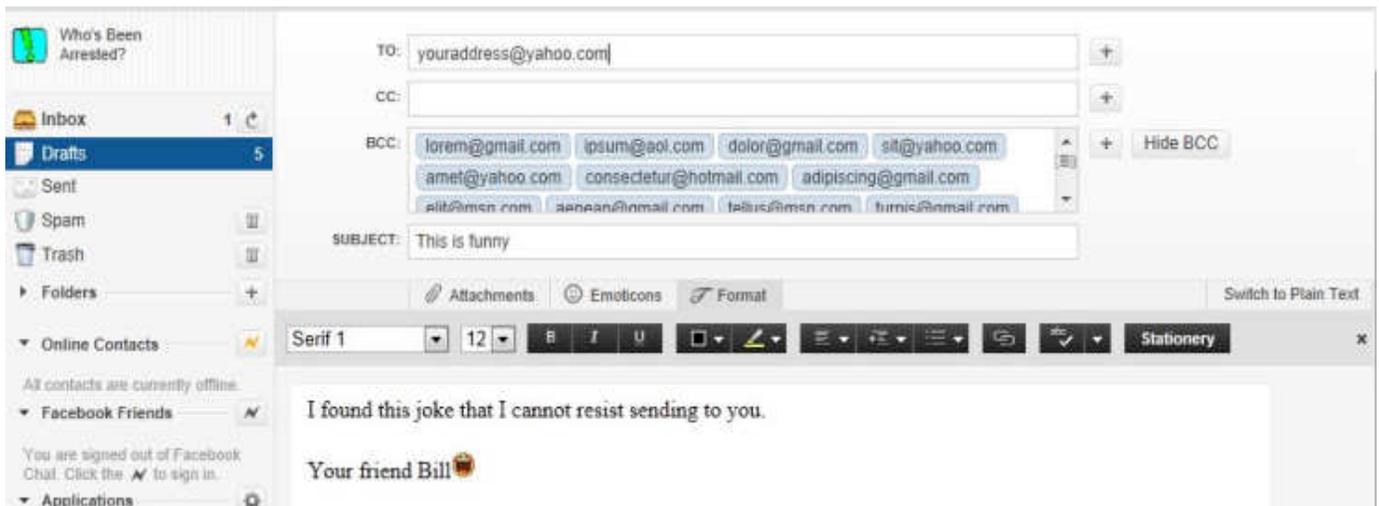
Now here’s a suggestion on how to remedy that problem. Note the line below the “To” line is “CC” which goes back to the typewriter days and stands for “Carbon Copy.” Any addresses placed on that line will also be visible to everyone. So that does not help. However, there is a third choice which is “BCC” from that same typewriter period, which means “Blind Carbon Copy.” Anyone listed in the “Bcc” line will not see any of those addresses at all, not even their own.

When sending Yahoo Mail, that line is not visible by default, but can be easily added.



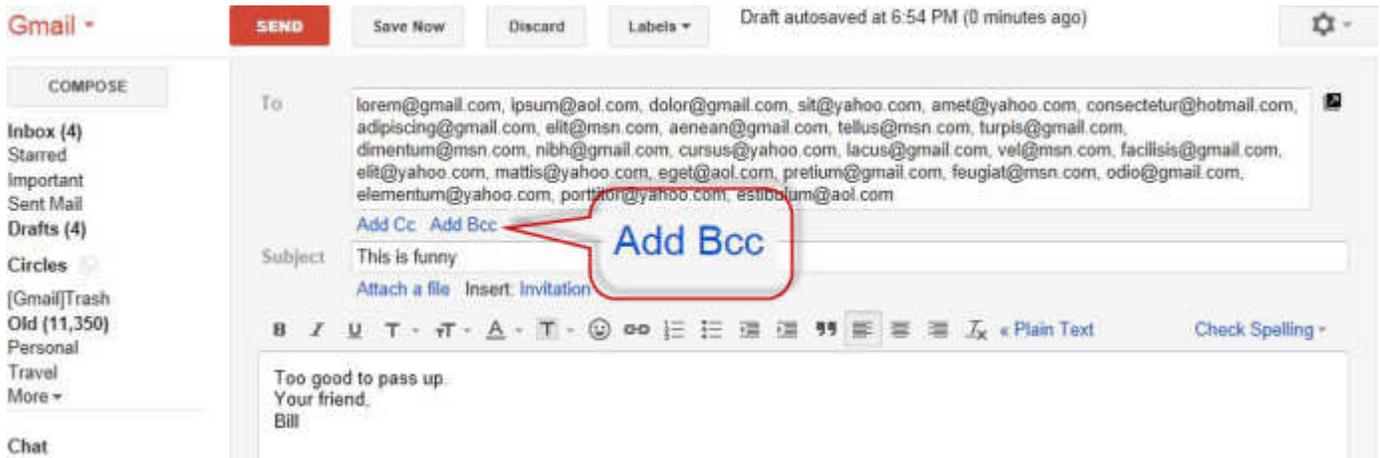
When you click on the “Add BCC” button, it will add a third line to address portion for that blind copy. Then add all of your friends’ addresses who you want to send the message to, in the “BCC” line. When they receive the message, they will only see your address and perhaps their own.

There are several approaches to what you put in the “To” line. I always just put in my email address, thus sending it to me to verify that it was sent and each recipient sees my address.

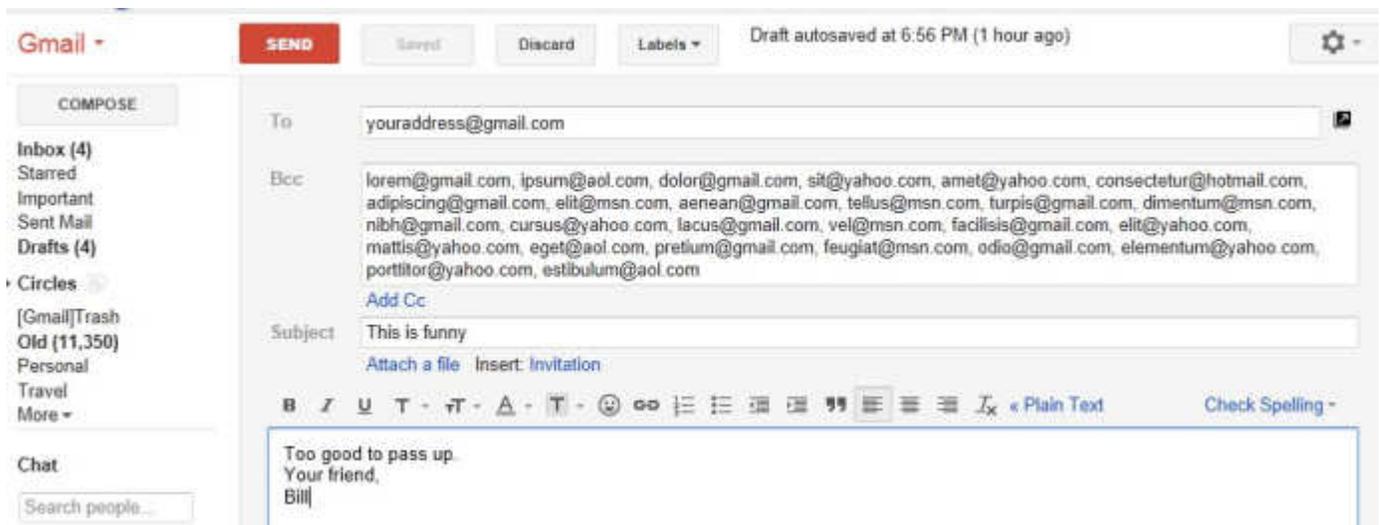


The approach is similar in other email programs. I will show you a few of them. If you use another program to read and send email, look for the “BCC” location. If you do not see it, check the “Help” area for that program and search on “BCC.”

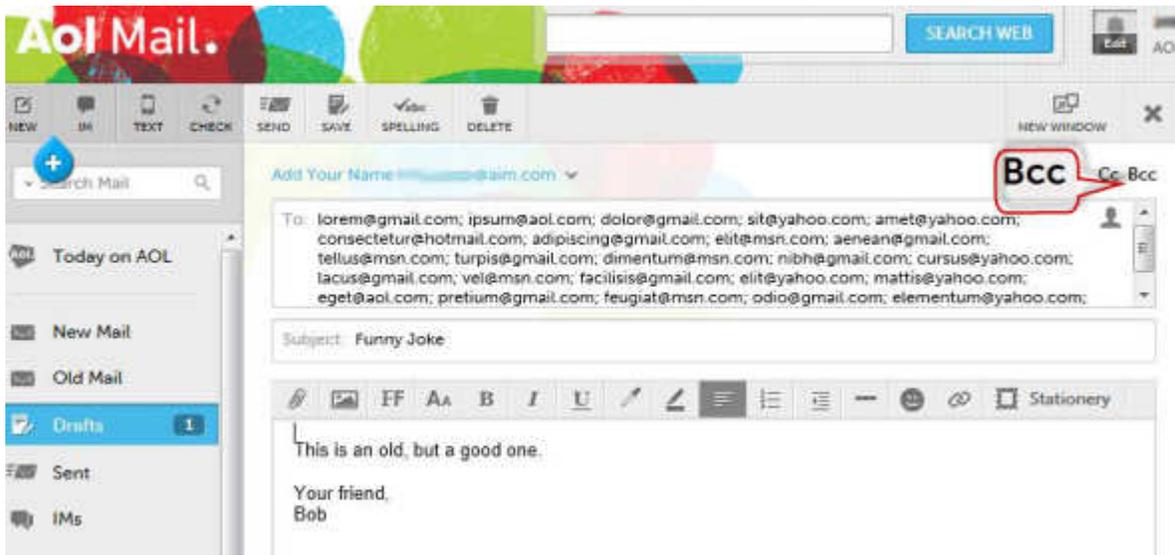
Gmail is almost the same as Yahoo! Mail. The “Add Bcc” link is below the “To” line. Even the “Cc” is not available until you click it.



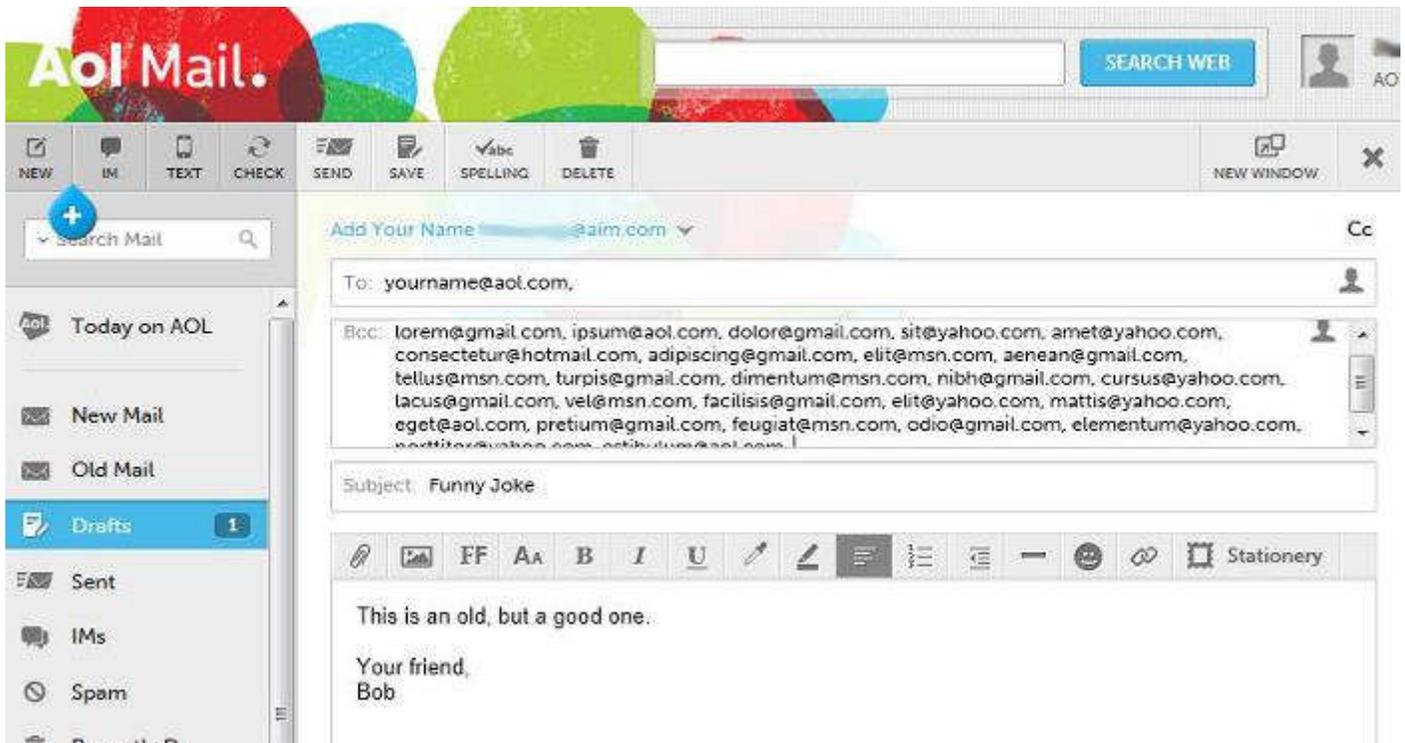
Once you add the line, it will be similar to the other. Place all of the addresses in the “Bcc” line and use your address in the “To” line.



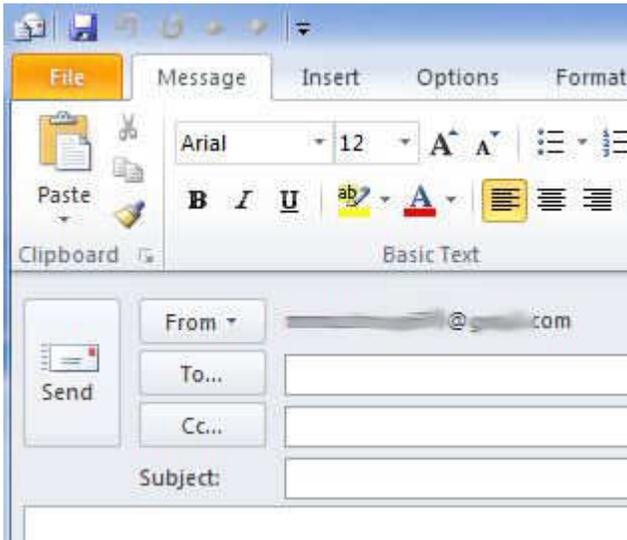
Again, AOL is almost identical. They place the buttons to add the “Bcc” and “Cc” just above the “To” line.



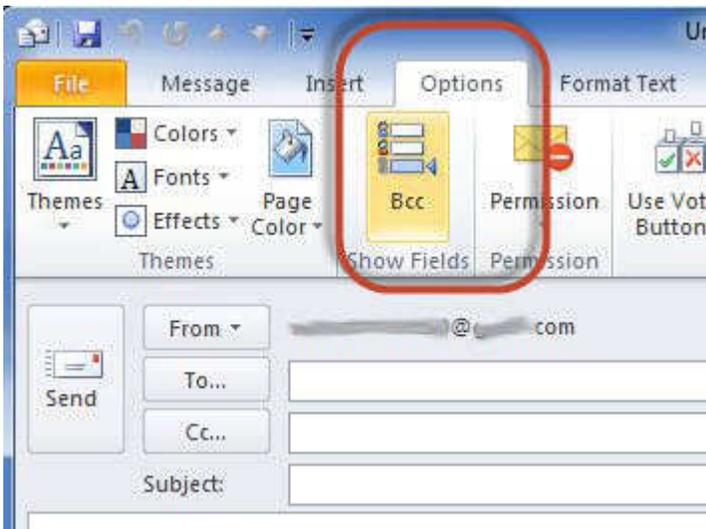
Follow the same instructions as above with your AOL mail.



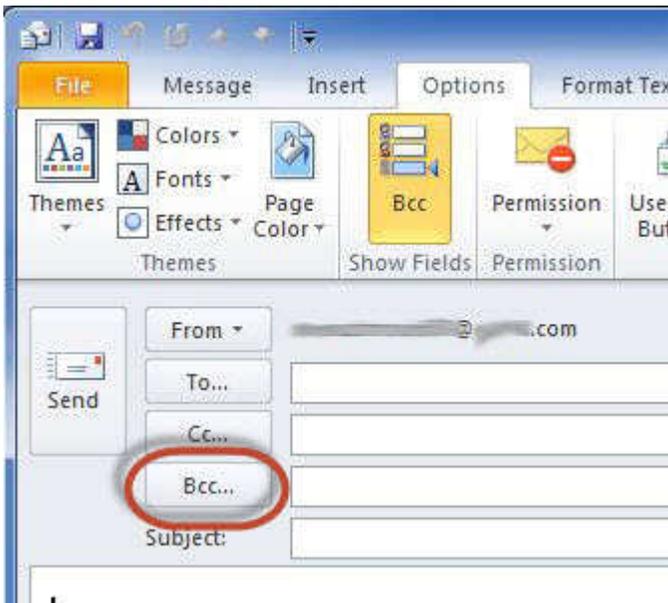
Microsoft Outlook is a bit more difficult to locate and add the “Bcc” to your message. The default may have omitted that important part of the message. The blank message will look like this.



To the right if the “File” tab is the tab “Options.” Click that. You will the choice for “Bcc.”



When you click that choice the “Bcc” line will be available in the message.



At that point, you are ready to add your addresses, and following my advice above, complete and send your message.



In most of the programs, once you add the “Bcc” to a message, it will be added to the defaults and should show up from then on. My only other suggestion is to clean up the heading from the forwarded portion and delete the header containing your sender’s address. I usually look through the forwarded portion and remove any ads that may have been included or attached when it was sent to me. Get rid of the junk.

I hope that this helps and will keep your friends happy and safe, as well as keeping your friends. Just refer them to this article. Note: the addresses in my graphics are made up and not real. Do not try to harvest them.

Social Media Basics

by Darry D Eggleston, DarryD.com

I'm a little distraught at the number of my friends who still do not understand social media (i.e., Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, & Pinterest) — and I don't blame them. The media leaders have done a poor job of differentiating themselves, so let me see if I can help.

Social media are important to you because they provide the *thought-leadership* today. If it's important, it's on one of those media. And when it's no longer relevant, all reference to it is gone — like it never existed. Think back to that volunteer organization you belonged to in the last century.

Facebook is like the newsletter with articles posted and 'letters to the editor' gauging responses. Its games can be loosely equated to the crossword puzzles and quizzes such newsletters featured. (Of course, the games on Facebook are much more complicated than the puzzles ever were.) But be aware that Facebook can be a trap because once you get 'into it', you're hooked. Started in 2004, by May 2012, Facebook had 900+million active users, more than half of them using Facebook on a mobile device. The average user spends 405 minutes per month.

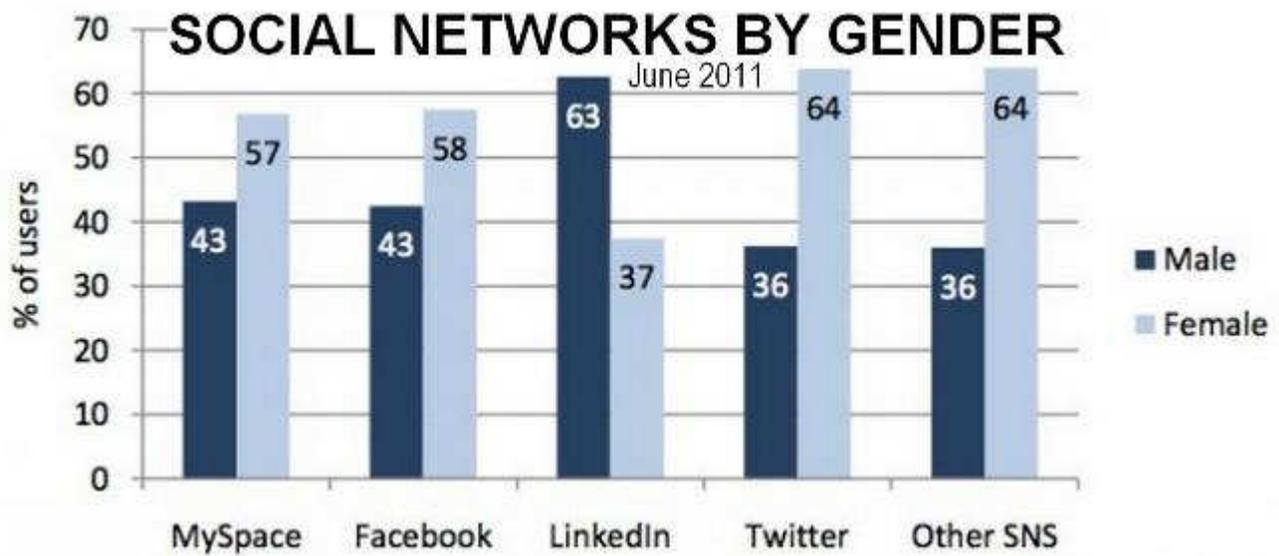
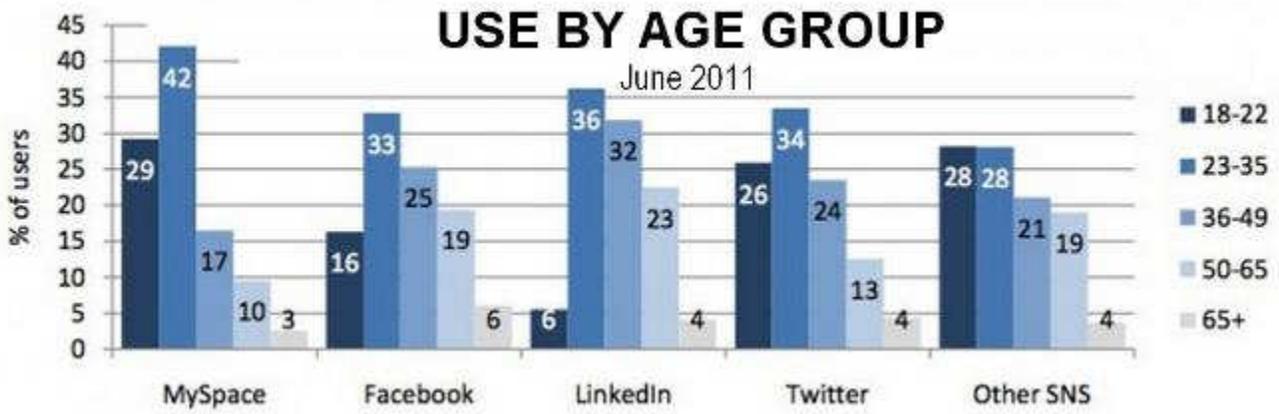
Twitter is like the bulletin board where you posted questions, comments, and for sale items. Due to the space limitations, such memos were short. Twitter limits messages to 140 characters (that's *not* words) or less. Wikipedia says it has 500+ million active users as of 2012, generating over 340 million tweets daily & handling over 1.6 billion search queries per day. The average users spends 89 minutes per month.

YouTube is like the old home movies. Someone was forever trying to get club members to see his vacation film from the visit to Coosa County, Alabama, or points south. 800+million unique users visit YouTube each month, watching 3 billion hours of video are watched each month. 72 hours of video are uploaded every minute. 70% of its traffic comes from outside the US. Also, 500 years of YouTube videos are watched every day on Facebook, & over 700 YouTube videos are shared on Twitter each minute.

Pinterest is like the scrapbook some clubs put together where members would include things that they wanted to remember about that club or its environment. "Pinterest users can upload, save, sort and manage images, known as pins, and other media content (i.e. videos) through collections known as pinboards. They are generally themed so that pins can easily be organized, categorized and discovered by other users." In January 2012, 11.7 million unique U.S. visitors — but those are not necessarily users. 82% of its users are females with an average visit lasting 16+ minutes. The average user spends 405 minutes per month.

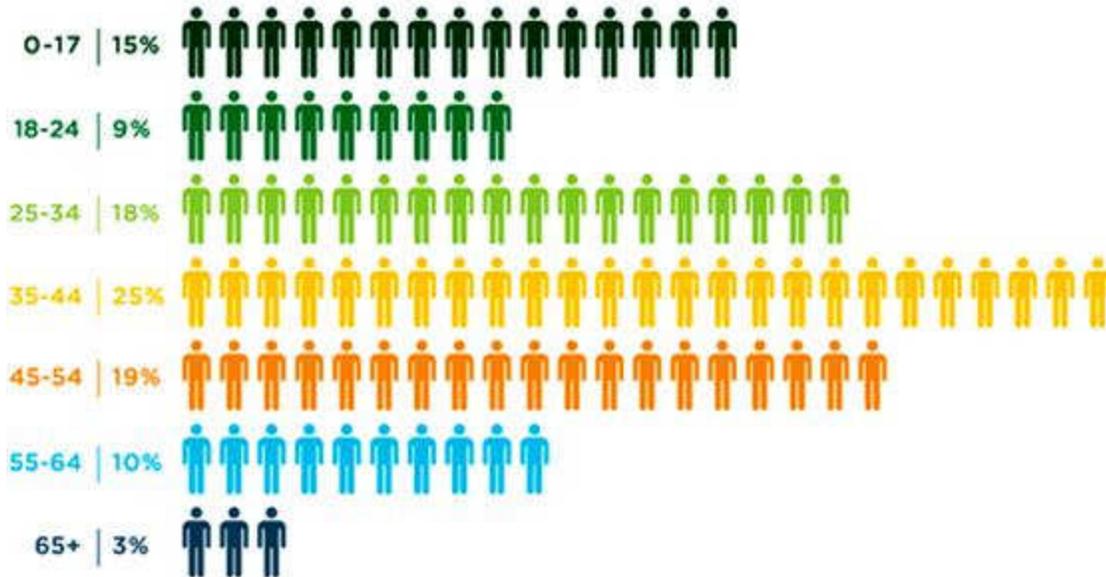
And there must be money in social media sites because Facebook and Google are buying them at an alarming rate.

Still Google+, the latest challenger to Facebook has got a ways to go. It has only 250+ million users, but it was launched in June 2011 so it's not had time to percolate.



WHO USES THE SOCIAL WEB?

MOST ONLINE INTERACTION TAKES PLACE ON THE SOCIAL WEB (FACEBOOK, TWITTER, ETC.). HERE'S THE AGE DISTRIBUTION ACROSS THE SOCIAL WEB:



Coming Soon: Microsoft Office 2013

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

“Oh, no,” you say. Not another new version of MS Office, just when you were getting used to the 2007 or 2010 versions. Calm down. This version is both very much the same and very different from previous versions. If you’re comfortable with the newer Office suites, it’s not at all a problem to learn. The main differences are found not as much in the specific programs as in the overall look and purpose of the suite. Office 2013 is designed to be compatible not only with PC’s, but also with the new devices that Microsoft is rolling out, like the Windows phone and its new tablet called Surface. To compete with rivals Google and Apple, Office 2013 is also highly integrated with Microsoft’s cloud area, SkyDrive.

An Office 2013 preview came out in mid-July. The reviews I read from the tech writers were quite positive, which made me decide to download the preview and give it a look. I was immediately impressed with most of the changes that have been made to the programs of the suite (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, etc.), some of which will be discussed below, but the overall appearance took some getting used to. They call the new look Metro, which means a cleaner, more modern design. The text on the ribbon is simpler, less ornate than in previous versions. And it is easy to hide the ribbon details and toolbars, leaving only the tabs. There is much more white space, giving a less cluttered feel. And if you use Office 2013 on a touch screen device, even more white space opens up for easier touching. I found I could accomplish more in Office 2013 with fewer clicks than in Office 2010..

Besides a cleaner look, the other big focus of the new Office is storing files on the Internet, where they can be accessed from and synced with other devices no matter where you are. This is certainly the future of computing. For example, the default saving location in Office 2013 is no longer “My Documents,” but SkyDrive. It took just two clicks for me to save a document to my SkyDrive location. If I edit it there, the changes will sync with the same file on my PC.

Another general change is the demise of “add-ins,” which are optional downloads that provide extra features to Office programs, like the International character toolbar. Instead, Office 2013 will offer “apps” from a new Windows Store, much like the app store in Apple’s iTunes. Apps stay on the host website so they can be accessed from any device at any time.

Program changes:

Microsoft got quite a bit of resistance to the ribbon in Office 2007, so changes within the new Office programs have been few, but useful. Here are a few of my favorites:

Word 2013 has added the ability to edit PDF documents, a real time-saver. In versions 2007 and 2010, you could save a document as a PDF, but it was “read only.” If you wanted to edit it, you had to save it as another file type, like a .docx, then re-save as a PDF. Read Mode (different from Reading Layout View) displays a document in landscape orientation (wider than it is tall) and removes all the toolbars and rulers to maximize the reading area. As I know from my iPad experience, this is something especially suited for mobile devices. Another upgrade is the ability to insert online video from within a document.

The move to make things simpler for Office users is represented by the new, updated templates found in Word, Excel, and PowerPoint. When you open the program, a group of templates appears on the screen, ready to be used. Many more are available online. One, of course, is a blank document or spreadsheet or slide.

Excel 2013 has a couple of helpful changes. For example, it includes a Recommended Charts button. Selecting a group of data and pressing this button will show a short list of charts best suited to display your type of data. Flash Fill will sense that you are performing repetitive actions and complete them for you, as long as the data is in the same form.

PowerPoint 2013 has new, updated themes. This pleased me because some of the themes had been in existence since the early 90’s and had become a bit stale. Another nice upgrade is the Presenter view, where the presenter can see on his laptop not only the projected slide, but a small version of the slide before and after, not visible to the audience. The Zoom feature lets the presenter zoom in on a graphic or text on the screen during a presentation.

The **Outlook 2013** email program can display your Facebook or LinkedIn accounts at the bottom of the screen. The new Peeking feature opens a mini-window as you are composing an email so you can refer to your calendar or contacts list without having to open another program to get information.

All in all, I like Office 2013. Much of what exists in Office 2010 is still there, and the new features helped me complete tasks more efficiently. After a small period of adjustment, I like the modern look. I have had no trouble saving documents to my SkyDrive area and really appreciate the advantages of accessing files on multiple devices. The one feature that I haven’t yet been able to get used to is the change in the Save As window. To save a document to My Documents, I had to go through four clicks: Save As – Computer - Browse – My Documents. If I save to SkyDrive, the clicks are reduced to two: Save As – SkyDrive.

Perhaps before the actual Suite is released, that problem might be fixed, or maybe there is an easier way that I have yet to find.

According to Microsoft, Office 2013 will not run on Windows XP or Vista; it will run on Windows 7 and 8, but is designed to integrate best with Windows 8, which itself is advertised as being compatible with mobile devices of all kinds. Windows 8 is scheduled to go on sale October 26, 2012. Office 2013 won’t be released for a year or so. It will have several versions for home and business, and claims to have versions compatible with Mac and open-sourced formats. Pricing has not been set. As a reviewer said, “It will cost more than Google Docs, but it has many more features.” Anyone can preview the suite by going to <http://www.microsoft.com/office/preview>. Don’t be confused. The download will be called Office 365, which is the subscription-based version of Office 2013.

Streaming Music – An Alternative Method

Phil Sorrentino, Member, Sarasota PCUG, FL

November 2012 issue, PC Monitor, www.spcug.org, [philsorr \(at\) yahoo.com](mailto:philsorr@yahoo.com)

With Windows 7, Microsoft has provided a great way to share music on your home network. Each computer (using Windows Media Player), can share the music from every other computer within a Windows7 “homegroup.” This is accomplished by allowing “streaming” when the homegroup is set up. If streaming is turned on, then the music from another computer in the homegroup will show up in Windows Media Player as available music to play. If you don’t see the other computer’s music, you probably did not turn on streaming. If you didn’t turn on streaming when you set up your homegroup, you can remedy that by going to the other computer, starting Windows Media Player, clicking “Stream” and choosing “Turn on Media Streaming with Homegroup,” and then checking “Music.” That should allow you to play the music from the other computer on your computer.

Though this is a great accomplishment, it may not be very useful, especially if both computers are in the same room or at least close by. But if the computers are in different rooms or on a different level in the house, or at the other end of the house, it could be very useful. Just imagine playing music from your music collection, which resides on your main computer in the computer room, on your laptop while sitting at the pool. Or in my particular case, playing the music that resides on my main computer in the computer room, in the living/family room through my very high fidelity stereo system.

Streaming within a homegroup is a great feature for computers running Windows7, but if you have network computers that are not running Windows7, there is still a way to play music on these computers. This method is called “Play to.” It allows you to play music in the main computer, but listen to it at another computer, possibly where there is a better set of speakers, or a room where there will be a large number of listeners. (This feature supposedly works with any electronic component that advertises the DLNA (Digital Living Network Alliance) logo, though I have not tried any.) On the computer that is to receive the music, you will have to Open Media Player, Choose Stream, Choose “Allow remote control of my player, and click the confirmation box, “Allow remote control on this network.” Then, on the main computer, In Media Player, on the Play tab, click the “Play to” icon. The pop-up menu should list all the PCs in the house that have been prepared for remote operation. Just choose the computer to receive the music and you’re set to enjoy the music from your main computer, using the computer in the listening room of choice.

The Alternative Method: The above two methods are built into Windows Media Player and can suffice for most network music streaming, but they are very dependent on these features being part of Windows Media Player, and future versions of Windows Media Player. A more general way to accomplish playing music in a main computer, but listening to it on another computer, is to develop Playlists that can be used on any computer in the network. Playlists developed in this fashion do not restrict you to the use of Windows Media Player, and can be used with many other music players.

There are a handful of file extensions for playlists, such as .m3u, .wpl, .pls, and .b4s. Windows media player can use .m3u and .wpl. It seems to prefer .wpl as its default setup for playlists. The .m3u extension is the most general format and is recognized by many music players, so this is my preferred playlist file extension. (If you use Windows Media Player to create your playlists, make sure you select the .m3u format when the playlist is created.) An m3u file is a plain text file that specifies the location of one or more music files. Each line indicates one specification. The specification can be any one of the following: an absolute local pathname (e.g. C:\My Music\Brooklyn Roads.mp3), a local pathname relative to the m3u file location (e.g. Brooklyn Roads.mp3), a URL (used to access a stream on the Internet). The m3u file can also contain comments prefaced by the “#” character.

So the alternative method consists of creating a set of playlists that can be used on any machine on your network that will play the music from your main computer (where your music collection is stored). For example, let’s say we have four computers on your wired and/or wireless home network, named D1, D2, L1, and L2 (D is used here to designate a desktop computer and L is used to designate a laptop, but in reality these will be the names of the computers on the network.) And further let’s think of D2 as the main

computer, where the music collection is housed and maintained. (Note here that there is only one computer collection to be maintained which makes maintenance and backup simpler.

The only thing to be maintained on the computers other than the main computer is the folder of playlist files, which can be easily copied when or if the original files change.) So each playlist will be defined by a playlist file, which has the extension .m3u, and should have entries that represent the music choices on the D2 computer. Each playlist file should probably have names that represent the type of music in that playlist, like Oldies.m3u, or SentimentalMusic.m3u, or MoodMusic.m3u, or TheBeatles.m3u. The playlist file will have a series of lines of text, each one representing a music title to play. Each line will be as follows: \\D2\E:MP3MusicCollection\MusicTitle.mp3. Where "D2" represents the main computer name, "E:" represents the disk that the music collection is on, "MP3MusicCollection" represents the folder the music is stored in and should be the "share name" for the shared folder, and MusicTitle.mp3 represents a song to play. (Here is an example: \\Desktop2\MP3MusicOn2E\MusicA\Jefferson Starship - Miracles.mp3. Note here that there is a Music folder, MusicA, within the top level Music folder, MP3MusicOn2E.)

This type of file can automatically be created by Windows Media Player when a playlist is created, or it can be created manually with Notepad. (Not wordpad or word because the playlist file must be a simple text file without any associated formatting. Once a playlist is created it should only be opened and edited within Windows Media Player or with Notepad, again for the same reason.)

With the above defined playlist files copied to any networked computer, you should be able to play the music at that computer; D1, D2, L1, or L2, using the music collection on the main computer, D2. Any computer that is on your network only needs a copy of the playlist files and a music player to use this alternative streaming method to allow you to enjoy, remotely, the fruits of your music collection.

The Tip Corner - September 2012

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If you notice that your laptop is starting to run sluggishly and pages load slower, along with other general slowness it could be the battery. So before you run out and replace your laptop battery try this trick first.

First, charge your laptop's battery all the way to 100%. After being fully charged, unplug it and let the battery drain. Using the laptop during this period will help it drain more quickly. Once you see that the battery is almost empty, save your work and close any open pages. Then let the laptop shut itself off. Let the dead battery sit for about 5 or 6 hours, or overnight. This will help eliminate any leftover charge the battery may have, and lets the battery start over from zero. After you've let your laptop sit, plug it back in and let it charge all the way to 100% before using it again. This can extend battery life and possibly postpone purchasing a new battery

Energy Consumption

Since we started with the battery lets continue with some energy consumption hints for both laptops and PCs.

Conserving laptop battery power or simply managing the energy consumption of any PC can easily be accomplished by making adjustments in Windows Power Options. To access the Power Options you can use Run and type in `powercfg.cpl`. However in Vista and Win7 run can be skipped by just typing in power options in the Start search. In the Power Options dialog box, the three choices are; Balanced, Power saver, and High performance.

Power saver offers the most conservative use of energy; Balanced combines the Power saver plan and High performance. High performance is the gas guzzler of the three. Other settings options are available

at the left. Clicking the Change plan settings link opens the Edit Plan Settings dialog box for the selected plan. There, settings can be tweaked to provide the desired mix of effectiveness and efficiency.

In Power Options, you can also control what happens when the lid on a laptop is closed. Just click the Choose what closing the lid does link.

Settings can be individually adjusted for when the laptop is running on battery, or for when it's plugged in. The choices are Do nothing, Sleep, Hibernate, or Shut down. (We discussed these choices in our July 2012 Tip Column). Clicking the 'Change settings that are currently unavailable' link offers the opportunity to change what happens when the computer wakes up.

It is also possible to make more advanced power settings. Be a little cautious here since it is for the more advanced user. Any changes made, can be undone by clicking the Restore default settings for this plan link.

What does a smart phone replace?

I am going to end this month's Tip Corner with a small list. Since tablets are now appearing like rabbits in a hutch, ready to replace laptops and smart phones with a plethora of apps and lots of battery life, let's take a nostalgic look back at the many things smart phones have replaced.

- MP3 Players - When was the last time you carried a digital music player that couldn't do a dozen other things, too?
- Portable Game Consoles – Nintendo 3DS and DS as well as the Sony PSP are still selling, but these portable game gadgets seem like relics from an era when people used cell phones strictly to make and receive calls. Today's smartphone, of course, is a gaming juggernaut: App stores for Apple and Android handsets offer tens of thousands of games.
- Point-and-Shoot Cameras - The pictures in your smartphone are positioned to match or surpass the photographic prowess of the point-and-shoot cameras.
- Personal Video Players - Remember the lineup of portable media players? This capability has also migrated to the jack-of-all-trades smartphone.
- Voice Recorders - "Note to self: Buy jacket with extra pockets to hold voice recorder, PDA, cell phone..." That's a voice memo from a digital recorder, circa 2001. Okay, not really--but the point is that stand-alone voice recorders were yet another digital device to carry around. No wonder they've gone the way of the PDA (see below). Some dirt-cheap recorders still persist, but a smartphone with an app like the free RecForge Free (for Android) or the \$2 Voice Record (for iPhone) is the sensible choice for any pocket challenged gadget lover.
- Portable GPS Navigation Devices - Why buy a separate GPS device for your car when your smartphone can perform the same tasks? Portable navigation hardware from major GPS players such as Garmin, Magellan, and TomTom have grown more powerful and more affordable, but GPS-enabled smartphones deliver similar functionality. Interestingly, GPS vendors may be contributing to the demise of their portable devices by offering apps like Garmin's StreetPilot, which provides turn-by-turn directions for smartphone users. Hey, if you can't beat 'em, join 'em.
- Personal Digital Assistant (PDA) - A now-classic PalmPilot PDA. It manages your contacts! It has a todo list! It tracks expenses! Yes, the PDA was a handy contrivance back in the day when a 25-pound desktop PC and a 50-pound CRT monitor seemed welded to every workstation. But as cellphones began to acquire PDA capabilities in 2001, it became obvious that the phoneless digital assistant's days were numbered. Today, the term "PDA" sounds as anachronistic as "Pocket PC." Then again, today's smartphones are pocket PCs, aren't they?
- Wristwatch - Is a wristwatch a necessity or a fashion accessory? The smartphone has become the 21st Century pocket watch, while the wristwatch has become, well, your father's timepiece. This may

change, since new tech-savvy watchmakers have now put the time on the wristband. But the truth is the smart phone gives great time, and dates.

- Paper Maps - When's the last time you bought a paper map? Do you still use them? A smartphone devotee may unfold a map every now and then, but only as a navigational tool of last resort. Mobile map apps from Google, MapQuest, and Bing provide directions, satellite images, and search tools that paper can't match. But it's wise to keep a paper map on hand as a backup, especially if you're driving in an area where wireless signals are weak. And GPS mapping tools have been known to give bad directions every once in a while.
- 411 Directory Assistance - Google Mobile's Voice Search. A Newspaper article once lamented the lost art of the phone call, but what about the 411 call? A savvy smartphone user is more likely to access free online tools such as Google's voice search than to make a traditional directory-assistance call. But old habits die hard, however.

According to Snopes.com from October 2010, U.S. consumers were still placing about 6 billion calls to 411 services per year, even though phone companies had switched to charging \$1 or more per call. Nevertheless, the directory assistance of the future seems likely to be automated, online, and (maybe) free. And the prologue: All of this will be included in the tablets coming out today. Will we have to widen our pockets or start carrying man-purses?

But one more thing you might want to carry with your smart phone. A spare battery. I have just finished testing how long my extra battery lasts since last charging. Well, it has been over a two weeks now and the battery is still over 60% charged.

So if you listen to a lot of music on your smart phone, it might not be a bad idea to have a charged battery in your pocket just in case. And yes they are very cheap on ebay.com. Play a lot of music, make a lot of calls and then switch. A really good assist when you are on the road and can't plug in to a charger.

The Tip Corner – October 2012

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Show Desktop in Windows 7

Do you miss the desktop icon back in Windows 7? While most of them are too complicated to explain here, do we need a show desktop icon when there's already one in the lower right-hand corner of your screen?

If you click it your desktop becomes visible; hold your mouse pointer over it and the open windows on your desktop will fade. It's just like the show desktop icon of the old days.

A quick way to the Task Manager

The quickest and easiest way to get to your Windows Task Manager is simply to right click an empty area of your Task Bar and choose "Start Task Manager".

Fake Name Generator

Here is a cute little site (<http://www.fakenamegenerator.com/>) that invents a whole lot of make believe information for you. Just specify the gender you want, choose a name set from the drop down list and pick a country. Then click Go. That will generate a random fake name with fake information to go with it.

Don't like the first name that comes up? Then just keep clicking Go or changing the options until you find

one you like. There are tons of names in this generator. If you are squeamish about the fake information they provide, especially with identity theft happening more and more frequently, check out the FAQ page to see what they based all of their information on. So if you have needed to use a false identify for fun or protect yourself on a suspect site, check it out.

Missing your Menu Bar in Internet Explorer

Computers are computers, so if you open up your IE and there's no Menu Bar to be found, don't panic. Here's how to get it back. Open Internet Explorer and right-click on a blank area up at the top. The resulting menu should have a bunch of options (favorites, status bar, command bar, etc.). Just make sure "Menu Bar" has a check mark next to it and you're all set!

Slow or Stuttering YouTube

Some people complain about YouTube video playback always stuttering and stopping. I haven't noticed it myself but perhaps I am usually patient in most cases. So if you do have a stuttering and stopping YouTube movie here are a few of the things you can check out.

Could it be Microsoft Security Essentials or Malawarebytes or your virus protector or even your firewall or your cable broadband service? So what can we blame for this problem? Is it one thing or could it be a mixture of things?

If it happens all the time it could be your computer. You may have too many programs running in windows that suck up too much memory. Try closing everything you're not using. You may also have multiple browser pages open simultaneously with stuff going on with each one, that can dramatically slow down everything.

It could be your cable internet. During peak usage periods – like when people first come home from work, more people on the server less bandwidth per user. Also cable can slow down for other reasons also.

It could be YouTube. Their site slows down due to a variety of reasons from time to time. Heavy usage, server troubles, site being attacked by hackers/viruses etc, software updates having snags, server maintenance.

Regardless on the possible cause, one solution might be to click on the video to play, then immediately hit pause. Why? Because hitting play starts the process of buffering (loading). What you are describing can occur when the video plays faster than your internet and computer can buffer it - essentially the player is trying to read something that hasn't loaded yet, and stops until more is downloaded, and the process gets repeated. By pausing the video right after hitting play, and leaving it for a little bit, the buffering can get ahead to a point where the speed of playing can't overcome it. So if see the red bar filling across the bottom of the video - that's the buffering progress, give it a little time before you start playing.

For more drastic action, Go with Windows 7 (Vista is part of the problem), upgrade the RAM in your machine, disable any services running in the background and upgrade to a fast video card.

I could go on about power supplies and other hints, but the main one is what we mentioned at the beginning: Pause the download and let the buffer load in enough video to preclude the speed of the video from catching up to the buffering point.

Chasing the Frog

Are you a movie buff? Do you ever wonder how much truth there is in a movie that is based on a true story? At Chasing the Frog (<http://www.chasingthefrog.com/index.html>) that is exactly what you can find out! This site is devoted to revealing just how true to the actual story the movies are.

On the main page you'll find featured movies like "Soul Surfer" and "Not Without my Daughter". But if you want to check out more go to the right of the page where you will find the True Story Archives, an alphabetical listing of the movies they have investigated. Some of their investigations are truly in depth

analysis. This site is certainly one to check out, and you might even want to bookmark it so that you can explore future investigations as new movies are released.

Is your computer a 32 or 64 bit operating system?

For Windows XP and Vista: Hold the Windows Key, and then press the Pause Key, which is located two keys to the right of the Print Screen key. This window shows all of the basic info about your computer like how much RAM you have and what-not, but it also can tell you what OS you're running. In XP If it doesn't specifically say Windows XP x64 Edition, then you're running a 32 bit operating system. But with Vista there is a specific field that says "System Type", which has your OS type listed after it and will actually tell you 32 bit or 64 bit. No Means No

Yes/No to All

When working in Windows that involved multiple files, you might have noticed that there's an option for "Yes to All", but no button for "No to All"? What can we do?

Well, the good news is that if you find yourself in this situation, all you need to do to get "No to All" is hold the Shift key when you click "No". Voila!

Getting Microsoft's Icons To Behave in Windows XP

Al Adams, Midland Computer Club, Midland MI

My Situation: When I had my now "Old" Commodore Amiga 2000 running (I still have it in the spare room), I remember that I could "lock" the desktop icons from not moving around and self-rearranging themselves anywhere and everywhere. Recently while I was tinkering with one of the older Microsoft XP OS based PC's I got tired of putting my desktop icons back where I wanted them for the tenth time.

Normally Microsoft's desktop icons stay put, if you turn off (un-check) the 'Arrange Icons By' ... for all of the options. But every now and then Windows coughs, sputters and rearranges stuff automatically, Curses Microsoft strikes again! I found this neat little app, the only down side is you have to periodically snap copy the desktop layout, before the icons become mobile, by selecting the "Save Desktop Icon Layout", when you are happy with the current look. It's not perfect like the Amiga's set-up was but it is livable for my purposes.

Also, I tend to pack my Microsoft desktop icons very close to each other, much closer than the grid option allows. None of the icons touch each other, or the descriptions do not touch if you haven't selected the icon. When I do make a selection, that application launches, and it doesn't matter at that point.

Try this for saving and restoring position of icons:

http://www.kellys-korner-xp.com/xp_tweaks.htm

Registry Edits for Windows XP ("Tweaks and Tips")

View by Category

Item 188 (right side) Add Save & Restore Desktop Layout to Menu (Sample image below)

iconlayout.zip extracts to iconlayout and contains - iconlayout.vbs & LAYOUT.DLL

To activate this Icon Layout Application, Just run the "iconlayout.vbs" with the LAYOUT.DLL in the same folder. The Registry changes will be copied into the Registry, for later use.

Then to use the new function: Right-Click a blank area of the desktop screen and select either the "Save" option or the "Restore" option. Couldn't be easier.

Again a really "Cool Application"



These are the new selection items, that are created by the VB Script, Registry Tweak..

