

The NCTCUG Journal

www.nctcug.org

May 2009

Volume 32 Issue 3

Keeping Up

By Paul Howard (NCTCUG)

Members of our local consortium of user groups — NCTCUG, OPCUG, and WACUG — are looking into the technology of providing remotely hosted meetings, sometimes called “webinars” to the members of the groups. There are several approaches and possibilities in this arena.

Consider: “one on one” of the tech help or instruction variety, where one person can access another’s computer, and perform various functions, as if they were sitting physically at the remote keyboard and screen; a variation, where a presentation is made remotely, and a group sitting together observes the presentation projected on a screen; and a “Web meeting” where folks at multiple locations can all participate, or observe a presentation, because of the use of central server.

While everyone loves a “live” demonstration, the economics of getting speakers from vendors to small user groups are such that this use of technology may expand the number of “outside” speakers we’re able to attract to our meetings. To learn more, check out these articles that have appeared in the APCUG newsletter:

- <http://reports.apcug.org/2008q4/6.htm>
- <http://reports.apcug.org/2008q4/10.htm>
- <http://reports.apcug.org/2009q1/6.htm>



DTV Converter Box Adventures

In spite of the joys of Verizon’s FiOS TV service, with digital video recording, and TiVo, another digital video recorder, there are times at our house when we’re trying to record three or four programs at the same time for later viewing. That requires resorting to “old” technology — the once ubiquitous VCR, of which I still have three.

The digital television “revolution” with the conversion from analog to digital TV signals by the over-the-air broadcasters, has vastly complicated the flexibility of VCR recording. The ease of looking up a “VCR+” recording code in the TV listings and using it to program the VCR to record goes away when you need a

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Moving On To Vista – Part 13

By Neil Stahfest, Librarian, Tacoma Area PC User Group, WA
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The chances are the first peripheral device you purchased for your computer was a printer. You may have even received a “free” printer when you purchased your computer. Vista makes it easier than ever to connect a new printer to your computer than ever before. The Plug-and-Play feature really works (unless, like me, you have an old laser printer that Windows Vista does not support. :- ().

So you connect your printer, follow the Printer Wizard's directions, it works and you're happy. But wait. Have you examined your printer to discover all of its functions? Did you know that many modern printers, even the inexpensive models, can print on both sides of the paper, print sideways on the paper (called landscape mode), print in gray scale as well as in color and allows you to control print quality (to save ink when you don't need high quality print). Here's how to find out what you can do and manage it.

Create or open a document using your favorite word processing program or WordPad. At the top of your screen, click on “File” and then scroll down to “Printer Settings” and click again. When the “Printer Setup” window opens, click on the “Properties” button. At this point what you see depends largely on your individual printer.



In the case of my HP printer, I see a window with tab labeled “Paper/Quality”, “Finishing”, “Effects”, “Basics”, “Color” and “Services”. Selecting the appropriate tab allows me to select print quality (Normal, Draft, Enhanced, etc.), Portrait or Landscape mode, page order, color, single or two sided paper printing and many other options. In the case of my HP printer, when I select two sided paper printer, the printer prints on one side of the paper and then an on-screen message shows me how to reinsert the printed sheet in the paper tray to print of the other side. These print options are actually determined by the printer, not Windows. Windows just provides the means to control the printers features.

Windows frequently provides more than one way to do the same thing. Desktop icons provide a shortcut to run programs listed in the Start Menu. You can easily create new desktop icons by opening the Programs section of the Start Menu, selecting a program, right clicking on it and drag it to a blank area on your desktop. When you release the right mouse button a short menu appears with the option to “Create Shortcuts Here”. Select it, and left-click once to create the icon. You can rename this icon to anything you wish.

If you right-click on a desktop icon, one of the menu options is “Properties”. Select Properties and left-click once. Under the “Shortcut” tab notice the entry line labeled “Shortcut key”. It probably contains the entry “None”. By selecting a suitable key (letter or number), you can create a key combination shortcut to your program. It's a convenient way to access frequently used programs, spreadsheets and documents.

Before we leave this menu, notice the button labeled “Change Icon”. When you left-click on this button you'll see an array of icons that you can use to substitute for your default icon. Pick an icon, click on the “Okay” button and then click on “Okay” again. Your new icon will appear on the desktop. ♣

[NCTCUG ed. note: we have not received Part 12]

Windows 7 Is Coming Soon

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

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If you ask 100 people their impressions of the Microsoft Vista operating system, 95 of them will tell you that Vista is no good, even if they have never seen or used it.

It is obvious that public opinion of Vista is in the mud. Microsoft made some major blunders when they introduced Vista. There were not enough drivers ready, so many printers, scanners, and other peripherals were incompatible. There was no noticeable speed increase over Windows XP. Vista requires much additional memory and more hardware, so it was often impossible to upgrade current Windows XP computers. Also, Microsoft did not woo the press as they did when they introduced Windows XP, so Vista got a lot of awful publicity. Vista is not a bad operating system, but Vista has gotten a bad name. Microsoft has lost the battle and they know it. So they are working on a new Windows operating system.

Microsoft hopes to make a clean break with previous Windows operating systems with this new version of Windows. They are especially distancing the new operating system from the "wicked" Vista operating system. This is obvious in the name they have chosen for the new OS. They are not using year names like Windows 2000. They are not using what they refer to as inspirational names, like XP or Vista. Instead, they will go back to their original numerical naming convention. There was a Windows 1, Windows 2, and Windows 3. Now there is to be a new operating system called "Windows 7".

If you have been following the versions of Windows as they have been introduced, you will find it difficult to comprehend that this next version is actually the seventh version of Windows, but Microsoft says that it is, so that is that. It's Windows 7.

More important than the name, however, is the fact that Microsoft cannot afford another misstep. They must make this operating system faster and better than Vista. Microsoft has already showed off Windows 7 at some developer's conferences and has made some announcements and promises.

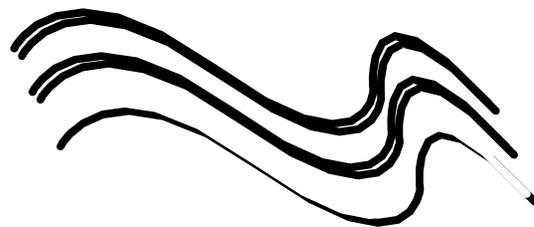
Windows 7 will be built on the Vista base, so peripherals that work with Vista, which now includes most printers, scanners, and other devices, will also work with Windows 7.

Windows 7 will have a smaller storage footprint and will use less memory. This will allow it to run on the new small Netbooks that are now running Windows XP or Unix because Windows Vista cannot run on their small solid state drives.

Windows 7 will boot up and shut down faster. It will have improved battery life on laptops. It is also promised to have an easier-to-use interface and to be easier to network in a home environment.

Although Microsoft is officially targeting January 2010 for the launch of Windows 7, logic indicates that they will have Windows 7 ready for next year's holiday selling season.

This holiday season you'll find some great prices on computers running Microsoft Vista. If all goes well, when the holiday season rolls around in 2009, the stores will be filled with computers running the next version of Windows, Windows 7. Microsoft has made mistakes before, but I think they will do everything they possibly can to make Windows 7 a winner. So if you are looking to buy a new PC, this year will be a good time to buy, but, if you can wait, next year may be even better. ♣



PowerDirector 7 Ultra

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I've used several video editing programs over the years, but I still like using CyberLink's PowerDirector. Yes, there are more powerful programs that can do more, but I feel that the PowerDirector's interface is just easier to work with, and it's faster. If I have not used it for a long period of time I can still figure things out without having to bring up Help.

They have a new Vista-like interface with PowerDirector 7. I like the new dark background, it's easier on the eyes than the previous bright white. One of the more interesting things CyberLink did was create a website (<http://directorzone.cyberlink.com/>) where users can share customized DVD menus, templates, frames, static and motion objects. There are hundreds for people to choose from. You can also search for and import media directly into your media library from Flickr or freesound. It can work with video in either 16:9 or 4:3 aspect ratio.

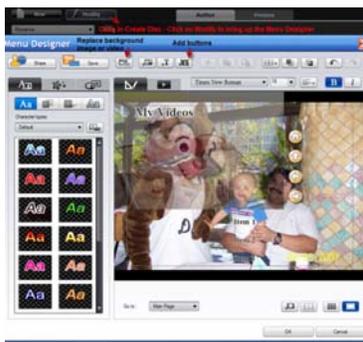
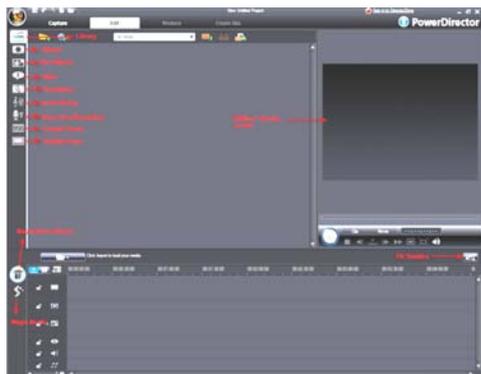
PowerDirector 7 will allow you to import video from an HDD camcorder; the edited file can be burned to a disc or back to a hard disk drive camcorder. If you have the Ultra version you can import AVCHD format. I had no problem with taking in my Canon HF100 raw AVCHD and working directly on it. If you have a Blu-ray drive Ultra will also work with it.

The picture-in-picture (PiP) feature is something you may not think to use, but once you do you will realize how much fun it can be. I'm starting to import old VHS tapes of my kids. It was interesting to have the high school band practicing their marching in the main screen and have a PiP of the march in competition.

With the new PowerDirector 7 you can have up to six PiP. You can modify the size of the PiP, degree of transparency of the overlapping clip, as well as its position, motion and other properties using the PiP Designer. So for my grandson's birthday party I can put in the video I took and on the corners have the 200 still pictures showing in four PiP (he's really cute.)

The Slideshow Designer has been enhanced with more styles to choose from. They say you can synchronize photos with the beat of the music and have full creative control over the design in slideshows. I did not do that, but I was really impressed with the Slideshow creation. Easy to do, add music to the background, pan and zoom in Magic Motion, or add a style. It will help you create soundtracks that fit perfectly within the length of a video clip or photo slideshow.

PhotoNow will let you edit images (stills.) You can resize, crop, rotate, remove red eye, adjust color, brightness and more. They show you the original and new image side by side so you can decide how it compares.



Magic Cut helps you fit a video clip to a specific time by automatically cutting out unnecessary portions and keeping only the best moments. The Magic Cut feature uses video technology to locate and keep the most interesting moments, while discarding sections of lesser importance. Great for the times when you have to get that 70 minutes of video down to 60. I did try it and thought it worked pretty good. You still want to check to make sure everything you need is in it.

In the Title Designer you can move the title to any part of the screen, change font, change the color, blur it, make it transparent (percentage), or change the gradient direction. As I said you can download many different DVD menus, or it is not that hard to create your own. One of my favorite things is to create a short video of up to 90 seconds and have it be the background for the DVD menu. When burning to a DVD in the past version they had a feature called Smart Fit which supposedly helped to make your video fit onto a DVD. Most of the time it would not work for me. Well, now in 7 they fixed it.

The Voice-Over Recording Room contains controls for recording a narration from a microphone while watching the video clip the voice-over it is destined to accompany. You can control the position and volume of the recording.

Magic Fix will help smooth shaky video and clarify blurry footage (don't expect miracles on a bad video.) With the previous version using Magic Clean

users could only apply one improvement method at a time - Lighting and Color Adjustment, White Balance and Backlight Compensation. With 7 you can apply all at the same time.

Is it perfect – well no video editing software is. When burning a DVD, the program default is to add background music that goes with the different templates. Excuse me, if I wanted it I would put it in. Also the template has the title put in as “My Videos” for each page you have. More chapters means you will have more buttons and therefore more pages. You can edit and put in whatever you want. If I put in Soccer 1993 on the first page I feel it should put that same title on all the pages. Instead I have to edit each page (and remove the background music from each) to change the title.

Besides burning the video to a DVD you can save the video you worked on to a good variety of choices. These include AVI, MPEG-1, 2 and 4, with full control over codec settings. Streaming options are WMV, RealVideo and QuickTime. If you want you can write your videos back to DV or HDV tape. The Production Wizard will link directly into your YouTube account, encoding and uploading straight to the Web.

PowerDirector Ultra is \$119.95 while the Deluxe version is \$69.95. If you do not have a camcorder that outputs to AVCHD or Blu-ray, you only need the Deluxe. You can download a 30 day trial version from the CyberLink website www.cyberlink.com ❖



Almost Everyone Needs A Little Help With Word 2007

By Linda Gonse, Editor and Webmaster, Orange County IBM PC Users' Group, California
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Bear with me while I quote John Dvorak from his August 2008 PC Magazine column, then I will tell you what my point is.

Regarding Vista, he said: "Vista isn't completely unusable; It's simply hard to use. Menus have been reorganized for no apparent reason, features of XP appear to be missing or need to be turned on from some remote directory, and basic functions are now obfuscated.

"In a nutshell, Vista manages to be more complicated than XP, performs more poorly than XP, and is more expensive than XP."

Now, substitute Word 2007 for Vista and Word 2003 for XP and my point is made. Compared with Word 2003, Word 2007 is an involuntary learning experience for anyone already proficient in Word and productive with one or more of the features. To name a couple I use often, are: Mail Merge, tables, labels, and fields. But, first users have to discover where basics like Help, Save As, Print and Close are.

To say Word 2007 has a steep learning curve may not scare everyone. But, to say it has a steep learning curve for experienced Word users should scare everyone, as well as be a cause for serious concern.

Unfortunately, I didn't fully understand how an Of-

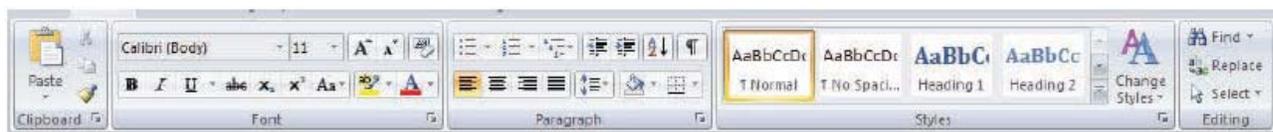
fice 2007 upgrade for Office 2003 functioned. If you haven't taken the step, yet, let me caution you. The upgrade wipes out Office 2003 and you cannot down-grade. I believe this step was automatically taken by the installation. Perhaps with a full version, you would be given a choice to install the newer version into another directory, leaving the older version intact.

The first thing you notice when you open Word 2007 is the highly touted "ribbon." Nine tabs take the place of menu items across the top of the window. The tabs do not have the same names as the old menu items. In fact, a couple of the tab categories—Home, References and Add-Ins—are enigmatic. And as they say on "Dancing With The Stars," the tabs "are in no particular order."

Clicking on a tab opens a segmented toolbar of options across the top of the window that relate to that tab's category. Although you may want to add to or rearrange the commands on the Ribbon or change or remove a command or group on the Ribbon — as you might have done with the menu and toolbar of earlier Word versions — you cannot.

And, you can forget about being able to revert to Word's old style toolbars and menus. But, Microsoft helpfully advises that if you are fluent in XML programming code, you can add tabs to the Ribbon.

Tabs that open contextual "ribbons"



The "Ribbon" options that correspond to the Home tab

In Photoshop, the ribbon concept is intuitive and natural, and actually speeds up productivity. In Word, it can be chaotic and time-wasting.

Now that you have this background in mind, you will better understand the images and steps that follow which is a short tutorial for simplifying Word 2007. My suggestion for anyone using the new Word version is to first set it up to make the features you need easy to locate.

With that in mind, I'll show you how to create a custom toolbar for the tasks that you need to perform most often. It will help to take the aggravation and time-wasting practice of hunting around and calling on Help to figure out where things are and how to use them.

Incidentally, speaking of Help, here's a tip. When you need to turn to Help, don't look for a tab or menu item. Just as in the old days of DOS, you must press the F1 key to make it appear!

In the upper left corner of the Word window is a round Windows logo, called the Microsoft Office Button. It will remind you of the Start button in Windows. Click on this button, it is a kind of command center temporarily until you get Word customized the way you want it. Or, it's possible, you may prefer to use it, rather than the Quick Access Toolbar. (Nah.)

The Quick Access Toolbar is just to the right of the Microsoft Office Button. It can be likened to the Quick Launch Toolbar in Windows. (Do you see a pattern here?)

When you first open Word, the Quick Access Toolbar is empty. Click on the down arrow a slight distance away from the Microsoft Office Button. A dropdown list appears, similar to the ones you saw at the end of toolbars in Word 2003. It contains many of the gen-

eral commands that you might use frequently.

Click on the commands that you want to be on the Quick Launch, er... Quick Access

Toolbar. The icons will be added to the bar and available to you with one click.

It's almost too easy isn't it? Well, keep in mind that with this Word version, whatever effort you save in one area, you are going to earn by working harder somewhere else.

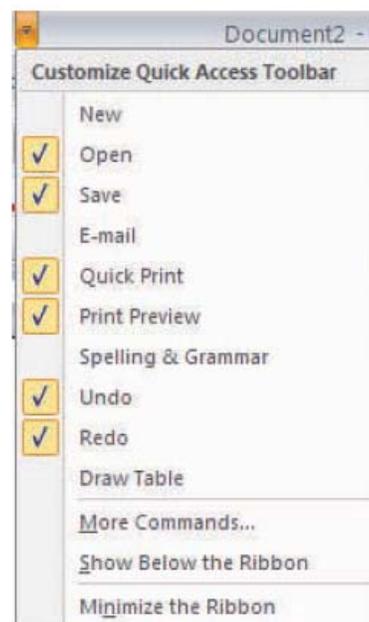
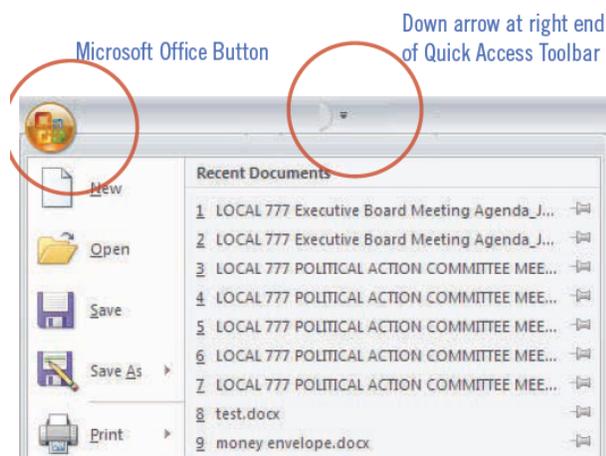
You may want to fill in the basic commands on the Quick Access Toolbar with different commands not on the dropdown list. In that case, right click on the down arrow for the dropdown menu and go to More Commands... at the bottom. There are five categories, so click through them to see what they offer. You'll be surprised. In each category, there are dozens of commands for just about any task and circumstance.

When you find a command you want to use, click to select it in the left window (see screenshot below) and click on the Add button with the arrows to move it to the right window.

Alternatively, you can click on the Microsoft Office Button. At the bottom of the dialog box click on Word Options. Then, in the list that appears on the left, click on Customize.

A familiar box with a double window will open. It is the same box that you can open from the down arrow next to the Quick Access Toolbar.

(Continued on page 8)



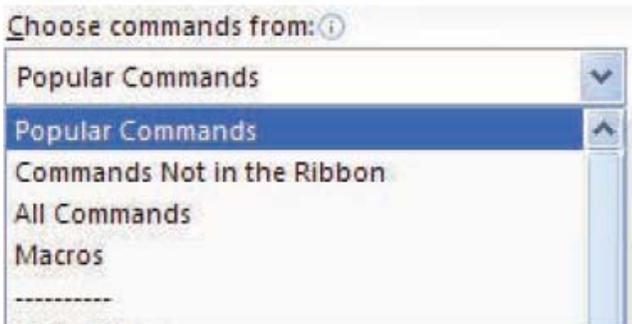
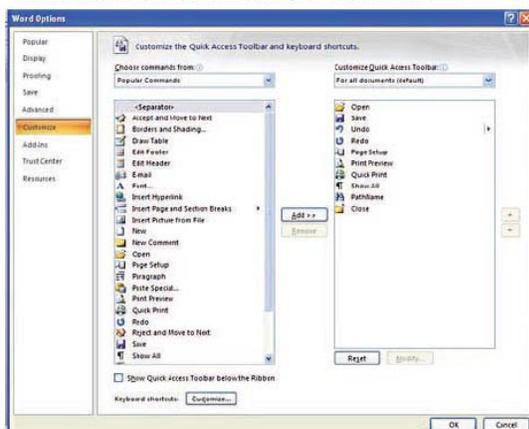
(Word 2007... Continued from page 7)

My Quick Access Toolbar has several preset command buttons and one macro that I recorded (to add the pathname to the bottom of documents). Without intentionally doing so, I nearly recreated the Standard Toolbar offered in earlier versions of Word.

The commands that I found useful to add were Open, Blank Page, Save, Undo, Redo, Page Setup, Print Preview, Print, Show/Hide, PathName (the macro), and Close.

Although a couple of the commands are available by clicking on the Microsoft Office Button, it is still faster and less distracting to have them at the top of the window and only one click away, rather than two or more.

Select commands here for the Quick Access Toolbar.



(Search...Continued from page 15)

be conducted to locate webpages that contain a specific language, or a specific file type (ie. pdf, rss, etc). Simply use the search engine's advanced search option and select the content, language, file type, etc to filter your search results.

Search Meta Words

Meta keyword searches give search engines special instructions. When the meta search words are used, a specific type of search is conducted. Here are some of the most common meta search terms...

define: When define: is used at the beginning of a search word or phrase, the search engine results will be a definition of the word or phrase.

site: When site: is entered in the search box, followed by a domain, the search engine locates all documents within a specific domain and all of its subdomains. This is an easy way to get a rough idea of the number of pages indexed on a domain.

link: When link: is used and followed by a URL, the search results will include all the web pages that are indexed by the search engine which contain links to the specified URL.

inurl: When inurl: is used, followed by a keyword or phrase, the search results will include links to web pages that contain the specific keyword or phrase in the urls themselves.

intitle: When intitle: is searched on in conjunction with a keyword or phrase, the search engine locates search results that contain the specified keyword or phrase in the web page title.

Web surfers can save large amounts of time and energy by optimizing their search techniques with these helpful tips.

Sharon Housley manages marketing for FeedForAll <http://www.feedforall.com> software for creating, editing, publishing RSS feeds and podcasts. In addition Sharon manages marketing for Record-ForAll <http://www.recordforall.com> audio recording and editing software.

How To Send An Email Message To Any Cell Phone

By Ken Peters, Product Review / Special Interests, Hilton Head Island Computer Club, SC
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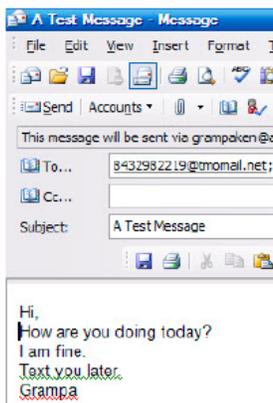
Impress your kids, grandkids and friends with your ability to text. Send a text message to their cell phone by email from your computer.

Most cell phones have the ability to send and receive short text messages. This is called short message service (SMS) or text paging. This service can take email sent over the internet and deliver them to a cell phone as a text message. Each carrier has its own email address extension i.e. @tmomail.net for T Mobile carrier.

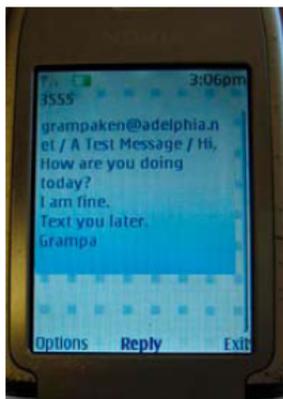
The two things you need to know to send a message are the person's cell phone number and their carrier's email extension. So to send to a T Mobile phone, enter the phone number and add the extension — 8433216549@tmomail.net

The message will look similar to this.

Some Common Cell Phone Emails



The email message



Appears on cell phone

Alltel AT&T (formerly Cingular)

10-digit phone number@message.alltel.com
 Example: 2125551212@message.alltel.com
 10-digit phone number@txt.att.net
 Example: 2125551212@txt.att.net

Boost Mobile Nextel (now part of Sprint Nextel)

10-digit phone number@myboostmobile.com
 Example: 2125551212@myboostmobile.com
 10-digit telephone number@messaging.nextel.com
 Example: 7035551234@messaging.nextel.com

T-Mobile Verizon

10-digit phone number@tmomail.net
 Example: 4251234567@tmomail.net
 10-digit phone number@vtext.com
 Example: 5552223333@vtext.com

Virgin Mobile USA US Cellular

10-digit phone number@vmobl.com
 Example: 2622341256r@vmobl.com
 10digitphonenumber@email.uscc.net
 Example: 2125551212@ email.uscc.net

Sprint PCS (now Sprint Nextel)

10-digit phone number@messaging.sprintpcs.com
 Example: 2125551234@messaging.sprintpcs.com

If you can't find the email address for the carrier, check the carrier's website (Links above) or call their customer service.

The one receiving the message may be charged 10 to 15 cents per message unless they have a plan that includes text messaging. Your kids and grandkids most probably do have a text plan. There is a 160 character limit per message including the email address and the subject line. Some carriers will split the message into two messages if it is longer.

The person receiving the email text message can reply to you from their phone and sometime later you'll receive their reply in your email inbox. If you don't like texting from a cell phone or hate trying to type a message with those small phone keys, give this a try.

File Management – Part One

by Ron Hirsch, Contributing Editor, Boca Raton Computer Society, Florida
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What exactly do I mean when I say file management? And, I can hear you saying “Who needs to fool around with that stuff. I have too many real things to concern myself with. My computer takes care of all those things anyway, doesn't it?” Well, the answer is yes and no. If you went into a restaurant to dine, would you rather select your own choices from the menu, or just have the waiter bring you what he feels like bringing? Very few of you will answer with the latter. But, most people don't bother to establish/customize their file preferences on the computer. It's easier to just take what the computer has been set to do. And, they don't have to learn anything (they think) if they just accept all the defaults.

Please note that I'm making the assumption that you know how to use a mouse, and right or left click on things. And, when I say “scroll down” or drag, you know what to do. If you haven't reached this point yet, I think it's time to take a very basic beginner's course before proceeding.

The simplest way to understand the way your computer stores things is to consider the following. Suppose you saw a line of text as follows -

USA\Florida\Boca Raton\123 Broadway\2nd floor\room 24\gray file cabinet\top drawer\3rd folder\2nd document.

I'm sure that everyone would understand exactly where to look for the document in question. **The line above is actually a descriptive path to get you there.** Well, computer hard drives store things in a very similar way. A path to get to a document in your computer might be —

c:\My Documents\Letters\Personal\Aunt Emma's Birthday.doc

This path states that the filename is “Aunt Emma's Birthday.doc”, and it is in a folder named “Personal”. That folder is a subfolder of “Letters”, which is a subfolder of “My Documents”, which is a folder on the hard drive C. To define paths in computer language a

“\” is used to separate the various elements of the path. Note that this information is not case sensitive. That is, upper or lower case makes no difference. Just having learned this already puts you well on the road to understanding file management.

File management includes things such as establishing certain folders which will be the storage areas for your documents, and other files. You direct where files will be stored in various of your programs by saving your files in folders you establish or define. This makes things easier when you want to do back-ups also. Many programs allow you to specify what those folders are. So, when you go to save a file, that folder comes up as the default. A common cry from beginners is “I saved the file, but I don't know where it is.”

Within a folder you can have sub-folders. For example, if you had a folder c:\letters, you could put in subfolders for business, personal, club, etc.. This way, you have an organized filing system. If you have a file drawer that you use for filing things, most people will have separate folders or hangers for different categories. Throwing everything in the same area make it much more difficult to find things, just as putting all your different socks into the same drawer, unpaired, and mixed up, makes life tougher also.

Most people are intimidated by their computers. Remember, it's only a machine, and you should be the boss, not the computer. The more you understand, the more in control you will feel. But, that doesn't just happen. Like all things in this world, you must make it happen.

Reading these articles, and doing the practice can help you along the road to that end.

Once you become reasonably proficient in the subjects to be presented, you will be prepared to move files around, copy them to a floppy or ZIP disk to back them up, or delete them. The exercise below should help you in this area.

Please note that the protocols used here are applicable not only to PC's, but also to Mac's. These protocols are very logical once you understand them. The term "Windows" will be used throughout the article. This means that all versions of Windows, 95, 98, ME, or Windows 2000 will follow the same procedures

Exercise Number 1

Open up Notepad - if you don't know where it is, click on the START BUTTON on the bottom left of your screen

START>PROGRAMS>ACCESSORIES. Double click on Notepad, and the standard Windows text editor will open. Notepad is simply a small program in which you can generate and edit text documents. It offers almost nothing in the way of formatting, but is a bare bones text editor, as opposed to WordPerfect or Word which are capable of elaborate activities.

Type "This is a test." in the Notepad window.

Save the document by clicking on FILE>SAVE. A window will open. At the top of the window is an area with the notation "Save in". It will probably show your C: drive. If not, use the scroll arrow to select the c: drive. Once you have done this and double-clicked on it, there should be a listing below of all the folders on the C: drive. Scroll to the one named "My Documents", and double click on it. (My Documents folder is a standard folder that Windows installs.) The focus is now on that folder. Next, go down to the bottom of that window and in the field at the bottom, select "all files(*.*)" just to see what else is in that folder. There is a field with "File name"

alongside of it. In that field, type testfile.txt. Then click on the save button. You have now saved that file in the "My Documents" directory. Now, exit Notepad.

Open Windows Explorer. If you don't know how to do this, it's time you learned. Click on **START>PROGRAMS>EXPLORER.** Or, click on the Windows key and the "e" key on your keyboard at the same time. Navigate around to display the list of folders on the C: drive. If that's not what showing, find C: on the left and double click on it. This should bring up the list of all the folders on the C: drive. Find the My Documents folder, and double click on it. There should be at least one file there, the one we just saved called "**testfile.txt**".

Before continuing, I suggest that you configure Explorer to show all file extensions. This makes working with Explorer easier. At the top of the Explorer Window, click on **VIEW>OPTIONS**, and then uncheck the line which reads "Hide file extensions for the types that are registered."

This is the end of part 1 of Learning Basic Windows skills. Next month, the second part of this will cover moving and copying files, along with setting up new folders. If you find this material useful, you may want to download this article in PDF format, from our web site www.brcs.org. This allows readers to keep the material either as a PDF file, and/or print it out, and place it in a looseleaf notebook for future reference.



Broadsides — Tips & Tricks

By Ron Broadhurst, Space Coast PC Users Group, Inc., Florida
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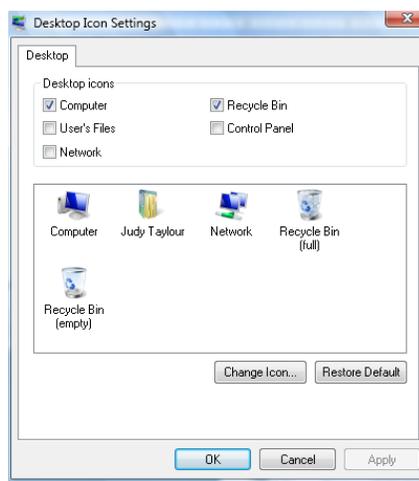
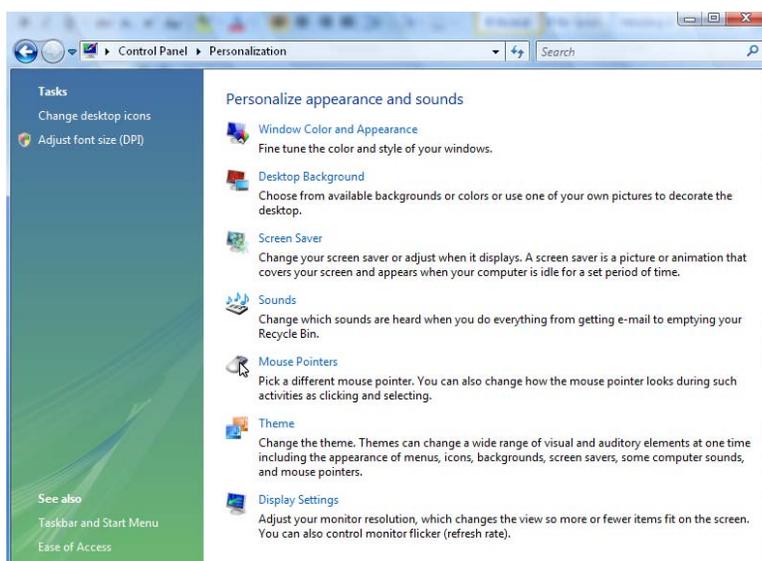
These ideas are compiled from years of accumulations from various magazines, books, on-line sites, and my own personal experience. I claim neither originality nor ownership to any of its contents. My only intent is to share the various “tips”, “tricks”, & “hints” in hopes of helping & maybe enhancing your computing experiences. They are all intended for anyone who uses a PC. It is for beginners as well as advanced users. Enjoy and use as you will.

Ron Broadhurst

I Accidentally Deleted My Recycle Bin In Vista How Do I Get It Back?

Go to Control Panel and click on the Personalization options:

Click Change desktop icons and you'll get this handy little dialog box: Click the Recycle Bin checkbox as highlighted above, click OK, and your Recycle Bin should reappear on the desktop.



Printing E-Mail Addresses In Outlook Express

TO PRINT YOUR Email Addresses:

Print each name and address on one line:

Open OUTLOOK EXPRESS click on File, Export, Address Book, Select Text File (Comma Separated Values) and click the Export button.

Name the file, click Browse button to save in Desktop. and at the bottom line, SAVE it in Text File (*.txt), click

Next, Deselect everything except NAME and Email Address then click Finish. Click on the Text File and Print it.

Outlook Express Address Book Back-Up

From Outlook Express, click on Tools/ Address Book, then File / Export / Address Book

Choose a storage location and give it a file name.
Click save e-MAIL SHORTCUT /

RIGHT click on the Desktop and choose NEW then SHORTCUT.

In the Command line type
mailto:yourfriend@whatever.whatever

For examplemailto:yourfriend@cfl.rr.com

Then click Finish and you have a short-cut to your E-mail friend. Double click and your e-mail opens up ready to go.

Control Panel Shortcuts

If you're tired of multiple clicks to get to your floppy drive, CD-ROM drive, D-Drive, E-Drive or to the Control Panel, you can put a shortcut on your desktop for instant access.

Open MyComputer, RIGHT click on the icon for your floppy drive, CDROM drive, E or D-Drive or whatever you want and then select "Create Shortcut". This will place an icon on your desktop for instant access to what you chose.

You can use this technique for any Folder you access frequently by putting the shortcut on your desktop. Now, your desktop becomes your operations center with quick access to any application, folder, or file on your PC.

Shortcut For Shortcut

You can assign a Keyboard key combination to any Shortcut. If you RIGHT click on any shortcut icon and choose Properties, you can then type Ctrl+any letter to assign the key combination that will open your Program. It should be a unique key and something you will remember. e.g. S for solitaire. This would be of great help if you wanted to go to another program when you cannot see your Desktop. ♣

(Keeping Up...Continued from page 1)

DTV converter box to translate the digital signal for your analog VCR. Now what — the converter box puts out an RF signal on CH 3 (or 4), and you have to change the channel received with the converter's remote control — which means you've got to be home to change channels if the programs to be recorded are on different channels. The VCR just gets set up to record channel 3 for the entire length of the multiple programs you want to record.

Well, there are alternatives — Jan Chance-Sampson, a user group colleague, tipped me off to a DTV converter box that offered programmability. The Zinwell ZAT-970A Digital Converter Box is available from Solid Signal, the source I've use for a number of years for off-air TV supplies — antennas, amplifiers, etc. This converter box has eight programmable time slots for solving the VCR dilemma noted above. The user programs converter box time slots and channels for received programs output on channel 3 to the VCR, which is programmed to record channel 3 at the appropriate times.

Obviously, there's some pain, 'cause you have to program two devices, instead of one, but you're able to have the converter box automatically switch between channel 7 at 8PM, to 4 at 9PM, to channel 9 at 10 o'clock. The VCR records channel 3 for the full three hour span, and you've captured multiple programs without having to be home to switch the converter box with the remote control.

When the Zinwell box arrived from Solid Signal early on a Saturday morning via FedEx, I immediately began hooking it up. I encountered a minor glitch — I had a six outlet surge protector of the type that covers your duplex receptacle, because it plugs into both AC outlets at the same time. The outlets were full, and I'd acquired a TrippLite Isobar Home Theater Surge Protector previously to provide more outlets, with better protection — but hadn't gotten around to shifting everything around. So, I unplugged all the gear from the older surge protector, plugged the Isobar into the old unit, and plugged everything into the Isobar.

Hooked up the antenna to the Zinwell's input, the Zinwell's RF output to the VCR's input, and took the remote to the couch (of course) to try 'er out! Push the power button — multiple times — nothing — mutter, mutter! Blasted cheap electronics with no

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Performing Better Searches

By Sharon Housley, VP, NotePage managing Marketing for FeedForAll
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Performing and perfecting search engine results can save web surfers lots of time and energy. Understanding the nuances of searching allows researchers to immediately drill down and locate the information they are seeking, without having to wade through a myriad of irrelevant search results in the process. The increasing complexity of search engines has made understanding search engines a necessity for those who spend any amount of time online. The following search tips are standards that will work in most of the major search engines.

How To Find What You Are Looking For

As the popularity of the Internet grows, more and more results are returned for even the most obscure search phrases. In order to save time, web surfers need to increase their search relevancy. It is advisable to use multiple search terms to produce better search results. Searchers should use specific words and phrases to

find what they're are looking for, while filtering out irrelevant and unwanted results.

In searching, more usually means less. Using more keywords in a search will help qualify the search and make it more specific to what you are looking for. It is all about striking a balance; more search terms will reduce the number of search results, but those results will be more accurate. Remember that you can always refine the search further if there are too many results returned in the initial search.

Capitalization Is Irrelevant

The major search engines ignore capitalization. Upper case and lower case search phrases will deliver the same results.

Order Matters

Keep in mind that the order in which the terms are entered into the search box will affect the search results. The most important terms should appear first in the list of search words.

Word Stemming

Major search engines will provide results that use word stemming. Word stemming includes variants of the terms that were searched for. For example, searching on the term fish in a major search engine will generate organic search results that also contain the terms fishing, fishes, and fisher.

Washington Area Computer User Group

WACUG Meeting will be held on May 9, 2009 [2nd Saturday] from 12:30 to 3:30 pm. Starting with the January 17th, 2009 meeting, WACUG will hold joint meetings with OPCUG [www.olligmu.org/~opcug/] It is anticipated that all meetings, except June, July, and August, will be held at the **Osher Lifelong Learning Institute** [www.olligmu.edu/] at George Mason University, 4210 Roberts Road, Fairfax, VA, known as the Tallwood Campus.

You do not need to be a member to attend. For more information on WAC meetings and events, call the WAC AnswerLine (voice) at (703) 370-7649. Also see WAC's Web Site at

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

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Exact

Using quotations around a search phrase will generate search results that contain only that specific search phrase, exactly as it was entered. For example, searching on the exact phrase “rocking horse” in a major search engine will only generate search results that contain the phrase rocking horse. The results will not include any results that contain “horse rocking”—even though both terms appear, they do not appear in the proper order for an exact match.

Do Not Include

Adding a (-) negative/minus sign before a search term will filter the results so that they contain the first term but not the negated word. For example, entering the search phrase horses -rocking into a major search engine will return search results about horses but not about rocking horses.

Must Include

If you want search results that only include a specific word, just type a (+) plus sign in front of a search term. The results produced will always contain that term. For example, conducting a search horse + carousel will result in all search results that contain carousel, and may include horse as well.

Similar Words

Adding a (~) tilde character in front of a search word will generate search results that not only include the specified search term, but will also include all words considered to be related to the original search term. For example, using the search term ~soda will result in organic search engine results that not only include soda, but also include pepsi, pop, cola, coke, bottle, and soft drink.

Either Or

Adding an OR parameter between two search terms will result in search listings that include either the first or the second word in the search results. For example, searching on the terms soda OR bottle will generate search results that may contain both terms soda bottle or it will produce results that contain either soda or bottle but not both in the same search listings.

Advanced Searches And Segmented Searches

Many search engines allow you to specify the type of content you wish to search in. For example, you can often search just news articles, just blogs, or just images. If you are looking for a specific type of media, segmenting your search can be helpful. Searches can

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NCTCUG Information

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Please send your change of
address to the club ad-
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avoid missing issues.***

Thank You!

(Keeping Up...Continued from page 13)

pilot light! Pull the batteries out of the remote — cheapa__ no brand AAA batteries, mutter. Test them with the old reliable Radio Shack battery tester — hmmm, they’re fine. Put ‘em back in, nothing substitute new batteries. Still nothing — heavily steaming ears !!

Walk back over to the Zinwell, sitting on the table next to the TV. What’s that — the Zinwell’s wall wart — power supply — that I didn’t have space for in the old surge protector is sitting next to the converter box. Draw a two inch red “X” on center of forehead. Smack “X” with palm of hand, hard — several times. Plug in the wall wart. What’s that glowing red light on the front of the Zinwell? How come there’s still no evidence of a signal from the VCR? Point the remote control at the box, push “power” — oops, the Zinwell light changes from red to green. Gulp! Up pops the menu, run through the channel scan, setup procedure — hot damn, summer in the city! A great picture on lots of channels. Tell me — why does the fickle finger of fate always point squarely at my nose?

http://www.solidsignal.com/prod_display.asp?PROD=ZAT-970A

May 2009	
1st Wed. (5/6)	7 p.m. General Meeting
4th Wed (5/27)	7 p.m. Internet SIG
3rd Monday (5/18)	7 p.m. Board of Directors
All meetings are at Carlin Hall , 5711 S. 4th St., Arlington VA: East off of Carlin Springs Rd, just south of Arlington Blvd/Route 50.	



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