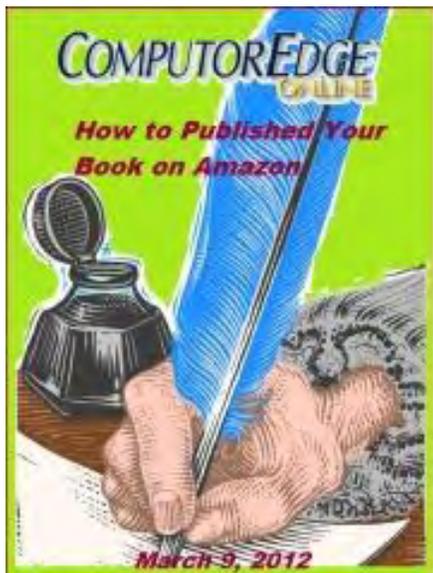


ComputerEdge™ Online — 03/09/12



This issue: How to Published Your Book on Amazon

Now, anyone can publish their memoirs —even if they have nothing to say. Plus, Jack and Wally take a peek at Windows 8.

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Digital Dave answers your tech questions.
Google in the Wrong Language; Is It Worth Upgrading Apple OS Just for iCloud?; Losing Junk Mail Settings.

[Self-Publishing in the World's Biggest Bookstore](#) by Jack Dunning

How to Publish Your E-Book on Amazon
If you have a book you want published on Amazon as an e-book, it is a fairly simple process. Jack explains the process and different options available on Amazon.

[Windows Tips and Tricks: Looking at Windows 8](#) by Jack Dunning

Windows 8 Consumer Preview Is Here!
Jack is testing the beta version of Windows 8 in a virtual machine. In the coming weeks he is going to share his explorations of Windows 8.

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

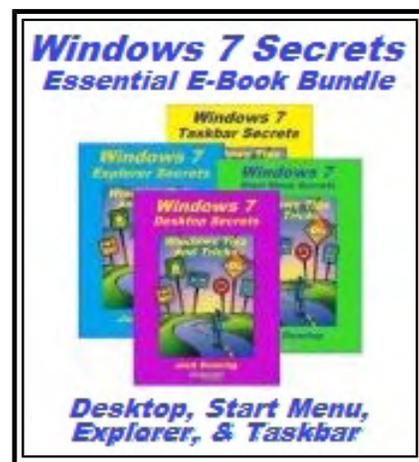
Windows 8 on a Mac
Windows 8 on a Mac; Another Survey About Apple Users Making More Money; Vancouver's Government Embraces the iPad; Education Goes Digital; Minimize a Window.

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

Tales of Bulbs, Fuses, Ink and Icon Storage
Marilyn shares some amusing anecdotes about computer monitor confusion.



(Click Banner)



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[Shop Like a Fool](#) by ComputerEdge Staff

Tips for Preparing for April Fool's Day

Aprils first will soon be upon us with all of its implications. Here are some pranks and gifts that will add foolishness to any April first.

DEPARTMENTS:

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

ComputerEdge Staff

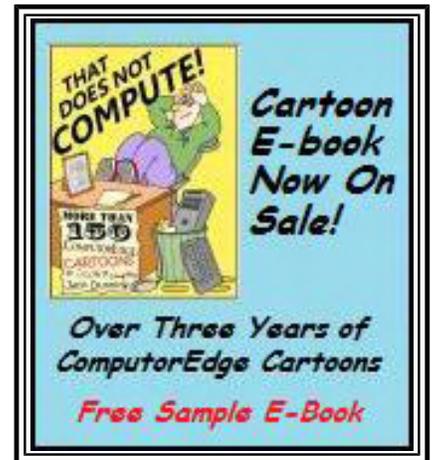
Computer and Internet tips, plus comments on the articles and columns.

"LibreOffice Save as DOC by Default," "Office 2010 Keeps Crashing Update,"

"Parallel Port Scanner OS Support?" "The Reason Microsoft Internet Explorer is So Snappy," "Installing XP on Windows 7 Machines"



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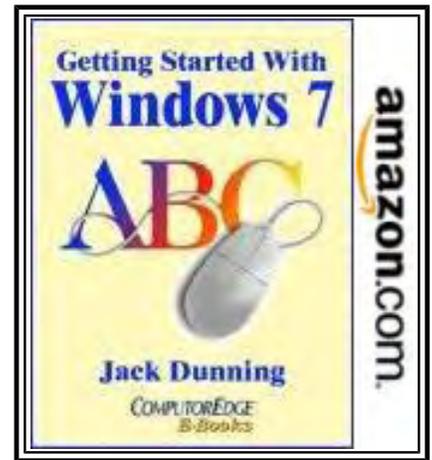
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Digital Dave

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

Google in the Wrong Language; Is It Worth Upgrading Apple OS Just for iCloud?; Losing Junk Mail Settings.

Dear Digital Dave,

I messed up. Somehow I deleted Google. That said, I thought "no problem, I'll just download it again." The only problem is that it is now in German or French. It also affected other things, like if I right-click anything. It also is in a foreign language. For example, if I right-click, the usual is copy, paste, etc., but now that is in a foreign language. Boy did I mess things up.

Please help.

*Mark Kowal
Thornton, CO*

Dear Mark,

I'm assuming that you actually deleted (uninstalled) the Google Chrome Web browser since it would be pretty hard to delete Google the search engine. (That would certainly upset a lot of people.) My guess is that you either downloaded a version defaulted to German (or another language) or somehow the default language was changed during installation. In either case, here is how you fix it.

Open the Tools menu (click the little wrench icon in the upper right corner) and select Optionen—"Options" in German. It should be the fifth item from the bottom on the menu. In the Optionen window select "Details" or whatever is in the same location. "Details" is used in place of "Under the Hood" in English (see Figure 1).

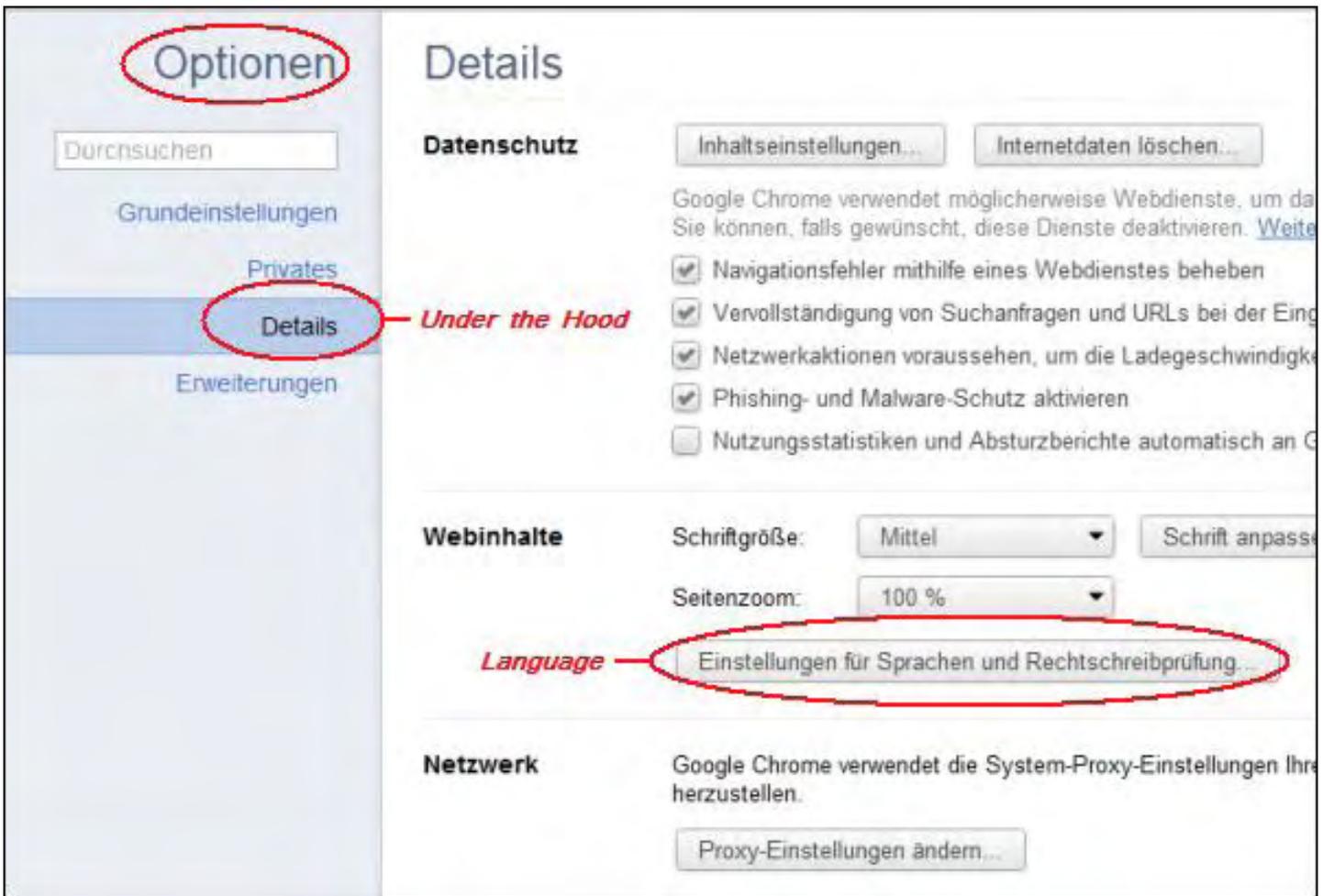
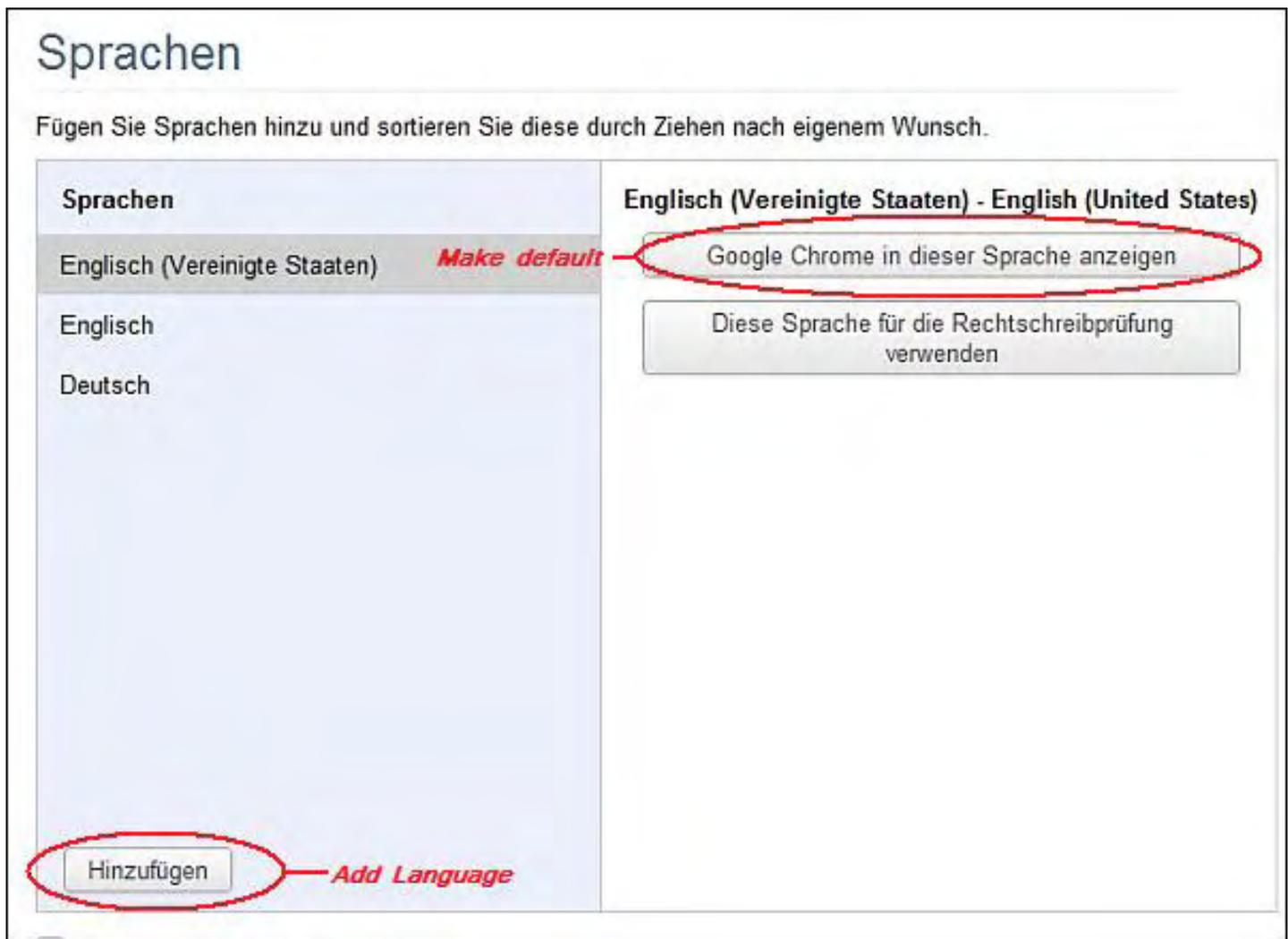


Figure 1. Under the Hood and Language selections in German.

Click the button marked as Language in the above image (circled in red). The Sprachen (languages) window will open (see Figure 2).



Click the button marked "Add Language" in the above image (circled in red), then Select English from the menu. Set English as the default language. Restart Google Chrome. Do the same for the spelling checker.

Digital Dave

Dear Digital Dave,

I have an Apple iMac running 10.5.8, but don't use a cell phone, laptop, tablet, etc., so I have been very annoyed with Apple giving me constant banners that my MobileMe account is going away. I "must" upgrade to iCloud. This means I have to upgrade to 10.6 and then 10.7, if I got it right from Crywolf.

I asked for more explanation from Crywolf, but exactly what will this upgrading do for me? I believe Crywolf is telling me that there is another way to transfer my MobileMe account to another e-mail program without upgrading, so I am trying to figure out if this "upgrade" is worth it to me, 10.5.8 versus 10.7?

*Dennis
Lakeside, CA*

Dear Dennis,

The purpose of iCloud is primarily to sync data between multiple devices, so if you aren't going to do that, then you don't really need iCloud—although you can still use it as an online backup site. Your MobileMe e-mail account will simply get transferred to iCloud when you migrate it, but it should run the same whether you upgrade to Mac OS X 10.6 or 10.7—or don't bother to upgrade at all. It's just an e-mail account that you should still be able to access from any computer.

Even though you won't have access to most of the iCloud services, you can migrate your MobileMe account (www.me.com/move) to iCloud and continue to use the e-mail account.

You should be able to access e-mail and calendars on the iCloud Web site at iCloud (icloud.com) provided your browser is reasonably up-to-date. You should also be able to enter the server settings for e-mail (www.wilmut.webspaces.virginmedia.com/notes/icloudmail.html) manually in the Mail application and access your e-mail. Note the caution about "external POP accounts you should cancel this before migrating" in the last linked article.

Digital Dave

Dear Digital Dave,

I use Microsoft Outlook to view e-mail. Everyday I tag junk mail with the Spam, or blacklist icon, but Outlook doesn't remember and displays the same senders on following days. When I delete an unwanted e-mail with the Spam or blacklist choice, Outlook doesn't remember my action the next time that I log on. Is there something else that I need to do to prevent duplicate Spam?

What can I do to tell Outlook to remember this?

Thanks,

*Mike
Cardiff, CA*

Dear Mike,

It sounds like Outlook is using the Spam list as a database for Spam blocking. When you delete the messages, the blocking data goes with it. This seems an odd way of doing things since I believe that Outlook has other ways of filtering.

First checkout the Tools menu => Options => Preferences tab => Junk E-mail, which opens the Junk E-mail Options dialog box (see Figure 3). There are a number of settings that may help you.

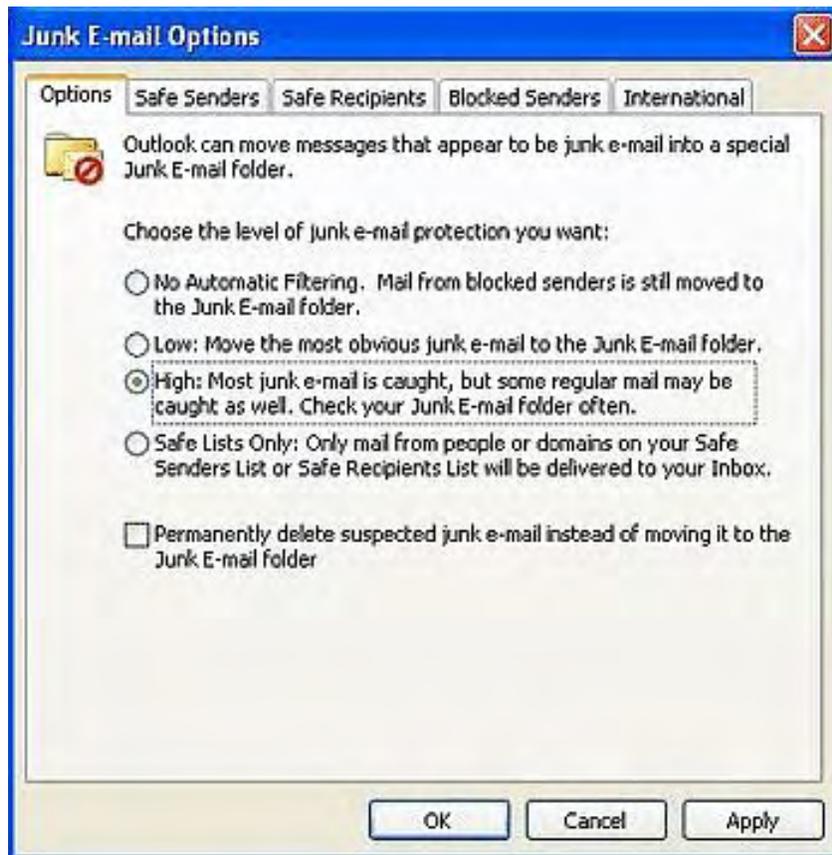


Figure 3. Junk E-mail Options window.

Set the level of junk e-mail protection to High. You will want to periodically check the Junk folder to make sure it is not filtering out e-mail you want, but this should cut down on some of the repeat offenders.

Next, make sure that the addresses and domains that you mark for blocking are actually being added to the appropriate lists. These lists should not change when you delete junk e-mail. If not, you will need to add them by hand (cut-and-paste).

You might also visit the Microsoft Support page, Junk Mail filters (support.microsoft.com/kb/872976), and get the most up-to-date Spam filters for Outlook.

I hope this helps. Maybe there are some Outlook users who can add some more specific information for you. Your Spam filtering certainly shouldn't depend upon the messages in the Spam folder.

Digital Dave

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Self-Publishing in the World's Biggest Bookstore

“How to Publish Your E-Book on Amazon” by Jack Dunning

If you have a book you want published on Amazon as an e-book, it is a fairly simple process. Jack explains the process and different options available on Amazon.

There have been almost 200,000 books released on Amazon in the last 30 days. That adds to the more than 34,000,000 already listed at the world's largest online bookstore. Most of them are digital e-books made available for reading on the Kindle. Why shouldn't your book be one of those titles?

If you have a book inside you, then you can make it part of the Amazon bookshelves without the hassle of dealing with the traditional publishing houses—which will mostly send you rejection letters. If you're publishing an e-book on Amazon, you don't need help from anyone else. Your book will have its own dedicated page which you can link to your Facebook account—showing all of your friends and family that you are now a published author. The most difficult part of the process is writing the book. If you've already written that book, then you're ready to go.

I've put a few books on Amazon as part of a marketing effort for *ComputerEdge E-Books* (www.computoredgebooks.com). Since our e-books are priced so low, as you will see, we don't earn much on each sale, but at this point, getting the name out there is most important. As an experiment, we have put the e-book *Getting Started with Windows 7* (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B007AL672M/?tag=comput0b9-20) into the KDP Select program which allows Amazon Prime members to borrow it the at no cost. (The publisher is paid based upon how many times the book is borrowed. This test is still under evaluation.)

- ◀ Any Category
- ◀ Kindle Store
- ◀ Kindle eBooks
- ◀ Nonfiction

Enough copies of the introductory e-book have sold to see the book hit the Hot New

- Kindle Store
- Kindle eBooks
- Nonfiction
- Education
- Adult & Continuing Education
- College & University
- Computers & Technology**
- Counseling

Releases list in the Computers and Technology category (see Figure 1). These moments may not last long. Amazon continually updates the rankings. If you see something good, you'd better take a screen shot of it. Come back in a few minutes and it may be knocked off the list.

I was quite surprised to see this happen. Most of the millions of books on Amazon must not be selling at all. When one of the books sold its first copy, it jumped to about #100,000 on the Best Seller list. The next day it was at around #200,000. Andy Warhol's prediction "In the future, everyone will be world famous for 15 minutes." has come true

at Amazon.

The "Getting Started" book had also risen as high as #5 in the same Computers and Technology category for a fleeting second. But that only represents #24,832 on the overall Amazon Best Sellers Rank: Paid in Kindle Store list. The e-book has been going up and down with a regularity, although it has a general upward trend. (You can see all of my current e-books published on Amazon at my author's page (www.amazon.com/gp/entity/Jack-Dunning/B001KCK5H0/?tag=comput0b9-20) set up via Amazon's Author Central. I would encourage any writer publishing on Amazon to create this free page to add to their personal 15 minutes of fame.)

More to Explore in Computers & Technology

Hot New Releases

[See Top 100](#)

The best-selling new & future releases on Amazon

 <p>Getting Started with Window... Kindle Edition \$0.99</p>	 <p>Windows 7 Taskbar Secrets (...) Kindle Edition \$0.99</p>	 <p>Carving Digital Education C... Kindle Edition \$0.99</p>
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Top Rated

[See Top 100](#)

The best items on Amazon based on Amazon customer reviews

 <p>lol...OMG! What Every Stud... Kindle Edition \$9.99</p>	 <p>Teach Online! A Practical G... Kindle Edition \$9.99</p>	 <p>Mr. Modem's Top 50 Computin... Kindle Edition \$2.99</p>
---	--	---

Every Stud...	Practical G...	Top 50
Kindle Edition	Kindle Edition	Computin...
\$9.99	\$9.99	Kindle Edition
		\$2.99

Figure 1. Hot new release list in the Computers and Technology category.

Getting Your E-Book into Amazon Format

Amazon is the primary user of the Mobipocket or MOBI (.mobi or .prc) format. If you have your e-book in the MOBI format then it can be loaded directly into any Kindle or Kindle computer application. Plus, when uploading your e-book to Amazon, MOBI is the best option since it will convert with the least problems.

In addition to the MOBI format, Amazon will accept Microsoft Word documents (.doc or .docx), EPUB (.epub), plain text (.txt), HTML (.zip, .htm, or .html), Adobe PDF (.pdf) or Rich Text Format (.rtf). However, file formats such as Word documents and Adobe PDF files may cause problems since they contain special embedded formatting which might cause problems in the Amazon conversion process. Plus, the procedures for uploading the other formats can get a little complex. MOBI is a simple, reliable upload and conversion.

If you are only planning to place your book at Amazon, then you won't need to create any other e-book format, although there are compelling reasons to use the EPUB format—at least initially. I have a few justifications for using the MOBI format for uploading books to Amazon. First, the conversions at Amazon have all gone flawlessly. Second, it is easy to convert to the MOBI format from many other formats. Third, I start with the e-book in EPUB format because almost everyone else in the world (Apple iPad, NOOK and Android tablets) uses it.

There are two free programs that are worth installing. The first is Calibre (www.calibre-ebook.com), a digital book library system and e-book format converter. By far the most important part of Calibre is the e-book conversion capability. Since all of my books start in the EPUB format, I use Calibre to convert the e-book to



“No, I ordered an ISBN for my new book, not an ICBM!”

MOBI format before uploading to Amazon. It only takes a few seconds.

If you are not starting with an EPUB file, then you can use the Word DOC format, the Open Document format (ODT)—used by OpenOffice.org and LibreOffice—or create a PDF file before adding it to your Calibre library. (LibreOffice

(www.libreoffice.org/) is a free office software suite with a word processor which uses the ODT format, reads and writes Word documents, and will export PDF files.) Once you load the word processing or PDF into Calibre, you can convert to most other e-book formats including MOBI and EPUB.

You may want to convert the e-book to EPUB first, then load it into the free EPUB editor Sigil (code.google.com/p/sigil/). While Sigil is an excellent EPUB editor, even allowing changes in the source HTML code, its true beauty is that it automatically fixes errors in the EPUB format. You can take an EPUB file which does not read properly in one of the many eReaders, load it into Sigil, then save it again for an instant working e-book. Once that is done, it's a snap to put the new e-book back in Calibre and convert it to MOBI for Amazon. (For more information about both Calibre and Sigil read the *ComputerEdge* Article "Quirks in Building E-Books" from last year.) Once you have your e-book in MOBI format, you're ready to go.

Checking your Results

Although Amazon gives you an opportunity to review your submission online, I always load my MOBI files into a Kindle (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B0051VVOB2/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20) or the Kindle app on the iPad before uploading to Amazon. (You can also use the free Kindle for PC (www.amazon.com/gp/feature.html/?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20&linkCode=ur2&docId=1000426311&camp=1789&creative=390957), Kindle for Mac (www.amazon.com/gp/feature.html/?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20&linkCode=ur2&docId=1000464931&camp=1789&creative=390957), or one of the other apps (www.amazon.com/gp/feature.html/?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20&linkCode=ur2&docId=1000493771&camp=1789&creative=390957) for testing.) If you are adding a MOBI file to a Kindle or one of the apps for review, you can be pretty sure it will show you how it will look after it is converted at Amazon KDP.

Amazon Kindle Direct Publishing

Amazon has a program to make it easy for independent authors to get their e-books up on Amazon called Kindle Direct Publishing (kdp.amazon.com/self-publishing/signin). It is easier to get going and more flexible than many other programs such as iTunes. It is certainly simpler than dealing with traditional book publishers and distributors.

The first step is to set up an account. It is a relatively simple procedure, but you will be required to give personal information such as your Social Security Number and bank information (if you want direct deposit for your massive earnings). Once that is done, you're ready to start submitting your e-book. If you select Bookshelf, you will see a page similar to Figure 2. The Bookshelf page at Amazon Kindle Direct Publishing (KDP) is the main control panel for managing your books.

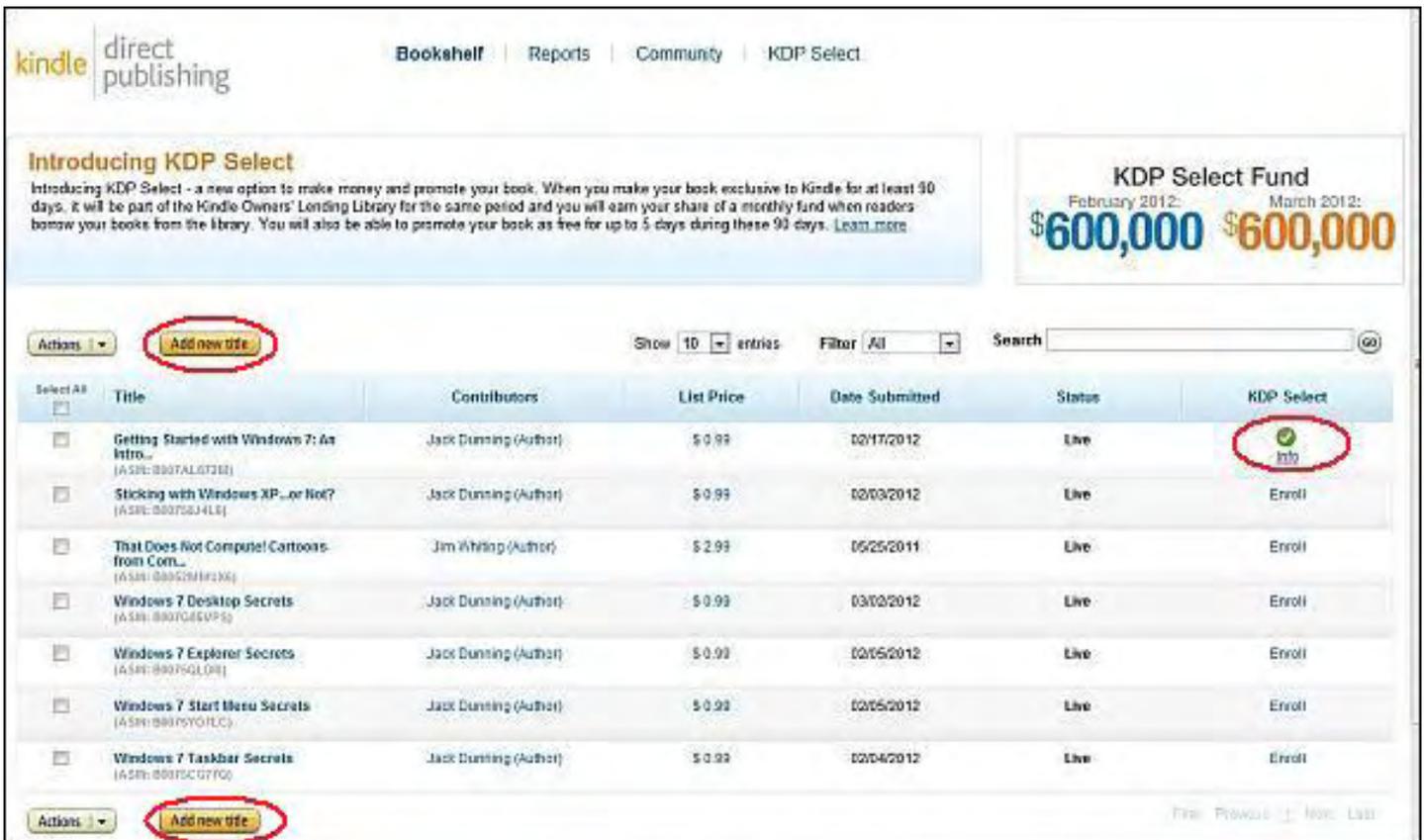
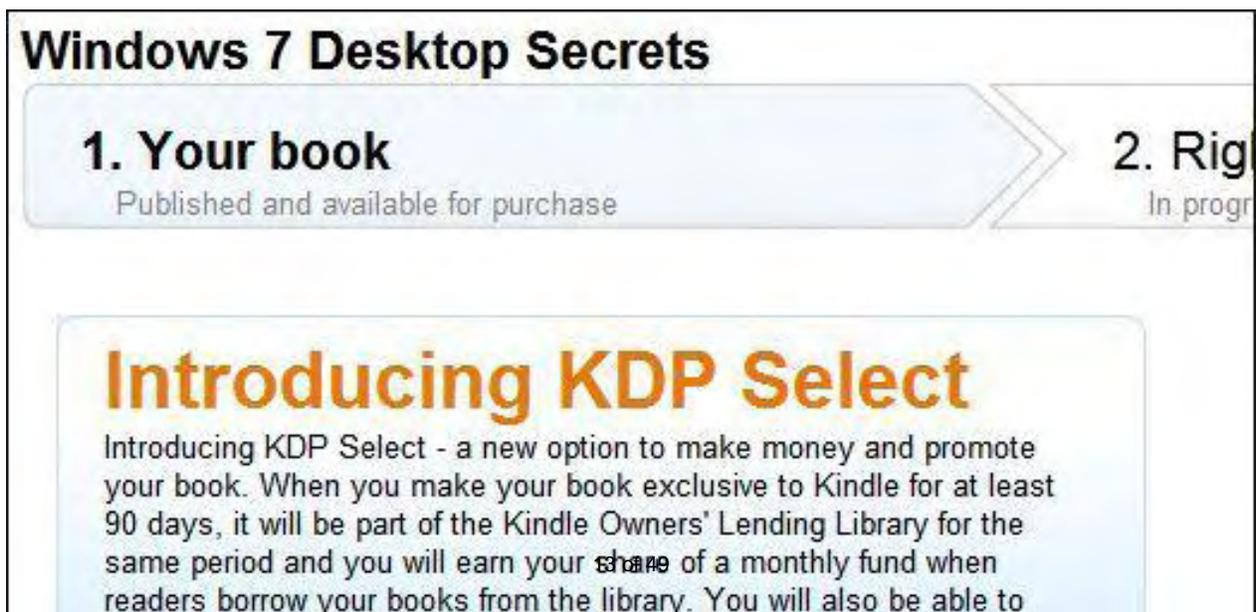


Figure 2. The Bookshelf page at Amazon Kindle Direct Publishing (KDP) is the main control panel for managing your books.

Whether you are editing current book information or adding a new book. The process is the same. To add a new book, click the "Add new title" button.

Adding a Book to Amazon

First, you will encounter the opportunity to enroll your book in KDP Select (see Figure 3). This is a program where a book may be lent out to Amazon Prime members free of charge. If your book is borrowed then you will earn a percentage of the pool money displayed on the Bookshelf page. It has worked out to over one dollar per borrow in recent months. On the downside, your book must be exclusive to Amazon while in the Select program (three to six months). That's why I only have one book in the program. Plus, Prime members can only borrow one book at a time, so unless you're a well-read author (with a high priced book), you may not see many borrows.



Introducing KDP Select - a new option to make money and promote your book. When you make your book exclusive to Kindle for at least 90 days, it will be part of the Kindle Owners' Lending Library for the same period and you will earn your share of a monthly fund when readers borrow your books from the library. You will also be able to promote your book as free for up to 5 days during these 90 days.

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Enroll this book in KDP Select

By checking the box, you are enrolling in KDP Select. Books enrolled in KDP Select must not be available in digital format on any other platform during their enrollment. See the [KDP Select Terms and Conditions](#) for more details.

1. Enter Your Book Details

Book name:

Windows 7 Desktop Secrets

Please enter the exact title only. Books submitted with extra words in this field will not be published. [\(Why?\)](#)

This book is part of a series [\(What's this?\)](#)

Series title:

Windows Tips and Tricks

Volume:

5

Edition number (optional): [\(What's this?\)](#)

Description: [\(What's this?\)](#)

How to Release the Power of the Windows 7 Desktop

The Windows 7 Desktop is your first view of Windows when you start your computer. It can be used to launch programs, save folders and files, or merely hang your favorite family photos. However in Windows 7 there is much more that you can do with the Desktop. Learn the secrets of configuring your Desktop work the way you want it.

99 characters left

Figure 3. The initial portion of the Amazon Kindle submission process includes the option of joining KDP select and the entering of book details.

Enter in the details of your book including the title and description. The description is the text which will appear on the book's Amazon page. You are allowed 4000 characters which is a good bit of text. Take advantage of it. The description is your primary opportunity to sell your book.

On the same page (continued in Figure 4), you can add contributors (authors, editors, etc.) and other book specific information. Amazon (unlike Apple iTunes) does not require an ISBN (International Standard Book Number (www.myidentifiers.com)). This is a good thing since ISBNs cost money, but as with anything, the more you buy, the

cheaper they are (one for \$125; 1000 for \$1000). If you're planning to submit your book directly to Apple iTunes, you will need an ISBN for your book, but you can always add an ISBN to your Amazon book later. (We're using old ISBNs left over from our printed book publishing days.)

Book contributors: [\(What's this?\)](#)

Jack Dunning (Author)

[Add contributors](#)

Language: [\(What's this?\)](#)

English

Publication date (optional):

03/01/2012

Publisher (optional): [\(What's this?\)](#)

ComputerEdge E-Books

ISBN (optional): [\(What's this?\)](#)

9780945776314

2. Verify Your Publishing Rights

Publishing rights status: [\(What's this?\)](#)

- This is a public domain work.
- This is not a public domain work and I hold the necessary publishing rights.

3. Target Your Book to Customers

Categories [\(What's this?\)](#)

Computer Literacy, General

[Add categories](#)

Search keywords (up to 7, optional): [\(What's this?\)](#)

Windows 7 Desktop, Windows 7 background, Personalize Windows 7 desktop, Wi

0 keywords left

4. Upload Your Book Cover

Upload image (optional):



Your book cover will be used for:

- the product image in Amazon search results
- the product image on your book's detail page
- the book cover inside your book
(uncheck this option if your book file already includes this)

A good cover looks good as a full sized image, but also looks good as a thumbnail image. If you do not upload a cover image, a placeholder image will be used.

See placeholder image example. You can change or



A good cover looks good as a full sized image, but also looks good as a thumbnail image. If you do not upload a cover image, a placeholder image will be used.

See [placeholder image example](#). You can change or upload a new cover image for your book at any time.

> [Product Image Guidelines](#)

[Browse for image...](#)

Figure 4. When submitting a book to Amazon, you will add contributors, publishing rights, categories and the cover image.

You will get the option to add two topic categories for your book. Choose those that best fit your market (see Figure 5).

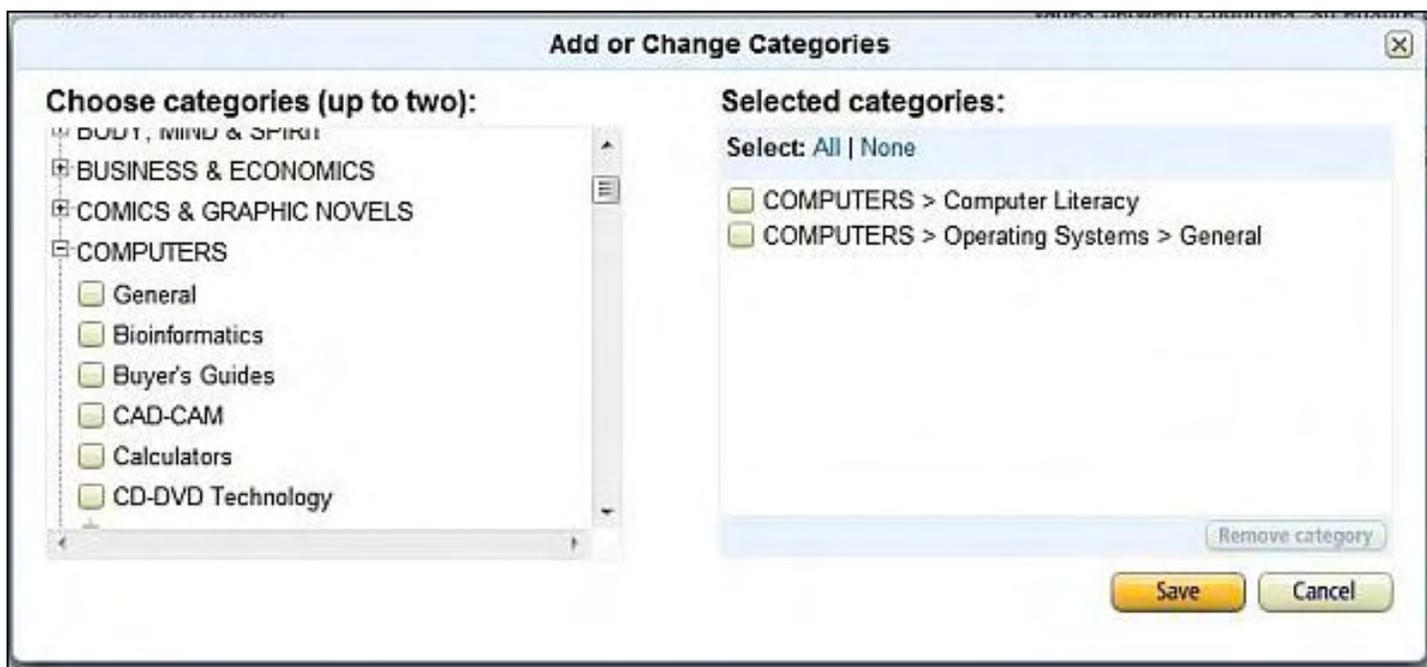


Figure 5. Two market categories can be added for each book.

Also shown in Figure 4 above is "Upload Your Book Cover." This is the image which will represent your book. If you haven't already included a cover in your e-book, then if you check the appropriate box, it will become the cover during the conversion process. If your e-book file already has a cover included in it, then leave the box unchecked.

The next step is to upload the e-book file (see Figure 6). But first you need to decide whether you want Amazon to enable Digital Rights Management (DRM) (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Digital_rights_management). DRM is a copy protection system designed to prevent people from copying your book and giving it away. This is an important business decision for you. You should review the advantages and disadvantages before you make your selection. Once you publish on Amazon, you cannot change this setting.

After you browse and select your file, click the "Upload book" button. The conversion will begin immediately. Once the conversion is completed, you have a number of options for reviewing the book. Make sure you do at least the Simple Previewer. You need to be sure that you uploaded the right book. Click Save and Continue.

5. Upload Your Book File

Select a digital rights management (DRM) option: [\(What's this?\)](#)

Enable digital rights management
 Do not enable digital rights management

Book content file:

C:\fakepath\Windows 7 Desktop Secrets Browse for book...

[> Learn KDP content guidelines](#)
[> Help with formatting](#)
Upload book

✔ Upload and conversion successful!

6. Preview Your Book

Previewing your book is an integral part of the publishing process and the best way to guarantee that your readers will have a good experience and see the book you want them to see. KDP offers two options to preview your book depending on your needs. [Which should I use?](#)

Simple Previewer

If you are not using any of the advanced formatting features from [Kindle Format 8](#) (e.g. text-wrapped around images, colors, tables, etc.), the simple previewer may serve your needs. It will display your book as it will appear on an e-ink Kindle, and the same formatting will appear on other devices.

Preview book

Enhanced Previewer

If you did use any [Kindle Format 8](#) features, or if you want to see what your book will look like on multiple devices (Kindle Fire, Kindle, Kindle DX, iPhone and iPad), we recommend you use the enhanced previewer.

[Instructions](#)
[> Download Book Preview File](#)
[> Download Previewer: Windows | Mac](#)

Figure 6. Upload your book and preview it.

The next page is all about territories and royalties. Since your book is an original work, you will of course hold worldwide rights in all territories (see Figure 7).

7. Verify Your Publishing Territories

Select the territories for which you hold rights: [\(What's this?\)](#)

- Worldwide rights - all territories
- Individual territories - select territories

Figure 7. Publishing Territories.

There are two royalty structures available from Amazon (see Figure 8). To a large extent the rules for Amazon royalties are semi-arbitrary. Amazon has decided that an e-book should cost between \$2.99 and \$9.99. If you price your book in that range, you can get the 70% royalty. However, there is a 15 cents per megabyte downloading fee. If you want to price the book at 99 cents, as ours are, then the best you can do is 35%, but there is no downloading fee. However, there are limits on the size for the lower cost books. For example, if a book is over three megabyte, the lowest possible price is \$1.99. I'm sure that there is means in their madness. As a self-publisher, you decide what's best for you and just have to live with it.

8. Choose Your Royalty

Please select a royalty option for your book. [\(What's this?\)](#)

- 35% Royalty
- 70% Royalty

	List Price	Royalty Rate	Delivery Costs	Estimated Royalty
Amazon.com	<input type="text" value="0.99"/> USD Must be between \$0.99 and \$200.00	35%	n/a	\$0.35
Amazon.co.uk	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Set UK price automatically based on US price £0.75	35%	n/a	£0.26
Amazon.de	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Set DE price automatically based on US price €0.86	35%	n/a	€0.30
Amazon.fr	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Set FR price automatically based on US price €0.86	35%	n/a	€0.30
Amazon.es	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Set ES price automatically based on US price €0.86	35%	n/a	€0.30
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Set IT price automatically based on US price			

Amazon.es	based on US price	35%	n/a	€0.30
Amazon.it	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Set IT price automatically based on US price	35%	n/a	€0.30

Your book file size after conversion is 2.98 MB.

Figure 8. There are two royalty structures available at Amazon KDP.

To save time (and calculations), select "Set price automatically" for the other areas, unless you have a particular reason for entering a different price. I noted that a few books that sold paid 40 cents each rather than the expected 35 cents. They came from the United Kingdom.

Finish up by deciding if it will be OK for buyers to lend your book to their Kindle friends for a two-week period. Check the box to confirm your rights and accept the terms, then Save and Publish (Figure 9).

9. Kindle Book Lending

Allow lending for this book ([Details](#))

By clicking Save and Publish, I agree to the terms of the Kindle Book Lending Program, including marketing, distribution and sales.

Kindle Book Lending ✕

Enrollment in Kindle Book Lending will allow users to lend your book after purchasing to their friends and family for a duration of 14 days. For full details, review the [Kindle Book Lending Program](#).

<< [Back to Your Bookshelf](#) [Save and Publish](#)

Figure 9. Kindle Lending and Save and Publish.

After you have submitted the book, the title will appear as "In Review" (Figure 10), then "Publishing" in the Bookshelf. During this time, usually less than 12 hours, you will not be able to edit your submission. Once published, you can edit your submission and resubmit to make changes and corrections.

Title	Contributors	List Price
Getting Started with Windows 7: An Intro... (ASIN: B007AL672M)	Jack Dunning (Author)	\$ 0.99

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Figure 10. After submission the title will appear as "In Review."

That's all there is to it!

Jack is the publisher of *ComputerEdge* Magazine. He's been with the magazine since first issue on May 16, 1983. Back then, it was called *The Byte Buyer*. His Web site is www.computoredge.com. He can be reached at ceeditor@computoredge.com. Jack is now in the process of updating and compiling his hundreds of articles and columns into e-books. Currently available:

Available exclusively from Amazon, *Getting Started with Windows 7: An Introduction, Orientation, and How-to for Using Windows 7* (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B007AL672M/?&tag=comput0b9-20)!

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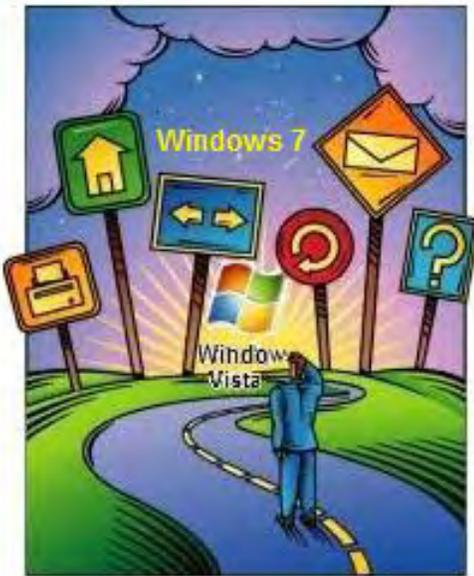
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Windows Tips and Tricks

Windows Tips and Tricks: Looking at Windows 8

“Windows 8 Consumer Preview Is Here!” by Jack Dunning

Jack is testing the beta version of Windows 8 in a virtual machine. In the coming weeks he is going to share his explorations of Windows 8.

Microsoft has released a beta version of Windows 8 (windows.microsoft.com/en-US/windows-8/consumer-preview) for general consumption. It should install on any computer that is currently running Windows 7. However, you don't need to install Windows 8 as the primary operating system to see what it can do. Save yourself the hassle and risk of a complete installation by putting Windows 8 into a temporary solution with virtual machine software. After all, Windows 8 Consumer Preview is a temporary product—at least until the official full release.

Installing Windows 8 in a Virtual Machine

If you have Windows 7 Professional, you may think that you can install Windows 8 in Windows Virtual PC. Sorry, that would be too easy. In this case, the free alternative is Oracle VM VirtualBox (www.virtualbox.org). The VirtualBox download (www.virtualbox.org/wiki/Downloads) along with the ISO download (windows.microsoft.com/en-US/windows-8/iso) of Windows 8 makes it fairly simple to get up and running with Windows 8 without doing any permanent damage. But you may want some help.

I used "Installing Windows 8 Consumer Preview In A VirtualBox Virtual Machine (pcper.com/reviews/General-Tech/Installing-Windows-8-Consumer-Preview-VirtualBox-Virtual-Machine/Step-1-Setting)" from PC Perspective for guidance. I always find it easier (less mistakes which may cause hours of confusion) to follow someone else's lead—in this case, Tim Verry. If you follow the steps he outlines, you should be able to get a good look at Windows 8.

Over the next few weeks, I'll give my impressions of Windows 8 in comparison to past Windows products. In the past I've speculated that Windows 8 was more Microsoft's entry into the tablet market than a replacement for Windows 7, but now I will enter with an open mind. I will look for how intuitive Windows is to use and how it rates with the other packages. What's missing and what's new will always be of paramount importance, plus, of course, that age old question, "Who cares?"

Initial Thoughts about Windows 8

My first reaction to seeing the opening screen was "What the ...?" See Figure 1. This doesn't look anything like Windows. Microsoft is doing it again.

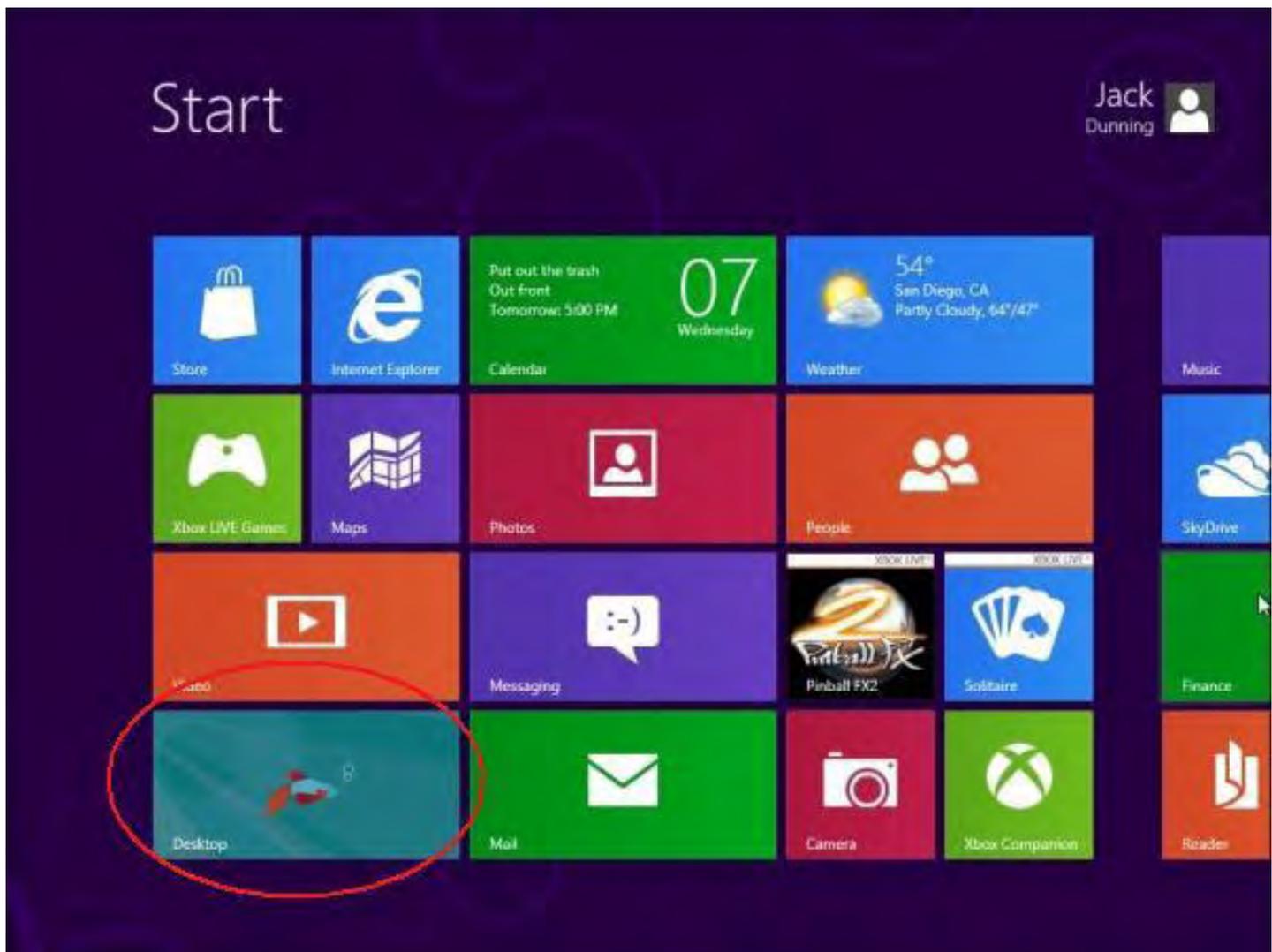


Figure 1. The opening screen for Windows 8.

The opening screen, or Start, does look like it was designed to work on a tablet or smartphone. It consists of tiles which represent various apps. If you have a touchscreen or touchpad, you can open an app with a touch of the finger or drag the tiles around to a new location. If you're using a mouse, a left-click and click-and-hold substitute for the touch actions. There is no doubt that Microsoft is targeting the tablet market, but how will it do for laptop and desktop computers?

Understanding Windows 8

Windows 8 seems a bit enigmatic in its operation until you realize that it is still Windows and includes all the essential components: the Desktop, the Taskbar, Windows Explorer and the Start Menu. However, the Start Menu has now been converted to Start, which is the opening screen shown in Figure 1. Once you understand that the Start screen is merely the old Start Menu activated by the Microsoft Windows logo key (WIN key) or clicking the button in the lower left hand corner of the Desktop, then the pieces begin to fall into place. The Start interface in Windows 8 is not a new layer (with the associated overhead) added to Windows, but the traditional Start Menu reconfigured into a tablet-like Home screen. As before, pressing the WIN key will bring up Start whenever you need to access the programs pinned to it.

Another similarity is that holding the WIN+TAB key combination will bring up preview/selection thumbnails of currently running program—although not in the old Windows Aero fashion (see Figure 2). Pressing the CTRL+WIN+TAB keys simultaneously will leave the thumbnails open for viewing and action after release. (Right-click on a thumbnail to Close

the running program.)



Figure 2. In Windows 8, hitting the CTRL+WIN+TAB keys simultaneously will display running programs in thumbnails.

But Where's the Desktop?

The Windows Desktop is still available for people who need better access to their programs and files. It can be opened by clicking on the Desktop tile (with the Siamese Fighting Fish image) initially located in the lower left hand corner of the Start screen (see Figure 1 circled in red). When the Desktop opens it looks very similar to every other Windows Desktop (see Figure 3). The notable exception is that there is no Start Menu button in the lower left hand corner on the Taskbar. The operation of the Taskbar and Desktop is very similar to that of Windows 7.

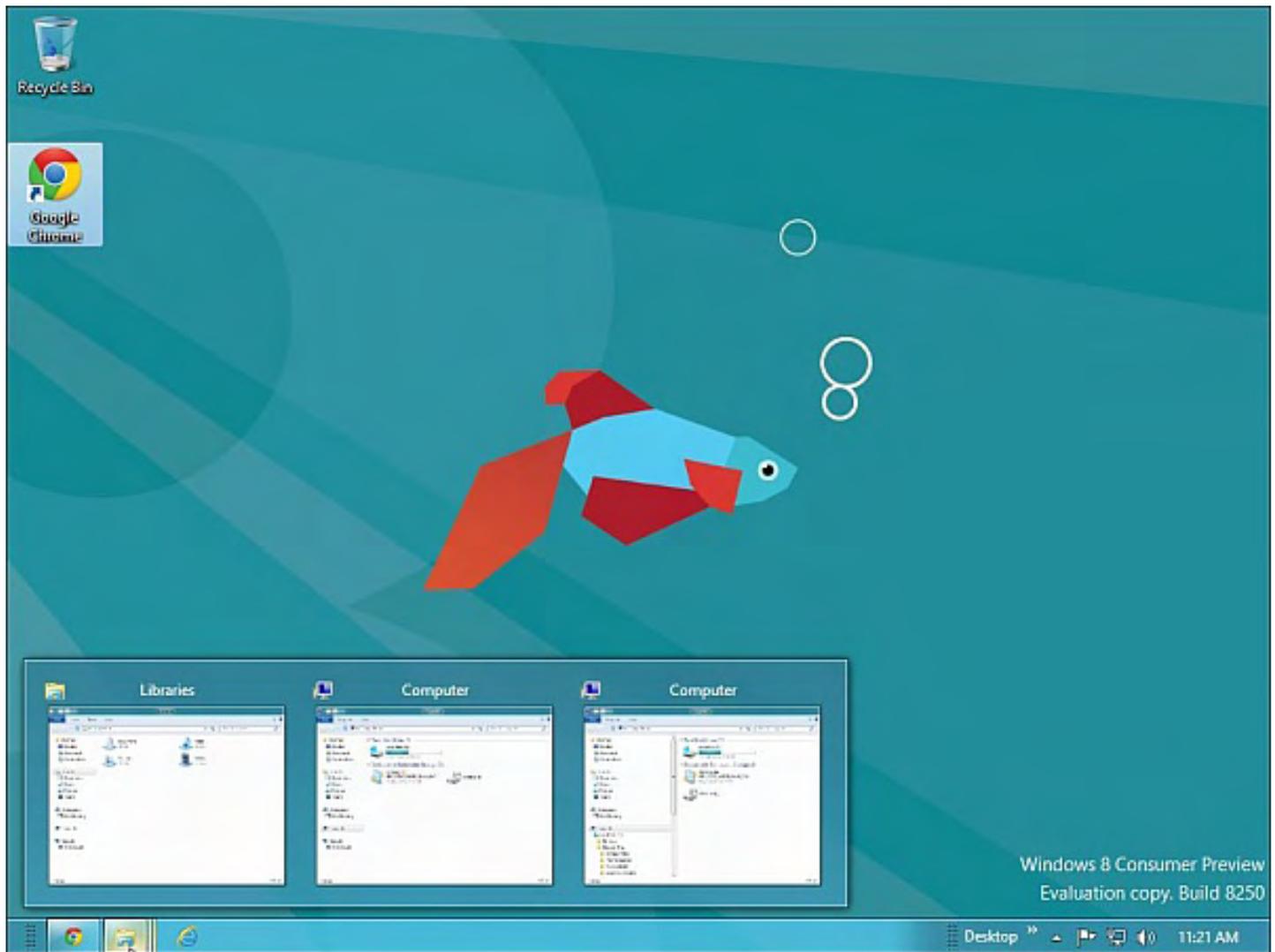


Figure 3. The Windows 8 Desktop looks and feels like other Windows Desktops.

As for the fourth essential of Windows, Windows Explorer, it can be accessed via a tile called Windows Explorer—initially located off to the right in Start (not visible in Figure 1) or the tried-and-true key combination WIN+E. The beauty of using WIN+E to open Windows Explorer is that it can be used anywhere and it will immediately display the Desktop with a newly opened Windows Explorer window.

Of course you can get back to Start by pressing the WIN key. Press the WIN key again and the screen will toggle back to the Desktop (or whichever app you had open when you first toggled to Start).

In the coming weeks I will continue my exploration of Windows 8. My initial assessment is that I was probably wrong a few months back when I suggested that Windows 8 was an unnecessary complication. It may be unnecessary—time will tell—but rather than an entirely different operating system with Windows 7 added on, it is truly Windows with the Start Menu reshaped into the Start screen. It's not so different from the Windows we already know.

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Wally Wang's Apple Farm

“Windows 8 on a Mac” by Wally Wang

Windows 8 on a Mac; Another Survey About Apple Users Making More Money; Vancouver's Government Embraces the iPad; Education Goes Digital; Minimize a Window.

Wally Wang's Apple Farm

Microsoft recently released their Consumer Preview of Windows 8 so people can see how it works and start developing programs for the new Metro interface. if you don't have a spare computer laying around to test windows 8, just use a virtualization program and run Windows 8 as a virtual machine.

You can install Windows 8 in Parallels (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B005FDK7J6/ref=as_li_tf_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=B005FDK7J6), but make sure you get the latest update. You can also install Windows 8 in VMWare's Fusion (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B005LTV8G0/ref=as_li_qf_sp_asin_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=B005LTV8G0) or if you want a free option, try using VirtualBox (www.virtualbox.org/) instead.



Figure 1. Windows 8 running as a virtual machine under VMWare Fusion.

By running Windows 8 as a virtual machine, your entire Windows 8 installation exists as a single massive file on your hard disk. Then you can safely test out Windows 8 in a virtual machine without dedicating a computer just to run it.

In my limited testing, Windows 8 seems surprisingly fast and fluid using its Metro tile interface. When using Apple's Magic Trackpad, it's easy to swipe to the side to scroll horizontally through the Metro interface. Trying to do this with a mouse is much more cumbersome, which may make Windows 8's Metro interface less suited for desktop computers. If laptop computers let you swipe sideways on a trackpad, the Metro interface might be just as easy to use as well.

More disturbing is Windows 8's schizophrenic nature. If you don't like the Metro interface, you can switch to the familiar desktop interface. Yet if you press the Windows button on your keyboard to view the familiar Start menu, the Metro interface appears because that's the new Start menu. Choose the Windows Explorer program and the Metro interface disappears and you're back to the familiar desktop interface again.

If you don't like relearning a new user interface, then you'll probably be happier sticking with Windows 7 or Windows XP. If you don't like this odd behavior of switching back and forth between user interfaces, you might want to use Windows 8 on ARM tablets that can only run Metro apps.

Since most people will want Windows 8 just so they can use Microsoft Office, they may be in for a surprise with the next version. To cater to touch gestures, Microsoft has reportedly modified the Ribbon interface in Microsoft Office. Instead of displaying icons by default, the new Ribbon interface appears collapsed and only displays icons when selected, and then the icons will likely be much larger to make them easier to tap.

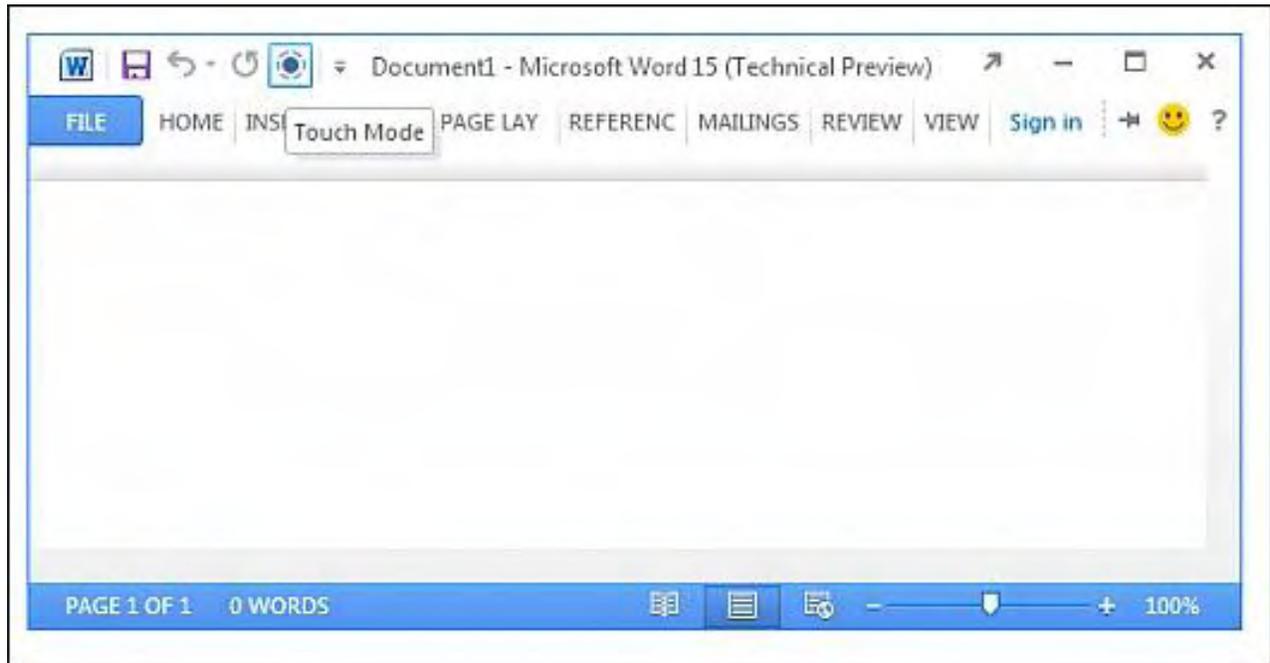


Figure 2. The next version of Microsoft Office may offer a new user interface.

For those who dislike change, Windows 8 along with the forthcoming Microsoft Office 15 promises nothing but change whether you like it or not. Most likely, this will cause people to stick with Windows XP, Windows 7, Microsoft Office 2003, Microsoft Office 2007, or Microsoft Office 2010. With each new release of their latest software, Microsoft keeps competing against themselves and losing.

Another Survey About Apple Users Making More Money

Bundle recently analyzed data from billions of anonymous credit card transactions to look for trends in spending patterns (www.bundle.com/article/mac-vs-pc-users-whos-really-more-fashionable/). After analyzing the spending of more than 700,000 PC and Mac buyers, Bundle concluded that forty percent of Mac users earned more than \$100,000, but only twenty-nine percent of PC users made \$100,000 or more.

Most likely a large majority of anti-Apple critics earn less than \$100,000 a year, so to earn extra income, the answer is simple. Get a job working for Apple.

The Analysis Group reports that Apple has created over 514,000 jobs (www.apple.com/about/job-creation/) in the United States. While some of these jobs require working directly for Apple such as in their retail stores, other jobs exist only because they rely on Apple products such as developers selling apps through the App Store.



Figure 3. Apple has created thousands of jobs in the United States alone.

If you're an anti-Apple critic solely because you object to their prices (despite the fact that an iPhone costs the same as many Android phones), start working for Apple so you'll not only make extra money, but you'll also learn how Apple products work so you can objectively compare them to a Windows PC or Android phone. Once you learn how to use different products, you'll better understand the pros and cons of each. Until you learn more about other options, it's easy to fool yourself into thinking you don't need to learn anything else.

Using an Apple product won't magically help you make more money, although it can help you become more productive since you'll spend less time maintaining your computer and more time actually using it. If you do become more productive, you might actually make more money, or at least become productive enough to get a better paying job somewhere else.

Dan Sullivan, the author of *How the Best Get Better* (www.amazon.com/gp/product/1896635296/ref=as_li_qf_sp_asin_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=1896635296), encourages everyone to develop the entrepreneurial mindset where you place your fate in your own control instead of relying on a bureaucratic system to take care of you. He says that bureaucracies tend to turn people into machines, which creates a tremendous amount of resentment, anger, frustration, jealousy, envy and bitterness in people who feel stuck and helpless within such bureaucracies. Rather than trust in their own talent and skills, too many people let fear keep them trapped in a bureaucracy that dehumanizes their life.

In the movie *Up in the Air* (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B00337KM2S/ref=as_li_tf_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=B00337KM2S), George Clooney plays a man whose job is to inform people at different companies that they're being laid off. When one man angrily reacts to the news, George Clooney glances at this man's resume and notices that when he was younger, he had attended cooking school. That's when George Clooney mentions this fact and then asks the man, "How much did this company pay you to steal away your dreams?"

Pursuing your dreams will never be easy, but the alternative is to do something you dislike and not get paid much to do it. Unfortunately for too many people, you can already guess which choice they'll make.

Vancouver's Government Embraces the iPad

In 2011, the Vancouver local government made more than 126,700 copies of reports for seven city council members alone. To avoid wasting paper any further, Vancouver has purchased 54 iPads (www.columbian.com/news/2012/mar/01/city-weighs-paper-vs-ipad-vancouver-invests-in-tab/) for the city council, police command staff and city department heads in the hopes of saving both paper and money. The city spent \$32,094 for the iPads and expects to save \$10,207 during the first year alone.

City officials already claim they've reduced their use of paper by 40 percent in the first three meetings of 2012 using iPads. Printed pages went from 5,371 in 2011 to 3,182 during the same time this year.

"If we kept pace with a 40 percent page reduction, we would print 75,646 pages this year, saving more than 50,000 sheets of paper, additional hours of staff time spent printing and collating," city spokeswoman Barbara Ayers said. "If we projected these kinds of savings to more departments, we think we can make an incredible impact, demonstrating good stewardship of resources."

Councilor Jack Burkman started the iMovement last year by purchasing an iPad for himself with his own money. "It's likely to be perceived as controversial, because it's true, it does cost money," said Burkman.

Jim Hominiuk, county director of application services, said that he's been pleased the size and ability of the iPad to interface with other technology so that he can plug in and start a presentation right away.

"Speaking to how I like mine, I do find it very convenient, to walk around the office and use it from meeting to meeting," he said.



Figure 4. Vancouver government officials have found a practical use for the iPad.

Even if the iPad does nothing more than save both money and paper, the Vancouver government will still come out ahead. The money saved from not printing reams of paper can now be allocated to providing actual services to its citizens. If the Vancouver government can find a practical use for the iPad, certainly individuals can find a practical use for an iPad in their own lives as well.

Education Goes Digital

Instead of sitting in rows of desks staring at a blackboard, students at Archbishop Mitty High School huddle in groups to brainstorm and blog about Indian culture (www.siliconvalley.com/news/ci_20094793). Lessons flash from tablets to a digitalized white board and back in a blend of YouTube videos and interactive maps with little paper and no sign of chalk.

"We still use paper and pencils sometimes," says Jeremy Pedro, a soft-spoken junior. "But our homework is mostly digital. Paper homework is a thing of the past."

The heart of this two-year pilot project to digitize education depends on the iPad. Mitty's pilot project put iPads in the hands of 250 students in 14 classes. Next fall the school plans to rent an iPad for all 1,680 students and 104 teachers.

"The richness and potential here is much greater than just e-books," Principal Tim Brosnan says. "The students have embraced the idea that learning happens not just in class but at home and anywhere else they can go online. The iPad's not some magic pill, but seeing students collaborate on them seems to add more life to the learning process."

In the meantime, Auburn, Maine tested iPads with kindergarteners (www.edtechresearcher.com/2012/02/are-

ipads-making-a-significant-difference-findings-from-auburn-maine/) and found that iPads modestly increased the reading scores of children. The iPad isn't just helping kindergarteners either. Abilene Christian University found that students who use iPads (www.phonearena.com/news/Using-iPads-in-classrooms-boosts-student-productivity-suggests-study_id22230) to take notes instead of pen and paper scored 25% higher on questions regarding information that has been noted down.

For anyone who already uses an iPad, you don't need a study to prove to yourself that the iPad can make you more productive. For anyone who still thinks the iPad is useless or that netbooks are superior because they can run Flash, the evidence trickling in from multiple studies and schools suggests that the iPad really can increase productivity (www.thestreet.com/story/11442195/1/why-every-small-business-needs-an-ipad.html) in both education and business as reported by The Street.

New York is even testing the feasibility of putting iPads in taxi cabs (www.zdnet.com/blog/gamification/its-game-on-for-ipads-in-nyc-taxis/690?tag=mantle_skin;content). Two companies currently supply touchscreen monitors in the back of nearly every cab, which streams a variety of news, advertising, weather and traffic information. Yet these current screens are slow to respond and often crash. The iPads will likely be less crash-prone while also allowing riders to play games or use GPS data to ask specific questions about the city as a virtual tour guide.

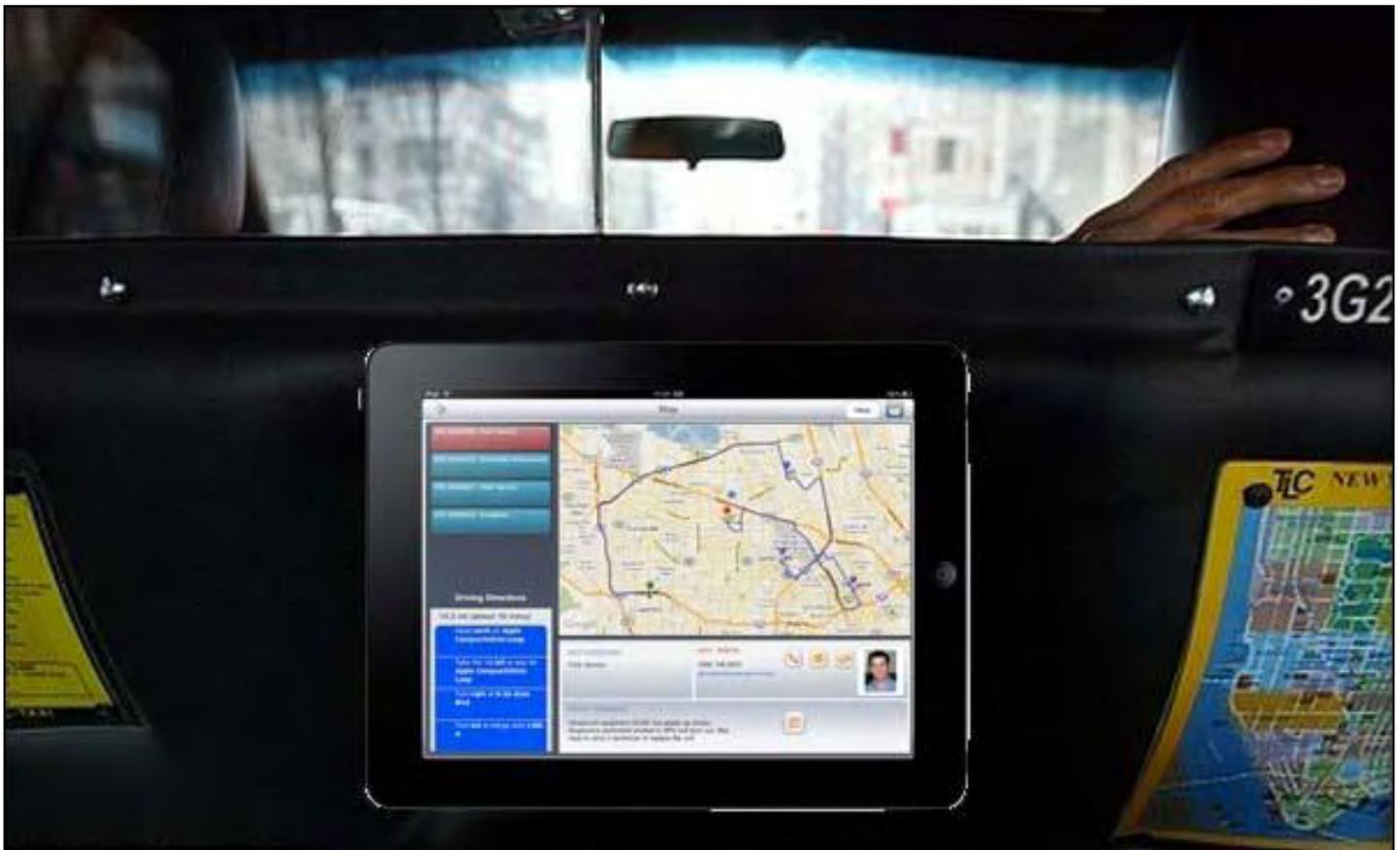


Figure 5. New York is testing iPads in the back of taxi cabs.

The New York Times states that "In 2011, PCs outsold tablets (www.nytimes.com/2012/03/06/technology/as-new-ipad-debut-nears-some-see-decline-of-pcs.html?_r=1) almost six-to-one, estimates Canals, a technology research company. But that is still a significant change from 2010, the iPad's first year on the market, when PCs outsold tablets 20-to-one, according to Canals."

The iPad is making inroads to unique applications that traditional PCs could never satisfy, and this trend will likely continue. Every day that you refuse to even acknowledge the advantages of an iPad is just one more day you're falling further behind the rest of the world. *The Wall Street Journal* even reports that app developers are in high demand (online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704547604576263200170918660.html?mod=WSJ_WSJ_News_BlogsModule) but in short supply.

Tech job board Dice.com reported that the average pay among mobile software designers and engineers increased at a higher rate than normal, mostly because of competition for talent. The Dice survey said the average mobile salary was about \$76,000, but experienced mobile developers can earn anywhere from \$90,000 to \$150,000 a year.

People keep finding new ways to use the iPad in businesses of all kinds, so if you're smart enough to recognize these opportunities, there's no limit to the amount of new work (and income) you can get. Godfrey Phillips, vice president of research at *The Business Journals*, said, "The iPad, as well as smartphones and cloud computing, are all part of this new trend (www.bizjournals.com/sanjose/news/2012/03/05/small-business-ipad-use-quadrupled-in.html) and are experiencing significant growth as a result of that need."

If you want a higher paying job, just become an app developer for mobile devices like the iPhone and iPad. With the iPad continuing to grow in so many markets, learning to program the iPad will be one of the fastest ways to future success.

* * *

One quick way to minimize a window is to double-click on its title bar. If this doesn't work for you, you can turn on this feature by clicking on the Apple menu and choosing System Preferences. When the System Preferences window appears, click the General icon. Now select the "Double-click a window's title bar to minimize" check box.



Figure 6. Turning on the feature to let you minimize a window by double-clicking on its title bar.

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.

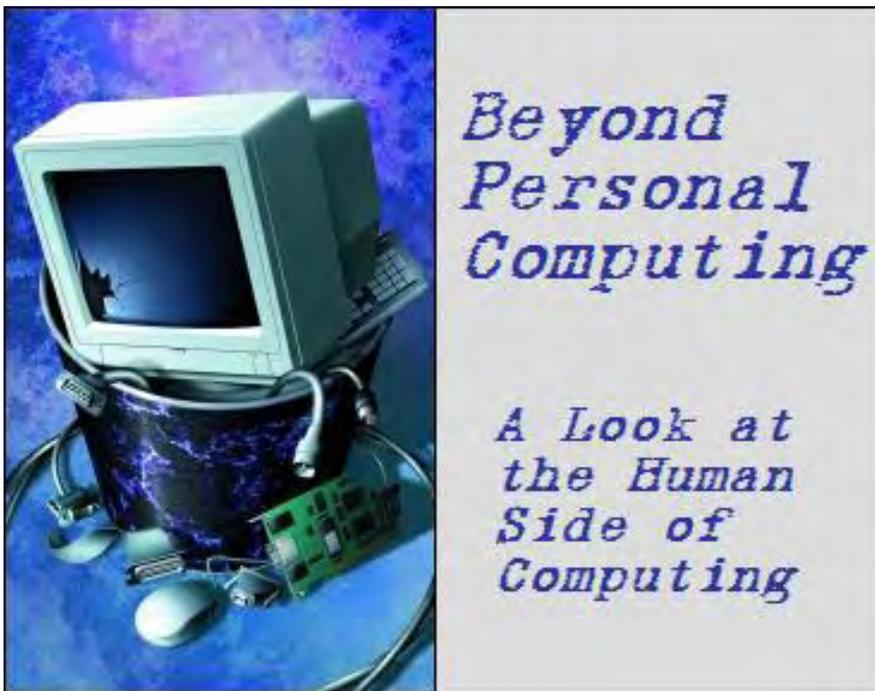
Wally is responsible for the following books:

- My New Mac, Lion Edition* (www.amazon.com/gp/product/1593273908/ref=as_li_tf_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=217145&creative=399373&creativeASIN=1593273908)
- My New iPad 2* (www.amazon.com/gp/product/159327386X/ref=as_li_tf_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=217145&creative=399373&creativeASIN=159327386X)
- Steal This Computer Book* (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?](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0470088702?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=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?](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0470108541?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=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?](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0764554468?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=0764554468)
ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=0764554468)
Strategic Entrepreneurism with Jon and Gerald Fisher ([www.amazon.com/gp/product/1590791894?](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1590791894?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=1590791894)
ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=159079189)
How to Live with a Cat (When You Really Don't Want To) ([www.amazon.com/gp/product/B006DJYL70/](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B006DJYL70/ref=as_li_tf_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=217145&creative=399373&creativeASIN=B006DJYL70)
ref=as_li_tf_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-
20&linkCode=as2&camp=217145&creative=399373&creativeASIN=B006DJYL70)
The Secrets of the Wall Street Stock Traders ([www.amazon.com/gp/product/B006DGCH4M/ref=as_li_tf_tl?](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B006DGCH4M/ref=as_li_tf_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=217145&creative=399373&creativeASIN=B006DGCH4M)
ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=217145&creative=399373&creativeASIN=B006DGCH4M)
Mac Programming For Absolute Beginners ([www.amazon.com/gp/product/1430233362?](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1430233362?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=1430233362)
ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=1430233362)
99% Fairy Tales (Children's Stories the 1% Tell About the Rest of Us) ([www.amazon.com/gp/product/](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B006QSKM3A/ref=as_li_tf_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=B006QSKM3A)
B006QSKM3A/ref=as_li_tf_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-
20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=B006QSKM3A)
The Zen of Effortless Selling with Moe Abdou ([www.amazon.com/gp/product/B006PUFPGI/ref=as_li_tf_tl?](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B006PUFPGI/ref=as_li_tf_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=B006PUFPGI)
ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=B006PUFPGI)
The 15-Minute Movie Method ([www.amazon.com/gp/product/B004TMD9K8/ref=as_li_tf_tl?](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B004TMD9K8/ref=as_li_tf_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=B004TMD9K8)
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/)" Wally can be reached at wally@computoredge.com.

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Beyond Personal Computing

“Tales of Bulbs, Fuses, Ink and Icon Storage” by Marilyn K. Martin

Marilyn shares some amusing anecdotes about computer monitor confusion.

Computer monitors should be the easiest part of a basic computer to understand, since people should be able to relate to a piece of hardware similar to their TVs. Right? Maybe not...

Getting Started

One Help Desk was having trouble getting a user to turn on his monitor. "No, Sir, that is the Power button. You need to click on the Start button. Is there a gray bar on the TV part of the monitor that you can point at with the mouse, using the cursor that is on the screen?" "Yeah," answered the user tentatively. "There are some dials inside, like one with a picture of a sun on it. But I have no idea what those are for."

A friend set up a brand new computer for a friend. It was the very first computer she'd ever used. A day later she called her installation friend to report that the monitor screen was fuzzy. "Do I need to buy an antenna for it?" she asked. The friend sagely answered, "No, it's cable ready."

When a parent bought his son his first computer, both doubled over in laughter when this message box appeared on the monitor: "Press and release the monitor power button, if it is not On or already blinking."

Why Support Techs Go Gray

Usual Helpful Question: So what's on your monitor now? "A Teddy Bear my boyfriend bought me from the supermarket."

"OK," answered one Support Tech. "What does your screen say now?" "Dell," the user answered. "Uh, not on the plastic part of your monitor," the Tech offered. "The glass part."

One Tech Support got a call from a user that every morning there was an error message on his monitor screen. The Tech offered the obvious solution, to restart the computer. A minute later the user complained, "The error message is still there." Turns out, the user was just turning the monitor off and on, not restarting the entire computer.

Monitors With Medical Issues

Another Help Desk got a call from a user that "My monitor doesn't seem to be working properly. It keeps going all blurry." The baffled Tech asked, "Can you describe this fuzziness?" The user dutifully replied, "Sure. When I have my glasses on, it works just fine. When I take my glasses off, the monitor screen goes all blurry." The Tech was laughing so hard that he had to turn the call over to another Tech to finish up.

A company's IT department got a call from an employee complaining "I think my monitor is broken, or about to quit on me. It has lines running up and down it, and it's driving me nuts." The Tech went to the employee's office, and the monitor looked fine. Amid the usual chit-chat about what the employee had done that day, it was revealed that he had just come from the eye doctor. Apparently, when your eyes are dilated, you can literally see the screen refreshing itself.

Even Techs And Teachers Get Confused

One Tech Support sent a new technician into the field to install a video card on a user's computer. The company was getting worried that it was taking too long, when the new technician called in, very frustrated. "OK, I took the monitor apart. But I can't figure where to install the video card."

One Middle School class took a field trip to a Computer Lab. The computer monitors in the Lab were connected to the cases and resting on top. But the monitors could still tilt up, down and around. As the kids "adjusted" some monitors, the alarmed teacher announced, "Do NOT move the monitors, or they will erase the hard drive!"

Monitor Joke

Q: How do you know a blonde has been using your monitor?

A: There's liquid correction fluid all over your screen.

Monitor Dos And Don'ts

One computer store received a poorly working monitor back from a medical facility. The complaint was that the monitor wasn't showing the prompt and several of the menu options. The Techs discovered that there were indeed some things missing on the monitor screen, and went through the usual troubleshooting options. Suddenly, on an impulse, one Tech reached around the monitor and turned the contrast knob up. All the missing options and prompt suddenly appeared on the screen. The Techs filled out their bill for "contrastual adjustment."

A Support Tech had to recently visit a user's home since her monitor wasn't working. She proceeded to tell the Tech that she had been playing "One-Armed Bandit" on her computer, and on one pull of the on-screen crank, she almost got a lucky 777. But the last 7 was too high on the screen for her to win. So she'd taken a large, industrial size magnet and tried to drag that 7 down to the other 7s. The Tech charged her \$70 for a house-call, all to inform her that she'd just ruined her new monitor.

A customer called Tech Support to report that her monitor wasn't working. The Tech went through all the usual troubleshooting questions—was it turned on? plugged in correctly? is the plug socket switched on?—all to no avail. Finally the exasperated Tech asked, "When was the last time it was working correctly?" The user replied, "Oh, this morning. Just before I put it in the dishwasher, since it was all mucky..."

IT Departments and Mystery Monitor Tales

One company IT bought new monitors for all the secretaries. But one protested mightily when he tried to replace her old model. "I have important files stored on that!" she told the Tech. When he asked her to show him her "monitor files," she turned on her old monitor and pointed at all the shortcut icons on the screen.

Another company IT responded to a user complaining that her monitor was dark. He troubleshooted the obvious solutions, then informed her that she needed to replace the monitor. She totally refused. "I don't want to lose all my work!" The Tech tried to explain that her work was actually saved on her hard drive, not her monitor. She replied that she KNEW her work was stored in the monitor, because she'd SEEN it on the screen!

One IT got a call from an Assistant Manager that the words she was typing on her computer were "bouncing all over the place." The Tech arrived to discover that she'd moved her electric fan from her desk to the top of her monitor.

Intuitive Monitor Repairs

IT for a collection company got a call one day that an employee had received a payment through her computer, but that the "Payment Received" message hadn't popped up as usual. She went on to tell the company Tech that "I'm pretty sure the bulb in the monitor just burned out, and needs to be replaced."

Another IT department got complaining calls from several employees, who had green lettering on their screen when they really wanted amber lettering. He tried to explain how that was impossible, but one employee was adamant: "All you have to do is put in an orange fuse!"

Upgrading Monitors to Magical-Models

One friend to another: "Yeah, everything was taking too long to load on my computer. So I went out and bought a new monitor, so everything would load onto the screen faster."

One company user watched as their IT person worked on the PC. "So what are you doing now?" the user asked the Tech. "I'm upgrading your 15 inch to a 17 inch monitor. "Great!" the user replied. "Will this make my PC go faster?"

Then there was the Tech Group that did support for a bank. One day the Tech was checking how much memory the computers on that floor had. One bank employee nodded their understanding: "That's like the strength of the monitor, right?" The Tech could only sigh. "Uh, no, it's not."

Computer Store Misunderstandings

One customer came in to buy "a 15 inch video card." When the Salesman asked if they really meant to buy a new monitor, the user asked about the cost of upgrading his monitor with a "16 meg memory kit."

One customer purchasing a new monitor asked, "So does this monitor have the latest version of the Internet?" While another monitor-purchasing customer wondered, "Is there Word in this?"

A customer called up the local computer store to ask, "Do you have any nuclear radiation shielding monitors in stock?" A few questions later, the computer salesman determined that the customer just wanted an anti-glare screen.

An irate user called up the store where he'd bought his computer. "This monitor doesn't work!" he thundered at the salesman. "So ... exactly what seems to be the problem, Sir?" the salesman asked calmly. "This monitor is missing a pin!" answered the user. The salesman tried to explain that most monitor cable plugs are missing a few unnecessary pins, and that not only was this normal, but a good thing. The user was still furious. "I paid for a monitor with all the pins! I want them all!"

Colorful Monitors

A user came into one computer store complaining that her monitor was dark. "I can't see any color," she told the salesman. "Maybe I just need a new ink cartridge. You know, maybe my monitor is out of ink." The salesman blinked. "Uh, no, I'm pretty sure that's not the problem."

A dutiful son spent six months teaching his 78-year-old mother how to use a computer. Then he bought her a computer of her own, and she was very excited. When he checked on her a week later, he found her turning the monitor Off every time she looked away, then back On when she wanted to see the screen again. "So why don't you just leave the monitor on?" the son asked. "If I leave the monitor on," Mom answered, "It'll use up all the ink in my printer."

Well, It Sounded Like A Good Idea

A family's PC monitor had been acting up. So the father went out and bought a reformatting disc, which he thought would fix the monitor. The family teen came home one day to discover that the monitor had completely died. Dad had inserted his "repair disc" in the tower to try and "save the hard drive." But all he'd done was delete everything on the hard drive.

(Many of these amusing anecdotes can be found on multiple internet joke sites. But special thanks to Mustsharejokes.com (Mustsharejokes.com) and Rinkworks.com (Rinkworks.com).

Marilyn is a freelance writer and humorist, with a special interest (besides computers and technology) in Science Fiction. A SF Horror story appeared in July 2011 in *Deadman's Tome* (www.demonictome.com/). And in January 2012 she had a SF Police Procedural appearing in *Cosmic Crime* magazine, and a SF Dystopian Romance appearing in the *Strange Valentines* anthology. She also has almost seventy articles on Helium.com (www.helium.com/users/573405/show_articles), and is writing a humorous Young Adult SF series, *Chronicles of Mathias* (www.amazon.com/Chronicles-Mathias-One-Reptilian-Rebirth/dp/1598249002). 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.

ComputerEdge E-Books is now converting Marilyn's computer humor columns into e-books.

The second book, *Computer Hardware: "Parts Is Parts"*, is now available at our E-Book Store (www.computoredgebooks.com/Humor-Computer-and-Internet-Anecdotes-and-Jokes_c16.htm) in both EPUB format (www.computoredgebooks.com/Computer-Hardware-Parts-Is-Parts-humor-EPUB-iPad-NOOK-COMPHUMOR0002-1.htm) for iPad, NOOK, etc., and MOBI format (www.computoredgebooks.com/Computer-Hardware-Parts-Is-Parts-humor-MOBI-for-Kindle-COMPHUMOR0002-2.htm) for Amazon Kindle.

The first book, *Computer Confusion in Paradise: Lo! And in the Beginning There Was Total Befuddlement!*, is also available at our E-Book Store (www.computoredgebooks.com/Humor-Computer-and-Internet-Anecdotes-and-Jokes_c16.htm) in both EPUB format (www.computoredgebooks.com/Computer-Confusion-in-Paradise-humor-EPUB-iPad-NOOK-COMPHUMOR0001-1.htm) for iPad, NOOK, etc., and MOBI format (www.computoredgebooks.com/Computer-Confusion-in-Paradise-humor-MOBI-for-Kindle-COMPHUMOR0001-2.htm) for Amazon Kindle.

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The Ardent Web Shopper

Shop Like a Fool

“Tips for Preparing for April Fool's Day” by
ComputerEdge Staff

Aprils first will soon be upon us with all of its implications. Here are some pranks and gifts that will add foolishness to any April first.

It won't be long before April first will be upon us. Many of us will venture into the day without thinking, but for those with a devious mind it pays to be prepared. Here is one freebie computer prank (and its antidote), plus a few electronic items which may cause consternation on that fateful day. (When considering any of the gadgets listed here, be sure to read the reviews. We can't vouch for any of them, since we haven't tried them. We will be out sick on April Fools' Day.)

Turning the Computer Screen Sideways

In some offices this technique is a fairly common prank. It is usually implemented when someone leaves their computer unattended without logging off. Hold down CTRL+ALT and press the left (or right) arrow. The screen may rotate 90 degrees causing confusion when the computer owner returns. Usually CTRL+ALT and up arrow will return it to the proper orientation.

Whether this works or not depends upon the graphics card in the computer, whether screen rotation is implemented, and the active controlling key combinations. If you try it without success, then you may be able to implement it with a right-click on the Desktop, then selecting Graphic Options.

To protect yourself from malicious screen rotation, right-click on the Desktop and select either the graphics card control panel or Graphic Properties. There should be settings available for either disabling the screen rotation capability or deactivating the associated hot key combinations.

Mess with the Television



If you've ever been annoyed by loud televisions, then the TV-B-Gone Universal TV Power Remote Control Keychain ([/www.amazon.com/gp/product/B0006GD9CE/?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B0006GD9CE/?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20)) may do the trick. Apparently, this device will turn off over 209 different types of televisions with the click of the button. We're not sure how useful this will be in the long run, because someone can always turn the television back on. Plus, what are you doing in a sports bar if you don't want to watch TV? It certainly isn't for the food.

Maybe of more use would be the Mini Universal Remote TV Control (Key Chain Size) (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B000P631PU/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20). With this device one is supposed to be able change the volume level and the channel. You might need to be pretty close to the television.

"What's that Beeping?"



Have you ever spent an afternoon (or entire night) hunting down the source of an annoying beep? Maybe it was a smoke detector with a low battery or a cell phone about to die. The Annoy-a-tron (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B0013JCSKC/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20) is an easily concealed device which emits a beep every few minutes. Watch your family and friends hunt down the source of the intermittent sound while you giggle to yourself.

You better get a few of these because once the device is found by your victim you can be sure that it will be smashed to bits—as you may well be when it's discovered that you planted it.

Put a Bug in the Computer



If you're looking for a joke which is the more computer related and makes people take their machine in for repairs, then the Phantom Keystroker (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B002YJW7C4/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20) may be the USB device for you. After you plug this into a USB port, it will either randomly type letters, turn the caps lock on and off, or make strange mouse movement—your choice. It works with most computers, although not the Mac.

We would guess that it wouldn't be very effective on computers where the USB port is in sight. "Hey, what's this sticking into my computer?" Plus, you may not want to do this to someone who is doing serious work. Do it to the office clown who spends all of his time surfing the Web.

"Did You Hear Something?"



You may want to save this one for Halloween when disturbing sounds are the most useful. Haunted Harassment (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B0036QUGF4/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20) is an electronic device which will emit an unsettling creaking noise, scratching sounds, gasping breath, and eerie whispering—your choice. The sounds are spaces at about six minute intervals, making it more difficult to find the device.

If you live on your own, you may want one of these so that on those cold, stormy nights you don't feel so alone. Activating the sounds is like having company.

"Your Cable is Broken!"



This gag is much less intrusive and actually has some practical value. The Broken USB Cable Flash Drive (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B001LGQP5G/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20) can make your computer (or another computer) look like it has a broken cable hanging from it. It is a one Gigabyte flash drive which can be used to store and transfer files. However, other than the curiosity factor, it's not much of a joke. You may get some strange looks and a few questions, but you're not likely to make anyone feel like a fool.

"Where's the Escape Key?"



To keep yourself amused you may want to install some Novelty Computer Key Caps (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B000QHYSIQ/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20) on your keyboard. Perhaps the ESC key will become a Panic button. Or possibly you can make the "~" key into "Any Key" for when you encounter the "Hit Any Key" instruction. Some of the possibilities are Panic, Any Key, Oops!, Eject, \$, duh! and Beer—although other key cap sets are more varied (and possibly tasteless).

April Fools' Day comes but once a year, while the fools stay around all year long. These are but a few of the ways that you can prepare for the big day. Of course, you can always buy a tractor lawn mower (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B003823BIK/?tag=comput0b9-20) for someone who only has a 108 square-foot lawn. That would make him (or her) feel like a fool.

ComputerEdge always wants to hear from you, our readers. If you have specific comments about one of our articles, please click the "Tell us what you think about this article!" link at the top or bottom of the specific article/column at ComputerEdge.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 "ComputerQuick Review", or yell at us, please e-mail us at ceeditor@computoredge.com. If you would like to review our recent e-books, please visit ComputerEdge E-Books (www.computoredgebooks.com/).

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Editor's Letters: Tips and Thoughts from Readers

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

"LibreOffice Save as DOC by Default," "Office 2010 Keeps Crashing Update," "Parallel Port Scanner OS Support?" "The Reason Microsoft Internet Explorer is So Snappy," "Installing XP on Windows 7 Machines"

LibreOffice Save as DOC by Default

[Regarding the February 10 Digital Dave column:]

As discussed here already, I would recommend *not* using OpenOffice as it's not longer supported, use LibreOffice, same interface, but well supported and updated.

And to add to your suggestion about saving LO files in .DOC Word format, you can set the default save to .DOC or whatever via the Tools/Options pull-down menu. Then under Load/Save, General list on the left, change the "Always save as" to your choice.

BTW, LO can save in the new MS Word format, DOCX too, although why anyone would want to is anyone's guess. :)

-Rich Ernst, San Diego, CA

Office 2010 Keeps Crashing Update

[Regarding the January 27 Digital Dave column:]

Thanks to Dave and all who commented on my Office 2010 problem.

A few days after sending my request for help to Digital Dave, XP and/or SP3 and/or Office 2010 crashed a 5GB temporary drive in my machine *and* it/they corrupted my 200GB backup drive.

So thanks to Microsoft, my 175GB of data is gone.

The original files were already gone, because I had to reformat my main drive to fully remove Office 2010. Now the backup of those files is destroyed. The machine has never been connected to the Internet. So I do not see this as caused by a virus or other infection.

After this, I again reformatted the main drive, did *not* install SP3, and did *not* install Office 2010. There have been no problems with the system since then.

The Office 2010 disc I had was legitimate, purchased from my university campus bookstore.

This whole nightmare is what I get for having done things the so-called "right" way by buying software. Thanks, Microsoft.

(About OpenOffice, I have it on my machine. But it is not fully compatible with Office products. Try using tables,

headers/footers, footnotes and graphics, and you may find that its products are not reliable. Also, LibreOffice will not operate on my machine without SP3, and I'm not going to install that again because it could have been a contributor to the crashing of my hard drives.)

Microsoft customer service is deplorable, filled with people who are incompetent. Every time I called, I got another flunky who had nothing useful to offer about any aspect of what has happened. Each one says that all supervisors are in a meeting (amazing how that happens), but promises that one will call back. Of course, no supervisor has every called back.

Also the Redmond (Washington) headquarters of Microsoft has been impossible to get to.

This shows how dishonest of an operation Microsoft is (and always has been for those of us who have watched it through the years).

In summary, Microsoft has been terrible.

-Jay, San Diego

Parallel Port Scanner OS Support?

[Regarding the February 10 Digital Dave column:]

Dave, you got it right about best way to support your scanner is to add a parallel port card (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B00006B8BS/?tag=comput0b9-20). Although better USB to parallel port adapters will work, they're hit or miss for some applications. Since most parallel port scanners are really SCSI based with yet another driver to convert the SCSI commands to parallel port, using the USB adapter is a hit or miss proposition.

However, an even more likely scenario is that if he's running any Windows OS later than XP, his scanner won't even be supported, whether he has a "real" parallel port card or not. So that's the first thing they need to check before going further.

I was amazed when I (just recently) moved from my old, faithful, extremely well known XP (drive getting flaky) to Windows 7, and my USB Canon Lide 3 scanner isn't supported! Fortunately, I'd acquired a Lide 5, and it *is* supported. Weird, surprising, disappointing, but true.

-Rich Ernst, San Diego, CA

The Reason Microsoft Internet Explorer is So Snappy

[Regarding the February 10 Digital Dave column:]

Microsoft hasn't changed the way Internet Explorer (IE) works. IE has access to better in house API "hooks" than what Microsoft allows third parties to use.

The downside: Microsoft has to patch IE more often with Microsoft security updates because IE is still tied closely to the Windows OS. This is despite all the requirements that IE is supposed to be a stand alone program from a legal standpoint.

On the parallel port issue: you should clarify the different modes for the new version of the port and if the USB adapter has them (or supports them).

We have a much wider support today than the old Clocked/Data Out pins of the Centronics interface. (We sold rebranded original Centronics printers at Cromemco.)

-Art Blackwell, Evergreen, CO

Why Choose Firefox? As I understand it, Firefox is the "descendent" of Netscape. According to the history programs I have seen on television, Netscape was essentially put out of business in a rather unscrupulous fashion by a very large and dominating concern that preferred to not have any competition. Need I say more? I still have a netscape.net legacy e-mail address that I will keep as long as it remains operational. AOL is the understanding company that nurtures this idiosyncrasy for me and many others. And I use Firefox as a genuine operational preference. It works best for my general uses.

-Cicero, Colorado Springs

Installing XP on Windows 7 Machines

[Regarding the February 10 Editors Letters: Tips and Thoughts from Readers column:]

My biggest recommendation:

Use Windows Compatibility Mode when installing OEM drivers! I've had ***better*** success with XP ***and not*** Vista Drivers!

That is how this Dell Inspiron 6000 is able to reply to this question using Windows 7 (Windows 7 is officially ***not supported*** on this machine by Dell).

The same advice works for the HP Entertainment Laptop (many dv series and some Compaqs) that HP ***refuses*** to support!

My rule of thumb so far (others have gotten W7 to run on PIII boxes and low memory, but they are ***sloooow***).

CPU: 1.5 GHz or faster

32 bit W7: 1GB memory (133 FSB or DDR, DDR2)

64 bit W7: 2GB memory (133 FSB or DDR, DDR2)

40GB minimum partition/hard drive...that lets you install upgrades & service packs...***and new drivers*** that replace the old drivers you had to use to get W7 running in the first place!

I recommend that you ***don't*** verify (The WGA number/letter combination you have to enter) until all the upgrades are finished. Then you can validate.

I've made several clients very happy with their existing hardware ***not*** supported by the OEM and chip makers...

Once you get W7 on the hardware, updates fix compatibility problems.

Some peripherals work, others are not supported by the maker. Buyer Beware!

Remember, Compatibility Mode is your friend...

-Art Blackwell, Evergreen, CO

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