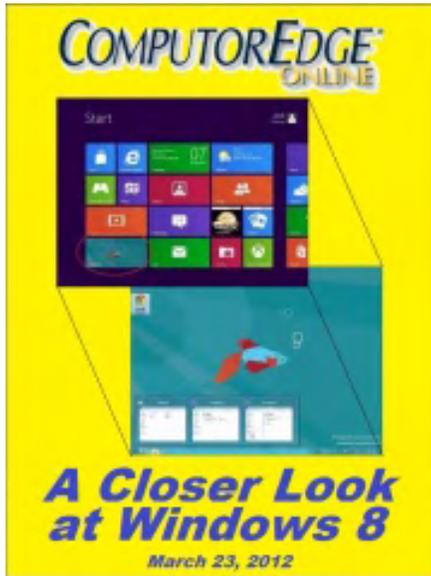


ComputerEdge™ Online — 03/23/12



This issue: A Closer Look at Windows 8

Will Windows 8 be accepted for either Windows PCs or tablet computers? Or, will the change be too much for computer users?

Table of Contents:

[Digital Dave](#) by *Digital Dave*

Digital Dave answers your tech questions.
Editing Metadata in Windows; Transferring DVDs to MPGs; Videos Won't Buffer.

[Windows 8 Update](#) by Jack Dunning

The New Microsoft OS for Both Desktop and Tablet Computers
Jack's exploration of Windows 8 focuses on what's changed from Windows 7 and the usefulness (or not) of those changes for daily computing. Will it really be too hard to learn?

[Windows Tips and Tricks](#) by Jack Dunning

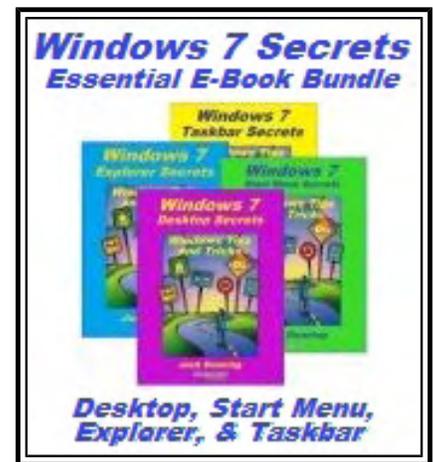
Windows 8 Start Charm
Jack examines using the Start Charm in Windows 8 and how to move the tiles in a manner that suits you best.

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

How to Lose by Avoiding Reality
How to Lose by Avoiding Reality; Some Reasons to Get the New iPad; Encrypting Your Hard Disk; Lying to Attack Apple; Secure Delete.

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

Backing Up
Amusing anecdotes about the unfathomable process called backing up.



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DEPARTMENTS:

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

ComputerEdge Staff

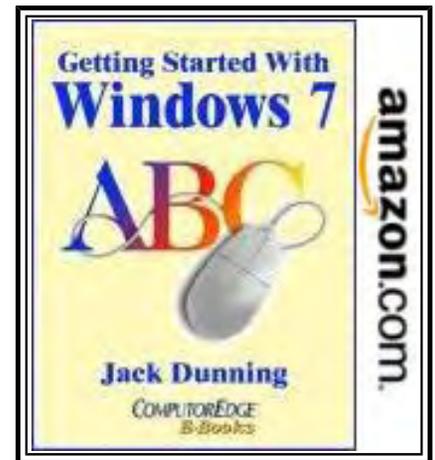
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[Return to Table of Contents](#)



Digital Dave

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

Editing Metadata in Windows; Transferring DVDs to MPGs; Videos Won't Buffer.

Dear Digital Dave,

This issue has been bothering me for some time. I remember I used to edit the information on the properties window for MP3 and WAV files. For several months now I can do it only on MP3 files and not on the WAV ones. I've tried the advanced options with no luck. Is it prohibited now a days or there is a trick that I don't know? I use Windows 7 Home Premium. I also have Real Player, UM Player and VLC, and I notice that I can edit there, but the properties in Windows remain the same. Only the file name is affected, but not the details. Any advice will be greatly appreciated.

*Victor Rodriguez
Seeley, CA*

Dear Victor,

Metadata is data about the data in a particular type of file. For a music file it may include the artist, album name, etc. For a photo it may include the camera and other photo parameters. The problem is that there is no one standard format for metadata even within the same type (music, photo, etc.) of file. The Windows file system attempts to read multiple formats, but you may have different saved metadata in the same file type.

For example, on my computer system I have noted that there are three WAV files all with similar file names. I most likely saved these files when I was doing some testing. However, one of the files contains metadata which includes space for genre, artist, title and rating. The others two contain no such data space. This is most likely because the first file was saved in a program which automatically added the data fields, while the other two were only saved as raw data. I also noted that I was unable to save any changes in the WAV file metadata, even when I adjusted all of the properties.

The point is that the saving of metadata depends upon both the type of file and the program you're using to change or save files. In many file types Windows will allow the changing of data while in others you may need a compatible program to do the job. Even different versions of Windows save data in different manners. (I addressed this issue in a letter last September.) You will most likely need to depend upon the programs you use to add and edit metadata. Windows is too much of a hit and miss proposition.

Also, many programs which add metadata to files only save the data within the program database itself. They use their own methods, therefore the data is never actually attached to the file and will not display in Windows Explorer.

Admittedly, the complications with so many types of metadata associated with various types of files makes this a very difficult issue. There are programs that make it easier, but they also tend to be file type specific. It's easy to get confused. It would be nice if there was one universal standard, but it appears that there are many standards (even for the same file type) which have evolved over the years. I welcome comments from anyone else who can shed more light on this topic.

Digital Dave

Dear Digital Dave,

I have many non-copyrighted DVDs to transfer to MPGs. Is there a machine that will do it, preferably more than one at a time? I've seen software—some free—but never hardware. Since I have so many DVDs to convert quickly, a PC wouldn't be practical.

Thanks!

*Garry Schaeffer
San Diego*

Dear Gary,

That's a bit of a head scratcher. The problem is that most people don't need to convert so many DVDs to MPGs simultaneously. At least I don't think that there has been enough demand for someone to manufacture such a machine. In essence you would need a DVD drive for each DVD simultaneously going through the conversion process. (This is almost the reverse of the process for duplicating DVDs, but there is enough demand for duplication that it's relatively easy to find DVD duplicating hardware (www.amazon.com/mn/search/?_encoding=UTF8&hvnetw=g&keywords=dvd%20duplicators&tag=comput0b9-20.)

You could build your own multi-drive converting hardware by adding more DVD drives to your computer. Then you could use the free software to start the conversion separately for each DVD drive. How quickly it could be accomplished will depend upon how many drives are installed, the speed of the processor, and the amount of memory you have installed in your computer. Unless someone knows of a machine that will do the job in bulk, which I don't, then this may be your best bet.

* * *

As long as we are talking about converting video, one of the most important things anyone should convert to DVD are those home videos stored on VHS or other video tape. The tape is deteriorating so the sooner you make them into DVDs, the more permanent will be your archive. There are plenty of services that will do it for you, including Costco (www.costcodvd.com/services_and_pricing.aspx). If you have too many to send out, then you may want to pick up a VHS to DVD conversion kit (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B0040FT300/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20) and do it yourself. (Since I have not used it myself, the link to the Honestech VHS to DVD conversion kit is for informational purposes only and is not necessarily a recommendation, although it had one of the higher user ratings.)

Digital Dave

Dear Digital Dave,

Unless I stop and start a video when it first starts it will run for about two or three minutes, then lock up and will not start again. It's the same for YouTube or a video from one of the major networks. I have a quad-core AMD processor and 8GB of RAM plus 30GB free HD space. I'm using Cox lowest speed cable connection. Is there any way to get my PC to buffer enough to watch a half hour video without jumping through hoops?

*Buck
El Cajon, CA*

Dear Buck,

If you have a cable Internet connection, I doubt that it is causing the video problem—even with the slowest connection. Nor do I think that it's your hardware since you seem to have plenty of everything that you would need—unless you have a faulty video card. That means some type of software interference, which may be another program using the same cache or a faulty installation of Flash for playing videos.

I am guessing that you have tried watching the videos with various browsers (Internet Explorer, Firefox, Google Chrome, etc). If not, then do so. If you have the same problem with each browser, then you may be able to isolate the issue down to your connection or computer.

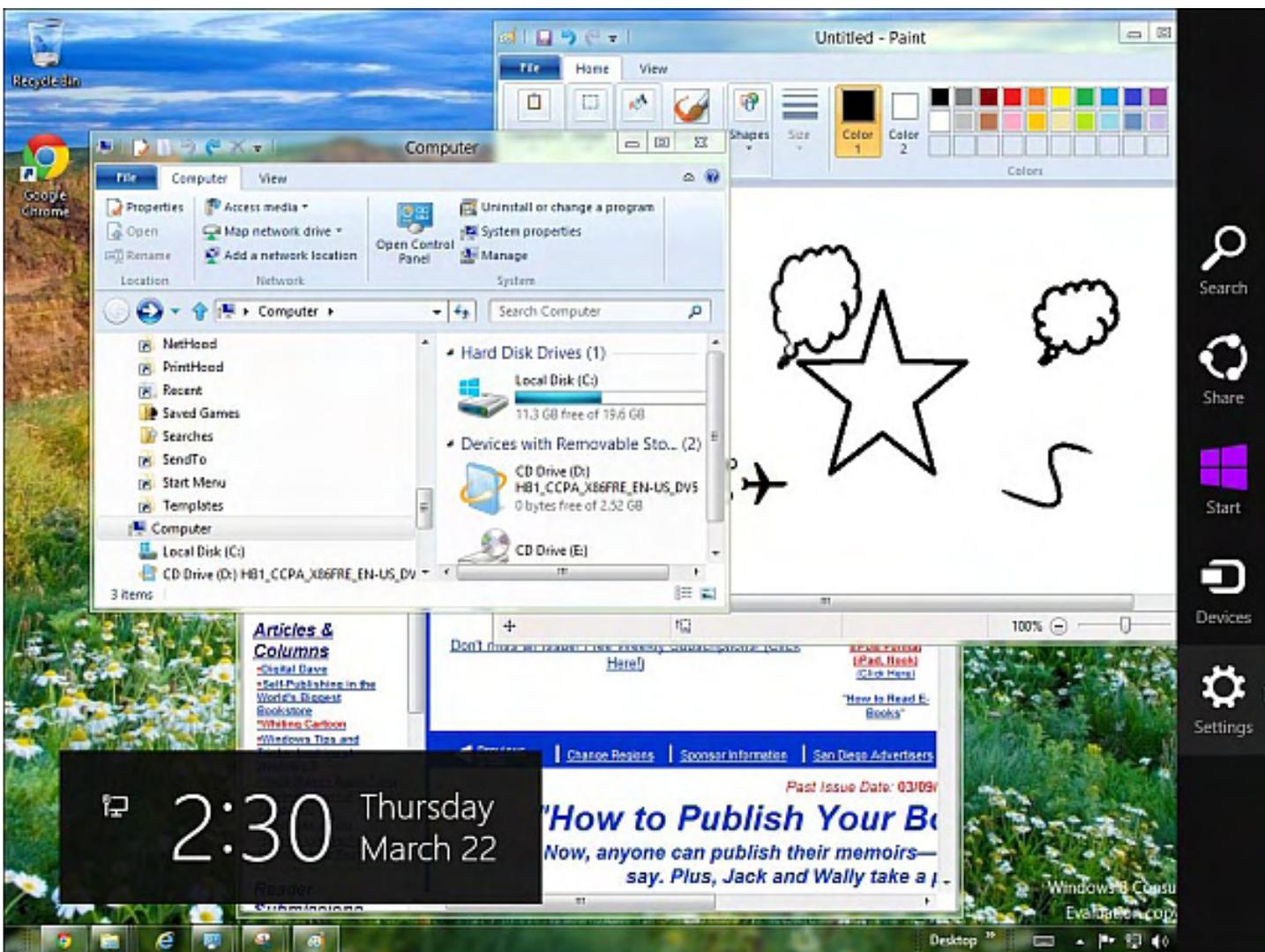
One problem some people with similar video issues have had is with the installed Flash add-on for the browser. Make sure that you have the latest version of Flash. (In some cases people have had to revert to an earlier version of Flash to resolve a video problem.)

Also, you may have another program which is interfering with your video. Try disabling start-up programs to see if they are part of the problem. Any program which is a processor hog can ultimately interfere. Some people have resolved similar video issues by uninstalling bit torrent downloading software.

Another possibility worth considering is that it could be the router or network card. This is easy to rule out by trying out a friend's router or connecting somebody else's laptop or tablet into your network and streaming.

Digital Dave

[Return to Table of Contents](#)



Windows 8 Update

“The New Microsoft OS for Both Desktop and Tablet Computers” by Jack Dunning

Jack's exploration of Windows 8 focuses on what's changed from Windows 7 and the usefulness (or not) of those changes for daily computing. Will it really be too hard to learn?

With all the stumbling by Microsoft over the past number of years it can be difficult to take Windows 8 too seriously. Some people think it's a desperate stab at getting a piece of the tablet market—which it may be. The new Metro UI (User Interface) with colored tiles designed for touch screens has been slapped onto Windows 7 and now, at least temporarily, is called Windows 8. There is no shortage of cynicism.



As a Windows user, I'm attempting to maintain a balanced view of Microsoft's latest. Now in beta testing with a Windows 8 Consumer Preview (windows.microsoft.com/en-US/windows-8/consumer-preview) available for download and full release due out later this year, it's difficult to say how the computer and tablet market will receive Windows 8. If



“I think we should release Windows 8 December 20, 2012 since the next day the Mayan doomsday apocalypse is scheduled.”

Windows 8 fails, it won't be for the lack of effort on the part of Microsoft and hardware manufacturers. A good bit of what is written about Windows 8 today is based upon what the authors want to happen rather than objective analysis of the operating system. There are plenty of cheerleaders on Microsoft's side and it seems just as many detractors—especially in the Apple iPad camp. For my part, I don't know how Windows 8 will do in either the PC or tablet market.

My explorations of Windows 8 (which continues in the "Windows Tips and Tricks" column in this issue) are from the perspective of using it on a desktop or laptop computer. I hope to ultimately

answer the question, "Is Windows 8 a kludge with the Metro UI slapped onto Windows 7 or is it a viable improvement over Windows 7?" (I have the Windows 8 preview installed in a VirtualBox virtual machine on a Windows 7 computer as described in the March 9 "Windows Tips and Tricks" column.) My particular focus is on what has changed from Windows 7 and the usefulness (or not) of those changes for daily computing.

Since I don't have Windows 8 installed on a tablet, I'm a little hampered in my ability to evaluate it as a tablet operating system. However, since I do use both an iPad and an Android tablet, it is easy for me to understand how the new Start screen (Metro UI) would work on a tablet, even though I'm using a mouse and keyboard. So far, Windows 8 doesn't seem like it would be much different from using any other tablet with an intuitive touch screen.

However, if you're using a desktop or laptop computer and have no experience with tablets, then the new Start screen will seem anything but intuitive. Intuition is experienced based, so the more something new deviates for what we know (traditional Windows) the less intuitive it will seem. Throwing a Windows user in front of Windows 8 with the Metro User Interface with no instruction at all is a fool's errand. Merely telling someone that hitting the Microsoft logo key () will bring them back to the Start screen will go a long way toward helping them navigate Windows 8.

By approaching Windows 8 from the point of view of desktop applications I'm not trying to minimize the importance of tablet computers. The hardware companies are starting to place their bets on Windows 8. Apple iPad currently owns the lion's share of the tablet market and the other hardware companies are not happy about that. There has been some limited success with Android tablets, but most have been flops. These manufacturers are determined to find a way to eat into Apple's market. If the Windows 8 operating system is successful on tablets, then it would be a boon for every Apple iPad competitor.

Why Windows 8 on a Tablet?

The number one reason for putting Windows 8 on a new tablet computer is that only Apple, with their proprietary iOS, can build and sell iPads. If other hardware manufacturers don't find an alternative, then they are forever frozen out of the lucrative tablet market. For the past couple of years they have continually introduced Android tablets with very limited success—if any. It's natural for them to look to Microsoft since the majority of the PCs they build already run Windows. The problem is the unknown of whether or not Windows 8 can offer any competitive advantage over Apple iPad. If not, then it could be yet another expensive exercise in futility. Are there any advantages to Windows 8?

I can see two possibilities. The first is the ability to run Windows programs on a tablet computer. This is dependent

upon compatibility between older Windows versions (in particular Windows 7) and Windows 8. In its current configuration, Windows programs are installed to the Windows 8 Desktop mode, which is essentially Windows 7 without the Start Menu (now replaced with the Windows 8 Start screen, or Metro UI). That means Windows 8 tablet computers should be able to do everything that you currently do with your desktop or laptop computer. The bulk of the huge Windows software base would be available to any tablet computer running Windows 8 with the Desktop mode enabled.

There's the rub. Will tablets get the full Windows 8 installation or a stripped down version which only includes the Metro UI—tablet apps only? This is currently an open question with Microsoft doing some waffling. It looks like there will be two versions of Windows 8 depending upon the hardware. The first would be the full installation, which includes the Desktop mode and the ability to load compatible Windows programs. (The only program I've loaded so far is Google Chrome and it seems to run fine.) The second is a reduced Metro UI only version without the Windows Desktop mode enabled. Only apps developed specifically for the touch interface would be available. Very few manufacturers are excited about this version, since it would offer little—if any—advantage over the iPad.

Microsoft has said that they will offer the full version (Windows Desktop enabled) for x86/x64-based Windows 8 tablets, but the ARM reduced instruction set processors would get the reduced Metro UI only version. However, lately Microsoft has made noises that it will provide the full version to both. This may turn out to be an option for the buyer which will affect costs, capabilities and power consumption of the tablet.

It's hard to say how well traditional Windows programs will respond in the touch environment of the tablet. Most Windows programs are designed for the mouse and keyboard. Using these traditional Windows apps on a tablet without a mouse and keyboard could be difficult, especially for people with fat fingers.

The second reason that Windows 8 may have an advantage on a tablet is that the Windows Runtime environment used by the Metro UI is compatible with a number of common programming environments including C++, C#, VB.NET, plus HTML5 and JavaScript. This means that many apps already developed in these language could be ported to the Metro UI either directly or with modification. I have no idea what the complications would be, but if there are not too many hurdles, then many applications would quickly appear for the Windows 8 tablets. If Windows 8 is accepted by the market, the relevant Apple app gap might be closed a little.

The Windows 8 Metro UI Learning Curve

Right now there is an element of shock when a Windows user encounters the new Windows 8 Start screen (see Figure 1). Many people speculate that this alone will prevent many Windows users from engaging with the new operating system. They won't want to change. It was hard enough moving from Windows XP to Windows 7. Now we are presented with a totally unfamiliar look—with no instructions on how to get back to our comfort zone.

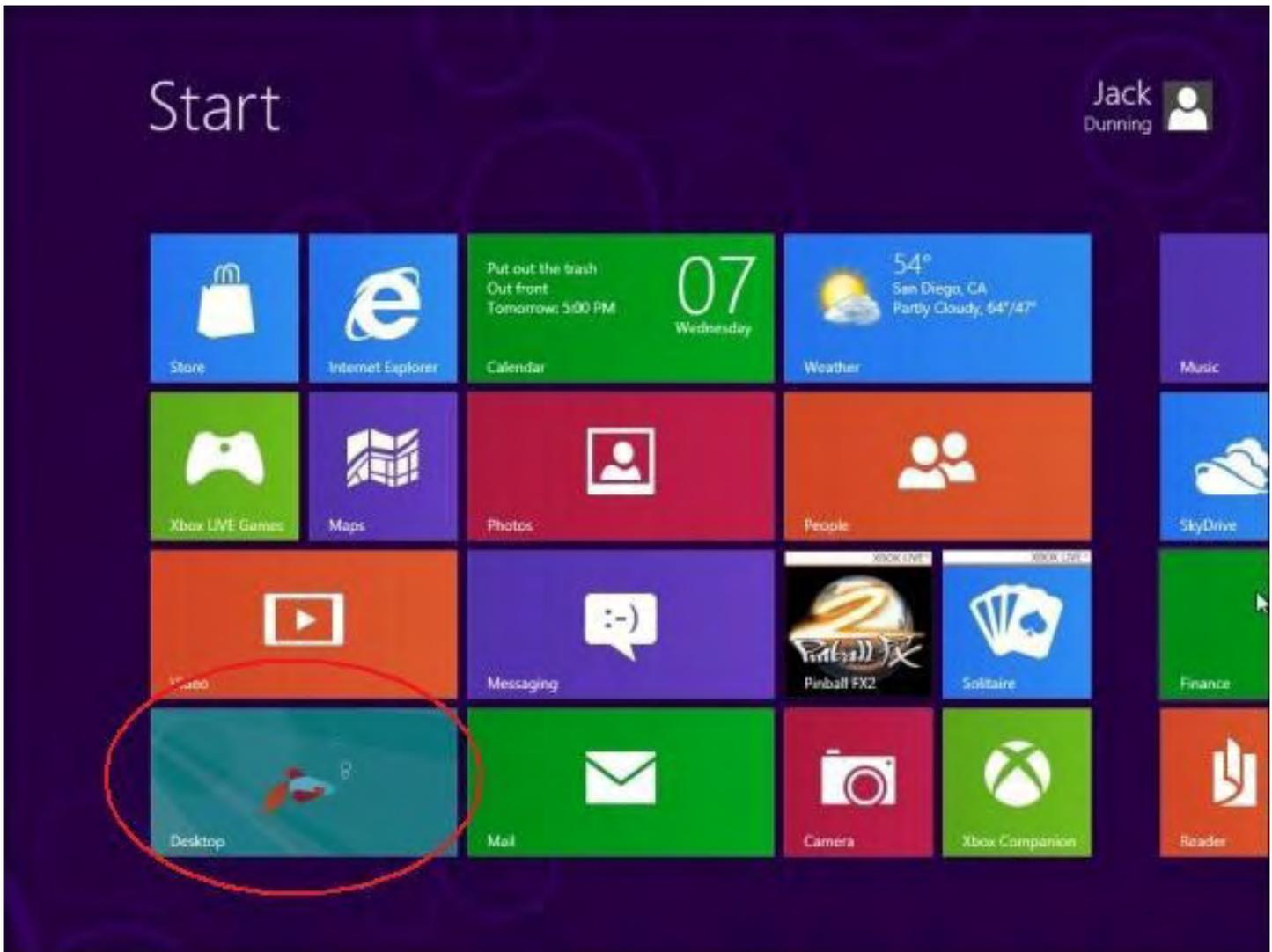


Figure 1. The Windows 8 Metro UI (Start screen) allows access to the traditional Windows Desktop with a click of the tile in the lower left corner.

While many people will resist any sort of change to their dying days (look how many said that people would never accept the iPad), this argument will not hold up for long. With a tiny amount of instruction, the actual learning curve for getting familiar with the Windows 8 environment is about 30 seconds—and, if you've ever used a tablet computer, maybe five seconds. Here are the instructions:

1. Click the tile that's labeled Desktop. The familiar Windows Desktop will appear—albeit with the Start Menu missing (see Figure 2). (By default, the double-wide Desktop tile is in the lower left corner of the group of tiles—until you move it somewhere else. The initial screen displays a Siamese Fighting Fish on the background.)

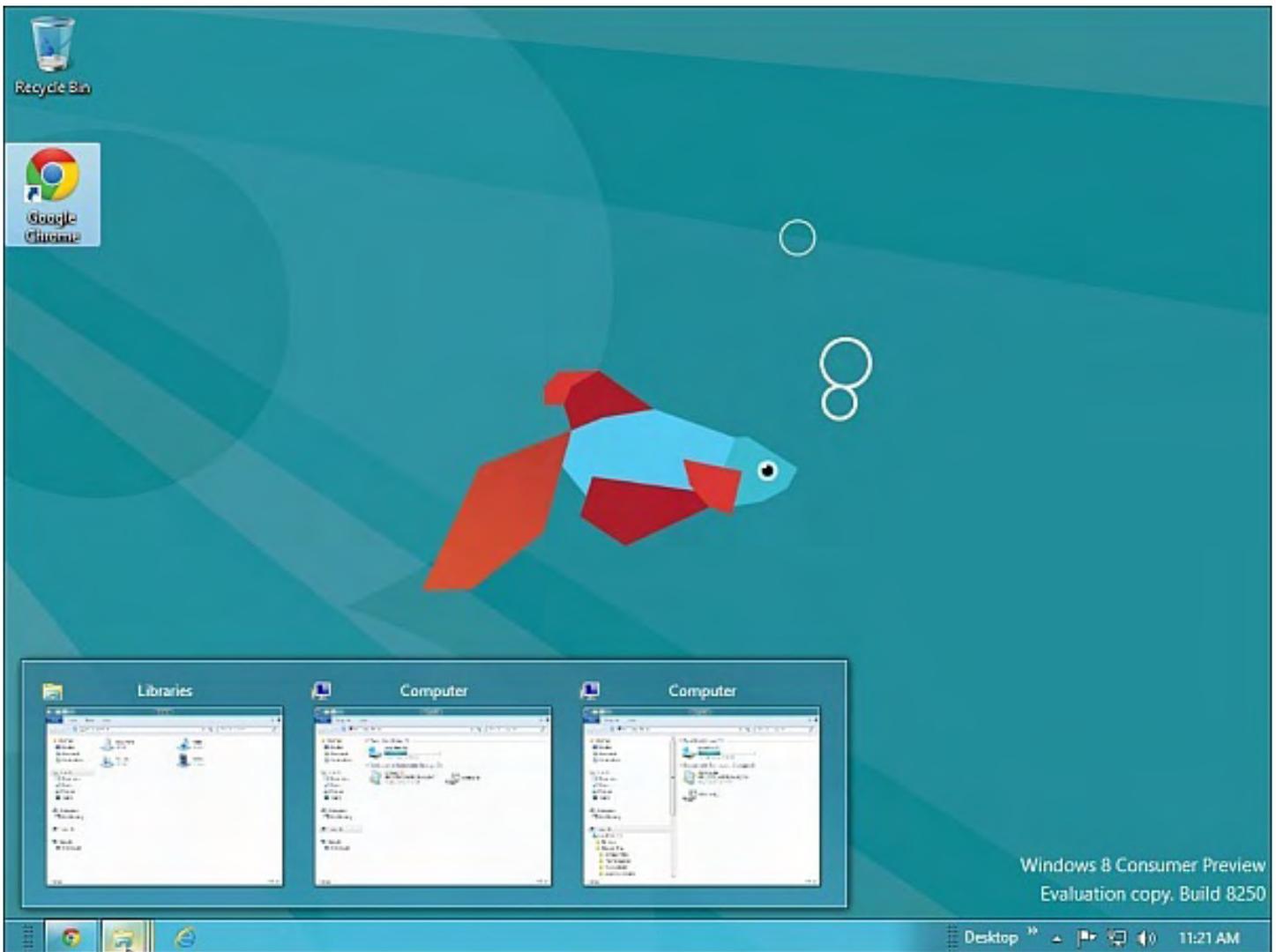


Figure 1. The Windows 8 Desktop mode looks very much like the Windows 7 interface with a Desktop and Taskbar, but not the Start Menu.

2. Return to the Start screen by hitting the Microsoft Windows logo key (⊞). Hit ⊞ again and you're back to the Desktop—or whichever program you last opened. (I have no doubt that Windows 8 tablet computers will have a Home hardware button similar to that of the iPad, which will serve the same function as the ⊞ key.)

It may take a little longer to get used to how the Start screen works—especially if you've never used a tablet computer—but random clicking, right-clicking, click and dragging, hovering, scrolling, and hitting the ⊞ or Escape key will quickly take you a long way toward that goal. Most of us learned how to use our tablets through trial and error without too many problems. The same can be done with the Windows 8 Start screen.

Hint: When you realize that the Start screen is not merely another interface plopped on top of Windows 7, but the replacement for the old Windows Start Menu—now removed from the Desktop and morphed into the Start screen—the interaction between the Start screen and the Desktop starts to make some sense.

In any case, if you want more help, you can check out the recent "Windows Tips and Tricks" columns, plus I will have a *Getting Started with Windows 8* book out well before Windows 8 is released—scheduled for just before the Mayan Doomsday on December 21, 2012. (I made up that release date.) While people will need to grow accustomed to a little different way of doing things, if Windows 8 fails, it won't be due to the learning curve.

Will Windows 8 Replace Windows 7 on the PC?

If Windows 8 turns out to be a problem operating system, loaded with bugs and compatibility issues, then Windows 8 will fall into the "Not another Vista!" category, and Windows 7 will continue as Microsoft's primary PC product. However, if Windows 8 turns out to be what it appears to be (to me) right now, it could quickly become the standard for Windows laptop and desktop computers. The fact that the Start Menu has morphed into the Start screen with tiles rather than links is a minor inconvenience for the uninitiated. New users will quickly grow accustomed to the change. Another possible benefit to Windows users would be using the same interface on both their Windows PC and Windows tablets, although the different look and feel of the iPad doesn't seem to bother Mac users.

It's up to Microsoft to make Windows 8 more compact, efficient and easy to use than any of its predecessors. If they pull that off, then they will not only extend the life of their Windows family, but they may also take a small bite out of the Apple iPad market. I'm not predicting that it is a success, but, nor do I think that Windows 8 is a bomb.

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:

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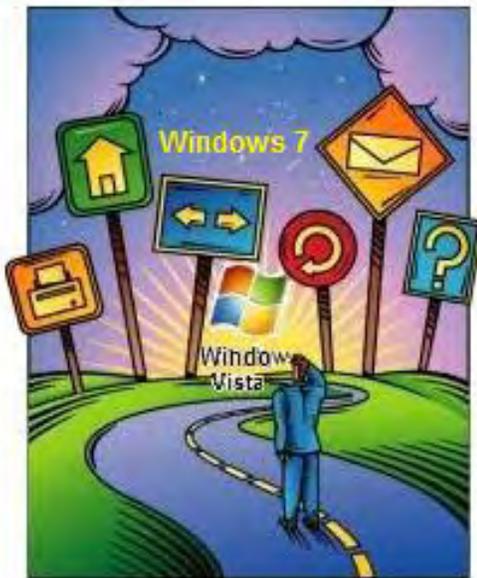
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[Return to Table of Contents](#)



Windows Tips and Tricks

Windows Tips and Tricks

“Windows 8 Start Charm” by Jack Dunning

Jack examines using the Start Charm in Windows 8 and how to move the tiles in a manner that suits you best.

Since the new Windows 8 Start screen (also called the Start Charm or Metro User Interface (UI)) has replaced the Start Menu in earlier versions of Windows, it is important to become familiar with how it works. The old Start Menu was an appendage of the Desktop which after initial setup largely could be ignored except when logging off or shutting down the computer. The Windows 8 Metro UI, which is integral to the operating system, will not be neglected. Fortunately, once understood the Start screen is fairly user-friendly and intuitive.

Note: Although, I'm using a mouse to manipulate the Start screen, the touch gestures on a touch screen are very similar: a tap with one finger is a left mouse button click, press and hold with one finger equates to a right mouse button click, a pinch (two fingers moving together on the screen) or stretch (two fingers moving apart on the screen) are used to zoom in or zoom out respectively, touch the screen and slide one finger to simulate the scrolling of the mouse wheel or clicking of the scroll bar, press and drag a screen object with one finger is the same as click and hold the left-mouse button down then drag the cursor to a new location, and other swiping gestures are simulated in some way with a mouse. It does not take a tablet user long to learn these touch gestures through trial and error.

Using the Start Charm

The Start Charm is a group of tiles which represent apps in Windows 8 (see Figure 1). Each tile is either an app which runs in the Metro UI as they would on tablet computer or a Windows program which will run in the Windows Desktop mode. They are not the same thing. Apps running in the Metro UI do not open the Windows Desktop and do not necessarily interact with Windows programs.

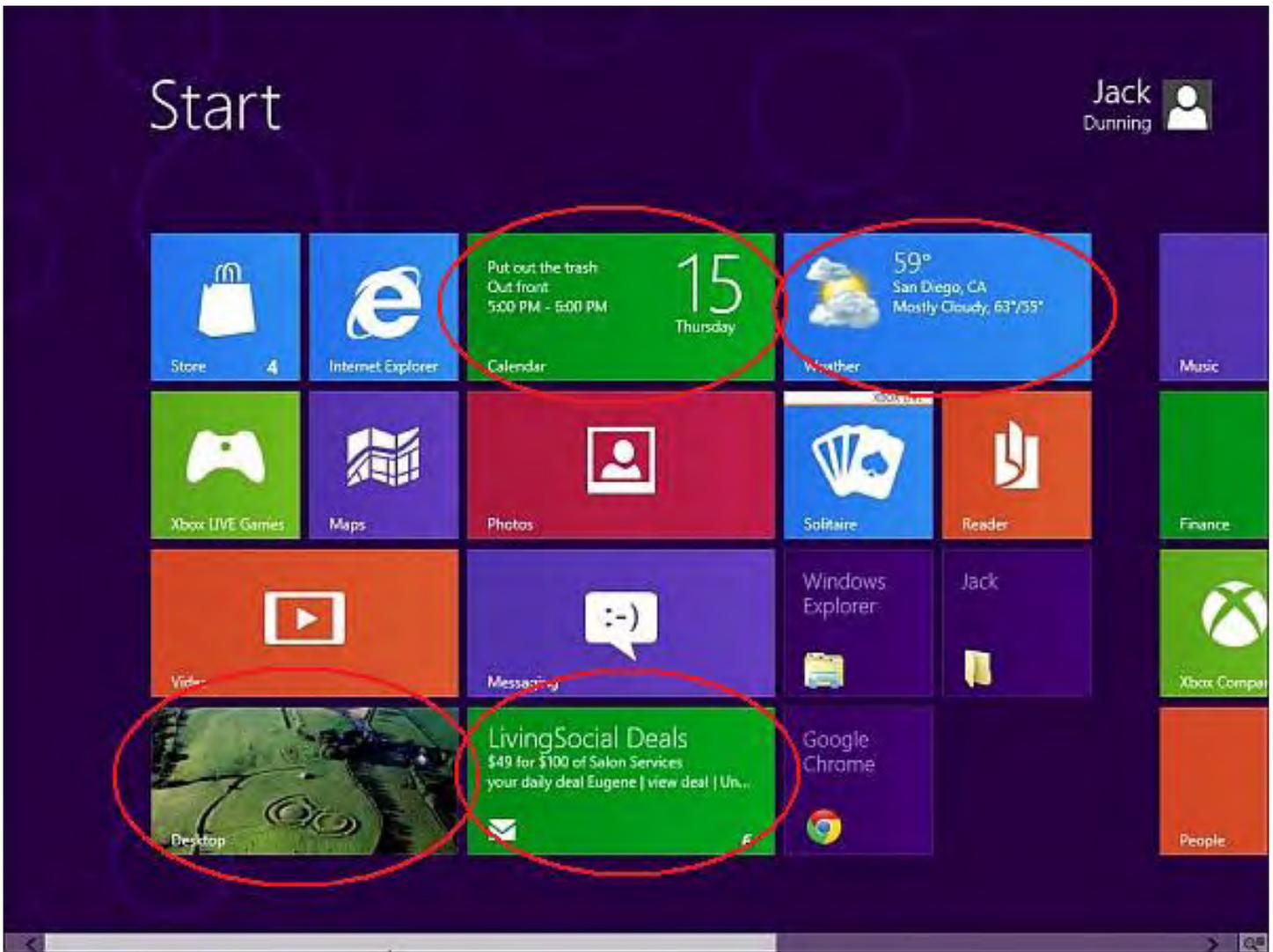


Figure 1. The Start screen in Windows 8 is composed of tiles which represent both Metro apps which run directly in Metro and traditional Windows folders or programs which open the Windows Desktop when launched. The tiles may offer a live informational view (circled in red) similar to that of a Windows gadget.

For example, when I attempted to e-mail an attachment from Windows Explorer with the Send to => Mail recipient option, I received a warning to install an e-mail program. That seemed odd since a functional e-mail program appears in the possible default programs (ms-resource:mailAppTitle), but that's the Metro app and it does not respond to the e-mail prompt from Windows Explorer—even when set as the default. This may change in the future, but for now it is necessary to install another Windows e-mail program (Live Mail, Thunderbird, etc.) in the Desktop to make the Windows Desktop functions respond to e-mail defaults and buttons.

It seems that the Windows Desktop (traditional Windows similar to Windows 7) runs as a Metro app, loading when you click the Desktop tile. With the exception of that Desktop tile with the background image in the lower left corner, all the other tiles circled in red in Figure 1 are Metro apps and do not open the Windows Desktop. However, Windows Explorer, Jack and Google Chrome are tiles representing either folders or programs (Google Chrome) and do open the Windows Desktop.

Note: To simulate the tablet swiping action to reveal tiles off the screen to the right use the mouse scroll wheel to move the screen left (scroll back) and right (scroll forward). This is a little counter-intuitive, but it works.

Right-click on a tile to select it and display options at the bottom of the screen (see Figure 2). Generally, the options to

"Unpin from Start" and "Uninstall" will always appear while "Smaller" (or "Larger") and "Turn live tile off" are app dependent. Only certain tiles can be expanded to double size (better for live information), although each of those larger tiles can be reduced to a square.



Figure 2. Right-click on the tile to select and display options in the Start screen.

Even when reduced to squares, the live tiles continue to display abbreviated information (see Figure 3). When a tile represents a Windows program shortcut, a right-click will display addition program specific information. In Figure 3, the Google Chrome tile has been selected with a right-click displaying additional options.



Figure 3. Google Chrome is a Windows Desktop program which appears as a tile in the Metro Start screen. When the tile is clicked (or touched on a tablet) the Windows Desktop will open and Chrome will launch.

Moving Tiles

It is simple to organize the Start screen tiles in a manner that suits you best. Click and hold the tile, then drag it to a new location (on a tablet, press tile with one finger and drag). See Figure 4. The other tiles will move out of the way to make room.

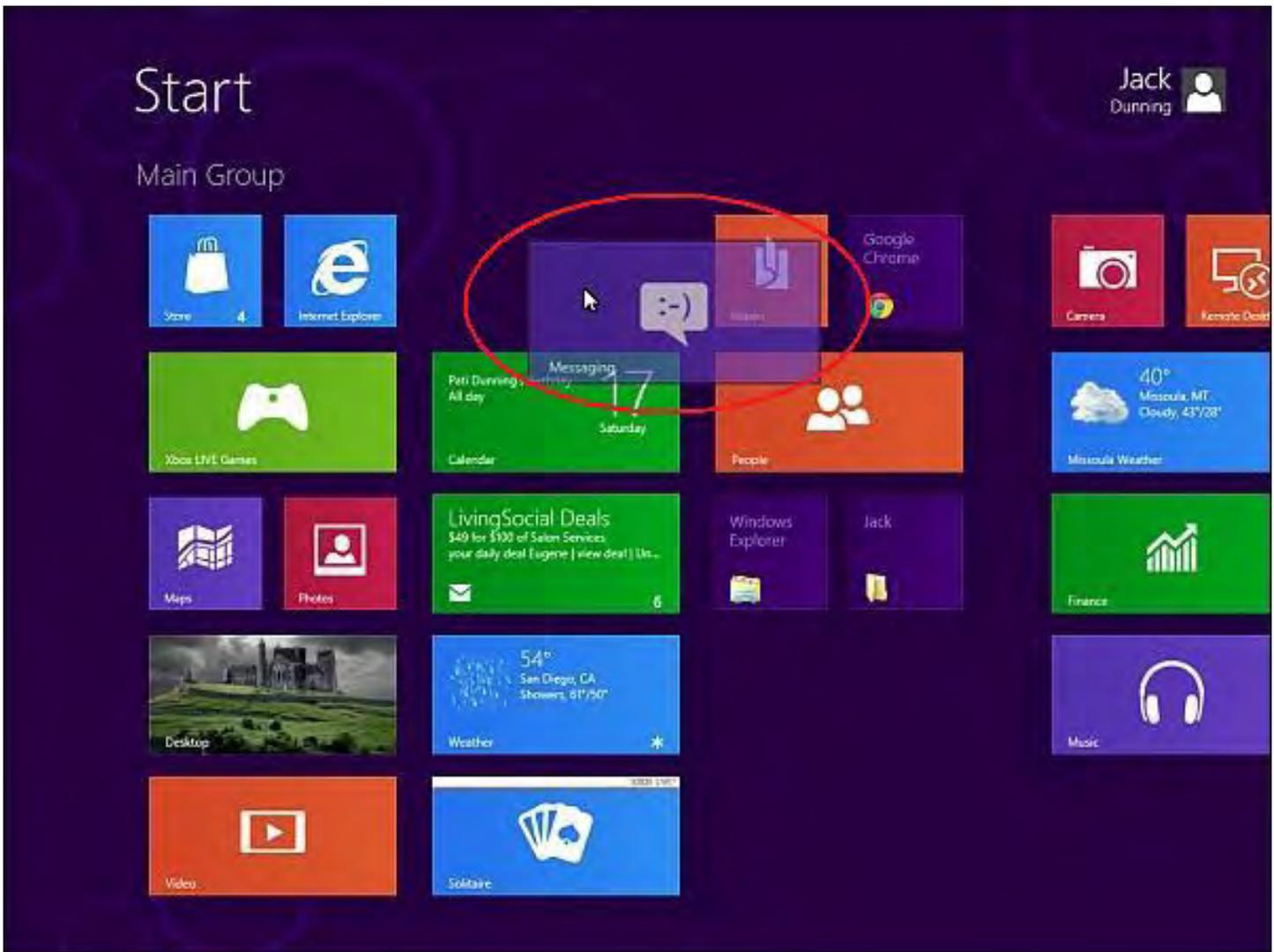


Figure 4. Click and drag a tile in Windows 8 to reposition it to a new location on the Start screen.

Groups of tiles are separated by invisible bars which only briefly appear as you hover a moving tile over them (see Figure 5). The purpose of these separators is to allow an ad hoc grouping of tiles according to their purpose (or any other type of arrangement you desire). To create a new group merely drag a tile all the way to the right edge of the screen until you can go no further.

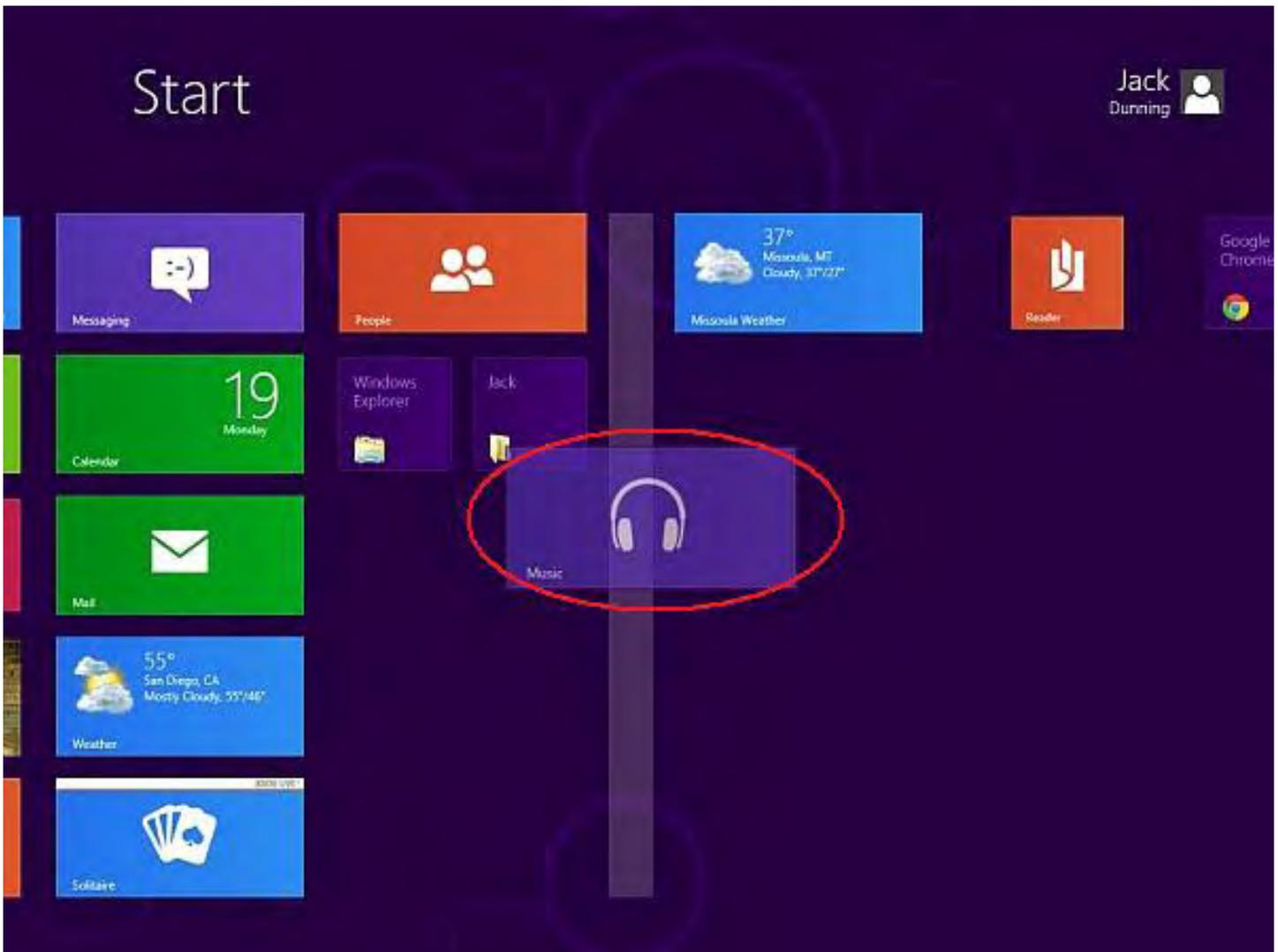


Figure 5. When a tile is moved over the invisible group separator bar in the Windows 8 Start screen, it is moved into a new group of tiles.

Once the groups of tiles are set up, they can be named in the group view screen. The group view can be opened through zooming out by clicking the little magnifying glass which appears in the lower right corner of the screen when the mouse is moved (see Figure 6). (I assume that on a touch screen a pinch will do the same thing.) Right-click on a tile group to select and edit the name of the group.

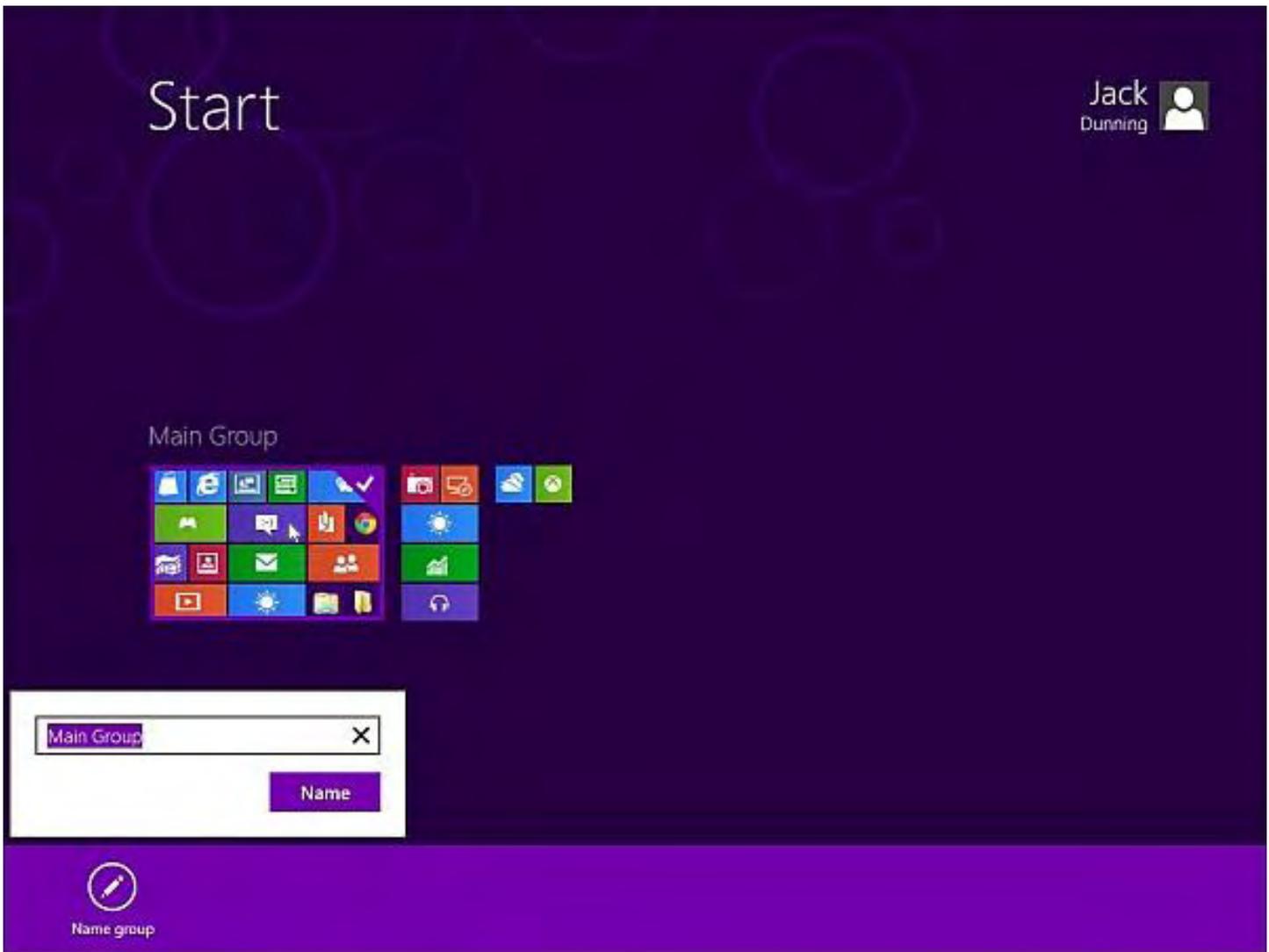


Figure 6. Windows 8, a right-click on a group of tiles in the group view allows the group name to be edited.

The group screen can also be viewed with the left CTRL key+minus sign (-) key combination to zoom out and return with the left CTRL key+plus sign (+) combination to zoom in. If you have added many groups to the Metro UI, then the group view allows you to quickly move to a new group of tiles by clicking on the group.

Next time we will take a look at the Windows 8 virtual keyboard for a touch screen.

Jack is the publisher of *ComputorEdge* Magazine. He's been with the magazine since first issue on May 16, 1983. Back then, it was called *The Byte Buyer*. His Web site is www.computoredge.com. He can be reached at ceeditor@computoredge.com. 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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[Return to Table of Contents](#)



Wally Wang's Apple Farm

“How to Lose by Avoiding Reality” by Wally Wang

How to Lose by Avoiding Reality; Some Reasons to Get the New iPad; Encrypting Your Hard Disk; Lying to Attack Apple; Secure Delete.

Wally Wang's Apple Farm

When I was ghostwriting a book for some professional New York day traders, they taught me why so many people lose money in the stock market. When most people buy a stock, they hope that its price will increase. If the stock should dip, they hold on to the stock, hoping it will still go up. What inevitably happens is that people hold on to a stock for too long and wind up taking a massive loss as the stock plummets.

Sometimes people buy a stock and it goes up. Then they keep holding that stock hoping it will keep going higher. Since no stock can keep increasing forever, people will hold on to a winning stock for so long that it eventually drops and becomes a losing stock. Whether the stock goes up or down, most people simply fall in love with their stock and never sell, guaranteeing that they'll never make a profit.

The trick is not to fall in love with any stock. Instead, look at the trend. If the stock is going up, buy and hold it until the up trend starts dropping. Then sell. Likewise if a stock starts dropping, cut your losses early and sell before the stock can keep dropping. The key to successful stock trading is to keep your emotions out of your decisions and simply follow the trends. Rather than rely on hope to trade stocks, you rely on reality by reacting to what the market is actually doing, not what you hope it would do.

In many cases, these day traders would buy a stock and have absolutely no idea what the company did whether it was involved in technology, transportation, or retail foods. Information about the company's finances were irrelevant because all they cared about was following a trend. The moment the trend ended with one stock, they'd rush out to look for another trend in a different stock. Follow the trend of a dozen or more stocks a day and you'll make a little money on all of them, which adds up to a lot of money in the long run.

This same principle applies to the world of computers as well. Ignore the actual names of different computer companies like Microsoft, Intel, Dell and Apple, and just look at the trends. Which companies are selling products that people want to buy? Which companies are selling products that people aren't buying? Whichever company is trending upwards in sales, go with that company. When that trend eventually ends, switch to another company. By following the trend, you'll always win.

Just as people fall in love with a stock and hold on to it for too long, so do many people fall in love with a particular computer company and hold on for too long. When people buy a stock and it starts to fall, they'll come up with all sorts

of creative excuses for why they should continue holding that stock, even if those excuses make absolutely no sense whatsoever.

To read more about the illogical mistakes people make with money, read *Why Smart People Make Big Money Mistakes and How to Correct Them* (www.amazon.com/gp/product/1439163367/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20) by Gary Belsky. Just because someone might have a Ph.D. in advanced mathematics doesn't mean they can't act irrationally against their best interests by clinging to outdated thinking.

Similarly, when people fall in love with a computer company, they'll make all kinds of illogical excuses for why their particular computer choice is the best in the world, completely denying any facts about that particular company. This is why so many people continue to ignore the upward trend of Apple products and cling to the flat and declining trend of the Windows market. Confront them with uncomfortable facts about their computer choice and they'll deny those facts completely, not because those facts are wrong, but because those facts are right and they refuse to acknowledge reality.

Such stubbornness causes people to lose money in the stock market and also causes people to miss out on the latest trends in the computer market. Just flip through random news sites on the Internet and count how many positive stories about Apple you'll find, such as this Reuters story (www.reuters.com/article/2012/03/12/health-ipad-idUSL2E8ECCVA20120312) about how doctors at the University of Chicago have found that the iPad made them more productive and efficient.

Doctors use iPads to view patients' electronic health records, contact the hospital laboratory or other departments, and show patients their own x-rays and other test results. In addition, doctors can also access medical journals without carrying a stack of magazines around.

After a few months using the iPads, almost four out of five doctors said they were more efficient with the devices, and 68 percent said they avoided delays in patient care by using them.

Here's the illogical reason why there are so many positive news stories about Apple products: Apple is paying people to write positive stories. That means even back when Apple was nearly bankrupt, they were dishing out huge sums of cash to get people to write positive stories about their products. Now that Apple has billions in the bank, they're continually shoveling out wads of cash to keep up the positive press about their products.

Naturally, people who believe this are simply denying reality about a company that really did bribe people to write positive stories about their products. Look at Joel Spolsky's 2006 article (www.joelonsoftware.com/items/2006/12/28.html) about how Microsoft tried to bribe bloggers with free laptops running Vista to get positive stories about Vista.

Joel reported in 2006, "Lately Microsoft, working through their PR agency, Edelman, has been getting rather aggressive about trying to buy good coverage from bloggers. A few months ago they invited bloggers out to Seattle to meet Bill Gates, with all expenses paid (hotel, airfare, etc). Last week they send out a round of expensive laptops with Vista pre-installed."

Did all of this cash thrown at bloggers result in numerous positive stories about how people are finding creative and productive ways to use Vista? If you're willing to deal with facts, just go to Microsoft's own search engine, Bing, and search for "bribing bloggers" to see how many stories appear about Microsoft trying to bribe bloggers to write positive stories about Vista. Despite Microsoft's bribery attempts, most people still didn't write positive stories about Vista, not because they didn't have a reason to, but because there wasn't much to promote about Vista.

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bing

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jennifer love hewitt
brow lift
tatum o'neal rumors
ipad 3
Angelina Jolie
See all
Clear all · Turn off

ALL RESULTS 1-10 of 8,500,000 results · [Advanced](#)

[Microsoft Bribing Bloggers With Laptops - Slashdot](#)
Slinky writes "According to at least six bloggers, Microsoft has been sending out free top-of-the-line laptops pre-loaded with Vista as a 'no strings attached gifts'.
[slashdot.org/story/06/12/27/1423234/Microsoft-Bribing-Bloggers...](#)

[Bribing Bloggers - Linux and Open Source - News & Reviews - eWeek.com](#)
Opinion: So, that's why people are saying nice things about Vista.
[www.eweek.com/c/a/Linux-and-Open-Source/Bribing-Bloggers](#)

[Bribing Bloggers - Joel on Software](#)
There's an interesting debate going on about whether bloggers should accept gifts from vendors. Lately Microsoft, working through their PR agency, Edelman, has been ...
[www.joelonsoftware.com/items/2006/12/28.html](#)

[The Putin Kremlin, Bribing Bloggers | La Russophobe](#)
Jul 11, 2010 · Recording the rise (and hopefully fall) of the Neo-Soviet Union
[larussophobe.wordpress.com/.../11/the-putin-kremlin-bribing-bloggers](#)

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[reviews.cnet.com/8301-10921_7-6639448-4.html](#)

[fak3r » PayPerPost.com: Bribing Bloggers to Promote Products?](#)
Ted Murphy, CEO of advertising firm Mindcomet, has launched a new service called PayPerPost.com. You guessed it, it's a marketplace for companies to connect with ...
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[How the FTC's New Blogging Rules Have Legalized Advertiser Bribery ...](#)
Dec 29, 2011 · (MoneyWatch) When the FTC introduced new rules requiring that bloggers disclose gifts they receive from advertisers, it looked like it might bring an end ...
CBS News · [Cached page](#)

[Microsoft Bribing Bloggers? - 50Micron.com](#)
I had posted a few nice words about Vista, but I deleted them when I found out that Microsoft has been bribing Bloggers with Brand new \$2,300 Acer Ferrari laptops.
[blog.50micron.com/2006/12/29/microsoft-bribing-bloggers](#)

[Microsoft bribing bloggers with free high-spec laptops - Digg](#)
W...T...F... Microsoft has been sending out free top-of-the-line laptops pre-loaded with Vista to bloggers. "No strings attached". This is of course right before the ...
[digg.com/news/story/Microsoft_bribing_bloggers_with_free_high_spec...](#)

[Let's Bribe Bloggers And Hire Sneaky Buzzers?! -](#)
The end for Blog Bribers & Buzzers?! ... Let's Bribe Bloggers And Hire Sneaky Buzzers?! Written by Igor Beuker on April 7th, 2009 | 2 comments
[www.viralblog.com/social-media/lets-bribe-bloggers-and-hire-sneaky...](#)

Figure 1. Microsoft's search engine, Bing, lists numerous stories about how Microsoft tried to bribe bloggers to write positive stories about Vista.

Visit the TechRights site (techrightrights.org/2012/03/07/win8-bribe/) and you can read how Microsoft is trying to bribe journalists (again) to write positive stories about Windows 8 by giving them free Windows 8 tablets. For more evidence that Microsoft relies on bribery to get positive stories, here's a TechFlash story (www.techflash.com/seattle/2010/06/microsofts_e3_xbox_bribery_makes_journalism_ethicists_squirm.html) about how Microsoft gave away Xbox consoles to people back in 2010 to get positive stories in the press about their game consoles.

Rather than rely on bribery, why doesn't Microsoft just create products that people actually want to buy and get excited

about sharing with their friends? More importantly, why do so many people claim that Apple must bribe people to get positive stories in the press, but completely ignore the actual fact that Microsoft has consistently bribed people to get positive stories in the press?

One reason why Apple gets so much positive press in the media is because people like their products and find unique uses for them everyday that makes for an interesting story. Apple products get so much publicity because they require less time to learn, which gives you more time to be creative with them.

In the old days, companies needed thick books and classes to train their workers how to use a computer. Nowadays, companies can just hand someone an iPad and they can figure out how to use it with just a few minutes worth of training. Even kids can pick up an iPad and figure it out how to have fun with it.

Yet InfoWorld reports (www.infoworld.com/t/microsoft-windows/windows-8-fails-the-dad-test-188540) that when confronted by Windows 8, many people's fathers couldn't figure out how to use it. One father summed up his experience using Windows 8 by saying, "Well it's anything but intuitive, I'll tell you that. There's nothing intuitive about this...I'll stay with Windows XP. I'm too old and life is too short."

Many long-time Windows users at InfoWorld have recently switched from Windows (www.infoworld.com/t/operating-systems/why-im-finally-switching-the-mac-188365?page=0,0) to a Macintosh. Eric Knorr says, "After 22 years of using Windows for work, I'm opting for a Mac instead. All it took was a long look at Windows 8 Consumer Preview. In hindsight, I suppose that Microsoft's quest to combine a desktop and mobile OS into one was damn near impossible to begin with. But couldn't the company do better than what landed with a thud on Feb. 29? I was shocked, not only at the clunkiness of Metro on the desktop, but also at the disappearance of the Start menu—a double-barreled fail."

When even die-hard Windows users join the steady flow of defections from Windows to the Macintosh, it's hard to ignore this trend as people tricked by Apple's slick marketing or needing to boost their self-esteem by buying a product with an Apple logo on the front. As steadily rising sales of the Macintosh throughout the past recession indicate, people are buying higher priced Macintosh computers and ignoring lower priced Windows PCs for a reason. Whatever reason that might be, you can't ignore that the trend currently favors the iPhone, iPad and Macintosh. In Apple's New York store, they sold 13,000 iPads (www.theverge.com/2012/3/19/2884897/ipad-sales-apple-store-5th-avenue-cube) in twelve hours.

Maybe when Windows 8 officially arrives, the trend will reverse and people will suddenly get excited about Windows 8 on PCs and tablets and forget about the Macintosh, iPhone and iPad. If that happens, then just shift with the trend. If that doesn't happen, there's no point in fighting the trend and experiencing frustration, bitterness and anger for no reason. Does it really matter which company is winning at any particular time if you keep losing through your own stubbornness and refusal to deal with reality?

Some Reasons to Get the New iPad

If you already have an iPad 2, you probably don't need to upgrade to the latest iPad. Even if you have the first-generation iPad, you probably don't need to upgrade to the latest iPad either. Here's one objective reason to get the newest iPad: the camera in the iPad 2 captures grainy images. If you need to take higher quality pictures or videos, the new iPad's camera captures 5 megapixel images.

Now here's a subjective reason why you might want to upgrade to the latest iPad. Go to an Apple Store or any retail store showing the latest iPad and look at the screen. Images are so sharp that you can't even see the pixels that make them up. Now look back at the screen of an iPad 2 and you'll suddenly notice how much grainier that image looks.

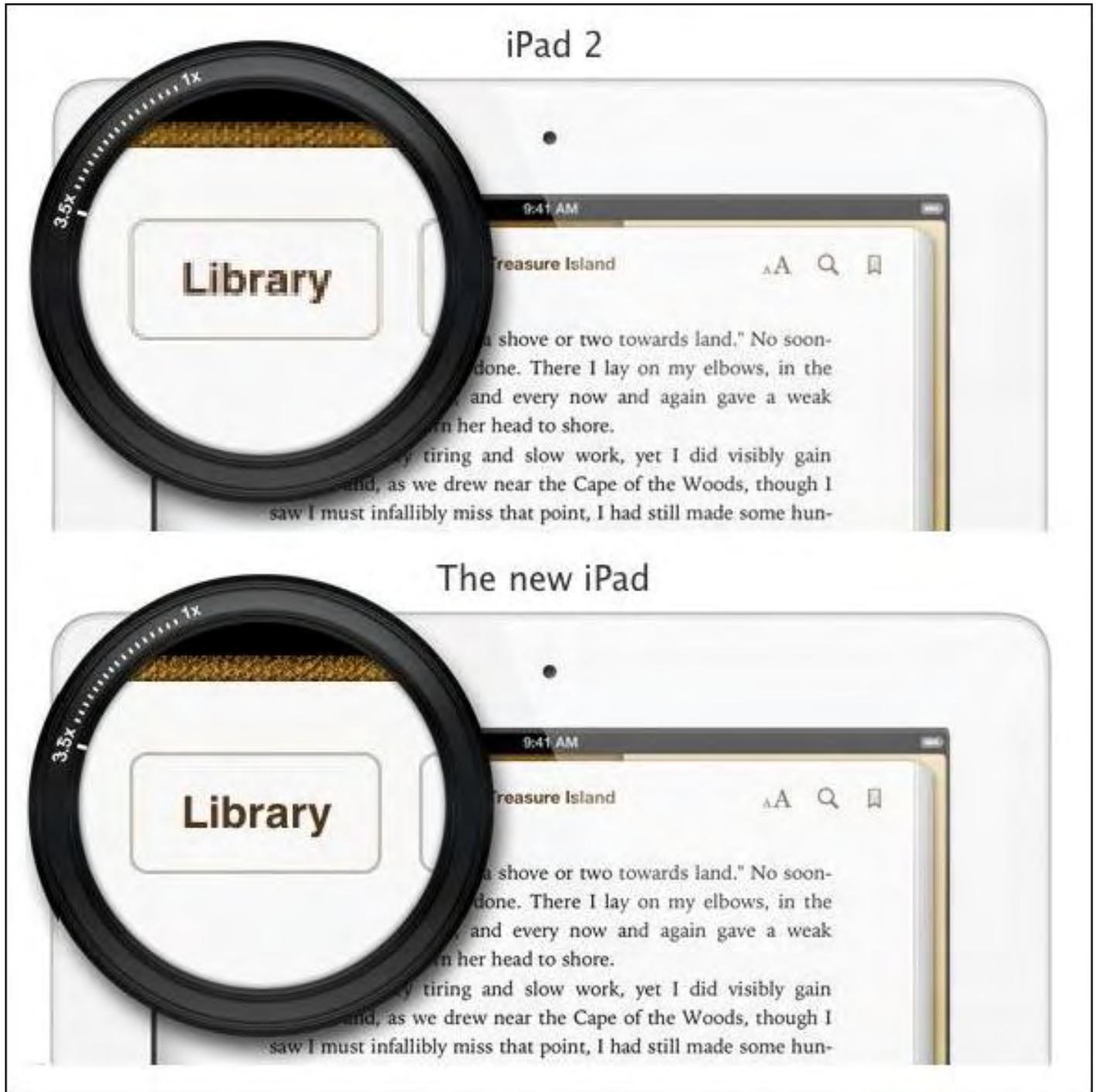


Figure 2. The new iPad's screen is twice the resolution as the previous iPad models.

There's no comparison between the new iPad's sharp screen resolution and the resolution of any rival tablet on the market. Combine this screen resolution with the iPad app store and you have two compelling reasons to get the iPad instead of any other tablet.

If you need another objective reason to get the newest iPad, try the voice dictation feature on the virtual keyboard. If you're taking notes or writing an e-mail message, you don't need to type any more. Just tap the dictation key, start speaking, and tap the dictation key when you're done. You'll be amazed at how accurate the iPad can turn your spoken words into printed text.

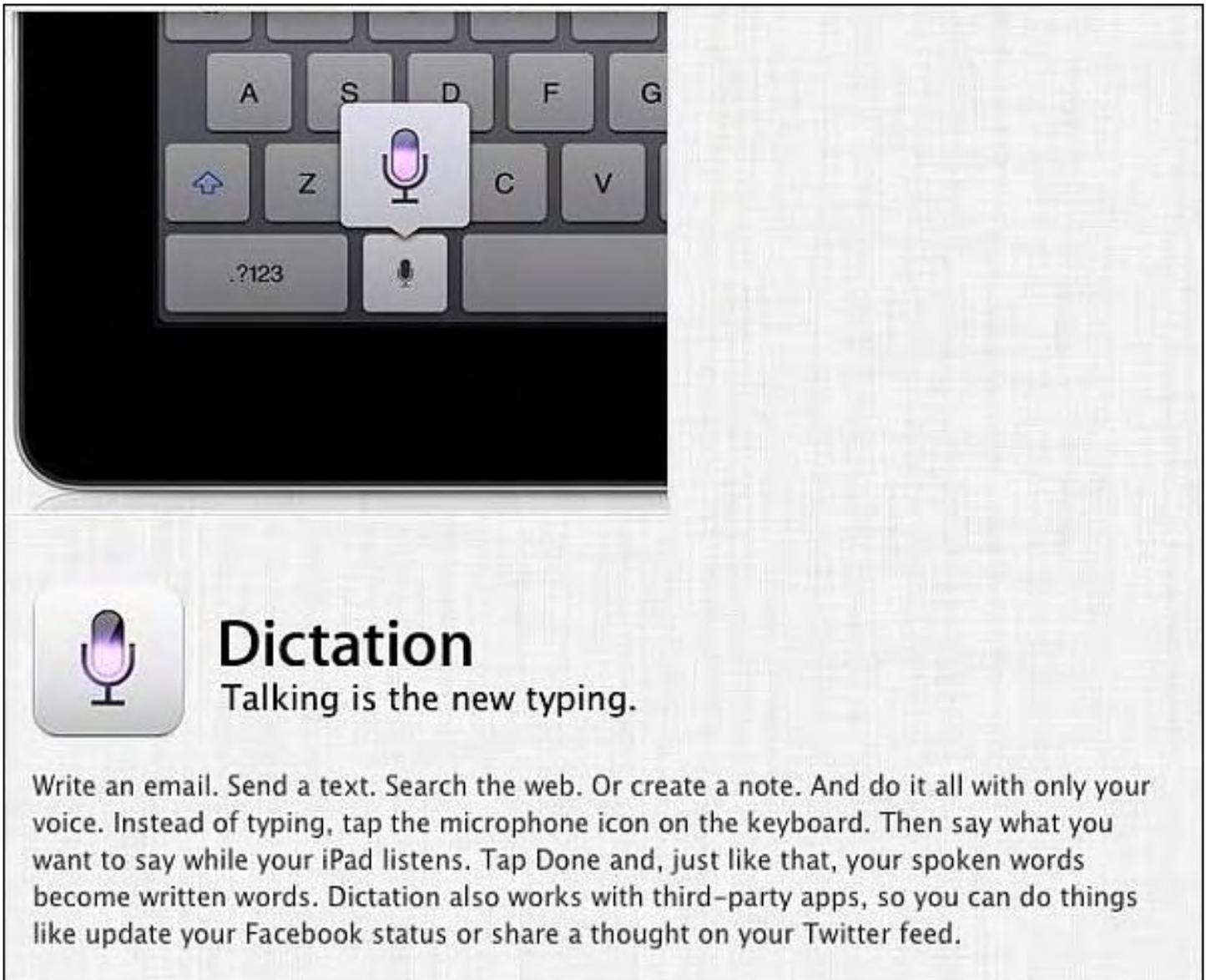


Figure 3. The new voice dictation feature lets you talk to your iPad.

For those people who don't like typing on a virtual keyboard, voice dictation eliminates typing altogether. Use a Bluetooth microphone and headset and you can cheerfully chat into your iPad to create text, dispelling the myth that the iPad can't be used to create content at all.

Encrypting Your Hard Disk

In case you're worried that someone could sneak on to your computer and steal your data, you can encrypt your whole hard disk using the built-in encryption program in Mac OS X called FileVault. However, for a more powerful alternative, take a look at TrueCrypt (www.truecrypt.org) instead.

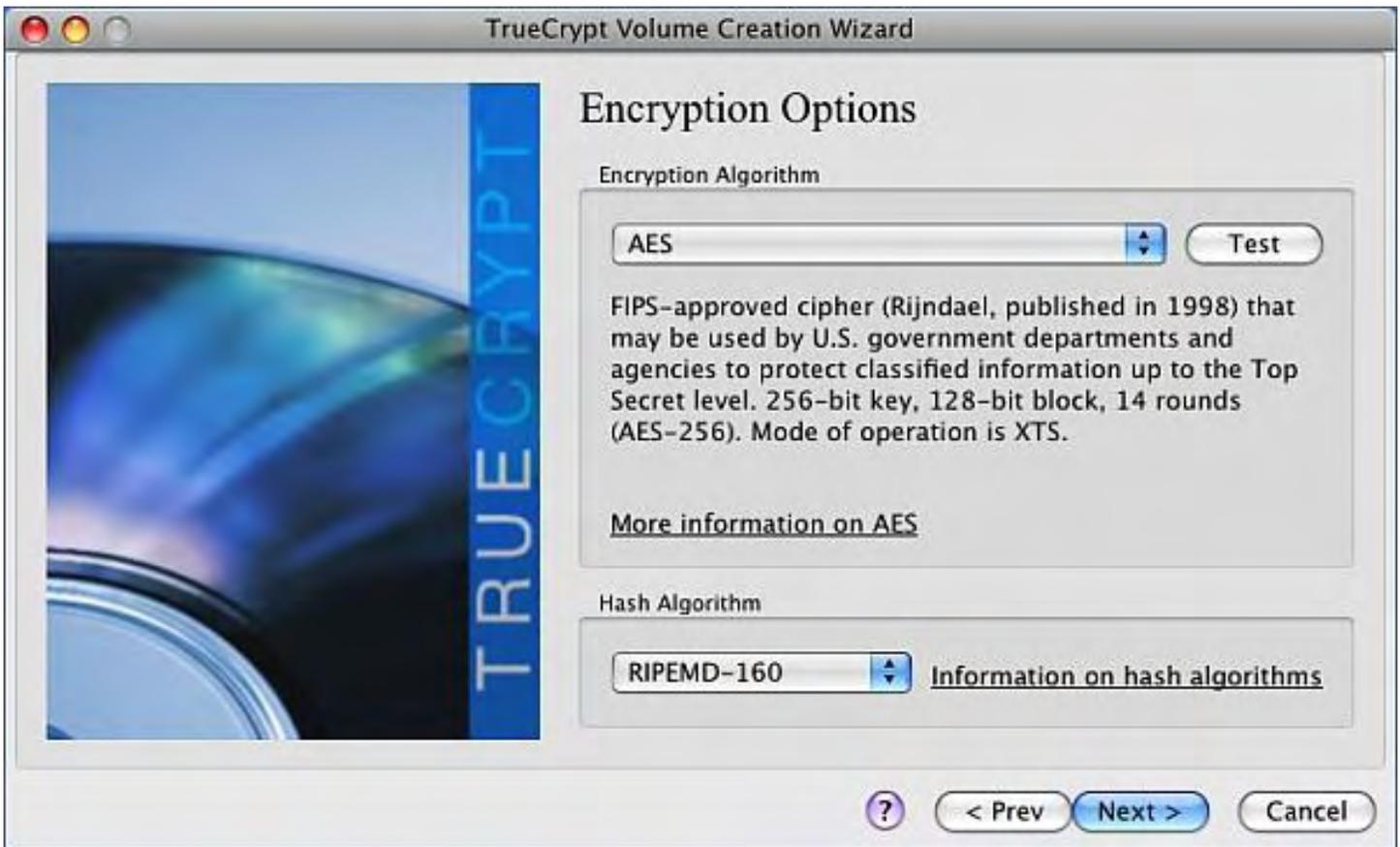


Figure 4. TrueCrypt can encrypt your data using the government's own AES algorithm.

TrueCrypt is a free, open source encryption program that lets you scramble data on your disk using the AES (Advanced Encryption Standard) algorithm that banks and government agencies use to protect their data from prying eyes. Besides encrypting your hard disk, TrueCrypt also has the option of creating a hidden partition on your hard disk that appears as random data. By hiding your sensitive files in this hidden partition, you can further protect your data from intruders.

This hidden partition can even have a separate, hidden operating system too. This lets you use the visible operating system to do harmless activities like play games and write letters, then use the hidden operating system to send out e-mail messages or write documents that you don't want anyone to see. Now if someone examines your hard disk, they'll only see the visible operating system with harmless data scattered around.

TrueCrypt is far more versatile and secure than FileVault. Since TrueCrypt is also free, you might as well use TrueCrypt instead of FileVault any time you want to encrypt your computer's hard disk and keep your files locked safely away.

Lying to Attack Apple

Over a year ago, Mike Daisey began performing his monologue called "The Agony and the Ecstasy of Steve Jobs." As part of this monologue, Mike talked about working conditions in Chinese factories that he claimed to include company guards holding guns and workers as young as eleven years old forced to work on assembly lines to make Apple products. Now Mike Daisey admits (tech.fortune.cnn.com/2012/03/18/apple-and-the-daisey-affair/) that he made up parts of his monologue that simply weren't true.

Why did Mike Daisey feel compelled to lie? Although lies might make better drama, he still deceived others that he

was telling the truth. Many people lie about Apple as a way to attack the company, yet if lying is your only weapon, shouldn't that make you question why you're attacking Apple in the first place? If you knowingly lie to deceive others to make a point, what does that say about you as a person?

Remember when Android tablets and smartphones advertised that they offered a full Flash experience? All of these companies lied right to the public since they knew Flash couldn't run well on mobile devices, which Adobe eventually admitted when they halted development (www.techspot.com/news/46192-adobe-stops-mobile-flash-development-will-focus-on-html5.html) of mobile Flash on November 9, 2011. Yet lying about Flash's capabilities on their smartphones and tablets was the only way these companies could claim an advantage over the iPhone and iPad.

Remember when Microsoft deceived consumers who bought PCs that were supposedly capable of running Vista, but really could only run the bare-bones version instead? Microsoft lied to consumers about Vista's capabilities (articles.businessinsider.com/2008-11-18/tech/29994947_1_windows-vista-jim-allchin-microsoft-executive) on Vista-certified PCs just to help sell more computers.

Buy almost any Windows PC and you'll find it loaded with antivirus trial programs from Symantec and McAfee, urging you to buy an annual subscription. What computer manufacturers and stores won't tell you is that you can get free antivirus protection just by using Microsoft's Security Essentials or a handful of other free programs. The reason computer manufacturers and stores won't tell you this is because they get paid by Symantec and McAfee to pre-install their software on a Windows PC. Such payment helps artificially lower the price of a Windows PC.

If you enjoy giving money to companies that lie right to your face, and then cheer and support those companies for deceiving you afterwards, then your own punishment is buying products that don't work like you expected. To make yourself feel better about getting ripped off, just lie about how happy you really are dealing with mediocrity and deliberate deception. Then keep handing your money to companies that get rich by taking advantage of your gullibility.

* * *

When you delete a file, your computer basically pretends the file doesn't exist even though it physically stays on your hard disk. That's why someone can use a utility program to undelete previously deleted files and see everything you tried to throw away.

To really delete something, you need to use the Secure Delete command. Instead of right-clicking on the Trash icon, hold down the Command key and then right-click. Now you'll see a Secure Empty Trash option, which securely deletes your files by overwriting them with random data.

Another way to securely delete data is through the Disk Utility program that's buried inside the Utilities folder in the Applications folder. Open the Disk Utility program, click on a drive you want to securely delete, click the Erase tab, and then click the Security Options button. Now you can drag a slider to define how securely you want to delete the files on that particular disk.

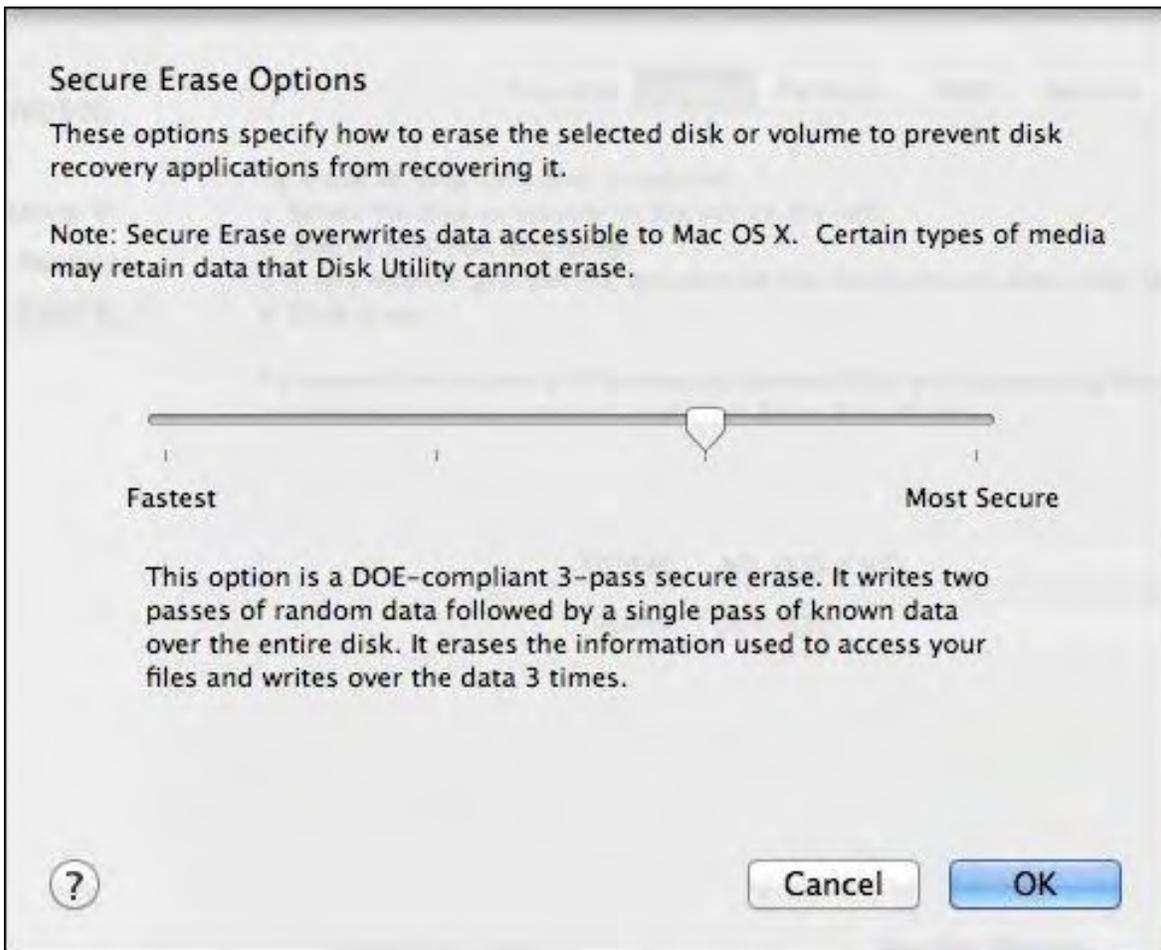


Figure 5. The Disk Utility program can securely delete everything on a drive.

In the early days, before Wally became an Internationally renowned comedian, computer book writer, and generally cool guy, Wally Wang used to hang around The Byte Buyer dangling participle with Jack Dunning and go to the gym to pump iron with Dan Gookin.

Wally is responsible for the following books:

- My New Mac, 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)

ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=159079189)

How to Live with a Cat (When You Really Don't Want To) ([www.amazon.com/gp/product/B006DJYL70/ref=as_li_tf_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B006DJYL70/ref=as_li_tf_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=217145&creative=399373&creativeASIN=B006DJYL70)

[20&linkCode=as2&camp=217145&creative=399373&creativeASIN=B006DJYL70](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B006DJYL70/ref=as_li_tf_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=217145&creative=399373&creativeASIN=B006DJYL70))

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?](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1430233362?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=1430233362)

[ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=1430233362](http://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-](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B006QSKM3A/ref=as_li_tf_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=B006QSKM3A)

[20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=B006QSKM3A](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B006QSKM3A/ref=as_li_tf_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=B006QSKM3A))

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

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

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.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)



Beyond Personal Computing

“Backing Up” by Marilyn K. Martin

Amusing anecdotes about the unfathomable process called backing up.

Backing up computer data leads to a lot of confusion. After all, the data to be backed up can't be seen or touched. So how can a non-tech user know how to perform—never mind understand—this mysterious duplication process?

Back-Up Misunderstandings

"Have you backed up your data?" a Support Tech asked a user on the phone one day. The confused user replied, "Uh, I didn't know my computer could go in reverse."

A Help Desk got a call from an angry user that his computer had just crashed. "Did you perform a back-up?" the Tech asked. Sounds of running footsteps and then a breathless, "I just backed up. Is the computer gonna blow or what?"

Mysteries of Backing Up Data

One Support Tech arrived to help a customer restore her system after a virus crash. He quickly deduced that the customer hadn't run a back-up in 18 months. And even then, she'd done it wrong. When questioned, the user replied, "I thought you just shoved in a blank disc and it sucked up all the data."

"Do you have a valid back-up?" asked another Support Tech. The user assured the Tech he did. "And when you turned on your system this morning, were there any messages?" "Oh sure," the user replied. "Just what it says every morning: Error XX - Backup Operation Failed."

A company user called their Tech Support in a panic: "I just created a new Word doc and saved it. Then I accidentally deleted it. Can you retrieve it for me?" The Tech sighed and replied that "No, the back-up feature isn't run until night time." The user seemed pleased. "So we can restore my doc tomorrow, right?"

Problems with Other

A customer called a Help Line to complain that his back-ups weren't taking. "But the printer has been acting up," the user offered. "Could that be the cause of our back-ups failing?"

"What do you mean 'other tape'?" challenged another user to Tech Support. "When it said 'second volume,' I just hit Enter again."

The Genie and the User

There once was a man who hated his computer. It was huge, clunky and outdated, and the manufacturer had horrible Support. And every time he tried to back-up his files, something important always got lost in the process. One day the Back-up Genie appeared to grant him three wishes. "But whatever you wish for," the Computer Genie warned, "The maker of your computer will get double of your wish."

First wish: "I want a computer that automatically backs itself up every three minutes." The Genie nodded. "The manufacturer will soon develop a new computer that will automatically back itself up every minute-and-a-half."

Second wish: "I want a computer that not only automatically backs itself up, but which only I can access the stored data." The Genie nodded. "The manufacturer will develop a new computer with data that can only be accessed by a company's CEO."

The man frowned and thought. Then he had his third wish. "I want you to beat my computer half to death."

Back-Ups That Seem Logical

"I have MS Office," complained a user to his hardware Help Desk. "I want to make a back-up of those disks, but my computer says it's not able to. Can you give me Microsoft's phone number so I can call them and complain?" The Tech, stifling his hilarity, dutifully gave the user Microsoft's phone number.

"I lost some of my files," complained another user to Tech Support. "I archived them, but when I went to look for them, they were gone!" "OK," started the Tech, "What program are you using to archive the files?" "I used 'undelete,' but they aren't there," the user replied.

The Tech then gamely asked, "And, uh, what command did you use to archive your files?" The user answered, "I used 'del' and the filename." The Support Tech quickly realized that the user was, in actuality, deleting his files. When he wanted a file again, the user would undelete it. Everything worked fine until that fateful day when the user discovered 'defrag,' which overwrote all his deleted files.

The Considerate Thief

A true story (gawker.com/5666044/worlds-most-considerate-computer-thief-backs-up-victims-data-mails-it-to-him) from October 2010, concerns a professor at Sweden's Umea University, who had his office computer stolen. He hadn't backed up his data, and was devastated by the loss. But a week after the theft, he got a strange package in the mail: A USB drive. The computer thief had laboriously backed up all the data on the stolen computer, and then mailed the drive to the professor. The professor was delighted, despite the loss of his hardware.

Going Through All the Wrong Motions

A small company insisted on backing up their own voluminous data. One of their administrators put a DAT tape into the drive every night, and removed it the next morning. It would then be dutifully labeled, and stored in a closet. When their computers crashed, they called their contracted Tech Support, since they couldn't restore their data from the last DAT tape. The Tech arrived to find that, despite all the rows of neatly labeled back-up tapes, the administrator had failed to run the back-up script. So all their stored tapes were empty.

A Tech went to a police station to work on their database recording parking fines. But first, he wanted to make sure that the database was backed up. "Oh sure," the administrator answered. "Every evening we back it all up on a floppy disc, then take it over to the other building and lock it in a fire-proof safe."

The Tech realized something was wrong. "You mean you back up the whole database onto a single floppy disc? I mean, one floppy disc only holds 1.44MB of data. And you've got over 10MB of data in this database." Turns out, that everyday the administrator would insert a fresh disc and type "FORMAT A" and then "backup complete." So the floppy discs they were saving in a fire-proof safe were completely empty.

One user called their company IT complaining of losing files from a floppy disc. When the Tech asked if the user was backing up their data everyday, the user replied, "Oh, yes, we were instructed to copy all of our data onto discs every day."

"OK," the Tech replied. "Put your back-up disc into your computer, and I'll show you how to restore the files." The user was confused. "Do you mean, put the disc in the printer?" The Tech soon realized that the company was using a copier to "copy" their discs every night. Then neatly storing the pictures of the discs in a filing cabinet.

How to Go from Back-Up to Disaster-Recovery

According to BizTechMagazine (www.biztechmagazine.com/article/2011/10/difference-between-backup-and-disaster-recovery), most computer back-ups on an individual computer are only the first step. In the workplace, however, the next step is in the "business saving" category, or DR (Disaster Recovery).

While most people think of DR as related to only catastrophic natural disasters, there are equally devastating disasters that can occur just within a business. Thieves can break in to steal a server or even a separate shared-disk system. BizTech recommends 1. protect more data (for faster recovery), 2. store it at an offsite location (even if you have to upgrade your routers), and 3. test your DR processes regularly.

(Many of these amusing anecdotes are on multiple Internet joke sites. But special thanks to Rinkworks.com (Rinkworks.com) and Mustsharejokes.com (Mustsharejokes.com).

Marilyn is a freelance writer and humorist, with a special interest (besides computers and technology) in Science Fiction. A SF Horror story appeared in July 2011 in Deadman's Tome (www.demonicctome.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.htm), 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-COMPUMOR0002-1.htm) for iPad, NOOK, etc., and MOBI format (www.computoredgebooks.com/Computer-Hardware-Parts-Is-Parts-humor-MOBI-for-Kindle-COMPUMOR0002-2.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.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)



Editor's Letters: Tips and Thoughts from Readers

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

"Adding E-Books to Kindle Fire," "Lipson is a Kook," "Office 2010 Always Crashes," "Revo Uninstaller," "Turntable to Laptop"

Adding E-Books to Kindle Fire

[Regarding Jack Dunning's September 9 article, "How to Download and Read Free E-Books":]

I downloaded "Windows 7 Explorer Secrets" in the EPUB format and attempted unsuccessfully to follow the article on installing third party e-books to the Kindle. This cannot be done because the Fire cannot be connected to a computer. I have the book on my computer and can read it in "Kindle for PC." Is there any way I can transfer it to my Kindle Fire? If not, will you provide me the PDF version?

Thank you for your consideration.

-Richard

Hi, Richard,

There are a few ways to get an e-book onto the Kindle Fire, but first it needs to be in the MOBI format, not EPUB. I've noted that the first e-books you purchased are in the appropriate MOBI format. I have attached the MOBI version to this e-mail.

First, the Kindle Fire will indeed connect to the USB port of a computer, however, Amazon was remiss in not including the appropriate cable, USB 2.0 (standard) to USB 2.0 (micro-B connector). This cable is used by some cell phones and GPS devices, but they are readily available at most electronic stores.

Second, there is an easier way to deliver content to you Kindle fire. Merely attach the file to an e-mail addressed to your Kindle e-mail address. (The e-mail must be sent from your Amazon logon e-mail address unless you add another one to your Amazon settings.) Your special Kindle e-mail address can be found at Amazon under Your Account => Manage Your Kindle [assigned name] @kindle.com next to the picture of your Kindle Fire. After syncing, the e-book will appear in your Documents folder in your Kindle Fire.

You can also convert the EPUB file to MOBI (or PDF) with a free program called Calibre (www.calibre-ebook.com/).

Let me know how this works out.

-Jack Dunning

Wow! That is great information, Jack, and I knew none of it. I saw the USB port on the Fire, but I thought that I had heard Leo Laporte (KFI) say that Wi-Fi was required, so I didn't investigate further (I've just acquired the Fire). Thank you very much, and I will let you know how it works for me.

The MOBI attachment worked just fine, Jack. I also downloaded Calibre, but was unable to use it. Thank you very much once again; I much appreciate your help.

-Richard

[The key to using Calibre is to first use "Add books" to put the e-book in the Calibre library, then use "Convert books" to create the new format (select the "Output format" in the upper right corner of convert window), then use "Save to disk" to make a copy of the new file. —Jack]

Lipson is a Kook

[Regarding Marilyn K. Martin's March 2 article, "Too Many Apps Among Little Known Tech Stories":]

"It is very non-intuitive, but that is the way evolution produced the living cell." That's not even a scientific statement! **No one** has ever produced **anything even** close to a living cell. How could one be so ignorant as to think it could happen by itself—with all information, materials and processes in place to "create" a replicating organism? Defies laws of probability! Evolutionary biology has given up on the spontaneous generation of life and is moving toward theories of pan spermia. Lipson is a kook and you're little better by propagating his quotes.

-Mark Burton, MS, Albuquerque

Mark—

Thanks for your comment. This series of "Little Known Hi-Tech" articles I write are aimed at finding the stories that seldom make the national news, or are localized. I don't take sides, push an agenda (as in Evolution versus Creationism), nor intentionally glorify any one person. I'm looking for innovative ideas, research or about-to-breakout discoveries. Identifying the people involved is only fair.

-Marilyn, Texas

Office 2010 Always Crashes

[Regarding the January 27 Digital Dave column:]

Don't know if this helps, but I had to change my default printer to Adobe PDF. Seems every time I went to open a Word document, Office first kept looking for my network printer (default). When it couldn't find it, I got similar problems.

-Terea, San Diego, CA

Revo Uninstaller

[Regarding the January 13 Digital Dave column:]

In my opinion, Advanced Uninstaller (download.cnet.com/Advanced-Uninstaller-Free/3000-2096_4-75157230.html?tag=mncol;7) is a much better program, although I also use Revo too. Both programs are *free*.

-John Cultrera, Temecula, CA

Buck in El Cajon wrote "I prefer to use a comprehensive file uninstaller program like Revo Uninstaller. When it uninstalls a program it does a very complete check of the reg file and the hard drive to find any left over bits and pieces of the uninstalled program."

But Revo costs \$40. What's wrong with leaving a few "bits and pieces" behind? The only problem I've ever seen is when an older version of a DLL is on the path before a newer version, and a simple uninstall should resolve that.

-Peter, Los Angeles

Turntable to Laptop

[Regarding the February 24 Digital Dave column:]

Transferring LPs to Digital: I'm using a turntable that directly connects to my computer via a USB port (www.amazon.com/mn/search/?tag=comput0b9-20&field-keywords=turntable%20usb%20port&url=search-alias%3Delectronics). I've found this to be the simplest method and I believe I paid about \$100 for the turntable. I have a turntable in my normal stereo system, but setting up a laptop, connecting through the stereo, and having all this equipment in the living room every time I wanted to do an album was too much for me.

I have a hundred LPs and now I can do it all in our office and the USB turntable is always ready. Plus, the software that came with the turntable has some useful tools.

-Bill Greenlee, San Diego

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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