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Keeping Up

by Paul Howard (NCTCUG)

The march of technology is hard to avoid. We're bombarded with it every day, if in no other form than folks weaving down the road, driving with a cell phone stuck in their ear, instead of paying attention to their driving. At the Fairfax County "Electric Sunday" recycling event in January, I bid adieu to my first color TV set, the 14" Heathkit I built in 1973. It had been sitting in the basement on an old Cosco kitchen cart from my days when fixing TVs was one of my hobby interests. The TV worked well until about ten years ago, when a power supply fault stopped it functioning, and I never seemed to find the time to repair it. Part of that stemmed from the failure of the oscilloscope I planned to use in the troubleshooting process -- another relic from the late seventies-early eighties and a GI Bill correspondence course from the DC-based National Radio Institute.

Two weeks ago, I recognized the futility of repairing that TV. I'd planned to acquire a wide screen monitor for my PC, and made the annual run to Office Depot for TurboTax and the associated bargain on a Norton Internet Security / Norton Utilities package -- it's tough to beat free (tho' via the rebate path.) While there, I was looking at the monitors, and saw an attrac-



tive deal on a 23" LG unit. I grabbed one of the 'turn this in at the cashier' slips for the monitor, and proceeded to the check out.

After a couple of minutes, the manager approached and said, "I can offer you a deal on the 32" TV; we're out of the one you wanted." "TV?" said I. "I was trying to buy the 23" PC monitor!" So off we marched to the appropriate aisle, and found that the TV slips were where the monitor slips should have been. "Let me check," said the manager, as he disappeared into the stock room. Several minutes later, he returned with a box. "We're out of stock on the monitor, but I can let you have this Samsung 23" monitor / HDTV for the same price."

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Discovering Windows 7 – Part 5

By Neil Stahfest – Tacoma Area PC User Group NCStahfest (at) msn.com www.tapcug.org

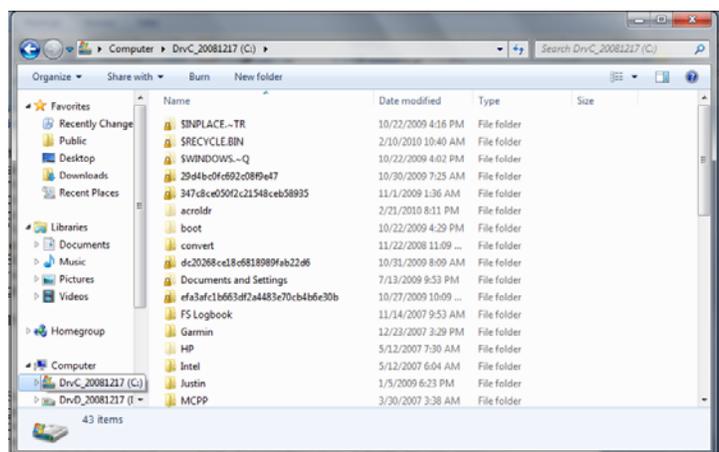
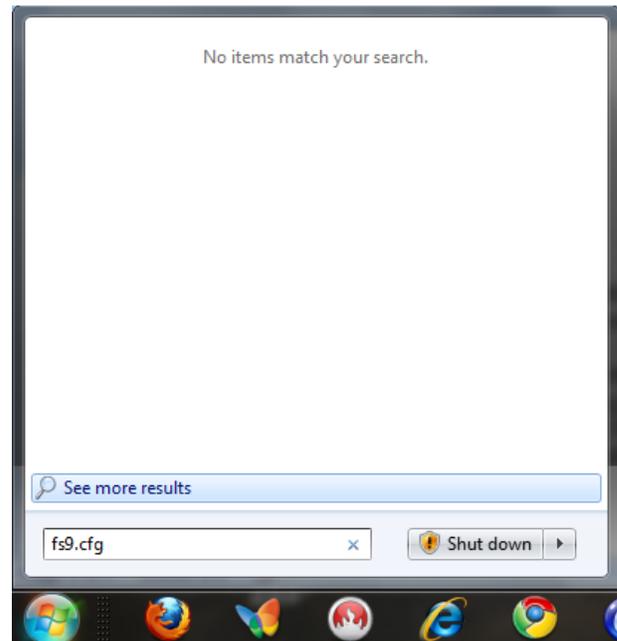
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Last month we looked at the basic Windows 7 file search function and libraries. But what do you do if the file you are looking for is not in one of Windows 7's libraries?

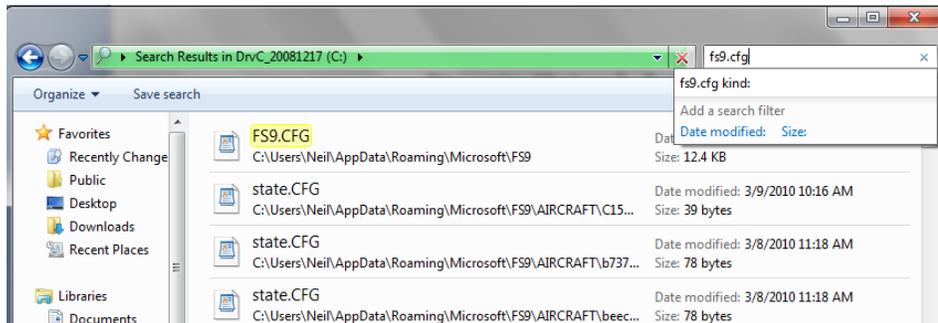
It's very simple. To begin, click on the "Start" button and type the name of the file you are looking for in the "Search" box. I have "Microsoft Flight Simulator 2004" installed on my laptop PC. "FS9.CFG" is a general configuration file for this program that I occasionally want to modify. If I type "fs9.cfg" (note letters can be upper or lower case) in the Search box above the Start button there is no match. The next step is to click on the magnifying glass where it says "See more results".

This opens up a new window, as shown below. As you can see, we have a lot more options here. In the left pane are some "standard" area to search, including the libraries. We don't know where fs9.cfg is located except that it is on "Drive C". I clicked on "Drive C" which revealed the folders on "Drive C" in the large pane to the right. Assuming that I don't know which folder it is located in, I'll just leave "Drive C" highlighted and type "fs9.cfg" in the Search box in the upper right corner of the windows and press Enter. Depending upon how many files you have on your computer and its speed this search could take a long time. I have over 500,000 files that had to be checked. My search took over 10 minutes. Your search might take less time.

A green bar will extend across the top of the search window as the search progresses (just to let you know something is happening I suppose). Files containing "fs9.cfg" were located and eventually the file itself (see below). Note that the file name is highlighted and the file location and size is shown.



I could click on the highlighted file name to edit it or might want to write down the location so I can find it more quickly in the future.



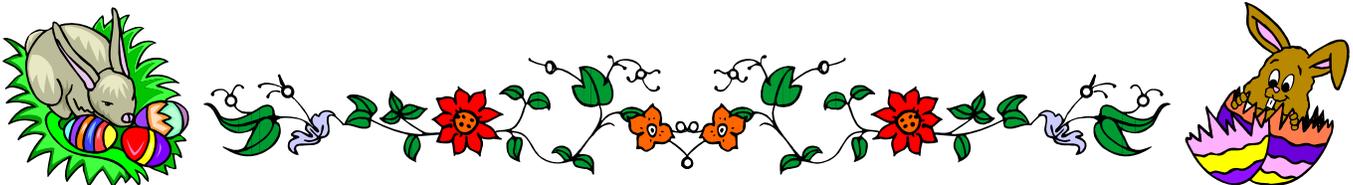
This is a very thorough search utility which can be refined in a number of ways including searching the date the file was last modified, or a range of dates or by file size.

Obviously, the fastest way to find a file is if it is located in a library. By default, Windows 7 has four libraries; Documents, Pictures, Music and Videos. You've probably noticed that the Videos library does not appear in the Start menu. So how can you add it? Easy!

Right-click on the "Start" button and selected "Properties". When the "Taskbar and Start Menu Properties" window appears, click on "Customize". In the "Customize Start Menu" window scroll down to the bottom where you see "Videos". Under "Videos" click on "Display as link" and then click on "OK". The Videos library will now appear in the "Start" menu.

You can also create additional libraries. Suppose you have a program on your computer for creating and storing genealogy records. After navigating to the main folder of your genealogy program (which probably contains sub folders), just right-click on the folder. In the window that opens, select "Include in library". In the new window that opens, select "Create new library". That's all there is to it! Now you have a genealogy library named whatever the folder was named. Now when you search, you can search all files (including Genealogy) or just the Genealogy library. Since libraries don't actually contain any data, if you change your mind about wanting one, you can delete it without losing any information.

As you can see, Windows 7 Libraries are a very powerful tool. They provide quick links to frequently used files without forcing you to store information in a manner predetermined by someone else. To put it another way, you're no longer forced to keep all your socks in the upper right drawer where your mother told you to put them. You can use the lower left drawer or several drawers. Windows 7 Libraries will quickly find your "socks" no matter where you want to store them. <S>



Microsoft Security Essentials

By Lynn Page, Editor, Crystal River User Group, Florida
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I have been using Windows Live OneCare for a couple of years on my laptop and have been very happy with it. OneCare is being discontinued next year and will not support Windows 7.

Microsoft Security Essentials is a real time security anti-malware application. The main difference between Microsoft Security Essentials and OneCare is that Security Essentials only provides malware protection while OneCare contains additional applications including a firewall, backup, tune up, multi pc management, simple Wi-Fi security configuration and simplified printer sharing.

With the upcoming discontinuation of OneCare, I loaded Microsoft Security Essentials, a free download from Microsoft, on my desktop to try it out. I still run a personal firewall and left one other anti-malware application on the computer. Security Essentials is designed to provide real-time anti-malware protection from threats including viruses, spyware, rootkits, Trojans, and other emerging threats in a single application.

The download of Microsoft Security Essentials is free and installation simple. The program is easy to use. As it does everything in the background. Automatic updates assure that your computer is protected by the latest available technology. Like OneCare Security Essentials makes it easy to see if the computer is secure. The green icon means it's secure.

The Installation Wizard walks you through the installation, which only took a few minutes. Its first step requires validation of your copy of Windows. Then you are instructed to remove any other anti-virus or antispyware applications installed on the computer. There is even a link to tell you how to remove the applications. Based on Alfred's discussion at the October meeting I expected this and had already uninstalled my antivirus application. Since the anti-malware program I have installed does not run in the background I left it on the computer.

Microsoft Security Essentials runs efficiently in the background so you can use your computer without interruptions or long wait times. When completing the installation The Wizard you have the opportunity to request a scan of your computer.

When finished Microsoft Security Essentials starts and automatically checks for updates before running the requested scan. Since it is new application you will have to instruct your firewall to allow it to connect to the internet.



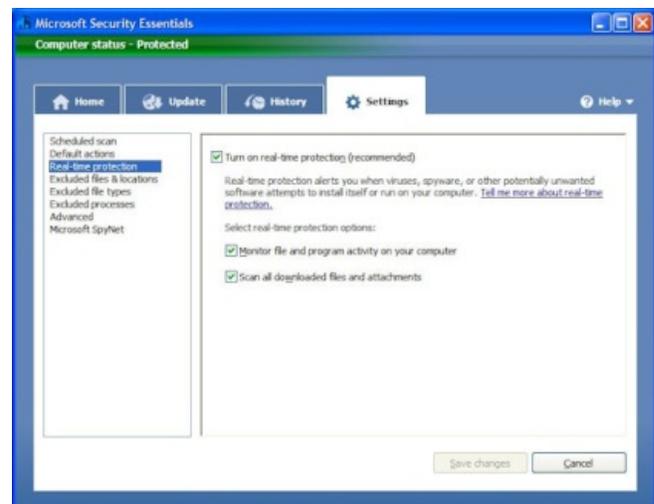
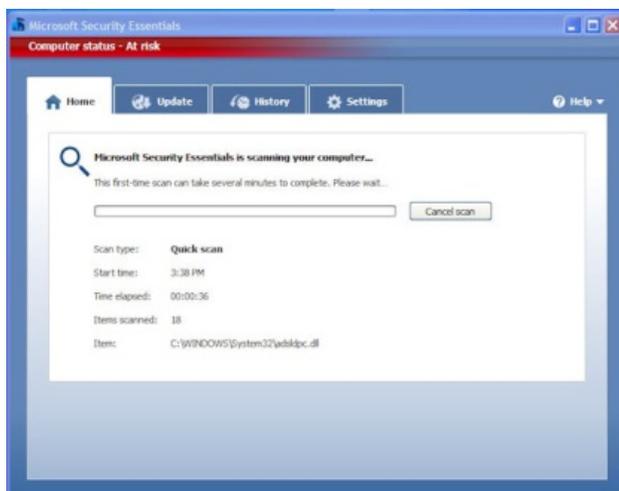
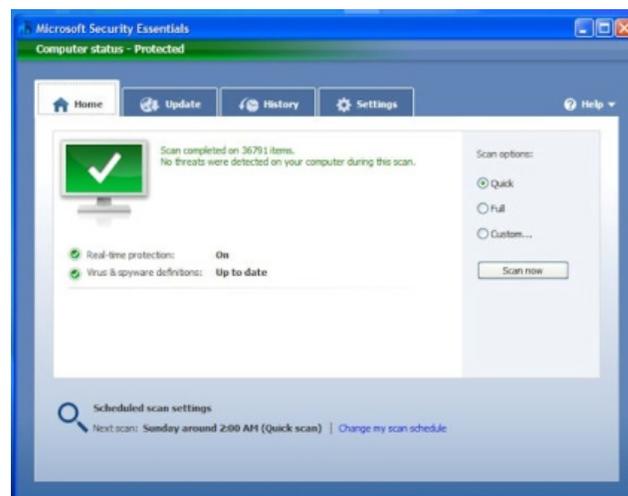
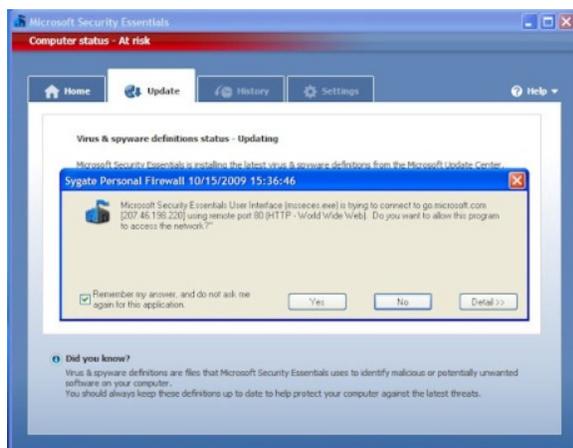
Until the updates and initial scan are complete, Microsoft Security Essentials shows the red warning that your computer is at risk. Once the scan is complete and any problems addressed, the computer status will be green or Protected.

The Security Essentials interface is tab based. The Home tab displays the application's status. Note that Real-time protection is on and definitions are up to date. Security Essentials performs scheduled scans but you can select and run a manual scan from the Home tab. When running a System Scan, select from Quick, Full, or Custom. I ran both a quick scan and then a full scan on my computer. If a threat is detected, Security Essentials changes to show the computer is at risk and that a threat has been detected. To remove a threat, click the Clean computer button displayed on the Home tab.

The Settings tab provides control over the application. I saw no reason to make any changes from the default settings. The one thing you might want to change is the scan schedule. You can schedule a scan by clicking the Change My Scan Schedule link on the Home window or on the Settings tab.

The History tab displays all Detected Items, Quarantined Items, and Allowed Items. Remove the history by clicking the Delete History button.

I haven't been running Microsoft Security Essentials long, but my experience with OneCare tells me it will work well and protect my computer from threats. I have already noticed that the computer runs faster during scans than with my previous software.



Things, Thinglets & Thingassoes: The Bad Guys Are After Your Money

By Jack Lewtschuk, Columnist, Monterey Bay Users Group, PC (MBUG-PC), California
mbug-pc newsletter, January 2010 <http://www.mbug.org> Blacklion (at) royal.net

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Well, that's nothing new.

Just as knowing the "computer language" is good to assist communication when seeking help or offering help to others, so is knowing the definition of words to describe cybercrime.

Just to better understand the nomenclature of cyber assaults, one has to be able to understand the lingo. I researched the Internet (some very helpful "e-letters") and came up with this handy list:

"Adware"

A piece of software that displays advertisements on a computer after the software is installed. Adware can be benign, as in the case of a free program that displays ads in a manner that is agreed upon in advance. Or adware can be a nuisance, displaying unwanted ads with no apparent way to remove the program. The nuisance variety is often silently downloaded along with some other desired software, such as a game or toolbar.

"Arbitrary Code Execution"

When a security vulnerability is discovered in a piece of software, sometimes it is said that it allows for "arbitrary code" to be executed on the machine. This really means that the vulnerability can be used to cause that program to execute ANY set of commands or instructions on that computer.

"Black Hat"

A "bad guy" or hacker who breaks into computer networks, creates viruses, sends spam, or uses unethical tactics to influence engine results.

"Ethical Hacker"

A "good hacker" who uses a variety of techniques to test the safety of a computer network or system software. Typically an ethical hacker (also known as a "White Hat") is hired by a company to see if there are any flaws in its systems that might allow Black Hats to gain entry.

"Botnet"

A collection of ordinary home and office computers that have been compromised by rogue software. The term "botnet" is short for "robot network" and describes the situation rather well. Computers that have been caught up in a botnet have been effectively taken over and can be used to perform almost any task by the person or persons who control the botnet. Botnets are controlled by criminals and other miscreants whose motives include spewing spam to sell products, operating financial scams, and crippling websites through coordinated attacks. (See "Denial of Service Attack".)

"Buffer Overrun"

This is a flaw in a computer program that occurs when the length of a user input is not validated. For example, if a program is expecting a 9-digit social security number as input, it should discard any input beyond the 9th character. If the program blindly accepts a longer input string, it could "overrun" the input buffer, thereby trashing some other part of the currently-running program with the extraneous characters. In some cases, this flaw can be used to overwrite the existing program with code that comes from the input string. (See "Arbitrary Code Execution".)

"Denial of Service Attack"

A concerted effort by one or more remote attackers that attempts to flood a web server or network with meaningless requests. A sustained, coordinated attack can render the target unable to service the legitimate users who are attempting to connect.

"Exploit"

A method of taking advantage of a bug or security hole in a computer program. It is possible that a hole may be known to exist, but no exploit has yet been created to capitalize on it.

“Malware”

Any form of malicious software. This can include computer viruses, spyware, worms, trojan horses, rootkits, and other software that is deliberately harmful, destructive, or invasive.

“Patch”

A fix for a software bug or security hole. When a bug is discovered, often there is a race by software vendors to provide a patch before an Exploit is created. Patches must be applied to the affected computers in order to prevent exploitation of the flaw.

“Phishing”

The act of stealing information using lies or deception as bait. Online scammers try to trick people into voluntarily providing passwords, account numbers, and other personal information by pretending to be someone they trust. An example of phishing is an e-mail that appears to be from a bank, asking recipients to log in to a rogue site that looks exactly like the real one. When the victim logs in, the operators of the fake site then have that person’s login credentials and can access his or her bank account.

“Rootkit”

A rootkit is a software tool (or a set of programs) designed to conceal files, data, or active processes from the operating system. Because of their ability to hide deep in the operating system, rootkits are hard to detect and remove. Although rootkits may not cause damage when installed, they are often piggy-backed with additional code written for the purpose of taking control of a computer, disabling certain functions, or spying on the user and reporting activities back to the rootkit creator.

“Scareware”

Software that is created for the purpose of tricking people into downloading or purchasing it, when in reality it is either unnecessary, marginally useful, or outright

dangerous. Online ads that display fake warnings such as “Your computer may be infected—click here to scan for viruses” or “ERROR! Registry Damage Detected—click to download Registry Cleaner” would qualify as scareware. Scareware programs often run a fake or cursory scan, then present the user with a list of hazards that must be corrected. Fixing these “problems” then requires the user to pay a fee for a “full” or “registered” version of the software.

“Skimming”

The act of stealing credit or debit card information while a legitimate transaction is taking place at an ATM (Automatic Teller Machine). Skimming involves an unauthorized device that is attached to the card slot of the ATM, which reads the magnetic strip as the card passes through. A hidden camera may also be used to capture the victim’s PIN (Personal Identification Number).

“Spyware”

Spyware is a type of malicious software designed to take action on a computer without the informed consent of the user. Spyware may surreptitiously monitor the user, reporting personal information to a remote site, or subvert the computer’s operation for the benefit of a third party.

Some spyware tracks what types of websites a user visits and send this information to an advertising agency. Others may launch annoying popup advertisements. More malicious versions try to intercept passwords or credit card numbers.

“Trojan Horse”

A Trojan horse is a malicious program that is disguised or embedded within other software. The term is derived from the classical myth of the Trojan Horse. Such a program may look useful or interesting but is actually harmful when executed.

Examples may include web browser toolbars, games, and file sharing programs. A Trojan horse cannot operate or spread on its own, so it relies on a social engineering approach (tricking the user into taking some action) rather than flaws in a computer’s security.



Cartoon by Regina Doyle, MBUG-PC

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“Virus”

A computer virus is a malicious self-replicating computer program that spreads by inserting copies of itself into other programs or documents, similar to the way a real virus operates. When the infected program or document is opened, the destructive action (payload) is repeated, resulting in the infection, destruction, or deletion of other files.

Sometimes the infected programs continue to function normally, albeit with the side effects of the virus; in other cases, the original program is crippled or destroyed.

“Worm”

A worm is a malicious computer program that is self-contained and does not need help from another program to propagate itself. It can spread by trying to infect other files on a local network or by exploiting the host computer's e-mail transmission capabilities to send copies of itself to everyone found in the e-mail address book. Some even look in the cache of recently visited web pages and extract other e-mail addresses to target.

“Zero-Day Exploit”

An attack that tries to exploit unpatched security vulnerabilities. The term “zero day” derives from the fact that software vendors sometimes have a window of time to fix a problem before an exploit is developed or before news of a vulnerability is made public. But when the exploit already exists before a patch is released, the vendors have “zero days” to fix it because users are already exposed.

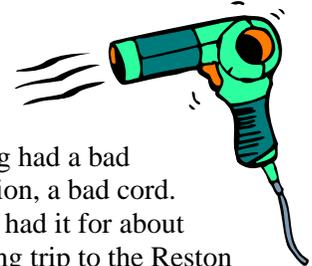
“Zombie”

A computer that has been compromised and can be controlled over a network to do the bidding of a criminal or miscreant. Computers that have been caught up in a botnet are zombies and can be used by the controller of the botnet to send spam or participate in a coordinated denial of service attack.

(Keeping Up...Continued from page 1)

And that's how I wound up with a lovely new 23" widescreen monitor, with a TV thrown in, for \$189! The 1973 Heathkit cost \$400, and about 40 hours to build. That \$400 has the buying power of \$1964.47 today, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics CPI inflation calculator. But, I'd still need a digital adapter to get that 40 pound TV to display a picture off the air. Recycle time!

Another trusty household standby bit the dust a few months ago — a hair dryer my wife and I used after showering had a bad switch, and, on further inspection, a bad cord. Can't imagine why, we'd only had it for about thirty years. We took a shopping trip to the Reston Target store, and headed for 'small appliance land.' We strolled around, and located the hair dryers, taking up at least 20 feet on one side of an aisle. Colors by the score, but most very similar in shape and size — and wattage. Seemed strange that all seemed to be rated at 1875 watts. Back of mind nagging — why does that ring a bell? We finally picked out one in basic black that seemed better balanced than most, fit both our hands well — decision made.



The dryer worked fine for us for a week or so, then it popped the circuit breaker a couple of times for Linda -- more hair, more thorough, yadda yadda. Then I got out the calculator and realized why 1875 watts had caused ringing brain cells. Standard line voltage -- 125 volts times 15 amps - standard circuit breaker capacity, yields -- yup, 1875 watts. So the dryer appears to suck current at the rated capacity of said circuit. Are there other things on the circuit? Yes, thus yielding popped breaker.

I spent about eight hours over three days running a piece of 12 gauge romex (plastic jacketed electrical cable) across the basement, splitting the circuit so only the bathroom outlets were on it. Using the 12 gauge wiring reduces the circuit's resistance, so the 'time before breaker trips' is extended. Because our home is two story, completely rewiring the outlets, replacing the receptacles and changing the circuit breaker to 20 amps was impractical. Time to acquire a Kill-a-Watt electricity usage monitor, and see how many watts that hair dryer really draws.

<http://www.p3international.com/products/p4460.htm>

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Windows 7: The Definitive Guide

The Essential Resource for Professionals and Power Users

By William R. Stanek

Reviewed by Elsie Smith, Editor, PC Community, CA PCC News, November 2009
www.pcc.org [lcms \(at\) pacbell.net](mailto:lcms@pacbell.net)

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This is the kind of how-to book that anyone—regardless of skill level—can read from cover to cover and walk away with a wealth of knowledge about the subject at hand.

This book provides everything you need to manage and maintain Windows 7. You'll learn all of the features and enhancements in complete detail, along with specifics for configuring the operating system to put you in full control. Bestselling author and Windows expert William Stanek doesn't just show you the steps you need to follow, he also tells you how features work, why they work, and how you can customize them to meet your needs. You'll also learn why you may want to use certain features of the operating system and when to use other features to resolve any problems you are having. Learn how to squeeze every bit of power out of Windows 7 to take full advantage of its features and programs.

When asked about the user level, Stanek replied: "This book doesn't focus on a specific user level. This isn't a lightweight beginner book or a book written exclusively for developers or administrators. Regardless of whether you are a beginning, power user, or seasoned professional, many of the concepts in this book will be valuable to you. And you'll be able to apply them to your computer regardless of which edition of Windows 7 you are using."

- Set up, customize, and tune Windows 7—Optimize its appearance and performance, install software - what has changed and what you need to know, customize your hardware, and install printers, scanners, and faxes
- Manage your files and data—Search your computer more efficiently, secure your data, share and collaborate, and get the most out of optional programs such as Windows Live Mail
- Master your digital media—Create media libraries, manage digital pictures and videos, make DVDs, and create movies

- Get connected and start networking—Set up a home or small-office network, conquer Internet Explorer, and master on-the-go networking
- Protect your computer—Keep your family safe while on the Internet, navigate the computer security maze, and configure Windows 7's protection features
- Manage and support Windows 7 systems—Configure user accounts, disks and drives, troubleshoot and handle routine maintenance, and resolve advanced support and recovery issues
- Learn advanced tips & techniques—Manage the Windows boot environment, explore Group Policy, and much more

Product Information

Windows 7: The Definitive Guide — The Essential Resource for Professionals and Power Users

By William R. Stanek

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<http://www.oreilly.com>

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Adobe Photoshop Elements 8 + Premiere 8: Still Top Notch.

By Louise Maye Huddelston, a HAL-PC family member and partner of a graphic outsource company www.hal-pc.org editor (at) hal-pc.org

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If you're new to the worlds of digital photography and image manipulation, Photoshop Elements 8 offers everything you need and more. Elements 8 is a powerful, well-balanced consumer photo editing and organizing tools. Photo Recomposition feature as amazing as its larger sibling - Photoshop. Tight integration with on-line services and Premiere 8 and extensive selection of help and tutorials. Users of Elements 7 are unlikely to find a reason to upgrade.

When you open Photoshop Elements 8, you're greeted with a just two real options: Going to the Organizer or opening Photoshop Elements 8 proper. Elements 8 remains the best option for consumer photo editing. It offers more than the competition in a package that's as attractive and unthreatening as this kind of software can be. The novice can rest assured they're getting the tip of the top. This is a very powerful program, though you might not think so with such a friendly face.

The Organizer is a large project folder with shortcuts for handling quick jobs without opening the individual programs. The Organizer bridges both Photoshop and Premiere Elements 8. The Editor has remained largely

unchanged from Elements 7. That means it includes a healthy amount of the features found in its more robust and expensive sibling.

Elements 8 boasts a number of new features in an attractive and an intuitive, tabbed interface. Best improvements include an Auto Analyzer to practically automate image tagging and a new People Recognition feature that identifies people in images, plus new one-click image editing tools.

It can't be easy for a software developer to keep products fresh year after year. I like the familiarity which actually reduces the learning curve! Because the software remains remarkable for the breadth and depth of its capabilities, it remains my pick. But for the new user, it's a steal with a breath taking feature/tool set.

The most exciting new addition is the Recompose Photo tool. A refinement of the astounding content-aware scaling that appeared in Photoshop. It allows you to redefine a photo selectively to fit into a specific size or orientation by choosing which elements of the picture to remove and which ones to keep. This is digital voodoo!

runSlideShow(); Quick Fix previews in Quick Edit mode now let you examine prospective changes, making it a lot easier to get the effect you want.

The biggest changes to PE 8 come in the area of organizing. Tags are even easier to use, with a "tag cloud" to help you rapidly sort or search for files matching your most frequently used criteria. The new Auto-Analyzer can automatically apply Smart Tags to files you import.

Of more immediate usefulness is the software's expanded help section, which includes tutorials that help you learn how to perform certain common tasks. Unfortunately, you can't derive the full benefit from them without paying an extra \$40 on a one-year Plus membership.



The new Auto QuickFix tools (Smart Fix, Color, Tone, Contrast, Detail, Color, and Red Eye) in the Organizer's full-screen mode can handle all of the editing that many photos require before you move on to the Create and/or Share tabs. Use Elements' full edit interface for more complex issues.

Among Elements 8's handful of new or extended photo editing tools is PhotoMerge, which now includes an Exposure tool that allows you to combine two nearly identical photos, taken with different exposure values, to attain the optimum exposure.

Those users who want a bit more assistance, you will find yourself pretty well taken care of. By clicking the down arrow next to Edit, you'll see an Edit Quick and Edit Guided menu..

Though Edit Guided presents you with what is at first a fairly intimidating list of options, it actually works quite well by telling and showing you exactly what to do to get the result you want. "Picture too blurry? It pops up with the blur-correction tool itself, instructions, and even an Auto button to see if the software can figure it out by itself." Very friendly.

The output features of Photoshop Elements 8 include Flickr which is under More Options while UTube is right out front. You share your images via iPhone, e-mail, and web/TV.

System requirements: Adobe has historically been resource hungry and for a reason. Best minimum: Win7 64-bit, at least a 2.1GHz processor and four, preferably six, GB of RAM. It was not worth my time to save a \$150 for less RAM and a slower processor.

Users who already have Elements 7 should pass on this "upgrade," since the move will feel lateral. Having said that, if you're in the market for photo editing software, Photoshop Elements 8 has a lot to recommend it, specifically the stripped-down, easily used, implementation of Photoshop proper balances ease of use and flexibility. It's beginner friendly but not oversimplified and remains sophisticated for the experienced user. For more info and updates go to www.adobe.co.

[NCTCUG Ed. Note: Ver. 9 is the current version. For version comparisons see <http://tinyurl.com/6bhqh4v> or www.adobe.com/products/photoshopel/upgrade/?view=compare]

Free Web Site Development Book

Thanks to Linda Gonse of ORCOPUG editor@orcopug.org for passing on this information.

Web Links

<http://www.the-web-book.com/>

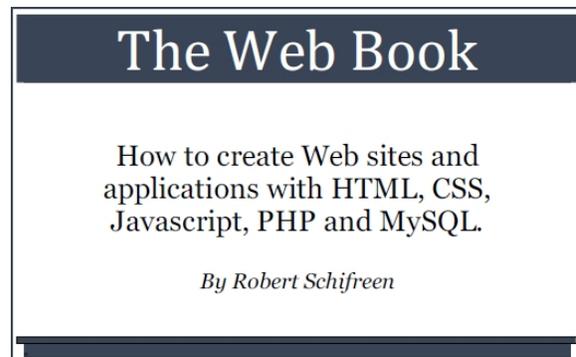
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or <http://tinyurl.com/4hewga>

Updated 1. February 2011 20:43 by r.schifreen

As you may know, I recently wrote a 350-page book, all about how to create web sites from scratch with HTML, CSS, JavaScript, PHP and MySQL. I've been giving it away for free at www.the-web-book.com for the past year or so, where you can either browse it online or download a PDF file. So far, around 58,000 people have grabbed the PDF. If you're one of them, thank you!

If you haven't yet downloaded it, and you're thinking about doing so, then allow me to give you a bit of insider information. In around 1 month's time, I'll be changing things slightly. You'll still be able to browse the complete 350-page book online in your browser, but if you want to download the PDF file it'll cost you a couple of dollars.

So if you want the complete offline version for free, grab yours before it's too late.



Can You Really Watch Free TV on Your PC?

By Ira Wilsker

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Websites

<http://toolbar.tv-fox.com>
<http://www.watch-live-online.tv> (Live TV)
<http://www.hulu.com>

You may have seen ads on the internet or on TV that tell you that you can watch free TV on the internet, and that you do not need cable or satellite to watch thousands of TV channels. Some even go as far as to say that you should cancel your cable or satellite, and use the free services, rather than paying for expensive TV service. Several others advertise software or hardware devices (for a fee) that allow you to watch hundreds of TV channels online for free. There are even websites that allow you watch TV in your browser or on your desktop, either for free, or for a subscription fee.

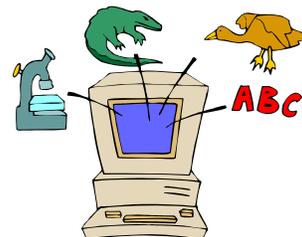
While these offers are generally real, they should not be confused with the selection of channels available on your local cable system or satellite service as they generally do not offer the major commercial channels, and rarely offer the major local channels. Some services, generally located overseas, offer illegally pirated feeds for a fee, and should always be avoided. Other services, such as the well respected Hulu (hulu.com) legitimately offer thousands of already broadcast and older TV shows and movies provided by the networks and movie studios that are either advertiser supported (for free), or without commercials (by subscription, sometimes for a fee).

One service that I frequently use is TV-Fox, or its sister product, LIVE TV. The selection of channels on LIVE TV is virtually identical to those on TV-Fox. Alternatively, for those who do not want to download a toolbar or plug-in, these same channels can be viewed

directly online at watch-live-online.tv. It may be necessary to have Windows Media Player (or some similar compatible player) installed to view these stations. Most of the stations can either be viewed in a small window, or opened to full screen by double clicking on the video.

TV-Fox is a free plug-in for the Firefox browser (toolbar.tv-fox.com), and currently offers "2780 Live TV Channels sorted by country & category, the TV-FOX allows you to watch thousands of TV channels freely available on the internet." It is installed as a short toolbar, and includes a pair of directories that display the available channels. The first icon (purple) opens a directory containing a listing of about 100 countries; moving the mouse cursor over the country displays the currently available TV stations that stream online. If the selected station has a circle icon with a right arrow (triangle), that indicates that the selected station is always online; if the icon is a small clock, that means that the station is only available for specific hours.

The viewer should be aware of the time differences around the world, as what is prime time in the mid-east, for example, may be the early morning here. While I enjoy watching live foreign TV, I am not capable of understanding all of the languages, so I prefer the English language stations available in many of the countries listed. Under the listing for the United States is approximately 60 stations, all but a few being broadcast in English. These US based stations include such well known stations as Bloomberg Business, CBN, CNBC, Home Shopping Network (HSN), Fox News, MSNBC, NASA, NBC News, and several prominent local stations from a variety of cities.



The second icon (green) on the TV-Fox toolbar opens a directory based on genre. Categories include sports, news, business, music, kids, lifestyle, government, religious, education, shopping and weather, as well as a listing of about 50 live web-cams from around the world. Personally, I am a news and information junkie, and spend significant time on the news listing, which has live news feeds from about three dozen news sources from about 20 different countries, many of which are in English.

Sports fanatics may enjoy the sports selection, consisting of 28 stations from about a dozen countries. While I may not understand the announcer on many of these sports stations, the live or recorded sports events are often quite understandable to the viewer.

Music fans would appreciate the almost 50 TV stations that stream music. While many of the music stations are from France, Italy, Poland, and India, the viewer will almost always find music of interest. I have found that many of the foreign music stations which play their native music are very intriguing and entertaining.

Investing and business is of universal interest, and TV-Fox offers 19 business channels, including Bloomberg-UK, Bloomberg-Asia, and Bloomberg-USA. Those stations, along with CNBC and NBR can provide business and economic information for the majority of investors and others interested in business.

Sometimes we need content to entertain our children, or the child in us adults. The kids section contains a dozen channels, three of which are American, two of which are cartoons. My favorite kids channel is the "Classical Cartoons" which shows old time cartoons, many of which are from the 30's and 40's, most of which today's children would not otherwise have an opportunity to view.

There are 22 movie channels listed, of which eight are from the US, and include sci-fi, comedy classics, thrillers, and WSTV (White Springs TV, also known as "The Golden Age of Movies Channel") which is a Florida and Oregon based network that streams old movies over satellite and on the air in about a dozen cities, as well as online. If I feel like watching a movie stream on my computer, I can usually find something of interest on one of these movie channels.

The two dozen religious TV channels that stream over the internet cover almost all of the world's major religions, in a variety of languages. There are 27 educa-

tional channels available, many from major universities around the world, including Texas A&M's KAMU-TV.

Shoppers may like to see what the 22 shopping channels offer, including the six American shopping channels. Some of the products promoted on the foreign shopping channels are very interesting, despite the frequent language barrier; the foreign sales techniques are often very entertaining as well. The 14 weather channels, including nine American weather channels provide more weather information than most viewers can utilize.

Sometimes it is interesting just to see a live webcam from some notable location. The live webcams available on TV-Fox include such diverse places as Times Square (NYC), the Hogs Breath Saloon in Florida, France, Germany, Kathmandu (Nepal), Israel, Japan, the Netherlands, Poland, Russia, Switzerland, and other US locations.

While not a complete substitute for local TV and the domestic cable and satellite services, there is enough free TV available online to entertain and inform almost everybody.

(Keeping Up...Continued from page 8)

Only one small problem with this "Harvey Homeowner" project. Seems my stomach switched off three breakers while I was standing on a stool in front of the breaker panel, working on routing the new romex cable. I sat down at my computer after completing the project, and it would bootup, I'd log in, and the machine would shut down. The UPS didn't have much capacity left. Not surprising since the breaker for that circuit had been turned off for several hours. I'd also shut off the breaker for the bedroom outlets. When I turned it back on, I discovered that the alarm clock needed a new backup battery. But it was a week later, when I plugged in the electric snow shovel and it wouldn't do a thing, that I discovered I'd switched off the garage outlets, too! Time to follow that New Year's diet resolution.



While Wandering the Web

By Dave Gerber, APCUG Director (dgerber@apcug.net)

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Free Templates for Printing Labels and Business Cards in an Instant

autofillPDF-Labels 1.0 is a site that's got tons of free, fillable PDF label templates for U.S. letter-size label sheets. Fill your information in one field and watch as your information automatically fills all label fields within that sheet! All you need to do is download and open up a template, fill a label field, and hit the Tab button on your keyboard! Print your labels in an instant.

The site offers a complete collection of basic formatting templates for address, shipping, mailing, and CD labels as well as file folder, round, name badge, business card, and all popular Avery label sizes are available — among many more choices! PDF is an ISO International Standard: ISO 32000-1. PDF Reader Required.

Four types of auto fill basic formatting templates for labels and business cards are available:

1. Autofill all label cells with the same information in seconds.
2. For Shipping/Mailing labels, autofill information for FROM and TO — excellent for multiple shipments to one address.
3. For Shipping/Mailing labels, autofill information for FROM & insert manually different information for TO.
4. Autofill image insert and text for popular size labels and business cards.

Also, there are templates for manually inserting different information into each label cell.

Check it out!

<http://www.worldlabel.com/Pages/autofillpdf-labels.htm>
<http://tinyurl.com/56wnwk>

Washington Area Computer User Group

WACUG Meetings will be held on March 19 & April 16 from 12:30 to 3:30 pm. 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.

Topics

March - Digital Photography

April - Hard Drive Organization & Best Backup Plan
 (Gene Barlow webinar)

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/>



Washington Area User Group Partners

Working Together For Our Members

NCTCUG.ORG WACUG.ORG OPCUG.ORG

In Memoriam

NCTCUG members and friends:

John L. Keys, long time member and director of our computer group, passed away on Friday, January 7th. He was also a member of our partner user group, WACUG. We all appreciated John's technical knowledge, troubleshooting skills, and especially his humor. John was instrumental in selecting the projection screen used in conjunction with our computer video projector, and more recently consulted on the acquisition of the jointly-purchased audio mixer for use with webinar presentations. He died at home from metastatic melanoma.

In keeping with our long-time practice, the club will accept contributions for a memorial donation to be made in John's name.

If you wish to contribute, you may send a check, payable to Paul L. Howard (Memo: John Keys' Memorial), to me at 12811 Turberville Lane, Oak Hill, VA 20171-2219]

Condolences Address:

Mrs. Margaret D. Keys
7726 Carleigh Parkway
Springfield, VA 22152-1307

From Washington Post death notice:

<http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/washingtonpost/obituary.aspx?n=john-l-keys&pid=14766378>

JOHN L. KEYS

On Friday, January 7, 2011, husband of Margaret D. Keys. Father of Lloyd Keys and Will Keys; father-in-law of Rachael Keys; brother of Elizabeth Williams; brother-in-law of Bob Williams; grandfather of John and Marshall Keys. Memorial services will be held at Messiah United Methodist Church, 6215 Rolling Rd., Springfield, VA 22152 on Saturday, January 15 where the family will receive friends from 12 to 1 p.m. with memorial services at 1 p.m. Interment private. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Messiah United Methodist Church Organ Fund.

Paul Howard, for NCTCUG's Board of Directors

NCTCUG Information

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Article Submissions

Articles, helpful hints, and other items of interest to readers of the NCTCUG Journal are always welcome and will be published as soon as possible after submission. Priority is given to members' contributions. Articles may be submitted in MS Word (.doc) or Rich Text Format (.rtf) or plain unformatted text (C/R only at end of paragraphs, no indents preferred) via email to the editor nctcugj@verizon.net

Membership Policy

The National Capital Technology and Computer Users Group, Inc. is a non-profit [501(c)(3)] organization founded in 1978 to educate users of all Tandy computers and MS-DOS compatible computers. Membership dues are \$25.00 (U.S.Funds) per year, with a \$5 surcharge for international mail. Membership in NCTCUG includes membership in all SIGs, access to the BBS and software libraries, and subscription to the Journal published 8 times per year. Applications may be obtained at any club meeting, by downloading from the BBS, by calling one of the officers or board members, or by writing to the club. A sample newsletter, membership application and related information may be obtained by enclosing \$1 and mailing your request to Jim Rhodes, 201 S. Kensington Street, Arlington VA 22204.

Advertisement Policy

Members' advertisements: Ads are accepted from members for non-commercial purposes at no charge. Copy should be sent to the Editor in the same format as article submissions. Commercial Advertisements: Ads are accepted from commercial advertisers at the rate of \$40 per full page, per appearance, with discounts for multiple insertions. Smaller ads are priced accordingly. Payment for ads must be made in advance of appearance. Advertisers must supply a permanent address and telephone number to the editor.

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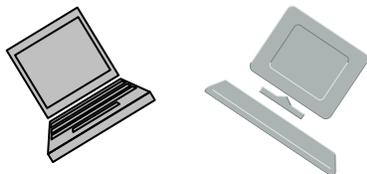
COMPUCENTER BBS

Is no longer in operation. It has been replaced by the 'compucenter' mailing list at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/compucenter/>

If you are moving

Please send your change of address to the club address as soon as possible to avoid missing issues.

Thank You!



Difficulties With An Outlook Patch

By Lorrin Garson, NCTCUG

I came across a substantial problem with Outlook 2007 resulting from an update from Microsoft (KB2412171) that was installed in December. Specifically I had trouble sending and receiving e-mail from my Gmail accounts and I noticed a very substantial degradation in performance when switching between Mail, Contacts, Calendar, Tasks, etc. within Outlook.

It turns out that the update KB2412171 is defective. See the official Microsoft Blog <http://blogs.office.com/b/microsoft-outlook/archive/2010/12/17/issues-with-the-recent-update-for-outlook-2007.aspx> [<http://tinyurl.com/4kn8zzd>] for a description of the problem and a solution, i.e., how to remove this update. Microsoft recommends removing KB2412171.

March/April 2011

1st Wed. (3/2, 4/6)
7 p.m. General Meeting

2nd Wed. (3/9, 4/13)
Online-Only Webinar using Skype
for information see club page at
<http://www.nctcug.org/webinarsig.html>

4th Wed (3/23, 4/27)
7 p.m. Internet SIG

3rd Monday (4/18; none in March)
7 p.m. Board of Directors

Meetings are at **Carlin Hall**, 5711 S. 4th St.,
Arlington VA: East off of Carlin Springs Rd, just
south of Arlington Blvd/Route 50. See website for
directions to post-meeting pizza gathering.



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