

ComputerEdge™ Online — 01/21/11



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Computers are lost or stolen everyday. If your data is not encrypted, then it is not protected.

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Digital Dave

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

A reader wants to disable pop-up information balloons in Windows; a reader regrets going to a 64-bit version of Windows and wants to downgrade; disabling or replacing Aero Snap will prevent windows from expanding to full screen.

Dear Digital Dave,

I use several operating systems and they all share one annoying feature—pop-up information balloons, which appear everytime I pass the mouse pointer over a file name or icon.

Is there any way this feature can be disabled or made optional?

*Eddie Warren
Wallace, NC*

Dear Eddie,

Since the problem is consistent across operating systems, I'm assuming that you are referring to various versions of Windows. Windows is packed with pop-up balloons and tool tip labels. While I find that the little pop-ups are quite useful for identifying icons, file types and sizes, I can see how they might become annoying for many users. There are various techniques available for limited removal of these messages, but the most reliable and all encompassing way to disable them is via the Windows registry.

Caution: *Be careful whenever you edit the Windows registry. Making the wrong change or deletion could cause Windows to malfunction. Ensure that any modifications that you make are appropriate and in the proper location. If you are not comfortable with dealing with the inner workings and hidden mechanisms of your computer, it may be best to live with some minor annoyances, rather than take the risk.*

You can make changes to the Windows registry via the regedit program (Start Menu, Run, then "regedit", or, in Vista and Windows 7, type regedit in the Start Search field). Follow the paths listed below for the appropriate key.

The most useful registry entry for removing tool tip messages (and the one you would use) is ShowInfoTip. It can be found at:

HKEY_CURRENT_USER => Software => Microsoft => Windows => CurrentVersion => Explorer => Advanced

If you modify the DWORD (right-click on the name, see Figure 1) setting the value to 0 ("ShowInfoTip"=dword:00000000), then reboot, the messages should no longer appear when you mouse over a file

name. Change it back to 1 to bring the labels back. (Be sure to log off and back on for changes to take effect.)

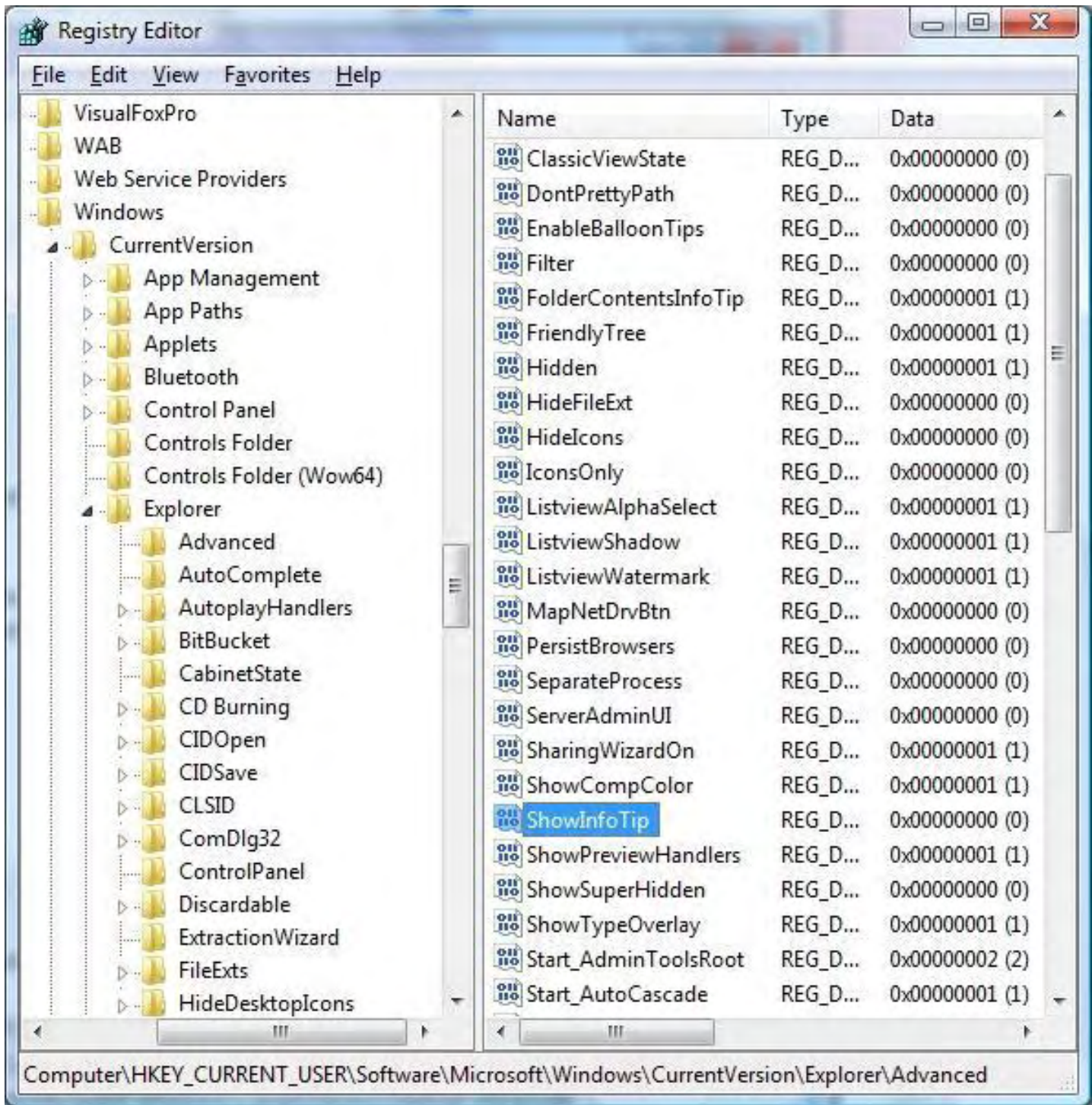


Figure 1. Right-click on the DWORD to modify the value.

The following is a list of other possible changes. In some cases, if the DWORD does not exist, you may need to create it.

Stopping SysTray Balloon Pop-ups:

HKEY_CURRENT_USER => Software => Microsoft => Windows => CurrentVersion => Explorer => Advanced

"EnableBalloonTips"=dword:00000000

Turn off folder contents labels:

```
HKEY_CURRENT_USER => Software => Microsoft => Windows => CurrentVersion =>
Explorer => Advanced
"FolderContentsInfoTip"=dword:00000000
```

Turn off the "Tip Of the Day":

```
HKEY_CURRENT_USER => Software => Microsoft => Windows => CurrentVersion =>
Explorer => tips
"Show"=dword:00000000
```

Turn off the Start Button BalloonTip "(Click here to begin)":

```
HKEY_CURRENT_USER => Software => Microsoft => Windows => CurrentVersion =>
Explorer => Advanced
"StartButtonBalloonTip"=dword:00000000
```

Turn off Start Menu pop-up label:

```
HKEY_CURRENT_USER => Software => Microsoft => Windows => CurrentVersion => Policies
=> Explorer
"NoSMBalloonTip"=dword:00000000
```

There are many features which can be controlled via the registry. Just make sure you know what you're doing before you make any changes.

Digital Dave

Dear Digital Dave,

I recently bought a Dell Studio XPS running Win 7 Ultimate 64-bit. I now regret going to 64-bit, as I can't run my old Q&A database software (I know it's 20 years old, but it works!), even in Virtual XP mode (the software runs, but I can't see data files). I was unable to install versions of TurboTax prior to 2009, and have difficulty with access to Web sites (my Cox account being one of them), and my BlackBerry Desktop Software won't sync. My wife's machine is a Win 7 Pro 32-bit machine and runs all of that just fine. Is there a way to downgrade to 32-bit without re-installing everything?

*Doug Clements
Poway, CA*

Dear Doug,

The quick answer is no you can't change to 32-bit without re-installing the operating system. You can minimize some of the difficulties by using Windows Easy Transfer to copy all of your files to a backup hard drive, then restore after you re-install the operating system. Easy Transfer, in addition to making copies of all your data files, will provide you a list of programs that you might want to re-install.

A more important issue is that you probably don't have the 32-bit version of Windows available for re-installation with your computer. Dell most likely installed an OEM version of Windows which only comes with either the 32-bit or 64-bit version—not both. You should contact Dell to see about getting the 32-bit discs. If you can't get it from Dell then you will need to purchase it, but Dell should work with you. This is not an uncommon problem for people running legacy software.

Digital Dave

Dear Digital Dave,

When I move windows around with my Win 7 laptop, they often expand to full screen when I release the mouse button. This is extremely annoying when I'm trying to work with multiple windows open. Is there any way to turn this "feature" off?

*Wes Nelson
Broomfield, CO*

Dear Wes,

It appears that you are inadvertently encountering a Windows 7 feature called Aero Snap. Whenever you drag a window (left mouse down on top bar of window) to the top of the screen where the cursor comes in contact with the top edge, then release, the window will go to full screen. Cursor contact on both the left and right side of the screen will resize a half screen window to the respective side. If you pull the window off the edge, it will go back to the original size.

This feature can be disabled by opening the Ease of Access Center through the Control Panel (or type "ease" in the Start Menu search field and select Ease of Access Center), then select "Change how your mouse works." Check the box next to "Prevent windows from being automatically arranged when moved to the edge of the screen" and Apply. Aero Snap will no longer function.

As an alternative, there is a free third-party program which replaces both Aero Snap and Aero Shake (a feature for minimizing all windows except one) called AquaSnap (download.cnet.com/AquaSnap/3000-2072_4-75181446.html). This utility offers more flexibility than Aero Snap by adding quarter screens windows when dragging to the corners. Plus dragging to the top and bottom will resize to horizontal half screens. There is a configuration program for AquaSnap which will allow you to tailor (or turn off) any of these features.

The AquaShake feature of AquaSnap can be configured to make a windows "always on top" when shaken. I find it particularly useful to keep a calculator on top of all the other windows during tax time.

Digital Dave

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Are You Practicing Safe Storage?

“Think about encrypting your data.” by Patrick Cotter

Data is not safe and needs to be protected with more than just a computer password. There are many software and hardware encryption solutions on the market. Patrick examines the pros and cons of a few products to help you make a decision to protect your data.

A little USB encryption goes a long way in protecting your sensitive files.

When it comes to protecting sensitive data, most people still act like they're immune. They leave their digital assets out in plain sight on their desk tops and laptops, believing that a computer password is protection enough. Any half-competent hacker or serious identity thief can get it in minutes. Maybe seconds.

Reality check: what about your digital files? The ones with your personal financial information? Or your medical records? Maybe some critical company data? Or pictures that you'd have a hard time explaining to your partner? How well are they protected? How would you feel if they suddenly went viral on the Internet?

It could happen quite easily if you lost your laptop. (FYI: there's one lost or stolen nearly every minute in the U.S.) And what about files on a flash drive? Who hasn't lost one of them?



You get the point. Our (your) data is not safe. But it could be, pretty easily. There are dozens and dozens of software and hardware encryption solutions on the market. Some are excellent, a lot are adequate and a few are awful. Here's a rundown on the pros and cons of four pocket-and-purse sized solutions that offer a range of effectiveness, economy and



“I wish you wouldn’t encrypt the items that you add to the grocery list!”

ease of use.

Top of the heap is the Iron Key Personal S200 (www.ironkey.com) solution. Marketed as the world's most secure flash drive, it has a built-in hardware encryption chip to protect your data. It does that really well, but it should be for the high price: as of this writing it is \$80 for 1 gig and \$300 for 16 gigs. On the downside, it's also much bigger than most USB flash drives and wouldn't fit on a key ring. And after 10 incorrect passwords, it fries the USB

memory (you lose all your data).

At the other end of the spectrum is TrueCrypt (www.truecrypt.org). Pluses: it's free, open source and can encrypt your whole hard drive (that can be good or bad). Minuses: you have to do more than a little set up and formatting. The feature that makes it portable appears to be Windows only, which means that you will need to have TrueCrypt installed to use your secure volume on a Linux or OS X machine. Also, the account that you use TrueCrypt on must be administrator level, which could make it hard to use a TrueCrypt protected USB on a library terminal or corporate computer. And because the encrypted volume resides as a container file on the unencrypted portion of the USB key, if someone got access to your drive without your knowing it, or if it were lost, they could copy off this file and subject it to brute-force password guessing methods. Free, yes, but at a price.

The two other solutions reviewed, SafeHouse (www.safehousesoftware.com) and Encrypt Stick (www.encryptstick.com), both give you a lot for relatively little. Both are very easy to use software solutions, both are fully portable, and both have free trial versions.

SafeHouse, a Windows only solution, makes you buy the more expensive upgrade (SafeHouse Professional at \$59.95) to get the full strength 448-bit encryption. Encrypt Stick does Windows and OS X, on the same flash drive, for one price. On the SafeHouse Explorer (their free version) and Personal (\$29.95) you get only 256-bit encryption. Nice, but a weaker offer than Encrypt Stick's 512-bit polymorphic encryption, even on the free version. Among other extras, Encrypt Stick's Full version gives you unlimited number of encrypted vaults (or protected folders), unlimited encrypted flash drive storage space, and a user definable timeout feature.

Three other Encrypt Stick features I liked:

- Includes the world's first portable encrypted Web browser.
- You only have to remember one password because a built-in Password Manager not only stores passwords, but can also automatically generate strong passwords.
- If you lose your flash drive you can access encrypted files on your PC or Mac through a new license via their Web site.

OK, you've got enough data to make a decision. You could have all the protection you need if you got an encryption solution in the next 15 minutes. Or would you rather wait until you see your private pictures on the Internet? Or the bank calls you to ask if you've been shopping in Hong Kong?

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Wally Wang's Apple Farm

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“The Verizon iPhone” by Wally Wang

Now that the iPhone will be available through Verizon, consumers have the choice between AT&T and Verizon—if consumer's choose Verizon, will Android phones be able to compete?; Macintosh sales are on the increase as trends shift; RapidWeaver is a painless way to build a Web site; the iPhone is used to film a movie; iPads continue to be introduced into classrooms; Drive Genius 3 helps save hard disk space.

On January 11, Verizon finally announced the long-rumored iPhone. Unlike in other countries where multiple carriers offered the iPhone, Americans could only get an iPhone if they switched to AT&T. Now that Verizon also has the iPhone, they're already scaling back their marketing for Android phones and heavily promoting the iPhone 4 (www.electronista.com/articles/11/01/12/could.sabotage.android).



Figure 1. Verizon is now promoting the iPhone at the expense of Android and Blackberry.

With Verizon throwing its marketing support behind the iPhone (at least for now), the first question is whether Verizon customers will still choose an Android phone when they can have an iPhone on Verizon instead. Undoubtedly some people will compare both and choose an Android phone, but if AT&T's statistics are any indication, the number of iPhone users on Verizon could quickly surpass the number of Android users on Verizon in a 15 iPhone to 1 Android ratio (www.slashgear.com/at-will-verizon-iphone-eat-droids-11125728/).

Now we'll get to see whether people were flocking to Android phones (www.pcmag.com/article2/0,2817,2375763,00.asp) on Verizon because they felt that Android phones were better or because they wanted to use Verizon.

Before you rush to get an iPhone 4 on Verizon, here are some ideas to consider. Apple traditionally releases a new iPhone model every year around June/July. That means if you wait, you can get the iPhone 5 on either AT&T or Verizon in a few months. If you get the iPhone 4 now, you'll have about five more months before the newer model comes out, and then you may need to pay an upgrade fee if you want the newest iPhone 5.

Second, Verizon's CDMA (Code Division Multiple Access) network isn't exactly equal (www.wisegeek.com/what-is-the-difference-between-gsm-and-cdma.htm) to AT&T's GSM (Global System for Mobile Communications) network. AT&T's GSM network lets you make calls and access the Internet simultaneously. While that's probably not something most people do, if that's a feature you need, then you have no choice but to stick with AT&T (for now).

To counter this limitation, Verizon will allow you to turn your iPhone into a Wi-Fi hotspot so you can share Internet access with other Wi-Fi devices such as your laptop computer. AT&T doesn't currently allow this feature.

The choice between AT&T and Verizon depends largely on where you get the best coverage and whether you need the specific features only available on AT&T or Verizon. Otherwise the iPhone 4 is identical whether you use AT&T or Verizon. However if you wait for the iPhone 5 this summer, it's rumored to have a dual GSM/CDMA chip so you'll be able to connect to either network on a single phone.

With a CDMA version of the iPhone available, Apple can now spread to other carriers in different countries such as China, India and South Korea. Think Apple might sell a few more million iPhones to these overseas markets?

With Verizon's customer base and the availability of CDMA-based overseas markets, the iPhone will likely grab a much larger share than it currently holds today. Since Android phones inched past the iPhone in the number of users (helped through buy one, get one free deals), we can see how Android survives the introduction of the iPhone on Verizon and other CDMA-based carriers.

Whatever happens, chances are good that people won't suddenly abandon their iPhones or Android phones to switch to Blackberry or Windows Phone 7. In the meantime, we have to wait until February 9 for Hewlett-Packard to make an announcement about webOS running on tablets and smartphones.

Macintosh Sales Increase (Again)

While other computer manufacturers keep blaming the recession for their weak sales, Apple keeps selling more Macintosh computers every quarter despite the same recession that hurts other computer companies.

According to Gartner, Apple sold 1.9 million Mac desktops and laptops during the fourth quarter for a 9.7% of the U.S. market. IDC claims that Apple sold 1.7 million Macs for an 8.7% share.

Gartner claims that Apple's sales for the fourth quarter were 23.7% higher (www.computerworld.com/s/article/9204880/Mac_sales_climb_as_rivals_lose_U.S._share?taxonomyId=12) than in the same quarter of 2009, while IDC claims had Apple's year-over-year increase at 15.2%. In comparison, Gartner said the U.S. market fell by 6.6%, while IDC called the decline 4.8%.

"That's been the story for much of 2010: PC sales weak, Macintosh sales strong," said analyst Philip Elmer-DeWitt (tech.fortune.cnn.com/2011/01/14/mac-zigs-while-the-pc-market-zags/). Like other analysts, Philip Elmer-DeWitt believes Apple could have sold as many as 4 million Macs during the holiday quarter while most other PC manufacturers struggled.



Figure 2. Sales of Macintosh computers keeps steadily rising.

Acer's sales plunged dramatically by 30.4% (according to Gartner) or 28.5% (according to IDC). IDC claims that Acer lost so many sales due to weakening demand for Acer mini notebooks (www.idc.com/about/viewpressrelease.jsp?containerId=prUS22653511§ionId=null&elementId=null&pageType=SYNOPSIS).

Assuming that IDC's mention of "mini notebooks" includes netbooks, then it appears that the once red-hot category of netbook sales has slowed and even reversed dramatically. Why? Perhaps the introduction of the iPad might have had something to do with killing netbook sales (www.myce.com/news/asus-the-ipad-is-killing-netbook-sales-33284/), at least according to Asus's CEO Jerry Shen, who has watched sales of Asus netbooks plunge in recent months.

With sales of Macintosh computers, iPhones and iPads steadily increasing every quarter, there's plenty of evidence indicating that people want Apple products. If you're shopping for a computer, smartphone, or tablet, you need to objectively look at all your options including Apple. Whatever the future of computing holds, Apple products are certain to play an increasingly larger role, so the longer you keep yourself ignorant about Apple's products, the further you're going to fall behind the rest of the computing world.

If you still think that Microsoft and Windows will remain dominant forever, you might want to hear about people starting to question whether Steve Ballmer should be CEO of Microsoft any more (www.eweek.com/c/a/Enterprise-Applications/Steve-Ballmers-CES-Performance-Proves-He-Needs-to-Go-10-Reasons-Why-712672/). ZDNet even acknowledges (www.zdnet.com/blog/btl/ballmers-11th-year-as-microsofts-ceo-is-it-time-for-him-to-go/43610) that "Trends are shifting. The competitive landscape in smartphones, tablets and even living room hubs (which is really what the Xbox is becoming) is getting more and more fierce." Microsoft may still be a major force in the computer world, but does anyone feel that Microsoft is a leader any more?

Creating a Web Site Without Losing Your Mind

Remember in the early days when businesses questioned whether they needed a Web site or not? Nowadays, nobody asks that question. A Web site is a necessity for every business and many people as well.

There are several ways to create a Web site. First, you can write HTML code using a program like Dreamweaver. This

gives you complete control over the appearance of every picture and text, but takes time to design. Even worse, the more pages you create, the more you have to worry about keeping them all linked together through menus. Updating HTML Web pages can be tedious too, which is why no news sites, such as Yahoo! or CNN, create HTML pages by hand.

An increasingly common approach is to use a content management system (CMS) like WordPress or Joomla. The idea behind a CMS is that you structure where you want content to appear on a page. Then you add new content to the CMS program and the program automatically takes care of displaying the content as a Web page.

A CMS makes it easy to organize ever-changing content, which is what all the major news sites use since you can have multiple people updating the site by simply adding new text and graphics. The major drawback is that setting up a CMS is a big pain in the neck and customizing a CMS to look the way you want is another big pain in the neck. It's easy to create a generic Web site with a CMS, but it's not so easy to create a custom Web site with a CMS program unless you're a CMS programmer.

To gain the benefits of a CMS without the headaches, take a look at Realmac Software's \$79 RapidWeaver (www.realmacsoftware.com/rapidweaver/overview/). The main idea behind the program is that you create your Web site by choosing the type of content you want to display such as a blog post, image gallery, stylized text, or even plain HTML code if you want maximum control.



Figure 3. RapidWeaver lets you choose between a variety of different Web page designs.

Each time you add or delete a page, RapidWeaver automatically creates a menu on each page so you can focus on creating your site and not worry about keeping all your Web pages linked together. When you're done designing the structure of your site, you can apply a variety of themes to define the appearance of all your pages.



Figure 4. Themes let you customize the appearance of your Web pages.

To add content, you simply type or paste pictures without worrying about HTML codes. If you want, you can use HTML codes to create custom Web pages within the structure of your RapidWeaver site.



Figure 5. RapidWeaver lets you focus on the content of your Web pages.



Figure 6. You can preview how your Web pages will look with your new content.

When you're done designing or updating your Web pages, you can upload your pages directly to your site through RapidWeaver's built-in FTP support. This lets you create and modify your Web pages, then upload your changes all within the convenience of a single program.

While RapidWeaver provides a collection of different themes, you can always buy more or download free ones from various sites that sell RapidWeaver themes (www.rapidweaverthemes.com/). If you find a theme that's close to what you want but not quite, RapidWeaver does allow a limited range of customization, but most people probably won't be modifying a theme too drastically or else they might as well just use ordinary HTML code.

If you want a Web page designing tool that lets you focus on the content and less on the appearance of each Web page, then RapidWeaver can help you create professional Web sites with little effort. However, unlike a CMS like WordPress that you can modify and update from any computer connected to the Internet, updating a RapidWeaver site means always using RapidWeaver on your computer. If you plan to travel and need to update your site, you'll need to install a copy of RapidWeaver on your laptop along with your Web site's RapidWeaver file.

For creating great looking Web sites without becoming a Web page designer (or hiring one), RapidWeaver is a tool for everyone. Both novices and even professional Web site designers can take advantage of RapidWeaver's ability to create sites easily so you can focus on the creative part and ignore the tedious side of Web site designing.

To see a site designed by RapidWeaver, visit my new personal site, www.wallacewang.com. I had reserved my domain name for years, but never knew what to do with it all this time. By experimenting with RapidWeaver, I could quickly try out different designs and content.

Such rapid experimentation let me see what might work for my personal site. Initially I thought about focusing just on my various computer books, but someone interested in Microsoft Office 2010 for Windows wouldn't care about Macintosh or iPad information and vice versa. That's when I realized that I could turn my site into a technology blog that covers future trends that don't necessarily fit within this column.

Without RapidWeaver's tools for trying out different Web site designs, this process of creating a site would have been much harder and more painful. By using RapidWeaver as a Web site prototyping tool, designing my site was easy and fun. Best of all, once I was happy with the design of my site, I could upload it and have it running immediately.

If you need to create a Web site where multiple people must update it from anywhere in the world, then you'll need a CMS program like Drupal (which is used to create the White House's Web site). If you're the only person who needs to update a site and you don't want to waste your time learning HTML code or hiring an expensive Web page designer, then RapidWeaver might be the best choice for you.

For more information about designing good-looking Web sites, grab a copy of *Web Pages That Suck* (www.amazon.com/gp/product/078212187X?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=078212187X) by Vincent Flanders. By showing you bad Web page design, this book can help you better understand proper Web page design techniques.

Making a Movie with the iPhone

Some people see no use for any smartphone, while others can find a creative use for practically anything. Recently, film director Park Chan-Wook shot an entire movie (iphone.tmcnet.com/topics/iphone/articles/134474-south-korean-director-uses-iphone-4-shoot-movie.htm) using nothing but the built-in camera in the iPhone.

The movie, called "Night Fishing," took 80 people, 10 days, and about \$133,000 to make. It follows a fisherman as he meets a female shaman in a "surreal encounter." Chan-Wook had previously directed "Oldboy" (2003) and "Thirst" (2009), both of which won festival prizes at the Cannes Film Festival.

"New technology always offers wonders and useful features," said Chan-Wook. "It was a new experience compared with making a meticulously planned movie. Even a casual and spontaneous shot delivered a surprise." According to Chan-Wook, the iPhone is good compared to other movie cameras because it is "light and small and because anyone can use it."

If you still can't see a use for new technology, then you can at least admire the creativity of those who are finding numerous and diverse uses for that same technology. Personally, I didn't think I needed to use Facebook or Twitter, but the more I learn about how others are using Facebook and Twitter, the more I realize that I can find a use for them if I just open my eyes and start thinking.

One creative use of Facebook and Twitter comes from Michael Montijo, who has spent the past decade developing his cartoon series called "The Adventures of Pachuko Boy," which will officially air on TV in the fall of 2011.



Figure 7. The Adventures of Pachuko Boy will appear on TV this fall.
(Created by Martin Deschatelets with original design by Phil Ortiz.)

To promote his cartoon series, Michael says, "While Pachuko Boy is in development at the animation house, the social media hooks and strategies are also in development...[to]...utilize Twitter to continue episodic and/or Webisode story lines. These platforms will also become crucial in new content distribution. The question of how do you build brand disciples and evangelists prior to heavy network promotion will be answered by creating mystery through Pachuko Boy tweeting about crime he's fighting or specific events in his day that correlates with exclusive Webisodes on the PB Web site."

Using social media to hide clues about the show's stories can intrigue kids and encourage parents to follow Pachuko Boy on Twitter (www.twitter.com/pachukoboy) and watch for updates on the Pachuko Boy Facebook Fan page (www.facebook.com/pachukoboy) to solve crime in Pachuko World. "Pachuko World will be the online central hub Pachuko Boy," Michael says. "Fans will be able to fully interact with the brand all the way from working with Pachuko Boy and his team to...digital downloads, ringtones and other exclusive offers."

When confronted by creative and practical uses for technology, you have a choice. You can either believe that you can also benefit from using that same technology, or you can get defensive and fabricate excuses to justify why that technology is totally useless and impractical to everyone on the planet (contrary to evidence right before your eyes). We already know which choice anti-Apple critics and technology Luddites consistently choose, but which option are you going to pick for yourself?

"All truth passes through three stages. First, it is ridiculed. Second, it is violently opposed. Third,

it is accepted as being self-evident."

—*German philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer*

More iPads in the Classroom

Cedar Schools of Excellence (cedars.inverclyde.sch.uk/wiki/index.php?title=Main_Page) in Scotland has been deploying computers in their classrooms since January 2010. Fraser Speirs, the schools head of computing, says that they've deployed 115 iPads in school (www.macworld.com/article/157013/2011/01/ipadintheschool.html)—one to each pupil and staff member. "The iPads stay with students all day." Fraser says. "Children aged 10 and older can take them home at night. We told teachers they could get keyboards; to my surprise, none have taken up that offer.

"I had one requirement in mind when we were planning the deployment: We wouldn't tell anyone what the iPads were for. Too often, school computers are bought for specific pedagogical purposes—video editing, podcasting, or simply learning about computers. We didn't do that. We simply made the iPads available, without telling anyone what they should do with them. It's been interesting to see how teachers and students have responded to that freedom.

"We've discovered all kinds of uses for the iPad that we never envisioned, all of them enabled by iPad apps. For example, we had no particular plans to adopt e-books, but we're now using them because teachers wanted iBooks installed. We started an iPad band just by buying a few instrument-simulator apps."

Both students and teachers are clearly finding creative and practical uses for the iPad. While not everyone may need an iPad, so many people have found different uses for the iPad that it's no wonder that other manufacturers are developing tablet devices to capture part of this fast-growing tablet computer market.

Tablet computers promise to change the world as drastically as personal computers did back in the early 1980's. If you can see how learning to use these early personal computers might have helped you in the past, you should see similarities for how tablet computers can help you today.

"Are there things we wish the iPad did better?" Fraser concludes. "Of course. Is there another computing device that meets our needs more fully? Not right now. The iPad has transformed our school, and we have only begun to find out what's possible."

* * *

Ever since Apple switched from PowerPC processors to Intel processors, software publishers have had to ship versions of their programs to run on each chip. To simplify installing software for the user, most companies store their programs as a Universal Binary.

Essentially a Universal Binary file contains two copies of the exact same program. One copy only runs on PowerPC Macs and the other copy only runs on Intel Macs. When you double-click the program icon to run it, it checks to see which processor your Mac has and runs the appropriate version.

This means that if you have an Intel Mac, your hard disk is getting clogged up with all those useless PowerPC versions of your program. Likewise if you're still running a PowerPC Mac, your hard disk is cluttered with useless Intel versions of your programs.

To save hard disk space, you can delete all versions of your programs that only work on a different processor. To do that, you'll need a special utility program such as Drive Genius 3 (www.amazon.com/gp/product/

B003JZN5KK?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=B003JZN5KK), which offers a drive slimmer feature that examines which processor your Mac has, then strips away all program versions that your processor can't run.



Figure 8. Drive Genius 3 can strip away programs stored as Universal Binary files.

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 particples 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),
 Beginning Programming for Dummies (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),

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),
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),
My New Mac (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),
My New iPad (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),
How to Live With a Cat (When You Really Don't Want To) (www.smashwords.com/books/view/18896).
Mac Programming For Absolute Beginners (www.amazon.com/gp/product/1430233362?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=1430233362)

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

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Worldwide News & Product Reviews

“The latest in tech news and hot product reviews.” by Charles Carr



10 predictions for paid and natural search in 2011; Kill Screen's Top 20 Best Big and Small Games of 2010; Altitude for PC; AudioSurf for PC; Moonbase Alpha Freebie for PC.

Predictions for Natural and Paid Search in 2011

With Google's Instant Preview here to stay, leading search marketing specialist and technology firm Greenlight (www.greenlightsearch.com/knowledge/sector-reports/), has 2011 pegged as "Web design year." Greenlight's top 10 predictions for paid and natural search in 2011 include:

1. *Google and Bing will offer app search before the year is out.*

Smartphone users likely already feel the pull of their respective app store/marketplace as much as, if not more, than a traditional search engine like Google, if/when they have a particular need. That, according to Adam Bunn, director of search at Greenlight, is a new frontier for search: the idea that instead of finding a Web site that will be able to answer your question right now, you'll go and find an app and install that app because it will answer the question, and questions like it, again and again, in a more usable way (in the long term).

"To maintain any kind of grasp on the mobile user, search engines will need to be able to point out apps that might be relevant to the searcher's search—and even give them a one-click install option for when the search is being carried out from a mobile with the right operating system. This will manifest as another type of vertical search on Google and Bing, as well as being pulled into the normal results as a universal search element."

2. *Display marketing will mirror much of what is search in practice.*

Google's acquisition of Double Click, Yahoo! Right Media Exchange, and Direct Response crossing over; and MSN bringing its exchange to the forefront, as well as offering similar display programs and formats to search advertisers—is turning what we all once knew as "traditional display marketing" to a search-like display.

The Ad Exchanges specifically have been pivotal to this evolution, providing real-time bidding and optimization. It is making advertisers and brands rethink their display strategy and investment—and ask the question, does display have a new lease of life?

"The best example of this was Google's acquisition of Double Click," says Hannah Kimuyu, Director of paid search at Greenlight. "It transformed its Content Network into a fully fledged display network (also rebranded Display Network) proving that in fact traditional display (blanket run of network, etc) is a thing of the past, and marketers can expect more sophistication, control and results from a new era of display. Imagine having search-like control with display—moving into 2011 we expect to see more from this new form of display marketing."

3. *Google versus Bing—competition will heat up.*

Bing is to imitate Google Instant Preview and introduce image previews of sites, with some additional functionality over

the Google implementation such as the ability to zoom or "grab and scroll" the preview with the mouse to take a closer look before selecting which site is of interest.

Google is to introduce a feature similar to Bing's "Recent Searches," only called "Recent Pages." It will list the viewers five most recently clicked on search results for easier recollection later on. Data pertaining to how often a site is revisited when in the respective user's recent pages list will be fed into the algorithm.

"Expect this amidst a continued advertising push by Bing throughout the year," adds Bunn.

4. Yahoo! "Rich ads in Search" proposition will take off, prompting Google to consider offering display style ads within the search engine results page (SERPs).

A little similar to Google's recent introduction of Video extensions via its AdWords program. Yahoo! has launched its 'Rich Ads in Search' (RAIS) proposition. In summary, RAIS are designed to deeply engage the target audience through images, videos and multiple direct links to the respective site. Unlike Google, Yahoo! is offering permanent real-estate. You buy full inventory over a fixed period of time and are charged on a CPM (cost per thousand impressions).

RAIS is focused on branded search. It aims to highlight a respective brand even further, incorporate its video assets and extends its search functionality including site links and a search function in the ad as well.

The proposition is expected to increase click through rates (CTRs) significantly for brand owners. It aims to take back some of the control/brand visibility lost from affiliates and competitors.

According to Kimuyu, RAIS has to be one of the most exciting things to come from Yahoo in a while. "In my opinion it is a great example of the search networks finally taking responsibility over their advertisers' brands. Although Google's version is yet to make its mark, we do expect Google to up its game, especially now Yahoo! has shown its hand."

5. Too much content on the Web.

The real problem is not that there is too much content, but that there is too much similar or identical content that offers no real value for search engines the second, third or one thousandth time they come across it.

2010 saw Google implement its "May Day" algorithm update, part of which penalized cookie cutter content that is excessively template driven or syndicated to multiple sites in favor of more unique and valuable pages.

In 2011, Greenlight expects duplication filters will get even tougher as the engines take ever more drastic measures to limit the amount of resource they spend on less valuable content and maximize the focus on everything else.

6. There will be massive growth in the contextual based PPC model—pulling away from the search engine domain to advertisers such as eBay or Amazon.

With the success of Google's Content Network (now rebranded the Display Network), many publisher sites and shopping aggregators are following with similar paid for listings models, offering their real estate at a price. Although very early stages, none of them have quite mastered a 'quality score' of some type, making the payment model very much a fixed cost per click (CPC) but still split by vertical.

For advertisers, this is another advertising option that in most cases is a cheaper option. With CPCs being relatively low it helps spread the risk, so all an advertiser's budget isn't just spent with Google. But it does not quite offer the same amount of reach as advertising via one of the search engines or Google's contextual network.

That said it's an interesting proposition and one which many advertisers (especially retail and travel) are already exploiting. So far the biggest selling points are the competitive CPCs some of these publisher sites are offering, almost undercutting the search engines. Are they offering something different? And do they have a real chance of cutting into Google's monopoly of the contextual space? Greenlight thinks so.

7. Instant Previews are here to stay, making 2011 "Web design year."

With the introduction of Google Instant Previews, search engine users now get to see a site before they arrive at it. This means they will be making important decisions before the site has any chance to engage the viewer with the strength of its content or functionality. Although Instant Previews usually contain a few highlighted snippets of text as well as the overall screen-grab, those snippets are barely noticeable at present making the previews basically entirely graphical. Consequently if a site design is not up to scratch, it will start to see click through rates (CTRs) dropping, which will have knock on effects on the site's rankings too.

In addition, CTR optimization will become its own semi-discipline built around the arrival of Instant Previews and incorporating competitor analysis, title and meta description optimization, to offer a rounded and compelling package to top ranking sites.

8. Pre-targeting, Re-targeting, Re-marketing—all will be a prerequisite of any search strategy.

Personalized re-targeting, is the channel that allows advertisers to re-engage with lost customers via personalized banners across the Internet. Some of the biggest players in this market include Criteo, Struq, My Things Media and adGENIE. Even the search engines are giving it a go with Google's Remarketing or Yahoo! Smart Ads. Personalized retargeting is quite a unique proposition and twist to display in some ways, to the point whereby dynamic personalized retargeting has been proven to drive increased CTRs and conversion rates from what is considered the typical 0.005% for traditional display versus personalized re-targeting which normally starts off around 0.8% CTR and has been known to reach as high as 5% CTR.

The dynamic nature and flexibilities of re-targeting mean advertisers can optimize their ads in real-time, therefore responding to what their consumers really want and getting the most out of their investment. Again this is another example of display marketing taking on the qualities of paid search—and making it work for the advertiser.

"Combining our earlier prediction (Display marketing will mirror much of what is search in practice) with the re-targeting model sees search marketing expanding its remit within the online space—claiming more investment, and presenting more opportunities to close the loop outside the existing buying cycle," says Kimuyu.

9. Quick Response (QR) codes will replace "search online" calls to action in above the line (ATL) advertising.

Some time ago we started to see the advent of search based call to actions in ATL advertising, where an advert ends with the line "search widgets online" rather than a Web site address.

Greenlight predicts that in 2011, QR codes will usurp search calls to action in display advertising. This is probably just as well given the hash most companies seem to make of search based calls to action when it comes to search engine optimization (SEO), often failing to achieve or even try to rank naturally for the keyword they are encouraging people to search for.

So what's a QR code? A QR code is a "matrix" or 2D barcode that can be read by many mobile phones. It has a URL (among other things) encoded within it, letting advertisers replace the whole affair with a simple point and click.

10. Google comparison ads will be rolled out across all finance (and perhaps more) vertical keywords.

Over the last year, Google introduced Comparison Ads into the mix (part of the AdWords program). After a successful trial in the U.S, Google rolled out the proposition in the UK at the beginning of 2010. Invited advertisers were able to set a target cost per acquisition (CPA) against a group of specific keywords and not have to worry about inflating CPCs as a result of a poor quality score or aggressive competition. This program alone not only assists Google in monetizing its excess inventory. It also allows the advertiser to have confidence in securing a positive return on investment (ROI).

Now almost a year on, it makes sense for Google to push this proposition out across the entire Financial sector and most likely into Travel.

However, what does this mean for the aggregators, as Google is effectively taking a punt at their business model? Furthermore, with some of the aggregators being Google's biggest clients, is Google shooting itself in the foot by trying to recreate its own version of this market? It remains to be seen.

Kill Screen's Top 20 Best Big and Small Games of 2010

The Kill Screen (killscreenmagazine.com) staff has put together two best of 2010 lists, one for small games (generally independently produced or add-ons to larger titles) and one for the biggies:

Lists are serious. A critical consensus and a "Game of the Year" pick can cement a title's place in the canon. Plus, those little "BEST OF 2010" stickers on the boxes? They aren't cheap.

Lists are silly, too. The heated, spittle-flecked arguments we have when we make them, the disgust of the readers who disagree with them—when did we start taking this so seriously? No list is "objective." Professional critics will always give a bump to an underdog, a personal favorite, the game that everyone should have played. You're supposed to disagree with lists. That's why they're fun.

And lists are fun, first and foremost, which is why for our first Game of the Year list, we eschewed the usual methods—getting the staff together, donning black robes, etc.—and invited our favorite critics, writers, gamers, bloggers and tweeters, and asked them for their votes.

High Scores is a critics' poll, drawing on talents from many gaming publications. In addition to letting voters choose and rank their games, we also gave them a pool of points to assign to each title: 2 to 40 points, for a total of 100 in each list. This gave everyone a chance to push their favorites, lessening the odds of a boring consensus candidate. (And be sure to check out how the points shook out—dig that drop from #2 to #3 on the second list!)

We also gave voters two lists to work on: the "big games" (blockbusters, full retail releases, subscription-based MMOs), and "small games" (indies, downloadables, DLC and expansions, mobile, social, free-to-play, free). The cutoff is roughly a \$30 sticker price. This was our stab at respecting the divergent trends in gaming between the multi-million dollar cinematic experiences that represent the state of the art of the industry; and the wealth of smaller-budget games that have proven just as successful, whether they're super-artistic indie releases or low-budget bombshells like Angry Birds.

It's our first year. We're working out the kinks. But we can promise you a measure of truth, passion and controversy.

So without further ado: Small Games: The Top 20

1. LIMBO (263)
2. Super Meat Boy (203)
3. Minecraft (166)
4. Costume Quest (139)
5. Lara Croft and the Guardian of Light (121)
6. Angry Birds (99)
7. Red Dead Redemption: Undead Nightmare (98)
8. Monday Night Combat (89)
9. VVVVVV (87)
10. DeathSpank (71)
11. Pac-Man Championship Edition DX (67)
12. Scott Pilgrim vs. the World: The Game (62)
13. BioShock 2: Minerva's Den (60)
14. Game Dev Story (56)
15. Deadly Premonition (48)
16. Mass Effect 2: Lair of the Shadow Broker (45)
17. Cut the Rope (42)
18. Chime (41)
19. Plants vs. Zombies (41)
20. Joe Danger (38)

Could there be a bigger tent than the "under \$30" category? A list of "indie games" wouldn't have room for big name DLC like Red Dead Redemption: Undead Nightmare and BioShock 2: Minerva's Den. A snootier list would also have skipped Angry Birds, which was arguably 2010's biggest barrier-breaking hit. And given a choice, where choice number three is a gun to the head, we'd rather remember 2010 as "the year of Angry Birds" than "the year of FarmVille."

Superindie platformer VVVVVV earned high praise, as did the "so you think there's no such thing as a B-movie game?" horror-thing Deadly Premonition. Scott Pilgrim placed higher than we, or its Metacritic scores, would have expected, while critical darling Costume Quest made it all the way to the top 5. And then we have a slew of downloadable faves and Independent Games Festival winner/nominees, with LIMBO and Super Meat Boy topping the list (and IGF winner Monaco waiting for us for next year), and Joe Danger sneaking onto the bottom.

Just one question: Would Minecraft have placed higher if more people had played it? And will its future gold release come close to the adoration it received in alpha?

Big Games: The Top 20

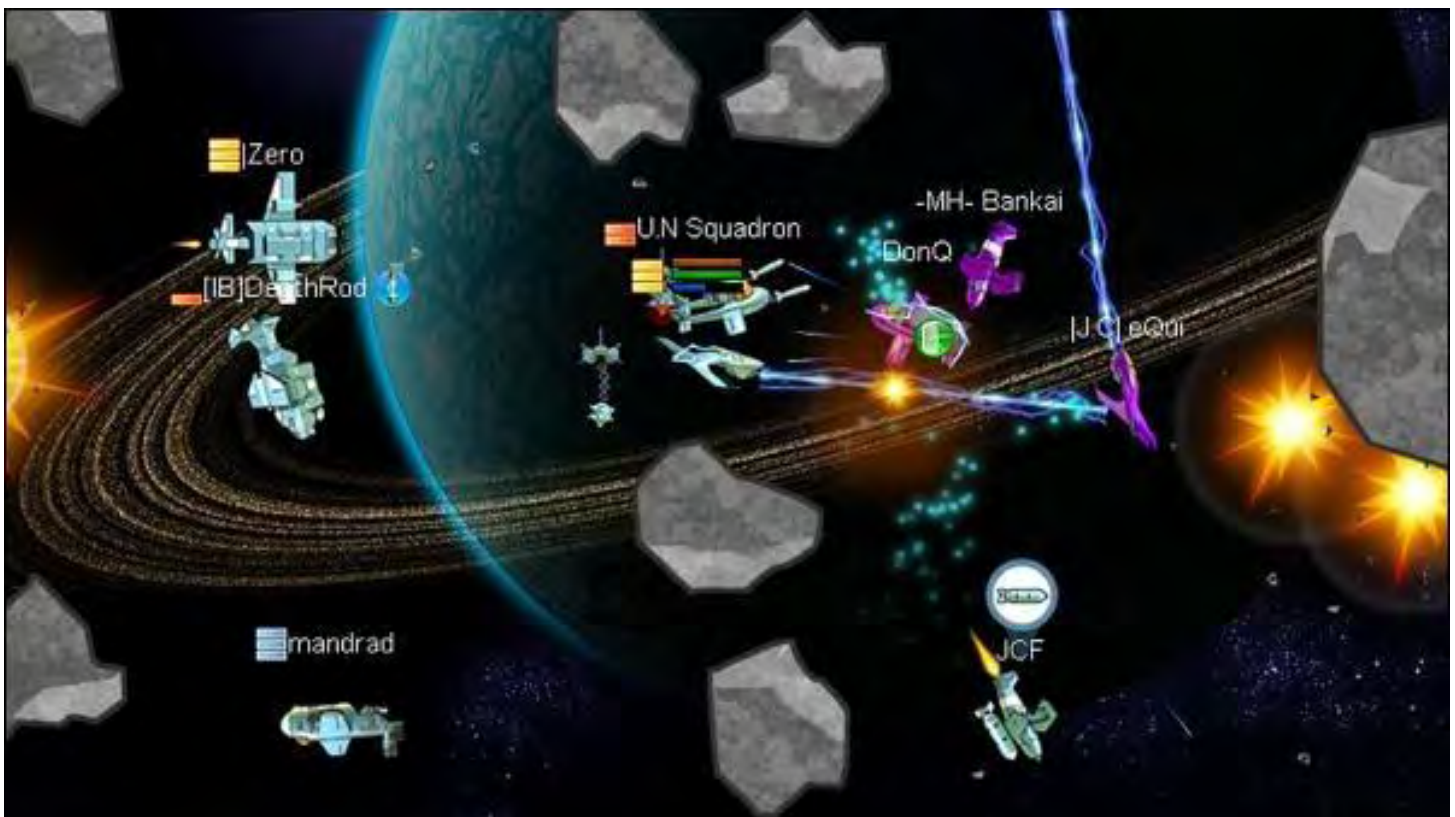
1. Mass Effect 2 (324)
2. Red Dead Redemption (307)
3. Heavy Rain (143)
4. StarCraft II: Wings of Liberty (136)
5. BioShock 2 (112)
6. Super Mario Galaxy 2 (111)
7. Rock Band 3 (104)
8. Assassin's Creed: Brotherhood (102)
9. Dance Central (91)
10. Halo: Reach (90)

11. Call of Duty: Black Ops (87)
12. Battlefield: Bad Company 2 (70)
13. Dragon Quest IX: Sentinels of the Starry Skies (67)
14. Kirby's Epic Yarn (66)
15. Enslaved: Odyssey to the West (62)
16. Metro 2033 (62)
17. Need for Speed: Hot Pursuit (58)
18. Split Second: Velocity (50)
19. Just Cause 2 (48)
20. Fallout: New Vegas (44)

If you had asked us in 2008 where the sequels to Fable II and Fallout 3 would have placed on this list, "nowhere near the top 10" would not have been our answer. Instead, Fallout: New Vegas just squeaks onto the bottom of a list of blockbusters. Mass Effect 2 and Red Dead Redemption loudly argue the case for games as the new cinema (in contrast to just about every title on our "small games" list). Heavy Rain's high placement suggests that the "love it or hate it" experiment won enough advocates to outweigh the yawns. And StarCraft II and Super Mario Galaxy 2 follow the "if it's not broke, make more of it" rule of sequels that has worked so well for Microsoft Word over the years.

Altitude for PC

Are you a fan of Team Fortress 2's class system? How about Call of Duty's leveling and perk system? If you answered yes to either of those (or even if you didn't) then Altitude (altitudegame.com) (\$9.99) is definitely worth checking out.



Altitude is a 2D airplane-combat style game that blends the best of all multiplayer elements into a giant thing of fun. It involves a leveling up system that is very similar to Call of Duty's. Each plane you fly has 3 perk slots (a red, blue and green one) that you fill with perks of your choice that give you various abilities; from rapid firing weapons to heavier

armor. The plane selection also seems to take hint from Team Fortress 2—it's got everything from the jumbo sized armored Hercules planes, to the fast and fragile bombers. With every plane you shoot down you gain xp, and as you build xp your level builds as well. At higher levels you unlock better planes and perks that you can customize to your play style. Along with leveling up there's even an achievement/challenge system that awards bonus experience from completing certain tasks. The game modes are attune to every multiplayer shooter you've played before as well, with modes like team deathmatch, free-for-all and plane ball (a take on capture the flag).

Overall, this game is a gem. The only part that bothered me is that starting off there is a severe unbalance in the equipment available to the equipment the other's you'll be playing with have. The intro soundtrack alone will have you crawling back for more, if the gameplay does not. If you're not worried about a little altitude sickness (pun intended) pick this one up on Steam or from Altitude's site.



Review contributed by Jeremy Halligan

AudioSurf for PC

Looking for a game that takes your music and turns it into an arcade racing game and sight seeing extravaganza all at once? Then look no further because AudioSurf is here. The concept is simple, take any unprotected (no Digital Rights Management) song on your hard drive and open it in AudioSurf, and the game designs a course specifically to the beats and rhythms of your music. You race along these courses picking up same colored tiles and matching them together to score points. There's multiple racers you can choose from as well each with their own unique capabilities—moving blocks to different rows, storing specific colors, and even playing with a friend—all of them add to the experience.



This game delivers a completely new spin to any music game I've ever played. I was truly amazed at how no two songs ever played the same. One thing I have to note is that the replay value starts to suffer after a while—and a word

of advice here, playing to oldies does not make for an exciting trip around the track!

So, for any of you techno or bass powered junkies out there looking for a new way to listen to your music, AudioSurf is available via Steam for \$9.99.

Warning: This game is not advised for anyone who is epileptic, there is a warning presented at the start of the game.



Review contributed by Jeremy Halligan

Moonbase Alpha Freebie for PC



Ever wondered what it would be like to go to the moon? How about go to the moon with friends? Well if this is the case, then Moonbase Alpha is worth a look. You take on the role of an astronaut sent on a mission to the moon faced with standard space missions; like repairing damaged equipment, driving around in the rover, and of course messing around in zero gravity with your buddies. It's single player as well as multiplayer so you can all have fun telling Houston about your problems together. It's available on Steam for free, just search "Moonbase Alpha."



Review contributed by Jeremy Halligan

In addition to being an editor and columnist for *ComputerEdge* and *ComputerScene* Magazines, where he has written hundreds of feature articles and cover stories over the past decade, Charles Carr has also penned well over 1,000 non-tech newspaper and magazine articles and columns for various publications, including two widely-read columns each week for San Diego's *North County Times* newspaper.

Carr has covered such diverse topics as pesticide use in area schools, invasive background checks for county volunteers, asthma awareness, the debate over standards-based grading, potential vulnerabilities in electronic voting machines, and Southern California's devastating 2003 and 2007 wildfires. He has also written many humorous pieces.

Carr has also edited dozens of stories and articles written by others which have appeared in major publications and web sites across the country.

He has been a contributor and technical advisor to *L.A. and San Diego Parent* magazines and receives dozens of requests a year to appear on Southern California television and radio stations to talk about important events in the tech world.

Carr has judged many writing competitions including San Diego Press Club and Time-Warner Communications contests and was sole judge for the national NAPPA Tech Toys awards for five years (which his kids really appreciated). He was recently a judge for the national "Poetry Out Loud" competition.

He has won many writing accolades, including Press Club awards for Best Column Writing, Consumer Writing and Best Arts and Entertainment, and has repeatedly taken top honors in San Diego Songwriter's Guild competitions for his original musical compositions.

Carr will soon publish his first book, *What a World*, a collection of his best writings.

Learn more at www.charlescarr.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

"Comparing Apples and Oranges," "Printer Ink Cartridges," "Wally's World"

Comparing Apples and Oranges

[Regarding Jack Dunning's December 24 article, "Comparing Apples and Oranges":]

Hi Jack:

You may be right regarding "Apples and Oranges," but I will not be buying an iPad now or any time soon. I have had a Netbook and an iPod Touch since their inception and in the market replace both (upgraded). The only difference that I will be making is from a 8.9" screen to 10.1" on the Netbook and of course I will purchase the latest generation iPod Touch.

They both have their place. They both have 40 to 50 hot spots programmed to pop on when I walk in the door. My house, my two daughter's houses, the grocery store, doctor's office, two libraries, computer club meetings and the senior center to name a few. Soon Wi-Fi will be almost every place I frequent and the portability is great. I manage two brokerage accounts, e-mail and whatever comes up with whichever machine I have with me at the time.

I also use Whistle Phone (Free nation wide phone system) from wherever I have Wi-Fi service. It is a great addition to save cell phone minutes. I can't even think about not having either one of these machines.

Thanks for *ComputerEdge*,

-Jim Haynes

Printer Ink Cartridges

[Regarding the December 31 Digital Dave column:]

Expensive printer-manufacturer cartridges and self-refills (what a mess this can be if you're not careful) plus refill services were mentioned. But the "middleman," the manufacturer of *new* duplicate-style cartridges was not mentioned. They provide *new*, printer-compatible cartridges at a price that is about 1/3 to 1/5 the cost of what the original manufacturer wants for their cartridges.

-Allen, Los Lunas, NM

I've always stayed with *laser* printers partly because of the cost of ink cartridges and because the print quality of a laser is so much better. Plus, the toner cartridges, though a bit higher in price, last a long time. One toner cartridge will last me a year based on my daily use. And now the cost of laser printers have dropped too, even color printers.

-Gary Weinstein, Groveland, CA

I was replacing cartridges every time the computer showed they were low. What a "scam" this is. Like you said, it was costing me a fortune. I found that by letting them run out or get very low, to where the quality was getting bad, they actually would last about three times as long. Just be sure to have an extra one on hand so you don't run out in the middle of something.

-Wayne Ford, Huntington Beach, CA

I've used low-cost laser printers in the past and still use one for non-color printing. However, ink-jet printers can't be beat for occasional high-quality color printing.

I've used both Canon and Epson ink-jet printers in the past, but bought one of Kodak's first ESP printers (the ESP-7) in December of 2008 in order to print about two hundred photos per year and several dozen color Web pages per year. This printer has worked great for this purpose and without any problems with printer heads or ink drying out, etc. It also seems to cost about half what the ink for the other printers had cost (just as Kodak claims).

I had used third-party ink with the other printers and was only somewhat satisfied. The cheapest didn't work well at all, others were OK but not as good as those from the printer manufacturer. The Kodak cartridges are cheap enough that I'm willing to use them with the Kodak printer, and am much happier with the results. Of course, its still somewhat more expensive than third-party inks.

-Ed Wullschleger, Longmont, Colorado

I have had many different models of printers over the years. I now have two HP ColorJet printers, one is a multi-function device. They were cheap and work very well, but cartridge life is an issue, apart from the low ink issue when there is plenty left, HP also has a life time-out date that pops up even if the cartridge is full but is judged too old!

There is some relief, not much, from this as HP has just settled a class action suit and users of certain HP printers will get e-credits to spend with, you guessed it HP's online store..! Check this link (pacificink.com/blog/2010/11/16/hp-class-action-lawsuit-settlement/) for more info on the suit.

-Bruce Allen, Ramona CA

Wally's World

[Regarding the December 31 Wally Wang's Apple Farm column:]

I read *ComputerEdge* every week and hope you never stop publishing it. This article about the iPad was the best and most informative article I have ever read about Apple's iPad. Thank you very much. I now feel I am almost up-to-date with my grandchildren on this subject. It also made me feel fortunate about having lived through the days of 386 DOS, Browsers, IPS, etc. In spite of all the ups and downs of changes and improvements, I am glad to have lived to see and use some of the fascinating changes we have had over the years.

Thank you very much,

-Arden Heinrich, Littleton Colorado

Right-click back button—Wow! Right-click in IE8 has a back and forward choice. Who knew?

Thanks Wally!

As for the virus myth—Apple does promote the myth that their products are immune to viruses. As more crackers buy Apple products, there will be an increase in attacks. Of course Mac OS X is a real operating system, which will make it more difficult.

-Marcus, Alabama

ComputerEdge always wants to hear from you, our readers. If you have specific comments about one of our articles, please click the "Tell us what you think about this article!" link at the top or bottom of the article/column. Your comments will be attached to the column and may appear at a later time in the "Editor's Letters" section.

If you want to submit a short "ComputerQuick Review", or yell at us, please e-mail us at [*ceeditor@computoredge.com*](mailto:ceeditor@computoredge.com).

Send mail to ceeditor@computoredge.com with questions about editorial content.

Send mail to cwebmaster@computoredge.com with questions or comments about this Web site.

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