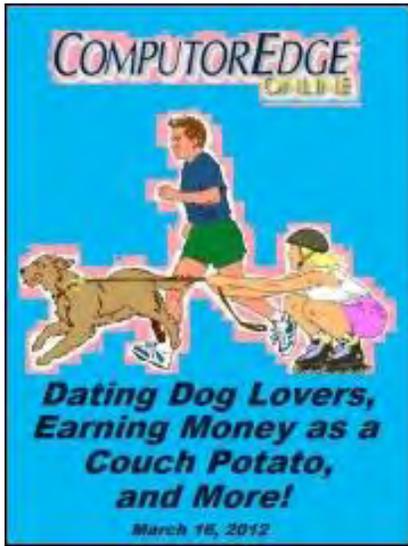


ComputerEdge™ Online — 03/16/12



This issue:
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These stories, plus more "Understanding Windows 8," Intro to Mac OS X," and a free Amazon Kindle e-book.

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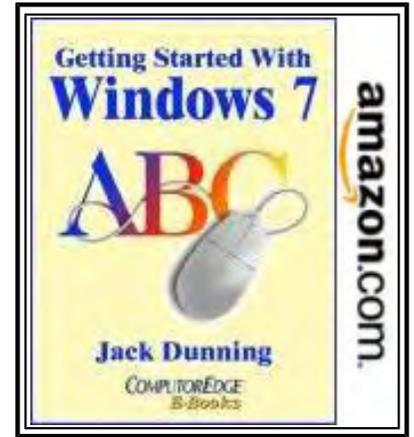
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DEPARTMENTS:

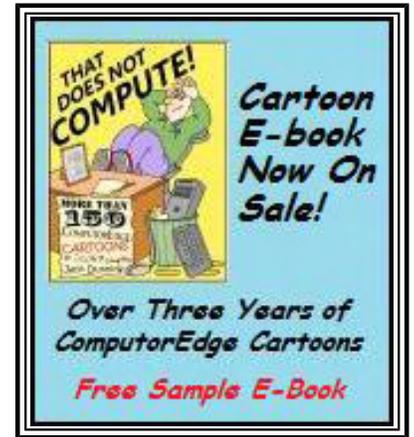
[EdgeWord: Kindle E-Book Now Free on Amazon!](#) by Jack Dunning

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"College Degrees—the Past is Still Relevant," "CAD Programs and Larger than A-size Output," "Internet Tracking Information," "Thank You, Digital Dave," "Not Suitable for Tablets"



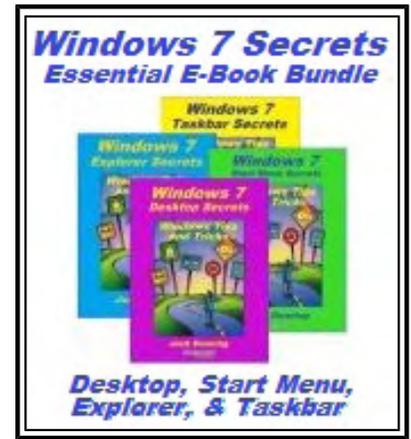
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Digital Dave

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

Getting Data Off Old Hard Drives; Script Error on the Internet; Too Many Internet Ads.

Dear Digital Dave,

I have some old computers in my garage that don't work anymore. I don't want to fix the computers, but I would like to see if there is any useful or interesting data on the hard drives. Is there an easy, inexpensive way to check this out?

*Roy
Denver, CO*

Dear Roy,

While I can't guarantee that this will work for every hard drive, a USB 2.0 to SATA/IDE adapter (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B000VS4HDM/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20) is probably your best bet. I consider this type of set up essential for anyone who regularly works with the inner workings of their computer.

I've used one to read drives after a system crash. It works by removing the drive from the computer and plugging it into another computer (or the same one with a new drive) via the USB port. Often the data on the drive can still be read even though the system is corrupted. Depending upon the drive type there is a separate power supply included.

I linked to an adapter available at Amazon based upon the current reviews. There are other cheaper setups, but they did not review as well. According to those write ups, the manual is a little inadequate, but I found that many of those same reviews (and replies) included answers to the concerns mentioned. I encourage you to read all of the reviews before deciding upon any particular adapter.

Depending upon the type and age of the hard drives, this set up may not work in all cases, but it is your best shot before taking them to a computer tech (who will probably try the same thing) or an even more expensive data recovery specialist.

Digital Dave

P. S. Jack has told me that his Kindle e-book *Getting Started with Windows 7* (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B007AL672M/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20) will be available free for the next five days from Amazon—some kind of promotion. It's a pretty basic Windows 7 e-book, so I'm guessing that most *ComputerEdge* readers won't need it. But what the heck, it's free!

Dear Digital Dave,

I am getting a script error when I am on the Internet. Is there a good program to eliminate this error? Or some freeware available? You can get a lot of sites to analyze your computer, but they want you to then buy their software to maybe fix the problem. Who has the best product at a good price?

*Ron
Vista Calif*

Dear Ron,

Most likely there is nothing wrong with your computer. When you see a script error on the Web (normally a JavaScript error) it is usually a problem in programming at the host Web site or possibly caused by JavaScript being turned off in your browser.

JavaScript is a programming language commonly used to add functionality to Web pages after they are loaded into a Web browser. However, JavaScript is notoriously sensitive to the differences in the browsers (Internet Explorer, Firefox, Chrome, etc.), with Internet Explorer being the worst. Sometimes just switching to another browser will eliminated script errors.

You can also set the Web browser to ignore script errors so that you won't get the error message each time it encounters an error. JavaScript errors are far too common on the Web and often go uncorrected. When an error occurs the JavaScript generally stops functioning on that page, losing some of the page features—although you may not notice or care.

I keep JavaScript turned on because some sites depend upon it, but I will turn off the error messages unless I need to debug some Web programming.

It doesn't sound like you need to buy any product at any price. There are too many free antivirus/anti-adware programs (such as one mentioned in the following letter) available to be spending money on a paid software program.

Digital Dave

Dear Digital Dave,

This morning I started up my computer and went to The San Diego Union-Tribune. I usually start the morning with the paper version on the breakfast table.

On the Web version I have always been annoyed with the ads that appear, but this morning was different. So many ads I had to scroll down to find the news! The last straw! This time I was inundated with three ads that I recognized were most likely from interactions with contacts yesterday. Are these all the result of cookies? And if I delete cookies do I need to sign in each and every time to the various sites that require sign-ins? Is there any solution to this?

Dave Stang

Dear Dave,

A few weeks ago, I briefly addressed cookies as part of another question. It sounds like the newspaper may be working with a business such as DoubleClick which uses third-party cookies to serve up targeted ads.

There are two type of cookies (small text files). The first is the one placed by the Web site you're

visiting which can only be written to and read by the host site. The second is a third-party cookie which is placed from another location but with the permission of the host site. Since third-party cookies can be found at many other sites, it's possible for advertising to be delivered based upon the type of sites you've visited. This may be what has happened.

You can view the cookies on your system through the Tools option in your browser. Third-party cookies can be readily identified because they will have the name of sites that you have never visited, plus there will usually be multiple cookies. For example, in Google Chrome you can view the cookies through Tools (wrench icon in upper right corner of the browser) => Options => Under the Hood => Content settings... => All cookies and site data... (see Figure 1). As shown, one of the biggest is 2o7.net which was set up by a marketing firm called Omniture. These cookies all report back to the same server.

The screenshot displays the 'Cookies and Other Data' interface from a browser. At the top, there is a title 'Cookies and Other Data' and a search bar labeled 'Search cookies'. Below this, a table lists 'Locally Stored Data' for the site '2o7.net'. The site name and the total number of cookies, '103 cookies', are circled in red. The table contains a grid of individual cookie names, many of which are truncated. At the bottom of the page, there is a page number '6 of 59'.

Site	Locally Stored Data
2o7.net	103 cookies
	s_vi_bagmbx7Fm... s_vi_bahfbjx7Dlz... s_vi_bcjriect s_vi_bkobcp s_vi_bkpita
	s_vi_bkx7Finbfcvl... s_vi_brcxxaabwx... s_vi_brcxxaabwx...
	s_vi_buxox7Emx6... s_vi_buxox7Ex7F... s_vi_bx7Bhx7Fx7...
	s_vi_bx7Cx7Cmlcj... s_vi_bx7Finahbyc... s_vi_cpx7Fx7Fx7...
	s_vi_cpx7Fx7Fx7... s_vi_cx60x60dcc... s_vi_cx7Eiox7Ex...
	s_vi_cx7Emox60i... s_vi_dgiefx7Fghck s_vi_edjkge80 s_vi_exox7Ctetry...
	s_vi_fax7Cfkjx7D... s_vi_felbhx7Fbf... s_vi_felbxxghx7Fybi
	s_vi_fenzmx7Bfg s_vi_fx7Bhjelijfd s_vi_gdx7Bhetx6... s_vi_gqfjh
	s_vi_guzx60uwfa... s_vi_hjefdex7Fynjg s_vi_ibx60pv s_vi_iex608x3Bg...
	s_vi_iex60iylegbx... s_vi_ibxmxhx7Fnm... s_vi_ixxmieyix7Ee s_vi_ijjnfnj
	s_vi_ix60x7Dmjx7... s_vi_jcx7Enix7Fo... s_vi_jcyonx7Eya... s_vi_jgx7Ehqu
	s_vi_jhgfx7Dx7Df... s_vi_jix60ncji s_vi_khaoup s_vi_kjodgjid
	s_vi_kx60kx60gakm s_vi_kxxwwupgx... s_vi_lex7Fihxxx7...
	s_vi_llmyibalobx7... s_vi_lojbx7Bdx7En... s_vi_ngx7Ckdyx7...
	s_vi_nlczhx7Eya... s_vi_nodx7Coxxz... s_vi_nyhytx7B801
	s_vi_nyhytx7B88... s_vi_nyhytx7B8x... s_vi_nyhytx7B8x...
	s_vi_nyhytx7B8x... s_vi_nyhytx7Bx3... s_vi_obafkkge s_vi_ogix27ogiiieg
	s_vi_ombzmbocy... s_vi_ongx7Fdnyieg s_vi_owfjh s_vi_ox7Cssqtcx...
	s_vi_pniibdhj s_vi_pogkrp s_vi_px7Ex7Dedc... s_vi_qpasgvx7B...
	s_vi_qx7Djx7Cwf... s_vi_qx7Dubydbq... s_vi_rokcek s_vi_snjbdhj
	s_vi_snjbpbt s_vi_sqx7Evyyx7E... s_vi_tghhjoxxgx7... s_vi_tghhjoxxgx7...
	s_vi_tghhjoxxgx7... s_vi_ufiknyfx7Ch... s_vi_vdx60x3Dx7... s_vi_vgjksu



Figure 1. Third-party cookies can be identified by the unknown names and large number of cookies (Google Chrome).

I easily deleted these cookies by clicking an "x" which appeared in the right corner next to the listing (not pictured).

Fortunately, you can also set your browser to block third-party cookies. If you blocked all cookies or deleted all the cookies you would need to sign in each time you visited your regular sites. The primary cookies are used to remember your site setup. If you only block third-party cookies, it should not affect sign-ins.

Another possibility is that your computer is infected with adware, which includes the third-party cookie problem. You can get the free program Ad-Aware (www.lavasoft.com/products/ad_aware_free.php), although most antivirus software now includes this type of protection.

By the way, it wouldn't hurt to write a complaint letter to *The San Diego Union-Tribune* about the Web site. If enough people complain, they might realize that they're driving away readers with the ad scheme and adjust it. Or they might go out of business (which may be the case anyway). It's not like there is a shortage of places to find news. If more people complained when a Web site did something blatantly annoying, then maybe there would be more good Web sites.

Digital Dave

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Online Romance for Geeks and Other Little Known Tech Stories

“Multitasking TV Viewers, Television Tech, Crystals for Solar & More” by Marilyn K. Martin

Video Game Sales Sank Sharply in January; E-Mail Giants Aim to Slash Phishing Spam; Television Tech; Crystal-Tech for Solar Solutions; Innovations In Light; More Ways to Earn Extra Money/Rewards with an App or Web Site; The Tech Titans: Mergers or Collisions?; Social Media Expands into Niche Apps; Web Sites Car Dealers Hate; GPS and the Law.

Video Game Sales Sank Sharply in January

According to CNBC in early February 2012, the video game industry saw a 34% plunge in sales (www.cnbc.com/id/46341237/Videogame_Sales_Fell_34_Percent_in_January) last month. That included a 38% decline in sales of game hardware, 38% decline in software sales, and an 18% decline in accessories. That's a bigger decline than the 12% drop forecast, and down 31% as compared to sales in January 2011.

Most gamers probably blew their budgets over the holidays. Also blamed were the lack of new launches to draw in shoppers, which probably impacted impulse shopping in gaming stores. While February is predicted to be better in sales than January was, some experts are wondering if more gamers are shifting from consoles to Internet play.

E-Mail Giants Aim to Slash Phishing Spam

At the end of January 2012, e-mail giants Google, Yahoo, Microsoft and AOL—as well as financial service companies and social media sites—backed a new effort to reduce "phishing" e-mails (www.techinfojournal.com/email-giants-move-to-slash-phishing.html) that try to trick recipients into believing they come from legitimate companies. These fifteen companies formed a working group (dmarc.org) called Domain-based Message Authentication, Reporting and Conformance, "that plans to promote a standard set of technologies that they say will lead to more secure e-mail."

Television Tech

One of the hottest trends in TV right now





“Sam was watching American Idol while surfing the Web with his iPad and reading an e-book on his Kindle, when his smartphone rang.”

(besides speculating on Apple TV) is the second screen (www.siliconvalley.com/personal-technology/ci_19889787). This is a smartphone or tablet computer people keep glancing at while watching television. And everyone from TV producers to advertisers want to figure out a way to corral those second-screener. Surveys say that as much as 30% of Internet surfing is done while watching TV.

Besides, if those surfers are checking e-mail or breaking news on their second-screen, that might be a threat to the TV industry. But if viewers are using that second-screen to learn more about a TV show they are watching, or discussing it with friends, this "social television" would deliver a more robust TV experience, and might bond viewers more strongly to TV shows. Apps for these second screens are already popping up. Previiv will offer second-screener information on any character and/or the actor on a TV show. And "Get This" app tells viewers how to buy the

stuff they see during a TV show.

At the end of February 2012, Netflix and Hulu were debuting their initial offerings of original scripted programming (www.siliconvalley.com/personal-technology/ci_19936155). "Battleground" on Hulu and "Lilyhammer" on Netflix were both multi-part shows applauded and dissed as being just like regular television—slick quality productions with too little innovation. Google's YouTube is also starting to roll out over 100 niche channels of original programming.

Crystal-Tech for Solar Solutions

Solar power continues to limp along, plagued by storage problems, too little power generated on cloudy days, and the amount of space needed for clunky photovoltaic or thermal energy's vast arrays of mirrors. Now researchers at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) have discovered a way to use thermophotovoltaic devices (web.mit.edu/press/2011/thermo-photovoltaics.html) without mirrors to concentrate sunlight.

An MIT team has developed a photonic crystal with "an array of precisely spaced microscopic holes in the top layer of the material." So the sun's rays can enter, but the crystal's precisely designed geometry prevents most of the reflected rays from escaping. The new system is cheaper to manufacture, and could theoretically triple the solar-to-electricity efficiency compared to traditional photovoltaic solar cells.



Meanwhile, at Stanford University (California), researchers are tackling the problem of a high-power, rechargeable battery (news.stanford.edu/news/2011/november/longlife-power-storage-112311.html) to store excess power for those cloudy or calm days when solar and wind power can't produce at maximum. Stanford researchers have already developed part of that dream-battery, with "a new electrode that employs crystalline nanoparticles of a copper compound." In laboratory tests, the new electrode managed 40,000 cycles of charging and discharging, and still retained more than 80% of its original charge capacity. "This

electrode would have a good 30 years of useful life on the electrical grid," said graduate student Colin Wessells.

Innovations In Light

The world is full of exciting ideas and trendy-tech to help the world's poor. But to make these innovations (opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/02/02/innovations-in-light/) work, other questions need to be answered first: How do you build a technology focused on people with no money? Then how do you physically get something as simple and necessary as artificial light into the world's poorest homes?

The New York Times' "Opinionator" offers three do-able lighting ideas for Africa. The simplest is the Solar Bottle, which uses an empty soda bottle filled with chlorine and filtered water, and then sealed into a roof/ceiling. Or how about Socialite (www.socialitelantern.com/About.html), a very simple light made from local materials that can be banged around, and still go 40 hours between charges on the high setting. The third idea uses a whole community, where someone buys a solar panel and starts a business charging lamps and mobile phones.



A Silicon Valley technology company, Sun Innovations (sun-innovations.com), is winning awards for their "patented emissive projection display technology and projects, which turns any glass window or windshield into a water-clear digital display screen." This media glass, similar to what was seen in the movie *Minority Report*, won the company an R&D 100 award in 2011.

More Ways to Earn Extra Money/Rewards with an App or Web Site

I've already written about how you can earn a little extra cash by using Web sites to rent out your driveway, or take smartphone photos of yourself at certain stores or with certain products. Now comes word of a new app (www.tecca.com/news/2012/01/25/iphone-app-viggle-tv-rewards/) for every couch potato. Viggle (itunes.apple.com/us/app/viggle/id487066871?mt=8) is free through iTunes and pays you in points to let the software listen in on what you're watching on TV. You are then rewarded with about two points per minute. You won't get rich, but using the app a few hours every evening for three weeks can earn you enough points to get a \$5.00 Gift Card from retailers like Burger King or Starbucks.

Another (small) money-making program (www.latimes.com/business/technology/la-fi-tn-google-screenwise-program-20120208,0,4017245.story) has been recently rolled out by Google. Called the Screenwise Project, people volunteer to let Google follow their Web surfing around the Internet. You only have to be at least 13, have a Google account and use the Google Chrome browser while searching the Web. Participants get up to \$25 in Amazon gift cards, and can opt-out at any time.

The Tech Titans: Mergers or Collisions?

The rocky relationship (www.agilitico.com/blog/2011/05/media-and-creatives-relationship-status-its-complicated/#.T2CvL3mV2xQ) between established companies and that upstart, the Internet, continues to be a work in progress. For the entertainment media, the sticking point is "how to find a balance between providing content online, and cannibalizing cable." An example is Viacom, which saw revenue rise recently from online content deals (it contracts with Netflix and Hulu). While revenue from their TV shows declined, "reportedly because kids were watching 'SpongeBob SquarePants' on Netflix instead of Nickelodeon." But Viacom, to their credit, continues to explore new kinds of mergers, and recently announced a Web streaming deal with Amazon.

Video gaming is another area that continues to morph into elements non-gaming corporations can use. Some companies like Samsung have taken a lesson from the social network game FarmVille, and are offering online loyalty programs (www.siliconvalley.com/personal-technology/ci_19889452) that offer virtual rewards to people who talk-up their brand online. The trend is called gamification, which takes elements from gaming and applies them in a different settings. Samsung Nation (www.samsung.com/us/samsungnation/) awards points and titles to people who talk-up their brand and/or answer questions online. Some of these companies start out by offering contests to win prizes.

Other uses for "gamification" are companies like RecycleBank (www.recyclebank.com/), which uses game incentives (points and rewards) "to prompt consumers to perform eco-friendly activities." Many people have been using a form of gamification for years, with frequent-flier points and hotel loyalty programs. Although those kinds of programs generally offer more concrete rewards, like upgrades. While real gamification is motivating people with virtual awards that may have little or no monetary value. Some businesses are even adopting a form of gamification for employee motivation, like awarding badges and merits. Some CEOs feel this creates a feedback loop for employees to feel recognized, and they are thus motivated to produce more.

Social Media Expands into Niche Apps

After the giant, Facebook, taught people how to go online and share all sorts of personal information with strangers, now smaller social Web sites are popping up for narrower, more niche audiences (www.boston.com/business/technology/articles/2012/02/10/start_up_websites_build_on_facebook_linking_people_with_shared_passions/). I've already written about smaller, more specialized social media sites, but new and different sites continue to pop up.

Trapster (trapster.com/iphone.php) is an iPhone app that charts your travel by GPS, shows your speed and the speed limit of the road you are on, and even "blips" to alert you to upcoming radar zones. Pinterest (pinterest.com) is a "combination bulletin board and search engine, where users can share hobbies ranging from old cars to architecture." Calling itself an online pinboard, Pinterest only had 400,000 visitors in May 2011—which grew to 11 million visitors by January 2012.



Another form of social media that is now expanding into niche areas, is online dating sites (www.physorg.com/news/2012-02-dating-sites-mainstream-focus-niche.html). Dating sites are now oriented toward ethnicity (Jewcier.com (Jewcier.com) for Jews, and Amor.com (Amor.com) for Latins), or religion (like CatholicSoulmates.com (CatholicSoulmates.com) and Corazon.com (Corazon.com)). gk2gk.com (gk2gk.com) (Geek to Geek) and MatureSinglesClick.com (MatureSinglesClick.com) also reach out to niche markets. While the online dating industry is still growing, the U.S. has the largest market, with the 50-plus crowd the fastest growing category at Match.com (Match.com). There are even dating sites now like Veggiedate.com (Veggiedate.com) for vegetarians, and Datemypet.com (Datemypet.com) for pet lovers.

Meanwhile Julie Spira, (author of *The Perils of Cyber-Dating: Confessions of a Hopeful Romantic Looking for Love Online* (www.amazon.com/gp/product/1600375693/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20)), offers tips for finding love in cyberspace: Have a catchy screen name; post a smiling and approachable photo; post only recent photos; avoid cliches and be original in your intro e-mail, and keep it short, varied and positive.

Web Sites Car Dealers Hate

Negotiating with a car salesman (www.nytimes.com/2012/02/11/your-money/car-dealers-wince-at-a-site-

[to-end-sales-haggling.html?_r=1&nl=todaysheadlines&emc=tha25](#)) to buy a new car hasn't changed much in a century. Now, however, consumers can at least educate themselves beforehand on the Internet. Sites like Edmunds and Kelley Blue Book offer car buyers suggested retail prices, and at least an estimate for how much their trade-in will be worth.

Now comes a Web site called TrueCar (www.truecar.com), which shows not only what other buyers paid for the same new vehicle, but also gives an estimate of the dealer's true cost. The Car Industry was especially alarmed by TrueCar's promise to deliver a guaranteed price from several different dealers. So this effectively eliminates the need for any haggling. The Car Industry hit back—hard—and even Honda Motor Company threatened to cut off marketing dollars to its dealers that didn't follow its guidelines when promoting its brands on TrueCar's site.

GPS and the Law

At the end of January 2012, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled unanimously that law enforcement's use of hidden GPS (www.nytimes.com/2012/01/26/opinion/gps-and-the-right-to-privacy.html) electronic surveillance will be suspect without a judge's warrant. But too many questions were left unanswered: How long can GPS surveillance be used before requiring a warrant? What types of crimes justify GPS monitoring? The majority opinion argued that the Fourth Amendment prohibits unlawful searches and seizures, "tied to common-law trespass." But a concurring opinion argued that the ancient concept of "trespass" is unsuitable for addressing 21st-century technology, like GPS. And that we need to think differently about a "reasonable expectation of privacy" with electronic surveillance, by updating law enforcement's concepts of intrusion and trespass.

California apparently leads the country in law enforcement's GPS supervision (berkeley.news21.com/behindbars/parole/tracked/). California law enforcement is using GPS ankle bracelets to track probationers and parolees, especially after Prop. 83 ("Jessica's Law") mandated lifetime GPS monitoring for convicted sex offenders released from prison. Now California law enforcement is beginning to use electronic monitoring to track other kinds of offenders, like dangerous gang members or domestic abuse cases with restraining orders, and as an alternative to incarceration. In addition, the tracking data can add insight into an offender's behavior, and even check to see if a braceleted offender was at the scene of any new crimes. This "virtual incarceration" is also helping California's overcrowded prison crises.

A year ago (February 2011), it was reported that at least three states (including California and Texas) were experimenting with using GPS handheld (www.pcworld.com/article/220225/california_school_district_battles_truancy_with_gps.html) mobile devices similar to smartphones, carried by volunteer middle and high schools students who were habitually truant. Some states had experimented earlier with putting GPS ankle-bracelets on truant students, but issues of privacy and stigmatizing the students as criminals soon popped up. With this carried device, developed by Dallas-based AIM Truancy Solutions (www.aimtruancy.com), the participants receive an automated phone call every weekday morning reminding them to get up so they can get to school on time. The student then enters a code that enables GPS to track their location from departing for school through coming home, and again at 8PM.

The New York Times ran a story at the end of January 2012, how private detectives and curious spouses and parents can soon be able to buy a GPS unit to attach to a vehicle (www.nytimes.com/2012/01/29/us/gps-devices-are-being-used-to-track-cars-and-errant-spouses.html) for only \$300. The device is no bigger than a cigarette pack, and can be attached to vehicles without the driver's knowledge. Then someone can monitor that vehicle's travels and stops, from a PC or laptop. The devices are already popular for everything from tracking an elderly parent with dementia, to spying on a spouse or employee—to outright criminal stalking.

While the Supreme Court ruling on GPS trackers only set boundaries for law enforcement, the growing sales of GPS devices to private citizens for "a multitude of largely unregulated uses" is mushrooming. Consequently, GPS trackers "are increasingly being cited in cases of criminal stalking and civil violations of privacy." Unlike most states, California and Texas ban most uses of GPS trackers without consent. This will undoubtedly be an upcoming topic for regulation in the other 48 states.

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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Intro to Apple Macintosh OS X

“10 Tips Likely to Enhance Your Productivity” by Barry Fass-Holmes

Enhance your productivity, experience and enjoyment in getting stuff done on a Mac with 10 tips for Mac OS X.

This article is intended for Mac OS X newcomers and novices (although veteran users also might learn a new trick or two).

The following 10 tips are likely to enhance your productivity, experience and enjoyment in getting stuff done on a Mac. They also describe differences between Mac OS X and other operating systems.

1. Only One Menubar

In Windows and Linux, each application that you launch displays in its own window which occupies either a user-defined portion of the screen or the entire screen (maximized). These operating systems can display multiple application windows (Figure 1A) or a single application window (Figure 1B); in either case, each app has its own menubar that is incorporated within the app's window frame.

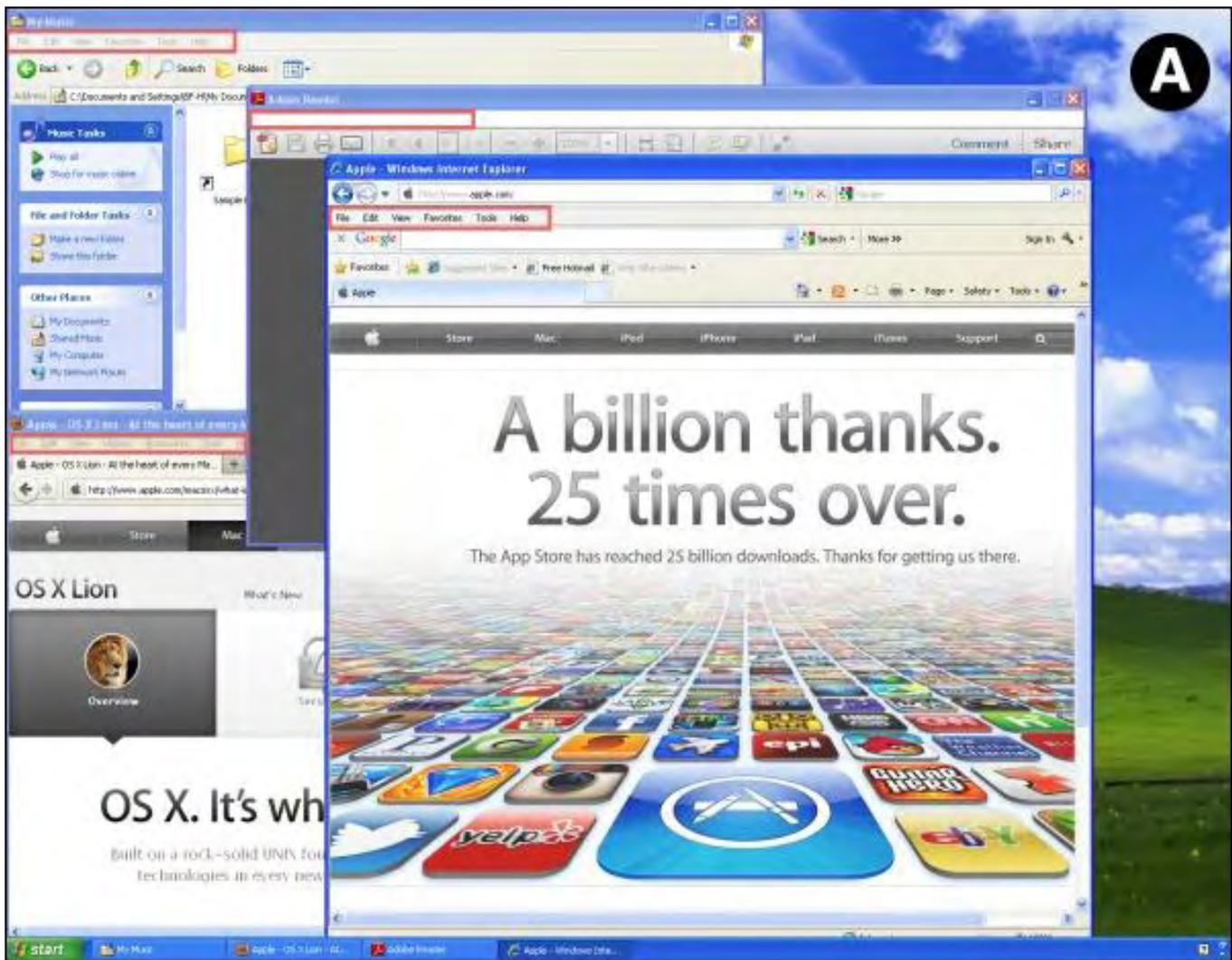




Figure 1. Windows and Linux operating systems display each running program in its own window. Each program window's size and position can be user-configured, and each program window has its own menubar (Firefox, Internet Explorer, Reader and Windows Explorer are shown in user-customized sizes and locations in A). Alternatively, each program window can be maximized (sized to occupy the entire screen) and has its own menubar (Firefox is shown maximized in B).

Mac OS X is different—it has only one menubar that is fixed at the top of the screen and shared among all programs that the user launches (Figure 2A). The currently active program controls the menubar and occupies the entire screen; its documents are displayed within windows (Figure 2A). Each document window can be re-sized to occupy a portion of the screen (Figure 2A) or maximized to occupy the entire screen (Figures 2B and C).

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Intro to Mac OS X
by Barry Fass-Holmes
published in , 2012 ComputerEdge

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B



Figure 2. Mac OS X has one and only one menubar which is shared by all running programs. Each running program's documents display within their own windows. Each document window's size and position can be user-configured (Bean, Pages and Safari are shown in A). Alternatively, each document window can be maximized (sized to occupy the entire screen; Safari is shown in B). A new feature in Mac OS X Lion is full-screen mode in which a program's document window occupies the entire screen including the space otherwise taken by the menubar (Safari is shown in C).

2. Clicking the Window's Close Widget Closes the Document, Not the App

Windows' application windows have a red button in their upper right hand corner (Figures 1A and B). After the user clicks this button, the corresponding application exits.

Mac OS X's document windows have a red widget in their upper left hand corner (Figures 2A and B). After clicking this widget, someone switching from Windows might expect the corresponding application to exit; however, that's not what happens. Clicking the close widget closes that document window, the application remains active, and it continues using system resources (CPU cycles and RAM). Instead of clicking the document window's close widget, press the command (⌘) and Q keys (or select Quit from the application's application menu; e.g., select Safari>Quit to quit the Web browser).

The close widget's standard functionality is to close document windows rather than programs. For whatever reason, however, the System Preferences program included in Mac OS X does not comply with this standard. After clicking the close widget in the System Preferences' window, the window closes and the program quits. Go figure.

3. Crouching Lion, Hidden Programs

Unlike other operating systems, Mac OS X has a feature called program hiding. This feature can be illustrated with two sheets of paper. If you hold them in front of you with one positioned a little to the right and behind the other, both sheets are visible. However, line them up so that one completely

overlaps the other behind it, and the back-most sheet is hidden.

By default, programs running under Mac OS X are displayed similarly to the two sheets of paper positioned so that both are visible. The user can see the back-most program's document windows at the same time as the front-most ones (Figure 2A). However, the back-most program's windows can be hidden by pressing the command (⌘), option and H keys together. The hiding feature completely dismisses the background windows without closing them.

If you prefer to hide the front-most program's windows rather than the back-most's, press the command (⌘) and H keys together. If you prefer not to remember these keystroke combinations, an alternative method is to click a program's Dock icon while pressing the option key; all other running programs' windows then will be hidden.

4. Finder Always is Running

The Finder program in Mac OS X dates back to the Mac's 1980s System software and is somewhat similar to Windows Explorer. You can use it to navigate through the filesystem on internal or external hard drives, network drives, pen drives, optical discs, etc. Unlike Windows Explorer, however, the Finder automatically launches upon boot-up and is always running. You cannot explicitly quit the Finder; you can only force quit and relaunch it unless you resort to geeky workarounds.

5. Dock Icons' Hierarchical Menus

The first version of Mac OS X (10.0 Cheetah) debuted 11 years ago (March 24, 2001) with a feature called the Dock. This feature, inherited from Steve Jobs' defunct NextStep operating system and imitated by Microsoft in Windows 7, is a strip that the user can position at the bottom of the screen or along the far left or right side. The Dock ordinarily contains and provides ready access to aliases (aka shortcuts in Windows lingo) of the icons of installed programs. Single-click any app's Dock icon and that app launches. Drag and drop a supported document's icon onto an app's Dock icon and the document launches in that app.

What some users might not know about the Dock, however, is that you can drag and drop hard drives' and folders' icons into the right-most portion (or the lower-most portion if the Dock is situated along the screen's left- or right-most side) of the Dock. After doing this and clicking on that icon, a hierarchical menu (support.apple.com/kb/TA20398?viewlocale=en_US) displays the contents of that hard drive or folder (Figure 3). This hierarchical menu can be used to navigate through the contents until locating an item of interest. If you select that item and release the cursor, the item opens. No need to open and drill through Finder windows to arrive at a document of interest that's buried deep within folders.

In my humble opinion, this feature remains one of Mac OS X's most clever and efficient functionalities.



Figure 3. Drag and drop a hard drive's icon into the right-most side of the Dock, then click the icon and a hierarchical menu of contents displays that can be used to navigate to a desired file or folder. This feature has been in Mac OS X since its inaugural version (10.0 Cheetah), which is shown in Figure 3.

6. QuickLook

This feature is another of Mac OS X's most useful ones. QuickLook displays the contents of a selected file in the Finder without opening the file in the program that created it (Figure 4). Think of it as a way to promptly preview a file's contents.

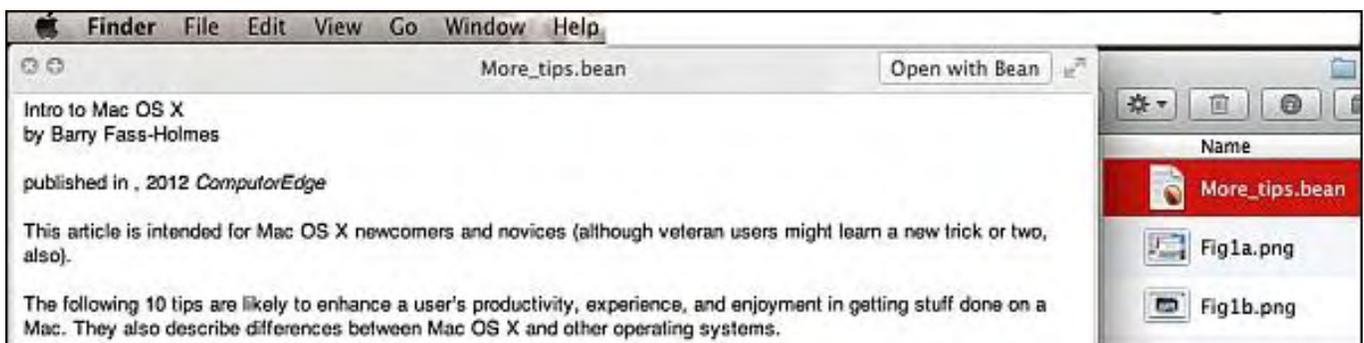


Figure 4. To display a QuickLook preview of a file's contents, select the file in the Finder and press the keyboard's spacebar. To dismiss the preview, press the spacebar again.

7. Spotlight Searches File/Folder Names and File Contents

The magnifying glass icon in Mac OS X's menubar has resided there since version 10.4 Tiger. Click the icon, regardless of which program is currently active, and a text input box displays where you type what you want to find. Windows' corresponding feature is the Start menu's Search item which Jack Dunning uses for finding and launching programs. Spotlight does that too, and more—it searches files' contents in addition to their names (Figure 5).



Figure 5. Spotlight's simple user interface accesses a powerful search engine that finds files based upon their contents or name.

Although Apple has continuously improved Spotlight's features and performance, it still has some weaknesses. It essentially is a database and consequently depends upon indexing for efficiency, but indexing can be time-consuming and can slow down Mac OS X's responsiveness (hint: visit the Privacy pane of the Spotlight System Preference to exclude devices from indexing). Another weakness is that Spotlight, by default, excludes the Library and System folders at the root of your Mac's boot-up volume; if you want to find something in those folders, you're out of luck using Spotlight unless you are comfortable using geekery.

Despite its weaknesses, though, Spotlight is pretty dependable and its elegant interface is a snap to use.

8. Mail, iCal and Address Book Natively Support Exchange Servers out of the Box, at No Extra Charge

Macintosh critics' mantra during the 1990s and early 2000s was "It's proprietary and incompatible with corporate networks." This mantra was partially accurate at that time, but not now. Beginning with Snow Leopard, Mac OS X has natively supported and been compatible with Microsoft's Exchange Server that is used for large-scale e-mail, calendars and address books. This support and compatibility is built-in, without any third party add-ons.

9. Uninstalling Apps is Wizardless

If you install a program and later decide that you no longer need/want it, uninstallation is simple—drag the program's icon to the Trash. An optional (but not required) step is to trash the program's preference file(s) that is(are) located in the user account's Library folder. Mac OS X does not have an uninstaller wizard, DLLs, or anything like them.

10. Mac OS X costs less than Windows

Suppose you buy or already own a Windows PC with a \$300 price tag. That's a terrific bargain that saved a pile of cash, right? Well suppose this PC has Windows XP or Vista and you decide to upgrade to Windows 7. Prepare to spend a bit of time figuring out which of the three upgrade flavors of Windows 7 is the right one for you. Prepare to pay between \$120 and \$220 (www.tuaw.com/2011/06/06/mac-os-x-lion-was-wwdcs-most-expensive-product-at-29-99/) depending upon which flavor (*windows.microsoft*.

com/en-US/windows7/products/compare) you choose. And prepare to deal with the activation code and process during installation.

Suppose you buy or already own a \$600 Mac mini, a \$999 MacBook Air, or a \$1,200 iMac. That's a ripoff Apple tax (*news.cnet.com/8301-10805_3-10064580-75.html*) price, right? Well suppose this Mac has Mac OS X Leopard or Snow Leopard and you decide to upgrade to Lion. Prepare to spend zero time figuring out which flavor is the right one for you because Lion comes in only one flavor (*www.apple.com/macosex*). Prepare to pay \$29.99 (*itunes.apple.com/us/app/os-x-lion/id444303913?mt=12*) (if your Mac is a server, Lion comes in one server flavor for \$79.98 (*itunes.apple.com/us/app/os-x-lion-server/id444376097?mt=12*) with free, unlimited seats. Did I mention that Mac OS X has no activation code or process?

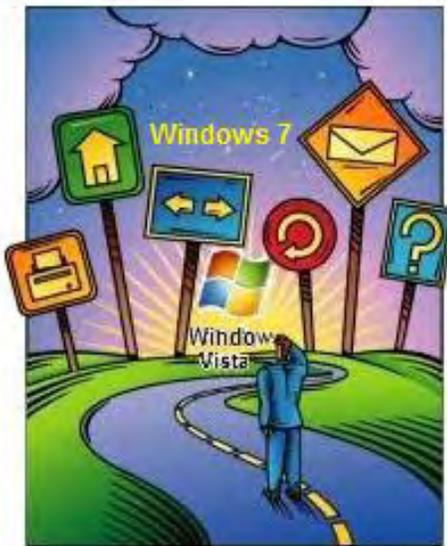
Not only does Mac OS X cost less money than Windows (perhaps due to a Microsoft tax (*en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Criticism_of_Microsoft*)), Mac OS X also costs less time to maintain than Windows. That's because there are few (if any) destructive worms and malware that affect Mac OS X, there is no Registry or anything like it that requires fussing and maintenance, and there is no need for regular defragmentation of the hard drive to prevent a performance hit.

My time and productivity are way more valuable to me than the price difference between a \$300 Windows PC (which has little, if any, resale value after two years of ownership) and the MacBook Pro models that I have purchased for under \$2,000 (which, in my experience, retained a resale value of up to 50% of their original MSRP after two years of ownership).

I think your time is more valuable than that too.

Barry Fass-Holmes has been reviewing products for *ComputerEdge* since 2003. He previously worked as a software support representative and quality assurance analyst in San Diego. His product reviews are available in *ComputerEdge's* archives and at his Web site (*www.barryfhphd.com/*).

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Windows Tips and Tricks

Windows Tips and Tricks: Understanding Windows 8 Start Charm

“How to do favorite old Windows Start Menu tricks with the Windows 8 Start screen.” by Jack Dunning

With the Start Menu removed from Windows 8, there are new ways to find programs and search files with the Start charm.

Last week in this column, I discussed how to install Windows 8 Consumer Preview into the free VirtualBox program on your PC. I also briefly introduced the Windows 8 interface. It has become apparent to me that there is only one fact that needs to be understood before it is quickly realized that Windows 8 is essentially the latest iteration of Windows and not an entirely new operating system. Nor is it merely a hodgepodge of features lumped together to create an inadequate operating system for both PCs and tablet computers. Windows 8 is Windows with the old Start Menu replaced by the new Start screen (called the Start charm) designed to work as easily with your laptop or PC as it will with a tablet. Once you understand that major difference in Windows 8 (the Start charm has replaced the old Start Menu), the pieces start to fall in place.

Replacing the Windows Start Menu

Fine. The old Start Menu is gone and we now need to deal with the Start screen (which looks nothing like anything Windows). But will the Start screen perform the old Start Menu functions that we loved (and used) so much—in particular All Programs and the "Search programs and files" field (see Figure 1). While I will occasionally launch programs from the Start Menu, I use it more for starting searches and finding programs which I haven't used in a while. Most of my regular programs I have pinned to the Taskbar.

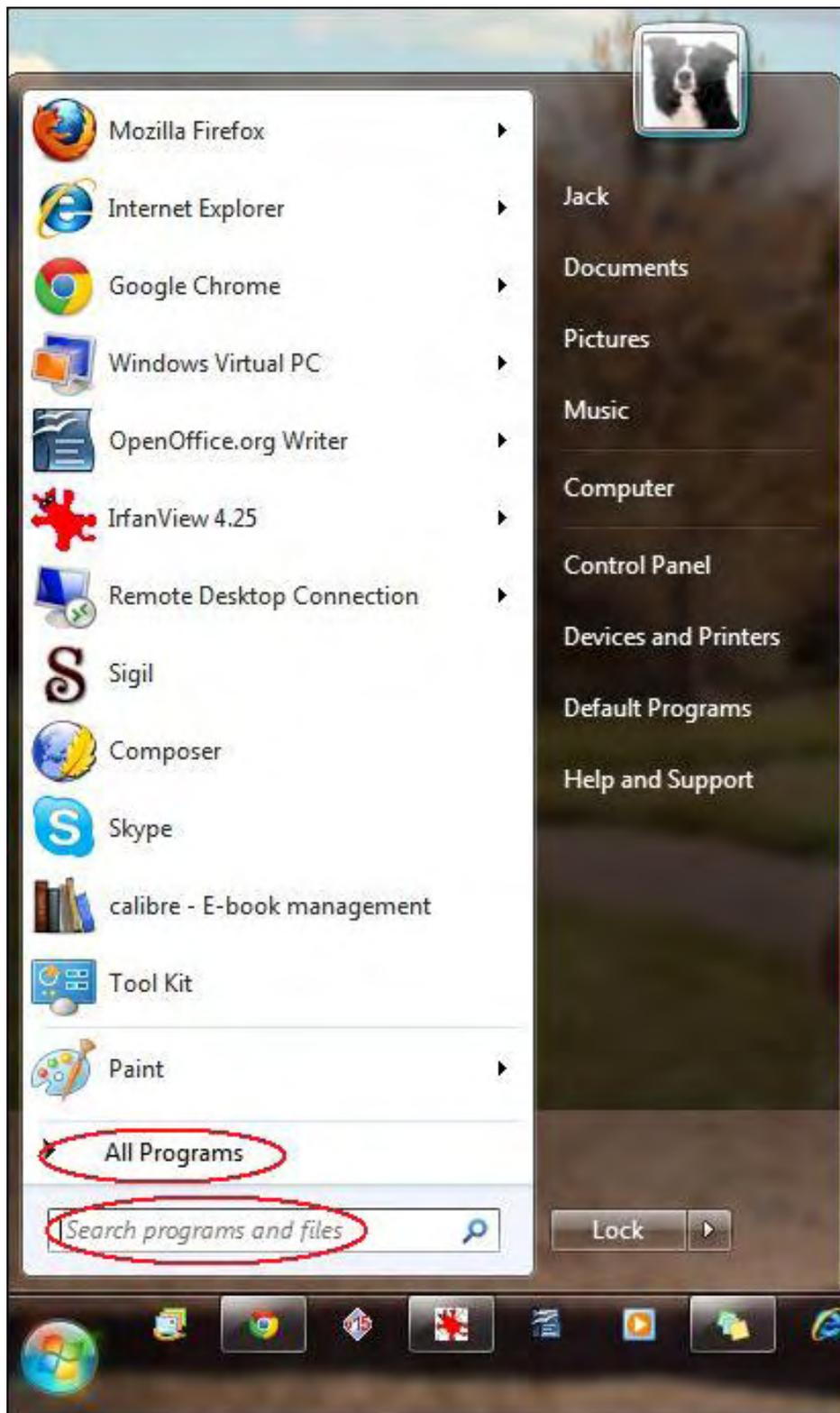


Figure 1. The Windows Start Menu is a valuable tool, especially for finding programs and searching for programs and files.

The question is "How can we do searches and find programs from the new Windows 8 Start screen?" Is it easier or more cumbersome than the old way of doing things? From just looking at the Start screen, it certainly isn't obvious how to get these things done, but the Start screen does offer those features of the old Start Menu.

Note: When using Windows 8 on a computer with a keyboard, you may find that the Windows logo key (

⊞) combinations are even more useful than ever. A few that I find that I'm already using regularly are: the WIN key alone (⊞) for bringing up the Start screen (same key used for opening the old Start Menu); WIN+D (⊞+D) for dismissing the Start screen and displaying the familiar Windows Desktop (also toggles open windows once the Desktop is showing); WIN+E (⊞+E) for opening an instance of Windows Explorer on the Windows Desktop; and, after returning to the Start screen (⊞) once you have launched a program or opened the Windows Desktop, the Start screen can be dismissed with the Escape key.

Finding Programs

Many of the programs that you will use regularly may already appear on the Start screen (see Figure 2). Intuitively, a click of a tile will launch the associated programs. (Some of the apps are combination launching tiles and gadgets displaying live information. Note the weather and calendar.) To see the remaining programs pinned to the Start screen it's necessary to scroll to the right or click the small magnifying glass (zoom out) in the lower right hand corner of the screen. (To display the scroll bar, it's only necessary to move the mouse over the Start screen.)



Figure 2. The Windows 8 Start screen. Click a tile to launch an application.

However, just as with the old Start Menu, the Start screen only shows those applications pinned to it. To display all of the programs available right-click on an open area of the screen or use WIN+Z (⊞+Z) to reveal the "All apps" button (see Figure 3).

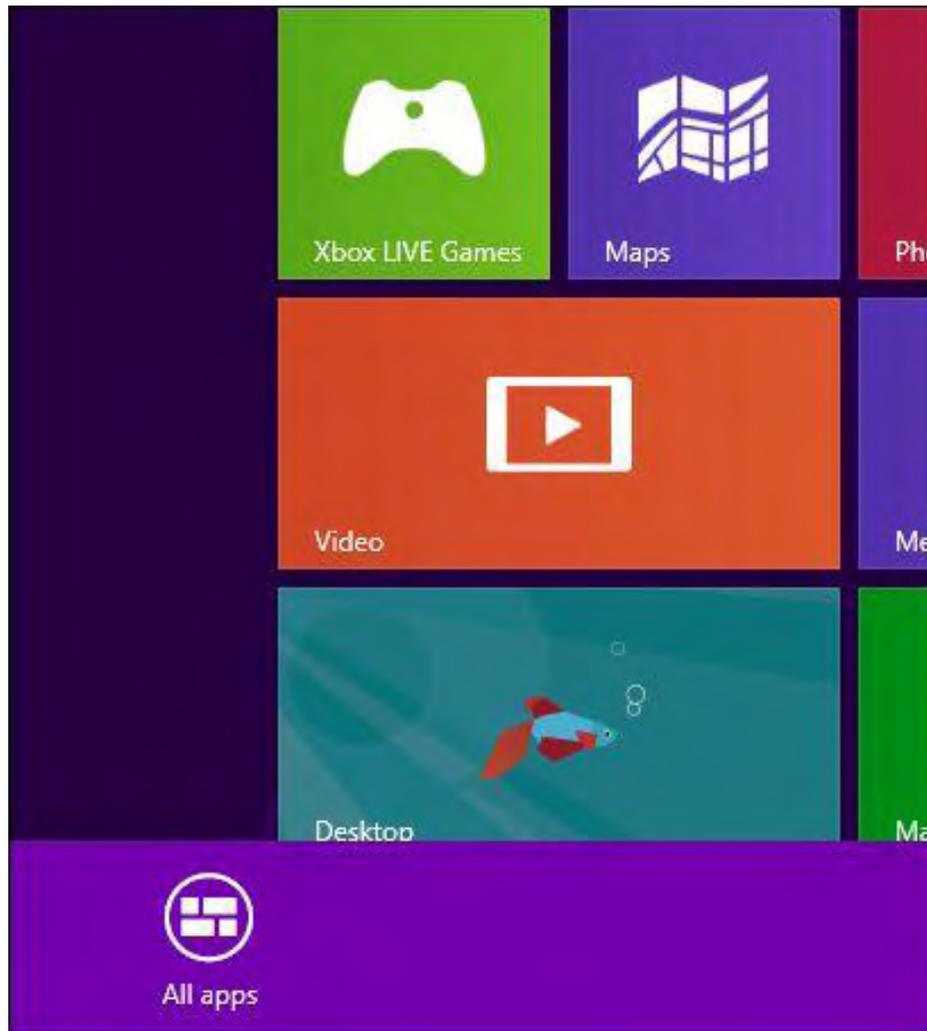


Figure 3. Right-click on an open area of the Start screen to reveal the "All apps" button.

Click the "All apps" button to display the programs installed (Apps) on the computer (see Figure 4). (Also, I found that Apps could be opened directly with the CTRL+TAB combination.)



Figure 4. The Apps window displays a matrix of program launching labels.

Since not all of the programs fit into this view, it's necessary to scroll to the right to reveal the remainder of apps—many of which are our old favorite Windows Accessory programs, such as WordPad, Notepad, the Snipping Tool, Paint, Windows Media Player, etc (see Figure 5). Click on the icon or name to load the program.

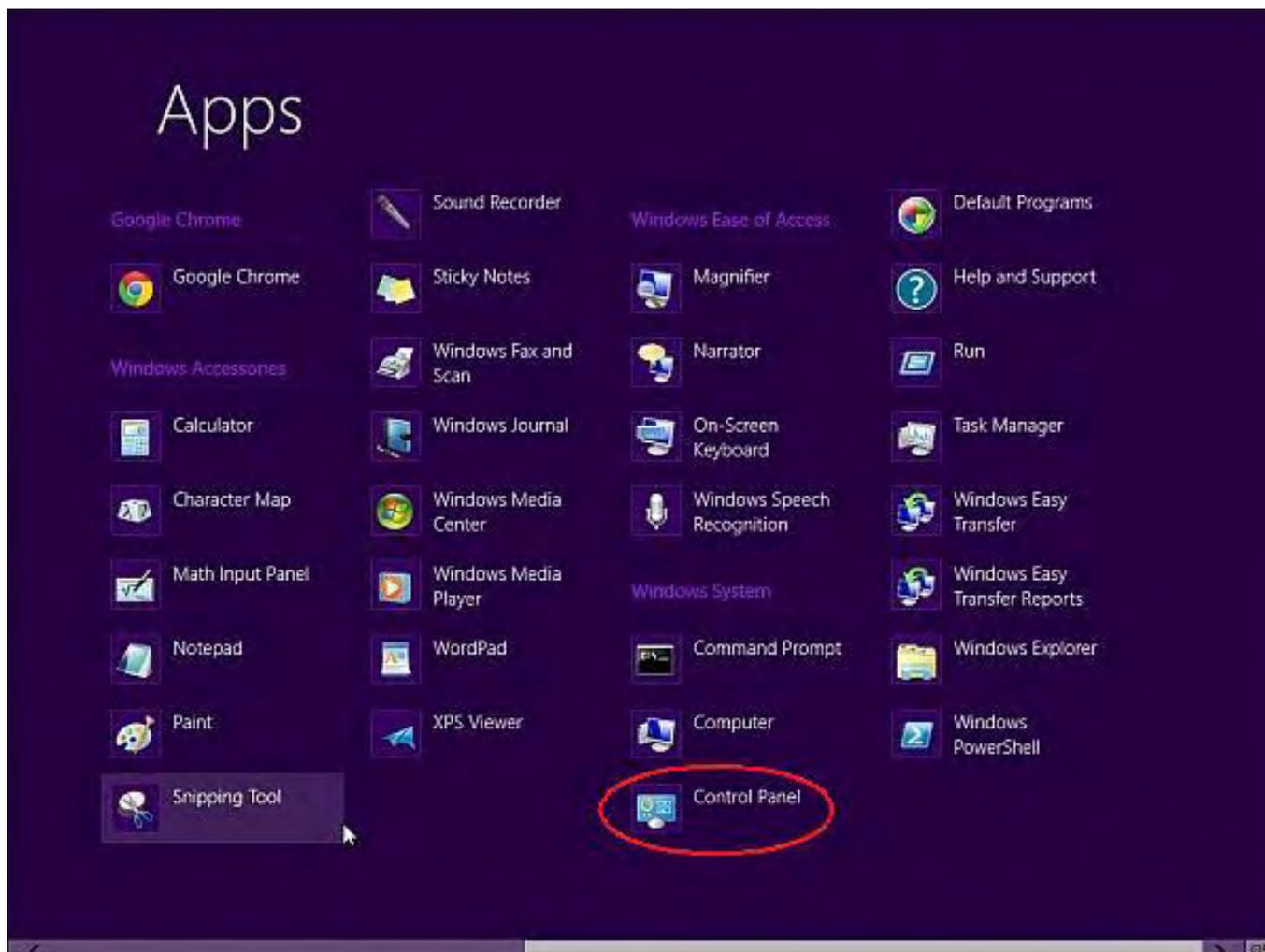
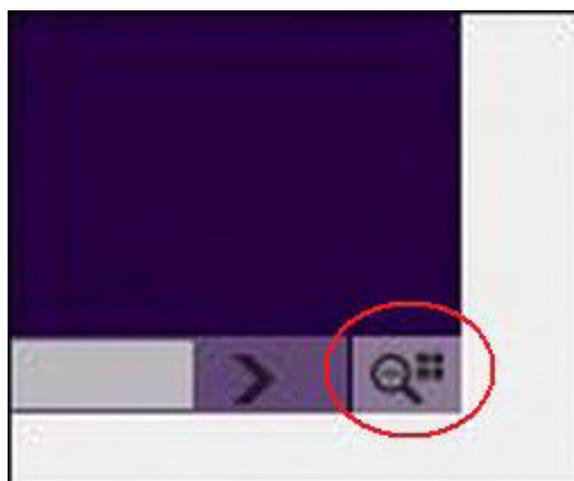


Figure 5. Scroll to the right to reveal the remainder of the programs and apps in the Windows 8 Apps screen.

Notice that many of our old favorites from the Start Menu, such as the Control Panel, Computer (Windows Explorer), Help and Support, and Run are available under Windows Systems.

It appears that Windows 8 has adequately replaced the All Programs capability of the old Windows Start Menu. It may even be quicker access since it's not necessary to navigate through the folder tree structure to find a program.

Start Search?



With the first look at Windows 8, it impossible to see how the old Start Menu search has been replaced. There is no apparent search field or button to push. It is not until you hover the mouse cursor over the lower right hand corner of the Start screen (see image at left) that you notice a search magnifying glass icon appear at the top of five icons. At first only the icons with an invisible background appear along the right edge, but if you move the mouse straight up to hover over one of the icons, the background will change to solid black and display the names associated with the icons (see Figure 6). As long as the cursor hovers over the black bar, the icons will remain in view. Microsoft calls all these features in the menu bar on the right "charms."

This charms menu was designed for a touch tablet, so on a computer using key combinations is easier than working a mouse. The key combination for opening the charms bar is WIN+C (⊞+C)—much easier than maneuvering the mouse. The Start charm (Start screen) opens with ⊞. ⊞+K opens the Devices charm. ⊞+I opens the Settings charm. ⊞+Q opens Search Apps.

One of the best aspects of accessing these charms with either the key combinations or the mouse is that it also works when you have the traditional Windows Desktop open. You can go directly to the charms without first opening the Start screen. (Using the mouse in the Desktop to open the charms bar is a little trickier since the hover location overlaps the invisible Windows Desktop Peek button (Windows 7) on the right end of the Taskbar. If you stay on the semi-visible raised line between Peek and the clock, the charms bar will stay open.)

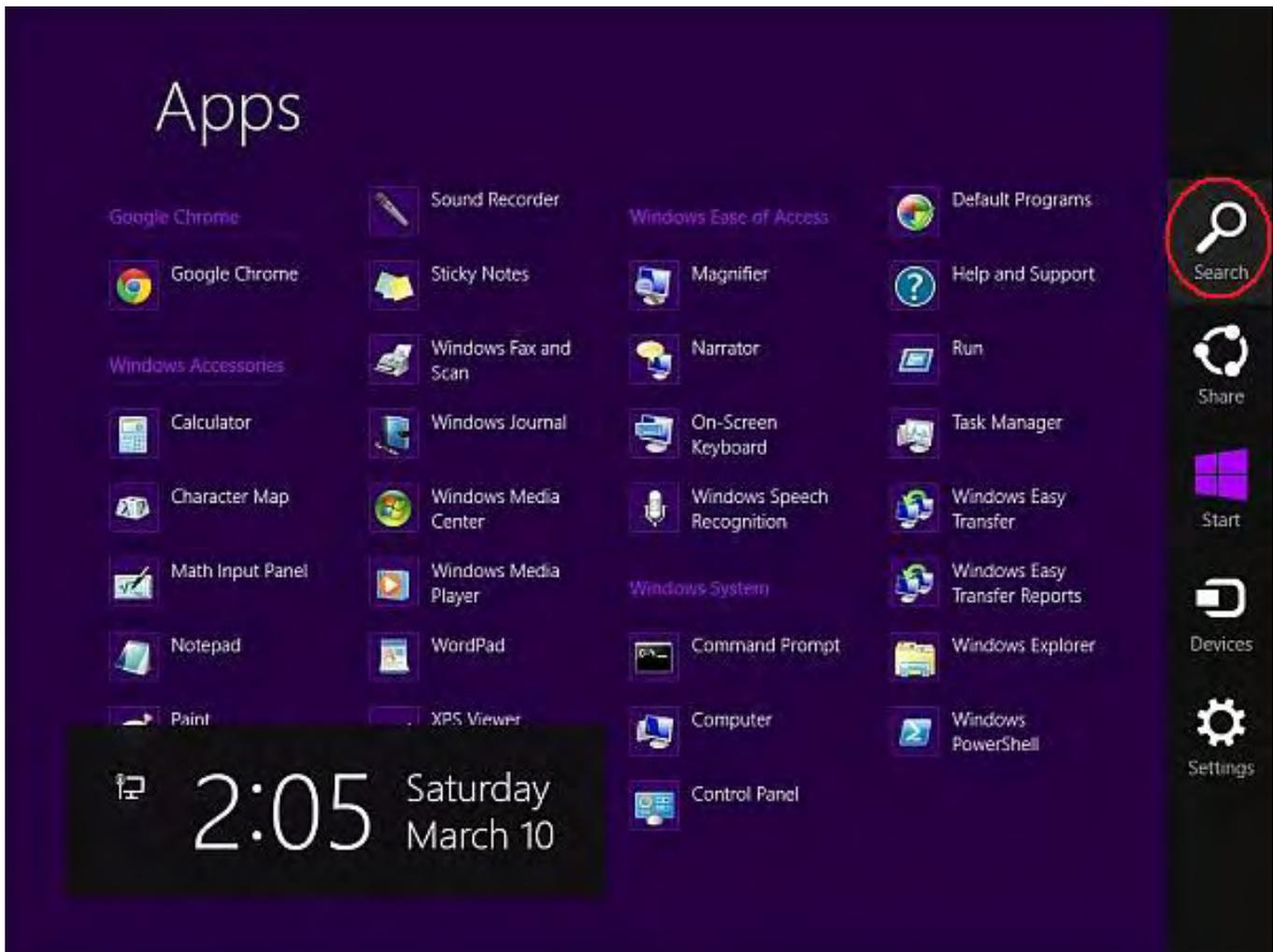


Figure 6. The Windows 8 Search charm (search screen) can be opened by clicking the top icon in the charms menu on the right of the screen.

Click Search to open the Search charm (see Figure 7). Note that you must select the category you want to search (Apps, Settings, Files, etc.). In Windows Vista and Windows 7, the search in the Start Menu searches all areas breaking them into categories on the Start Menu. This may be a little more workable, especially when there are many more results than would ever have fit on a Start Menu.



Figure 7. The Search charm in Windows 8 is divided up by categories.

When searching in Settings, as shown in Figure 7, options are shown as suggestions similar to those of Windows 7. To directly open a Settings search use +W. To search the computer files use +F.

When the Start screen is open, by far the easiest way to initiate a search is to merely start typing your search term. The Search charm will open and immediately start searching Apps. To search Files or Settings make the appropriate selection.

Again, Windows 8 appears up to the task. The old Start Menu search function is not lost in the new Start screen. It may even be better for some people, especially since typing a few characters in the Start charm will launch a search.

Of the four primary work areas of Windows (the Start Menu, the Taskbar, the Desktop and Windows Explorer), the Start Menu appears to have undergone the most radical changes by morphing into the Start charm (Start screen seen at start-up). Next week I will continue to explore how Windows 8 works. Ultimately, I'll give my overall evaluation of Windows 8 as the next generation of Windows.

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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[-MOBI-for-Amazon-Kindle-Wintips0003-2.htm?sourceCode=writer](http://www.computoredgebooks.com/Windows-7-Explorer-Secrets-MOBI-for-Amazon-Kindle-Wintips0003-2.htm?sourceCode=writer))

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[Secrets-EPUB-for-iPad-NOOK-etc-Wintips0002-1.htm?sourceCode=writer](http://www.computoredgebooks.com/Windows-7-Taskbar-Secrets-EPUB-for-iPad-NOOK-etc-Wintips0002-1.htm?sourceCode=writer))

Windows 7 Taskbar Secrets (MOBI for Amazon Kindle) ([www.computoredgebooks.com/Windows-7-Taskbar-Secrets-](http://www.computoredgebooks.com/Windows-7-Taskbar-Secrets-MOBI-for-Amazon-Kindle-Wintips0002-2.htm?sourceCode=writer)

[MOBI-for-Amazon-Kindle-Wintips0002-2.htm?sourceCode=writer](http://www.computoredgebooks.com/Windows-7-Taskbar-Secrets-MOBI-for-Amazon-Kindle-Wintips0002-2.htm?sourceCode=writer))

Sticking with Windows XP—or Not? (EPUB for iPad, NOOK, etc.) ([www.computoredgebooks.com/](http://www.computoredgebooks.com/Sticking-with-Windows-XP-or-Not?sourceCode=writer)

Sticking-with-

Windows-XP-or-Not-EPUB-for-iPad-NOOK-etc-Wintips0001-1.htm?sourceCode=writer)

Sticking with Windows XP—or Not? (MOBI for Amazon Kindle) (www.computoredgebooks.com/Sticking-with-

Windows-XP-or-Not-MOBI-for-Amazon-Kindle-Wintips0001-2.htm?sourceCode=writer)

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Wally Wang's Apple Farm

“The New iPad” by Wally Wang

The New iPad; Software Updates; Adjusting Volume Independently; Refurbished iPads on Sale; The Problem with Android From a Developer's Perspective; Apple Sells Out of Pre-Order iPads; Homepage in Safari.

Wally Wang's Apple Farm

On March 7, Apple released the third generation of the iPad that offered sharper resolution, better cameras, a faster processor, and 4G LTE connectivity. Of course, technical specifications mean nothing if there's no interesting and useful software to run on it, so that's why Apple also introduced voice dictation along with updated versions of iWork and a new iPhoto app for organizing and editing your pictures right on your iPad. To watch the video of the new iPad's launch (events.apple.com.edgesuite.net/123pibhargjknawdconwecown/event/index.html), visit Apple's Web site.

In case you didn't pre-order your iPad online, you can get in line and pick one up at an Apple Store or any other store that carries the iPad. If you're on a budget, you can now pick up the older iPad 2 for \$399, which makes the iPad more affordable. Better yet, offer to buy a used iPad 2 from someone who's planning to upgrade to the latest iPad.

If you're going to get the latest iPad with 4G LTE connectivity, American users can choose between AT&T and Verizon. The advantage of AT&T is that they offer a less expensive monthly data plan (250MB/month for \$15) compared to Verizon (1GB/month for \$20). However, Verizon lets you turn the iPad into a Wi-Fi hotspot so you can share your Internet connection with other devices such as an iPhone or laptop computer. If you get the AT&T version of the iPad, you currently cannot use your iPad as a Wi-Fi hotspot.

Perhaps the most interesting development was the introduction of iPhoto for iOS (click.linksynergy.com/fs-bin/stat?id=15PJQz44Qcc&offerid=146261&type=3&subid=0&tmpid=1826&RD_PARM1=http%253A%252F%252Fitunes.apple.com%252Fus%252Fapp%252Fipphoto%252Fid497786065%253Fmt%253D8%2526uo%253D4%2526partnerId%253D30). Unlike the plain text description of tools found in most programs, iPhoto provides a visual clue to what each tool does through its graphical menu.



Figure 1. iPhoto's choice of tools is visual and descriptive.

Just by using your finger, you can edit colors, straighten images, and erase or draw on your pictures. Ordinary people might use iPhoto strictly to organize pictures, but graphic artists could use iPhoto to edit and create pictures as well.

If you store multiple pictures of a similar scene, iPhoto is smart enough to find all of those images so you can see which one you like best. By connecting your iPad to iCloud through Wi-Fi, any pictures you take or edit on your iPad will get stored automatically to your Macintosh and iPhone without the need for clumsy cables or removable media like Secure Digital (SD) cards that you can easily lose or forget.

With the iPad's better camera (5 megapixels), you can capture higher quality still images and video.

Buy a copy of iMovie (click.linksynergy.com/fs-bin/stat?id=15PJQz44Qcc&offerid=146261&type=3&subid=0&tmpid=1826&RD_PARM1=http%253A%252F%252Fitunes.apple.com%252Fus%252Fapp%252Fimovie%252Fid377298193%253Fmt%253D8%2526uo%253D4%2526partnerId%253D30) and you'll be able to capture and edit your video directly on the iPad. Then e-mail or share it directly from the iPad if you want, eliminating the need to use a computer at all.



Figure 2. iMovie lets you edit your captured video directly on the iPad.

You can start using an iPad today with iPhoto to help you organize and edit pictures, iMovie to edit video, or GarageBand (click.linksynergy.com/fs-bin/stat?id=15PJQz44Qcc&offerid=146261&type=3&subid=0&tmpid=1826&RD_PARM1=http%253A%252F%252Fitunes.apple.com%252Fus%252Fapp%252Fgarageband%252Fid408709785%253Fmt%253D8%2526uo%253D4%2526partnerId%253D30) to turn your iPad into a musical instrument. Get some other iPads running GarageBand and you can all wirelessly play music together.

The other alternative is to wait for a Windows 8 tablet that might cost the same or less than an iPad, might be just as light and thin as an iPad, might have a battery life equal to the iPad, might be easy and intuitive to use, might have the apps you need to be creative, might be stable and reliable, might be released by the end of the year, might not need constant Windows registry optimization, might still need the memory and processor overhead of running an antivirus program in the background, might run older Windows programs on a touch screen interface that it was never designed for, and might be fun to use. With a choice between the certainty of the iPad or the multiple question marks surrounding a Windows 8 tablet, will many people avoid the iPad and wait for Windows 8 tablets to arrive?

Software Updates

In the old days, you could click on the Apple menu and choose Software Update to check for newer versions of Apple's software. If you downloaded any programs through the App Store, you'll need to click on the Apple menu, choose App Store, and then in the App Store window, click the Updates icon.

If you're using iBooks Author to create interactive iBooks, you'll need to update your program through the App Store. If you want to update your iLife programs (iPhoto, iMovie and Garageband), you'll need to go through the Software Update command.

Having to go through two different methods to update all of your software might be cumbersome, but it's something you'll have to tolerate. As a general rule, use Software Update to update Apple's software

that came with your Macintosh (Mac OS X, iLife, etc.) and then use the App Store to update every program you downloaded from the App Store. If you installed a program off a CD/DVD, it may have an update option buried in its File or Help menu, so you can keep these programs updated too.



Figure 3. Many programs offer an update feature in its menus.

Adjusting Volume Independently

Here's one problem with any computer. Crank up the volume to hear music streaming through your browser and it may sound fine. Switch to another program to play a DVD and suddenly the volume you set for your browser blasts your ear drums when you start playing a DVD. Lower the volume on your DVD and when it's over, switch to listening to music stored in iTunes. Now the volume control of your computer may play the music too softly.

Rather than settle for one volume setting for everything, spend \$9.99 and get ProSoft Engineering's Sound Bunny (www.prosofteng.com/products/soundbunny.php) program instead. With Sound Bunny, you can set the volume level for every program currently running, so you can have one setting for iTunes, another for the DVD player program, and a third for your browser.



Figure 4. Sound Bunny lets you adjust the volume level for any program.

Sound Bunny lets you customize your Macintosh just a little bit more so you can cheerfully listen to

audio without getting blasted with an audio sound wave or suddenly hearing everything like a whisper. You can even designate certain programs to ignore if it doesn't make any sound at all such as the Disk Utility program or the Finder.



Figure 5. Sound Bunny can ignore certain programs that don't play audio.

If you regularly switch between different programs that play audio, you'll find Sound Bunny a handy tool that you'll wonder why you never had before. Download and try a free demo on your own Macintosh for a few days and you'll see how handy it really can be.

Refurbished iPads on Sale

For those who want an iPad but don't want to pay the minimum \$499 price to get one, get a refurbished iPad instead. Apple is selling first generation iPads for as low as \$299, while selling the iPad 2 refurbished at \$349 or new at \$399.

Apple Certified Refurbished
 We test and certify all Apple refurbished products and include a 1-year warranty.
 All refurbished iPad models also include a brand new battery and outer shell.
 Limited supplies, but updated frequently. Availability is guaranteed upon receipt of full payment.

 **Fast, free shipping on all refurbished products.**

	<p>Refurbished iPad with Wi-Fi 16GB – Black (first generation)</p> <p>Originally Released April 2010 16GB flash drive capacity Wi-Fi Bluetooth 2.1 + EDR technology 9.7-inch widescreen display Multi-Touch screen 1.5 pounds and 0.5 inch</p>	<p>\$299.00</p> <p>Save \$100.00 25% off</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Select</p>
	<p>Refurbished iPad 2 with Wi-Fi 16GB – White (second generation)</p> <p>Originally released March 2011 Wi-Fi Bluetooth 2.1 + EDR technology FaceTime with 2 cameras HD video recording Dual-core A5 chip 10-hour battery life Smart covers (sold separately), instant on 9.7-inch widescreen display Multi-Touch screen 1.33 pounds and 0.34 inch</p>	<p>\$349.00</p> <p>Save \$50.00 12% off</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Select</p>
	<p>Refurbished iPad 2 with Wi-Fi 16GB – Black (second generation)</p> <p>Originally released March 2011 Wi-Fi Bluetooth 2.1 + EDR technology FaceTime with 2 cameras HD video recording Dual-core A5 chip 10-hour battery life Smart covers (sold separately), instant on 9.7-inch widescreen display Multi-Touch screen 1.33 pounds and 0.34 inch</p>	<p>\$349.00</p> <p>Save \$50.00 12% off</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Select</p>

Figure 6. Apple is now selling refurbished iPads.

A refurbished iPad comes with all the same warranty and service as a new iPad, but at a lower price. If you get the first iPad, it may not be able to run all the latest apps, so make sure you already have a specific use for the first iPad before buying it. With the lower prices of both iPad models, the choice between a \$199 Kindle Fire or Nook tablet or a \$299 first generation iPad may get tougher. If all you want to do is read e-books and play a few games, then the Kindle Fire or Nook tablets will work just fine. However, if you plan on doing more, then the iPad might be a better choice.

At the very least, getting an iPad is now more affordable for everyone. As the newest iPad continues grabbing the high-end of the tablet market, the refurbished older iPad models will gradually threaten the low-end tablet market. Given the large app library and usefulness of such services as iCloud to automatically synchronize your data between an iPhone, iPad and a Macintosh computer, the decision to get an iPad will keep getting stronger, which will translate into more iPad users, more iPad developers, and a continually growing third-party iPad accessory market.

Want to find an accessory for an iPad? It's easy. Want to find an accessory for an Android or Windows tablet? Good luck. In the old days when everyone made software and peripherals just for Windows PC,

it was easy to choose a Windows PC. Now with so many companies making apps and accessories for the iPad, it's getting harder and harder to justify buying anything else.

The Problem with Android From a Developer's Perspective

The makers of the game Battleheart recently announced that they're dropping support (*mikamobile.blogspot.com/2012/03/our-future-with-android.html*) for Android. The problem highlights the difficulty Android developers face. Not only do Android users tend to spend less money on apps due to the ease of piracy, but the different hardware devices make it cumbersome to optimize a program for any particular device.

The Battleheart developers said, "We spent about 20% of our total man-hours last year dealing with Android in one way or another—porting, platform specific bug fixes, customer service, etc. I would have preferred spending that time on more content for you, but instead I was thanklessly modifying shaders and texture formats to work on different GPUs, or pushing out patches to support new devices without crashing, or walking someone through how to fix an installation that wouldn't go through. We spent thousands on various test hardware. These are the unsung necessities of offering our apps on Android. Meanwhile, Android sales amounted to around 5% of our revenue for the year, and continues to shrink. Needless to say, this ratio is unsustainable."

With less incentive to develop apps for Android, the appeal of Android will gradually shrink. Developers will likely focus on iOS first with Android second, if at all. Big companies can afford to make and support Android apps, but smaller developers may not, and that just means fewer apps for Android.

As Android continues experiencing problems, iOS continues selling out. If Android keeps stumbling, Windows 8 might actually have a shot at taking the number two spot away from Android in the smart phone and tablet markets. Windows 8 just has to push Windows Phone 7 out of the way first.

If you're a developer, you could go with the certainty of iOS and its growing market, the complexity of Android and its larger market share on smart phones, or the uncertainty surrounding Windows 8 and its huge installed base of Windows PC users. Back the wrong platform and you could miss out on the growing mobile market. Ignore the mobile market altogether and you'll be no better off than people who dismissed the whole personal computer market as a fad that would soon go away like CB radios.

For those looking to make a living selling mobile apps, take a look at this chart that shows how much money iOS developers make compared to Android developers. Not only do Android developers have to deal with fragmentation among different device specifications, but they also have to deal with piracy due to the more open nature of Android. It's relatively trivial to download an Android app, decompile it, booby-trap it with a Trojan horse, and then submit it back on the Internet again. Given all of these problems, nobody should be surprised that Android developers make only a fraction of the amount as iOS developers while working harder in the process.

Android Market Vs. Apple App Store:

	As of:	Total App Downloads	Total Gross Revenue	Paid To Developers	Percentage Of Apps Paid	Average ASP
Android Market	11/17/2011	6,750,000,000	\$341,765,335	\$239,235,734	1.3%	\$3.79
App Store	9/30/2011	18,566,331,811	\$4,939,611,127	\$3,457,727,789	13.5%	\$2.01

Source: Androlib, Apple, Piper Jaffray estimates

Figure 7. Android developers earn far less than iOS developers.

Apple Sells Out of Pre-Order iPads

If you didn't pre-order your iPad when Apple announced it on March 7, you can still order it online but you may have to wait a while to get it. USA Today claims that worldwide shipments might be delayed (www.usatoday.com/tech/news/story/2012-03-10/new-ipad-preorders-sell-out/53463592/1) from three days to three weeks. In the meantime, you can stand in line at a retail store and hope they have enough iPads in stock.

People are obviously buying iPads by the millions because they want to use one for a valid reason whether it's for business, personal productivity, or simply entertainment. Few people are buying netbooks in the same quantities that they did in the past, so it appears that netbooks aren't superior to the iPad as some critics originally claimed. People also aren't buying ordinary laptops in the same quantities they did in the past either, so it's likely that the iPad is solving unique problems that regular computers can't handle as well.

While both netbooks and laptops have been around for years, they never quite changed education the way the iPad promises to do. Visit Apple's site to learn some of the different ways (www.apple.com/education/ipad/) the iPad can improve education both in schools and at home.

The device that changed everything is now changing the classroom.

iPad inspires creativity and hands-on learning with features you won't find in any other educational tool — on a device that students really want to use. Powerful built-in apps and apps from the App Store let students engage with content in interactive ways, find information in an instant, and access an entire library wherever they go. And now, with the introduction of Multi-Touch textbooks, iPad takes learning to a whole new level.

Figure 8. The iPad is taking over the education market.

Smartphones may have started the mobile computing revolution, but the iPad continues to dominate and define it. Just as few people can get along without a computer any more, pretty soon people won't be able to remain as productive without an iPad or an equivalent tablet any more. The problem facing competitors right now is trying to come up with an equivalent tablet.

* * *

Every time you load your Safari browser, it displays your designated homepage. One way to define your homepage is to click on the Safari menu, choose Preferences, and then click the General icon. Then type the Web site address for your homepage in the Homepage text field.



Figure 9. Changing your homepage in Safari.

A second method is to simply find the Web page you want to designate as your homepage, then click on the Safari menu, choose Preferences, and then click the General icon. Now just click on the Set to Current Page button so you don't have to type anything at all and risk spelling something wrong.

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?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 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.amazon.com/gp/product/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?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=217145&creative=399373&creativeASIN=B006DGCH4M)

Mac Programming For Absolute Beginners (www.amazon.com/gp/product/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/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?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?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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Worldwide & Product news reviews



Worldwide News & Product Reviews

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

Identifying Spyware or Adware problems; Poll: When Should Kids Be Allowed on Facebook?; Mass Effect 3 for Xbox 360 (and PC, PS3Z); A CES Revelation.

Clint Ethington writes in this week with tips from ZookaWare (www.ZookaWare.com) on how to identify spyware or adware problems on PCs:

Quick detection is important when dealing with any type of malware, as the malware itself and the problems it is creating tend to multiply at an alarming rate.

Indicators of spyware or adware problems on your PC:

1. Difficulty with program functions when multiple windows are open
2. Internet surfing has slowed down
3. Excessive pop-up windows
4. Pop-up windows on unrelated topics/services

Solutions:

Periodically press CTL+ALT+DELETE. This will bring up the Task Manager. Click on Processes. Look each of the processes up on the Internet. Don't trust all the info that pops up in a general search, but use what you find to attempt to determine if processes currently running on your computer may have malicious intent.

Open a command window (DOS box) by clicking Start, Run, cmd. Type in the following command: netstat -an. This will show you a list of the systems you are connected to, those connected to you and any listening ports (You can find common port numbers online, but 80 and 443 typically refer to the Web, and 135, 139 and 445 are typically referencing Microsoft networks).

The sad fact is that almost any user who frequently accesses the Internet is probably going to have an adware or spyware issue on their computer. Many experts recommend running a good spyware removal program regularly, regardless of the presence of common symptoms or blatant issues indicating a problem.

Poll: When Should Kids Be Allowed on Facebook?

Escalate Communications' Glenn Mandel has the results from a new poll asking the increasingly perennial question: How old is too young to open an account on Facebook?:

Even though Facebook has a minimum age of 13 to sign up for an account, that has not stopped kids 12 and under from either signing up for their own page or having their parents do it for them. Opinion-based community site SodaHead.com (SodaHead.com) polled its users to find out the age that they

thought kids should be able to join Facebook.

Poll results (www.sodahead.com/poll/2511937/) indicate that while 34% of respondents believe that 13 is an appropriate age, 48% believe that Facebook users should be older than 13 years of age. 29% of voters think you should be between 14-17 before joining Facebook and 19% said that Facebook users should be 18 or older.

As expected, teen voters were much more likely to suggest that they should be allowed to sign up. 75% of respondents aged 13-17 said that they should be allowed to have a page by age 13, while the majority of all age groups with respondents over 18 feel that kids should be older than 13 before joining Facebook. Additional results showed that 1/3 of parents think that kids should be 18 before signing up, while only 13% of those without children thought users should have to wait until 18.



13 Is the Magic Number

Facebook's current minimum age, 13, was the most popular choice. But it's important to note that more voters total picked older options (48 percent).



Teens Trust Themselves

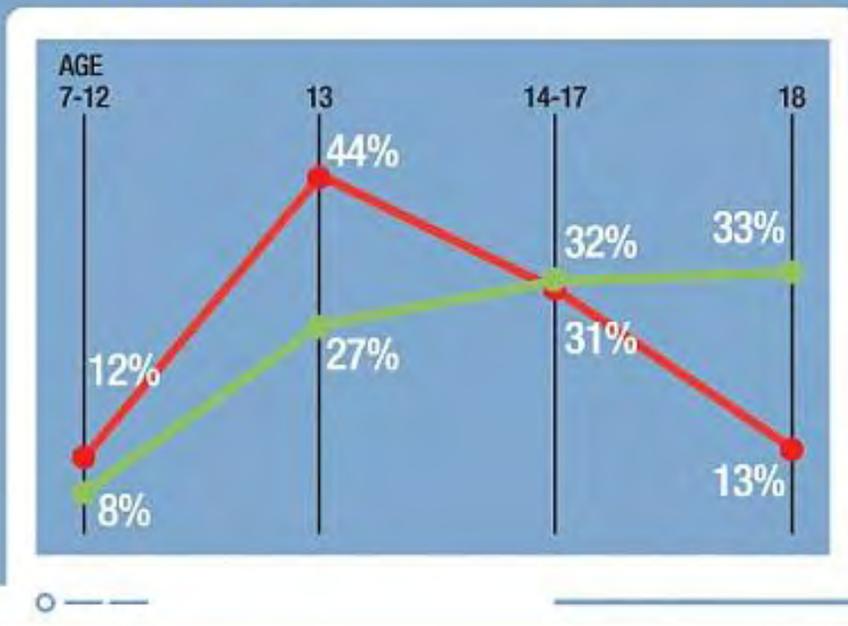
As might be expected, teen voters were much more likely to suggest they're old enough for Facebook, but that trust diminished as respondents got older.

As might be expected, teen voters were much more likely to suggest they're old enough for Facebook, but that trust diminished as respondents got older.

AGE:	<13	13	>13
13-17:	18%	57%	25%
18-24:	11%	35%	54%
25-34:	15%	30%	55%
35-44:	13%	31%	56%
45-54:	12%	23%	65%
55-64:	8%	6%	76%
65+:	12%	17%	71%

NO KIDS PARENTS

Parents Get Protective



Results were more at odds when we compared parents with voters who didn't have kids. A third of parents think kids should wait until they're 18.

Actual Ages*

As of March 2011, teens made up approximately 20 percent of the U.S. Facebook population. It's unlikely the network would willingly drop that many users.



13-17

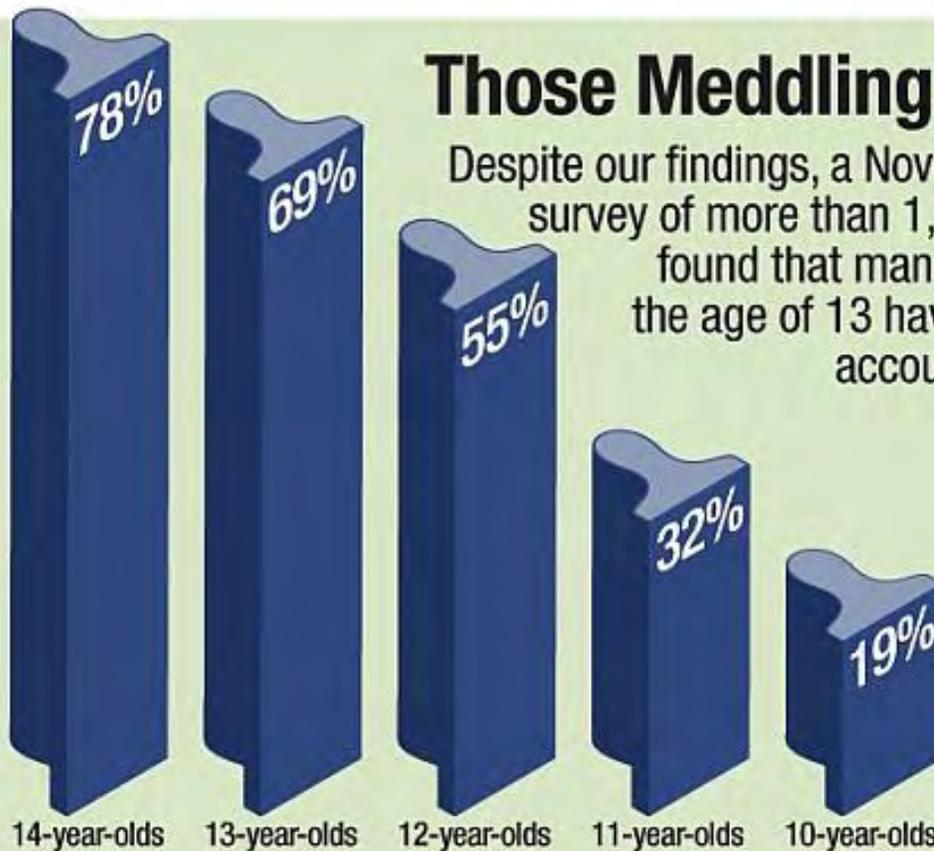
18-25

26-34

35-44

45-54

55-64



Those Meddling Kids**

Despite our findings, a November 2011 survey of more than 1,000 parents found that many kids under the age of 13 have Facebook accounts anyway.

Sodahead, 2012 (<http://www.sodahead.com/poll/2490675/>)
 * Inside Facebook, 2011 (<http://www.kenburbary.com/2011/03/facebook-demographics-revisited-2011-statistics-2/>)
 ** First Monday, 2011 (<http://www.uic.edu/htbin/cgiwrap/bin/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/3850/3075>)

Results taken from SodaHead.com on March 8, 2012.

Vote, comment, and share a **SodaHead**

© 2012 SodaHead.com

Total votes: **2,094**

Regardless of the age of the user, security-consciousness is increasingly becoming a must for every Facebook user. Seth Geisler of Martin Levy Public Relations has more:

Facebook, twitter and other social media sites are fertile ground for scammers, phishers, clickjackers and all other species of Internet villains—illustrated with recent social scams and porn image attacks.

Despite this and other privacy issues that pop up, it's easy to stay protected if you know what to look for and use a bit of common sense.

Support.com CTO of Consumer Software, Nicholas Skrepetos, who boasts 25 years experience in security software design, including the big hits SUPERAntiSpyware and Pop-Up Stopper, offers the following insights on what to be aware of, new scams coming down the line, and tips:

Facebook Security:

- Don't install Facebook apps from publishers you've never heard of
- Enable secure browsing in Facebook. This is where the Web address says HTTPS and not just HTTP
- If you see an unfamiliar message, or a message about "click this or Facebook will no longer be free"—do not click the link, delete it right away!
- Be cautious of any posts on your wall from friends that have small or encoded links (i.e. tinyurl, bit.ly, etc.)—those can often be spam posts with malicious content

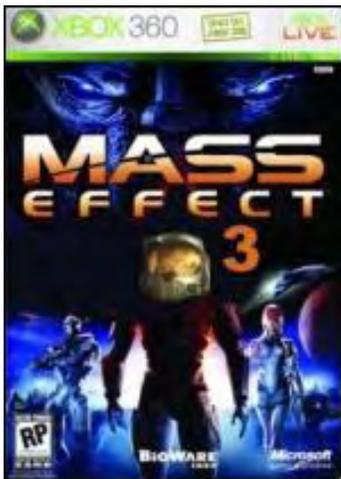
Social sites:

- Most security threats are "social engineering" threats that con the user into clicking a link. These threats require you to do something, to open your door as it were.
- If something seems too good to be true (i.e. "Click this to win a free iPad")

PC security tips:

- Make sure your operating system and browser are up to date
- Make sure you have real-time antivirus protection that is actually turned on and up-to-date; supplement that with additional anti-malware protection or a full security suite
- Create and use secure, hard-to-guess passwords.
- Change them frequently and use different passwords for things like e-mail, Facebook and online back data back-up.

Mass Effect 3 for Xbox 360 (and PC, PS3Z)



I have been playing Bethesda's Skyrim RPG (role-playing game) since it was released 11-11-11, but a few weeks ago I hit a wall and decided I could use a break. A couple of days later, I saw the EA/Bioware Mass Effect 3 (*masseffect.bioware.com*) demo had been made available for Xbox 360 (\$59.95) and downloaded it. The single-player aspect of the demo was great and got me interested in the game. Then I played the multiplayer part of the demo and realized that I needed to pre-order this game. Now, having put about six hours into the game, I can say there are only a few things that I don't like about it, which I'll get to a little further down.

First off, this game is *fun*! I've barely scratched the surface and I can't wait to dig in deeper. Gameplay is smooth, loads are quick, and fighting with your squad is as fun as ever.

Perhaps the best part about ME3 is the environment it creates. Between missions, I always find myself running around on the Normandy (Commander Shepard's ship) to where all the essential NPCs (non-player characters) are. These NPCs are your squad members and have relevant dialogue and great background stories. The places you visit in the game are breathtaking and very unique. The graphics

are excellent and the music really helps to put you into the game's world, er, solar system...er, universe.



For those of us who have been around since Mass Effect 1, there are some great insider references and Easter Eggs for you to find. Also, if you still have your saves from the other Mass Effects, they can be imported so you can play the game with the same character and the decisions he/she made in the previous installments. If ME3 will be the first game in the ME series you play, don't worry; it's pretty easy to pick up the story and the game does a great job of filling in the holes.

Now for my gripes. First off, ME3 is a two-disc game, like ME2 or Rage. The multiple discs have different content so the game will ask you to switch discs when traveling around the galaxy or doing different quests. At six hours in, I have already had to change discs four times. Now, I don't mind switching them, but having to get up and go change the disc takes me out of the ME3 universe and weakens the game experience. Granted, if you have the storage space on your Xbox, you can install both discs to the hard drive, which helps with load times, but you still have to swap discs! People have been arguing over the issue, saying that it's BioWare's fault for not dividing the content well enough between the two discs, or that it's Microsoft's fault for not allowing the Xbox to play Blu-ray discs (a single Blu-ray disc has more than enough storage for a game like ME3).



Regardless of who's at fault, my issue is a little different: I don't see why they require gamers to swap discs *even if they have installed both of them*. If they made disc one the *only* verification disc, then players could install both discs and just leave one disc in the drive all the time.

Mass Effect 3 has gotten a lot of negative criticism regarding the story. Still, in my experience with the game so far, I can tell you there's nothing new here. Basically, the protagonist you play as, Commander Shepard, has to save the entire galaxy...a third time. If you buy into that, it's a great game.

One of my biggest gripes with ME3 is in the multiplayer aspect of the game. Basically, teams of four fight together to survive 10 waves, each harder than the last. Sometimes these 10 waves can take up to 25 minutes from start to finish. And you *do* have to finish. If your connection lags out while you're killing the last enemy in wave 10 after 24 minutes and 59 seconds, you lose all the XP you've accumulated. This might not sound so strange, but if we look at other renowned multiplayer games like Call of Duty, we see that XP points are instantly awarded to your character, rather than in a lump-sum at the end of the match. Granted, the ME series is not a multiplayer franchise, but this problem can be frustrating for gamers who have a not-so-light-speed throughput.

Another issue many players have is that Mass Effect has become far less of an RPG (role-playing game) and more of action game or first person shooter. Check over at Metacritic (www.metacritic.com) where plenty of PC gamers, especially, are incensed about this—so much so that they have given it roughly a 3 rating on a scale of 10.

For diehard fans of true RPG games like Skyrim and The Witcher (1 and 2), Mass Effect 3 could arguably be regarded as a let-down. But if you're looking to get a couple dozen hours out of a video game set in an amazing universe and with a fun and straightforward plotline, then pick up Mass Effect 3.

🌐🌐🌐 (for RPG purists)



(for action fans)

Review contributed by Alex Caratti

A CES Revelation

While at the Consumer Electronics show I attended several press conferences during Press Day. Having been a longtime Dish Network customer (since 1996) I made it a point to attend theirs. Dish CEO Joe Clayton gave the presentation. It featured their new receivers, Hopper and Joey. The new receiver now has a mascot. It's the kangaroo, thus the name Hopper. The Hopper can push content out to up to three smaller Joey receivers located in other areas of the home. It will be capable of recording up to six programs at the same time and the receiver will have a 2TB hard drive capable of recording up to 2,000 hours of content. You will be able to record the whole prime time content of the four major networks (NBC, ABC, CBS and FOX) for up to eight days with the push of a button.

Clayton also announced a high speed broadband service, Dish Broadband, with partner ViaSat. Its download (12Mbps) and upload (3Mbps) speeds would be pretty good for a satellite service. This is supposed to be available in the first quarter of this year. The launch for the new receivers should be first or second quarter as best I can tell.

Continuing along the Dish line, I recently upgraded from my old 500 series to a 722 receiver. I learned at the Dish Network show booth that all I needed was a \$99 Slingbox Sling 700U Adapter to be able to view my Dish content on a computer anywhere that I can connect to the Internet. You need only have your router connected to your Dish receiver by CAT5 cable, powerline adapter, or wirelessly; and have the Slingbox adapter connected to one of the two USB ports on the receiver. My receiver is in the basement, matrixed throughout the house. My wireless modem/router is two floors above, so CAT5 was not an option. I tried powerline adapters with no success as the two units were on different circuits.



The Dish support folks sent me a USB wireless adapter gratis. That did the trick though I did have to build a parabolic reflector (freeantennas.com/projects/template/) to boost the signal a bit.

That being accomplished, one needs to only establish an account (dishonline.com), log in on your computer and you can watch your Dish content from anywhere in the world on the Internet. Now when

I'm on my annual trip to Italy during football season and there is a game I want to watch, I can do so.



The best part is that it cost me nothing! Dish had a \$99 rebate on the Slingbox Adapter and in just over four weeks, I received a credit card with a \$99 balance on it which I quickly used up. Unfortunately, that offer has now expired. However, you can purchase the adapter for \$30 with no rebate, still not a bad deal.

Oh and by the way, If you have a Dish 900 series receiver, the Sling Adapter is built-in so there is no need to purchase the hardware. Just get the receiver connected to your router as outlined above and you're on your way!

The process did take some time to get it working just right but the final results were fine.



Review contributed by Joe Nuvolini

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Learn more at www.charlescarr.com.

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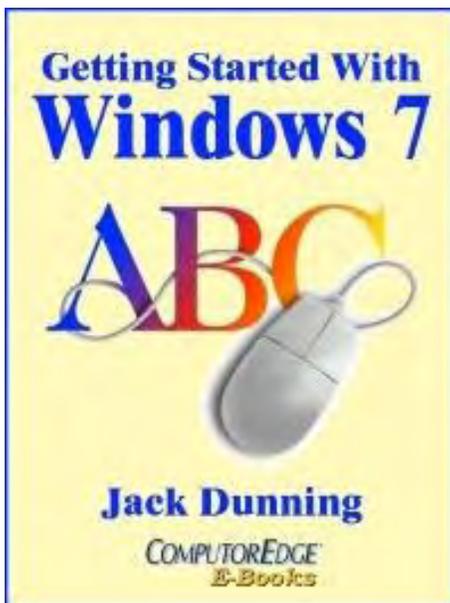
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“Five-day Experiment in Kindle Direct Publishing Select” by Jack Dunning



Jack has implemented a five-day promotion for the e-book "Getting Started with Windows 7" as a test of the Kindle program.

This week I've started the grand experiment with the e-book *Getting Started with Windows 7* (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B007AL672M/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20), which is available exclusively through Amazon (for now). Starting today and continuing for five days, the e-book will be free through Amazon. (I won't know for sure that it worked until I get up early on the morning of March 16.) This is the book that I put into the Kindle Direct Publishing Select program (KDP Select) which allows Amazon Prime members to borrow books free of charge.



Although *Getting Started* is selling reasonably well on Amazon, no one has borrowed the book. This is probably because the Prime members are only allowed to check one one book out at a time. Who wants to use their borrow on a book that only costs 99 cents? It's much better to check out a \$29.99 novel which will give hours of pleasure. I'm guessing that people see the book and just buy it rather than borrowing—which might explain why it's my best seller.

In any case, for the next five days *Getting Started* is free on Amazon for loading onto your Kindle (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B0051QVESA/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20) or free Kindle app (www.amazon.com/gp/feature.html/?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20&linkCode=ur2&docId=1000493771&camp=1789&creative=390957). Now there is even a free Kindle Cloud Reader (read.amazon.com/about?tag=comput0b9-20) for perusing your Kindle e-books anywhere.

I know that I'm planning to get a copy for the free Kindle app on my iPad.

I'm guessing that most *ComputerEdge* visitors are well beyond the computer literacy target of the *Getting Started* book, but maybe each reader will know someone who could use a little help with Windows 7. My goal is to make the e-book as widely available as possible for the next five days. That's the experiment.

I'm skeptical about whether the KDP Select program is worthwhile for my type of books. I've had to maintain the book exclusive to Amazon, rather than selling it on the ComputerEdge E-Books (www.computoredgebooks.com?sourceCode=edgeword) site or iTunes. (I've had books sitting for almost a month at iTunes while Apple evaluates them for "quality assurance." I wonder if the fact that they are Windows 7 e-books affects their evaluation? (I do have Jim Whiting's *ComputerEdge* Cartoon e-book (itunes.apple.com/us/book/that-does-not-compute!/id445115917?mt=11) available on iTunes.) I'll let you know the results of this give-away—good or bad.

If you want to learn more about reading e-books and e-book formats, there are a few articles linked at

ComputerEdge E-Books (www.computoredgebooks.com?sourceCode=edgeword) in the sidebar on the right and "E-Book How-to's and Help" in the menu bar at the top. Those links will bring you right back to earlier issues of *ComputerEdge*, but maybe you'll enjoy the trip.

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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Editor's Letters: Tips and Thoughts from Readers

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

"College Degrees—the Past is Still Relevant," "CAD Programs and Larger than A-size Output," "Internet Tracking Information," "Thank You, Digital Dave," "Not Suitable for Tablets"

College Degrees—the Past is Still Relevant

[Regarding Maryellen Cicione's June 23, 2006 article, "Life Experience Translates into College Degrees":]

Very interesting article. I would like to qualify the article even further. If you want to work for the Federal, State Government, or education system in the USA, the government will let you have a student loan for life. We don't care if you are not qualified, do not finish, or even take 20 years to finish as long as you take out a loan and make monthly payments when you get out. The big question is can you find a job after school in private industry, or will the government or Union hire you so that you can repay back the school loans.

Not everyone should go to college! There are way too many in college that do not belong there in the first place. Lets face it, it's all about money. A life experience can work out well for you if you already have a degree, have work experience, work for yourself or in private industry.

In my opinion two years of work experience in a specific job is equal to one year of college. The article was good, but could have gone into more detail about converting work years to equivalent credits. An example might be two years of work experience equals one year of college.

Much regards!

-Dr. Louis Goglia, Stockbridge, Georgia

CAD Programs and Larger than A-size Output

[Regarding the January 20 Digital Dave column:]

The DraftSight program from Dassault Systems is indeed an excellent program for *free*. It is pretty much an exact copy/ripcoff of AutoCAD's look and feel and functionality. The program can be downloaded and installed for free on a standalone license. The maker (DS) instead charges for their support or network services if users or employee groups want help in using it, but if you already know AutoCAD, you will acquire the usage very easily.

I saw someone's concern about different paper sizes for CAD output. I have been using a free shareware program for a couple years now called PDFill (*PDFill.com*) to output my CAD files to PDF format. This allows me to specify up to Arch D size (24" x 36") for typical CAD plans. I can simply e-mail the files or carry them on USB drive to any reprographics store (Staples, Kinko's, or Mesa Reprographics in Kearny Mesa). It installs like a printer driver, and has three icons of tools for editing PDF files. The Tools allow for converting back and forth from picture files to PDF and merge/split/re-order pages in PDFs, among other things.

The download also has a PDF Editor tool which I myself don't need, but it requires a one-time fee of \$19.99 to activate it (not bad if you actually need this function). I have used it with DraftSight quite nicely.

-P Miles, S.D., CA

Internet Tracking Information

[Regarding the February 17 Digital Dave column:]

Dave,

I think that your article today was quite good and informative. However, I might add the following information: By going to the Internet Properties folder, the following can be deleted, which will further minimize possible data loss over the Internet.

- Browser history upon exit
- Temporary Internet files
- Cookies
- History
- Download History (not in Win XP)
- Forms data
- Passwords
- ActiveX Filtering (InPrivate Filtering in Win XP) and Tracking Protection data.
- You can also Preserve Favorites Web site data

This action must be done each and every time one logs off of the Internet. The only downside to doing this is; every time you log back on to an Internet Web site, it will take a few seconds longer as all necessary saved data must be recreated. (You are logging on as if you are doing so for the first time.)

I have been doing this for years.

-John E. Evans, Denver, CO

[Another option is to use "Incognito" or "Private" browsing, an option available in most browsers. This will save your needing to delete the files after each session. —Digital Dave]

All good advice, Dave. Some of us are more paranoid about privacy, and one thing I did recently was regarding my Gmail when they sent the "New Privacy policy" notice. I have more than one Gmail and I scrutinized each one in the profile to make sure there was *nothing* I had ever entered other than name and the minimum that had to be there. Not much other than name is required as I recall, and that's all I'll give them! Just checked the Chrome settings too, and had to enter "cookie" in the search to find that item in the tools section. I also will use Firefox vs. Chrome to log in to certain sensitive accounts. Don't trust Google for privacy!

Keep up the good work because we always learn so much from you!

-Sandy, San Diego CA

I use IOBIT Advance System Care (the paid version) and it erases Web traces automatically everyday. I hope that's enough for safety.

-Victor Rodriguez, Seeley, CA

Thank You, Digital Dave

Dave, just want to say Thank You Very Much. I learn several things from you every month.

-Peter, Los Angeles

Not Suitable for Tablets

[Regarding the February 17 Wally Wangs Apple Farm column:]

The problem is that even something as simple as word processing (not heavy duty like CAD or desktop publishing) still cries for a laptop or desktop computer. I dare say that even though he could do it on an iPad, Wally likely uses a computer when he writes.

As to the lackluster performance of the computer market compared to tablets and other mobile device, maybe it's because over the past couple of decades the computer market has become mature and saturated while the tablet market is still in its rapid growth infancy. There are many who don't need more than a tablet to browse the Web or watch videos, but that does not make the laptop or desktop obsolete and dying.

-Richard, Oceanside, CA

Actually I do most of my editing on a computer not because I need a physical keyboard but because I prefer the much larger computer screen for writing and editing, although I often write portions of my column on the iPad and then transfer the text to my computer. I greatly prefer the virtual keyboard of the iPad over a physical keyboard because I find that typing on the virtual keyboard takes less energy and is much less tiresome over an extended period of time. If you ever made the transition from a manual typewriter to a computer keyboard, you'll remember that typing on a computer keyboard takes far less energy. Likewise, typing on a virtual keyboard on the iPad takes far less energy than typing on a physical keyboard of a computer.

Before dismissing virtual keyboards as inferior, try using one and ignore your initial reluctance to anything different while also acknowledging that others are cheerfully typing away on virtual keyboards regardless of what you believe is possible or not.

Now in regards to PCs becoming obsolete and dying, if the PC market is mature, that implies people aren't buying them because they don't need to keep buying them. People keep buying cars despite holding on to cars for longer periods because people still need cars. If people aren't buying PCs at the rapid rate they did in the past, it's likely because they no longer find a reason to do so.

In the meantime, if people are buying tablets because it's a new market with rapid growth, it's likely because they're finding a reason to have a tablet that existing products can't meet or else they'd be buying those existing products instead. People can and are doing more than Web browsing and watching videos on tablets. In many cases, they're typing on them as well.

-Wally Wang

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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