



Midland Michigan

BITS AND BYTES

June 2014

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



President Piper's Ponderings

The June General Meeting should be a very informative one for you. Four of the Board members are going to talk about browsers. We will cover the big

three: Microsoft Internet Explorer, Firefox and Chrome. We may talk about Safari, AOL and Opera if interest warrants. What we are NOT prepared to talk about is the mobile versions of these browsers, mainly because of lack of experience with mobile devices. I hope some of the other members will voice their feelings on what they are using on their mobile device.

Browsers are likely the second most used function, after email, which you use on your computer. I doubt the various speakers will convince you to change your browser, but you will get some opinions about the different features available for each browser.

A related topic will be a question for all the members: How do you deal with bookmarks and favorites on multiple computers as well as when you are using a strange computer?

Our current meeting plan is to return in the fall with the flip side of browsers—search engines. Again I think we can benefit from the experiences of our members.

It is apparent that Windows PCs are not selling as well with each passing year. This would be an excellent time to pick up another computer for yourself or for a family member. You can get decent desktop for \$150-200, and a laptop for \$200, both with Windows 7 Home Premium. I shudder when I hear that college students are “required” to buy a Mac at \$1,000-1,200.

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:
June 25, 2014

This month's topic:
Browsers - Board members will discuss setting up browsers.

What you missed!
May meeting - Club Members shared their favorite websites for fixit, home, garden, etc.

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.

I will have a story and a sales pitch about having small capacity flash drives in your spare parts drawer. Maybe we will even have time to boot a “strange” computer with these drives.

I still have a bag full of give-aways and raffle items. I hope to see you for our last meeting in June before summer. We will meet again in August for our annual picnic.

(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: (submitted by Howard Lewis)

<http://tinyurl.com/k66p43z>

There are loads of free software available on the Internet. Lincoln Specter of PC World explains why you can trust some of this software and how to handle the installation to reduce your chances of getting ride along software that you may not want.

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

Scott Hanselman is one very interesting person. He works for Microsoft, but in his spare time. Scott sends out a once or twice a month newsletter (sign up at <http://www.hanselman.com/newsletter/>), blogs about random things in life, hosts a Youtube channel and contributes to several other sites. Some of his articles are very technical and some are less so but all very good.

<http://store.usgs.gov/pass/senior.html>

August 25 is the day that the National Parks Service celebrates its anniversary and in celebration they offer free visits to all of the National Parks that charge a fee. If you cannot make a visit to one of these parks on that day and are over 62, a Senior Pass is available from the National Park Service for \$10 that allows you to lifetime admittance to all of the National Parks.

Board Meeting

First Thursday of the month
 7:00 PM

Chapel Lane Presbyterian Church,
 5501 Jefferson Ave., Midland MI
 No meeting in July

Membership Enrollment Form

NAME _____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ ZIP _____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____

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

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

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

Attn: Membership Chairman

You may also pay for membership at a regular club meeting

Tips, Tricks & Techniques (submitted by Carol Picard)**Interested in learning about Linux?**

The Linux Foundation, in conjunction with edX is offering their Linux course for free - 40 to 60 hour self-paced course, starting August 1.

For more information and to enroll in the course:

<https://www.edx.org/course/linuxfoundationx/linuxfoundationx-lfs101x-introduction-1621#.U2ZStPldV18>

For information on using edX learning experience:

<https://www.edx.org/course/edx/edx-edxdemo101-edx-demo-1038#.U2ZUgPldV18>

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Windows 8.1 - change Network from Public to Private or Private to Public

The first time you connect to a network with Windows 8.1, you will be prompted to set it up as either a public or private network. If you chose the wrong option, you can change it by doing the following.

Have to be connected to network you want to change and have to be logged on to an account with Administrator access.

Optional: To prevent automatically discovering and setting up printers and other network connected devices when switching from Public to Private network do this first:

- Access Control Panel
- Click/tap Network and Internet
- Click/tap Network and Sharing Center
- Click/tap Change advanced sharing settings
- Under Private – Network Discovery
 - click to remove checkmark to left of
 - Turn on automatic setup of network connected devices
- Save Changes

To change Public/Private setting:

- open Charms
- Click/tap Settings
- Click/tap Change PC settings
- Click/tap Network
- Click/tap on name of connected network
- under Find Devices and content
 - Find PCs, devices and content

To change from Public to Private
set to On

To change from Private to Public
set to Off

Exit

ARTICLE INDEX

- 2TB of Cloud Storage - Free! -- Page 4
Phil Sorrentino, Past President, Sarasota PCUG, Florida
- 3 Better Ways to Store Your Files than On the Desktop -- Page 6
Joel Lee, MakeUseOfCom.com, May 5, 2014
- Be Careful of Buying Old Versions -- Page 9
Sandy Berger, CompuKISS
- Computer Problems Plague Everyone, Even Me -- Page 10
Sandy Berger, CompuKISS
- Create and Save a Custom Footer in Word -- Page 11
Nancy DeMarte, 1st VP, Sarasota PCUG, Florida
- Looking for an MP3 Player with wifi? -- Page 12
Carol Picard, Midland Computer Club, Midland MI (mcc.apcug.org)
- Member to Member Tip -- Page 13
HAL-PC, Texas, www.hal-pc.com

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2TB of Cloud Storage - Free!

By Phil Sorrentino, Past President, Sarasota PCUG, Florida
January 2014 issue, PC Monitor, www.spcug.org, philsorr (at) yahoo.com

Well, now that I have your attention, let me tell you how you can accomplish this without any trickery or dishonesty. (Remember, 1TB is equal to 1,000 GB) Wouldn't it be nice to have all of your pictures, videos and documents available to you whenever and wherever you want it? Cloud storage is a great way to accomplish this. Cloud storage is available from many sources like Skydrive, Google Drive, SugarSync, Dropbox, etc. Some of these cloud services give you from 2GB to 7GB of free storage and then you pay for additional space (Skydrive provides 7GB free). With over 100GB of pictures and more than double that amount of videos, this could run into quite an expense using one of the commercial cloud storage services.

The cloud service I'm suggesting is your own computer system with an additional external (or internal) 2TB hard drive. You don't have to use a 2TB drive if you don't need that much storage. Maybe you have an old 300 or 500GB hard drive around that would do the trick. The size of the drive is not that important. What is important is that the information on that drive will be available to you wherever you are. The software that makes this incredible benefit possible is called Teamviewer. Teamviewer is available for your PC, and the Teamviewer App is available for your smartphone and/or tablet; both the PC software and the App are free for personal use. (Though the App can work on a smartphone, a 4 or 5 inch display is really too small. If you try this on a smartphone, I think you will find that the objects you will want to control will be too small when you try to use your finger to select these objects. It really works well on a larger display, so I will be limiting my discussion to a tablet with at least a 7 or 8 inch display. It works great on a 10 inch display.)

For this arrangement to work, you install Teamviewer on your home computer, you install the Teamviewer App on to your tablet, and then you leave your home computer on whenever you want access to it and the hard drive. Because I've limited this to tablets, the tablet will have to be in reach of a Wi-Fi network because most tablets only have Wi-Fi. Wi-Fi networks are typically found in many places such as homes, airports, libraries, Starbucks, Panera Bread, shopping centers, and some McDonalds.) If your tablet has cell phone capability then you don't have this restriction.

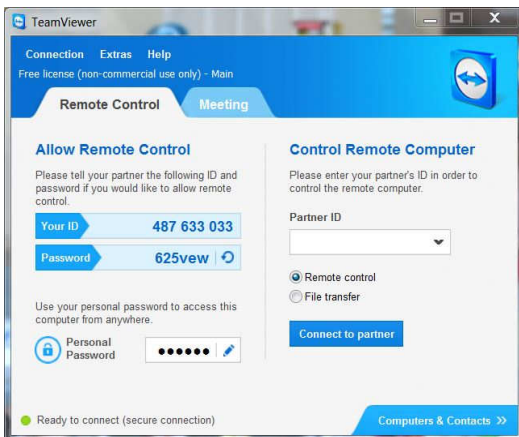
Teamviewer is a software package used for remote control, desktop sharing, online meetings, web conferencing, and file transfer between computers. It runs on Windows, Apple and Android operating systems. The basic features of Teamviewer are similar to Crossloop. (You might remember Crossloop from an article published in the Sarasota PC Users Group Monitor in Feb. 2010.) The intent of that article was “Assisting another member with a computer problem”, but if you’ll remember it was stated that “CrossLoop provides a quick, easy, and completely free way to give another member, a friend, or a relative, access to your computer”. This remote control feature is also part of Teamviewer, and Teamviewer has the App for tablets that allows these devices to act as remote controllers. As it says on the Teamviewer website, “Teamviewer allows you to control computers remotely via the internet, as if you were sitting right in front of them”. The home computer desktop appears on the tablet and you can interact with your home computer by using various touch-screen gestures to control the home computer and its software. Just start Windows explorer on your tablet with a double tap, (once your home computer desktop appears on the tablet) and then navigate to the Drive you have designated as “Cloud Storage”, and navigate to the folders and files of interest. To show a picture, just double tap on the file in question. You can even start a video or music and it will be streamed to your tablet, for your enjoyment. (The video will only be acceptable if you have a fast uplink at home.)

To download Teamviewer for your computer, just go to www.teamviewer.com and click on the Download button. To download the Teamviewer App for your Android tablet, just go to the Google Play Store and touch the Magnifying Glass to search for “Teamviewer”, and then download the App. The Teamviewer App logo is as shown here:



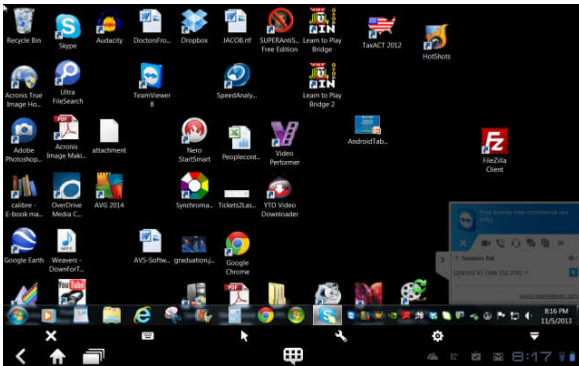
Teamviewer Logo

After Teamviewer has been installed on your PC, start it and you will be presented with a window that gives you a “Your ID” and a “Password” for this Computer. This ID is what you will need when you are attempting to remotely control this PC. (The “Partner ID” would be used if you were going to attempt to control another PC from this PC. That might be the subject of another article.) The last item needed is the “Personal Password”. You can use the “Setup unattended access” wizard by clicking on the pencil icon in the Personal Password box, or you can just assign a personal password by entering a password that you desire into the Personal Password box. I would suggest you use the wizard, at least the first time. Once you have the Personal Password setup you are ready to allow remote control, or Unattended Access, as the wizard calls it.



Teamviewer on the PC

The last thing to do is set up the tablet for remote control, or “unattended access of the PC”. After the Teamviewer App is installed on the tablet, start it by tapping it’s icon. This will bring up the Teamviewer remote control screen. Enter the “Your ID” number that was assigned to your PC and tap Remote Control. Teamviewer will make a connection with your PC and display an Authentication window (if it doesn’t, your tablet may not be on the Wi-Fi network). Enter your “Personal Password” into the password box and tap OK. The first time this is done you will see a screen of Touch interactions as a primer for tablet control; just tap Continue (and check the “Don’t show this dialog again” if you don’t want to see this screen again.) After you tap Continue, your PC desktop will appear on your tablet. There is a box on the bottom right that indicates you are using Teamviewer; flick the box to the right so it will be out of your way. Now you can operate your computer just as if you were sitting in front of it. The only difference is that there is no keyboard, but you can use the tablet virtual keyboard by tapping on the keyboard icon on the bottom towards the left, whenever it is needed.



Tablet showing the PC Desktop

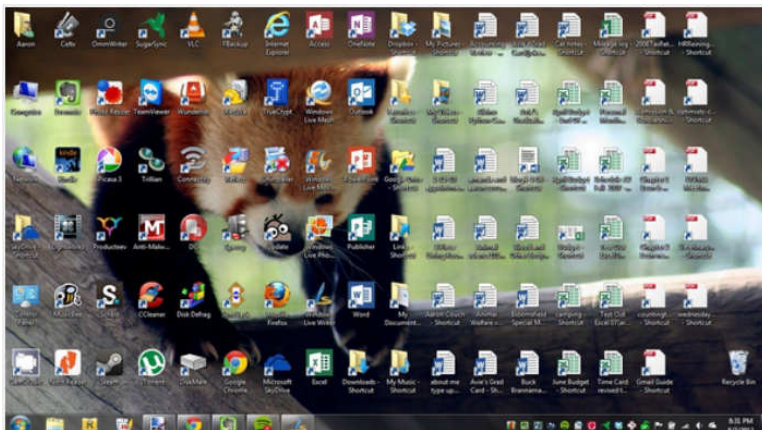
Now to get to your data, just open the Windows Explorer and navigate to the drive and open any of the folders and files that are now part of your 2TB cloud storage. Make sure you close everything and save any changes you made before leaving Teamviewer. To leave Teamviewer and close the connection, tap the big X on the bottom left, and then go back to your home screen.

Now, how is that for 2TB of cloud storage with no monthly storage charge?
(I'd like to thank Dennis Russell, a student in my Android Tablets class, for making me aware of Teamviewer.)

3 Better Ways to Store Your Files than On the Desktop

By Joel Lee, MakeUseOf.com, May 5, 2014

<http://www.makeuseof.com/tag/3-better-ways-store-files-desktop/>
<http://bit.ly/1iiLU2u>



Did you know that storing files directly on your desktop can harm your productivity? I used to be one of “those” people who downloaded files straight to the desktop. If you can identify with that, then I have good news for you: you can do better. Desktop storage is simple, sure, but it comes with hidden drawbacks you may not know about.

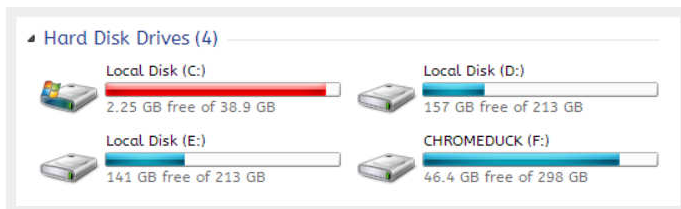
Kick the bad habit with these alternative file storage methods. They may not be as convenient but I promise that you’ll learn to love them in the long run.

The urge to save files to the desktop is understandable. It provides immediate access with a single click, which means that it's tempting to turn the desktop into a de facto headquarters for storage. But unless you are strict with maintenance, you'll eventually succumb to these issues:

- **No file protection.** As noted by PC World, certain directories are not affected by System Restore, the most recognizable location being My Documents. Files on the desktop are affected by System Restore, which can result in unexpected file disappearances.
- **No file backups.** Many file backup programs ignore desktop files by default. Most programs worth their salt will allow you to change the settings and include the desktop if necessary, but all it takes is one forgetful moment to accidentally lose an important desktop file.
- **Clutter, clutter, clutter.** The story is always the same. You begin your desktop collection with a few documents. Over time, the collection grows to include images, music, programs, zip files, and more documents. Suddenly, finding the right document takes more time than actually opening it.

Separate Drive Partitions

One bit of computer wisdom that you should learn is this: "Never save data on the same partition as your operating system." In Windows, the location of the desktop on the file system does reside on the same partition as the operating system itself.



Why is this important advice? Because you want to avoid putting all of your eggs in the same basket.

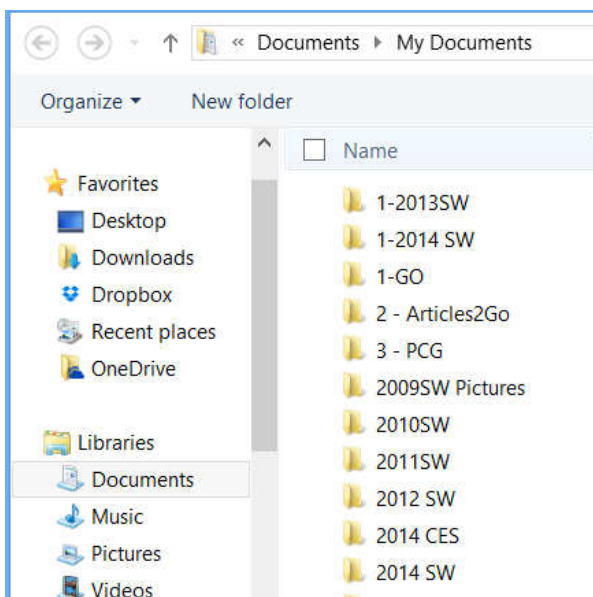
Let's say that you happen to contract a mild virus or malware that attacks your operating system. It might wipe all files related to the operating system itself OR it may affect the entire partition that holds

the operating system. By losing the operating system, you lose all of your saved data as well.

But if you installed Windows to the C: partition and stored all of your files on the D: partition, your files on D: would be safe even if C: were wiped clean. The only way D: would be affected is if the physical hard drive itself was wiped or damaged.

One additional benefit of having separate partitions is that you can reinstall Windows without losing your saved data. Tina has written on the subject of resizing Windows partitions, so check it out if you want to take advantage of this feature. <http://bit.ly/1fBCDe>

Use Windows Libraries



Every installation of Windows comes with a directory called My Documents. In Windows 7, it was renamed to Documents and came with a couple of buddies: Music, Pictures, and Videos. They're called libraries and you've probably seen them before, but never really used them, right? Well, you should reconsider.

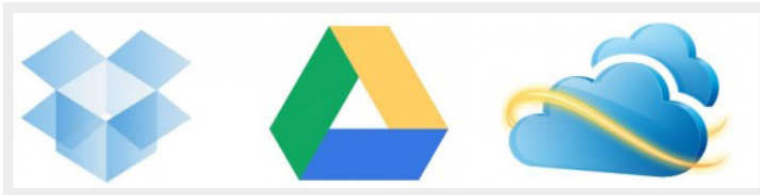
In truth, these four libraries are special. They aren't just directories; they're collections of multiple directories. In each library, you can specify different directories to be included and that library will show the content from all included directories. It sounds more complicated than it is.

Think of it like this: You can save your videos to many different locations and link those directories to the Videos library. Then, whenever you access the Videos library, you'll see all of those files in one place.

It's just as convenient as storing everything on the desktop, yet infinitely more flexible and organized. For more details on how to take advantage of this feature, check out Chris's writeup on how to use Windows Libraries. <http://bit.ly/1iMkORF>

Store Files in the Cloud

Cloud storage has been a big buzz term over the past few years and for good reason. While cloud-related solutions like Dropbox, G+ Drive, or Microsoft OneDrive come with privacy concerns <<http://bit.ly/1lzsQ4F>>, they also offer many benefits and I think people are too quick to throw the baby out with the bathwater.



Here's how it works: You set aside one or more directories that automatically sync with whatever service you're using (comparison of cloud storage services). These files can be accessed from anywhere and they can be set to private or public.

Why is this better than storing straight on the desktop?

- Immediate backups. Due to automatic synchronization, you rarely need to worry about lost files. If your computer gets wiped somehow, those files still reside on the cloud and you can always retrieve them again.
- Revision history. Not every cloud service offers a revision history, but most do and it's an important feature. Basically, the service will track every change that's made to the file (it may be limited to the last X changes) and allow you to instantly revert to a past version if necessary.

One Drive (aka SkyDrive) comes integrated with Windows 8 and can help you keep your files synced.

Need Quick Access to Files?

Sometimes convenience wins out over practicality and reason. The desktop is great because it allows for immediate access, right? With one small compromise, you can maintain that convenience. The answer is to use shortcuts.

Creating a shortcut is as simple as dragging a file using the right mouse button to where you want the shortcut to appear, then selecting *Create shortcut here* from the menu. Even if a shortcut gets wiped, the actual file will still be safe.

But instead of putting the shortcuts on the desktop, why not take it one step further?

Right click on any file shortcut and select either *Pin to taskbar* or *Pin to start menu*. It's a self-explanatory feature that works just as well as, if not better than, traditional desktop shortcuts. I use it day in and day out and I wouldn't have it any other way.

Conclusion

Ultimately, personal preference will always win. For those of you who have been "desktopping" for years, you'll probably find it near impossible to break the habit. I still do it from time to time, though I try my best to clean up after myself when I realize what I'm doing. It just doesn't make sense to store everything on the desktop anymore.

Do you clutter up your desktop with files and folders galore? If so, are you convinced enough to try a safer method of file storage? Share your thoughts with us in the comments! <http://www.makeuseof.com/tag/3-better-ways-store-files-desktop/>

Be Careful of Buying Old Versions

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

Don't be fooled by a cheap price on a product. It may be last year's model. While sometimes this is okay, for others it is a real rip-off. Here are some examples that you may want to read. Remember being a savvy consumer is essential in today's high tech world.

In the recent past, when a new version of a product was introduced, the old versions were removed from the retailer's shelves. So when you went into the store, you were sure of getting the latest and greatest version of each product.

But times have changed. Now the manufacturers are keeping their old versions available right alongside the newest models. In some cases, the product names have changed enough that the average person can easily tell the new from the old. For example, the iPad Air is Apple's newest full-sized iPad. You will see that Apple is also still selling the older iPad 2 model. In this case, the name actually changed and the marketing will usually indicate which is new and which is old.

In many cases, however, the name of the product doesn't change. There are often several versions of the same product with the same name or similar names selling at different prices.

Take the iPad mini, for example. Apple recently introduced a new, improved version of that product. The cheapest current version is selling for \$399. So when Walmart advertised the iPad mini for \$299 and it offered a \$100 gift card with that purchase, it seemed like a fantastic deal. However, Walmart was selling last year's model in that ad. They didn't have to stipulate anything other than "iPad mini" because both last year's model and the latest version are both simply called "iPad mini". The same is true for devices from other manufacturers, as well. The Microsoft Surface tablet has an original version and a newer updated version. If you purchase a Nexus tablet, you will find a version from last year right alongside the newest 2013 version that was just released.

The newer versions almost always have improved functionality and new features, but buying last year's model is not necessarily bad. To be a smart consumer, however, you need to know exactly what you are buying. It is always wise to ask if you are purchasing the latest version. Even better, take the time to research the older version and compare it spec-by-spec with the newest version. That is the only way to know if the price difference is worthwhile for you.

Luckily, the Internet make such research easy. Right on the Apple website you can find a comparison for the two versions of the iPad mini. The newer iPad mini has a much improved screen resolution and a faster processor but the main specifications of the device remain the same. If you don't care that much about the screen clarity or the speed, the savings may be worthwhile.

You may not always need to purchase the latest and greatest version of each product. Only you can determine exactly what you need and which features you will use, and which you can do without. Doing research on the products can be time-consuming, but it is a worthwhile endeavor that will help you find the perfect device at the right price.

When it comes to high tech gadgets, being a savvy consumer is essential. You need to be "in the know" so you can make an informed decision on whether you would rather have the best device currently on the market or a little extra money in your pocket.

Computer Problems Plague Everyone, Even Me

Sandy Berger, CompuKISS, Sandy (at) compukiss.com, www.compukiss.com

Why do things change on your computer? One day everything comes up just as it normally does. The next day, you can't get on the Internet, the icons are in a different place, and/or your program is working differently. Well I am here to tell you that everyone has problems like this -- even me! Here's the whole story!

When weird things happen on the computer, most people immediately blame themselves saying, "I must have done something to make this happen." The truth, however, is that in the computer world changes can happen without your having done a thing to cause them. This was really brought home to me this week when I had several "problems" with my own computer

When I sat down to work on the computer last Monday, the icons for my password manager and several other shortcuts that I use regularly were no longer on my browser toolbar at the top of the screen. On Tuesday, when I opened my Quicken program, the numbers and text was twice as large as normal. On Thursday I tried to play some music and found that iTunes was no longer working. On Friday I found that my CD drive, which I hadn't used for months, was no longer working.

Now, it is unusual for all of these things to happen in one week, but it is not unusual for them to happen. I did not do anything to cause any of these changes. So what happened? Well the simple explanation is that the computer is run by millions of lines of code. As you work on the computer, add files, and download programs, things change. Even installing updates from the manufacturer causes changes. Sometimes these changes, even if they are aimed at making a certain part of the computer better or more secure, can adversely affect other programs and other computer operations.

Although these types of changes can produce huge frustrations for the end user, the first thing to learn is that you probably didn't cause the different behavior and that, if you remain cool and calm, you can often correct the changes. Here's how I got through my aggravating week.

To find the missing icons, I had to look carefully at the screen where they normally appear. I found two arrows next to where the icons normally appeared. Low and behold, when I pressed the arrows, the missing icons cascaded down. To actually solve the problem, I simply put my cursor on the area next to the arrows until it turned into a double-ended arrow. Then I dragged that to the left and my icons appeared and remained on the screen.

Quicken was another disconcerting item. For several days, the text and numbers appeared larger one time and smaller the next. To be honest, I never found the cause, but luckily it all went back to normal and has stayed that way.

Why in the world would iTunes stop working? I had no explanation, but I did have an easy solution. I simply reinstalled the iTunes program. It was aggravating and a bit time-consuming to have to do so, but after I did, everything went back to normal.

The most vexing problem was my CD drive. Last time I used it, it worked fine. Now it wasn't working. It did not appear in My Computer at all. A trip over to the Device Manager showed the CD drive with a yellow exclamation meaning that it was not working properly, which I already knew. I tried a few things like uninstalling the CD driver and rebooting, but had no success. I knew that this could be a hardware problem. Perhaps the drive itself had stopped working. I also knew, that it could be a software problem. Since the driver and filters from the operating system are used to run the CD drive and other peripherals, I decided to check that out first. I headed over to the Microsoft website where I found a Microsoft tool called "Fix It." I used it to troubleshoot and correct the problem. There are multiple Fix It tools, and the proper one can be a bit hard to find, but Fix It checked out the software, found the problem, and helped me quickly solve the problem at no cost. That sure beat having to purchase and install a new CD drive.

Well, now everything on my computer is back to normal. At least for the moment. The moral of the story is that, unfortunately, we have to expect glitches when working with computers. The best thing that you can do is to keep your eyes open for possible solutions, learn as much as you can about how your computer works and be bold enough to troubleshoot small problems. I keep my Sherlock Holmes hat ready for use at any time. You may want to do the same.

Create and Save a Custom Footer in Word

By Nancy DeMarte, 1st VP, Sarasota PCUG, Florida

January 2014 Issue, PC Monitor, www.spcug.org, [ndemarte \(at\) Verizon.net](mailto:ndemarte@verizon.net)

As you build up a library of documents you have written, it helps to have a system to have some sort of ID on each document to help you remember where it is stored. A good place to record this information on a document is in a footer along the bottom of each page. In Word 2007 and later, you can easily create a custom footer which includes the information you want and save it in a handy spot called the Building Block gallery for insertion into any document. Here is how it's done.

For illustration, I chose to create a footer which includes the date the document was created and the file name, including the path. The path shows the location of a file by listing all the folders and subfolders which need to be opened to find it, beginning with the hard drive (c:).

First I opened a document I had saved that had no footer. I clicked the Insert tab, and then Footer. From the gallery of footers, I clicked the footer labeled, "Blank (Three Column)" even though I was adding only two pieces of information. I then scrolled down to find my footer at the bottom of the page with my cursor flashing inside the footer area.

To customize the footer, first I highlighted the left placeholder and pressed Delete to remove it. Leaving my cursor in that spot, I clicked the Insert tab in the ribbon, then Quick Parts – Field. I scrolled down the list and clicked "FileName." I chose lower case for its format, and checked the box which said, "Add path to filename." When I clicked OK, the entire path appeared in the footer.

Then I highlighted the center and right placeholders and deleted them. (I knew I would not be using the center placeholder with this footer, but a page number fits very well in that center spot.) My cursor was then flashing in the spot where the right placeholder had been. To add the date, I clicked the Insert tab again, then Date & Time, which opened the Date and Time dialog box. I opted for the default date format (first one on the list). Now I had a choice: Do I want the date to remain static to remind me when I composed this document, or do I want it to update to the present date each time I open it. I decided not to have the date update automatically. So I clicked to remove the checkmark from the option, "Update automatically." I knew I could always update the date manually by clicking it in the footer and selecting Update.

My last step was to save this footer so I could reuse it on other documents. I double clicked in the footer area and highlighted the entire footer line. I clicked the Insert tab – Quick Parts – Save Selection to Quick Parts Gallery. The Create New Building Block dialog box opened with several choices to make. I named my new footer, "FileName" and put in the Footers gallery. Then I clicked the arrow next to Category, chose Create New Category and typed my first name. This way it would be easy to find my custom footer by looking in the Building Block organizer. I left the last two lines as they were, Building Blocks.dotx and Insert content only.

To make sure I had succeeded, I saved my document and closed it. When asked if I wanted to save a new building block, I clicked yes. From now on, if I want to add this footer to a document, all I do is open the document, click Insert – Footers and choose it from the Footer gallery. If I add it to an unsaved

document, of course, the filename will be Document 1 with no path. I can always delete it from the Building Block organizer, which will make it disappear from the Footer gallery, as well.

I have created several customized quick parts, depending on my task. The one I use the most has my name on the left, page number in the center, and date on the right. Creating footers, headers or any other groups of text that you reuse often can be a real time-saver. They are worth exploring.

Looking for an MP3 Player with wifi?

Carol Picard, Midland Computer Club, Midland MI (mcc.apcug.org)

I'd been using a Samsung Galaxy Player 4 for music player and also for a few apps, e.g., calendar, contacts, shopping list. It had wifi capability and access to Google Play Store. Recently the battery started discharging completely every couple days. Fortunately, it didn't lose data but did lose all settings. Replacing the battery didn't help.

A basic mp3 player wouldn't give me the capabilities I wanted. Could have used my cell phone, but not ready to put all of my information and music on one device.

Samsung no longer markets the Galaxy Player (at least not in the U.S.) and didn't want to pay hundreds of dollars for a replacement device. My criteria were: 4" screen, 8Gb storage, microSD card slot, 1Gb memory, wifi, and Google Play Store. My search led me to no-contract phones. Unfortunately, the specs are not generally listed on the packaging so need to do research before going to the store. Since I had a pretty well-defined list of apps, and didn't anticipate adding a lot of new apps, decided a device with 4Gb storage would probably be okay.

Purchased a no-contract phone for about \$80. Make/model of phone I chose isn't important as any device that meets your criteria and has decent reviews should work. Since I was not going to activate the phone capability was not concerned about which service provider the phone worked with.

The phone I chose has Bluetooth which I had not included in my search criteria but allows me to connect to a Bluetooth speaker. It also has a rear facing camera with flash. A front facing camera would have been nice for Skype, but forgot to check for that.

Was able to back up data from the apps on the Samsung Galaxy Player to a computer and was quickly able to get the new device set up with my favorite apps and data.

Turned on Airplane Mode to disable the 3G service but can still turn wifi on/off as needed.

The device only has about 2Gb user accessible storage so decided to add a microSD card for music, pictures, etc. Had a small microSD card in the Samsung Player and could have used that but decided to purchase a 32Gb microSD card (which was highest capacity for the device).

Probably could have copied music from the smaller to the larger card but decided this was a good opportunity to re-select music. Connected the phone to a computer via USB cable to synch music from Windows Media Player. While all the selected music was synched to the microSD card, the Google Play Music app only displayed songs that were in mp3 format and most of my music is in wma format. Windows Media Player used to convert from wma to mp3 when synching but apparently that isn't available in Windows Media Player 12 and didn't want to run all the music through a 3rd party converter.

Researched some of the music apps available in the Google Play Store and settled on Rocket Player. The free version doesn't play wma files but after testing Rocket Player functionality with some mp3 files, decided it would work and paid \$3.99 for the Pro version which does play wma. Rocket Player admits it doesn't have a good solution for managing album art. Tried a couple 3rd party apps but they didn't work

well either. If having album art is important, and depending on how you ripped the music to your computer, the music folders on your computer may contain three different album art .jpg files (have to view hidden files and protected operating system files to see them). Copied the AlbumArtSmall.jpg file from the computer to the corresponding album folder on the SD card and renamed it to AlbumArt.jpg (which appears to be the Rocket Player default). After disconnecting the device and viewing in Rocket Player, the album art was displayed. If you have hundreds of albums, that may not be a workable solution.

The only other app I've added is a flashlight app.

I've been using the no-contract phone with my select set of apps and for playing music for a couple months and it has proven to be a good option at a reasonable price.

Member to Member Tip

HAL-PC, Texas, www.hal-pc.com

Free-Software ALERT

A new software contrivance was discussed at the Build-or-Buy SIG on Wednesday, January 22. Previously, when free software was offered, one was frequently referred directly to the programmer's website. In more recent times, one would notice that the desired software was accompanied by boxes to select additional software to download and install. At least you had a chance not to download the add-ons.

Then came the "installers." Here you couldn't directly access the desired software, but had to be subjected to advertisements and also other software you were virtually trapped into downloading in order to get to the free software that you wanted. CNET is infamous for this. Some of this unwanted software is almost as bad as viruses, Trojans, and worms. The most common "additives" include taskbars, driver updates, and performance improvers. It can be extremely pervasive.

Joe Whinery, a Co-Chair of the Build or Buy SIG, along with Gill Boyd, discussed a process to counter this:

1. Always check the download order to uncheck any unwanted software. Look for "boxes."
2. To install, select Custom instead of "Default" or "Automatic" or "Recommended" when downloading, so you can select what is to be downloaded.
3. Read each screen of the install operation.
4. Look for a "Decline" option (which may appear to be grayed out, but is functional).
5. Decline these options.
6. When the download is complete, Install, but DO NOT RUN the downloaded software, instead: Go to Control Panel, then Add/Remove Programs (Programs and Features in Win7 and 8).
7. Then SORT by date.
8. Examine the listing for the software that you WANTED. If there is anything else with the same date/time that you did not intentionally install, delete it.

Now you can safely run your desired program. This may seem like a chore but it is much easier than trying to undo something that infiltrated your machine.
