ComputorEdge™ Online — 05/27/11

This issue: Who's Really Losing Their Jobs to Computers?

Computers do eliminate many jobs, but they may not be the ones you think.

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Digital Dave

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

Cleaning Out My Browser Favorites; Using Windows Scripts for Controlling Power Settings; Transferring Quicken Data from Old to New Computer.

Dear Digital Dave,

I was an early adapter to the Internet having first used Internet In A Box in about 1995. Over the years, I've accumulated literally thousands of entries in my Internet Explorer Favorites/ Bookmarks. I suspect that today only about one quarter of the links are still good, but the job of manually editing my Favorites by individually testing each entry would be a daunting task. So, it never gets done. Is there any software available to help me?

Perhaps the ideal program to clean up this mess would be automated so when it started I could leave my computer and go do something else (like going to bed). As it tested each Favorites link for validity (whether it still worked or not) it would create a report listing only those entries which failed. Hopefully the software would be smart enough to look for higher level links when the designated one was missing—for example, look for and report that www.ABCDEF.com *still works if* www.ABCDEF.com/subsidiarystuff *is no longer valid. When the Internet scan is done I could then view the completed report and make individual line item decisions about whether to delete a failed Favorite, replace it with a confirmed higher level link, or perhaps search the Internet for a replacement link. This would take the drudgery out of cleaning things up, while still giving me control over how to deal with each error.*

Can you suggest anything?

(I have been reading your column forever. The week wouldn't be complete without my Friday fix of DD.)

Thanks,

Ted
Louisville, CO

Dear Ted,

I'm glad you asked that question. This is a problem many people have created for themselves by saving a Web page as a Bookmark (Favorite) in their Web browser. While it's super convenient, if we don't take the time to organize and/ or clean up the listing then it can soon get out of hand. It can even make it difficult to find your favorite Favorites.

It didn't take me long to find AM DeadLink (*download.cnet.com/AM-DeadLink/3000-2370_4-10056655.html*) which appears to do almost exactly what you want, plus it's free. You can run it for any of your installed Web browsers (see Figure 1).
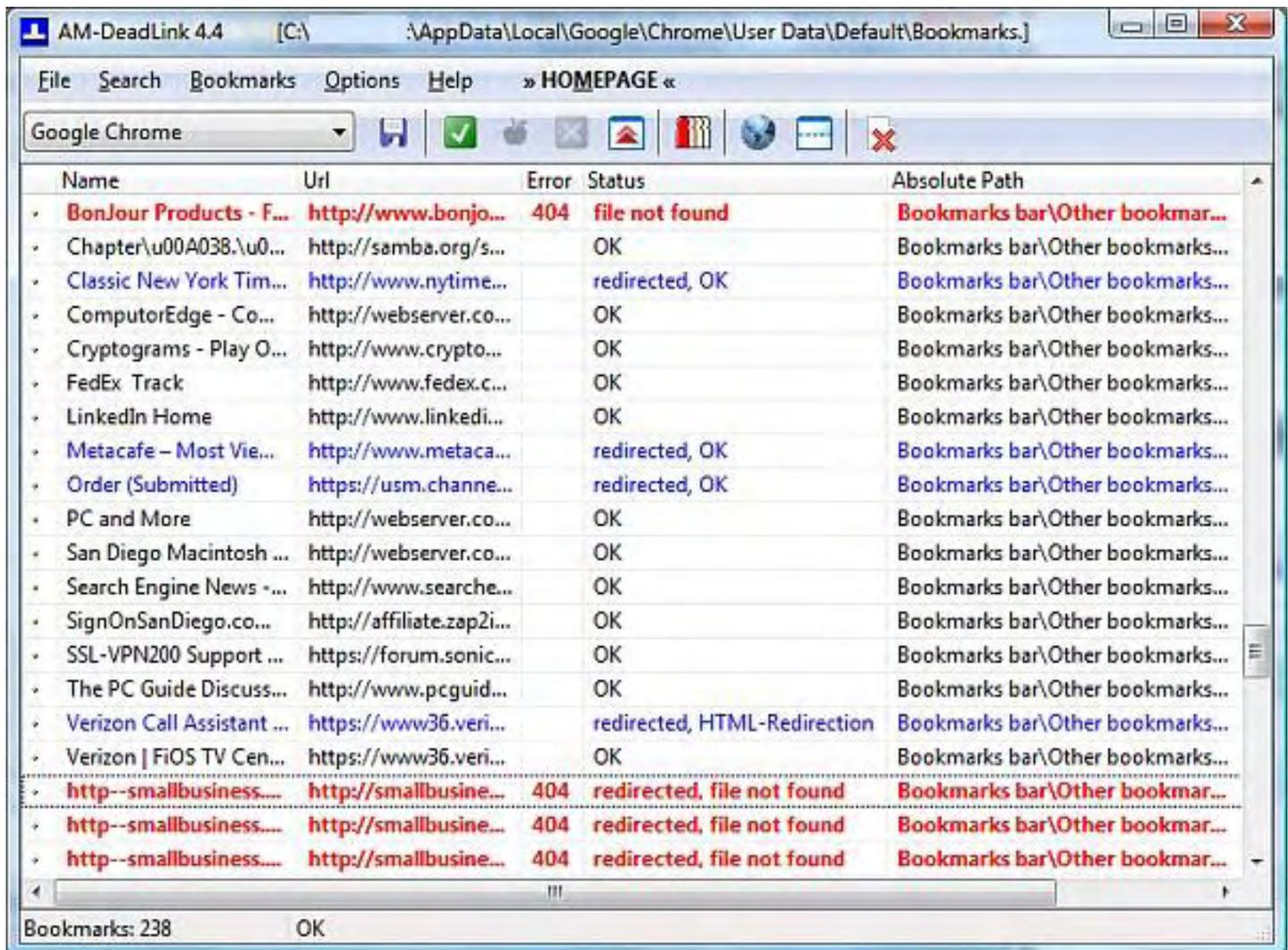
Figure 1. The AM DeadLink Bookmarks window.

All you need to do is select the browser, and click Check Bookmarks from the Bookmarks menu. As you can see, it will tell you if a Bookmark has a bad link, if it's redirected and works, or if it's redirected and is bad (file not found). You can delete the bad links directly in the window. It also will check for duplicates.

There are probably other similar programs out there. If someone has another favorite program for dealing with too many Favorites, please let us know.

If you want information from a Web site that changes regularly (and they offer a RSS feed), I'd recommend subscribing to it. It won't bother you when the site is dead, and you don't have to remember to check for updates. It has certainly saved me a lot of time.

Digital Dave

Dear Digital Dave,

I wrote you a while back about how to find a way around the power settings on my work laptop.

You were right that they get reset every time I went inside the corporate firewall. I stumbled onto something that works really well. The PowerCFG utility has command line options, and with a little reading you can figure them out. I ended up creating a small batch file that I run two to three times a day in the task scheduler. You can even set up the task scheduler to wait until you're not busy. Here's the batch file. So far, this seems to be a very good solution.

```
@echo off
powercfg.exe /create "always on"  >nul:
powercfg.exe /change "always on" /monitor-timeout-ac 00   >Nul:
powercfg.exe /change "always on" /monitor-timeout-dc 00   >Nul:
powercfg.exe /change "always on" /standby-timeout-ac 00   >Nul:
powercfg.exe /change "always on" /standby-timeout-dc 00   >Nul:
powercfg.exe /change "always on" /hibernate-timeout-ac 00 >Nul:
powercfg.exe /change "always on" /hibernate-timeout-dc 00 >Nul:
powercfg.exe /SETACTIVE "always on"
```

Tom
Denver, Co

Dear Tom,

That is an excellent use of the scripting capabilities of Windows computers. There are many repetitive jobs which are ideally suited for a batch file to either be run via the scheduler or in the Command Prompt.

I found a couple of sites that list some of the utilities that can be used in this fashion: *ss64.com/nt/* and *commandwindows.com/command3.htm*. However, I recommend that anyone using these programs be sure to check out what they do. It's possible to inadvertently perform something undesirable, such as reformatting a hard drive, when fooling around with command line utilities.

Dear Digital Dave,

I have a five year old laptop with Windows XP and use it to keep track of personal finances with Quicken 2003. I plan to replace this computer and will want to transfer the old Quicken data and integrate it with data added in the future.

How can I accomplish this going from 32-bit to 64-bit Window OS—either using the old version of Quicken or obtaining a new version?

Dee Lee
Vista

Dear Dee,

The easiest way to move your data to a new version of Windows is Windows Easy Transfer (*windows.microsoft. com/en-US/windows7/products/features/windows-easy-transfer*). This link will give you both the download for your version of Windows XP, plus lead you to instructions on how to use it.

As for Quicken data, I would install the old version of Quicken on the new computer first. This way you will be able to check out all of your data files with the old version before upgrading to the latest iteration of Quicken. Although it is unlikely to be a problem, this approach will protect against version compatibility issues and ensures your old data is in the system before moving up.

Once you have old Quicken running with all your data on your new computer, upgrading Quicken should be a simple task without worrying about your data.

This is the approach I would take with any new computer. Get all of your old stuff running on the new system before adding any new stuff. An alternative approach which is just as good, if not better unless there is a compatibility problem, is to get all the new software running with your data on the old computer, then move everything to the new computer.

Digital Dave
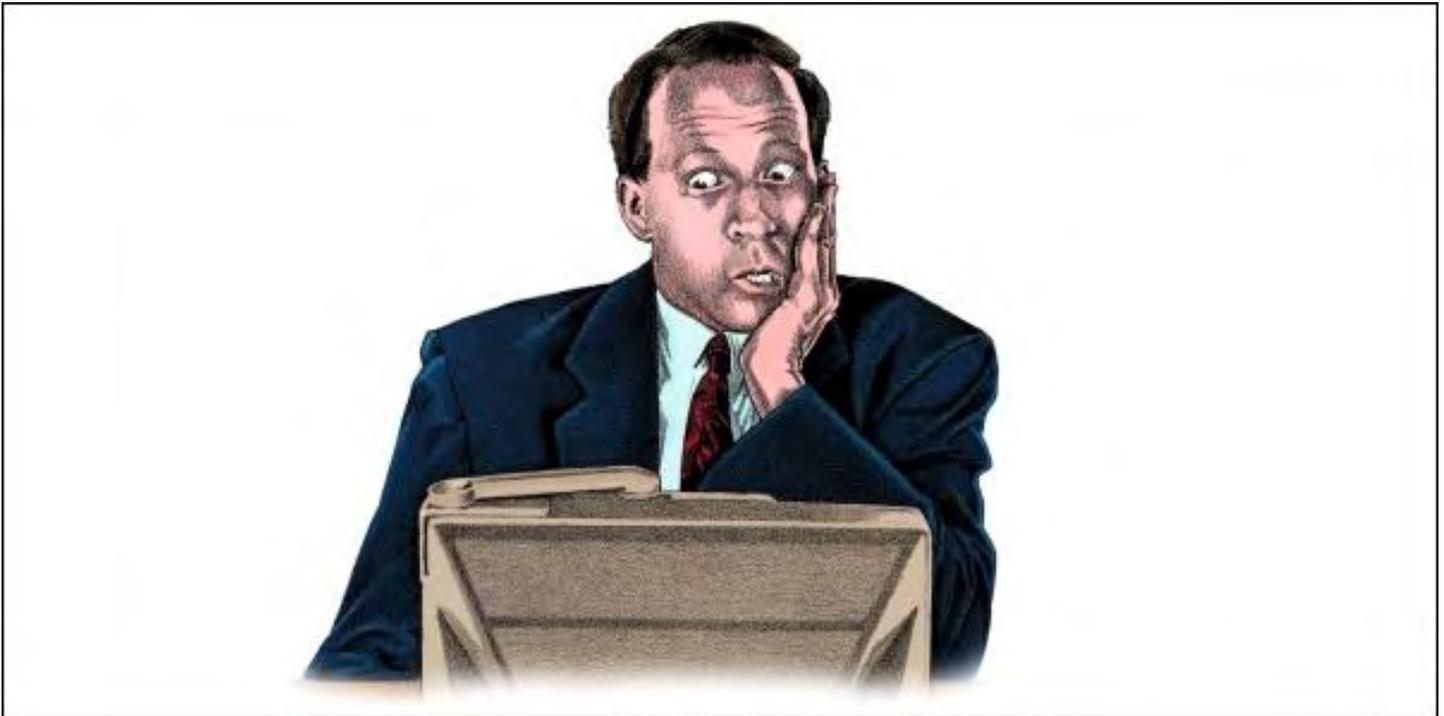
Are Computers Stealing Our Jobs?
"Jobs and Technology" by Marilyn K. Martin

Marilyn explains how computers are capable of taking jobs from even the most highly educated professionals. On the other hand, professions that don't follow "explicit rules," like certain manual labor jobs, are safe—for now.

A recent editorial in the New York Times ("Degrees and Dollars," March 7, 2011) by Paul Krugman, turns several universally accepted ideas about unemployment and computers upside down. First to go is the idea that more education automatically translates to a well paid job that can't be taken over by a computer. In fact, the elephant-in-the-room everyone is studiously ignoring, is that rapidly developing computer software can take the place of even highly educated jobs, from lawyers to engineers.

Another preconceived notion, is that computers help those who work with their minds, and hurt those who work with their hands. This too has turned out to be a fallacy. Economists argue that computers, in fact, excel at "cognitive and manual tasks that can be accomplished by following explicit rules." Thus the reality is that the many manual labor jobs still around are hard to automate, because the work doesn't follow "explicit rules."

Who Loses Jobs to Computers

Businesses will still need stockers, forklift drivers and janitors, who can react to different situations requiring various, non-explicit skills. Much like long-haul transportation still needs drivers and loaders, to handle a variety of loads and routes, and who can quickly respond to problems or detours. All are examples of manual labor jobs that don't follow
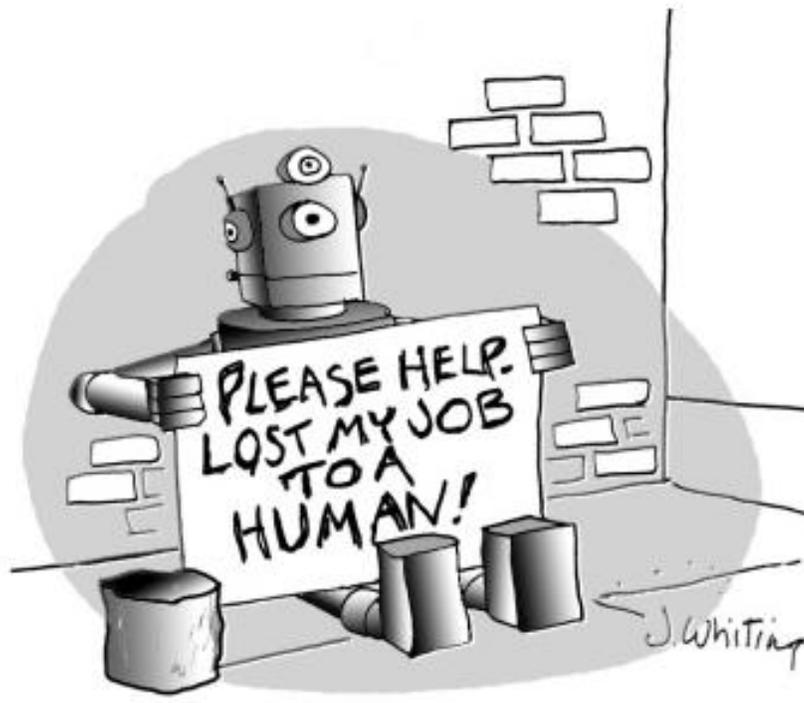
"explicit rules" and/or rote repetition.

Meanwhile, computer software is proving excellent at taking over work done by highly-paid workers that rely on research, calculations or other computerized tasks with "explicit rules." Computers can analyze millions of legal documents, cheaper and quicker than lawyers and paralegals. And even some engineering jobs, like chip design, can be done faster and cheaper with new software.

The Los Angeles Times (12/17/2010) recently asked "Where Are the Retail Jobs?" The Holidays were approaching, and yet California retailers added only 26,000 jobs in November, compared to 62,000 jobs added in November 2006. Durable goods manufacturing and wholesale trade sectors were hiring by November 2010, showing a demand for what retail was selling. So why the anemic showing of new retail jobs?

The article had multiple possible answers to that question, but no hard data. One of their speculations, however, was that retailers are increasingly relying on self check-out and in-store kiosks, to replace cashiers and "informational" floor personnel. Even restaurants, especially fast food, are experimenting with self-ordering screens and self-pay options. Since most of these jobs are performed with low, rote skills, or already rely heavily on computers, they would naturally be the first to be taken over by computers.

Although no one has yet to suggest that a robot will soon be driving the forklifts for retail stocking. But I recently worked in a warehouse club store that was working on bar-coding pallets of merchandise, as well as the various storage slots on the floor's steel shelving. When that system is fully operational, Robby-the-Robot may just be driving that forklift, matching bar codes to store pallets in the floor shelving.

Predictably, the public is confused and frightened about how many jobs are being "lost" to computers. And answers to Internet questions too often perpetuate the myths and fear of low skill jobs all being gobbled up by automation, with only "get more education" offered as a solution.

WikiAnswers tackled an explicit question about what jobs are or will be eliminated due to "expert systems." The intelligent answer given is that most jobs likely to be eliminated, are those that are the "least natural for people, and the most static by definition."

Flying a plane, they say, is a prime example of a difficult, unnatural job that has been relatively static (or unchanging) for 50 years. No wonder the military is relying more and more on flying drones and unmanned space-planes. Although the jury's still out, on how well computerized "Pilots" could function in a sudden cascade of mechanical or electronic failures.

But no one has yet been able to eliminate infantrymen, who rely on non-static and complex evaluations of dangerous environments. Although drones may feed them crucial real-time information, and thus assist in reducing the danger level for the ground-pounders. So the irony is that many jobs being lost to Artificial Intelligence or "expert systems," may well be those that are "specialized unnatural skills with a static set of expectations." (Which sounds remarkably

close to computer software that can replace nearly-rote jobs with "explicit rules.")

World Losing Manufacturing Jobs

According to *www.AutomationWorld.com*, the entire world (not just the U.S.) is losing manufacturing jobs to automation. Especially since automation often creates a cyclic phenomenon that contributes to unemployment. A new product is created, but when other manufacturers enter the market with competing products, the emphasis shifts to price. Then developers start moving manufacturing off-shore, to take advantage of lower labor costs to try and stay competitive.

This creates a need in foreign countries for better automation and technology. This not only facilitates the move of more and more manufacturing jobs off-shore by developed countries, but also means more job loss in those foreign countries due to their improved automation. The lesson to be learned by business, is that automation is only optimal for a period of time. Businesses need to continually reinvest in automation and innovation to stay competitive.

Thus it does appear that certain jobs or fields that already rely heavily on computers, or static skills with "explicit rules," are being slowly taken over by automation or software that can do that job faster and cheaper. But this employment loss is not all on the lower end of lesser skilled jobs, as feared.

Beyond automation, actual free-moving robots, despite impressive AI (Artificial Intelligence), still have clunky bodies that tend to break down or never work as advertised. One idea for near-space robots, is to build them in human form and use a real time, Wii-type human Controller on Earth.

So for now, the physical aspects of free-moving robots is extremely limited. Grandma may take a pill from one, but it won't be making her bed. We may end up with automated vehicles driving themselves by GPS, but they won't be able to fix their own flat tire. You may be able to self-order and pay at your favorite fast food restaurant, but a person will still be delivering your food.

How Not to Lose Our Jobs to Computers

So how can we use computers to enhance our work output, but not lose our jobs completely to computers? Netfuture (*www.netfuture.org/*) ("Computerized Technology and Human Responsibility") argues that computers are inherently one-sided, "substituting analysis and calculation for understanding and meaning." This represents a "risk" that needs to be balanced with human input for the most desirable outcome. If we view the computer as just a "tool" to provide information and perhaps reduce danger, and then go off to perform a non-static job using that information, then those are the jobs that will probably always be around.

So exactly what kinds of jobs are safe (for now) from automation or computerization? From what I've gleaned from the Internet, jobs are currently safe if they require lots of different little non-computerized tasks that can configure into a fresh approach or response each time they are done.

Medical, law enforcement, social services, teaching, counseling, creative endeavors, investigative, repair jobs and even some construction jobs are examples of work that constantly require a juggling of different non-computerized sub-skills to respond to each different person or situation. These sub-skills also benefit from slightly different repetition that is not rote, but that does give the worker an accumulation of valuable depth-of-experience.

Skilled Workers Wanted

Conversely, another conundrum that has recently popped up is that U.S. manufacturing jobs are having problems finding enough skilled workers. According to a Wall Street Journal article ("Help Wanted On Factory Floor," May 6,

2011), manufacturers are having trouble filling their well paid jobs, even in a down economy with so many people out of work.

One reason cited was that our high schools aren't turning out people with the basic science and mathematical skills necessary to run the sophisticated and high tech machinery in today's factories. Clearly, most manufacturing machinery has already been automated as far as it can be right now. And much of this flexible and high tech machinery, like sophisticated lathes, needs skilled operators who can reprogram them correctly for each new job or task.

So high enough entry-level skills eventually give way to depth-of-experience in such jobs, which represents "learning" or constantly growing and enhancing skills. This becomes a non-static human interaction that computers (or AI) are so far not that good at reproducing. A computer may tell a plumber what the latest available supplies and products are to put in a certain home. But the plumber still needs to discuss the options with the customer, and help make a final selection based on the customer's choices, as well as other crucial factors after inspecting the home.

Plus, the actual repair or installation needs to conform to the physical dimensions of the space, requiring both an experienced and fluid skill level, and an intricate physical flexibility to successfully perform the task. In other words, don't look anytime soon for a clunky, tipsy robot plumber that will only get stuck under the kitchen sink.

And even some highly-paid white collar fields are split, between those needing a human mind, and those being eliminated by new software. Lawyers are a prime example. Paralegals and new lawyers may be replaced by computers that can scan documents and find precedence material faster. But no one is ready to trust automated trial lawyers and judges.

So if you are worried about your job being eliminated due to computers, carefully analyze exactly what you do and if a computer is doing the bulk of your "work" right now. Only get worried if your job is basically static with "explicit rules," and involves little or no physical movement on your part. If so, you need to start thinking about moving into management or another aspect of that field, that is not mostly dependent on computers.

Marilyn is a freelance writer and humorist with many interests. She has sold teen anti-drug articles, as well as had numerous esoteric articles published. She has almost seventy mini-articles on *Helium.com (*www.helium.com/users/573405/show_articles*),* and is writing a humorous Young Adult Science Fiction series, *Chronicles of Mathias*. Volumes One and Two have received a "Gold Star for Excellence" from *TeensReadToo.com (*www.teensreadtoo.com/ReptilianRebirth.html*),* and are available from most on-line bookstores.

Cannibalization: High-tech Devours Markets and Jobs
"Technological Evolution" by Jack Dunning

> Cannibalization is the essence of technology markets, which causes loss of jobs. A company may be a leader one day and gone the next as new niches and technologies are developed.

Technology has always been based upon planned obsolescence. The latest product this year is designed to make last year's model old and antiquated. The newest is always the faster, more powerful and often cheaper. This continual evolution has made it possible to grow and renew markets that would otherwise become stagnant.

Cannibalization is the essence of technology markets. Unfortunately for many people it is not only last year's devices which are eaten by the latest and greatest, but entire market segments and the associated jobs are also consumed. It is unsettling to live and work in these high-tech times. Businesses that once seemed secure have been decimated by the revolution. If you happen to be one of the many people who has been or will be impacted by these changes, it might be a source of desperation.

Technology Causes Job Loss

For example, the major brokerages have floundered in the wake of Internet stock trading. Brokers who once reaped huge profits in commissions every time someone made a stock trade have been forced to compete with dirt cheap online systems such as eTrade and TD-Ameritrade. Former stockbrokers have had to seek other occupations since commissions which once would garner $200 now compete with seven dollar online trades.

The US Postal Service is being hammered by e-mail. With the exception of holiday cards and junk mail, snail mail has become a secondary form of communication. Many people now pay all their bills online saving the price of stamps. I use two or three stamps a month whereas in the past I would consume 30 or 40. What happens to all those postal jobs?

The downloading of music and people burning their own mixed CDs has destroyed the music store. There is no reason to expect a resurgence in this market while the music industry is continuing to struggle with the turmoil and lower margins caused by technology.

In the same manner as the music stores, we are now seeing the death of traditional bookstores. They already had plenty of competition from the major chain such as Walmart and Target, but e-books which are now taking over the market can offer greater variety at lower cost while taking up zero shelf space. This doesn't just affect bookstores. The major publishers (and printers) are experiencing turmoil that will not be resolved in their favor.

The Monday edition of the local newspaper is so thin that it's starting to feel like a pamphlet. Publishers raise their prices to make ends meet, but people are starting to read the news on their iPads while eating their breakfast. This trends seems to be inevitably pointed toward the end of the local newspaper as we have known it.

Video streaming businesses such as Netflix are raising havoc with the cable industry's on-demand service by completely bypassing cable to reach the television set. Many people are now only getting their Internet connection from the cable company. That's if they don't switch to DSL, satellite, or another type of service provider. Cable has grown with the Internet technology. Ironically, this seemingly unassailable industry may be cannibalized by the very service it offers—the Internet—and many jobs with it.

The reality is there are very few safe businesses, if any. It might be contended that barbers and hairdressers are relatively secure in their occupations. There is enough variation in the shape of the human head and the amount and quality of hair, that it would be extremely difficult to build a computer to give a haircut. Yet, if you're in a business which depends upon information, then you may be in trouble—even if you're the current leader.

Leader Today—Gone Tomorrow!

High-tech businesses which once seemed unassailable, have been cannibalized by either changes in the technology or the environment. MySpace has been displaced by Facebook. In the future, the same thing could happen to Facebook. Twitter's vulnerability is its dependence upon the text message. Another free communications system could quickly replace Twitter if it offered just a little bit more.

Businesses such as GoToMyPC and GoToMeeting are at risk. Versions of operating systems include software which will eliminated the need for GoToMyPC types of remote access. Businesses such as Skype and others online communications companies are offering free video conferencing in direct competition with current Internet meeting services.

New Niche—More Game Changes

It does appear that the netbook has become a victim of the tablet market re-energized and now dominated by the iPad. The reasons for owning a netbook fall primarily in the light computing category—Web browsing, games and entertainment. The convenience of one-handed computing with the iPad, has nicely filled the niche between the laptop computer and smart phone seriously impacting the sale of light use computers (Internet, games, etc.). Ironically, the iPad is also impacting the iPhone as many people are finding that running apps on the iPad is a much better experience than on the much smaller iPhone. Who wants to buy a monthly 3G package for both their iPhone and their iPad? Since Apple owns both markets, they don't care which you buy—although they would prefer you buy both.

The tablet market will devour more jobs in traditional markets. (Albeit, the tablet is also creating more opportunities, but they may not be as readily apparent.) It is a likely accelerant in the take down of traditional book publishing. Every tablet computer sold is also a convenient e-book reader creating many more potential e-book buyers. Even if an iPad is purchased without reading e-books in mind, there is another potential e-book buyer created. The iPad is an excellent video streaming device possibly prompting a drop in the sale of portable DVD players. (The DVD market is already feeling the crunch from video streaming services such as Netflix.)

It is difficult to recognize the business landscape when compared to only a few years ago. Companies once hailed as great successes are now nowhere to be found. The only guarantee is that everything will change. Will online storage wipe out hard drives, or will cheaper, bigger, faster hard drives force Cloud backup to quit? Maybe solid state drives cause the eventual demise of the hard drive. There is danger (or opportunities) everywhere you look.

Think your job is safe? Think again! Even if you're in high-tech, that "next big thing" may be getting ready to clobber you. You may see it coming, but feel it's a ways down the road. Plenty of time to prepare. Don't delay. It will be upon you before you know it.

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
"Using Facebook" by Wally Wang

Facebook for business; the secret of Apple retail stores; how far the mighty have fallen; the e-book evolution; the end of the world; Migration Assistant.

Given a choice between setting up a Facebook page or an ordinary Web site, it's probably better to go with the Facebook page first. Although a Facebook page can display the same information as an ordinary Web page, the difference is that it's easier to connect your Facebook page to other people's pages so someone can find your Facebook page right away. In comparison, most people rarely find an individual's Web site unless they're specifically looking for it, you give them your Web site's address, or they happen to follow a link on another site that leads them to your Web page.

Beyond using Facebook to help track down your high school classmates or co-workers from a previous job, a more practical use for Facebook is to promote your business. Just Google "business uses for Facebook" and you'll find plenty of sites offering tips and advice for either promoting yourself or your business. For a quick primer on using Facebook, download the free *How to Use Facebook for Business (*blog.hubspot.com/Portals/249/docs/facebook_for_business_ebook_hubspot.pdf*)"* e-book. This free e-book covers the basics of setting up a Facebook account while also providing a few tips on how to maximize your Facebook pages for business.

Figure 1. Plenty of sites offer advice for using Facebook in business.

For some free Facebook plug-ins for Mac OS X, such as a toolbar for Firefox or a Dashboard widget to keep you updated on your Facebook news, visit the Apple Source site (*www.applesource.com.au/software/soa/Mac-plugins-for-Facebook/0,2000070819,339287565,00.htm*) and stay connected to Facebook whenever you're using your computer.

Just as most organizations now need a Web site, more people and organizations now also need a Facebook page.

Toss in a Twitter account and a LinkedIn account, and you should have what you need to promote and advertise yourself on the Internet. Then when the next new social media trend hits, you'll have to think about including that as well.

Just remember that social media tends to be fickle so be ready to shift and change at a moment's notice. One day MySpace was all the rage, then Facebook took over. At one time, people enjoyed instant messaging through services like ICQ and AOL Instant Messenger. Now many people are relying on Twitter to "follow" their friends' activities. Virtual worlds like "Second Life" once seemed poised to take over social media, but seem to have faded in importance recently.

Social media is unpredictable, so keep your eyes open and don't be afraid to relearn something new tomorrow. You may never learn to master the details of using a social media network like Facebook, but you don't have to because nobody else knows much more than you anyway, so learning any new social media network will always be a process of trial and error as you stumble your way to figuring out how to put it to practical use.

The Secret of Apple Retail Stores

According to analyst Charlie Wolf with Needham & Company, "Mac shipments in the business market grew at a torrid 66.0% pace, an order of magnitude higher than the 4.5% shipment growth rate of the business market."

The growth of the Macintosh continues increasing faster than comparable PC sales, especially in the government market where Mac sales skyrocketed 155.6 percent and very large businesses where Mac sales increased by 94.7 percent. In every market, sales of Macintosh computers surpass PC sales.

Mac Growth vs. the PC Market — Figure 4

Education   Home   Business   Total
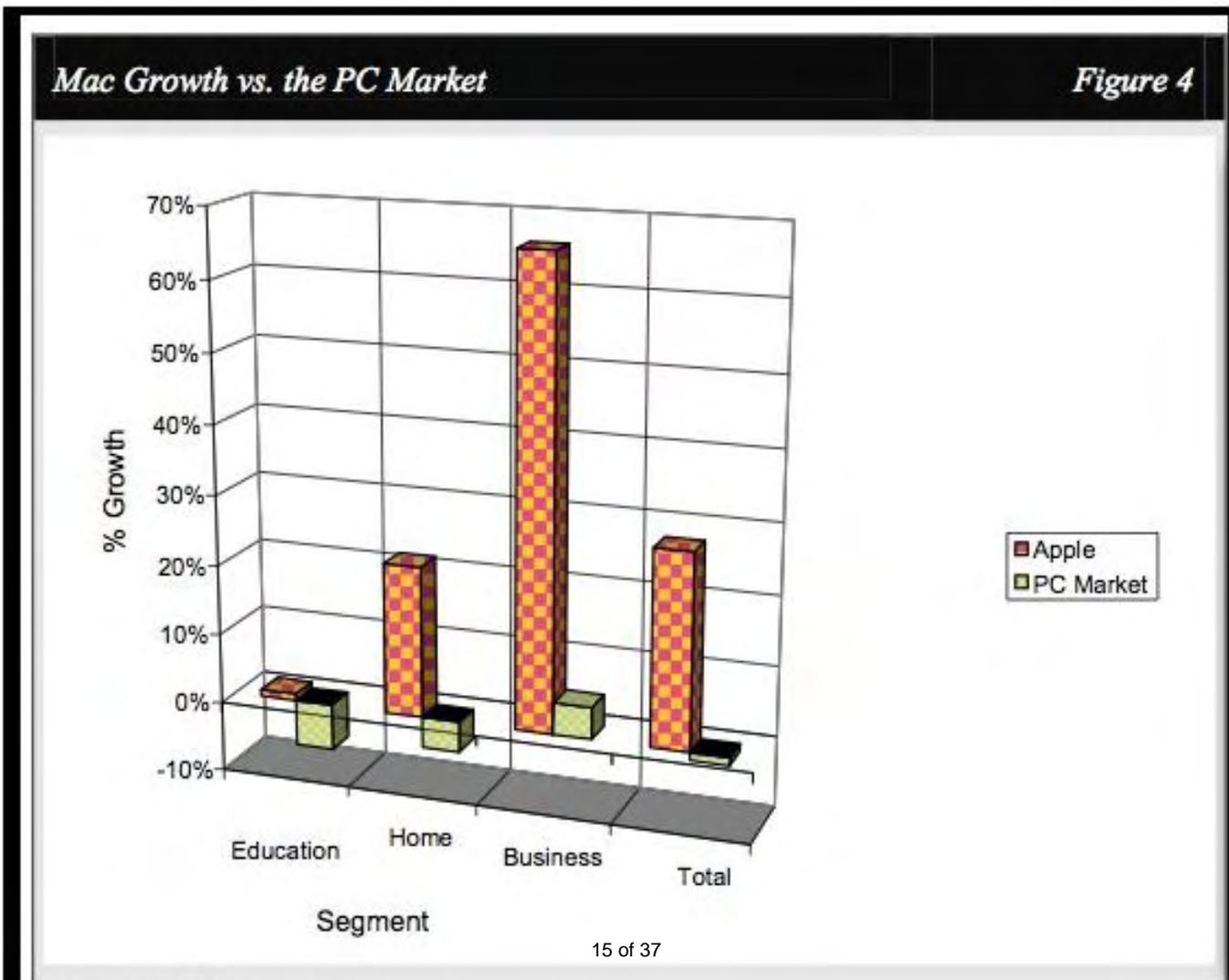
Segment

Source: IDC.

The Mac's Growth vs. Market's Growth by Segment[1], March 2011   *Figure 3*

Segment	Apple	Market
Education	1.0%	-6.5%
Government	155.6%	2.3%
Home	21.6%	-4.4%
Very large business	94.7%	16.7%
Large business	75.5%	6.1%
Medium business	58.1%	2.7%
Small business	80.4%	5.8%
Small office	48.2%	1.5%
Business	66.0%	4.5%
Total	27.7%	-1.2%

Source: IDC.

Figure 2. Mac sales keep outpacing PC sales.

Besides increasing sales to specific markets, the Macintosh is also growing rapidly around the world, especially in Asia. In the meantime, PC sales in the United States and Europe continue sinking.
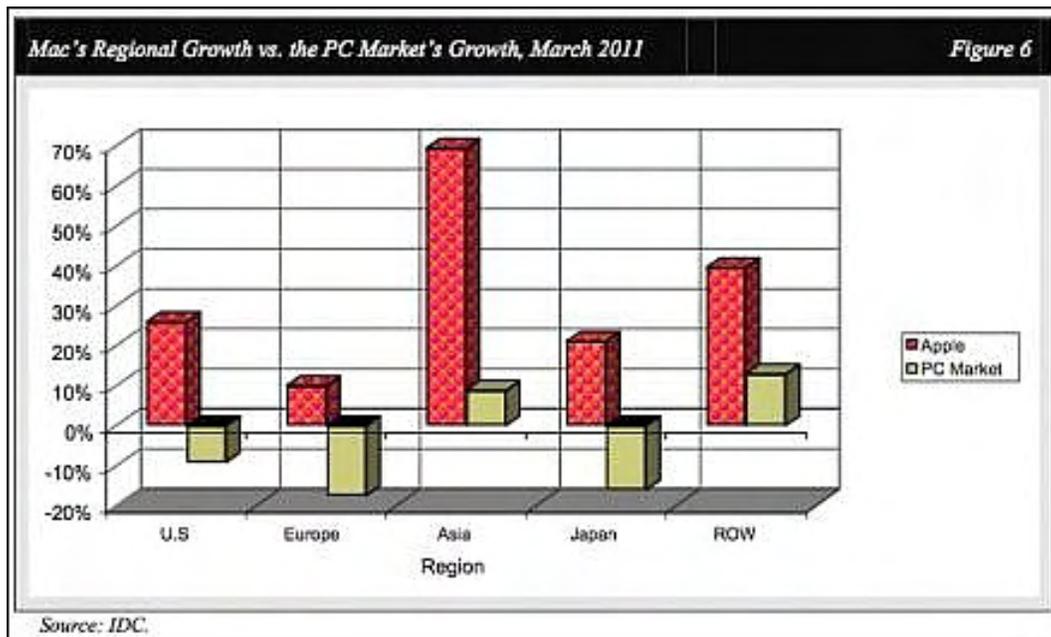
Figure 3. The Macintosh continues selling around the world.

One secret to Apple's success has been their Apple Retail Stores (*www.informationweek.com/news/hardware/ mac/229503438*). Ten years ago, Apple products had to fight for shelf space in retailers like Staples or Best Buy. As a result, most sales people simply steered people to a Windows PC. By establishing their own retail stores, Apple could provide a showcase for their products and also provide a place where people could go if they had problems with their computers.

Today, you can see Apple's influence in the stores of other companies. Microsoft's own stores are clearly mimicking the Apple Stores while Staples is emphasizing customer service to help people fix their PCs or transfer data from an old PC to a new one. Staples also showcases different tablets from Research in Motion, Acer and Motorola. If you want to see a RIM Playbook or Motorola Xoom tablet in action, visit your nearest Staples and try them out.

The Apple Store Genius Bar makes it easy for people to get help with their computers without dialing a toll-free number that's routed to India, being put on hold, and then trying to follow a long series of troubleshooting instructions over the phone. In comparison, you just have to bring a troublesome computer to an Apple Store and sit back while their geniuses do all the troubleshooting so you don't have to waste time trying to do it correctly yourself.

Now Apple is placing iPads next to every product (*news.cnet.com/8301-27076_3-20065082-248.html? tag=topStories1*) so you can view the features of that product in ways that an ordinary printed sign could never do. By demonstrating the versatility of the iPad as a sales tool, Apple Stores can sell customers on both the iPad and whatever product they may be looking at. Instead of asking a sales person for help, customers can look up information on the iPad and call for help (through the iPad) if needed.

Thomas Claburn of Information Week says that this level of customer service is what makes Apple Stores so effective. "If IT organizations can deliver that kind of experience, they're in good shape—they'll find their users more compliant and more satisfied. They will have more control because their users will be happy. That may sound simplistic but it's the core of any good IT organization."

Treat customers well and they'll reward you with their loyalty and business. Sadly, that simple concept escapes most businesses today as they look for shortcuts to wring every last penny out of a customer while doing as little as possible in return. Such short-sighted focus may work initially, but it's rarely a formula for lasting success in the long run.

Search the Internet and you can find plenty of former customers who hate Dell (*www.ihatedell.net*), but how many people can you find who love Dell? Dell is hated by former customers, tolerated by most of its current customers, but loved by very few of its current customers. Apple is hated by people who aren't its customers and loved by many people who are its customers. Which company do you think will likely thrive over time?

How Far the Mighty Have Fallen

Just a few years ago, authors relied on traditional publishers like Random House, John Wiley & Sons, and Simon and Schuster to distribute a book through a vast network of book distributors and bookstores. With bookstores shutting down, there's less of a need for book distributors, which also means there's less of a demand for traditional publishers.

How are traditional publishers trying to survive? By turning into vanity presses. In the old days, a vanity press was a publisher who took money from the author to publish a book. The author paid a fixed amount of cash, the vanity press printed and delivered the book, and that was the end of the transaction.

Bookstores rarely stocked books from vanity presses because of their uneven quality, which meant that any author who went through a vanity press had to sell and market the books all by himself. In most cases, the author lost money.

A friend of mine, Dan Fitzpatrick, runs a stock market site called Stock Market Mentor (*www.stockmarketmentor. com*). As a well-respected stock analyst, Dan has appeared on CNBC and Jim Cramer's "Mad Money" in addition to speaking at investment and trading conferences.

One time he was scheduled to speak at a trading conference so the conference organizers printed his name and presentation topic in their program, which everyone received. At the last moment, Dan had to cancel his presentation because he wasn't able to attend the conference after all.

A few days after the conference ended, Dan received an e-mail from an acquisitions editor at a major publishing company (which has been around for over 100 years). In the e-mail, the acquisitions editor gushed over Dan's presentation at the conference and suggested that it might make a great book topic.

Obviously this acquisitions editor could never have seen Dan speak at that conference because Dan was never there, so it's apparent that the acquisitions editor simply e-mailed every speaker listed in the conference program and tried to get them interested in publishing a book with that particular publisher.

This is how acquisitions editors now work. Their job is to trick potential authors into signing a book contract where the publisher acts like they're doing the author a favor. Next, the publisher asks that the author guarantee (as part of the contract) that he will buy back a fixed number of copies of his own book, such as 5,000 copies. This buyback forces the author to essentially pay the publisher for the right to have his book published.

At this point, the publisher has made money through the author buyback program, and the publisher does no marketing afterward while they search for another author to reel in. In the meantime, the publisher asks that the author use his own social media network to promote and sell the book.

If the author does manage to promote his own book through his own marketing efforts, the traditional publisher takes up to 90 percent of the profits and leaves the author with 10 percent for all his hard work. (Self-publishing through Amazon's Kindle gives the author 70 percent of the profits.)

By following this vanity press business model, traditional publishers can make money directly from their authors, do nothing to promote their books, and leave the author with boxes of unsold books and several thousand dollars less in

their bank accounts. If by some miracle the author actually sells his own books, the publisher takes the lion's share of the profits while retaining the book rights at the same time.

By holding the book rights, the publisher now controls whether the book can be converted to other forms such as an e-book or audiobook, and if so, then the publisher snares the lion's share of those profits even if the author does all his own marketing.

The traditional publishing model has shifted from selling books to fleecing authors, which even vanity presses never did. Such tactics will only push authors faster into the self-publishing, e-book business model and leave traditional publishers to wither away as they soil their once sterling, century-old reputation in exchange for the short-term pursuit of making money now.

Of course, not all publishers work this way, but a distressing number of the largest publishers now do. For authors, the quickest and least expensive route to publication is through self-publishing. If you're lucky enough to sell a lot of e-books to attract the attention of a traditional publisher, you can license your material to the traditional publishers (while retaining the lion's share of the profits) because you'll be dealing from a position of strength.

The future of e-books will only grow over time while the future of traditional publishers will continue decreasing over time. Given the way traditional publishers are turning more into vanity presses while staying handicapped with the limitations of print, e-book self-publishing looks more attractive every day.

The E-Book Evolution

One reason why people are still debating the worth of e-books is because most e-books are nothing more than electronic versions of printed books. Read an e-book on an Amazon Kindle and you just get to stare at static text and graphics. The Barnes and Noble Nook e-reader offers a bit of an improvement by adding color, but even color e-books only display static text and graphics.

However, if you browse through the latest EPUB 3.0 draft standard (*idpf.org/epub/30/spec/epub30-changes.html*), you can find some interesting glimpses of the future of e-books.

The EPUB 3.0 standard defines the use of adding audio and video to an e-book, which immediately makes Amazon's current Kindle e-reader obsolete since it can't display video, even though the Kindle e-book format does support video embedded in e-books. This may explain why Amazon is developing a tablet of their own while Barnes and Noble's Nook is slowly evolving into a tablet as well.

Another interesting tidbit is the EPUB 3.0 text-to-speech feature that allows a computer to read text out loud with the ability to synchronize scrolling of text so you can follow along. Go one step further and notice that the EPUB 3.0 standard also defines the ability to write scripts so an e-book can interact with the reader.

Instead of simply delivering information to a reader in a fixed format whether text, graphics, audio, or video, future e-books can allow reader interaction that allows the e-book to customize its presentation of information, which can be useful for textbooks and helping different types of students learn. Instead of printing three different history books, you could create a single history e-book that can cater to kindergartners, fifth graders and high school students by selectively choosing appropriate information to display based on the reader's needs.

Imagine learning a foreign language with an interactive e-book. Instead of struggling with a book written completely in another language, what if that e-book could change to display just a few words in a foreign language? As your knowledge of that language improves, you could gradually change more text to another language until you're finally comfortable reading everything in that language. Today's printed books can't offer this feature, but tomorrow's e-books

might. To get more ideas on the future of e-books, read this blog post (*kristinnehls.wordpress.com/2011/01/25/ digital-book-world-day-2-future-ebooks-will-be-seriously-awesome/*) about ideas discussed at the Digital Book World conference.

With the ability to hear audio, see video and manipulate items on a page to achieve different results, readers will no longer be limited to viewing electronic versions of printed books as boring static images. Watch early movies to see how film makers initially treated movies as filmed versions of stage plays. Now look at an Amazon Kindle and notice how displaying black and white text on an e-reader is no different than viewing a printed page. The faster e-books evolve from their printed text origins, the faster people will accept e-books.

Until e-books evolve to include audio and video along with interactivity, you can continue reading ordinary e-books on your computer using a variety of software such as Amazon's free Kindle software (*www.amazon.com/gp/feature. html/ref=kcp_ipad_mkt_lnd?docId=1000493771*) or Barnes and Noble's free Nook software (*www. barnesandnoble.com/u/free-nook-apps/379002321/*).

Today's e-books may look dull, but wait a few years and you may not recognize the next generation of e-books. Whatever e-books eventually look like, you can be certain they'll no longer mimic the static text and pictures of the printed page.

The End of the World

If you listened to Harold Camping's predictions (*content.usatoday.com/communities/Religion/post/2011/05/ harold-camping-failed-prophet-of-may-21s-doom-to-speak-today/1*) that the world would end on 6:00 pm May 21, you may either be disappointed to find that you're still on Earth or dismayed that despite another failed religious prediction, many people will still believe future predictions of the apocalypse anyway. To learn more about why people tend to behave in predictably stupid ways, read *Extraordinary Popular Delusions and the Madness of Crowds (*www.amazon.com/gp/product/1461078369/ref=as_li_tf_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=217145&creative=399349&creativeASIN=1461078369*)* by Charles MacKay. After reading how crowds are easily duped, you might reach the conclusion that a distressingly large number of people are no smarter than a slug.

For those who aren't satisfied listening to someone else's interpretation of the Bible, take a moment and read it for yourself using a program like Eloquent (*www.macsword.com/*). This open source project lets you read various Bible translations and compare versions to see for yourself what the Bible actually says. Once you actually read and understand the Bible, you can compare your interpretation with what some self-proclaimed religious preacher tells you the Bible really means.
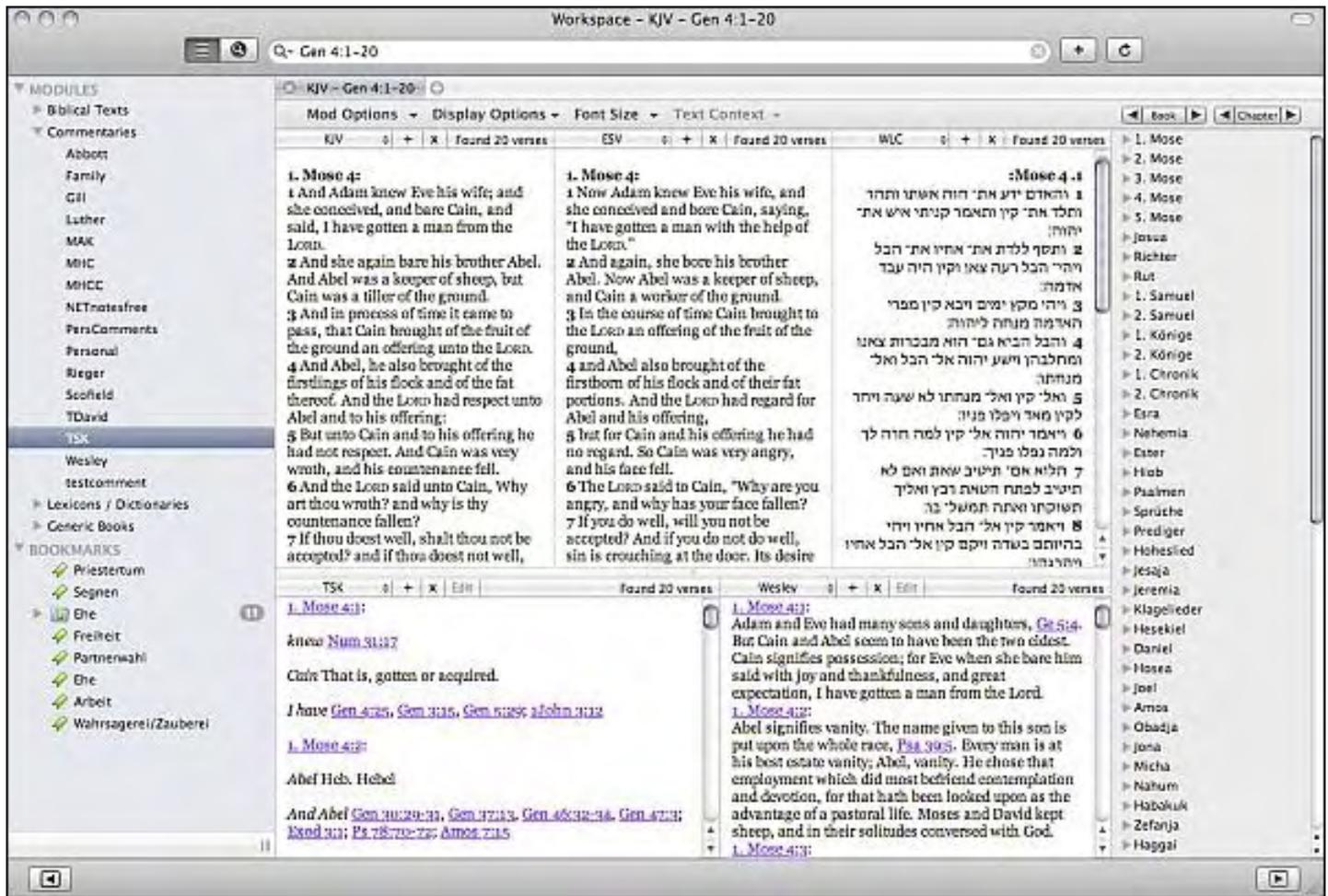
Figure 4. The open source Eloquent program lets you read the Bible on your Macintosh.

Because Eloquent is open source, you can contribute your own programming skills to improving the program or adding new features. Obviously, working on an open source Biblical program will probably help spread the Bible's real message a lot better than spreading tales of doom through fliers or billboards financed through your life savings.

Harold Camping's followers simply prove how easily people can accept a comforting delusion rather than open their eyes and minds to deal with the stark reality of facts. If Harold Camping loses his religious followers, perhaps he can use his self-proclaimed "expertise" and avoidance of facts to start convincing people not to buy anything made by Apple instead.

*   *   *

Switching to a new computer is usually a pain since you have to copy all your files and reinstall all your software on the new computer. Fortunately if you're switching from an old Macintosh to a newer one, you can effectively clone your old Macintosh using a program that comes with Mac OS X called the Migration Assistant, which you'll find buried in the Utilities folder inside the Applications folder.

Figure 5. The Migration Assistant can even transfer e-mail along with files and programs.

One way to transfer your data from your old Macintosh to a newer one is to connect a FireWire cable between the two computers, but with some Macs having different FireWire ports, you need different adapters. A much simpler way is to use an external hard disk connected to your older Macintosh. Back up all your data using Time Machine, then disconnect the external hard disk and plug it into your new Macintosh. When you run the Migration Assistant, you'll be able to restore everything from the external hard disk on to your new Macintosh.

Figure 6. The Migration Assistant can retrieve data from the Time Machine backup of another Macintosh computer.

Within minutes, you'll have all your files, music, photographs, e-mail settings and messages, and browser bookmarks transferred to your new Macintosh and you'll be ready to start working in the exact same environment as your original Macintosh. By using an external hard disk and Time Machine with the Migration Assistant, you'll never risk the hassle of switching to a new Macintosh ever again.

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*.
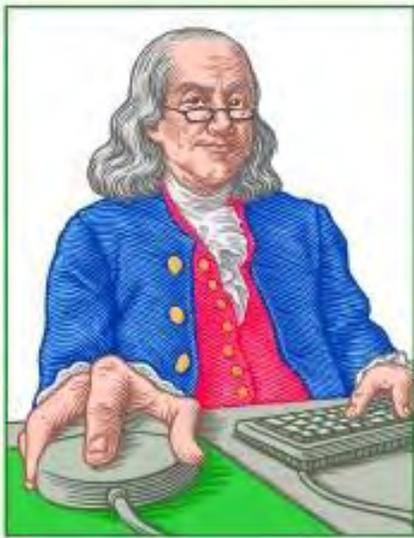
LINUX LESSONS

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

Linux Lessons: Tips and Tricks from Users
"Please BEEP when done." by Tony J. Podrasky

No need to keep checking. Here is a Linux script which will alert you with a BEEP when a running program has completed its task.

BEEP is one in a series of Linux scripts offered in this column which are designed to accomplish simple tasks while providing quick tools for Linux users.

Filename: BEEP

Use: Sounds the bell at prescribed time until interrupted with a control-c.

Have you ever started a job and wanted to know when it ends? Like backing up a disk to tape, compiling a program, a long download, or any other job that takes many minutes or even hours? Well, the <BEEP> shell file might help.

What you do is enter the commands for the job and then follow it with a semicolon and the shell file BEEP. When your job finishes it will execute the BEEP module continuously until you kill it off with a control-c.

Example: date; tar -cv .; date; BEEP

<date> will put the time that the <tar -c .> began, and when the <tar -c .> completes, it will print the time, then enter the BEEP loop.

How it works:

```
#!/bin/csh -f        Use the "C" shell interpreter.
while (1)             Do what follows indefinitely.
xset b 100 870 100   Sets the information for the system's "bell."
echo "^G"            Sound the bell.
sleep 60             Wait for 60 seconds before continuing.
end                  End of the "while loop's" things to do.
```

Things you might try:

• Do a <man xset> to see what the "b" and "100 870 100" do. You can try the <xset> at your command prompt and change some of the parameters. If you mess something up, when you close that xsession, things will return to normal.

• The "60" after the <sleep> tells the system to wait 60 seconds. You can change the "60" to whatever you like.

• The "CUT HERE" needs to be edited after you save it because it won't save the "^G" (ASCII bell code) properly. Here's what you need to do:

1. Do the "CUT HERE" part and save it to a file called BEEP.
2. Do a <vi BEEP>
3. Skip down the the line with the "echo" command on it and put the cursor on the first double-quote. Type the following keys:

• D
• a
• "
• control-v
• control-g
• "

Don't forget to do a <chmod 755 BEEP> on the BEEP file.
————————————————CUT HERE————————————————-

```
#!/bin/csh -f
while (1)
    xset b 100 870 100
    echo "^G"
    sleep 60
end
```

————————————————CUT HERE————————————————-

NOTE: I give my shell files uppercase names so that *I know* they are my shell files and not the system's binaries. For example, when I save the data (the commands between the "CUT HERE" lines, which is the actual shell file) I might 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."

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*).
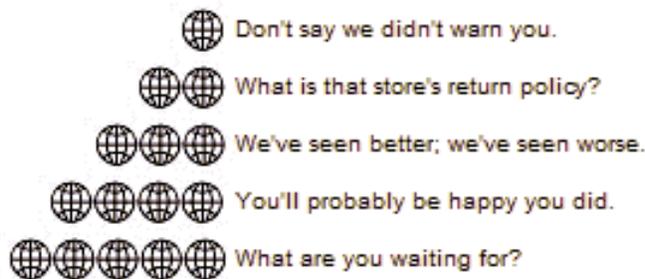
Worldwide News & Product Reviews

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

The Digital Swiss Army Knife; Adobe Creative Suite 5.5; LG Quantum Windows Phone (AT&T).

Don't say we didn't warn you.

What is that store's return policy?

We've seen better; we've seen worse.

You'll probably be happy you did.

What are you waiting for?

The Digital Swiss Army Knife

We hear this week from Consumer Savings Expert Andrea Woroch (andrea@kinoliinc.com) on the topic of "Saving with a Smartphone":

Imagine a future where nearly everyone owns a small computer that serves as a video camera, a camera, an alarm clock, a GPS and just about everything else you want in a handheld. Well guess what—the future is here. The smartphone technology for creating videos has become so popular that Cisco is closing down its FLIP video camera division.

The price tag on these wonder devices can be steep, but with a huge number of features, smartphones are making other tech gadgets obsolete. Here are just a few of the ways you can use your smartphone to save some money.

1. Digital Camera

The idea of the smartphone camera replacing the point-and-shoot camera probably makes photography purists cringe. Camera-phone technology has come a long way and, in many cases, the picture quality is keeping up with digital cameras.

There are several factors that weigh into the decline of the traditional camera. For one, the convenience of a smartphone camera can't be beat. Instead of uploading pictures to the computer from a regular camera, we now can share them with friends and family immediately after taking them. Also, smartphone cameras allow users to download photo apps that create a range of picture possibilities not available on the point-and-shoot camera.

According to the New York Times, the Apple iPhone is the most commonly used camera on the photo sharing Web site Flickr. In fact, a standard digital camera didn't even crack the top five.

2. Video Camera

The video camera is newer to the cell phone scene than the camera, but it's making some big strides: So much so that some of the toughest competitors are backing down, including the aforementioned Cisco. With some smartphone video cameras capable of shooting in HD, handheld camcorders are becoming obsolete. Even if the quality isn't ready for national TV, a smartphone video camera works well enough to capture the kids blowing out their birthday candles.

3. Alarm Clock

An alarm clock probably isn't the item on this list that's breaking your budget. Still, using the alarm clock on a smartphone cuts down on the number of gadgets you need around the house. The portability also is helpful beyond waking up in the morning as you can use the alarm to remind you of appointments, when it's time to take a pill, etc.

4. GPS

Good luck finding excuses for being late now that many smartphones have free GPS apps. There are expensive GPS apps like TomTom that can cost up to $100, but most phones already come equipped with a free Google Maps navigation app. This can provide up-to-date directions for driving, walking, biking and even public transportation.

5. The Junk in Your Purse

This is a somewhat broad category. Smartphones clearly aren't replacing mascara, Chapstick, tissues, gum, sunglasses or whatever else might be in your purse or murse. They can, however, get rid of calculators, planners, address books and calendars. We no longer have to remember each individual birthday, address or phone number. Smartphones have the capability to operate as a glorified tip calculator or full-on business planner, depending on your needs.

6. Coupon Apps

There are a growing number of coupon apps that let users download coupons and even use the coupons directly from your smartphone. The Coupon Sherpa app not only provides mobile coupons, but does so based on your location. If you decide on a spur-of-the-moment lunch at a new restaurant, you can now figure out which ones have the best coupons. It also lets you compile lists of your favorite stores, so you only get the coupons you want.

7. GasBuddy

New smartphone apps are created every day. Many can be used to save money from your phone, including the popular Gas Buddy. This free app finds gas stations in your area and lists their current gas prices.

8. Barcode Scanner Apps

Use this app and you'll draw a crowd. Barcode Scanner apps let you scan any barcode to get more information about the product, other places you can buy it, and what kind of prices competitors are offering. These apps really take the legwork out of bargain hunting.

Adobe Creative Suite 5.5

Adobe has just released the Adobe Creative Suite 5.5 product family. In the future we plan to get into more depth on individual components of this encyclopedic compilation but, for now, let's check in with the folks at Adobe:

Adobe Creative Suite 5.5 delivers important advances in HTML5 and Flash authoring, enabling designers and developers to create compelling content and applications. Creative Suite 5.5 products also feature significant innovation in the areas of video production and editing. Finally, Adobe Creative Suite 5.5 delivers exciting new capabilities in the exploding area of digital publishing. With Creative Suite 5.5 content authors worldwide can deliver high-impact work to multiple platforms, operating systems, Web browsers, smartphones and tablets—including Android, BlackBerry Tablet OS and Apple iOS devices.

Focused on the latest wave of mobile devices, this release of Creative Suite gives Web designers and developers a complete software solution that allows them to produce stunning HTML5 content in the browser and deliver high-impact mobile applications through sweeping advances in Flash tooling.

• Creative Suite 5.5 Web Premium Suite is packed with innovations in HTML5 and Flash authoring tools, empowering customers to create, deliver and monetize rich content and applications for virtually any screen. Designers and developers can create rich browser-based content across screens using HTML5. Adobe Flash Professional CS5.5, Flash Builder 4.5 Premium and the Flex 4.5 framework allow users to quickly and easily develop, test and deploy high-performance mobile applications for Android, BlackBerry Tablet OS, and Apple iOS. Creative Suite 5.5 Kick-starts New Era in Digital Publishing
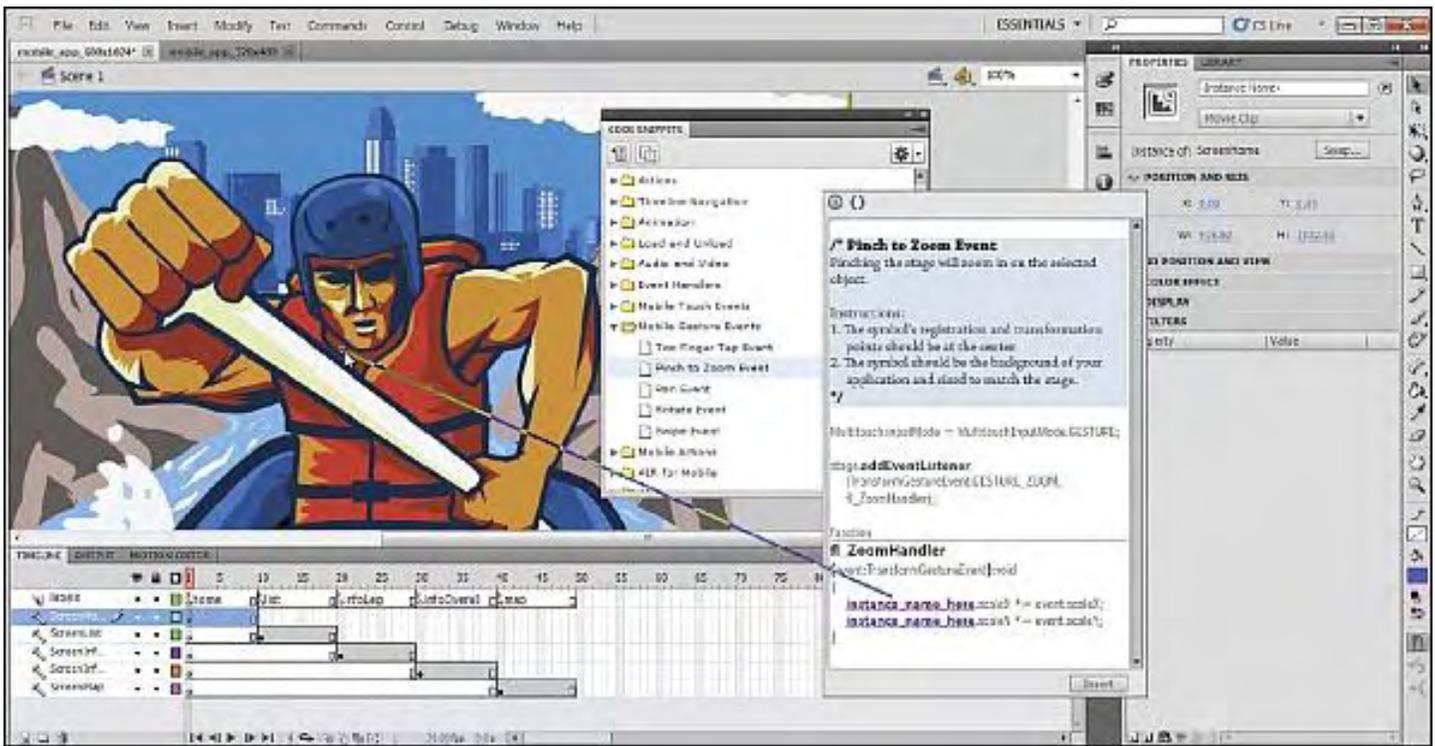
Adobe Flash.

Over the last year Adobe and leading publishers, including Condé Nast and Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia, have worked to develop new digital publishing workflows based on Creative Suite and Adobe InDesign. Creative Suite 5.5 will enable print publishers to create beautiful interactive publications on the latest tablet platforms.

• Creative Suite 5.5 Design Premium Suite builds upon Adobe's product innovations in publishing already deployed by some of the world's leading newspaper, magazine and business publishers to create print and stunning digital versions of their properties for the latest tablet devices. Using Adobe InDesign CS5.5, in combination with the integrated Folio Producer toolset, designers can add new levels of interactivity to their page layouts targeted at tablet devices. Adobe today also announced the immediate availability of the Professional Edition of Adobe Digital Publishing Suite, a turnkey solution that includes hosted services and viewer technology that allow publishers to cost-efficiently publish content to Android tablets, BlackBerry PlayBook and Apple iPad.

In addition to advances in mobile authoring and digital publishing, Creative Suite 5.5 Production Premium Suite delivers video and audio professionals breakthrough performance, workflow improvements, creative innovations and powerful new audio editing capabilities that build upon the huge customer momentum Production Premium is experiencing with broadcasters, filmmakers and video professionals worldwide.
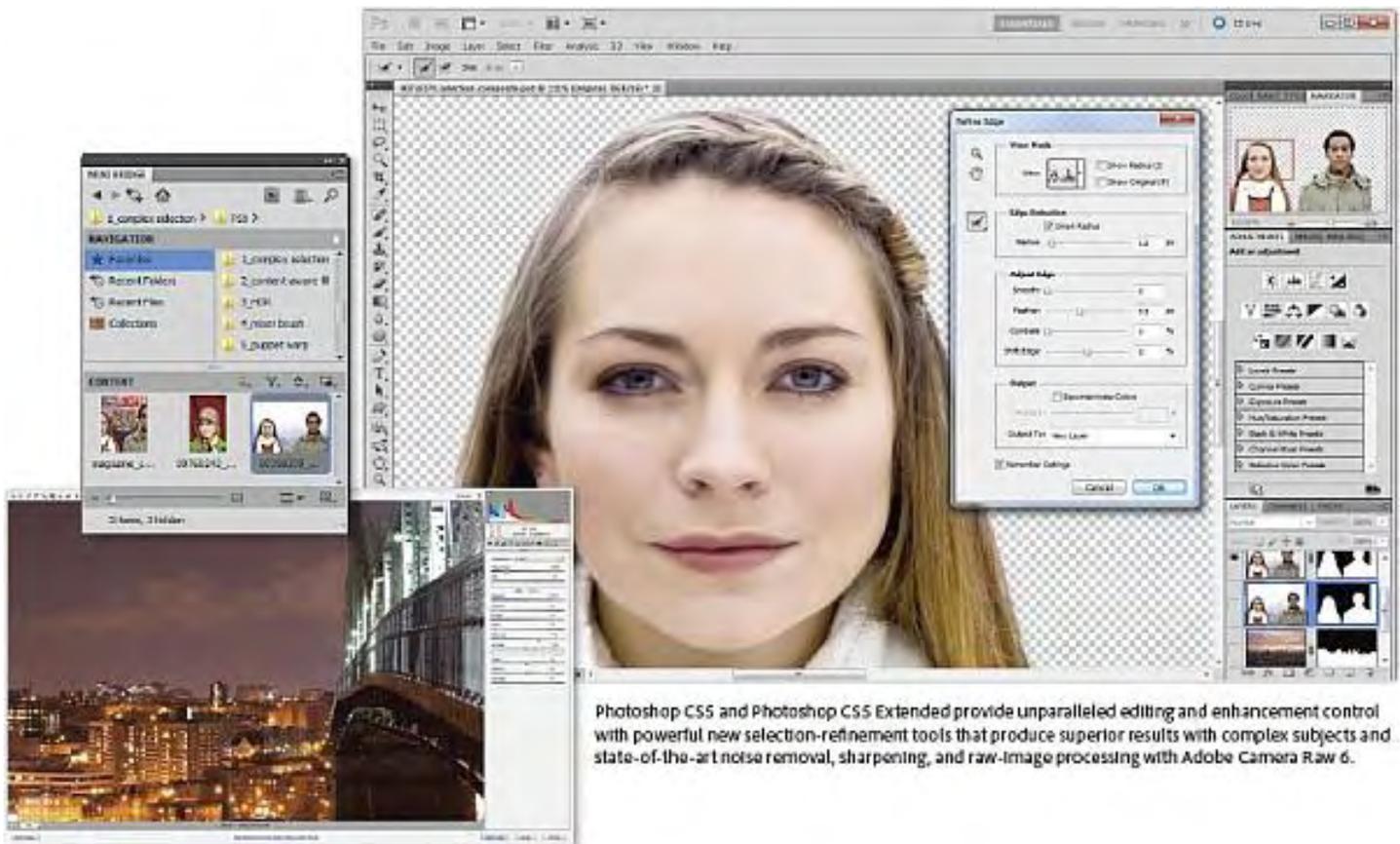
Adobe Photoshop.

The new Creative Suite product lineup is headlined by Adobe Creative Suite 5.5 Master Collection, which includes, in a single package, all of Adobe's industry-defining creative tools, such as Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign, Acrobat, Flash Builder Premium, Flash Catalyst, Flash Professional, Dreamweaver, Adobe Premiere Pro and After Effects.

These products are available separately or as components of one or more of the five Creative Suite editions. The complete Creative Suite 5 lineup includes Creative Suite 5.5 Master Collection, Creative Suite 5.5 Design Premium, Creative Suite 5.5 Web Premium, Creative Suite 5.5 Production Premium, and Creative Suite 5.5 Design Standard.

Adobe Creative Suite 5.5 products are available through Adobe authorized resellers, the Adobe Store (*www.adobe. com/store*) and Adobe Direct Sales. Estimated street price for the suites is $2599 for CS5.5 Master Collection, $1899 for CS5.5 Design Premium, $1799 for CS5.5 Web Premium, $1699 for CS5.5 Production Premium and $1299 for CS5.5 Design Standard. Upgrade pricing and volume licensing are available.

By subscribing to Creative Suite, customers can choose a one-year subscription plan for lower payments or a month-to-month subscription for greater flexibility. For more information, visit Subscription Editions (*www.adobe.com/go/ cssubscription*).

Education pricing for students, faculty and staff in K-12, and higher education is available from Adobe Authorized Education Resellers and the Adobe Education Store (*www.adobe.com/education/purchasing/ education_pricing.html*). For more information regarding education volume licensing for higher education and K-12 institutions visitAdobe (*www.adobe.com/aboutadobe/volumelicensing/education*).

For more detailed information about features, OS support, upgrade policies, pricing and international versions visit this Adobe page (*www.adobe.com/go/creativesuitemaster*).

LG Quantum Windows Phone (AT&T)

Microsoft is hoping to leverage its success with the Windows 7 operating system to get at least a toehold in a mobile market dominated by Google Android, Apple iOS and RIM Blackberry OS. Their Windows Phone 7 OS looks quite impressive, particularly if you're specifically looking for something other than one of the aforementioned OSes. Windows Phone 7 offers easy access to social networking, e-mail, MS Office apps, streaming media, the Zune music ecosystem, and even Xbox LIVE gaming.

The LG Quantum we evaluated is a 3G-enabled Windows Phone 7 smartphone with a fast Qualcomm 1GHz Snapdragon processor, a 3.5-inch touchscreen, and a slide-out full QWERTY keyboard. It's got a 5-megapixel camera with LED flash that captures HD 720p video, a 3.5mm headphone jack, 16GB of internal memory, Wi-Fi networking, Bluetooth stereo music and hands-free communication, FM radio, GPS for navigation and location services, and a Li-Ion battery that offers up to six hours of talk time (depending on what else you've got running).

The LG Quantum also features something called DLNA technology which lets you to stream videos, music and pictures wirelessly to a similarly-enabled TV, stereo, Windows 7 PC, or other device.

The Quantum has an interesting Live Tile and Hub interface. Instead of the normal icons you see on iPhones and Androids, its Live Tiles show you what's going on with e-mail, Facebook, your contacts and other commonly used services. The Tiles automatically keep up to date without you needing to open up the associated app so, if there's no new e-mail or Facebook status update, you see it right there at a glance.

The Quantum also has full mobile versions of the MS Office apps Word, Excel and PowerPoint so it's easy to keep up to date with much of your workload.

One thing that I thought could use a little improvement is the Quantum's camera. The pictures it takes look a tad washed-out, especially in low light conditions.

A recent update for all Windows Phone 7 devices brings Copy/Paste capability, better load times for apps, faster Marketplace searches, improved Wi-Fi, and more. For anyone who already owns a Windows 7 phone who hasn't yet downloaded the update, make sure you get it. It's a keeper. Note: you'll need to connect your phone to your computer via USB cable to get and install the update.

With Windows 7 Mobile it looks like we have a solid, interesting new entry in the mobile phone space, and the LG Quantum is an attractive, feature-rich member of this growing family.

⊕⊕⊕⊕

In addition to being an editor and columnist for *ComputorEdge* 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*.

Editor's Letters: Tips and Thoughts from Readers

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

"30% Speed Upgrade," "Microsoft Office Alternatives," "OK, How About This Linux Script?"

30% Speed Upgrade

[Regarding the May 13 Digital Dave column:]

Please, rather than putting in *more than 2GB* of memory, just buy and install a faster CPU!! *Without* dreaded *overclocking* CPUs with rates close to 3GHz won't break the bank!!

Keep it simple, stupid!!

-Michael Viehman, Julian, Ca

You can find Windows 7 Ultimate (32 or 64-bit) on sale from TigerDirect or NewEgg for as little as $160. I would *much* rather do that than buy what may be pirated Windows in Mexico.

I have had problems with Microsoft declaring even my legit Windows to be pirated. I have had to prove otherwise to them once and was forced to buy new XP Pro, even though Microsoft had verified my Windows three days prior when I downloaded the SP2s.

Installing Windows 7 is easy if a bit more time consuming than XP. Comparing my 2.9GHz 4GB 1066MHz RAM computer to my roommate's HP laptop with 2.4GHz and 4GB 600MHz RAM, his Win7 64-bit is faster than mine running my old XP Pro. I'm upgrading to Win7 64-bit and a 3GHz Phenom Black this summer. I will eventually install 2-4GB RAM and later still another 2 for 16GB RAM. I find myself frequently using 80%+ of my 6GB page file, but I do often have a number of things running at the same time—one of which is usually HDTV.

-YPaula Barefoot, Borrego Springs, CA

About the computer upgrade: I'll take your primary advise and buy more memory. I'll see what happens after that, Dave. My HDD is a solid state, so no reason for upgrade. About the person who called me stupid, well... I guess you have all kind of readers. He knows more than me, I can dig that.

-Victor, Seeley, CA

Victor, I don't think that Michael was calling you stupid. I believe he was simply invoking the acronym KISS (Keep It Simple Stupid), in which he was probably referring to me.

The problem is that computer system speed is not a simple as CPU speed. It is a combination of all of the pieces of the system. That's why adding a little memory in a low memory machine may have more impact than replacing the processor. But of course it all depends upon the total

configuration. In many cases, a faster processor can give you the desired increase in performance. But being forced to swap memory data to the hard drive due to low available RAM can be quite a bottleneck.

-Digital Dave

Microsoft Office Alternatives

[Regarding the May 13 Digital Dave column:]

Digital Dave,

Many people are switching to LibreOffice (*www.libreoffice.org/*) instead of OpenOffice.org (*openoffice.org*). Functionally, LibreOffice is nearly identical. What is the rationale for the change? It's complicated, but many are concerned over OpenOffice's future now that it has been purchased by a commercial business. LibreOffice is completely free, and its goals are consistent with FOSS principles (free and open source software). Try LibreOffice if you haven't already. I don't think you'll see any difference.

-Jerry Palsson, Tucson, AZ

I've found that OpenOffice, GoogleDocs and Zulu are OK for very simple word and power point type documents. But most all non-trivial documents from my professional work are incompatible, going into (or back from) these alternatives (styles/formats, tables of references, footnotes, graphics).

So recommending alternatives to MS Office needs such a caveat. Of course, if you author outside MS Office and don't need interoperability, or convert the resultant document to PDF for distribution, it's a different story.

We all wish for an alternative to MS Office which exceeds the need of many users, but is mandated by most government and business IT policy-makers.

-Steve C, Sandy Eggo

OK, How About This Linux Script?

[Regarding the May 13 Linux Lessons: Tips and Tricks from Users column:]

Your code works, but I'm a bash user. Here's my version of your script:

=== Cut here ===

```
#!/bin/sh
for file in *; do
   echo
   echo Now playing: $file
   play $file
done
```

=== Cut here ===

-Joe Rosevear, San Diego, CA

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 specific article/column at ComputorEdge.com (*webserver.computoredge.com/online.mvc?src=ebook*). 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*.