ComputorEdge™ Online — 04/22/11

This issue: Real E-mail Deals

One form of e-mail marketing has become acceptable—especially if you're looking for a massage or facial in your local geographic area.

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[Beyond Personal Computing](#) by Marilyn K. Martin

**A Look at the Human Side of Computing**

Marilyn shares humorous anecdotes about the first computers and how users tried to resolve computer problems on their own, often with unique and destructive results.

DEPARTMENTS:

[Editor's Letters: Tips and Thoughts from Readers](#) by ComputorEdge Staff

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

"Building E-Books," "USB Dilemma"
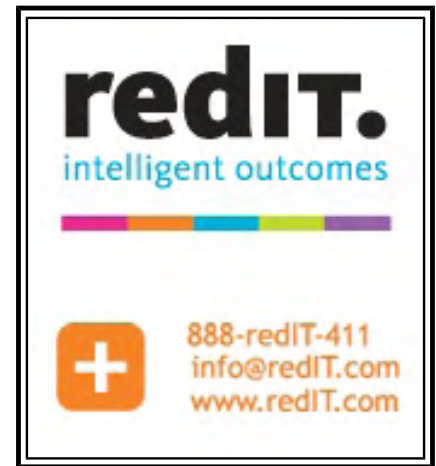
Digital Dave

"Digital Dave answers your tech questions." by *Digital Dave*

E-mail Links & Default Browsers; Entering the IT Field as a Career Change; Listing of a Directory in Windows Just Like DOS.

Dear Digital Dave,

When I open a link in an e-mail message, sometimes it opens in Firefox (my default browser) and sometimes it opens in MS Internet Explorer. It sure would be nice to have them all open in Firefox. Is that the e-mail sender's option that I can't change?

Mike
Denver

Dear Mike,

I know of no way for the sender to specify which browser should open on your computer. These decision are under your control. However, it is possible for separate browser to be the default for similar types of links.

For example, HTTP and HTTPS are two different protocols commonly seen in Web links. In Windows they can have different default browsers. Then the browser that opens will depend upon which protocol is called. The same is true for file extensions such as HTM and HTML (which are both the same type of file). In Window Vista and Windows 7, you can check these settings by typing "default" in the Search field of the Start Menu and selecting Default Programs from the menu. In Window XP you can check the defaults in the File Type tab of the Folder Options window.

Even though you may have set Firefox as your default browser, you should check these specific default settings. Even then, Firefox says:

"Note: MSN Messenger and other applications may open Internet Explorer regardless of which browser is the default. Also, Internet service providers like PeoplePC Online, Juno and NetZero may provide connection software that automatically launches Internet Explorer."

Digital Dave

Dear Digital Dave,

I am looking at making a 180° career change and want to enter the IT field as a system or

network administrator. My first love, besides my wife, has always been computers and I'm trying to making a break into the field with not a whole lot of experience other than what I have accomplished at home. I have taken the time to earn the A+ certification from CompTIA and now studying for the Network+ certification exam. What else can I do?

Thanks and appreciate your column!

Mike
Snoqualmie, WA

Dear Mike,

Some of the best IT people I know have no formal training. They generally started when they were just kids and learned from immersing themselves in the technology—out of love. The credentials don't hurt, but it is recognized that there can be a productivity difference of twenty to one between good and adequate computer people, regardless of education or experience. The difference is in how their mind works and their motivation. What business wants are people who can get things done.

The best place for you to start may be at a small company that doesn't have a human resources department hung up on pieces of paper, but is looking for people who will help them with their IT problems. They are generally more accepting of people without a degree as long as you can do the job. As you gain a reputation, you will find that other companies will take an interest in you (and maybe try to steal you away). Your experience working in the field will rapidly become more important than paper credentials.

In the meantime, you can take more classes at night. This will not only give you more opportunities to accumulate pieces of paper, but you can choose classes that you know will give you the knowledge that you want.

Based upon your love for computers and your home experience (which is not insignificant), it is time to just do it. Sometimes we spend so much time getting ready that we never get around to doing it.

Digital Dave

Dear Digital Dave,

In DOS I could enter: DIR>filename to get a listing of the contents of a directory. Is there an equivalent directive in Windows XP?

Gene
Denver, CO

Dear Gene,

Yes, there is a way to get a display of directories in Windows which looks just like the old DOS display. The reason Windows doesn't directly do the listings is because when you open Window Explorer (found under All Programs=>Accessories), every window is a listing of the folders and files. However, you can open a Command Prompt window (same location as Windows Explorer)

and use it to navigate around your hard drive as if you were using DOS. The DIR command will work fine.

One advantage to using the Command Prompt is that you can write scripts to do routine jobs such as copying or moving files and changing their names. In Windows Explorer using the mouse to drag files and change names can become tedious, especially if it needs to be done repetitively in a preordained fashion. This is one of the reasons that the capability remains in Windows. There are many detailed tasks and troubleshooting techniques that are made much easier by using commands (which can be grouped together) at a prompt.

Digital Dave

Daily Deals in Your Mailbox
"Respectable E-mail Marketing" by Jack Dunning

> Jack has discovered LivingSocial and Groupon, two of the larger daily deal businesses. There have been a few issues, but overall there are some good deals.

Except for excessively lonely people, nobody likes Spam. Outside of occasional contact from friends, family and financial institutions, our inboxes are usually inundated with unsolicited offers and phishing expeditions. Normally, e-mail marketing is associated with schlock business, but now a bit of respectability (and effectiveness) has come to cyberspace in the form of the daily deal.

The daily deal is a term given to the Internet business model where one e-mail per day is sent to subscribers in targeted geographic areas. The e-mail will include one heavily discounted offer—usually 50 percent or more—which will expire ii a day or two. It may be $50 worth of food for $25 at a local restaurant or a half-price massage at a local spa. The range of offers is only limited by the the participating advertisers. If the offer is purchased, payment is immediate with redemption allowed over some period of time—usually two or more months. The daily deal companies make their money primarily through a percentage of the take.

In the last couple of years, these daily deal businesses have taken off. Since most are backed by some major money, including companies such as Amazon, a new legitimacy has come to e-mail marketing. The most important way these marketing companies grow is through viral programs in the form of their offers getting referred to friends. The effectiveness of the referral process is dependent upon the value of the offer and how universal it is.

For example, a few months back when I was totally oblivious to this marketing concept, my son referred me to an offer from LivingSocial (*livingsocial.com*), one of the larger daily deal companies, which was offering a $20 credit with Amazon for the price of $10. If you regularly buy from Amazon, then this is like getting free money. Of course thinking it might be Spam, I was immediately suspicious. I contacted my son who assured me that it was indeed a reputable offer. Plus, if three of the people my son referred bought the deal, then he would get his deal free— even more free money. (He did get his free $20 Amazon credit.)

LivingSocial sold over 1.3 million of the Amazon deal. That's over $1.3 million that someone had to pony up for real product to be purchased from the Internet giant. It's understood that LivingSocial purchased the vouchers from Amazon, however Amazon had previously invested $175 million in LivingSocial. Was it worth the $13 million dollar cost for the increased subscribers? Amazon probably didn't need the marketing since most buyers already had Amazon accounts (although it would be rare for someone to only spend $20 on Amazon). I would guess that hundreds of thousands of people became new LivingSocial subscribers, due to that one offer. The deal brought me into LivingSocial as a subscriber.

"This is Ed's fifth facial this week. He can't resist the Groupon Internet deals."

In the months that followed the daily e-mails included offers which which made me quicker on the e-mail delete key. Massages, tanning salons, facials and other personal services from local companies were heading up the lackluster list. Occasionally there would be a restaurant with half-off, but there are tons of two-for-one coupons to be found in the local papers. Why pay up front when you can just bring a clipped coupon? Finding deals which will stimulate the subscribers to action, such as the Amazon offer, has to be one of the biggest challenges for a daily deal business. Eventually, there was a movie ticket offer from Fandango for two (up to $30 value) for $9. LivingSocial sold one million of these deals. (I bought one too —even though I almost never go to the movies. Who could resist at $4.50 a ticket?)

The LivingSocial site is a little deceptive in that you can be tricked into referring friends without qualifying for the free deal. In order to qualify for the free offer you must refer three other people who buy the deal. You need to use a special URL with a cryptic code—generated after you purchase. If you mistakenly use the e-mail button just below a blurb for the offer, you will not get credit for any referrals, plus there is no warning that you won't qualify once you are in the pop-up window used for entering the e-mail addresses (see Figure 1). You need to find and copy the correct link for the a referral e-mail after you've purchase. I did inform LivingSocial of this perceived deception, but I haven't seen any change on the site. It's probably not high on their list since it saves them money if subscribers make this mistake.

Figure 1. Don't use this button if you want the get the deal free!

Caution: Be sure to read the fine print. The deal may not be as good as it initially appears. For example, $50 for a $100 credit toward a hotel reservation from a travel site may seem like a great deal until you read that there is a two night and $250 minimum booking to use it. That places the maximum value of the deal at 20% discount (and it might result in much less), rather than what initially appears to be half off.

It was during the Fandango referral fiasco that I became aware that my daughter was a subscriber to Groupon (*www.groupon.com*), which is the current leader in the daily deal market. (That lead may not last long with the energy generated by SocialLiving's Amazon and Fandango deals. See the chart in Figure 2.) Figuring, "Why not?" I also subscribed to Groupon. I've since purchased one deal on Groupon. It was a local attraction which offered half-off on its fixed admission price.
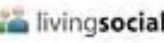
Service	March '10 Uniques	Monthly Growth	Cities	Avgerage Deal Price	Funding
The Leaders					
GROUPON	4.6MM	47%	~200	$41	$173 million from DST, Accel
livingsocial	3.9MM	70%	33	$35	Raised $49 million from US Venture Partners, Lightspeed and others
BuyWithMe	846K	217%	5	$36	$5.5 million from Matrix Partners
The Challengers					
DealON	143K	81%	12	$43	Owned by AdBlade
HOMERUN	135K	150%	7	$27	First Round Capital, Founder Collective, Others
kgb deals	97K	258%	9	$36	Owned by KGB
TIPPR	210K	232%	9	$51	Owned by Kashless (Series A $5 million RRE Ventures 10/29/2008)

Source: Yipit.com

Figure 2. Competitors in the daily e-mail deal business.

Also shown in Figure 2 are number of the other up and coming daily deal businesses. DealOn (*www.dealon.com*), KGB Deals (*www.kgbdeals.com*), HomeRun (*www.homerun.com*), and Tippr (*www.tippr.com*) are all up and coming concerns with significant financial backing. Plus, there is certainly no shortage of other similar start-ups.

How many will survive and who will win the race to the top is anyone guess right now. The early leaders will not necessarily be on top in a couple of years—as demonstrated by the languishing fortunes of MySpace after the Facebook onslaught. Unlike the mired network of Facebook which insidiously sucks people into their sticky web via friends and family, there is nothing to promote customer loyalty in the daily deal business. The key in this business is subscriber base and exciting offers. LivingSocial has had a couple of winning national offers, but looking at number of individual cities served by Groupon, they may have better local support. In the long run, the local geographic targeting may just be the key to continued success.

At this point, Groupon is considered to have better customer service. There is the story of one person who bought a deal from LivingSocial for a local establishment only to see it go out of business before the offer could be claimed. There was a horror story involved in getting a refund. One would only hope that this situation has been corrected. I would certainly like to hear about others people's experiences with daily deal businesses.

As competition gets tougher for the daily deal market, the offers will be better (at least in the short run) and their margins will be squeezed. I'm guessing that there will be a number of hard to resist enticements coming through. A few years from now it's possible that we may be reminiscing about the existence (or lack) of daily deal businesses. It would not be a surprise in this age of cannibalized Internet businesses. For now I think I'll just keep my eye out for a good deal.

Jack is the publisher of *ComputorEdge* 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*

Wally Wang's Apple Farm
"More Signs That Windows is Losing its Dominance" by Wally Wang

Windows can't compete in the tablet market; \r\nFlash security woes; Wintel no longer; the state of iPad rivals; turn your iPad into a second monitor with Air Display; free RealPlayer converter; track your iPad.

Mike Halsey, the ardent Microsoft supporter who once claimed that the iPad was ugly (*www. windows7news.com/2010/01/28/why-the-ipad-will-fail-and-help-windows-7-to-succeed/*) and not what people wanted, recently purchased an ExoPC Slate Windows 7 tablet (*www.windows7news. com/2011/03/02/day-apple-announced-ipad-2-delivery-windows-7-tablet/*) instead of an iPad, and apparently isn't very happy with the performance of Windows 7 on a tablet.

On a train ride crammed in with fellow passengers, Mike "spotted something different. There was a man using an iPad (*www.ghacks.net/2011/03/24/has-the-pc-worm-now-turned/*), nothing unusual in that you might think. This tablet was supported vertically in a dock however with a bluetooth Apple keyboard sitting stylishly in front of it. Your attention was drawn to this partly because of the beauty and elegance of such a setup, but also because it was so unusual.

"I, being a tech author and a Windows 7 tablet user, sat across from the man with my ExoPC and he sat working on whatever he was doing, merrily typing away while I struggled to get my 3G connection to work reliably at high speeds.

"Then came the all important question, I stumbled over this slightly trying not to appear impertinent. 'If you don't mind me asking, you've got that all set up and are using it in a way that implies it's your only computer.'

"The answer was clear, swift and decisive. It was! He almost seemed to take pride in telling me that his desktop PC at home hadn't been switched on in almost six months. Why would he need to, he could do everything he wanted on this tablet device and it worked far more effectively than his PC ever could.

"This is a man who had clearly seen the advantages of the tablet, and seen them all. More importantly he'd admitted to not knowing the first thing about technology except how to recognize a good thing when it came along. He was absolutely delighted with his iPad and there was, frankly, no going back to the old way of doing things now."

Mike Halsey is at least honest about his admiration for watching someone else using an iPad effectively. Despite seeing how simple and easy an iPad can be to use, Mike is now contemplating switching from Windows 7 to MeeGo (*www.windows7news.com/2011/04/11/ microsoft-windows-mvp-jump-ship-windows-today/*), a Linux variant on his ExoPC.

While puzzling that Mike would admire the elegance of someone else using an iPad, yet still stick with his ExoPC, Mike (a hard-core Windows supporter and the author of *Troubleshooting Windows Inside and Out (*www.amazon.com/gp/product/0735645205/ref=as_li_tf_tl? ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme- 20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=0735645205*)* makes numerous references about Windows 7's shortcomings as a tablet operating system when compared to MeeGo.

"Indeed if you put these two operating systems side by side it's clear to see that one is a fully featured, powerful OS for the 21st century and the other is Windows!

"Windows 7 is just not suitable for tablet computing and, as much as Microsoft would like us to believe Windows 7 tablets offer power, flexibility and functionality that other mobile operating systems don't, it also offers frustration, sluggishness and unresponsiveness to boot. It's simply not suitable for today's tablets.

"Then there's Windows 8 which, to be honest, I'm not convinced will be tablet friendly enough when it arrives next year...To be honest I never thought I'd switch a computer completely over to a Linux OS, only a year ago I'd have laughed at the notion, but here I am at this crossroads still. Fast, responsive OS on the one hand and Windows 7 on the other."

What does it say when such a long-time supporter of Windows not only can recognize the advantages of an iPad, but is willing to dump Windows in favor of MeeGo, an operating system with a dubious future since it was a partnership between Intel and Nokia (and Nokia has chosen Windows Phone 7 instead of using MeeGo for their smartphones)?

When someone like Mike Halsey believes that Windows can't compete in the tablet market, he's saying this from his perspective as a long-time, rabid supporter of Windows and a long-time critic of anything made by Apple. If a die-hard Windows supporter can see the limitations of Windows on a tablet, and believes that MeeGo is a better option than Windows (while also acknowledging the elegance and simplicity of an iPad), how much longer will everyone else continue to suffer under the constant frustrations of Windows before they get so fed up that they'll consider better alternatives?

Even more importantly, how much longer will people allow their prejudice against Apple to keep them from evaluating all of their technology options so they can choose the best product for themselves? For those frightened about making the transition from Windows to the Macintosh, visit your nearby Apple Store and take classes to learn how a Macintosh works, or follow a friendly transition guide like *Switching to the Mac: The Missing Manual (*www.amazon.com/gp/ product/0596804253/ref=as_li_tf_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme- 20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=0596804253*)* by David Pogue.

Switching from Windows XP to Windows 7 involves learning a slightly different user interface, which is no more difficult than switching from any version of Windows to Mac OS X. You're going

to have to learn a new user interface if you upgrade to any new computer, so if you can put up with the complexity of Windows, you should have no trouble learning the Macintosh.

Flash Security Woes

Adobe recently issued a security report detailing yet another exploit in their Flash player (*blogs. adobe.com/psirt/*). While it's nice for Adobe to warn users of a Flash security flaw, it also highlights the problem with relying on Flash. Not only do mobile devices lack the processing power to run Flash flawlessly, but Flash comes with inherent security problems that must constantly be patched.

While some people continue to promote Flash support as an advantage, they cheerfully ignore the drawbacks of that same Flash support. Beyond uneven performance issues and battery drainage problems for running Flash on smartphones and tablets, Flash also opens another security hole for hackers and malicious software to break into your computer, smartphone, or tablet.

Flash has its uses, but also inherent problems. Flash isn't perfect and Adobe isn't claiming that it is, but if you listen to companies promoting Flash support as the most desirable feature you could possibly want on a smartphone or tablet, you're definitely not getting all the facts. That's because if Flash supporters told you the whole story about Flash's drawbacks, you might not see Flash support as an advantage any more.

Wintel No Longer

For decades, Windows and Intel processors worked together so much that everyone referred to this combination as Wintel, even though rival chip maker, AMD also made processors used in many PCs. However, the Wintel dominance has long since fallen apart.

Intel is reportedly paying PC manufacturers (*www.electronista.com/articles/11/04/13/intel.has. android.3.strategy.paying.chip.subsidy*) to use Intel chips for their upcoming tablet designs running Android (not just Windows). Intel simply wants to get a piece of the tablet market that's been going to rival ARM Holdings instead.

Besides ignoring Windows in favor of Android, Intel is also pushing their own MeeGo operating system (not Windows) for netbooks. By eliminating Windows, Intel hopes to get the cost of netbooks even lower using MeeGo.

With Intel pursuing Android for tablets and MeeGo for netbooks, where does that leave Microsoft? Intel can't depend on the dominance of Microsoft Windows any longer, so rather than get hurt in the market, Intel is pursuing other strategies that don't include Windows.

Combine Intel's push for Android, Hewlett-Packard's push for their own webOS, and Microsoft's pursuit of ARM chips for upcoming Windows 8 tablets, the Wintel alliance seems permanently fractured. What should prove interesting is seeing which behemoth adapts faster in a rapidly changing market, Intel or Microsoft?

One problem facing both Intel and Microsoft is the question of why should anyone upgrade to Windows 7? When you're running a program like Excel, what difference does it make if you're

running it on Windows XP or Windows 7? Does Windows 7 offer any advantage running Microsoft Office over Windows XP?

ITBusinessEdge believes that Windows XP and Windows 7 will co-exist peacefully (*www. itbusinessedge.com/cm/blogs/vizard/the-missing-windows-7-fear-factor/?cs=46449*) in many organizations simply because there are few compelling reasons to dump Windows XP in favor of Windows 7.

If you need to run Windows programs on your Mac using Parallels (*www.amazon.com/gp/product/ B0041DVQ8M/ref=as_li_tf_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=B0041DVQ8M*) or Fusion (*www. amazon.com/gp/product/B002Q72JB8/ref=as_li_tf_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=B002Q72JB8*), choose the oldest version of Windows possible because earlier versions of Windows require less space and memory. On my Mac, I use Windows 2000 because it only needs 256MB of RAM compared to 512MB for Windows XP and 1GB for Windows 7. In exchange for higher storage and RAM requirements, what advantage does Windows 7 offer that Windows 2000 lacks if I can run the same Windows program equally well on both of them?

Although Windows 7 may be the fastest selling operating system in history, it's also tied to practically every PC so you don't really have much choice. Windows 7's sales figures would be more impressive if people actually had a choice between Windows XP and Windows 7, and consciously walked into stores to buy a copy of Windows 7.

PC Growth Rates y/y
© asymco.com
○ All PCs
○ Windows only
○ Apple only
○ Mac Only
300%
272%
241%
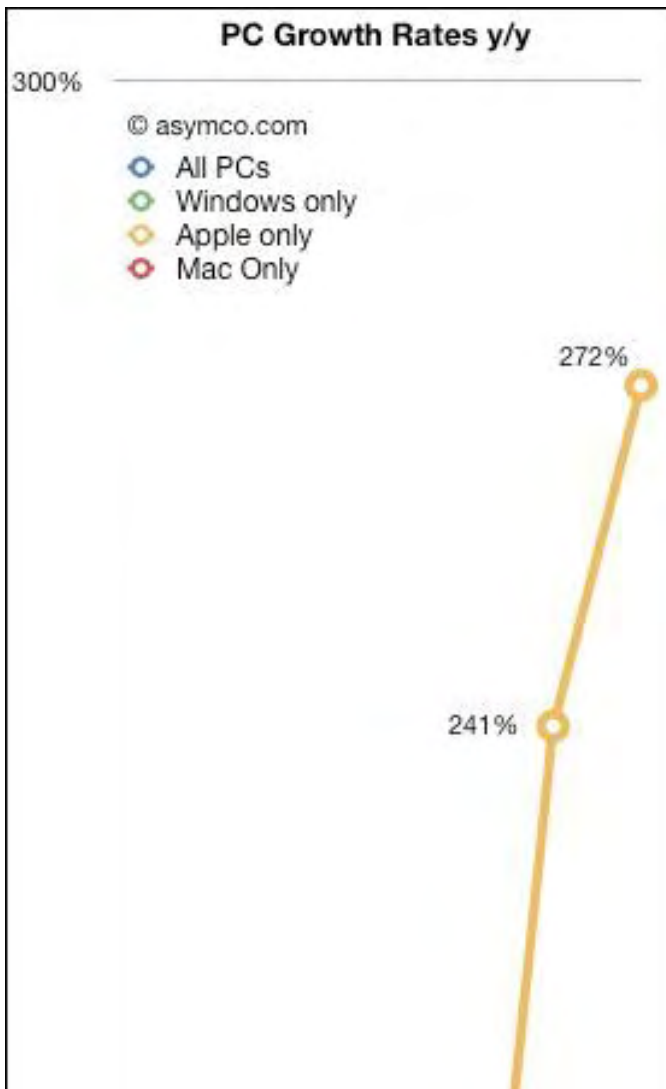
Despite all the rosy sales claims of Windows 7, sales of PCs continue falling (*www.asymco. com/2011/04/14/first-quarter-pc-forecast-windows-down-2-macipad-up-250/*) for a third straight quarter according to asymco. While PC manufacturers complain that sales are down because of the recession, they conveniently ignore the fact that Apple is selling more Macs each quarter despite that same recession. When sales of all Apple products (not just Macs) are plotted, sales of Apple products are skyrocketing if this graph is accurate. (See Figure 1 at left, "Sales of Apple products continue growing while sales of PCs continue slumping.")

The State of iPad Rivals

Now that the iPad is selling millions of units every month, every other manufacturer wants to jump into the tablet category. Unfortunately, few companies have what it takes to create a competitive tablet. After seeing the tepid response to the Motorola Xoom (despite the million dollar marketing campaign highlighted by the Super Bowl ad for the Xoom), many companies are now reportedly

164%

159%

delaying the launch (*www.digitimes.com/news/ a20110415PD205.html*) of rival Android tablets.

Research in Motion (RIM) recently released their Playbook tablet (*www.informationweek.com/news/ personal-tech/tablets/229401670*), which costs as much as an iPad, offers a smaller 7-inch screen, and can only access e-mail when tethered to a Blackberry phone.

Even stranger, Blackberry claims that their Playbook tablet uses a Blackberry phone for e-mail due to security concerns. Yet Blackberry claims that their Playbook will soon offer native e-mail support in the future.

With such limitations, Blackberry can only hope to sell the Playbook to current Blackberry users, who are dumping their Blackberries in favor of Android and iPhones/iPads. Not every Blackberry user will want the Playbook and most people aren't going to want a Playbook if they need to buy a Blackberry phone at the same time. This limits the potential Playbook market to just a fraction of all Blackberry users in the world who even want a tablet.

Does anyone think that the Playbook can seriously compete against the iPad under these conditions? Now we just have to wait to see what Hewlett-Packard can offer with their upcoming TouchPad tablet. Over a year after Apple first introduced the iPad, we're all still waiting for a credible competitor.

In the meantime, we still get to hear from anti-Apple critics who continue to dismiss the iPad as a useless toy, despite ample news stories showing how people have found numerous practical uses for the iPad, such as how the iPad can help autistic children (*www.parenting.com/blogs/show-and-tell/ kate-parentingcom/how-ipad-can-help-kids-autism*) communicate and learn. Critics may not have a use for an iPad (usually through their own lack of imagination), but they also believe that if they can't find a use for an iPad, then nobody else on the planet can possibly find a use for an iPad as well.

Personally, I have no use for a kayak, but I would never be so arrogant to believe that if I can't find a use for a kayak, then nobody could possibly ever
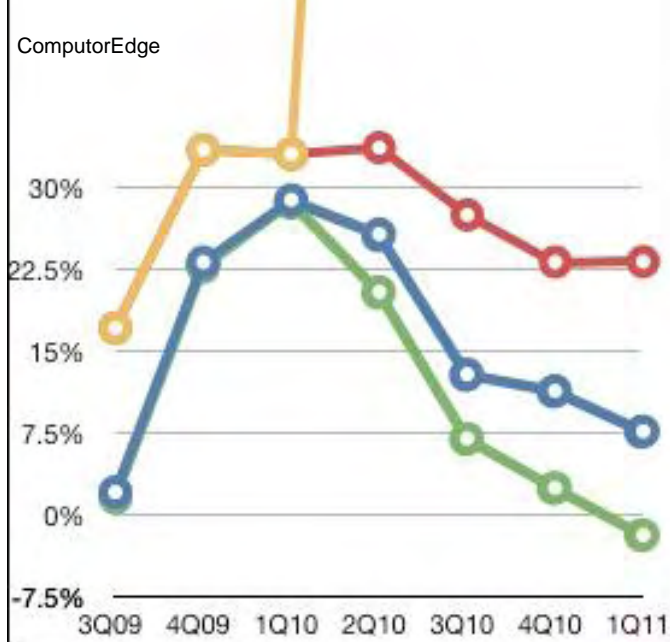
find a practical use for a kayak either, and if someone did buy a kayak, it's because they were foolishly wasting their money on useless garbage. Yet this is the exact same thinking that critics use when dismissing the iPad without even using one themselves or acknowledging how others are using it productively.

As Apple continues selling more iPads and more businesses find practical uses for the iPad, iPad critics will simply push themselves further into obsolescence through their own stubbornness. Perhaps such critics should read Alvin Toffler's classic book *Future Shock (*www.amazon.com/gp/ product/0553277375/ref=as_li_tf_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme- 20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=0553277375*)* to learn how to adapt to change, or just heed the wisdom of the world's oldest man, Walter Breuning (*www. woodtv.com/dpps/news/national/west/worlds-oldest-man-dies-in-montana-at-114-nt11- jgr_3774874*), who said, "Embrace change, even when the change slaps you in the face. (Every change is good.)"

Turn Your iPad Into a Second Monitor with Air Display

Most people are using the iPad as a portable computer, but when you sit in front of your main computer, the iPad has no use any more. To keep your iPad from doing nothing while you're using your main computer, turn your iPad into a second monitor using a unique app called Air Display (*avatron.com/apps/air-display*).

The idea behind Air Display is that through your Wi-Fi network, your iPad can act like a second monitor but without the usual complexity of connecting cables. Whatever you see on your computer screen, you can drag to appear on your iPad screen, even rotating the iPad screen if you wish. To see Air Display in action, watch this YouTube video (*www.youtube.com/watch? v=xkl4h5W4Bjc*).

To use Air Display, you need an iPad, a Wi-Fi network, and either a Macintosh or Windows PC running Windows XP, Vista, or Windows 7. After purchasing and downloading the Air Display app on your iPad, you'll also need to download and install the Air Display program for your computer.

Figure 2. You must install Air Display on your computer.

Once you get Air Display installed on your computer and on your iPad, you'll need to turn on Air Display on your computer. On a Macintosh, you can click on the Air Display icon on the menu bar to open a menu.
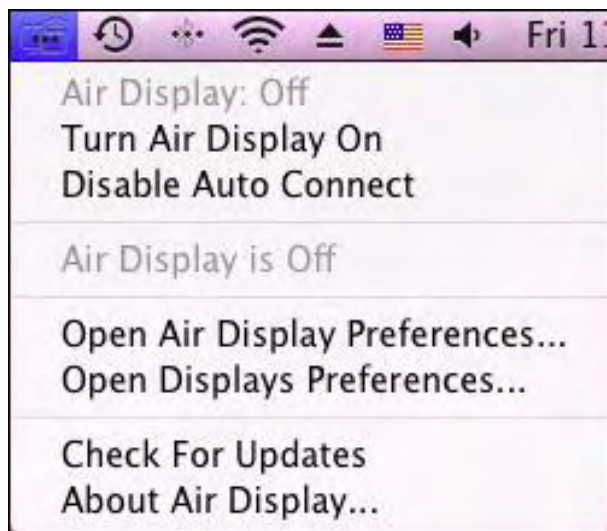

Figure 3. Turning on Air Display on a Macintosh.

After you have Air Display running on your computer, just prop your iPad next to your monitor, load Air Display on your iPad, and you'll be able to drag windows from your computer monitor to your iPad screen. Although the iPad's screen may not be as large as your computer monitor, it

gives you just a little bit of extra screen real estate so you can place the window of a Word document on your computer monitor while displaying a browser window on your iPad screen.

If you don't want the expense and hassle of connecting a second monitor to your computer, get Air Display and turn your iPad into a second monitor whenever you need one. Once you see the advantages of dual monitors, you may never want to go back to using a single monitor ever again.

Free RealPlayer Converter

Unlike still images, video files take up an enormous amount of space for capturing even the shortest footage. To avoid sending people large video files, download the free RealPlayer Converter program (*www.real.com/realplayer/convert-video*). Just open a video file, select the device that you want your video to play on, and let the program convert your video to the optimum format for your chosen device.

Create custom   Cancel   OK

Figure 4. RealPlayer Converter lets you choose the type of device to play your video on.

The type of device you choose defines the size and resolution of your converted file so you don't have to know anything about resolution or file formats. When I used my iPhone to capture a video of my iPad running Air Display, the original file was 30MB stored in the QuickTime .mov file format.

After using RealPlayer Converter to create an iPod compatible video, the file shrank in size to 1.5MB. You can see the converted file by downloading (*www.computoredge.com/images/2916/ Air Display Demo.m4v*) and viewing the Air Display Demo.m4v file.
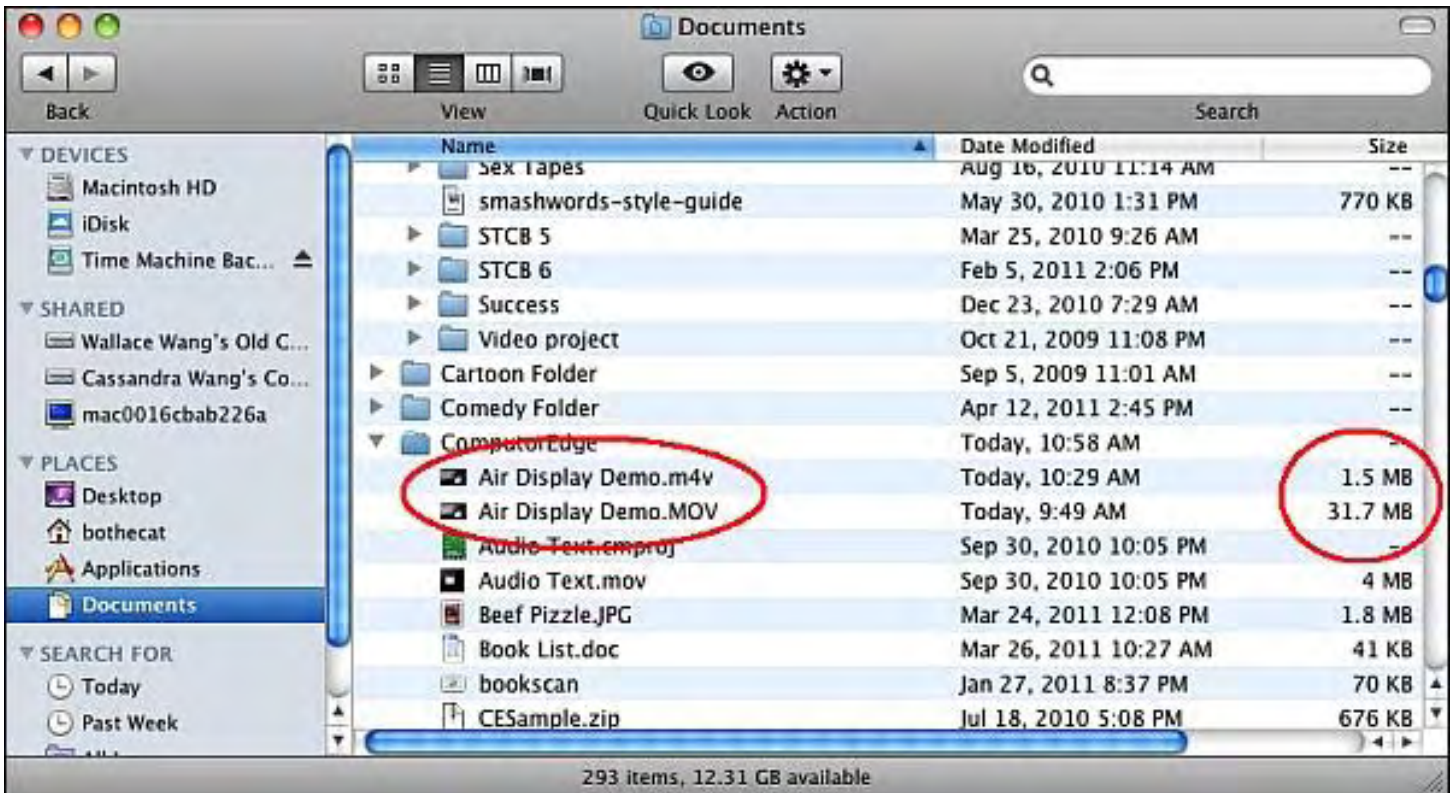
Figure 5. RealPlayer Converter can shrink a video.

*   *   *

The iPad is so thin and light that it's also easy to misplace and lose. To help track down a lost (or stolen) iPad, set up a MobileMe account and turn on the Find My iPad feature (*www.apple.com/ ipad/find-my-ipad-setup/*). With this feature turned on, your iPad will broadcast its location so you can track it down on a map displayed on your computer.

Figure 6. Apple provides instructions for tracking down misplaced or lost iPads.

As long as you have the sound turned up, this feature can help you find a misplaced iPad in your house by using MobileMe to activate a two minute audio signal on your tablet. Once you've located it, in addition to the audio signal activation, you have the options of locking the iPad to prevent unauthorized access, wiping out all your data, or displaying a message asking for its safe return.
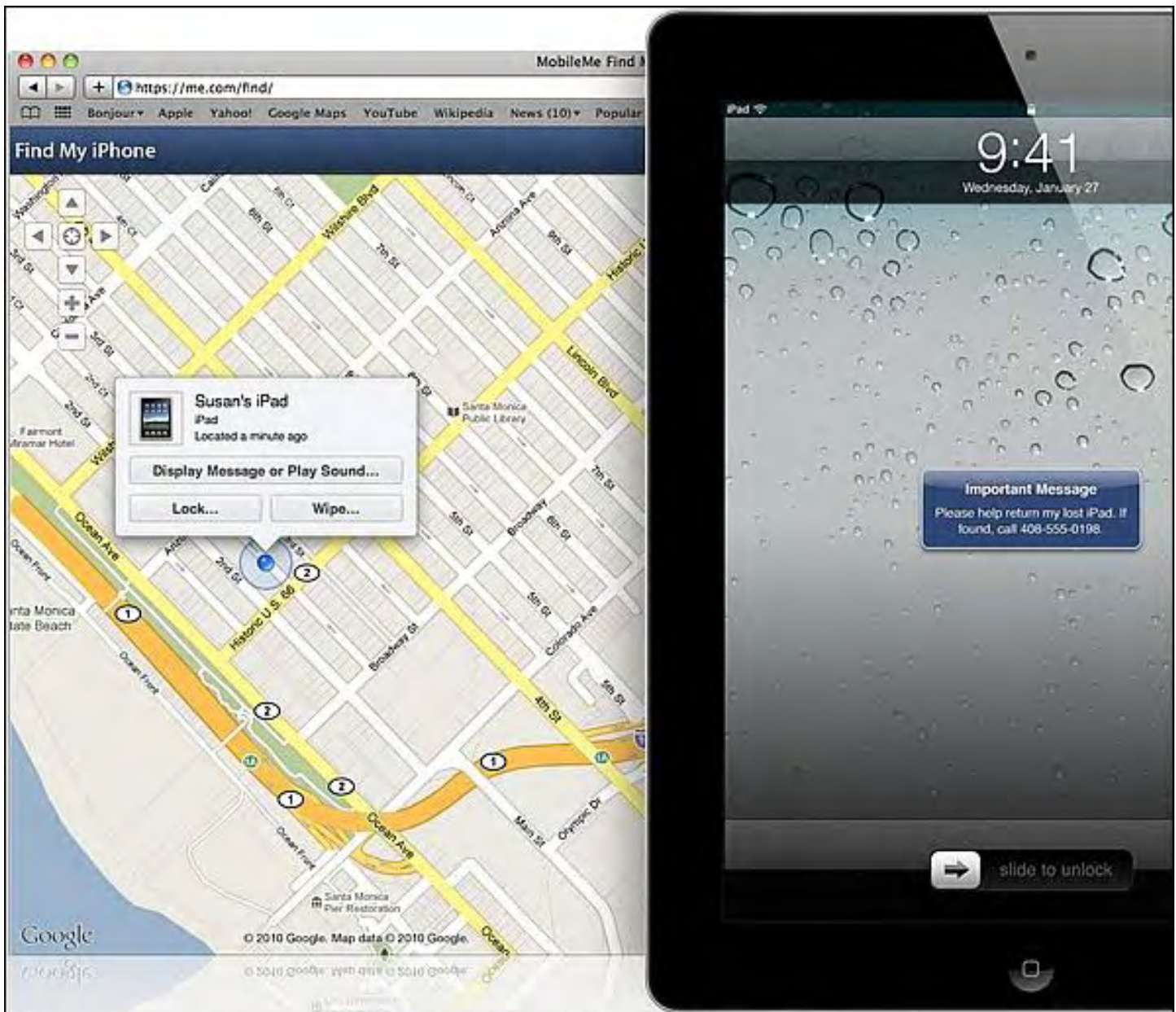
Figure 7. You can use your computer to locate your lost iPad.

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 participles 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*),
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*),
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*)
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*)
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*.
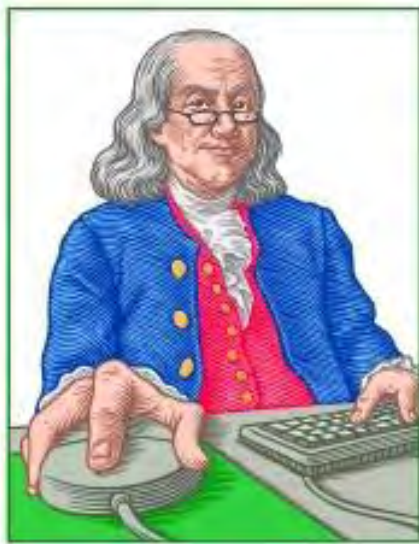
Linux Lessons: Tips and Tricks from Users

"A Script to Reformat the Line Length of a Text File." by Tony J. Podrasky

Tony shares a simple text formatter script for Linux, explaining each step and how it works.

Filename: FMT

Use: Simple text formatter. Takes a text file, changes the number of characters per line to a number you select, and rewrites it to the original file.

Invocation: tonyp% <./FMT>

(Program now asks "Enter name of file to format:" (you enter the name you want), then it asks "Enter maximum number characters per line:" (you tell it).

Example: Below is the contents of a file called "myfile".

```
tonyp% cat myfile
```

The Quick Brown Fox Jumped Over The Lazy Dogs Back 1234567890
The Quick Brown Fox Jumped Over The Lazy Dogs Back 1234567890
The Quick Brown Fox Jumped Over The Lazy Dogs Back 1234567890

```
tonyp% ./FMT
```

Enter name of file to format: myfile

Enter maximum number of characters per line: 20

tonyp% cat myfile
The Quick Brown
Fox Jumped Over
The Lazy Dogs Back
1234567890 The
Quick Brown Fox

Jumped Over The
Lazy Dogs Back
1234567890 The
Quick Brown Fox
Jumped Over The
Lazy Dogs Back
1234567890

Next Example

```
tonyp% ./FMT
```

Enter name of file to format: myfile

Enter maximum number of characters per line: 80

```
tonyp% cat myfile
```

The Quick Brown Fox Jumped Over The Lazy Dogs Back 1234567890 The Quick
Brown Fox Jumped Over The Lazy Dogs Back 1234567890 The Quick Brown Fox
Jumped Over The Lazy Dogs Back 1234567890

<FMT> is a shell file for the system command <fmt>. You might like to do a <man fmt> to see how it works. <fmt> is useful for taking text that was captured from an e-mail or Web page and allows you to change the number of characters on a line. We all know someone who sends e-mail and has no idea that you can break the line up by using the ENTER key every eighty characters or so.

How is works:

#!/bin/csh -f *(Use the C-shell interpreter to execute the commands.)*

echo -n "Enter name of file to format: " *(Type out the text in quotes to the screen.)*

set i = $< *(Take the typed input and store it in the work integer called "i".)*

echo " " *(Type out a "newline" to space this up one line.)*

if ((-e $i) == 0) then *(Ask the system "if" the filename you entered actually exists.)*

echo "File not found: $i" *(If not, tell you "File not found" along with the filename you entered.)*

echo " " *(Type out a "newline" to space this up one line.)*

exit *(Exit the shell.)*

endif *("end" of the test "if" statements.)*

echo -n "Enter maximum number of characters per line: " *(Type out the text in quotes to the screen.)*

set j = $< *(Take the typed input and store it in the work integer called "j".)*

echo " " *(Type out a "newline" to space this up one line.)*

mv $i /tmp/ *(Move the file to the /tmp directory.)*

/usr/bin/fmt -w $j /tmp/$i >$i *(Execute the <fmt> command telling how many character/line <$j> and the file you want it to format <$i>, then copy the file that has just been formatted back to where you found it and retain its name.)*

Save the text between the "CUT HERE" line in a file called <FMT>, then do a <chmod 755 FMT>.

————————————-CUT HERE————————————-

```
#!/bin/csh -f
echo -n "Enter name of file to format: "
set i = $<
echo " "
if ((-e $i) == 0) then
    echo "File not found: $i"
    echo " "
    exit
endif
echo -n "Enter maximum number of characters per line: "
set j = $<
echo " "
mv $i /tmp/
/usr/bin/fmt -w $j /tmp/$i >$i
```

————————————-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 reached for questions at Linux Questions for Tony (*hunybuny @netzero.net*).

Beyond Personal Computing

"A Look at the Human Side of Computing" by Marilyn K. Martin

Marilyn shares humorous anecdotes about the first computers and how users tried to resolve computer problems on their own, often with unique and destructive results.

Exactly when computing-hardware was first created, goes back to the Ancients. Computation aids have been around since the abacus (2400 BC). And the very first analog-computers were constructed in Ancient Greece (150-100 BC), such as the Astrolabe and Antikythera Mechanism. But mass produced computers with a wide range of programmable features, didn't make an appearance until last century.

In the 1900s, IBM's room-sized computers and egos lorded it over big business, declaring that the public had absolutely no interest in smaller "personal" computers. But, unknown to IBM, the answer to their off-the-cuff Challenge was already percolating. Genius-geeks started dropping out of college, when they realized that they were smarter than their instructors. Then they looked around and decided that Personal Computers were a Challenge worthy of their time and attention.

Thus PCs were born in parents' garages, and the Age of Personal Computing began. Those initial PCs weren't much more than just motherboards with instructions and personal Thank You notes, but the Revolution had started. And within a decade or so, every Mr. and Ms. Public wanted in on the World of Computing.

Very personal computing Challenges by the non-genius rest of us then loomed. There was no Internet yet to search out consumer reviews, tech manuals or even computer Web sites or blogs for advice. So we asked around about the best computer brands, then figured we'd just buy one and "wing it." Besides, these dang machines were so sophisticated, what could go wrong?

We all learned the answer to that question the hard way: Plenty!

First Computers

Sometimes, buying a First Computer is an adventure in itself. Salesmen tell stories of new buyers who point to a display monitor and keyboard, asking to buy equipment "just like that." And

then point at the CPU (Central Processing Unit, or the brains of an early computer) and say, "But I don't think I need one of those." One lady hauled her new monitor back to the store, to complain it didn't work. When it was hooked up, it worked just fine. So the salesmen asked where her CPU was. She left and returned with the surge protector.

Thank God for those "Help" phone numbers! One Help Desk got a call from an upset gentleman who had never had a computer before. He'd unpacked everything and was trying desperately to set everything up, but couldn't figure out where to plug in all the cables. The Support Tech quickly looked up the man's order. He'd bought top-of-the-line everything: monitor, keyboard, printer, modem, scanner, speakers, CD-ROM drive and external hard drive. But he hadn't ordered the actual computer "brains," so no wonder the cables had nothing to plug into.

Or consider the user who called up to ask, "My friend gave me an Image Writer printer and keyboard. He said he gave me all the cables, but I can't figure out how to connect them. Am I missing something?" Uh, yes. The actual computer. "You mean this keyboard isn't a word processor? Gosh, I guess I'll need a monitor too."

Then there was the gentleman who bought an expensive computer, and had the computer store throw in one of their special batch of quick-sell paper shredders. The customer seemed to know what he wanted, and even asked for the installation disks to be included in case something went wrong. Yet he called up the next day, and complained that he hadn't received the driver disk for the shredder. The computer salesman had to calmly explain that those were totally separate units, and that there was no way a shredder could be connected to a computer.

Miracle Downloads

Then again, a lot of users think that anything their computer is missing, is just a download away. Or not. Consider the guy who had such an outdated computer that a friend's CD with some multimedia content wouldn't work. The friend told him politely that he needed "a new motherboard, CPU, case, power supply, lots more RAM, and maybe a new video card." The guy nodded, then asked brightly, "Can you download them for me?"

Then there was the guy advising a female friend, that Netmeeting could be downloaded from the Internet, but that she would still need a microphone for the talking part. "Can you download a microphone too?" she wondered.

Logical Fix-Its

Non-tech users have an odd perception sometimes, of how to deal with problems related to computer hardware. Men, especially, like to reach for the power tools when a problem arises. Such as the man who thought that his laptop got too hot on his lap. So he drilled sixteen "air holes" in the bottom of the case. Then took it back to the salesman to ask, "Why doesn't my laptop boot up anymore?"

Then there was the customer who called up an electronics store where he'd just purchased his computer, to complain that his new computer wouldn't boot. The computer Tech arrived and couldn't figure out the problem. He said he'd be back to change it out for a new computer. But when the Tech arrived with the new change-out computer, he couldn't believe his eyes. Fearful of thieves, the customer had fired 24-inch bolts straight through the box, the hard drive, the

motherboard, everything, bolting it to his desk. The user was perplexed over the Tech's shock. "Oh, I just thought the TV part (monitor) was important. Will my warranty cover this?"

Or consider the user who told a Help Desk that, No, he couldn't look for his modem's serial number. "I've got that modem attached with a C-clamp to the desk, so it doesn't fall off." Although not much can top the male customer who told Tech Support, "I upgraded my processor to a 486DX-50 myself. I ripped out the other soldered 286 chip, and used my trusty soldering iron to solder the 486 on myself. But now it doesn't work."

And, for some reason, super-glue is another favored fix-it option for most non-tech users. Help Desks probably have a scoreboard on a nearby wall, for calls where the user has super-glued the cables into their plugs, or a disk into a disk drive, to make darn sure things don't come loose.

Consider the lady who bought a PDA with phone functionality. She called the Help Desk with a vaguely described "My phone got messed up." Turns out she had broken the stylus, then super-glued it back together. Only she'd put the glued stylus back in the slot before the glue had dried, and now the stylus was glued to the phone. She'd then resorted to a hammer and chisel to get the super-glued stylus off her phone. I think I "messed up" was putting it mildly.

Those ubiquitous paper clips also seem to be handy Fix-It tools for a lot of computer users. Like the student whose iMac froze up. He knew a paperclip could reset it, but he didn't know how. So he just stuck a paperclip in the back, in the port for "Microphone." Or consider the user whose aging CD/ROM wasn't working. So he straightened a paperclip, twisted it through the center hole of the CD, and fastened it to the drive tray. When he tried to use it, all he heard were the grinding sounds of a dying disc drive .

And people often reach for a "logical" solution that may work great in more mundane cases. Just not for computers. Like the student who told his visiting mother that his computer was running a little slow that day. "So why don't you just oil it?" she wondered. And then there was the Support Tech that told a user, "It sounds like your system froze up." To which the user responded, "I don't know why. It's about 80 degrees in here!"

Or the man who called a colleague about a non-working modem. "Is it still hooked up?" the helpful colleague asked. "No, it's in the fridge," the man replied. "It started to get really hot, so I put it in there to cool off." Or how about the user who complained his CD/ROM drive wouldn't work, and took it into Tech Support. The Tech noticed that the drive was really slick. The customer shrugged, "That must be from the WD-40 I used to get the drive tray to slide in easier."

Help Desk Headaches

Nothing will make computer Help Desk Techs gnash their teeth faster than a misunderstanding of the concept "minimum requirements of hardware" needed to run new software packages. Consider these real questions to real Help Desks: "Is it possible to put Windows 95 on a Commodore 64?"; "Do you have WordPerfect for Gameboy?"; "Why doesn't this Playstation CD work on a computer? And, while I'm at it, why can't I buy Windows 95 for my Playstation?"

Sometimes there's a bizarre disconnect between the hardware's instructions and the user's interpretation. One Help Desk didn't think they'd heard the customer correctly. "Sir, did you just say that you were inserting and removing the modem while the system was up and running?"

"Well, yeah," the customer answered. "I thought that's what Plug and Play meant!"

Or consider the user being walked through a procedure by Tech Support on the phone. "OK, Bob, now type the letter 'P' to bring up the Program Manager." The user was confused. "'P' on your keyboard, Bob," urged the Tech. "I'm *not* going to do that!" sputtered the indignant user.

Technological Leaps That Leave a Few Users Behind

Scanners have puzzled a great many computer users. "What kind of ink cartridges do I need for this scanner?" is one oft-heard question. Which is related to a user complaining, "While scanning, the picture has a thick black border, and it's using up my printer ink!"

Or consider the university Multimedia Lab, where an irate student insisted that "This lab's scanner doesn't work!" Come to find out, the student did everything correct up until the last step. "Oh, so you have to put the picture inside the scanner, huh," he admitted sheepishly.

Then there was the user who insisted, "It's not my computer that is slow. I have a 200 horse power hard drive!"

Not So Natural Disasters

One on-site Tech found caked mud inside a computer. The user just shrugged, "Must'a been that flood awhile back." While another user told the visiting Tech that the computer hadn't worked since "All that rain came through the open window last week." Sure enough, the Tech opened the computer to find that both the CD/ROM drive and disk drive had turned brownish green with rust.

Or how about the polite caller reporting, "A water main in our house broke, and 85 gallons of water got dumped on my PC. But the insurance company will only cover the parts I can prove are bad. I think it's dry now, so can you help me troubleshoot for those bad parts?"

Speaking of "bad parts," let's not forget those youngest users, commonly called children. Pity parents with computers in Boston awhile back, since the Boston Computer Museum sold chocolate bars shaped like floppy discs. Or the Help Desk which asked approximately when a caller's CD/ROM drive had stopped working. "Oh, right after my toddler stuck some quarters into the drive," was the motherly response. (Wait 'til they take this kid to Vegas!)

I understand, computers are expensive. So when ... little things go wrong, why run out and buy a whole new computer? Like the man who had a bad powerbook monitor. It had tire treads visible on the left side of the screen, from when it fell off the hood of his car and he backed over it. It still booted, and the man compensated by repositioning his windows to the right. (And, hey, those monitor tire treads were undoubtedly a great conversation starter!)

The Filth Express

And then there are the PCs that are somehow expected to operate in, let's say, less than optimal conditions. Such as the Sales/Service Tech who opened a returned computer to find layers of dead cockroaches and other insects. The owner just shrugged, "I'm not surprised. We kept it out in the kitchen." (Strike that home off your list for a free meal!)

Or consider the computer that had sat in a small, enclosed dispatch office of 24/7 smokers. The

non-working computer had so much gummy brown tar deposits inside, that the computer had literally "expired from smoking."

Although not much can top a Service Tech called to an isolated farmhouse for a non-working computer. Cows, dogs, chickens and pigs were running loose and circling the house making an unbelievable racket. Near the house's front steps was a dead and half-eaten calf. (The Tech soon learned that the owner would just step outside and shoot a calf, when it came time to feed the dogs.)

Inside, the Tech saw pigs on the couch, dogs in the recliner, with mud and grim all over the floor and walls. Led to the computer in a back room, the Tech saw that a chicken was nesting on top of the monitor, with droppings running down the side. At this point the Tech fled the scene, fearing he'd end up represented in a horror movie 'based-on' the story of a farmer who just shoots whatever he wants—or whomever displeases him.

Computer Users Who Need Anger Management Classes

"Can it damage a mouse to be thrown at a wall?" Or how about "Can you fix my laptop? It's still under warranty. My wife got mad and threw it in the pool."

Or consider the service call to the home of a little gray-haired lady. Smell of gunpowder upon entering ... A double-barreled 12-gauge shotgun lying on the couch ... A huge gaping hole in the side of her computer. "Yes, I got a little mad at it," she squeaked. "They told me I couldn't hurt it, but I think they were wrong. Can you salvage anything?"

(Although many of these anecdotes can be found on multiple computer joke sites, special thanks to *Rinkworks.com* and *Netsmartinc.com*)

Marilyn K. Martin is a freelance writer of nonfiction and fiction living in East Texas. She is the author of several published mini-articles and is currently writing a Young Adult Science Fiction series, Chronicles of Mathias, (*www.amazon.com/Chronicles-Mathias-One-Reptilian-Rebirth/ dp/1598249002*) Volume One and Two are available on Amazon.

Editor's Letters: Tips and Thoughts from Readers

"Computer and Internet tips, plus comments on the articles and columns." by ComputorEdge Staff

"Building E-Books," "USB Dilemma"

Building E-Books

[Regarding Jack Dunning's April 1 article, "Building E-Books":]

I've recently published a Kindle book on Amazon. I just wrote and assembled the book in MS Word and uploaded it to Amazon's kindle direct publishing Web site. I created several graphs, charts and tables in Excel. Getting them from Excel to Word is easy. Getting them from Excel to Word *and* have them appear correctly in Kindle took a trick. Using Snag-It was the only way that worked for me. After capturing my Excel graphs, charts and tables in Snag-It, I just pasted into Word (for whatever reason, a simple copy and paste does not work in Kindle). Then I just uploaded the entire Word file as is. The Kindle direct publishing site does the conversion to kindle in a minute or two for you. The only thing I was missing, was the Table of Contents feature you described. I do have a Table of Contents, but you cannot click on it to go somewhere in the book. I'd love it if someone knew how to do that.

-Ron Elmer, Author of the Kindle book, "The Rollover IRA Cookbook"

*I believe that the Kindle uses the MOBI format. You should be able to use Calibre to convert to EPUB, then use Sigil for creating the linked Table of Contents. You can then convert back to the MOBI format with Calibre. There is also a program called MobiPocket Creator (*www.mobipocket. com/en/downloadsoft/productdetailscreator.asp*), although I haven't tried it yet, it does say that you can create a linked TOC.*

-Jack, ComputorEdge

I'll play around with that. Thanks Jack.

By the way. If someone just has a typical novel with no pictures or charts, they can pretty much just write it in any word processor and upload directly to Amazon. Again, no TOC, but super easy to get it up for sale on Amazon.

-Ron Elmer, Raleigh, NC

Jack, thank you for your recent article in *ComputorEdge* about building e-books. I try to read each issue of *ComputorEdge* for the down-to-earth advice.

Your project of converting Jim Whiting cartoons to an e-book seems similar to a project I'd like to do. Which e-book software do you find most useful so that it can be viewed on the greatest

number of reading devices? The project I'm considering is converting a young child's read-to-me book, which is mostly pictures and little text, into an e-book. Word processing will not be a big issue since the pages are all in PDF. Thanks for your advice!

Blessings,

-Dorothea Lander

Dorothea, you're right in thinking that a child's book would be similar to a book of cartoons and it would present some of the same problems. If you are talking about just viewing the converted e-book, Calibre (mentioned in the article) has e-book viewers for testing the various e-book formats. I think you will need to use an editor such as Sigil (also mentioned) to do certain formatting.

If you're referring to the devices used by the people who would read the book, that depends upon what device they happen to prefer. Many will be using the iPad iBook app. The iPad uses the EPUB format and it is fairly easy for someone to include the e-book in their library. The iBook app is also good for viewing the e-book from various angles while looking for format problems. If you want to use Amazon Kindle, then that will be another format (MOBI) which can also be created with Calibre. You will most likely need to go through Amazon to get it loaded on the Kindle, although I'm not yet positive on this point, but will know in the not too distant future.

-*Jack*, ComputorEdge

USB Dilemma

[Regarding the April 1 Digital Dave column:]

Hey! This article seems to suggest a computer odometer, or some kind of hour meter, and power-up counter. Coupled together with the manufacturer's MTBF (mean time between failure) rating, that would notify the user when certain components are going to expire. You know—similar to the little notice you get when your printer cartridge is depleted. Maybe this technology is already on the street?

Thanks for sparking the idea!

-John Danis, Hooksett, NH

USB ports do wear out and/or break. To prevent the breakage or wearing out of the USB Port, I use a short three foot extender from the computer back panel to the top of my desk via the hole for the monitor and keyboard cables. This both cuts down on the mechanical wear of the USB port, and I have a convenient place to connect my Thumb Drives and Digital Camera when needed. If I have a problem, I just get a new extender cable.

-Ray, San Diego

ComputorEdge 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 "ComputorQuick Review", or yell at us, please e-mail us at *ceeditor@computoredge.com*.