

ComputerEdge™ Online — 04/01/11



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Digital Dave

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

Computer Comes On Then Goes Off; USB Ports; Web Site Display.

Dear Digital Dave,

Every night for the past four nights, at 9:21, my computer comes out of sleep with a lot of hard drive activity, but the monitor does not come on, then at 9:25, it goes back to "sleep." I've run a complete virus scan with nothing. Same with SuperAntispyware. I can find nothing "scheduled" at that time. Ideas?

*Larry McLaughlin
Aurora, CO*

Dear Larry,

"Oh what hast thy gremlins doth done ere mid the nigh!" (Not Shakespeare, I just make that up.)

You should not be in the same room with a sleeping computer since it is never really asleep. Wanting to know what it is doing (and thinking) could drive your crazy.

I'm assuming that you checked your Task Scheduler in the Control Panel to determine that there was nothing scheduled. I checked mine and found all kinds of things ready to go off. Many of them were automatic updates and backups. However, there are numerous maintenance activities that may run as services or are routine parts of the operating systems which may not appear in the Task Schedule. It could be as simple as checking for an update of some type or running a defrag on a drive that needs no defragging—it doesn't take very long.

As for the timing, the Windows has features that, based on user experience, try to pre-cache programs at times you're most likely to use them—and unload those that you are unlikely to use. There could be a combination of events, that is causing the operating system to change its state of readiness at 9:21 PM. It only takes about four minutes, but it causes a great deal of drive activity. It will depend totally on how you use your computer.

Digital Dave

Dear Digital Dave,

I have a six year old Dell Desktop computer. I use one of the USB ports for the wireless Linksys system that connects to a wireless Motorola Modem on the other side of the house. Recently it stopped working and I couldn't figure out what was wrong and couldn't get an Internet signal

from my Cox Cable modem. So I hooked up an Ethernet cable directly to the modem (pain). Then a friend came over and hooked the wireless to the USB port in the front of the computer and now it is working again. Is it hard to replace the USB ports and is it worth it? Do they just wear out or is there a "quick fix"?

Thanks

*SD Cooley
San Diego , CA*

Dear SD,

Yes, USB ports do wear out and/or break. No, there is rarely a quick fix. Sometimes the constant connecting into and disconnecting out of the port will break things. Sometimes the transistors just die. The fact that you were able to reconnect with the USB port in the front is pretty good evidence that it was a hardware problem with the port in the back.

Whether it is worth replacing your USB ports depends upon how many USB ports you need and how much longer you will be using that computer. (Six years is about 76.674 in computer years. Your computer could have a couple of years left. It probably will need a hard drive or power supply transplant—if not already done.)

If the bad USB port(s) is on the motherboard, you will need to add an expansion card. In this case, be sure that you disable the bad ports in the Device Manager found in the Control Panel. Otherwise, they might interfere with the good ports in a negative way. (I've seen it happen. Bad company and all that.)

If the bad USB is a separate board, you can merely replace it. Be sure to match the new board with the expansion slots on the motherboard.

Another option for adding more USB ports is to get a USB adapter which adds more ports. You could do this with the good port in the front of the computer. It is similar to adding more power sockets to your wall power with an adapter. However, if you add too many, you need another adapter which will provide external power.

Digital Dave

Dear Digital Dave,

I have a problem I've never seen addressed. The computer I'm working on will not display any Web page with either Internet Explorer or Chrome. It does have an Internet connection through a router and the other two computers on this router work fine. I have refreshed the IP address, but got no joy. OS is Vista Home Premium. Any ideas would be much appreciated.

Thanks

*Jim Hill
Spring Valley, CA*

Dear Jim,

"Have you tried turning it off and on again?" (Taken from the British comedy series "The IT Crowd.") Include the modem, the router and the computer in this suggestion. Turn them all off, then first turn on the modem. Wait a couple

of minutes, then turn on the router. A couple more minutes, then power up the computer. Even though your other computers are working, a glitch (technical term for "We don't know what causes this") has stopped the communication with your computer. I know that you probably already did this, but I thought I'd mention it.

You have isolated the problem down to specifically the connection between your computer and the router. There is no problem with your ISP nor the router itself since the other two computers get the Web. I'm not clear on whether you are getting other Internet services such as e-mail. I suspect that you are not.

You should make sure your malfunctioning computer doesn't have a static IP assigned to it. If it does, in some situations (it was turned on after device with same assigned IP), it could conflict with another device on the network which would cause non-communication.

To check the IP assignment setting, open the Network and Sharing Center and click Network connection in the left hand navigation pane. In the Network Connections window, select your network device, right-click and select Properties from the bottom of the menu. From the Network Connections Properties window, select Internet Protocol Version 4 (TCP/IPv4) and click Properties. In the Internet Protocol (TCP/IP) window, select Obtain an IP address automatically and click OK.

If the IP setting wasn't the problem, I suggest that you use the netstat and ping commands in the command window to check your connection with other devices on the network. (Type "command" into the Start Search field of the Start Menu and select Command Prompt from the menu.) The commands:

```
netstat /?
```

and

```
ping /?
```

will give you information on how the commands work.

If you are indeed connected to other devices on the network and/or your e-mail is working, then something on the software side is likely blocking the port (80) over which the Web operates. You will need to then check your firewall settings and other software setup factors. It is very difficult to nail down this type of problem.

If, as I suspect, you are not getting communication, then you most likely have a problem with a network card or device. If you're using a direct Ethernet connection, then try wireless. If you're using wireless, try a direct connection. Most likely you will need to replace something.

Of course this is all assuming that you don't have some type of virus which is running undetectable by your antivirus software. If the previous suggestions do not work, my experience is that either I can go to bed at night and it will magically be fixed in the morning, or I toss it out the window ("Out of sight, out of mind"). Use one of your other computers.

Digital Dave

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Building E-Books

“E-book Self Publishing Software” by Jack Dunning

Jack is starting to explore the world of e-books—more specifically e-book publishing. There are different e-book formats, the most common is EPUB. Calibre will convert to whichever e-book format you need, and Sigil enables you to edit your e-book—even better, both programs are free!

I'm not an expert on e-books—yet. I've only started digging into the hidden mechanisms of creating and publishing digital reading material. With my daughter, we're starting a project for converting Jim Whiting's cartoons into a digital book (maybe "That Does Not Compute!"). We will then move on to some of the other editorial content in *ComputerEdge*, such as "Digital Dave" and "Windows Tips and Tricks." This will put the columns in one place in an easy-to-read format. Eventually, the e-books will be made available via Amazon, Apple iTunes and other publishing outlets. This is part of the journey I started when I purchased an iPad, but only one aspect of the total.



Reading a book is the ultimate example of one-handed experiences. The basic process consists of holding the book in one hand while turning the pages with another. The simplicity (and beauty) of the process is that it can be done virtually anywhere. This is the reason that people have had a love affair with books for the past number of centuries. Now that one-handed computing has become a standard for reading books—first with the Amazon Kindle and more recently with the tablet computers a la Apple iPad—a multitude of opportunities open up to the individual



“Since Clyde bought his new eBook reading tablet he has thousands more books he’ll never have time to read.”

entrepreneur. Just as what has already happened to the old stock brokerages and music publishers, the major book publishers are facing the cannibalization of their traditional way of doing business. What is devastating for the publishing elite, who have controlled book publishing in the past, produces a dynamic environment for new entrepreneurial enterprises.

Digital e-books are taking over the book market.

In January of this year, e-book sales more than doubled over last year, outstripping the sales of paperbacks. It looks like the digital revolution is in full steam for the book publishing industry. More and more people are reading their books on their Amazon's Kindle, Barnes and Noble's Nook, Apple's iPad tablet, or even their computer—laptops and desktops alike. While this is an unfortunate turn of events for major book publishers and bookstores, it is a boon for anyone interest in self-publishing. Not only can you get your novel published without the blessing of a big publishing house, but you can do it for free. All it takes is a little time to learn how to do it.

The E-Book Format

E-books are digital files that meet certain format criteria for reading in one, or a number, of e-book readers. The e-book format was designed to replicate the printed book reading process while taking advantage of technology. There are a couple of key features to e-books. First, the size of the type is not fixed. If the reader needs larger type, no problem, the font size can easily be changed. Second, there is generally a Table on Contents which is interactive with the book. When you click (or touch) a chapter name, you are navigated to that point in the book. While there are other features added to the e-book reading experience by the various reader programs, such as bookmarks for saving places, note taking and dictionary look-up, the primary function of an e-book format is to provide continuous text and, hopefully, an interactive Table of Contents.

Unlike word processing files and PDFs, which are page oriented, controlling font types and sizes (and a multitude of other page layout features), e-book files have relatively simple formatting. There are no embedded page numbers and limited formatting with the text flowing and wrapping continuously into the e-book reader as each chapter of the book is loaded. This allows the software to add virtual page numbers to each book based upon the size of the text. If the user decides to increase the text font size, the reader software will rescan the book thereby increasing the number of pages—and vice versa. To make up for possible inconsistent page numbering, most reader software will offer a bookmark system for saving specific locations in the text. Digital readers also provide a Table of Contents feature, which will link directly to each chapter or section of the book—as long as the Table of Contents has been included by the publisher as part of the e-book file. Generally, an e-book will open to the page which was last opened by the user (before falling asleep).

There are a number of such e-book formats (identified by the extension added to the file name), which cause a good deal of confusion. Amazon uses AZW which is based on the Mobipocket standard, but EPUB (compatible with virtually every e-book reader except Kindle) is rapidly becoming the most universal and capable of the numerous formats. EPUB, an open standard for e-books, was created by the International Digital Publishing Forum (IDPF) and is based upon XHTML—very much like Web programming, if not identical. There are numerous other digital book formats (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comparison_of_e-book_formats) associated with various companies and readers (see Figure 1).

Format	Filename extension	DRM support	Image support	Table support	Sound support	Interactivity support	Word wrap support	Open standard	Embedded annotation support	Book-marking
Plain text	.txt	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
HTML	.html	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
PostScript	.ps	No	Yes	?	No	No	No	Yes	?	?
Portable Document Format	.pdf	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
DjVu	.djvu	?	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
EPUB (IDPF)	.epub	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
FictionBook	.fb2	Yes	Yes	?	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	?
Mobipocket	.prc, .mobi	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes ^[citation needed]	Yes	Yes
Kindle	.azw	Yes	Yes	Yes ^{[f 1][19]}	Yes ^{[f 2][20]}	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
eReader	.pdb	Yes	Yes	?	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
TealDoc	.pdb	Yes	Yes	?	No	No	Yes	Yes	?	Yes
Broadband eBook	.lrf, .lrx	Yes	Yes	?	No	No	Yes	No	?	?
WOLF ^[disambiguation needed]	.wol	Yes	Yes	?	No	No	No	No	?	?
Tome Raider	.tr2, .tr3	Yes	Yes	?	No	No	Yes	No	?	?
ArghosReader	.aeh	Yes	Yes	?	No	No	Yes	No	?	Yes
Microsoft Reader	.lit	Yes	Yes	?	No	No	Yes	No	?	Yes
Multimedia EBook	.exe	Yes	Yes	?	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Repligo	.rgo	?	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	No

Figure 1. E-book formats. (Chart taken from Wikipedia—Comparison_of_e-book_formats.)

Independent of the specific file format, there is a system of Digital Rights Management (DRM) (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Digital_rights_management), which locks a book to a particular reading device preventing copying and printing. This is an attempt by publishers to stop the sharing of copyrighted material. DRM is subject to some controversy since it technically prevents "fair usage" by the purchaser (reading the same book on another owned device). Publishers feel that freely shared copyrighted material will cut into their sales, although there is little evidence to support this notion. Plus, many people claim that DRM is ineffective since there are always ways to break the system. Many distributed e-books have no DRM and are freely available over the Internet. Protecting your digital rights is a topic for another day(or author if someone else would care to write about it).

Software for Creating E-Books

There are a number of commercial programs which will create e-book format. Most often mentioned is Adobe's InDesign—a \$700 program. I haven't had a chance to check out InDesign (30-day free trial) because I always look for the free stuff first. However, I know that InDesign is primarily a page oriented desktop publishing program, which means it will not be ideal for the initial process of book creating called writing. (Usually, a word processing program such as the free OpenOffice Writer will be much better suited to the writing process.) If you are creating an e-book from a magazine, an advertising brochure with many graphics, or another disjointed type of publication, then a desktop publishing program may be just the ticket. Even then, I would give the free OpenOffice Draw a shot.

The most common name to arise in the free e-book software category is Calibre (calibre-ebook.com) (pronounced "cal-i-ber" rather than "ca-lee-bray"—go figure), but people looking for an all-in-one e-book publishing package may be initially disappointed. There are a couple of other pieces of the puzzle (also free) which are needed for a complete digital book creation solution. Calibre (I mean "cal-i-ber") is primary an e-book organizer, digital book reader and file conversion program. While it is excellent for getting your book into various e-book formats, it will not be helpful in

writing the book nor editing it once it is in the proper e-book file format. Therefore, creating an e-book with Calibre is a three-step process: writing the book; converting the book to the desired e-book format (Calibre); and editing the e-book file (if necessary).

Note: Using three different programs seems like a bit of a kludge, but it works—and it's free. I'm guessing that a program such as InDesign would do it all, but I'll leave it to those who are more experienced with e-book publishing to make recommendations. Also, if any of you know other programs that work well, please include your thoughts in a comment.

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Once you have converted your original file (text, DOC, ODT, PDF, etc), you may need to tweak the new file with an e-book editor. If you're working with EPUB files, Calibre recommends Google's Sigil (code.google.com/p/sigil/) for editing. It is not the most intuitive program and a little HTML Web programming experience will come in handy. Once you understand how Sigil works, you'll find that you can edit either with the WYSIWYG screen or directly in the XHTML code which is the basis for the EPUB format. If you've worked with a number of different types of software, you may find Sigil fairly limited as an editor. But it's important to remember that e-book formats **are** very limited, designed for one particular purpose—reading books. The most important feature included is for creating a Table of Contents. This is not available in Calibre, at least as far as I could see. Minor editing and adding page breaks is relatively easy in Sigil. Even though Sigil only works with EPUB files, you can do your editing, save, then put that back into Calibre and convert to other e-book formats.

There are other programs available which appear to be free and possibly more comprehensive. I saw Mobipocket Creator (www.mobipocket.com/en/DownloadSoft/ProductDetailsCreator.asp) mentioned frequently. (I would need comments from people who have used the program.) Book Designer (www.bookdesigner.ru/) (also free) is a suite of programs of Russian origin—noted by the fact that most of the Web site is in Russian. (This is not much of a problem if you access the site with Google Chrome and use the built-in translation feature.) Although after reading the information at the site, it appears that the e-book creation process would be pretty much the same as what I've already described for Calibre. (I'm not sure how I would feel about using a Russian program.)

There are a multitude of e-book library/reader programs for testing your results. Some are dedicated devices such as the Kindle or the Nook, while virtually all of the tablets will have software available. The free Apple iPad library/reader program is called iBooks which will read both EPUB and PDF files. The iPad is a good device for testing EPUB files since it will display in both a single-page mode and a smaller double-page mode by merely rotating the display. Since it recalculates the layout and number of pages when changing modes, it's easily to see the effect on any graphics included in the book. Eventually, I will need to get other reading devices for more testing, especially an Amazon Kindle. With an ultimate goal of distributing e-books, it's necessary to know how the major readers work.

Once the e-book is created, the next step is publication with distributors. This would naturally include Amazon Kindle, Apple iTunes for iPad book sales, and Google Books. However, this is a topic for another time since at this moment I only have a cursory understanding of the topic. (More exploration is required.) Then, there is the bag of worms called marketing. Even if you write, create and publish the most brilliant book, no one will know unless you do good marketing. I know a little about this, but I'll address that at the appropriate time.

This is only the beginning of the process for me. There will be many people creating and publishing digital books, but I predict that, just as has happened in Web design, the number of people who want help with their e-books will far outstrip the number who know how to do it.

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. He can be reached at ceeditor@computoredge.com

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Wally Wang's Apple Farm

Wally Wang's Apple Farm

“The New World of Digital Publishing” by Wally Wang

Wally shares his experience with e-book publishing using Smashwords and Amazon. Learning with Apple; the business model of Microsoft Windows is broken; the future of Apple (and everyone else); lies, misinformation and deception; the iPad vs. the iPad 2; how to avoid right-clicking.

For the past few decades, I've made my living by writing computer books. With e-books gaining popularity, printed books getting too expensive, and book stores going out of business, the traditional book publishing business model is dead. With declining sales, book publishers, distributors and stores are slowly sinking into bankruptcy.

Most authors hope that the book publishing business will magically rebound and return back to the glory days of the past. Maybe that will happen, but it's more likely that making money through traditional book publishing will never be the same again. People still want books. They just don't want to wade through a book store and waste time looking for something that might meet their needs when they can just go online and find something that offers the information they want.

Given a choice between the convenience of online ordering and instantaneous delivery to your computer, or random wandering through a book store in hopes of finding something appropriate, the answer seems simple. Just as the music industry died by eliminating the middlemen, so will the book industry die by eliminating the middlemen which are the publishers, distributors and book stores. The new business model appears to be selling directly to the customer.

How exactly that might work is anybody's guess, but investigating electronic, self-publishing seems far more promising than wishing for the good old days of book publishing to return once more. In my personal blog (www.wallacewang.com), I'll be jotting down my experience with electronic self-publishing, but for now, I have experience with two electronic self-publishing options: Smashwords and Amazon.

Smashwords (www.smashwords.com) is a free service that converts a Microsoft Word document into a Smashwords manuscript that you can sell through the Smashwords site. Although the service is free, Smashwords takes a percentage of every sale you make. When your book (or books) earns a fixed amount of money, such as \$100, Smashwords will send you a check.

To experiment with Smashwords, I submitted a humorous e-book called *How To Live With a Cat (When You Really Don't Want To)* (www.smashwords.com/books/view/18896), which is a parody of a cat care book. I priced this e-book on the honor system so people can pay whatever they wish. The problem with e-books in general is that unless you constantly promote your e-book, nobody will know it even exists.

My second experiment is through Amazon's Kindle. While the Kindle e-reader isn't likely to dominate the world, Amazon's Kindle software is already dominating the world with e-reading software available for Windows, Mac OS X, iPhone, iPad, Android, Blackberry and Windows Phone 7. Any Kindle e-book can be read through any Kindle software so you can take your library with you from your computer to your iPad to your Android phone to your Kindle e-reader.

Just as with Smashwords, publishing an e-book through Amazon means creating a Microsoft Word document and allowing Amazon to convert it to a Kindle e-book. My Amazon Kindle e-book is based on my screenwriting blog called *The 15-Minute Movie Method* (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B004TMD9K8/ref=as_li_tf_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=B004TMD9K8), which guides readers into turning good ideas into well-structured screenplays. The same information is freely available on my screenwriting blog (www.15minutemoviemethod.com), but the Amazon Kindle e-book packages this information in a more structured format.

The big difference between electronic self-publishing and traditional publishing is that authors typically earn 10-15 percent of a book's price in traditional publishing. If a book sells for \$10 in a book store, the book store probably paid \$5 at the most for that book.

The distributor probably paid \$2.50 at the most for that book in order to sell it to the book store for at least a 100 percent profit. That means the book publisher probably paid \$1.25 to print and bind that book. When the publisher sells a book to a distributor, the publisher keeps the lion's share of the profits and gives the author 10 percent of that profit. So if the publisher sells a book to a distributor for \$2.50, the author makes 25 cents on a \$10 book.

In the old days when book stores and distributors were the only way to get a book to the public, this business model worked fine, but with book stores failing and costs going up for printing and distributing books, this business is unsustainable.

On the other hand, electronic self-publishing typically lets authors capture 70 percent of a book's retail price, so if you price a book at \$10, the electronic distributor (such as Amazon) keeps \$3 and the author gets \$7. Would you rather sell a book for \$10 and earn \$7 or 25 cents?

The trade-off is that electronic self-publishing initially didn't reach as many people as traditional book stores do, but with book stores rapidly disappearing, electronic distribution will eventually catch up and surpass printed book distribution.

Will I get rich electronically self-publishing my own books? Probably not right away, but with the traditional book publishing market nosediving into the ground at supersonic speed, electronic self-publishing seems like one of many viable options to consider. What isn't an option is hoping that change will go away and the future will be more like the past that's never coming back again in our lifetime.

Learning with Apple

Despite their smaller market share in the computer market, Apple has traditionally been strong in the educational market. With the growing use of the Macintosh, iPad and iPhone in education, teachers and administrators have been coming up with creative solutions for integrating Apple products into the classroom.

To share their knowledge, teachers typically fly to a single city and attend a conference. However, the time and expense for traveling may be too much, especially when it's much simpler just to attend a conference over the Internet instead. While such remote conferencing prevents people from randomly meeting and getting to know each other in person, remote conferences are more convenient to reach a larger number of people who are unable to travel.

That's why an organization called MacLearning, along with the help of Apple, is holding their AcademiX 2011 (maclearning.org/userpage.php?page_id=29) conference on April 29. The conference is free but does require registration (www.apple.com/education/academix/).

AcademiX 2011 - Redefining the university experience

AcademiX 2011
Locations

Friday, April 29, 2011

Northeastern University
11:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. EDT
Egan Center Raytheon Amphitheater
120 Forsyth Street
Boston, MA 02115

Emory University
11:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. EDT
Emory Conference Center Hotel
Emory Amphitheater
1615 Clifton Road
Atlanta, GA 30329

The Ohio State University Medical Center
11:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. EDT
OSU Biomedical Research Tower (BRT)
Room 115
460 W. 12th Avenue
Columbus, OH 43210

San Diego State University
8:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. PDT
Aztec Athletics Center
Aztec Athletics Auditorium
5302 55th Street
San Diego, CA 92115



Redefining the university experience.

Discover how mobile devices and iOS are helping transform education.

You're invited to AcademiX 2011 on April 29th, 2011, where you'll learn how mobility is changing the way universities work. In eight 20-minute talks, leading educators will discuss how iOS development, mobile devices, and apps have impacted the way students learn, the teaching methods that have emerged, and the Apple technologies that help make it all happen.

Register now to attend the conference in person. Or watch the live webcast and interact online with presenters and your peers from 8:00 a.m. to 12:50 p.m. PDT. Go to www.apple.com/education/academix/.

One Event, Multiple Ways to Participate

AcademiX 2011 will take place simultaneously at Emory University, Northeastern University, The Ohio State University Medical Center, and San Diego State University through a live video conference bringing all the presenters and audiences together into one live event. If you can't attend in person, you

Travel Budget Empty?

AcademiX 2011 is friendly to your budget and the environment!

You and your colleagues can participate from your office or conference room via a live webcast.



Figure 1. The AcademiX 2011 conference focuses on using Apple products in education.

Some of the conference topics include:

- Using mobile and social media for research and teaching.
- Enhancing computer science education with real-world app development projects.
- Supporting iPad across different departments, and how students are using iPad as their primary tool.
- How learning with iPad ensures that future foreign policy leaders understand the role new technology can play in global politics.

Even if you can't attend this conference in person, registration allows you to watch and listen to the presentations as

well as ask questions remotely. These eight, 20-minute talks can teach you how to integrate Apple products into your own world, whether it's a classroom or an ordinary work environment.

By attending the AcademiX conference remotely, you can get a glimpse for how technology and education can work together. While technology alone can't solve all our educational problems, it can certainly help, and this conference can show you how that might happen.

The Business Model of Microsoft Windows is Broken

Microsoft made their fortune by licensing their operating system to various computer manufacturers, eventually making MS-DOS and then Windows the most dominant operating system in the world. Microsoft tried duplicating that success with Windows Mobile on smart phones where they once held 20 percent of the smart phone market. Now according to comScore (www.comscore.com/Press_Events/Press_Releases/2011/3/comScore_Reports_January_2011_U.S._Mobile_Subscriber_Market_Share), Microsoft's October 2010 market share was 9.7 percent when they introduced Windows Phone 7, and dropped to 8 percent in January 2011, despite the heavy marketing of Windows Phone 7.

Top Smartphone Platforms 3 Month Avg. Ending Jan. 2011 vs. 3 Month Avg. Ending Oct. 2010 Total U.S. Smartphone Subscribers Ages 13+ Source: comScore MobiLens			
	Share (%) of Smartphone Subscribers		
	Oct-10	Jan-11	Point Change
Total Smartphone Subscribers	100.0%	100.0%	N/A
Google	23.5%	31.2%	7.7
RIM	35.8%	30.4%	-5.4
Apple	24.6%	24.7%	0.1
Microsoft	9.7%	8.0%	-1.7
Palm	3.9%	3.2%	-0.7

Figure 2. Microsoft's share of the smart phone market continues to slip.

One problem with Microsoft's operating system business model is that if everyone uses the same operating system, there's little difference between one product and the other. As a result, PC manufacturers have been reduced to competing on price where each competitor keeps slashing prices (and profits) until nobody can make much money at all.

One reason why Apple has succeeded with Mac OS X and iOS is because their operating system gives them a competitive advantage over rivals. If someone wants to use Mac OS X or iOS, they have no choice but to buy an Apple product.

Now other companies are seeing the advantage of Apple's business model compared to Microsoft's business model. Hewlett-Packard acquired Palm Computing just for their webOS operating system so they won't be dependent on a third-party operating system from Microsoft or Google. Motorola is rumored to be looking at developing their own operating system (www.informationweek.com/news/development/mobility/showArticle.jhtml?

articleID=229400097).

Motorola already relies on Google's Android, but since anyone can use Android for free, it's likely that rival smart phone and tablet manufacturers will wind up making similar products as Motorola. Then Motorola will have to compete on price and lower their profit margins.

By developing their own operating system, Motorola hopes to differentiate themselves from their competitors and maintain control over their own destiny without relying on a third-party for their success.

In the early days of computers, there were plenty of different operating systems (MS-DOS, CP/M-86, UCSD p-System, Pick, etc.), but since finding programs to run on those different operating systems was difficult, people rallied around a standard, which happened to be Microsoft's MS-DOS and eventually Windows.

The same problem can occur with today's multitude of operating systems. However, the idea of an app store, combined with the convenience of the Internet, makes it easy for people to find apps for their particular operating system no matter how small its market share might be.

By eliminating the hassle of finding apps, an app store partially removes one advantage of a dominant operating system standard. Even though both webOS and Windows Phone 7 offer just a handful of apps compared to iOS and Android, users can still find and install apps quickly and easily. The sheer variety may not be available on less popular operating systems, but the convenience is still there.

With Hewlett-Packard and Research in Motion relying on their own operating system and Motorola looking to develop their own operating system as well, companies are finding that they can't become just one of many assemblers of the same software and hardware as everyone else. The Microsoft business model may be dead and the vertically-integrated business model of Apple may become the new standard.

The Future of Apple (and Everyone Else)

Scan the headlines and you'll find plenty of stories about the demand for the iPad 2, the influence of the app market for the iPhone and iPad, and the growing sales of the Macintosh. Look through those same news headlines and how many positive, optimistic stories do you find about Microsoft, Research in Motion (the makers of the Blackberry phones), or Hewlett-Packard?

Despite the constant coverage of Apple, Eric Jackson of Forbes believes that most analysts are missing six major factors (blogs.forbes.com/ericjackson/2011/03/24/6-things-analysts-are-missing-about-apple/) that will push Apple even higher in the near future.

First is the massive potential growth of Apple in China. Apple's stores in China already have the highest revenue of all their stores worldwide. With the ease of writing Chinese characters by drawing them on an iPhone, iPad, or Macintosh through a touchpad, Apple can customize their products for the Chinese market just by changing the default language setting in their software without clumsy add-ons that add cost or complexity.

Second, sales of the iPad 2 continue growing. Analysts estimate that Apple could sell 30 million iPad 2s this year, but those same analysts thought that Apple would only sell 1-4 million iPads last year. (Apple sold 15 million iPads.)

Third, the iPhone continues selling and with AT&T marketing the previous generation of the iPhone 3GS for \$49, the iPhone can now capture both the high-end and the low-end of the market to better compete against Android. With the iPhone available on Verizon and AT&T, Apple will likely continue selling more iPhones than ever before.

Fourth, Apple still has a billion dollar data center in North Carolina that hasn't done a single thing yet to generate revenue. While no one knows what Apple plans to do with this billion dollar data center, chances are good they're planning to use it to make money somehow. Chances are also good that once Apple starts making money from this data center, rivals will scramble to catch up once more.

Fifth, Macintosh sales keep climbing. As a younger generation grows up accepting the Macintosh, iPhone and iPad without the prejudice of the predominantly older, technically-savvy, male demographic that clings to the familiarity of needless complexity, Macintosh sales will simply keep growing and gobbling up more market share.

Sixth, Apple reportedly is investigating Near-Field Communication (NFC) to provide digital payments and turn a mobile device like an iPhone into a digital credit card. Such digital payments would circumvent the major credit card companies while also giving Apple a cut of every purchase made, which is how the credit card companies get rich.

With multiple ways to make money, Apple has a lucrative future ahead of them. Forrester Research analyst George Colony believes Apple may soon exceed \$200 billion in revenue (www.itechtrek.com/index.php/analysts-sees-50-increased-revenue-in-2-years-for-apple) within two years. For comparison purposes, IBM has annual revenues of \$126 billion while Hewlett-Packard has annual revenues of \$96 billion.

Now compare Apple's financial future to the one-trick pony (low prices) business model of Dell Computers or the two-trick pony (Windows and Office) business model of Microsoft and ask yourself which company will likely experience continuing growth over the next five years?

In his book *50 Prosperity Classics* (www.amazon.com/gp/product/185788504X/ref=as_li_tf_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=185788504X), Tom Butler-Bowdon discusses Peter Drucker, who wrote the business classic "Innovation and Entrepreneurship." Peter Drucker noted that companies often try to "do the same thing better" where they simply improve on another company's product and call that innovation. This strategy makes it "easy to miss out on new opportunities totally and run an enterprise into the shoals almost without noticing."

Sound familiar? While Apple innovates, everyone else wastes their time trying to copy Apple. Peter Drucker noted that "People do not buy products, but what that product does for them." Apple understands this, but other companies parade a laundry list of technical specifications to promote their products without telling potential customers what benefit their product can offer them.

Does anyone buy a toaster because it has 1000 watt power consumption? When you buy a car, do you care if the wheelbase is 104.3 inches or 100.5 inches?

Nobody buys other products based purely on technical specifications, yet the technically-savvy crowd believes this is the only way to evaluate computer products. Based on this thinking, it's easy to see how Apple could continue growing not because they're smarter than everyone else, but because everyone else is too stubborn to change and realize that their emphasis on technical specifications is obsolete.

In the early days of personal computers, technical specifications meant something because most buyers of computers were technically-savvy. Today, most computer buyers don't care about technical specifications, yet most computer companies haven't changed to cater to this growing non-technically knowledgeable crowd.

As Peter Drucker noted, these companies are likely to wind up missing out on new opportunities and run their business into the ground. When these companies collapse, they'll drag all their technically-savvy supporters down with them, who were also too bull-headed to change and realize that the computer industry has moved forward while

they've remained stubbornly rooted in the past.

Lies, Misinformation and Deception

The surest sign of desperation is avoiding facts and relying on deception, misinformation and outright lies to fool people into buying your products while avoiding a rival's products. When you can't rely on honesty to compete, it's easier just to make up "facts" instead.

To compete against the iPad, Samsung claimed that they had sold two million Galaxy Tab tablets, then later backed off to claim that they had only shipped two million units (www.cioinsight.com/c/a/Latest-News/Samsung-Galaxy-Tab-Shipped-2M-Units-But-Not-to-Consumers-702659). How many of those two million units were actually purchased remains a mystery to everyone but Samsung.

Now to beat Apple, Samsung has announced that their new Galaxy Tab tablet will be even thinner than the iPad 2. However while actually examining a prototype, Fritz Nelson of Information Week discovered that the supposedly thinner Galaxy Tab (technologizer.com/2011/03/25/is-samsungs-new-galaxy-tab-fibbing-about-its-figure-and-about-those-galaxy-tab-fans/) is actually slightly thicker than the iPad 2.

Of course, Fritz only got to compare a real, shipping iPad 2 with a prototype Galaxy Tab, but if you're creating a prototype to show everyone, shouldn't the non-working prototype match the specifications of the eventual shipping product?

The latest questionable marketing move by Samsung involves their "Samsung Galaxy Tab Interview Project" where Samsung supposedly asked happy Galaxy Tab users what they liked best about their product. Finding satisfied Galaxy Tab users should be easy, except Samsung apparently found it easier to hire actors to mimic happy Galaxy Tab users instead, even using the text from a not-so glowing review of the Galaxy Tab (www.pcworld.com/article/223448/samsungs_fake_galaxy_tab_interviews_hey_those_words_sound_familiar.html) to act as a fake news story.

One of the actors, Joseph Kolinski, portraying a real estate CEO, said he picked the Galaxy Tab 8.9 and found that it helped him stay amazingly productive. The one flaw with this claim was that the Galaxy Tab 8.9 won't be shipping until June, so it's hard to see how an average consumer like Joseph could walk into a store, buy a Galaxy Tab 8.9, and be "surprised how productive he was able to be with it."

So Samsung has shipped two million Galaxy Tabs to warehouses instead of selling them to consumers, the thinner Galaxy Tab really isn't thinner than the iPad 2, and video testimonials of happy Galaxy Tab users are really from actors presumably paid to say nice things about the Galaxy Tab, using a product that isn't available to the public yet. For a real review of the Galaxy Tab 8.9, read UberGizmo's impressions (www.ubergizmo.com/2011/03/galaxy-tab-8-9-preview/).

At least Research in Motion isn't using lies to market their Playbook tablet and Hewlett-Packard has simply hid their TouchPad battery life specifications to avoid direct comparisons with the iPad. With so many manufacturers trying to mimic the iPad and falling short, why put up with continuous disappointments and broken promises when you could just get the standard that everyone's following, which is the iPad (www.cnn.com/2011/TECH/gaming.gadgets/03/25/tablets.need.wired/index.html)?

The iPad vs. the iPad 2

Today you can buy the original iPad for at least \$100 less than its retail price. AT&T and Verizon are also reportedly

dumping their current stock of iPads for even less, so you could get an iPad for a few hundred dollars without waiting in line to get it.

The main difference between the original iPad and the iPad 2 is weight and dual cameras. Pick up the original iPad and it weighs 1.5 or 1.6 pounds, depending if you hold the Wi-Fi only version or the 3G cellular version. Pick up the iPad 2 and it only weighs 1.33 pounds, which doesn't sound like much, but it feels substantially lighter in comparison.

The original iPad seemed thin and light, but next to the iPad 2, the first iPad feels thick and bulky. It's a minor difference, but it feels like much more.

The other main difference is that the iPad 2 offers dual cameras. If you absolutely need cameras for videoconferencing through FaceTime, then you'll want the iPad 2. Otherwise the iPad 2's cameras shoot grainy still images and grainy, but acceptable video.

If taking crisp, clear still or video pictures is important to you, get a separate camera. If you insist on getting sharp still or video images from a camera in a tablet, look at a rival product like Motorola's Xoom or one of these other tablets considered worth watching (www.techtree.com/India/Features/5_More_Tablets_to_Watch_Out_for_in_2011/551-114908-899-1.html) in the coming year. Some people may demand high-quality cameras in a tablet, but if you don't, then the iPad 2's cameras are better than nothing.

Perhaps the biggest noticeable difference is the iPad 2's speed. Browsing the Internet on an iPad 2 is noticeably faster than on the original iPad. Of course, you won't notice this speed difference until you use the original iPad, but if you demand speed, get the iPad 2.

Overall, the iPad 2 improves upon the original iPad. If you have the original iPad, you don't need to upgrade unless you need dual cameras. The original iPad works just as well as the iPad 2, but the iPad 2 is definitely the better product for its speed, thin size and light weight. Now you just have to decide for yourself if paying an extra \$100 is worth getting the iPad 2 or just picking up an original iPad today at a discount price.

* * *

The first Macintosh had a mouse with only one button, which made it impossible for someone to hit the wrong mouse button by mistake. However, one mouse button soon proved too limiting so companies started making two and three button mice. Where one button mice proved too restrictive and three button mice proved too confusing, two button mice have become the norm.

Yet, using the second or right mouse button is often too confusing for most people who prefer the simplicity of just clicking one mouse button all the time. In the Finder, you can access various commands by right-clicking on a file.

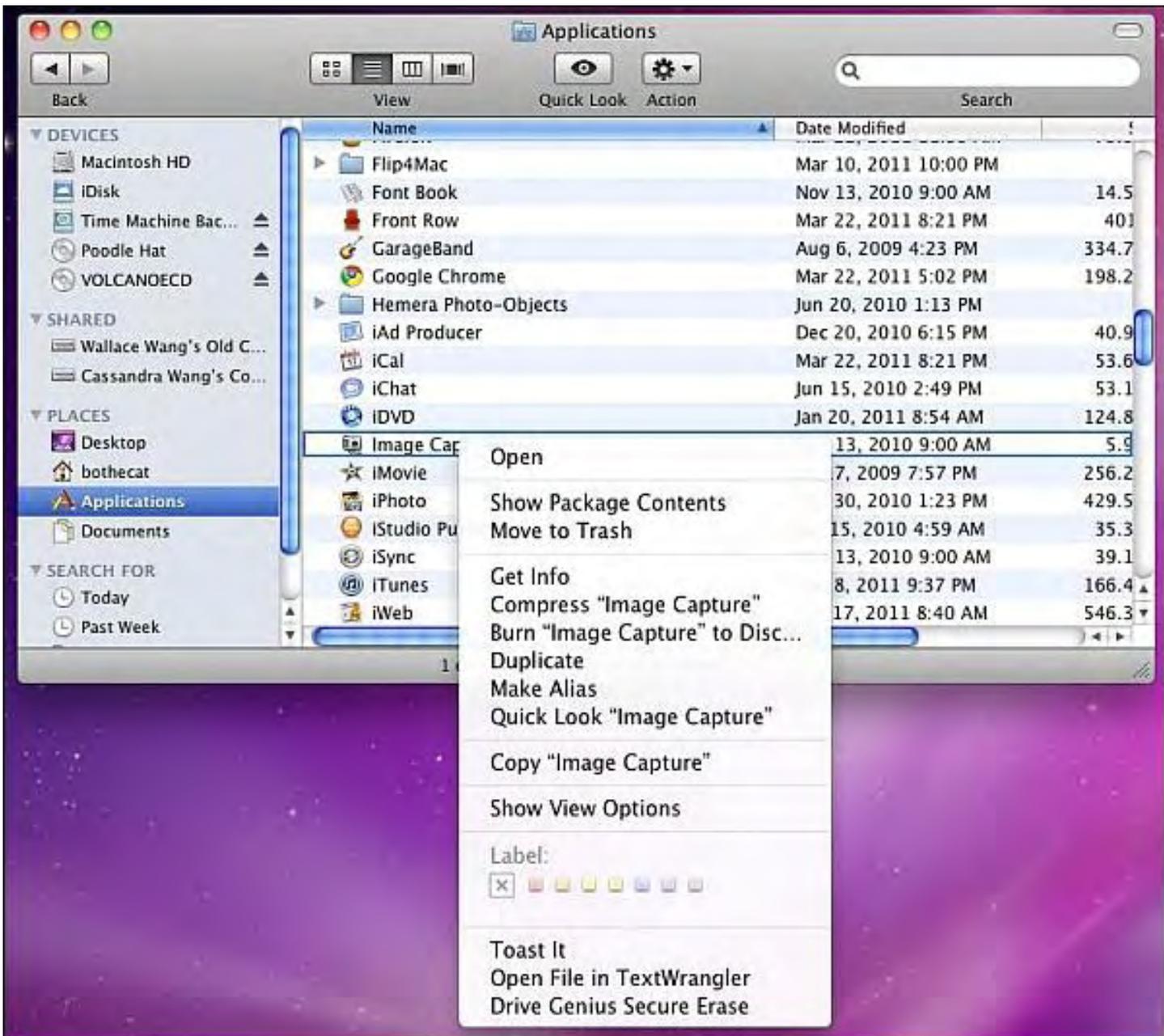


Figure 3. Right-clicking on a file displays a menu.

In case you want to avoid right-clicking, you can access this same menu by clicking on a file in the Finder and clicking on the Action icon with the left mouse button.

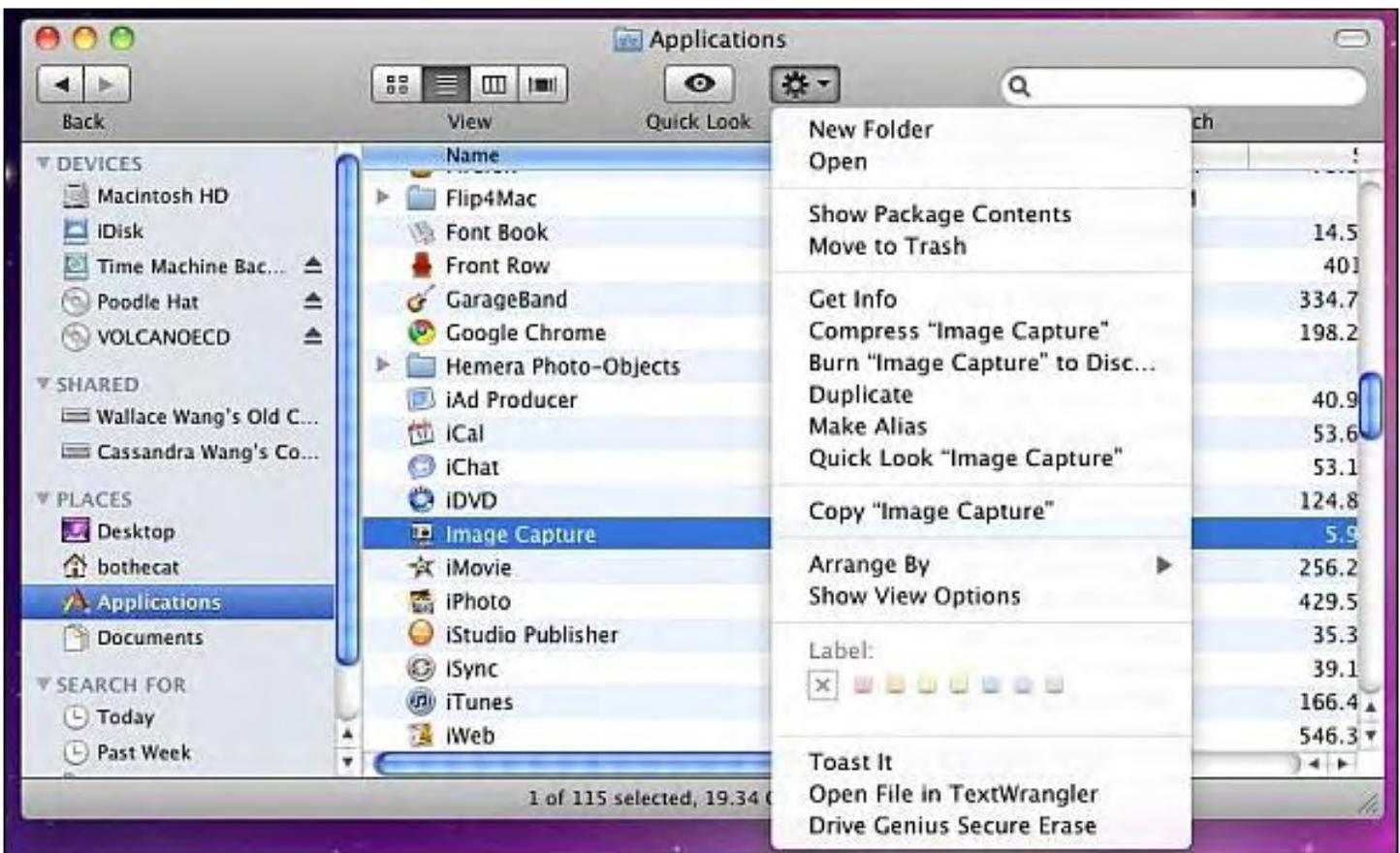


Figure 4. Clicking the Action icon displays the same menu as right-clicking on a file.

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:

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),

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),

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)

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)

20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=0470108541),

Breaking Into Acting for Dummies with Larry Garrison ([www.amazon.com/gp/product/0764554468?](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0764554468?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=0764554468)

ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-

20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=0764554468),

Strategic Entrepreneurism with Jon Fisher and Gerald Fisher ([www.amazon.com/gp/product/1590791894?](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1590791894?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=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?](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1430233362?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=1430233362)

ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-

20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=1430233362)

The 15-Minute Movie Method

([www.amazon.com/gp/product/B004TMD9K8/ref=as_li_tf_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B004TMD9K8/ref=as_li_tf_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=B004TMD9K8)

20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=B004TMD9K8)

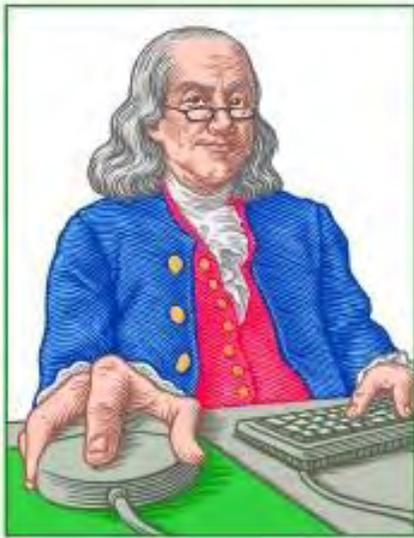
In his spare time, Wally likes blogging about movies and writing screenplays at his site "The 15 Minute Movie

Method" (www.15minutemoviemethod.com/) along with blogging about electronic publishing and how authors

can take advantage of technology at his site "The Electronic Author." (www.wallacewang.com) Wally can be

reached at wally@computoredge.com.

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LINUX LESSONS

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

Linux Lessons:
Tips and Tricks
from Users

“VI Shell Script” by
Tony J. Podrasky

Here is a Linux script to
protect you from yourself
when using the VI editor.

NOTES: I give my shell files uppercase names so that *I know* they are my shell files and not the system's binaries. In the case below, when I save the data (the commands between the "CUT HERE" lines, which is the actual shell file) I call it "VI", which is *not* to be confused with the system's "vi" file—but I call it "VI" because it calls (or uses) the system's "vi editor."

Filename: VI

Use: When called, VI makes a backup of the called file and invokes /usr/bin/vim.

Example: `tonyp% VI myfile`

Have you ever edited a file, messed it up and then wanted to kick yourself?

When you invoke VI, it will first make a copy of the file and append the date to it, so, if you do multiple edits, you'll be able to see all the previous versions. If the file is write-protected it will ask you if you want to make it writable. If you are root or the file belongs to you it will allow you to edit it. If you do not have permission, it will open the file in read-only mode. After editing it you can save it under another name. If the file you ask it to edit does not exist, it will ask you if you wish to create it.

First, decide where you want to save your edits to. I keep mine in the /tmp directory under a subdirectory called ".vi". If you choose another directory, edit the "/tmp/.vi" line to read where you put yours. Do the following steps:

1. Save the file (below) and name it "VI".
2. `<cd>` to the directory you wish to put the .vi directory in.
3. Do the following command: `<mkdir .vi>`.
4. If other users will use the VI shell script do the following `<chmod 1777 .vi>` that will allow VI to put other user's files in the .vi directory.
5. If you place .vi somewhere other than /tmp, don't forget to edit the /tmp/.vi lines in the scripts below.

6. Remember: (with any shell script) to do a `<chmod 755 [filename]>` so it will run.

```
#-----CUT HERE-----

#!/bin/csh -f
set dt = `date`
set suffix = "$dt[2]_ $dt[3]_ $dt[4]"
if ( -e $1 ) then
    if (! -w $1 ) then
        echo " "
        echo "file is read-only: [$1]"
        echo " "
        echo -n "chmod it? (y/n) [n] "
        set i = $<
        if ($i == y) then
            echo "{backing up file $1}"
            cp $1 /tmp/.vi/$1.$suffix
            chmod u+w $1
            /usr/bin/vim -i NONE -cmd "set tabstop=4" $1
            chmod u-w $1
        else
            endif
    else
        echo "{backing up file $1}"
        cp $1 /tmp/.vi/$1.$suffix
        /usr/bin/vim -i NONE -cmd "set tabstop=4" $1
    endif
else
    echo " "
    echo "file not found: [$1]"
    echo " "
    echo -n "Create it? (y/n) [n] "
    set i = $<
    if ($i == y) then
        /usr/bin/vim -i NONE -cmd "set tabstop=4" $1
    else
        endif
endif

#-----CUT HERE-----
```

Tony has been in the computer field since 1976 when he started working for Data General Corp as a field engineer. Later going on to design hardware interfaces, write patches for operating systems, and build networks. It was in 1995 while working with the military on several projects that he ran into a "spook" who showed him a laptop that ran a then-unknown O/S called "Linux." "A laptop running a form of UNIX tony = a marriage made in heaven!" Tony can be reach for questions at Linux Questions for Tony (hunybuny@netzero.net).

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Worldwide News & Product Reviews

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



How Facebook Scammers Rake in the Bucks; The Case for Free Cell Phones for the Poor; Defrag for Free; This R.A.T. Takes the Cheese.

How Facebook Scammers Rake in the Bucks

Thomas Guenther, Head of PR and Marketing for Emsi Software (www.emsisoft.com) writes in this week:

The Emsisoft malware analyst team has recently found that fraudsters are now not only earning money through spreading Malware on Facebook, but through social engineering techniques, which betray the trust of the user.

Facebook still continues to attract large numbers of fraudsters. Although the threat of Trojans and other Malware is still active, many specially developed applications are used to turn a user's private Facebook data into money.



"My Facebook page was visited more than 15,000 times!"—Someone with a message like this on their Facebook wall was probably a victim of the latest scam on Facebook. The cause is an application that pretends to show statistics of visitors. It is spread typically by the Facebook walls of friends: with announcements like this. Thousands of potential victims are addressed rapidly due to the snowball system.

This scam application is called "List your stalkers" and promises to show detailed statistics of one's Facebook page. Of course scam applications are deleted by Facebook, but the authors of these applications continuously re-upload their applications with alternate names, swamping Facebook with hundreds of applications to delete.

Request for Permission

List Your Stalkers is requesting permission to do the following:



Access my basic information

Includes name, profile picture, gender, networks, user ID, list of friends, and any other information I've shared with everyone.



Post to my Wall

List Your Stalkers may post status messages, notes, photos, and videos to my Wall



Access my data any time

List Your Stalkers may access my data when I'm not using the application



List Your Stalkers

[Report App](#)

Logged in as (Not You?)

Allow

Don't Allow



The scam application gains access to personal information such as place of residence, age, marital status and so on. This information can then be sold online in "black-market" forums, where personal details are auctioned off to buyers to be used in identity theft and spam lists. Typically, the more information, the higher the price.

Another new trick by these false applications is a survey during the "installation" of the fake application. This survey with the dubious pretense to secure the online identity and protect from spam, is of commercial nature. The authors receive money for each completed survey in combination with the demographic data.

Christian Mairoll, CEO at Emsisoft: "There is no direct danger to the security of the computer. Nevertheless, this personal information can be used maliciously and the threat of identity theft is critical. Facebook users should always be skeptical with dubious messages and offers—either on Facebook or anywhere else they may visit on the Web. Users of Facebook should take note that Facebook generally does not allow applications to show advanced user statistics, such as number of profile views. "

The Case for Free Cell Phones for the Poor

According to a report by the Washington, D.C. think tank, New Millennium Research Council (www.thenmrc.org):

Recently expanded efforts to put free cell phones into the hands of poor and near-poor Americans eligible for the Federal Communications Commission's Lifeline Assistance program have the potential to deliver nearly \$4 billion annually to eligible Americans, according to a first-of-its-kind study published today by the New Millennium Research Council (NMRC).

Titled "Subsidized Cell Phones Provide Significant Economic Gains for Poor and Near-Poor Americans," the new report written by telecommunications access expert Nicholas P. Sullivan concludes: "...the subsidized cell phone has been an important economic tool, which generates an average of \$259 (per participant) per year. If all 28.5 million adults eligible for Lifeline Assistance were to take advantage of the program and earn at the same rate and level as our sample, it would result in \$3.7 billion in fresh income for the poor and near poor. In large states, such as New York, Florida and California, the gains would exceed \$250 million. By this measure, the program is already paying for itself."

Wireless Lifeline support for prepaid wireless is now available to low-income Americans in 35 states, as well as the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. The 15 so-far non-participating states—which include California, Colorado, Hawaii, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Vermont and Wyoming—are missing out on a total of about \$650 million in potential income for their poorest residents, according to the new study.

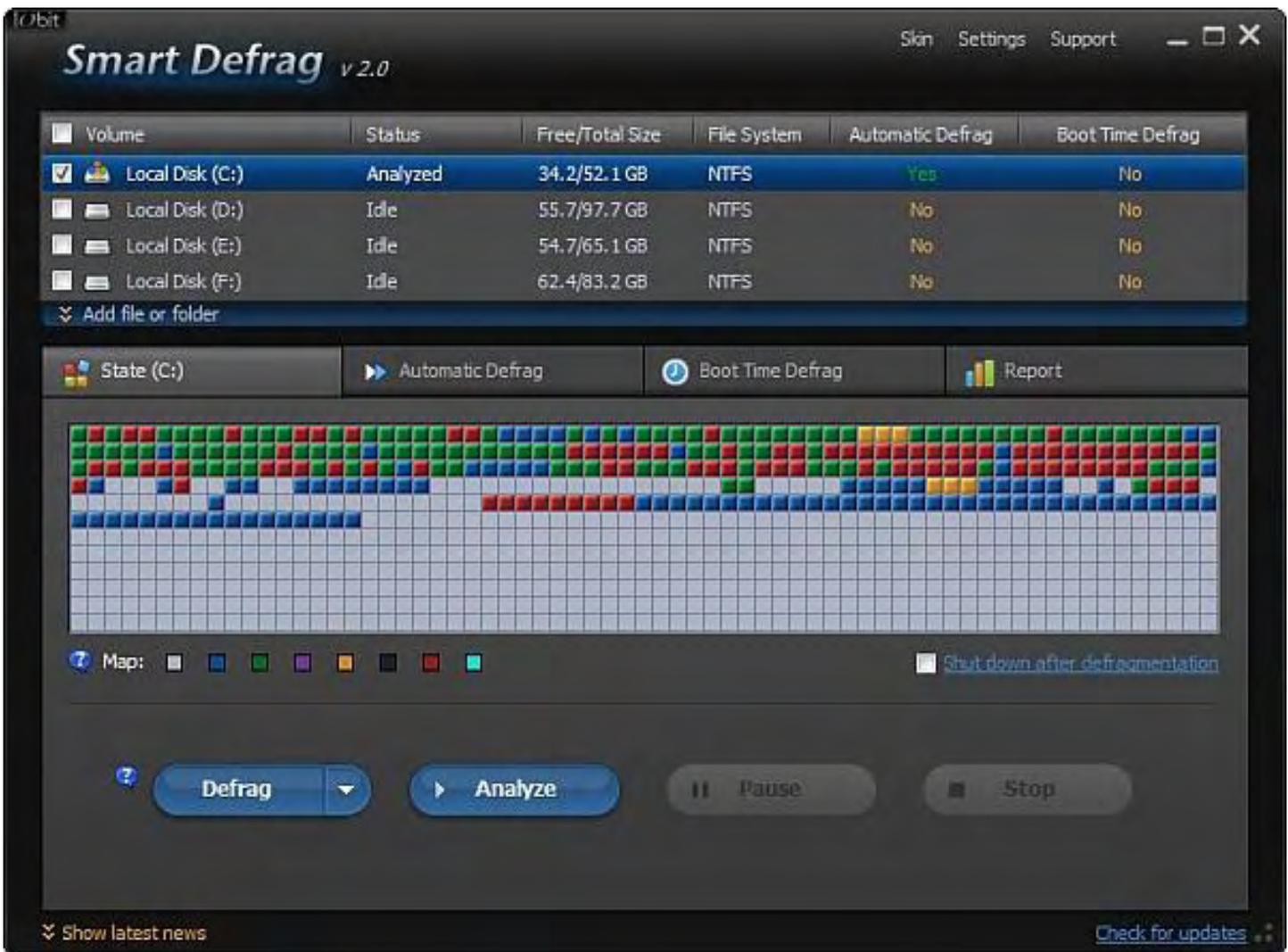
Report author Nicholas P. Sullivan, a Fellow at the Center for Emerging Market Enterprises at The Fletcher School, and co-chair of The Fletcher School Leadership Program for Financial Inclusion, said: "To date, only 35 states have allowed Lifeline Assistance for prepaid cell phones, which means that the remaining 15 states are both limiting the ability of their poorest to earn money—and also adding to their own state-funded liabilities for social programs. At a time when states are strapped and suffering from a range of deficit liabilities, new income on this level should be a welcome outcome."

Defrag for Free

Jessie Luo writes in from IObit software (www.iobit.com/iobitsmartdefrag.html) to tell us about a totally free utility that puts something of a new spin on hard drive defragmentation:

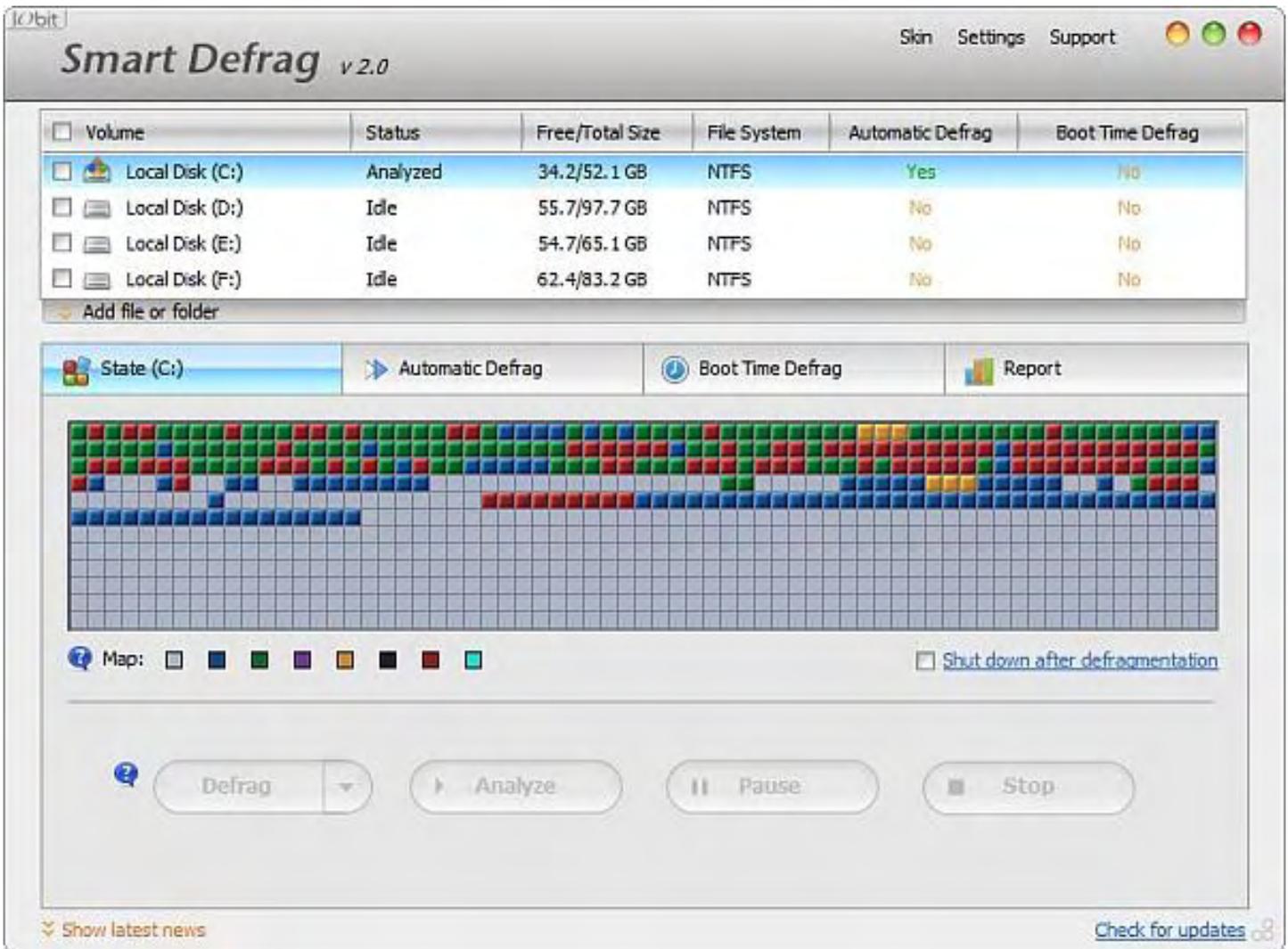
IObit has announced a new version of their free disk defragment software, Smart Defrag 2, for Windows 7, Vista, XP and 2000. With a brand new user interface, this version is equipped with the unique "boot-time defrag" feature and improved defrag engine. The exiting features in previous versions are also greatly improved.

Smart Defrag 2 is one of the only few disk defragment tools that has a "boot-time defrag" or "startup defrag" feature. Using the "Boot Time Defrag" technology Smart Defrag 2 can defrag files during the system boot process, while these files cannot be defragged or are not safe to move after the system is already boot-up. These files include pagefile, hibernation file, MFT and system files.



Using IObit's latest defrag engine, Smart Defrag 2 has not only the world's fastest defragmenting speed but also the most advanced defragmenting ability. It works automatically and quietly in the background, so it continually and constantly keeps your computer fragment-free. It has been specially designed for modern, large hard drives.

Smart Defrag 2 doesn't just provide simple defragmentation. It also streamlines your file system, places the frequently used files and directories into the fastest area of the disk, enabling your computer to run at top speed with the most stability.



"You don't need to pay a penny for keeping your disk running fast and stably," Said Kevin Zhou, Marketing Director of IObit, "just install Smart Defrag 2 and forget it, and simply your PC is running faster."

This R.A.T. Takes the Cheese

The R.A.T. 9 gaming mouse by Cyborg is quite possibly the greatest mouse I have ever laid hands on. Customizable in every aspect from DPI sensitivity to chassis, this mouse is nothing short of fantastic.

The R.A.T. 9 mouse features fully customizable buttons along with a thumb scroll wheel, these include a forward and back button for Internet surfing. On a side note, the thumb scroll is a bit awkwardly positioned and from gaming to Internet use, I found no use for it.



The thing I loved most about this mouse was the "Precision Aiming" button. It's a red button located right where your thumb is, and you hold it down to temporarily set your DPI to a more finite level, for those all-important game winning sniper shots. Another button exists that allows you to change your sensitivity to a preset level from 1 to 4, these levels can all be customized to your taste with the software included. The last part of this mouse which was absolutely killer was its ability to have 3 customized modes on it. This means you can assign different functions (key strokes, clicks, or macros) to each button on the mouse, and change between 3 of these modes; you can cycle through them using a button on the mouse, which has a colored led that indicates which mode you're in.

The customizability does not end there, so fear not! The actual mouse itself can be completely changed to fit the form of your hand. Included in the R.A.T. are three pinkie grips, three palm rests and seven weight disks, all of which can be interchanged, and the palm rest can be shifted back and forth for a more comfortable fit. The thumb rest can be moved both forward and back, as well as oscillate slightly to the side. All of these things can be changed to your preference with the tool that is conveniently located on the back of the mouse.



The battery system on this mouse is a real life-saver for all wireless mouse lovers. It includes two rechargeable batteries, one of which is always charging in the dock. Once the mouse battery dies you just swap it with the docked one, and keep on going. The battery lasts on average about nine straight hours of gaming or four days of normal use.

All in all, Cyborg created a mouse that is truly amazing in every aspect. The battery system definitely kicks the pants off of those pesky USB charging wireless mice and the customizability factor is nearly limitless. The only real con to this mouse was the price point, but considering the high-end nature of this mouse, it is something to be expected. The Cyborg R.A.T. 9 is available now for around \$150. On the cheaper side, there is the R.A.T. 7 which is the same mouse as the 9 except it is wired. The 7 is priced at about \$100.

Site link: [Cyborg Gaming \(cyborggaming.com/prod/rat9.htm\)](http://CyborgGaming.com/prod/rat9.htm)



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

"Love My iPad," "John's Linux Dual Boot Question"

Love My iPad

[Regarding the March 4 EdgeWord: There Is an iPad in the House column:]

Good for you, Jack! Be as skeptical as you like, but you can't be up to date in the tech world without allowing yourself to get your hands on an iPad. As with most things in life, there's a huge difference between reading about something and experiencing it. Will you find it as magical as Steve Jobs promised? Millions apparently do.

My personal experience is that I am seldom more than a few feet away from mine. It's in my hands, in my handbag or portfolio, on my desk next to my computer, on my kitchen counter, on the coffee table. Most days I use between 20 and 30 different apps. There are things I now choose to do on the iPad instead of either my very nice laptop or my iPhone—which means that, yes, I use them much less than I used to. And then there are the things I do on the iPad that I can't do any other way.

The iPad has become integrated into my life to an extent that amazes me, helping me with routine things all day long. Routine things like e-mail, useful tools like weather and bookkeeping, enriching and entertaining things like music, books and art. It's equally good at creating and consuming content. I'm waiting for my meal at a restaurant? Maybe I'll read my copy of "ComputerEdge." I'm in Balboa Park? I'll just bring up my mapplets app and navigate the zoo or museums or hiking trails. I slipped the noose during a workday? I can work on just about anything from my iPad, and boy have I gotten fast on that virtual keyboard. I even (blush) keep it by my bed at night. You gotta love a nice Netflix movie to soothe the inner insomniac.

I'll stay tuned to see what you discover for yourself. Thanks.

-Krasna Svoboda

With the release of the new iPad2, Apple is giving \$100 refunds or allowing exchanges to get the new one for recent purchasers of the old iPad. There is, of course, a time limit on this which is my reason for calling your attention to it.

Thanks for your excellent publication which I always picked up and read when I lived in San Diego and now continue to read online in Houston.

-Thornton Stewart

[I suspected that there might be some kind of program for recent purchases when I bought mine, but I wasn't going to wait any longer, regardless. If you purchased a new old iPad within two weeks of the announcement of the new iPad 2, then you can return it for a full refund within the following two weeks. Then you can buy the new iPad 2 at the same price when it is available

starting March 11th. -Jack]

Congrats Jack! Looking forward to reading about your experiences with and impressions of your iPad.

-Barry Fass-Holmes, San Diego, CA

John's Linux Dual Boot Question

[Regarding the March 11 Can You Answer a Dual Boot Ubuntu/Vista Question? column:]

The answer to John's question is the boot start-up gui, instructions can be found here (www.ubuntugeek.com/startup-manager-change-settings-in-grub-grub2-and-usplash.html).

-Bogs, US

Hello everyone,

I've been running Linux for many years—since the 1.2 kernel.

I *have not* used Ubuntu but I suspect it will work like any other version of Linux.

I have several systems in my home. Some have separate disks for each operating system, some share the same disk.

I use LILO (LInux LOader). In the /etc directory is a file called lilo.conf.

Here is what mine looks like:

```
root% cat lilo.conf
prompt
timeout=50
default=WindowsXP
boot=/dev/hda
map=/boot/map
install=/boot/boot.b
message=/boot/message
lba32
image=/boot/vmlinuz-2.4.21-4.EL
    label=vizzy
    initrd=/boot/initrd-2.4.21-4.EL.img
    read-only
    root=/dev/hda2
image=/boot/vmlinuz-2.4.21-4.EL
    label=ministry
    initrd=/boot/initrd-2.4.21-4.EL.img
    read-only
    root=/dev/hda3
other=/dev/hda1
    label=WindowsXP
```

In the above configuration file you'll notice the line "default=WindowsXP". It doesn't care what you call it, it just has to match an entry below and at the end of the configuration file you'll see "other", which points to the disk partition hda1 and the label field matches the default field.

You can do a "man" on lilo and lilo.conf for more information.

I suggest *before* you play with this, since this modifies the boot information and can make your system unbootable, that you make up a boot CDROM first, and test it.

Regards,

-Tony P

Look in the root of the system drive for the "boot.ini" file. Change the attribute from Read-only. Edit that file to change what Operating System will boot in what order. Save the file and reboot the box.

You can also set the amount of time the Boot Menu will stay on screen.

-Andrew SQLDBA, Oceanside, Ca

The easiest way to change the default boot system, one that doesn't involve having to manually edit configuration files with a text editor, is to install a utility called startupmanager, which can be found in the Ubuntu repositories.

Install it using the Ubuntu Software Center, or Synaptic Package Manager. Alternatively, open a terminal and type "sudo apt-get install startupmanager" (without the quotes).

Once the program is installed, it can be accessed in the System Menu under Administration, where a drop-down menu will be found to set the OS that will boot by default.

-R. Stickney, San Diego

```
sudo gedit /etc/default/grub
```

Change "GRUB_DEFAULT=0" to the number (starting with 0) of the preferred OS. Save and exit gedit.

```
sudo update-grub
```

Done.

Good Luck

-Dennis

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.

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

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