

# ComputerEdge™ Online — 08/06/10



## This issue: Windows 7 Update

Released to rave reviews in October 2009, how is Windows 7 doing now?

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A black and red advertisement for Castle Access. The text reads: "If you're running out of power, space or HVAC, contact Castle Access". Below that, in a red banner: "SAN DIEGO'S EXCLUSIVE BANDWIDTH NEUTRAL COLOCATION FACILITY". At the bottom: "castle ACCESS Enterprise Data Centers" and "CLICK HERE TO SEE INSIDE THE CASTLE".

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A blue and white advertisement for CD/DVD Duplication. The text reads: "Affordable Duplication Services CD/DVD Duplication". Below that: "Direct-to-Disc Printing Case Inserts, Packaging Audio/Video/Film/LP's to Disc" and "619-462-0702".

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## [Wally Wang's Apple Farm](#) by Wally Wang

The Mouse vs. the Magic Trackpad

Before dismissing Apple's new touch-gesture Magic Trackpad, mouse users should try one for themselves. Also, a pro-Microsoft blogger loves her iPad; Android's lack of a vetting process may lead to Trojan horse apps; streaming video is the future of content delivery; Microsoft is late to the tablet PC party; and Safari now offers extensions for customizing your browser.

## [Linux Lessons: Text Editors in Linux](#) by Pete Choppin

Text editors still remain a critical tool in the hands of a Linux user.

GUI schmooey! For Linux uses, it's all about the text editor—small and simple enough to use for modifications of configuration files needed to run different services.

## [Rob, The ComputerTutor: Tech Solutions with Microsoft Word](#) by

Rob Spahitz

Mail Merge 2

Mail Merge typically merges a document and a database. This week, Rob focuses on creating and setting up a document to use in a Mail Merge.

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### [EdgeWord: A Note from the Publisher](#) by Jack Dunning

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The newer smartphone and tablet markets are just beginning to shake out, with Apple and Android devices leading the pack. But traditional computing will tend to keep doing what it's always been doing.

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Computer and Internet tips, plus comments on the articles and columns.

"Microsoft Office Word 2003," "Windows 7 for Free," "XP Programs Under Windows 7," "Not Convinced"

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## Digital Dave

“Digital Dave answers your tech questions.” by *Digital Dave*

A primer on bringing in Web page content from other sources; did a Windows 7 upgrade cause audio problems on a laptop?; a reader is frustrated by Web sites that don't date their information.

*I'm interested in Web page design and found the comments in Jack Dunning's Edgeward column on placing graphics on a different server interesting. Any chance one of the ComputerEdge contributors could do an article on placing material from different servers into the same Web page? Or could any of the readers point me [toward] a good source for learning about the ins and outs of doing this?*

*Bill Schieb  
Fort Collins, CO*

Dear Bill,

I'll take a shot at pointing you in the right direction.

The fact is that Web pages are often composed of content from various sources. YouTube ([www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)) is a good example of a service that you can put into your Web page. Go to any video and click the <embed> link just on the right and below the video. The required code for accessing the video appears in a box just below. If you copy and paste this code into your HTML document, the video will be in your Web page.

To get a better understanding of how you can bring in content from other sources, you should get an HTML language reference—either online or at a bookstore. Many of the tags require URLs for specific types of objects, such as images—the <IMG> tag. By specifying the location of the image with the SRC=" " parameter, you can add a graphic from anywhere on the Internet.

In the case of *ComputerEdge*, all the content is distributed over *ComputerEdge* sites to optimize bandwidth utilization. However, if you include material from other servers (not your own), this is called both bandwidth stealing and/or copyright infringement. Be sure that you have permission to include this content in your Web site. YouTube—and many others—encourage the sharing because they can include their own advertising.

Digital Dave

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*Dear Digital Dave,*

*I just upgraded to Windows 7 on a Toshiba Satellite with RealTek high-def audio. Now, with the volume at 100 percent I can barely hear it. I have tried all the volume settings I can find with no luck. What gives?*

*Phil  
San Diego*

Dear Phil,

There are a number of things that could be causing audio problems. That fact that you are hearing something means that the volume is turned on and the device is working.

The first thing that I always check is that the hardware volume knob is turned up. I know that this sounds stupid, but it is a common problem. We get so used to doing everything through software controls that we often forget that there may be a hardware control. (I believe that your computer has a volume control on the right side.) I've known people to take computers with no audio in for service only to find the hardware dial is turned down.

If you know that this isn't the problem, and since you have checked all the volume settings (including the different levels in the Mixer selected when you click on the speaker icon in the system tray), you should check the Sound setup window. Type "sound" into the "Search programs and files" field of the Start Menu and select Sound from the Control Panel list.

Under the Playback tab, you can select devices, right-click and Test. This should help you to isolate any problems. There are also settings in the other tabs that could affect playback. Try various settings and adjustments to see which will have an effect, if any.

The last place that you may have a volume adjustment is in the individual program that you're using to play sound. You will need to be sure that the sound is turned on and up.

Digital Dave

*Dear Digital Dave,*

*Part of looking for work is researching companies using the Internet. It would be helpful to know the date a particular Web page about a company was created. I think this was covered in a ComputerEdge article years ago, but I haven't been able to figure out the right words to put into the archive search. Can you offer a suggestion?*

*Mike  
Denver*

Dear Mike,

One of the most annoying aspects of many Web pages is that they don't bother to date the articles. Therefore, you could be reading material that is many years old and never know it. This is frustrating when you're looking for the most current information. However, there are ways to find dates for Web pages.

There are two types of dates that are useful. The first is the date the page was last modified—theoretically telling you how up-to-date the material is. You can get this by typing (or pasting) in the address field (where the URL of the page appears) and entering the following:

```
javascript:alert(document.lastModified)
```

A window will pop up with a date and time similar to Figure 1.

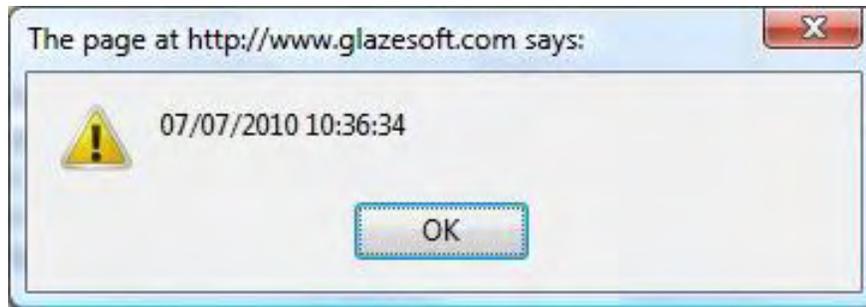


Figure 1. The date and time this Web page was modified.

This is great if it is a static page that was modified when the article was posted. However if, like the *ComputerEdge* site, the Web page is dynamically generated each time it is loading, this code will offer only the most recent loading time.

Your next best bet is to use the date that Google first uncatalogued the page. If you add to the end of the Google search line the following:

```
&as_qdr=y15
```

the date of the last crawling of the page by the Google bot that found changes made will be listed at the beginning of the item text (see Figure 2). While this may not be the exact date of origin, it may be reasonably close for the purpose of establishing timeliness. Yet, even this may be way off if even a small change (irrelevant for your purposes) is made.

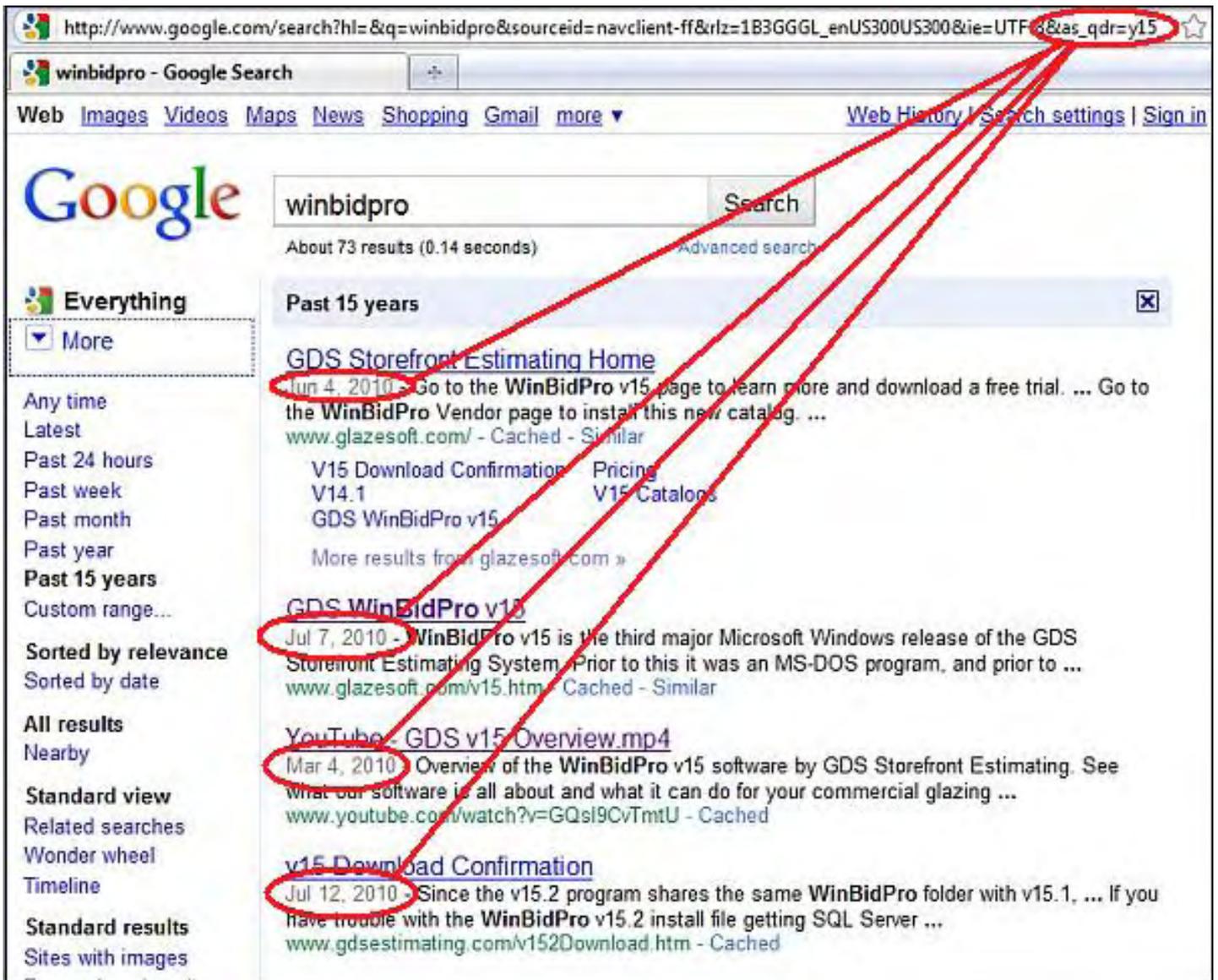


Figure 2. Adding &as\_qdr=y15 to the Google search URL will add dates to the listings.

None of this is a substitute for Web sites that actually tell you when they published an article. If I can't find dates on information, I usually move on to other, more professional sites.

Digital Dave

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## Windows 7 Update: How Is It Doing?

“After the rave reviews and positive word of mouth, how is the OS faring?” by Andrea Dunning

Windows 7 is Microsoft's new flagship operating system. Eagerly anticipated, it was released to rave reviews and positive word of mouth. The question now is, nine months in, how is it doing? Is the public still in love?

Windows 7 is Microsoft's new flagship operating system. Eagerly anticipated, it was released to rave reviews and positive word of mouth. The question now is, nine months in, how is it doing? Is the public still in love? Is upgrading worth it?



Figure 1. Operating system market share, June 2010.

As of June, the number of people running Windows 7 has nearly caught up to those running Windows Vista. Windows XP is still the most prevalent operating system, but Windows 7 has already nibbled away a fifth of Vista's pre-launch market share in the nine months it has been out, and the two are now neck in neck for second place. Upgrading from Vista to Windows 7 is much less of a hassle than upgrading from XP, as you're able to keep files, settings and programs. Not that a clean install isn't a good thing from time to time, but backing up all your files to some sort of external media and tracking down those program installation discs takes some effort. This may have some effect on

the number of people upgrading from XP to Windows 7. See Operating System Market Share ([www.netmarketshare.com/operating-system-market-share.aspx?qprid=10](http://www.netmarketshare.com/operating-system-market-share.aspx?qprid=10)) at [Netmarketshare.com](http://Netmarketshare.com).

Windows 7 continues to get good reviews from places such as CNET ([reviews.cnet.com/windows/microsoft-windows-7-professional/4505-3672\\_7-33704140.html?tag=contentMain;contentBody#reviewPage1](http://reviews.cnet.com/windows/microsoft-windows-7-professional/4505-3672_7-33704140.html?tag=contentMain;contentBody#reviewPage1)), but at the same time the question remains: Will this be enough to drag people away from XP? Considering the age of Windows XP, the fact that there is any sort of discussion about whether or not to upgrade reveals something about the way computers are advancing. I remember how momentous it was going from Windows 3.1 to 98. No longer having to run Windows from DOS, and the colors! The programs were only six years apart, versus the eight for XP and Windows 7. The same impressive leaps in technology just aren't visible. Windows 7 won't transform your PC experience, but instead incrementally improves existing functionality and adds in a few new tricks.



Figure 2. Pinning programs to the taskbar.

Your average day-to-day computing isn't going to change much, though a number of operations have been improved. File sharing, particularly streaming media, is much better integrated into the file structure. Searching for files is also way easier. Being able to pin programs to the taskbar for easy access is very convenient, and also an easy way to set up a computer for computer-impaired relatives. With all the important programs pinned to the taskbar, my mother never has to search the Start menu or her cluttered desktop for the icon she's looking for (or call me when she can't locate it). Everything is right there, always in sight.

Windows 7 also incorporates a number of new features in the Aero desktop ([windows.microsoft.com/en-US/windows7/products/features/aero](http://windows.microsoft.com/en-US/windows7/products/features/aero)), many of which will need to be taught to users. Aero Peek lets you see the desktop and quickly open and close all windows, but for a lot of users it is just going to be a feature that unexpectedly turns all your windows transparent every once in a while. Aero Shake, clearing off all windows but the one you shake with the mouse, is a total gimmick. Other features are more useful. If you want to look at two windows at the same time, you no longer have to carefully adjust the window size in order to make them both fit. Now you can just drag them to either side of the screen, which automatically re-sizes them to take up half the view space.

My favorite new feature in Windows 7 is being able to automatically back up your files to a network computer. Unfortunately, I have Windows 7 Home Premium edition, which does not include that feature. Touchscreen support is also a nice bonus—if you're lucky enough to have a touchscreen.

Businesses seem to be a little tentative about making the upgrade to Windows 7. According to calculations done by Woody Leonhard over at InfoWorld, the majority of Windows 7 licenses purchased have been for private use ([www.infoworld.com/t/windows/do-the-math-175-million-copies-windows-7-isnt-impressive-707?source=footer](http://www.infoworld.com/t/windows/do-the-math-175-million-copies-windows-7-isnt-impressive-707?source=footer)). The majority of businesses run Windows XP, and that looks like it will still be the case in the near future. I can see two big factors working against Windows 7. The first would be Windows 7-incompatible business software. Companies running older versions of software, or even custom-designed programs, may run into compatibility issues. Most companies don't upgrade their software annually, so these issues are going to be hindering Windows 7 for years to come. Sure, you could run the program on a computer with Windows 7 through Windows XP mode, but when XP still works, why?

## Common Issues

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### Firewalls

Sage Peachtree and its database, Pervasive, can be mistakenly identified as an intrusion threat by many firewall and anti-virus programs. If not addressed properly, this may cause installation to fail or Peachtree may not start or run properly.

### Microsoft Windows 7

On October 22, 2009, Microsoft launched the new Windows 7 operating system. Peachtree 2010 SRT and Sage Peachtree 2011 are compatible with Windows 7. Prior releases, such as Peachtree 2008 and Peachtree 2009, will install and run on Windows 7; however, there may be areas of functionality that will not operate as intended. For example, you will not be able to utilize e-mail and PDF functions within older releases. Please visit the Windows 7® page for more information and to learn about Windows Vista® as well. Also note that currently supported releases, up to and including 2009, will be supported on Windows 7 provided the issue is not directly related to the Windows 7 environment.

Figure 3. Older versions of business software have compatibility issues with Windows 7.

The second issue is, of course, money. Upgrading operating systems costs money. You've got to buy the OS, possibly buy new hardware, and buy newer versions of any programs that are incompatible with the new OS. That doesn't even take into account the human costs. Someone has to upgrade all those computers and, if the jump in technology is large enough, employees may need training. Businesses tend to avoid unnecessary expenses at the best of times, and with the economy being the way it is, upgrading before it is strictly necessary looks even less appealing. Undoubtedly, as much as their IT departments would like to upgrade, a lot of companies will probably put it off until 2014, when support ends for Windows XP ([support.microsoft.com/lifecycle/?LN=en-gb&C2=1173](http://support.microsoft.com/lifecycle/?LN=en-gb&C2=1173)).

Windows 7 is a good operating system; it has some useful new features and a nice design aesthetic. Upgrading to Windows 7 when you upgrade your computer is definitely a good decision. The OS has all sorts of little conveniences to make computing smoother and more instinctual. However, for the average user, Windows 7 isn't drastically different from the previous versions of Windows. If you're not upgrading your computer, I'd side with the millions of XP and Vista users who remain with their old operating systems. The new OS is nice, but there really isn't any rush.

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Andrea Dunning is a digital cartographer, AutoCAD drafter, World of Warcraft player extraordinaire and blogger with a Master's in Education. She also serves as tech support for her less computer-savvy family members.

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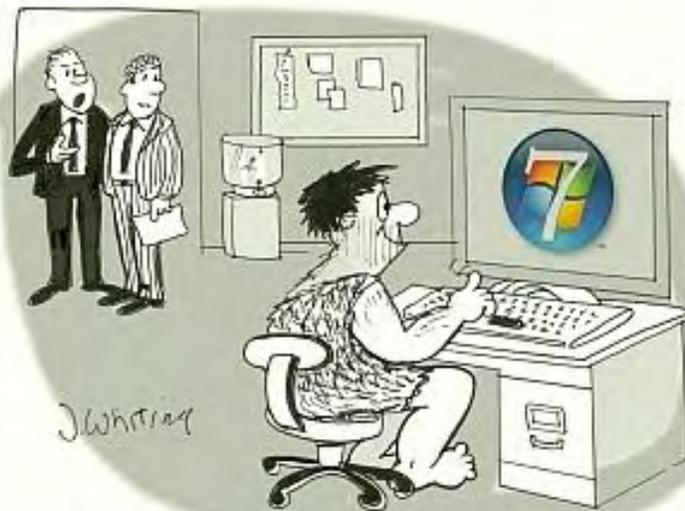
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## Are You Still Using Windows XP?

“Many businesses are in no rush to upgrade.” by Jack Dunning

Many businesses are sticking with Windows XP because it is working for them and they wanted to avoid the Vista fiasco. Now they are in no rush to upgrade. But when they do, they are likely to choose Windows 7.

I've heard it quoted that 74 percent of businesses with Windows computers are still using Windows XP. If it weren't for the intervening stint of Windows Vista—the target of almost universal criticism—this would not be considered unusual since the latest version, Windows 7, has been widely available for less than a year. Windows XP has been dubbed “the operating system that refused to die.” Microsoft has relented and extended the Windows 7 downgrade to XP option to 18 months from October 2009—the scheduled date for the release of Windows 7 Service Pack 1 (SP1). This number of XP computers represents a huge potential market for Microsoft, and it would like to figure out a way to speed up the conversion.



**“I would have thought that Fred would be among the last to upgrade from Windows XP to Windows 7.”**

customers.

So what's the hold up? It's the economy, Stupid! Businesses don't want to commit to capital expenditures when they don't know what's around corner. They may wish to upgrade to Windows 7, but in most cases that also means buying new computers. The XP machines are still working, so businesses can hold on a little longer. However, the average age of these machines is 4.4 years—the longest that any type of computer has ever been kept alive as a group. In the next few years, many of these computers will die and be replaced. When they are replaced, it most likely will be with Windows 7 machines. But for now there is too much uncertainty in the economy to force the issue. As long as this government keeps forcing through dubious legislation—which nobody has read or understands—in such a ham-handed fashion, no one will feel comfortable about the future. Regardless of whether you think the current Washington-legislated changes in our economy are good or bad, the massive ambiguity injected by these sweeping changes has shattered confidence—and the economy runs on confidence.

Should You Upgrade to Windows 7?

I've always advocated that as long as a computer is doing what you want it to do, there is little reason to change. I feel that way about Windows XP. I don't begrudge anyone who continues to use it. In fact, I have one XP computer—which I purchased during the Vista dark ages—that performs very specific routine (yet important) tasks for me. I'm not motivated to upgrade it to Windows 7 because I would not get any added benefit. At the same time, I would not purchase a new computer today with Windows XP on it.

I've written hundreds of articles and columns on Windows and have spent the last nine months almost exclusively on Windows 7. I probably know more than most about the similarities and differences between the various Windows versions. I still use Vista computers as well as Windows 7—and the one XP machine I mentioned above. When any of the computers die and need replacing, it will be with a Windows 7 computer. While I would consider most of the changes and new features in Windows 7 an improvement, how important they are is debatable. If you never use Windows Media Center then those changes will not be significant to you. The fact that the new e-mail program, Window Live Mail, is account oriented rather than Inbox oriented will be lost on people with only one e-mail address. Combining program tabs with Quick Launch buttons may not impress you. However, there are a couple of features in Windows 7 that could make you never want to go back to XP. (See this column from last October for an overall comparison of Windows XP and Window 7.

## More Speed

While testing has shown that Windows 7 offers about the same operational speed on the same hardware as Windows XP, both do better than Vista. The primary way that you will get improved performance with Windows 7 is with the newer, faster hardware that you will buy. I don't see much point in upgrading from XP to Windows 7 on the same hardware, unless there are some specific Windows 7 features that you will need.

I'm impressed with how fast my Windows 7 computer boots up—especially compared to the Vista computers. When I restart a Vista computer, I usually go off to do something else while it's loading. I don't have that kind of free time with Windows 7.

## Easier to Find Things

One of the features first introduced in Windows Vista and improved in Windows 7 is the Start Menu search capability. (Many of the columns discussing Vista search capabilities, although they are dated, continue to apply to Windows 7.) Files and programs in key folders are automatically indexed, creating a very fast search based upon any word or name. Just type into the field at the bottom of the Start Menu and you will very quickly get a list of matching programs and files—including your e-mails. You will not only find file names, but it also searches the text of files.

Even better in Windows 7, if you're troubleshooting a problem, that same search field will help you to get to the correct utilities by offering suggestions (see Figure 1).



Figure 1. A search on the term "hard drive" yields some options.

## Favorites

I first started using Favorites in Windows Explorer with Windows Vista. Each week I changed one of the Favorites shortcuts to the folder for the new issue. This is one of the best ways to maintain quick access to the folders and files while keeping all I need at hand all of the time.

## Libraries

Windows 7 has added Libraries for tracking collections of similar types of files across many different devices and computers—whether music, photos, videos or documents. Libraries give you one location for all similar files—even if they are on different drives and computers.

## HomeGroup

The new HomeGroup feature is all about sharing with other Windows 7 computers. Entire Libraries can be easily shared with other members of the HomeGroup regardless of the original location.

## Improved Tools

Many of the traditional tools continuing in Windows 7 have been improved including WordPad and the old Paint program. They have more features and are a little more intuitive. There are new tools such as the Snipping Tool (originally introduced in Windows Vista), which can make screen capture easier. Even the calculator is more powerful.

Ultimately, other than the cost of upgrading in time and money, the major sticking point in making the leap to Windows 7 from XP is old incompatible software. Windows 7 Professional and above includes the Windows XP compatibility mode, which is actually a free virtual machine that runs its own copy of XP in a separate window. My experience is that most XP software runs fine in Windows 7, although the older the program the more likely there will be a problem. The only way to find out is to test it on a Windows 7 machine. If there is an issue, then it is better to know it now, so an alternative can be found (or developed). The problem is not likely to go away on its own, but Windows XP certainly will.

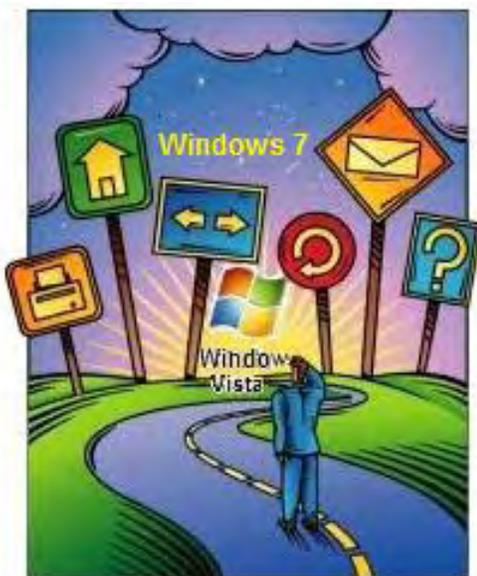
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Jack is the publisher of *ComputerEdge* Magazine. He's been with the magazine since first issue on May 16, 1983. Back then, it was called *The Byte Buyer*. His Web site is [www.computoredge.com](http://www.computoredge.com). He can be reached at [ceeditor@computoredge.com](mailto:ceeditor@computoredge.com)

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# Windows Tips and Tricks

## Windows Tips and Tricks

“Creating a System Repair Disc” by Jack Dunning

While Windows 7 is one of the most stable operating systems around, it is a good idea to be prepared for a future problem by having an alternative method for booting and repairing your system.

While Windows 7 is one of the most stable operating systems when compared to all of the other versions of Windows, it is always a good idea to be prepared for a future problem by having an alternative method for booting and repairing your system. Even if you have original system discs, it's a good idea to make a system repair disc just in case you lose or damage the originals. That way you will be able to boot and use recovery tools for repairing problems.

Fortunately, this is simple to do in Windows 7. Type "repair," "disc," or "create" in the search field of the Start Menu and select "Create a System Repair Disc" from the Programs list at the top of the menu. The program window will open (see Figure 1). Put a blank DVD disc in your DVD writer and select the appropriate drive. Click "Create disc."



Figure 1. Create a system repair disc in Windows 7.

There is nothing more to do until the disc is complete (see Figure 2), at which point you label it and put it in a safe place—one where you will actually be able to find it when you need it.



Figure 2. Create a system repair disc completed in Windows 7.

When you do need the disc, put it in the DVD drive and boot from it. (You may need to enter the BIOS, which means hitting F11 for the boot menu, or another designated key such as DEL for changing the boot order in Setup, to select the CD/DVD drive for booting.) Then you will have the standard repair/restore tools available. See Figure 3.



Figure 3. System Recovery Options in Windows 7.

This is a quick process for Windows 7 users. If you haven't already done it, do it now!

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Jack is the publisher of *ComputerEdge* Magazine. He's been with the magazine since first issue on May 16, 1983. Back then, it was called *The Byte Buyer*. His Web site is [www.computoredge.com](http://www.computoredge.com). He can be reached at [ceeditor@computoredge.com](mailto:ceeditor@computoredge.com)

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## Wally Wang's Apple Farm

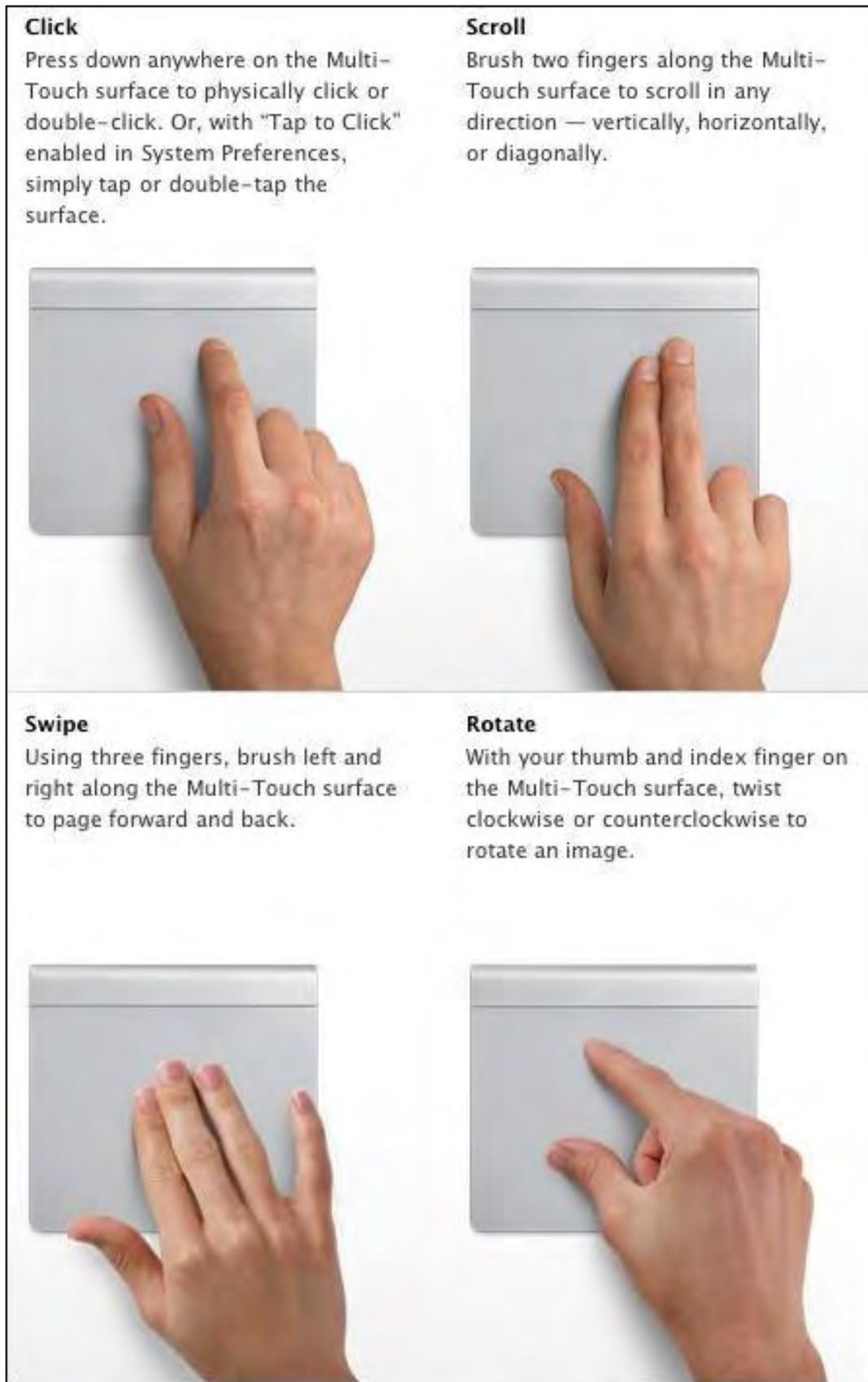
### Wally Wang's Apple Farm

“The Mouse vs. the Magic Trackpad” by Wally Wang

Before dismissing Apple's new touch-gesture Magic Trackpad, mouse users should try one for themselves. Also, a pro-Microsoft blogger loves her iPad; Android's lack of a vetting process may lead to Trojan horse apps; streaming video is the future of content delivery; Microsoft is late to the tablet PC party; and Safari now offers extensions for customizing your browser.

For some odd reason, people are extremely resistant to change, even if changing can directly benefit them. Given a choice between changing and enjoying new benefits, or refusing to change and continuing to suffer, most people would rather suffer than change because at least they're familiar with the circumstances responsible for their suffering.

One of the latest examples of this resistance to change has occurred with Apple's new Magic Trackpad. The basic idea behind this trackpad is to duplicate the trackpad features from Apple's laptops and provide the same touch-gesture trackpad for desktop Macintosh computers.



**Click**

Press down anywhere on the Multi-Touch surface to physically click or double-click. Or, with "Tap to Click" enabled in System Preferences, simply tap or double-tap the surface.

**Scroll**

Brush two fingers along the Multi-Touch surface to scroll in any direction — vertically, horizontally, or diagonally.

**Swipe**

Using three fingers, brush left and right along the Multi-Touch surface to page forward and back.

**Rotate**

With your thumb and index finger on the Multi-Touch surface, twist clockwise or counterclockwise to rotate an image.

Figure 1. The Magic Trackpad provides a touch surface for desktop Macintosh computers.

The Magic Trackpad is a \$69 option, yet many Macintosh users are already hotly debating the trackpad's usefulness. On one side are people who insist that the mouse is the most accurate way to control a pointer on the screen and who can't see a need for the Magic Trackpad.

On the other side of the argument, there are Macintosh users who embrace the idea of using the Magic Trackpad as a supplement to the mouse or even as a replacement altogether. Since the mouse (even Apple's latest Magic Mouse) can't support all the touch gestures available on laptop Macintoshes, these users are eager to use these same touch gestures to control their desktop Macintosh using the Magic Trackpad.

Of course, no one is forcing people to choose between the mouse and the trackpad. The iMac still comes with the Magic Mouse, but you can purchase the Magic Trackpad as an optional accessory. Yet, some Macintosh users are insistent that the mouse is the only useful input device and refuse to consider the Magic Trackpad.

Unlike the trackpad found on laptops, the Magic Trackpad is much larger, which makes it more comfortable and easier to use than the minuscule trackpads found on laptops. Anyone frustrated by the physical limitations of a laptop trackpad may find that the Magic Trackpad's size makes it more inviting.

Perhaps the main reason for so many people's resistance to the Magic Trackpad may be their own familiarity with the mouse. However, if you look back at history, you'll find that many people once resisted the idea of a mouse for controlling a computer.

Noted computer columnist John Dvorak said in 1984 ([tech.fortune.cnn.com/2009/01/12/jan-1984-how-critics-reviewed-the-mac](http://tech.fortune.cnn.com/2009/01/12/jan-1984-how-critics-reviewed-the-mac)) that "The Macintosh uses an experimental pointing device called a 'mouse'. There is no evidence that people want to use these things."

Is the resistance to Apple's Magic Trackpad just a repetition of people's resistance to the mouse way back in 1984? Before dismissing the Magic Trackpad, mouse users should try one for themselves. Ignoring the initial awkwardness that learning anything new entails, there's a good chance that after seeing the benefits of the Magic Trackpad, die-hard mouse users may discover for themselves just how the Magic Trackpad might actually help them be more productive with their Macintosh.

## A Pro-Microsoft Blogger Loves Her iPad

Mary Jo Foley, a longtime Microsoft supporter, claims she has avoided Apple products her entire life because she could always find another alternative. However, she couldn't find an alternative to the iPad, so she reluctantly bought one and discovered that she loves it ([www.zdnet.com/blog/microsoft/i-confess-i-bought-an-ipad-and-so-far-i-love-it/6912](http://www.zdnet.com/blog/microsoft/i-confess-i-bought-an-ipad-and-so-far-i-love-it/6912)).

Although Mary Jo Foley spent most of her life using Microsoft products, she's not a mindless enthusiast of everything made by Microsoft. In a 2008 interview, Wired magazine asked Foley her opinion of Microsoft's Windows Mobile ([www.wired.com/techbiz/people/news/2008/05/Qanda\\_maryjofoley](http://www.wired.com/techbiz/people/news/2008/05/Qanda_maryjofoley)), to which she responded, "I've avoided it like the plague. Every time I get a new cell phone, everyone always warns me not to get Windows Mobile. The thing's awful."

What's surprising isn't that a pro-Microsoft person likes an Apple product, but that so many pro-Microsoft enthusiasts have avoided trying anything made by Apple for so long. Like Mary Jo Foley found out for herself, trying an Apple product simply means experimenting with all the choices available so you can pick the one that's best for you. By simply trying an Apple product, even the most die-hard anti-Apple critic might learn that using the best technology is always the best choice, even if it does come from Apple.

## Malware on Mobile Phones

One of the major philosophical differences between Android's app store and Apple's app store is how developers can

market their programs to mobile phone users. Apple takes a gatekeeper approach that forces developers to follow rigid guidelines, and even then Apple can arbitrarily reject apps for no apparent reason, such as Apple's curious refusal to allow Time Magazine to allow in-app purchasing ([news.cnet.com/8301-1023\\_3-20011993-93.html](http://news.cnet.com/8301-1023_3-20011993-93.html)), which Apple actually agreed upon before.

Political cartoonist Mark Fiore even struggled with Apple's approval process ([www.niemanlab.org/2010/04/mark-fiore-can-win-a-pulitzer-prize-but-he-cant-get-his-iphone-cartoon-app-past-apples-satire-police/](http://www.niemanlab.org/2010/04/mark-fiore-can-win-a-pulitzer-prize-but-he-cant-get-his-iphone-cartoon-app-past-apples-satire-police/)) before Apple finally relented under increasing public pressure. Rather than examine apps for their technical capability, Apple has often gone too far and rejected apps because of their content.

The advantage of Apple's app store vetting process is that it helps minimize (but not eliminate) the number of rogue and malicious apps that hackers could post for unsuspecting users to download. Unfortunately, this vetting process isn't available for Google's Android app store.

Back in January, a hacker had distributed a bank app that secretly stole people's passwords and account numbers ([www.sophos.com/blogs/gc/g/2010/01/11/banking-malware-android-marketplace/](http://www.sophos.com/blogs/gc/g/2010/01/11/banking-malware-android-marketplace/)). More recently, another hacker had posted an app disguised as a wallpaper selector ([www.gizmodo.com.au/2010/07/over-1m-android-users-details-compromised-thanks-to-malicious-app/](http://www.gizmodo.com.au/2010/07/over-1m-android-users-details-compromised-thanks-to-malicious-app/)). When people downloaded this app, it would send their private data, including voice mail passwords and SIM card information, to a site in China.

Much like Windows and Mac OS X allow anyone to post programs for anyone to download, Android's app store also lets anyone post apps for anyone to download. The advantage of Android's approach is that developers never risk a force like Apple arbitrarily rejecting their app. The disadvantage is that hackers can post malicious apps, and by the time people discover its true nature, it will be too late.

Such Trojan horse apps are thus more likely to appear on the Android app store than Apple's app store due to Android's lack of a vetting process. As a result, Android users (much like Windows users) need to exercise far more caution and take time to track the latest malware threat to avoid becoming the next victim, and even then it may not be enough to spot a malicious app in advance.

With the added freedom of Android comes the need for added responsibility from the user. With Apple, the tradeoff is limited freedom in return for greater security. Neither approach is perfect, so the choice is yours.

## The Future of Video Content

Only a handful of companies know how to adapt to change. Apple basically conquered the MP3 music player, smartphone and tablet markets not because it was necessarily the best, but because all of its competitors let Apple win without much of a fight until it was too late. Companies that wait tend to lose, while companies that foresee the future tend to thrive.

With Apple releasing its latest iMac models, people are complaining about the lack of Blu-ray drives. While this can be a problem for those who want to play Blu-ray movies in their Macs, the future of Blu-ray may have a short lifespan along with cable companies anyway.

Netflix, which pioneered the DVD-by-mail service, already sees that the future is video streaming. Rather than protect its currently lucrative DVD-by-mail business, Netflix is diving headfirst into offering streaming content ([news.cnet.com/8301-31001\\_3-20012024-261.html?tag=topStories2](http://news.cnet.com/8301-31001_3-20012024-261.html?tag=topStories2)), even though such streaming content will likely kill its DVD-by-mail service.

Streaming video content not only threatens DVDs and Blu-ray discs, but also cable companies. After all, why bother paying for a cable subscription service to get a handful of channels that you may not want when you can selectively choose the movies and TV shows you do want to watch and not pay a monthly fee to get it?

Streaming video content threatens both video rental services and cable companies. With streaming video content clearly the future compared to DVD or Blu-ray discs, the lack of Blu-ray drives on the Macintosh may seem short-sighted today, but may not matter in the long-term.

Now put Apple's new billion-dollar data center ([www.datacenterknowledge.com/archives/2009/06/03/its-official-apple-to-north-carolina/](http://www.datacenterknowledge.com/archives/2009/06/03/its-official-apple-to-north-carolina/)) together with rumors of a drastic upgrade to AppleTV ([www.wired.com/gadgetlab/2010/05/rumor-new-100-apple-tv-takes-aim-at-the-cloud/](http://www.wired.com/gadgetlab/2010/05/rumor-new-100-apple-tv-takes-aim-at-the-cloud/)), and you could have Apple's own video-streaming solution in the near future.

Steve Jobs is a major stockholder of Pixar and Disney, which gives Apple links to Hollywood. Streaming video offers major advantages over ordinary movie rentals (Blockbuster Video), so it's likely that the majority of all movies and TV shows will soon be "broadcast" through streaming video instead of through cable television networks.

Once television networks and cable companies lose their clout to act as gatekeepers for creating and distributing shows, the barrier for becoming a television producer drops as dramatically as MP3 files and audio editing software has dropped the barrier for individuals to become album producers and burn their own audio CDs.

What's clear is that streaming video is the future of Netflix and video content delivery. What's not so clear is how AppleTV and Apple's new \$1 billion dollar data center might fit into this growing market. Stay tuned. You may soon get the latest news the next time you stream video content to your computer.

## The Missing Windows Slate PC

In the beginning of this year, Steve Ballmer, Microsoft's CEO, touted Hewlett-Packard's Slate tablet as one of many Windows 7 designs that would soon be available. Fast forward seven months later and neither a Windows 7 tablet nor Hewlett-Packard's Slate is anywhere to be found.

Hewlett-Packard recently purchased Palm and plans to use Palm's webOS for its tablet, while devoting Windows 7 tablets to niche markets such as warehouse or hospital use. Dell plans to use Android for its upcoming Streak tablet/ phone combination. At a recent financial analyst meeting, Steve Ballmer admitted that Apple has sold more iPads than Microsoft would like ([www.electronista.com/articles/10/07/29/ballmer.says.ipad.sales.make.microsoft.uneasy/](http://www.electronista.com/articles/10/07/29/ballmer.says.ipad.sales.make.microsoft.uneasy/)), and that producing a Windows 7 tablet is Microsoft's number one priority.

Steve Ballmer even claimed that he's seen too many journalists "struggling to set up iPads for notes." Either these journalists are incompetent or they haven't figured out that you can just turn an iPad on and start using it to type on its virtual keyboard.

By attempting to criticize the iPad for a non-existent problem, Steve Ballmer's comment makes no sense to anyone who has actually used an iPad. Criticizing the iPad for a valid problem is fine, but to make up a problem indicates that Microsoft has to rely on slandering the iPad instead of providing a concrete answer to the iPad's growing dominance.

Given this type of response, when can we expect to see a Windows 7 tablet that can compete against the iPad? Perhaps Steve Ballmer should have really just admitted that the iPad caught Microsoft by surprise and it still hasn't figured out a strategy to compete against Apple.

Then again, the iPhone and even the iPod caught Microsoft by surprise, which indicates that a billion-dollar company

like Microsoft is somehow missing every opportunity that Apple somehow manages to exploit. If Microsoft continues its track record of missing out on markets that Apple quickly dominates, what does that say about the people running Microsoft?

\* \* \*

Apple recently released version 5.0.1 of Safari, where the most notable feature is the ability to install extensions to Safari ([extensions.apple.com/](http://extensions.apple.com/)) for accessing Twitter, eBay or Amazon, among other features.



Figure 2. Safari now offers extensions for customizing your browser.

If you're a fan of Firefox because of its numerous add-ons, try Safari and see if you like Safari's extensions better. For added security, Safari extensions are digitally signed by the developer and isolated in a virtual sandbox to keep it from accessing (and interfering) with other parts of the computer. This helps protect you from downloading a malicious extension that could really be a Trojan horse in disguise that could steal your passwords or credit card numbers.

In the early days, before Wally became an Internationally renowned comedian, computer book writer, and generally cool guy, Wally Wang used to hang around The Byte Buyer dangling participle with Jack Dunning and go to the gym to pump iron with Dan Gookin.

Wally is responsible for the following books:

Microsoft Office 2010 for Dummies ([www.amazon.com/gp/product/0470489987?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=0470489987](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0470489987?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=0470489987)),  
 Beginning Programming for Dummies ([www.amazon.com/gp/product/0470088702?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=0470088702](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0470088702?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=0470088702)),

Beginning Programming All-in-One Reference for Dummies ([www.amazon.com/gp/product/0470108541?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=0470108541](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0470108541?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=0470108541)),  
Breaking Into Acting for Dummies with Larry Garrison ([www.amazon.com/gp/product/0764554468?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=0764554468](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0764554468?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=0764554468)),  
Steal This Computer Book 4.0 ([www.amazon.com/gp/product/1593271050?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=1593271050](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1593271050?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=1593271050)),  
My New Mac ([www.amazon.com/gp/product/1593271646?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=1593271646](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1593271646?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=1593271646)),  
My New iPhone ([www.amazon.com/gp/product/1593271956?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=1593271956](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1593271956?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=1593271956)),  
My New iPad ([www.amazon.com/gp/product/1593272758?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=1593272758](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1593272758?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=1593272758)),  
Strategic Entrepreneurism with Jon Fisher and Gerald Fisher ([www.amazon.com/gp/product/1590791894?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=1590791894](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1590791894?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=1590791894)),  
How to Live With a Cat (When You Really Don't Want To) ([www.smashwords.com/books/view/18896](http://www.smashwords.com/books/view/18896)).

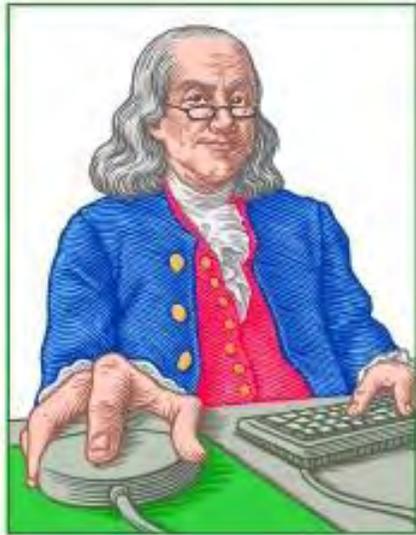
When not performing stand-up comedy or writing computer books, he likes to paper trade stocks with the video game Stock Reflex ([www.plimus.com/jsp/download\\_trial.jsp?contractId=1722712&referrer=wwang](http://www.plimus.com/jsp/download_trial.jsp?contractId=1722712&referrer=wwang)), using the techniques he learned from a professional Wall Street day trader.

In his spare time, Wally likes blogging about movies and writing screenplays at his site "The 15 Minute Movie Method." ([www.15minutemoviemethod.com/](http://www.15minutemoviemethod.com/)) Wally can be reached at [wally@computoredge.com](mailto:wally@computoredge.com).

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## LINUX LESSONS

**"AN INVESTMENT  
IN LINUX KNOWLEDGE  
PAYS THE BEST  
INTEREST."**

### Linux Lessons: Text Editors in Linux

**"Text editors still remain a critical tool in the hands of a Linux user."** by Pete Choppin

GUI schmooney! For Linux uses, it's all about the text editor—small and simple enough to use for modifications of configuration files needed to run different services.

Before the GUI, everything was text-based. It was the era of the command line, where text configuration files were as prolific as Windows system files. Everything was done by keyboard, and the mouse was as unknown as the Universal Serial Bus.

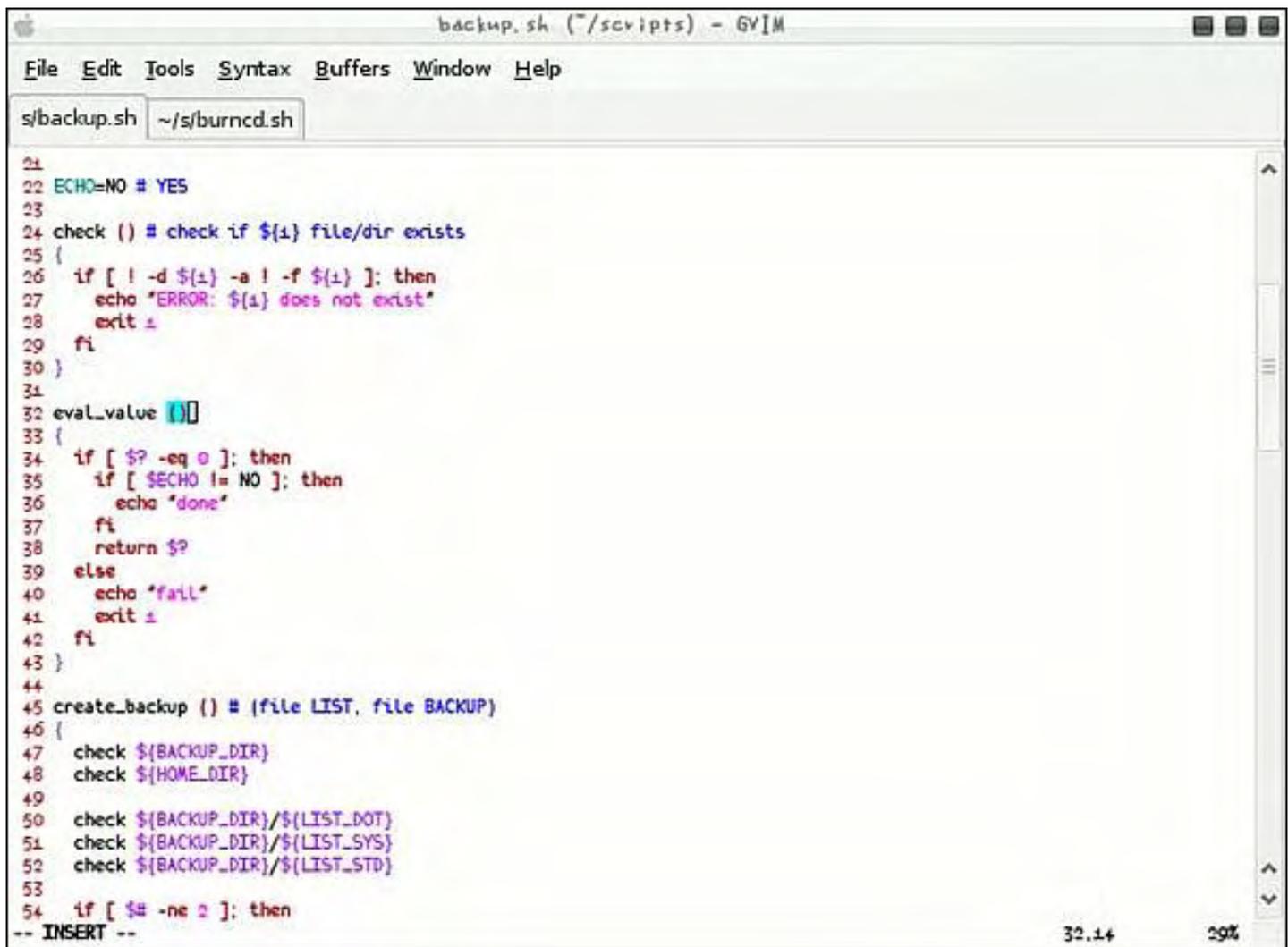
Then came X—the graphic user interface (GUI). Users could now execute the same commands that were entered from the command line, but through icons on the screen and through boxes they called *windows*. The keyboard now took a step down and the mouse took over as the preferred input device. It started with Apple and users ate it up like candy... eye candy.

So why is it that text editors still remain a critical tool in the hands of a Linux user? Essentially, the basic foundation of the Linux operating system has always been, and still remains, built on configuration files. These configuration files are what make everything happen behind all the icons and windows in a GUI. Whenever you change a setting in Linux from the GUI, you are indirectly editing a text file. And many seasoned Linux users prefer to edit these configuration files directly instead of through the GUI.

Text editors range from having a simple to a complex type of interface, and menu-driven application options are there for a more convenient way to organize files. Linux enthusiasts will be very excited to find out that there are a lot of text editors to choose for a Linux operating system.

### In the Beginning There Was VI

Most system administrators use the VI text editor ([ex-vi.sourceforge.net](http://ex-vi.sourceforge.net)). VI is a very simple and basic editor. It is the default text editor of a Linux operating system. If the system needs to have a configuration file edited, the system will automatically call the VI editor. A good example would be the task of scheduling a service by use of a cron job. The system calls the cron job for modification in a VI editor environment. It is harder to learn this editor, but a good system administrator should have patience in learning this. VI is fast, very accessible and it is found on just about every version of Linux.



```
backup.sh (~/.scripts) - GVIM
File Edit Tools Syntax Buffers Window Help
s/backup.sh ~/s/burncd.sh
21
22 ECHO=NO # YES
23
24 check () # check if ${1} file/dir exists
25 {
26   if [ ! -d ${1} -a ! -f ${1} ]; then
27     echo "ERROR: ${1} does not exist"
28     exit 1
29   fi
30 }
31
32 eval_value []
33 {
34   if [ $? -eq 0 ]; then
35     if [ $ECHO != NO ]; then
36       echo "done"
37     fi
38     return $?
39   else
40     echo "fail"
41     exit 1
42   fi
43 }
44
45 create_backup () # (file LIST, file BACKUP)
46 {
47   check ${BACKUP_DIR}
48   check ${HOME_DIR}
49
50   check ${BACKUP_DIR}/${LIST_DOT}
51   check ${BACKUP_DIR}/${LIST_SYS}
52   check ${BACKUP_DIR}/${LIST_STD}
53
54   if [ $# -ne 2 ]; then
-- INSERT --
32.14 29%
```

Figure 1. Screenshot of VI text editor.

## And Then There Was Pico

Another editor commonly used by long-time Linux users is the Pico ([www.reallylinux.com/docs/editors/editor.shtml#Pico%20Editor](http://www.reallylinux.com/docs/editors/editor.shtml#Pico%20Editor)) text editor (PIne COmposer). This is a simple-to-use text editor that is included in the Pine e-mailer. Pico is great for quick edits and is easy to understand. One drawback of Pico is that you are not able to download it as a sole entity. Thus, you would have to install Pine if you wanted to use Pico. Not all Unix-like operating systems support Pico, so it can be a disadvantage. Some versions of Linux do not even include Pico anymore as a text editor.

```

UW PICO(tm) 4.0                               New Buffer                               Modified
# LILO configuration file
# Start LILO global Section
# If you want to prevent console users to boot with init=/bin/bash,
# restrict usage of boot params by setting a passwd and using the option
# restricted,
#password=bootpwd
#restricted
append="enablepic vga=791 hdc=ide-scsi"
boot=/dev/hdd1
#compact          # faster, but won't work on all systems.
lba32
vga=788
message=/boot/message
disk=/dev/hde
menu-scheme=wg:kw:wg:wg
read-only
prompt
timeout=80
# End LILO global Section

^G Get Help   ^O WriteOut  ^R Read File  ^Y Prev Pg   ^K Cut Text   ^C Cur Pos
^X Exit       ^J Justify   ^W Where is  ^V Next Pg   ^U UnCut Text ^I To Spell

```

Figure 2. Screenshot of the Pico text editor.

## The Emacs Text Editor

Emacs ([www.gnu.org/software/emacs/](http://www.gnu.org/software/emacs/)) is the extensible, customizable, self-documenting real-time display editor. What makes Emacs so user friendly is that it is well documented and supports many languages. Emacs also includes many extensions that allow you to further enhance the text editor. The Emacs text editor is one of the most widely used among system administrators. It has a good grip of the Linux environment. This powerful text editor is second only to VI in terms of popularity.

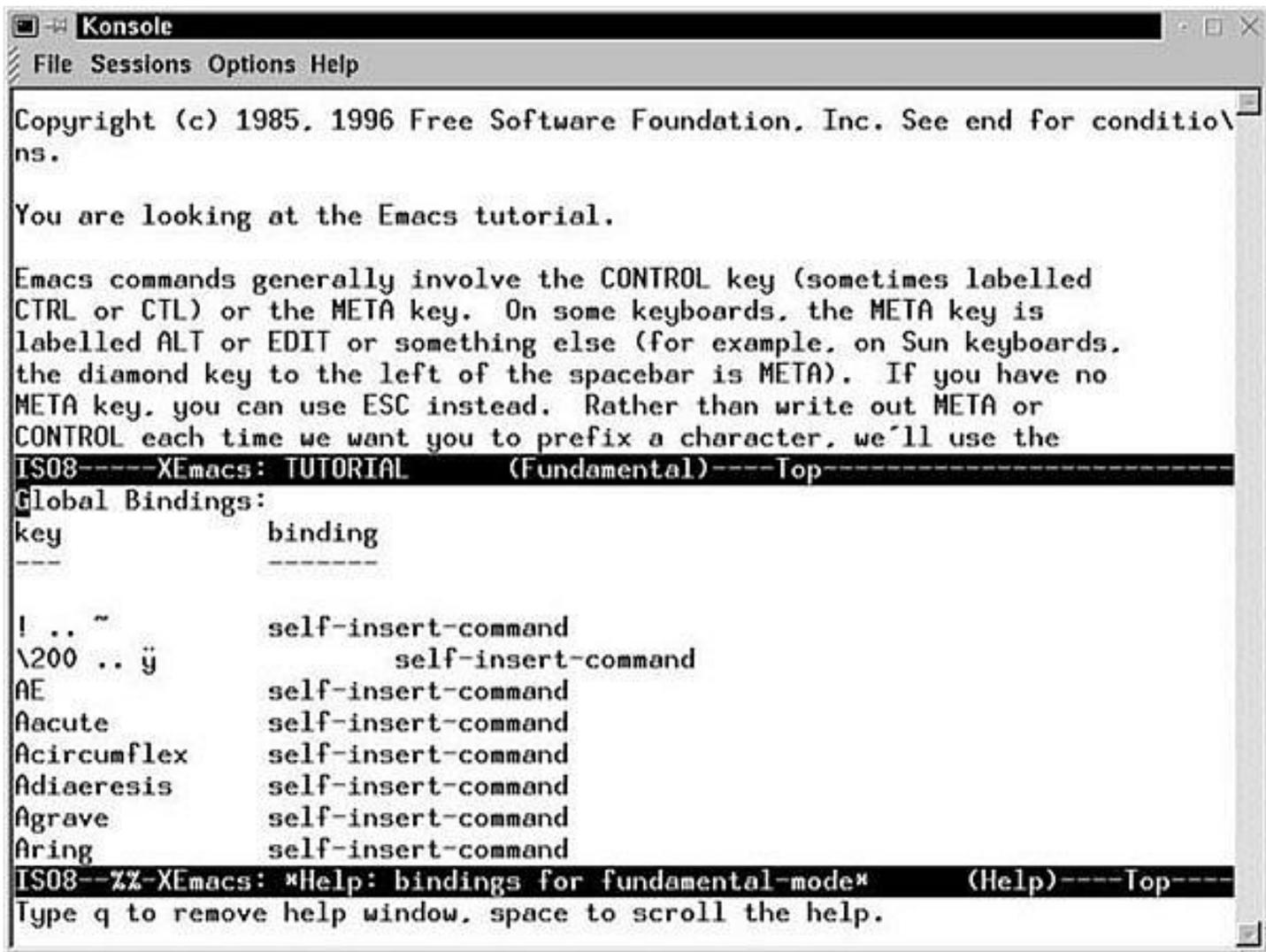


Figure 3. Screenshot of Emacs text editor.

## Finally JOE

Another familiar text editor available for Linux is JOE (*joe-editor.sourceforge.net*) (Joe's Own Editor)—a full-featured terminal-based screen editor. Like Pico, it is also a package application that needs to be installed. People like me who grew up with the Wordstar word processor should have a reason to be happy about Joe, because the commands and interface of the Joe text editor are similar to Wordstar. So from a DOS-based experience, there will be no hassle learning Joe.

```

Konsole
File Sessions Options Help

Help Screen      turn off with ^KH      more help with ESC . (^L.)
CURSOR          GO TO              BLOCK             DELETE            MISC             EXIT
^B left ^F right ^U prev. screen ^KB begin ^D char. ^KJ reformat ^KX save
^P up ^N down ^V next screen ^KK end ^Y line ^T options ^C abort
^Z previous word ^A beg. of line ^KM move ^W >word ^R refresh ^KZ shell
^X next word ^E end of line ^KC copy ^O word< ^@ insert FILE
SEARCH          ^KU top of file ^KW file ^J >line SPELL ^KE edit
^KF find text ^KV end of file ^KY delete ^_ undo ^[N word ^KR insert
^L find next ^KL to line No. ^K/ filter ^^ redo ^[L file ^KD save

IW lilo.conf Row 1 Col 1 4:02 Ctrl-K H
#
#
# /etc/lilo.conf - generated by Lizard
#
# target

boot = /dev/hda
install = /boot/boot.b

# options

prompt
delay = 50
timeout = 50
message = /boot/message

```

Figure 4. Screenshot of the JOE text editor.

## Wrap Up

It is important to understand that there is no right or wrong choice when picking out a Linux text editor. The choice you make should factor in your ability to function within that editor, ease of use, desired functionality and overall "feel," among other things.

Text editors are considered to be lightweight application programs that are very essential to Linux. They are small and simple enough to use for modifications of configuration files needed to run different services. Users do have many choices for Linux text editors. There are so many editors available under Linux, and deciding which one to use really comes down to user preference.

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Pete Choppin has been an IT Professional for over 15 years. He currently works as a network and systems administrator for a company called Albion based in Clearfield, Utah. He has experience in all types of hardware, software, and networking technologies. He is proficient in many operating systems including Linux, Windows and Macintosh. His interests include cooking, sci-fi, computers and technology, and Web design—a semi-professional endeavor, having designed Web sites in the dental field, e-commerce businesses, and for the Boy Scouts of America.

Pete has been a devout reader of *ComputerEdge* since 1990 and contributes regularly to featured articles as well

as the Linux Lessons section of *ComputerEdge*. He can be contacted at [pchoppin@comcast.net](mailto:pchoppin@comcast.net) but prefers to have comments on *ComputerEdge* articles submitted to the editor and posted for the benefit of all readers.

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## Rob, The Computer Tutor

### Rob, The ComputerTutor: Tech Solutions with Microsoft Word

“Mail Merge 2” by Rob Spahitz

Mail Merge typically merges a document and a database. This week, Rob focuses on creating and setting up a document to use in a Mail Merge.

Last week, we looked at a few of the features of Mail Merge. This week, we'll explore this a little more thoroughly.

First, as mentioned last week, Mail Merge typically merges two things: a document and a database. This week, let's focus on the document. We'll start with something very basic that could be used to tell people about a big party you're planning.

Exploring the design, you'd probably want to have the person's name, maybe used several times. When you're done, you'll have a template that will contain some "holes" where the data from the database will be pushed into the document to create a collection of custom documents (where the only parts that change are the names). So this might be your document:

*Dear Jack,*

*Guess what? I'm planning an awesome party and you're invited. I'm throwing this party for all of my ComputerEdge buddies like you, Jack, because I want to thank you all for giving me the opportunity to share my thoughts with all of my readers.*

*I can't believe that I've been writing these articles for 2-1/2 years. Jack, people like you have helped me to find new opportunities to share my computer expertise with people I've never met and they, in turn, help stroke my ego with awesome comments.*

*So come join me for the party on August 6 at our usual get-together, and bring your favorite dish.*

*Thanks again, Jack! I look forward to seeing you there.*

*Sincerely,*

*Rob the ComputerTutor*

OK, with that out of the way, now we need to figure out what parts will change by person. If nothing changes, you're done and you can simply print out as many copies as you need. However, I'm guessing that not all of your friends are named Jack. Since there are four places that I included the name, there are four places that we want to replace with some kind of marker (a field) to tell Word to fill that in with a value from the database.

There are several ways that this field can be inserted. Last week we saw that you can run through the mail merge process first and it will insert any pieces that you specify. These could then be cut and pasted onto each of the "Jack" entries. Another way is to set this up first, then perform the merge. To do this, we'll need to let Word know what fields are available.

Proceed to the Mailings tab and notice the Start Mail Merge group box that we saw last week, plus the Write and Insert Fields group box next to it, as seen in Figure 1. When we notify Word about the data, these items will become enabled.



Figure 1. Mail Merge Items.

This time, let's start by selecting the recipients. When you click on that item, you can create a new list, use an existing list, or select from people in your Outlook name database. Last week we used a CSV (Comma-Separated Values) text file. This week I'll use the same data from an Excel spreadsheet. From the above choices, select "Use Existing List..." and navigate to the location of the Excel file and Open it. Since Mail Merge recognized the file as an Excel file, you'll get a dialog box similar to Figure 2.

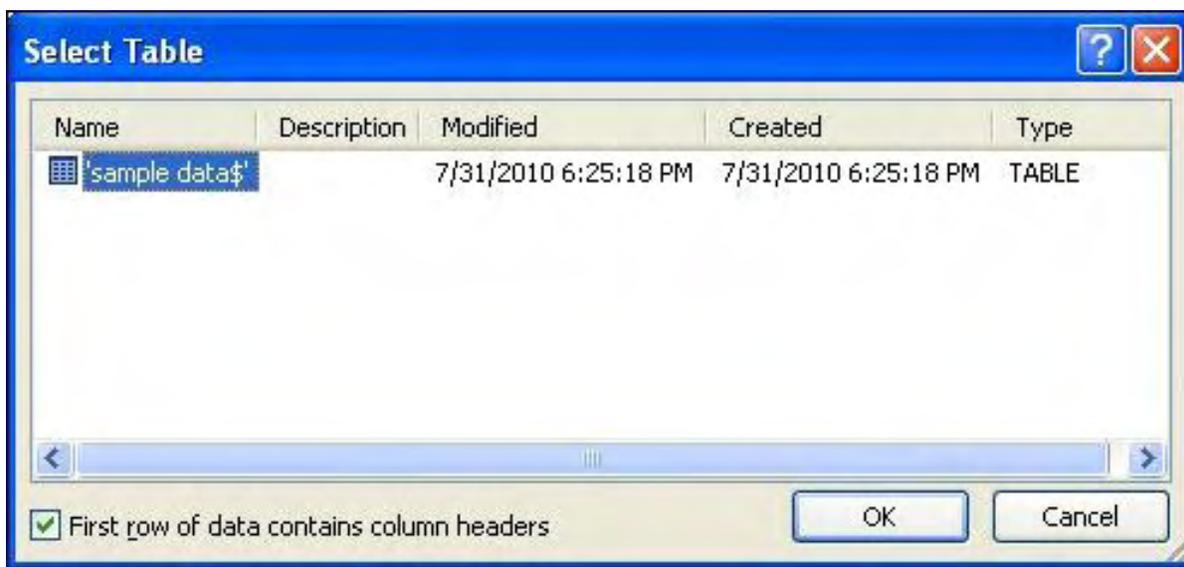


Figure 2. Excel Data For Mail Merge.

Since there is only one sheet with data, that's all you see in the list. Select 'sample data\$' as needed, make sure that the checkbox setting indicating that the first row contains header information (mine does; if yours doesn't, you will have some extra work to do to ensure that Word knows what the data represents), then click on the [OK] button.

Upon completion of this, Word will enable some of the other Group items.

### Adding Mail Merge Fields

With Word now linked to the data source, you can add the proper pieces to your document. Start by selecting the first name (next to "Dear" at the top of the letter). Next go to the Write & Insert Fields group and select the Insert Mail Merge item. The fields found in Excel should show in that list, as seen in Figure 3.

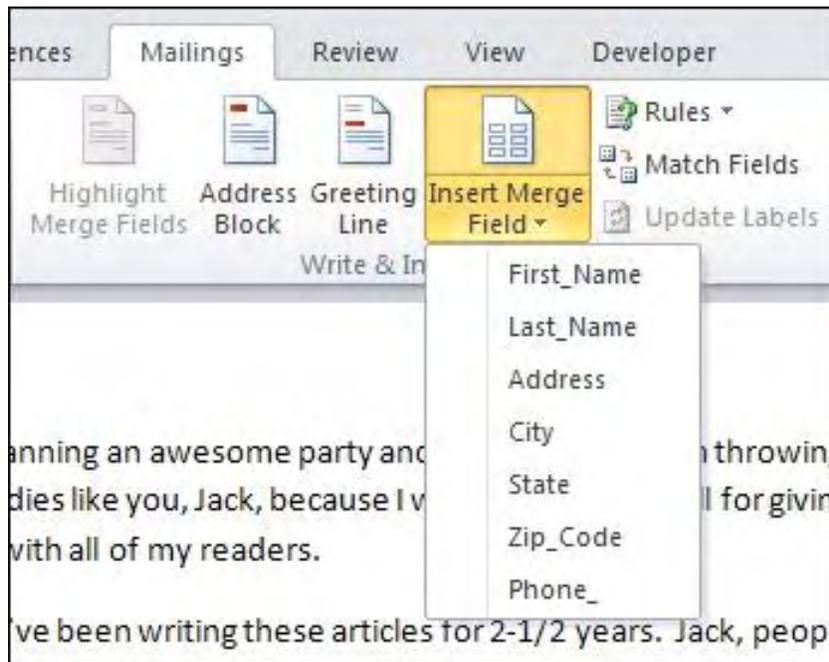


Figure 3. Data Fields From Excel.

Since all we care about for this letter is First\_Name, select that. It should replace the selected name with a field marker ("«First\_Name»"). If you try to click on this, the entire piece will be selected, rather than individual characters. If you delete this, the entire field will be deleted.

Repeat this process for each field that you want to insert. Also, if the field is repeated, as in our document, you can select the entire contents and then copy the field and paste it in the appropriate places. Your end result should look something like Figure 4. I enabled the "Highlight Merge Fields" item so you can see all of the fields.

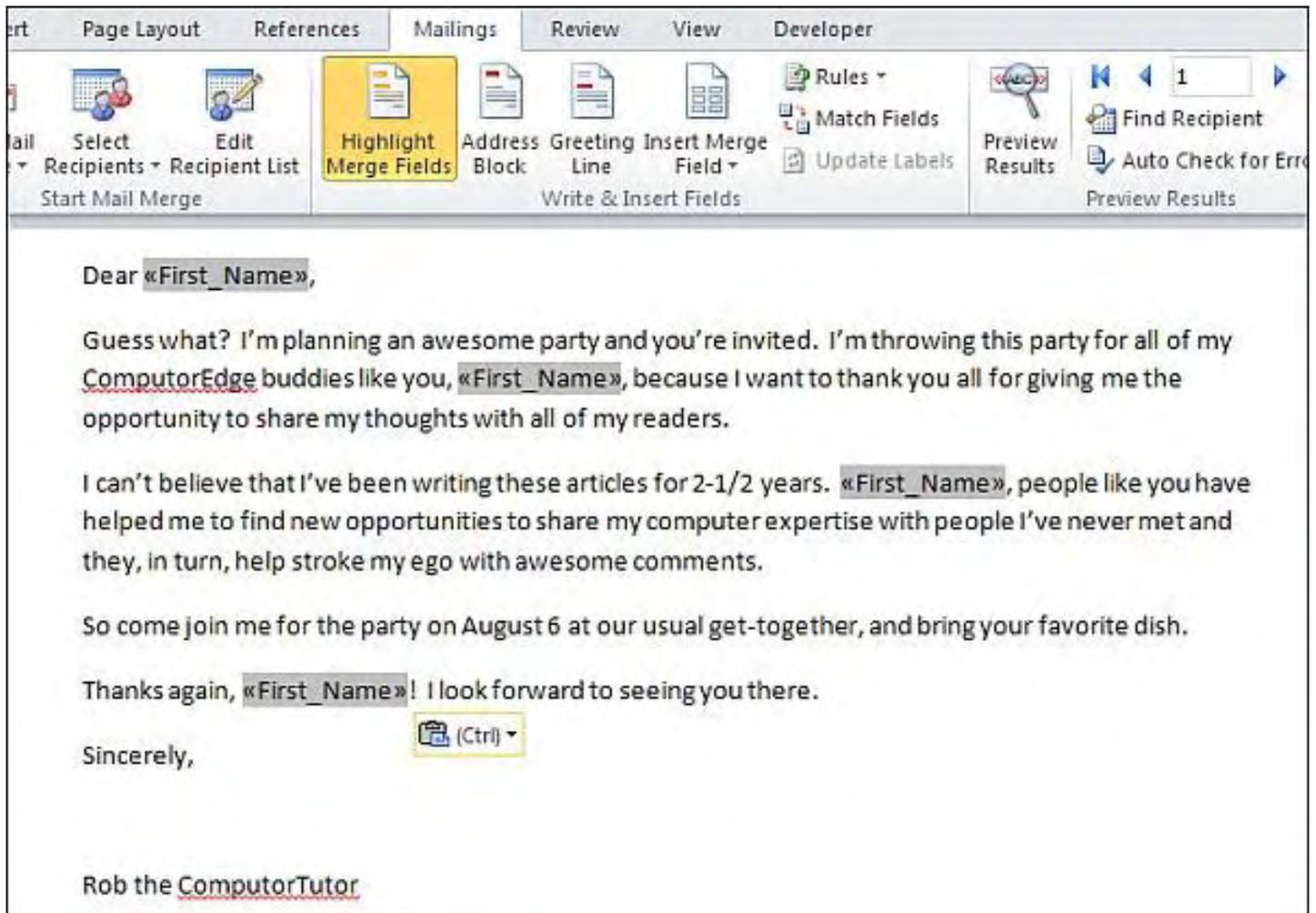


Figure 4. Merge Mail Fields in Word Template.

You now have the template ready for the Mail Merge.

### Merging the Data

Finally, as seen last week, we can start the Mail Merge. Click on the Start Mail Merge item to the left of the ribbon bar and select "Step by Step Mail Merge Wizard." This time, the panel that appears on the right side of Word starts on Step 3. If you click on the Previous link, you'll see that it defaulted to Letter style and is using the existing document. Since we will also "Use an existing list," click on the Next link at the bottom of the panel, as seen in Figure 5.



Figure 5. Mail Merge Wizard Data Source Selection.

For Step 4, we don't need to "Write your letter" since it's already done. We can go to the next step to preview the letters, as seen in Figure 6. Note that I went to recipient 2 to show how it placed Jack back into this document template.

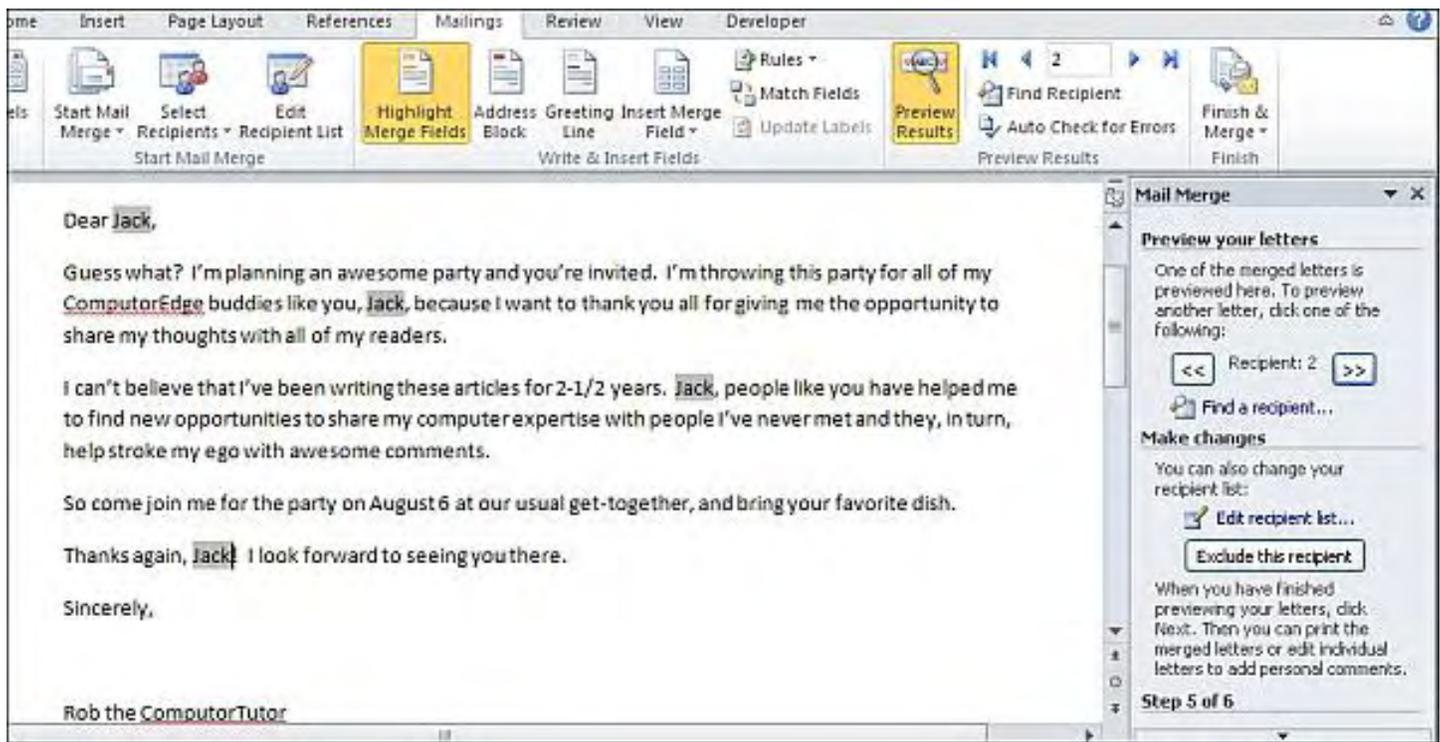


Figure 6. Mail Merge Preview.

To complete the process, click on the Next link at the bottom of the wizard panel. On this sixth pane of the wizard, you have the option to Print the final document collection or to edit individual letters. When you finally Print, you will be asked to specify the entries that you'd like to print. When you click the OK button, you will be asked which printer to send the results and your task will be complete. When you are happy with the results, simply close the wizard panel.

Good luck with your merges. Next time we start exploring Word macros and VBA.

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Rob has been in the computer industry for over 25 years and is currently a part-time teacher, offering classes in Excel, Access, Visual Basic, and a variety of other technical tools. He has loved *ComputerEdge* since 1990 and can be contacted at [RSpahitz@Dogopoly.com](mailto:RSpahitz@Dogopoly.com).

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## EdgeWord: A Note from the Publisher

“As the Technology Market Turns” by Jack Dunning



The newer smartphone and tablet markets are just beginning to shake out, with Apple and Android devices leading the pack. But traditional computing will tend to keep doing what it's always been doing.

Twenty-five years ago, choosing which type of computer to buy was a major decision. Most people were looking at their first machine and the literacy gap was huge. It was during this time that Microsoft established its dominant market position. Apple could have made more inroads, but it chose a closed, more controlled, higher-end (pricier) approach. IBM took an alternative operating system shot with OS2. A few other companies introduced machines such as the Amiga with yet another operating system. However, today it's pretty well settled—at least in the regular computer market. There are three choices: a Windows PC, a Mac, or some flavor of Linux.

In reality there are very few new choices being made between the operating systems. Most people already know that they are either a PC, Mac, or Linux box user. There are a few who drift from one market to another, but for the most part people stick with what they know best. The reasons for changing computer type are not compelling enough to make the jump to something new—even if the switch is easy. (Admittedly Apple made some reasonable inroads during the dog-years of Vista, but those days are over with the release of the well-received Windows 7. Even then, Apple has only approached 10 percent market share.)

One of the big reasons that 75 percent of Windows XP business users have not moved to Windows 7 is because their computers still work. (They feel pretty good about outlasting Vista.) They know that in the next few years they will probably need to get a new computer—which will be their excuse for upgrading. By that time, Windows 7 Service Pack 1 will be out—the usual fix for early release problems, although Windows 7 has had surprisingly few issues. Most of these people will not be motivated to switch to Apple or Linux.

Once someone becomes an Apple user, they tend to be an advocate for life. The Mac following is not as large as the Microsoft club, but it is more loyal and dedicated. With few exceptions, when they are ready to buy again, it will be an Apple product. Apple has its market hardwired and can depend upon it for many years.

The Linux users are just as dedicated as Apple users, although they are generally much more knowledgeable about computers. They could just as easily use any of the systems, but they prefer the power, stability and flexibility of Linux. The reason Linux doesn't get more widespread penetration is because of the image of Linux as an operating system for nerds. Quite frankly, that stereotype is not totally wrong.

In the next five years, the market composition for computers (desktop and laptops) is not going to change much. Most people are fine with the camp they live in now. If there are any major changes in the computer market, it will not be based upon the operating system, but it will spring from changes in how computers are used.

Desktop and laptop computers are essentially the same machines with regards to capability. As evidenced by the sales of laptops surpassing desktops, many people find it more convenient to buy a laptop for all their computing needs since it comes with the added portability. Desktops are cumbersome, but their expansion capability and potentially much larger screen capacity make them more suitable for many tasks. However, whether desk mounted or portable, both types of computers are used the same way.

While there have been handheld computers and PDAs (Personal Digital Assistants) for many years, Apple's flashy, easy-to-use iPhone established the small computers as a coherent market. Apparently people are much more willing to use a handheld computer if it is also their cell phone. After all, who wants to carry two devices on their person? This is not a replacement for desktop/laptop computing, but it is a different way to use a computer. It is too soon to tell if there is a threat to traditional computing from phone computers. The differences in physical size would tend to make handheld computers a mobile augmentation to desktop/laptop computing rather than a replacement. This market is still in its early stages with the Google Android (Linux-based) type devices making inroads into Apple's early lead. There is no reason to believe that Microsoft will have any significant impact on this market, although the company has the resources to take a run at it.

Apple has also relaunched the long-lingering tablet computer market with the iPad. Apple, with its usual flair and innovative technology, has turned a stumbling concept into an industry full of energy. With its recent success in the smartphone business, the free Google Android operating system is currently the only reasonable near-term competitor—with many manufacturers ready to support it.

Both the smartphone and tablet computer represent different ways to use computers. There has not been enough time for most users to develop long-term loyalty to a particular company as is seen in the world of desktop computers. Apple does garner some traction with iPhone users, but the life cycle of cell phones is so short that switching will not be unusual. In any case, these buying decisions are not likely to affect desktop/laptop buying choices. These newer markets will shake out while traditional computing will tend to keep doing what it's always been doing.

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Jack is the publisher of *ComputerEdge* Magazine. He's been with the magazine since first issue on May 16, 1983. Back then, it was called *The Byte Buyer*. His Web site is [www.computoredge.com](http://www.computoredge.com). He can be reached at [ceeditor@computoredge.com](mailto:ceeditor@computoredge.com)

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## Editor's Letters: Tips and Thoughts from Readers

“Computer and Internet tips, plus comments on the articles and columns.” by ComputerEdge Staff

"Microsoft Office Word 2003," "Windows 7 for Free," "XP Programs Under Windows 7," "Not Convinced"

### Microsoft Office Word 2003

[Regarding the July 23 Rob, The ComputerTutor: Tech Solutions with Microsoft Word column:]

While I love the very simplistic explanations you provide, unfortunately I only have Microsoft Office Word 2003 and I find it hard to relate to some of your instructions only because they aren't always available to me. I don't know how to solve this except to buy Word 2010 or keep updating my software. I'm only 79+ years old, but I try real hard to keep up with the technological world and all ideas that will keep my dendrites and synapses connecting my neurons in my brain functioning to its optimum efficiency. It strains the pocketbook, but I try to budget where it is most essential.

-Grandma Julie, Alpine CA 91901

Love your show, Rob! Great job, hope you keep 'em coming!

Now, even though I'm using 2010 at work, like most people who haven't upgraded, I'm using 2003 at home.

Is there any way to get you to show the processes in both Word 2010 and 2003? Yes, I understand some of the tools weren't available in 2003, but if it's possible could you include them?

Thanks!

-Whatabtboob, Sandy Eggo Native

### Windows 7 for Free

[Regarding the July 23 Digital Dave column:]

Seth may be interested in the Win 7 Enterprise Trial ([www.oqotalk.com/index.php/topic,4767.msg38635.html#msg38635](http://www.oqotalk.com/index.php/topic,4767.msg38635.html#msg38635)) available for download from Microsoft until the end of this year. It's nominally for 90 days, but can actually be used continuously for up to 600 days thanks to its built-in rearm feature.

-Ron Cerrato, San Diego, CA

### XP Programs Under Windows 7

[Regarding the July 16 Digital Dave column:]

Consider using virtual XP as described in the June 18, 2010 issue of *ComputerEdge*: Create a virtual hard drive of your Windows XP system and run that as a virtual machine under Windows 7. A little awkward, but likely lots cheaper

than buying new versions of your current software.

-Phil Merritt, Carlsbad, CA

## Not Convinced

[Regarding the July 23 Wally Wang's Apple Farm column:]

Listen, I would love to have an "Apple" computer—just not as my main computer. I've been diagnosing, repairing, installing, etc. on the X86 platform for 18 years. I'm not going to start an argument about what is better.

I run Windows XP, Windows Vista, Windows 7 and Linux (Ubuntu). Quite frankly, I prefer Ubuntu to Apple. It's free, and it works on all the hardware (PC/X86) that I have. If Microsoft closed its hardware platform like Apple, then that would eliminate most of the BSODs. Any BSODs that I've encountered were due to a bad driver or a piece of hardware going bad (memory, for example).

My biggest gripe with Apple is the tech side of it. If I want to upgrade any of the base hardware pieces (system board, CPU, etc.), I'm out of luck. If something goes wrong (hardware-wise), I have to take my system to an "Authorized" Apple dealer/shop. Replacement parts are not cheap for the Apple. They are easy to find and inexpensive for the PC (Windows/Ubuntu).

I've found that most of my clients who have switched to an Apple computer [did so] due to two things: computer viruses (mostly through bad browsing habits) or troublesome networking (including Wi-Fi Internet setups). I think that the Apple interface is slick and polished, and pretty dummy-proof for the average/below average computer user. Yes, it's pretty bullet-proof to viruses also. But then again, so is Ubuntu. With this install of Windows (Windows 7) I haven't had any problems with BSOD's, crashes, etc. Windows 7 boots up fast, and shuts down fast. You even can run a variety of browsers (IE8, Safari, Google, etc.). You just have to be careful with your security settings and be prudent about how and where you browse the Internet. You should also know when to stop what you are doing and shut pop-ups (spyware/malicious software) down via the Task Manager. One day I'll have a Mac, but not as my main system—when I can afford one!

-Albert, San Diego

*Albert's comments are accurate in that it's much cheaper to buy parts and fix a PC rather than relying on taking an Apple computer to an authorized Apple repair shop. That comment simply highlights the big difference between Apple products and PCs whether they're running Windows or Linux.*

*In the PC world of Windows or Linux, you have to take time to learn the technical side of using a computer. Finding parts is much cheaper on the PC side just as long as you know what to look for, which many people do not. An analogy might be that it's also very inexpensive to rebuild and replace your own car engine if you know what you're doing. What costs money in car repair is the labor; the parts are mostly reasonably priced.*

*In the same way, PCs are cheaper, but require technical knowledge (labor) to maintain. If you don't have this technical knowledge, then it's too easy for a dishonest computer repair shop to take advantage of someone's ignorance and overcharge them. Windows PC users also need to know about defragmenting hard disks on a regular basis and optimizing the Windows Registry (two tasks that Linux users do not need to worry about).*

*Windows users also have the hidden costs of time and possibly money constantly running antivirus and anti-spyware programs. If you buy a commercial antivirus/anti-spyware program, you have the additional annual subscription cost as well. (Once again, Linux users need not worry about this problem either.)*

*The bottom line is that PC users (Windows or Linux) require additional technical knowledge to take advantage of the PC. If you have that technical knowledge, then PCs are fine. For people without that technical knowledge, they can pay extra for software or a technician to keep their PCs running well, or they can pay extra and just go with an Apple product instead. In either case, people without technical knowledge of computers are going to have to pay extra in one form or another.*

*-Wally Wang*

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