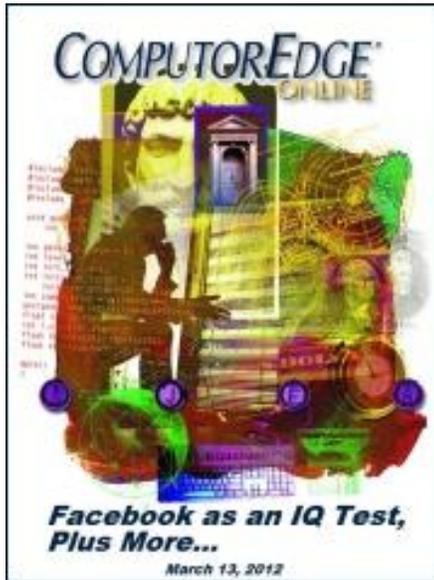# *ComputorEdge™ Online — 04/13/12*

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High Tech Stories and Intro to Mac OS X, the Sequel

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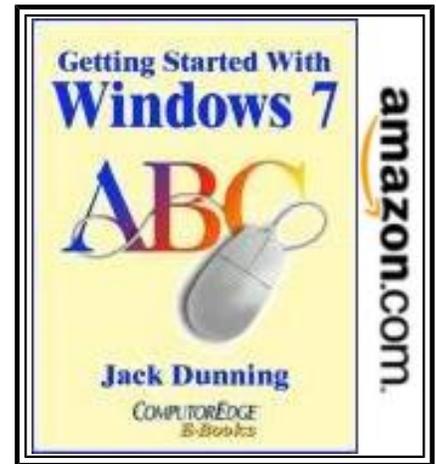
Digital Dave

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

Apple's OS Versus Windows OS; Creating a System Image with NTFS Formatting; Dual Booting Windows 7 Pro 64-bit and Windows 8 Preview.

Dear Digital Dave,

It is well-known that Apple's OS resistance to viruses is hands down better than Windows, but can you explain in layman's terms why?

Poz
San Diego, CA

Dear Poz,

The resistance of Apple's OS X to malware is mostly myth. The primary reason why hackers go after Windows and Microsoft products is because they are still 90 percent of the market and present many more targets of opportunity. People who write malware prefer to go after the biggest fish. With the current recent growth of Apple, there has been an increase in attacks on Macs.

The core of OS X is the Unix-like FreeBSD operating system. This has been proven to be a very secure environment. Yet to develop the current Mac interface Apple needed to break with the Unix-like environment in ways that actually introduced vulnerabilities. In a number of past hacking contests, the Mac was breached in two minutes or less.

As with Windows, there is usually increased security with each version release of an operating system, although occasional vulnerabilities will appear in new features. Windows XP was full of holes, but now it is more than ten years old (with many patches) it is pretty secure—although the newer versions (Windows 7 and Vista) are much more robust. Over time, the battle with malware has improved all operating systems on the security front.

By far the biggest source of problems is not from the operating system, but software applications which allow access to the nefarious hackers. Even then, human error (inadvertently opening a bad file) is usually the cause of an infection. If it is indeed "well-known that Apple's OS resistance to viruses is hands down better than Windows," then it is because of all the Apple Mac advertising claiming just that, and not based upon the facts.

In interesting related news, there was just an outbreak of the Flashback Trojan on Macs. If you're running anything older than Snow Leopard, Apple will not be providing a Java patch. Should there be some kind of truth in advertising issue here? I've recently heard radio ads for Macs that say that they don't get viruses.

I use Macs (as well as Windows computers) and I'm just as cautious when using them. Macs are a little safer than

Windows computers only because most viruses encountered were written for the PC and won't run on a Mac. If Apple ever takes over the market, then they may also become the virus king.

Digital Dave

Dear Digital Dave,

When I attempt to create a system image on my external HD, I get this message:

"This drive cannot be used to store a system image because it is not formatted with NTFS."

How do I format it with NTFS?

Thank you for all the good advice and help you give out.

Ray McCutcheon
Stagecoach, NV

Dear Ray,

When you buy a new hard drive (*www.amazon.com/mn/search/?_encoding=UTF8&node=595048&tag=comput0b9-20*) or flash drive (*www.amazon.com/mn/search/?_encoding=UTF8&node=3151491&tag=comput0b9-20*) it is usually formatted in the FAT32 format which is compatible with most computer systems for reading and writing. However, Windows uses the NTFS (New Technology File System) to add extra features and metadata. Many of the Windows features such as indexing for searches and making a system image require the drive to be in the NTFS format.

The NTFS format is more secure than FAT32 and offers other more advanced features. You can convert or reformat a FAT32 drive to NTFS to resolve compatibility issues. However, once in the new format, you will lose the portability to Macs (read-only) and Linux computers. Also, the drive will not work with the older Windows 95 and 98 machines—if you happen to own one.

Your first choice is to convert, rather than reformat, a FAT32 drive to the NTFS format. Many drives, both flash and external hard drives, come with software pre-installed (although you may consider it useless). Often they include utilities and sync programs that help with your backup capabilities. By converting rather than reformatting the drive, the programs (and any data) are saved. To convert the drive to NTFS, open the Command window. (Type "command" in the Start Search field of the Microsoft Start menu, and select Command Prompt window—or Start => All Programs => Accessories => Command Prompt. If you are not already the administrator, you will need to "Run as administrator.") At the prompt (C:>), type "convert <drive letter>: /fs:ntfs". For example:

```
convert d: /fs:ntfs
```

where "d" is the letter of the target drive.

If you're not worried about saving any data or programs on the drive, reformatting the drive will accomplish the same thing as converting without saving any programs or data. Right-click on the drive in Windows Explorer, or in Disk Management in Computer Management, and select the Format… menu item. (Warning: Format will completely erase everything on the drive partition.) Select NTFS and OK. Depending upon the size of the drive, either of these processes (converting or formatting) may take a while. Once it has started, be patient, don't interrupt it.

After you have converted or reformatted your drive to NTFS it should be available for all Windows functions. This is the first thing I do with any new FAT32 hard drive or thumb drive I plan to use exclusively with a Windows computer.

Digital Dave

Dear Digital Dave,

I will be purchasing a new laptop with hard drive and SSD. I will be dual booting Windows 7 Professional 64-bit and Windows 8 Pro 64-bit. Is it better to put both operating systems on the same drive and use the Windows boot loader and Windows OS select screen, put one each on different drives, or use virtual software such as Sandbox, VM Fusion or Parallels? What is the performance gain, drawback, advantages or disadvantages of each scenario?

Jay
San Diego, CA

Dear Jay,

The first thing to remember is that the current version of Windows 8 is the Consumer Preview which is merely a beta version of the new operating system available primarily for demonstration purposes. I would not make it a permanent (or even a regular) part of my daily computing. There are likely changes which will occur to Windows 8 between now and its expected October release date. It will probably look and work the same, but any preview installations will become obsolete—even if they continue to operate. For those reasons, I would use temporary solutions for booting Windows 8.

I know you're not planning to do this, but as a warning for others, I certainly would not install the Windows 8 Consumer Preview over a current installation of Windows unless it is on a computer I never use anymore. This would wipe out the current Windows and later require reinstallation if you ever wanted to go back.

Your first option of partitioning your drive and installing a version of Windows in each partition is viable. The advantage of this would be that your system will be operating with the same hardware with either version of Windows without interference from Virtual Machine software. This would give maximum performance. However, depending on the size of your hard drive, you may have some drive partition management issues.

The option of putting a different operating system on different drives is also workable, plus one of them could be a flash drive. The advantage of this is that there is no messing with partitions on the same drive. Any performance issues will depend upon whether the drives are identical in speed or varied. The computer itself will offer the same performance with both drive options. I would certainly consider putting Windows 8 on a 32GB flash drive (*www. amazon.com/gp/product/B001XURP8Q/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20*) (4GB minimum, but extra gives plenty of storage space) for booting as a good way of using the preview without interfering with any current Windows installation.

Since I consider Windows 8 Consumer Preview a temporary solutions, I prefer running Windows 8 in a Virtual Machine. The primary disadvantage to running Windows 8 in virtualization software is that you will see some performance degradation. There is no way to avoid it when you run the operating system through another layer of software and it's forced to share the processor with the other operating system. How much performance will be affected depends upon the application running, the speed of the hardware and the performance of the Virtual Machine software. On some computers the slowdown may be unnoticeable.

Note: Both VM Fusion and Parallels are Mac solutions for virtualization. Look for the desktop versions (workstation) to run on a PC.

Another interesting option is to run standalone VM software (such as VMWare Workstation, which I haven't tried. I've only used server solutions). In this case, you run the VM software as your native OS and it runs the Windows 7 and 8 virtual machines. There is far less of a performance hit for either OS (unless they are both running simultaneously) since the VM software is a highly optimized OS and they can be started, stopped and paused independently. This sort of setup is increasingly popular for server environments. I have had machines running five or six VMs as needed. Also, next time an OS release comes along that you'd like to try, it's no hassle to add another VM, plus they are very easy to back up. There is a license fee however. This is probably overkill for your situation.

Digital Dave

<p style="text-align:center">*   *   *</p>

If would like a little more information about Windows 8, Jack Dunning has the book *Misunderstanding Windows 8: An Introduction, Orientation, and How-to for Windows 8* available for the Kindle at Amazon (*www.amazon.com/gp/product/B007RMCRH8/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20*), the NOOK at Barnes and Noble (*www.barnesandnoble.com/w/books/1109995715?ean=2940014229463*), and for the iPad at ComputorEdge E-Books (*www.computoredgebooks.com/Misunderstanding-Windows-8-EPUB-for-iPad-NOOK-KOBO-etc-Windows8-1.htm*). Jack tells me that for a limited time he's selling the e-book for only 99 cents on Amazon and Barnes and Noble—regularly $2.99.

More Little Known High Tech Stories

"QR Codes on Condoms, Spoofing and Jamming, Cell Phone Stun Guns and $35 Computers" by Marilyn K. Martin

Facebook vs. IQ Tests; QR Codes; New Reporting Apps; The T-Shirt with a Beat; Personal Safety Tech; Earthbound GPS; $35 Computers and an App against Bribery; Video Games; Crime-Fighting Tech; New Anti-Terrorism Efforts; Spoofing and Jamming; Medical Tech; Tech Companies Refocus.

Facebook Profile Versus IQ Tests

An article just published in the Journal of Applied Social Psychology makes the astounding claim (*www. siliconvalley.com/personal-technology/ci_20091488*) that a Facebook profile is better than an IQ Test in predicting what kind of employee a person might be. The study asked six people with Human Resources experience to study a sample of 500 people on Facebook. They were asked to rate the Facebook posters on the "Big Five" personality traits: extroversion, conscientiousness, emotional stability, agreeableness and openness to new experiences.

"High scores on these traits are generally accepted by human resource managers as an indication of good future job performance." Meanwhile, the people whose Facebook profiles were being studied, were asked to give a self-evaluation and take an IQ test. The employers of the people with the studied Facebook profiles were asked after six months to rate these same people's job performance. The study found that their Facebook profiles had been a much better indication of their performance on the job than their IQ test. While experts caution that a Facebook page can provide a lot of information which is illegal for a job interviewer to ask of a candidate, especially over the phone (sight unseen), a 2011 study by Reppler found that 90% of recruiters and hiring managers looked at an applicant's Facebook page whether they should have or not.

The T-Shirt with a Beat

ThinkGeek (*www.thinkgeek.com*) now offers an Electronic Drum Machine Shirt (*www.*

latimes.com/travel/deals/la-trb-shirt-drum-kit-gear-20120224,0,1345249. story) with a removable, battery-operated box that amplifies a range of nine built-in drum styles. It has eight drum pads and controls "delineated on the wired-up rubber grid attached with Velco to the front of the shirt." Each drum style (or kit) has a choice of seven sounds that can be mixed and matched with other styles of music, like rock, jazz or techno punk. The amp box has a metal clip for attaching to a belt or waistband, and can be stashed into a pocket sewn into the bottom of the shirt. It runs on batteries, and the electronics detach for washing.

Personal Safety Tech

One new example of merging-technologies are cell phone stun guns. StunGunsCheaper.com (*StunGunsCheaper. com*) sells combo cell phones and stun guns for under $40. TheHomeSecuritySuperStore.com (*TheHomeSecuritySuperStore.com*) also offers cell phone stun guns in the same price range, up to 5,000,000 volts.

In mid-March 2012, the *Las Vegas Sun* reported that residents can now subscribe to an e-mail or text alert system (*www.lasvegassun.com/news/2012/mar/15/metro-rolls-out-free-subscription-based-crime-aler/*) about crime in their neighborhoods. A Nevada-based start-up called AlertID (*alertid.com/default.asp*) is a free service that lets users customize their settings based on what kind and how much information they want to receive. "The program sends users a mixture of crime notifications, sex-offender registry updates and public safety announcements, in addition to interactive features." Users can also add multiple locations for which to receive updates, such as parents' neighborhoods or their children's schools. Alerts are "an important way to reach people in an emergency," from a lost child to evacuation notices during a wildfire.

QR Codes on Condoms?

Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest is working on encouraging safe sex by passing out 55,000 QR-coded (*seattletimes.nwsource.com/html/health/2017582308_condoms24m.html*) condoms to local colleges and universities. The QR-code wrappers can be scanned by smartphones, "connecting users to a mobile Web site that plots their approximate location and asks a few non-identifying questions." The safe sexual encounter will end up a little blue dot on a searchable map at WhereDidYouWearit.com (*WhereDidYouWearit.com*), which will hopefully encourage young people to practice more safe sex as part of an everyone's-using-condoms population.

New Reporting Apps from the Department of Homeland Security
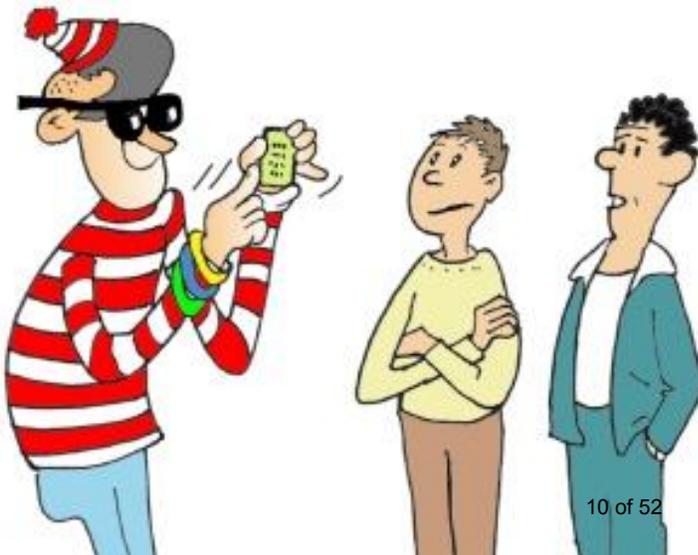
The West Virginia Department of Homeland Security, and the WV governor's office, is trying out a new snitch-app (*www.wired.com/ dangerroom/2012/03/app-homeland-security/*). The new mobile app is called the Suspicious Activity Reporting Application, which can be downloaded from the Apple App Store and the Android Market. It is basically a camera function, and users can submit additional identifying details for the people, vehicles, or locations snapped. Users then submit the photo (s) and information to authorities, with the option

J. Whiting

"It looks like someone hacked Joe's 'What's Cool' smart phone app again."

of identifying themselves or remaining anonymous.

Kentucky's DoHS launched a similar app last year, Eyes and Ears on Kentucky. The information ends up at a Fusion Center. But after that things are unclear, in terms of what the information is used for, or if civil liberties are being protected. It's also unclear why West Virginia needs such a terror-report app, since the state was one of only 15 states in 2010 with no terrorism convictions in state or federal courts since 9/11.

Earthbound GPS: Cheaper and More Accurate

Australian researchers are making more reliable GPS systems (*nextbigfuture.com/2012/02/gps-enhanced-with-cheap-cameras-and.html*) using camera technology and mathematical algorithms. "At the moment you need three satellites in order to get a decent GPS signal, and even then it can take a minute or more to get a lock on your location," a researcher said. Their approach is to navigate with visual algorithms, dubbed SeqSLAM (Sequence Simultaneous Localization and Mapping), which "uses local best match and sequence recognition components to lock in locations."

New Take on Global Tech: $35 Computers and an App against Bribery

At the beginning of March 2012, The Raspberry Pi sold out (*www.latimes.com/business/technology/la-fi-tn-raspberry-pi-35-computer-20120302,0,5105970.story*) its entire 10,000 units available for pre-order within minutes of going on sale. The Raspberry Pi (*www.raspberrypi.org*), you see, is a bare-bones $35 computer the size of a credit card, designed to let students write code. International interest was so keen, that even after the pre-order units were gone, Internet traffic was so intense that it crashed the Web sites of the retailers (PremierFarnell.com (*PremierFarnell.com*) and RSComponents.com (*RSComponents.com*)) authorized to sell it.

The unit has no case, monitor, keyboard or mouse, but users can surf the Internet with an Ethernet connection. It was developed by Cambridge (UK) academics who developed the teensy-computer over "mutual concern over how little British youth know about computer programming." The group took six years to create their tiny, cheap computer. When their product finally went on sale, executive director Eben Upton, of the Raspberry Pi Foundation, said they got 10 times the response they were expecting. "The foundation is about teaching kids to program," he stated, with some bafflement. "Not about making computers."

As reported in the *New York Times* in early March 2012, a couple in India has started a Web site to gather (*www.nytimes.com/2012/03/07/business/web-sites-shine-light-on-petty-bribery-worldwide.html*) anonymous reports of "bribes paid, bribes requested but not paid, and requests that were expected but not forthcoming". I Paid A Bribe (*www.ipaidabribe.com*) was started by Mr. and Ms. Ramanathan and Sridar Iyengar

in August 2010. They report that 80% of the more than 400,000 reports to the site tell of "officials and bureaucrats seeking illicit payments to provide routine services, or process paperwork and forms." Similar sites are popping up worldwide. And slowly, the data is being used to push through reforms.

Video Games in the Sky!

In February 2012, Electronic Arts International and Bioware promoted their new video game space odyssey Mass Effect 3 (*www.wired.com/gamelife/2012/02/mass-effect-3-space-edition/*), by sending copies of the game aloft in weather balloons over New York, San Francisco, Las Vegas, Berlin, London and Paris. It was a sophisticated launch, using high-altitude balloons with GPS and HD cameras. To grab a free version when they landed, contestants had to create an online account at Electronic Arts International (*www.ea.com*), then use the site's GPS system to race to the landing destination.

By February 24, the San Francisco game copies sent aloft had landed 150 feet (*www.wired.com/ gamelife/2012/02/mass-effect-3-space-edition-found/? utm_source=Contextly&utm_medium=RelatedLinks&utm_campaign=MoreRecently*) off the ground, in a tree in the woods north of Santa Cruz. Ten fans arrived at the landing site, and used a softball on a rope, slingshots and marbles to try to dislodge the treed games. No word on the outcome.

Crime-Fighting Tech

Some police have started wearing small video cameras (*www.nytimes. com/2012/02/21/technology/tasers-latest-police-weapon-the-tiny- camera-and-the-cloud.html*) around their necks, to record all public encounters and end the he-said/she-said differing versions after the fact. Now Taser International (*www.taserinternational.com*) announced in February 2012 that they are releasing a new and smaller camera for law enforcement, called Axon. "It is a half-ounce unit about the size of a cigar stub that clips onto a collar or sunglasses, and can record two hours of video during a shift." The data is transferred by a docking machine to a local machine. There the video can be stored in a cloud-computing system using Taser's online evidence management system, tagged and labeled for future reference.

Taser International's main product, tasers, remain controversial. The company already has some 55,000 minicameras mounted on their tasers, but the cameras are only triggered when the taser is drawn. So the new Axon camera on a collar answers the criticism by recording an entire event, not just from the point of the taser being drawn. "Police spend up to $2.5 billion a year paying off complaints about brutality," says a police officer whose recording of a fatal gunshot verified he'd acted correctly. "Plus, people plead out when there is video."

In early March 2012, San Jose police tracking down a stolen iPad, stumbled on one of the biggest meth stashes (*www.contracostatimes.com/crime-courts/ci_20096845*) ever seized in the United States. The police were tracking a stolen iPad via GPS, and didn't have a search warrant. So they knocked on an apartment door and asked permission to come in. The occupant let the police in, where they not only found the stolen iPad, but 780 pounds of crystal meth—worth about $35 million. Astonished at the huge haul, the lingering question on everyone's mind was: With $35 million in meth lying around, why did the occupants have to steal an iPad?

New Anti-Terrorism Efforts to Store Every E-Mail, Phone Call and Web Visit

In February 2012, it was announced that the British government was in negotiations with phone companies and broadband providers to store all their citizens' (*www.telegraph.co.uk/technology/internet/9090617/Phone-*

and-email-records-to-be-stored-in-new-spy-plan.html) phone calls, text messages, e-mails and Web sites visited for a year. To be officially announced in May, all the stored data has to be available to security services in real-time in accordance with the British government's latest anti-terrorism plans. Concerns are already being raised about not only civil liberties, but how safe the stored data will be from hackers.

In Mid-March 2012, *Wired* Magazine reported that the National Security Agency (NSA) has broken ground on a massive complex in the western U.S. called the Utah Data Center (*www.wired.com/threatlevel/2012/03/ ff_nsadatacenter/all/1*). The $2 billion center is projected to be open by September 2013, with the purpose to "intercept, decipher, analyze and store vast swaths of the world's communications as they zap down from satellites and zip through the underground and undersea cables of international, foreign and domestic networks." Domestically, everything from personal e-mails, cell phone calls and Google Internet searches will be stored, as well as "digital pocket litter" from parking receipts to online purchases and travel itineraries. Amid concerns of invasion of privacy, the complex is primarily aimed at terrorist activity. No one wants another 9/11 surprise, and we need something substantial to counter the growing cyber attacks from China and other hostile countries.

## Spoofing and Jamming: GPS to Chinese Missiles

At the end of February 2012, *Wired UK* did an article on GPS spoofing (*www.wired.co.uk/news/ archive/2012-02/22/gps-spoofing*) and jamming. Jammers "put out radio signals at the same frequency as the GPS satellites, overwhelming the devices that are used to plot positioning—including anti-theft tracking devices put into trucks traveling with valuable loads." Spoofing uses "devices that create false GPS signals to fool receivers into thinking that they are at a different location or different time." Experts are warning that spoofers could be used to interfere with time-stamping systems used in high frequency financial institution trading. "So far no credible high profile attack has been recorded," an expert explains. "But we are seeing evidence of basic spoofing, likely carried out by rogue individuals or small groups."

In mid-March 2012, *Wired* also reported that U.S. Naval Intelligence is working on techniques to counter China's dangerous new carrier-killer missile (*www.wired.com/dangerroom/2012/03/killing-chinas-carrier-killer/*). The article's title states the primary anti-missile options being considered: "Jam, Spoof and Shoot." "You want to spoof the missile, preclude detection, jam them, shoot them down if possible, get them to termination, confuse it," says Adm. Jonathan Greenert, the Navy's top officer. "The concept is end-to-end, and the capabilities therein (are) what we're pursuing." Time is on the Navy's side, however, since the Chinese carrier-killer missile (DF-21D) has reached "initial operating capability," but is not yet able to destroy a naval carrier.

Wireless Medical Tech

Developing needed personal technology that is still affordable, is the challenge today in our Digital Age. This is emphasized in the medical field, where it's much less expensive to treat people in their own homes (*www. siliconvalley.com/ci_20174226*) than in hospitals or even doctors' offices. A 2010 survey of 2,000 consumers by PricewaterhouseCoopers, found that 40% of those surveyed said "they would willingly buy a device and pay a monthly fee to automatically send their heart rate, blood pressure, blood sugar and weight data to their doctors."

Wireless medical technology is already generating over $1 billion a year, despite concerns of too much transmitted data overwhelming doctors, or being stolen or spied upon by hackers. One 57 year old patient who chose exercise and weight loss instead of drugs to bring down his blood pressure, takes his blood pressure every morning. Every few weeks he is reminded by his iPhone, and e-mails his blood pressure readings to his doctor.
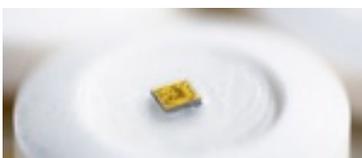
Proteus Biomedical (*www.proteusbiomed.com*) will begin selling tiny edible
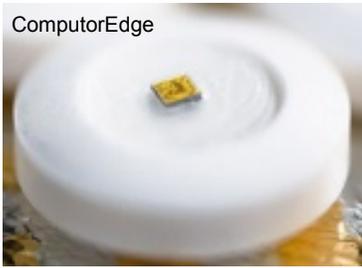
sensors in the UK this Fall. The size of a grain of sand, the sensor is integrated into a drug tablet or capsule, and is activated by stomach fluid. When the medicine is taken, the sensor signals to a patch on the patient's body. The patch then relays the information, along with the patient's heart rate and other medical details, to the caregiver's cell phone. This could be a boon to seniors who live alone, and easily forget to take their medication.

Tech Companies Refocus with Looming Defense Budget Cuts

The Glory Days of defense spending on Big Ticket vehicles and weaponry are coming to an end. But diversity, innovation and down-sizing will help contracted companies weather the storm better than others In January 2012, the Motley Fool profiled three companies (*beta.fool.com/dillarda/2012/01/06/three-companies-stand-lose-budget-cuts/553/*) that stood to lose the most with slashed U.S. defense spending. Lockheed-Martin currently receives 78% of their total revenue from government contracts. But their Web site also emphasizes their civilian "Gate to Gate Air Traffic Solutions," and a press release from March 2012 says they are "Broadening Cloud Computing Solutions to the UK government." They seem to have some defense funding in place as they continue their prototype "Space Fence, to revolutionize space situational awareness" program with the Air Force. These programs, and their "missile and air defense systems" may weather the defense cuts.

Northrop Grumman currently has 48% of their total revenue from government defense contracts, but also has some interesting programs in place beyond the U.S. military. They too are pursuing downsized military programs like cybersecurity and unmanned-systems. And a recent press release about hosting the Norwegian State Secretary for the Ministry of Defence mentioned strengthening their partnership, possibly alluding to sales of their military equipment overseas. And, most telling, they are actively recruiting new employees.

Raytheon, the third contractor, has about 60% of their total revenue currently tied up in government contracts. Their Web site emphasizes their shift to more civilian projects, from Global Air Traffic Management to Public Safety Technologies. And a check of their Press Releases shows a plethora of U.S. and overseas military contracts awarded in December 2011, totaling in the billions of dollars.

At the end of February 2012, iRobot Corporation (*www.irobot.com*) announced a reorganization that will create a new emerging technology division (*www.boston.com/business/technology/innoeco/2012/02/irobot_reorg_aims_to_enable_co.html*), a good sign that they are diversifying. The corporation is known for home robots like Roomba, and military robots like Packbot. Less interested in warehouse robots (like made by Kiva Systems and Symbotic), their push into telemedicine was accelerated when iRobot shares lost one-third their value after drastic cuts in U.S. defense spending. iRobot soon announced a $6 million investment in the InTouch Health company (*www.intouchhealth.com*).

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

ComputorEdge 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.

Intro to Macintosh OS X--The Sequel
"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, like its predecessor, is intended for 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 OS X and other operating systems.

1. (OS X's Apple Menu + Spotlight + Dock) = (Windows' Start Menu + Taskbar)

The inaugural 1984 Macintosh came with an operating system (OS) called System. That OS and its successors have included a menubar item called Apple menu (*en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Mac_OS*).

The Apple menu is named after Apple, Inc.'s logo (black-grey in Leopard, Snow Leopard and Lion; blue in previous versions (*www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mac_OS_X_Leopard*) of OS X) that is available in the menubar's upper left corner system-wide; in other words, regardless of which program is the currently active one, the Apple menu is available. It provides various options for managing your Mac (see Figure 1).
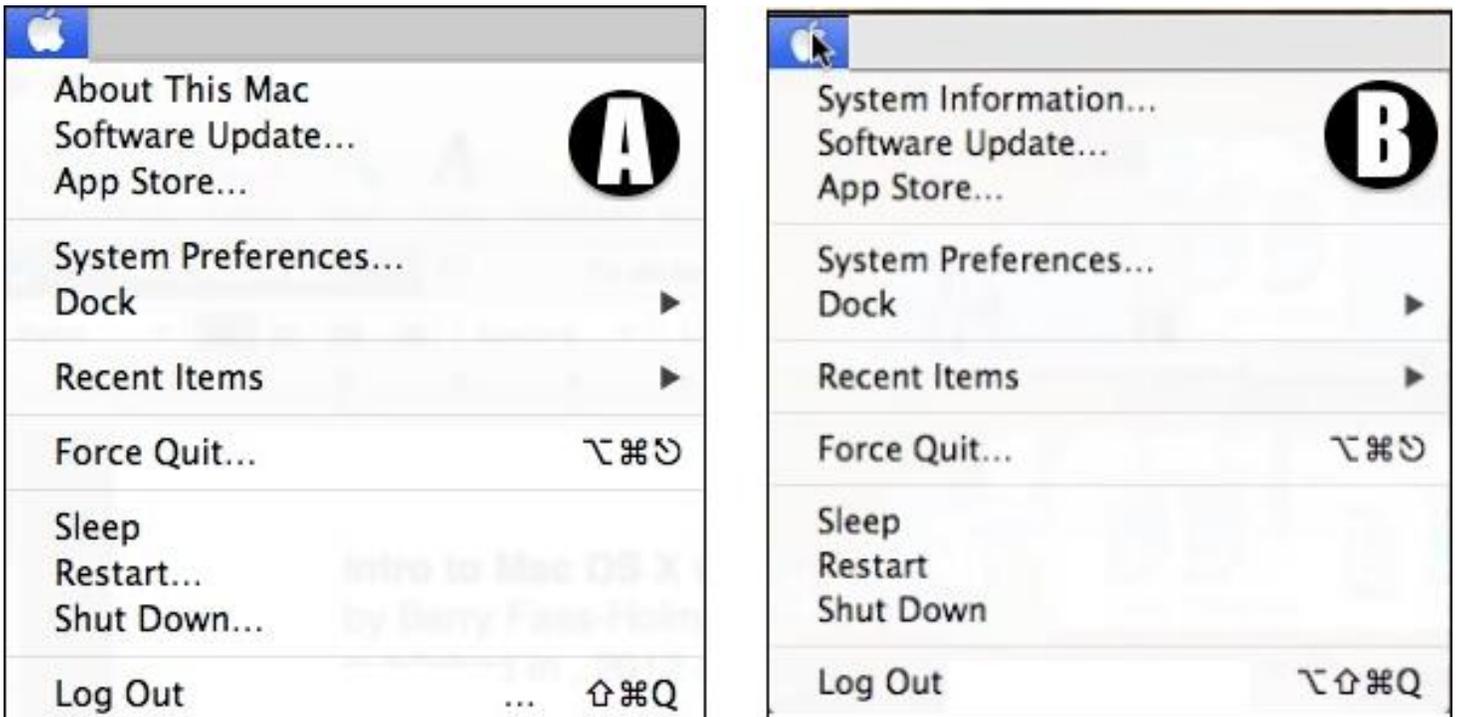

Figure 1A. The ubiquitous Apple menu is located at the left-most end of the menubar. When single-clicked or tapped, the logo turns white and the menu displays. Figure 1B. The menu's contents are the same regardless of what program is currently active. However, some of the menu's contents are different when you press the Option key while single-clicking or tapping the Apple logo; for example, Restart, Shut Down and Log Out no longer have an ellipsis, which means that selecting any of these commands will execute it immediately without displaying a cautionary alert (asking whether you really want to restart, shut down, or log out, respectively).

Spotlight is the search feature introduced in OS X 10.4 Tiger (*en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spotlight_(software)*) that, like the Apple menu, is available system-wide. It is represented by a magnifying glass icon located at the right-most end of the menubar. After single-clicking or tapping this icon, a text-input box displays in which you can type word(s) representing the name of a folder or file that you want to find (you also can type numerical equations and use Spotlight as a calculator; see Figure 2A). In addition to searching for files and folders by name, Spotlight also can search the contents of files on local storage media (see Figure 2B), on the Web, and in the dictionary built into OS X.
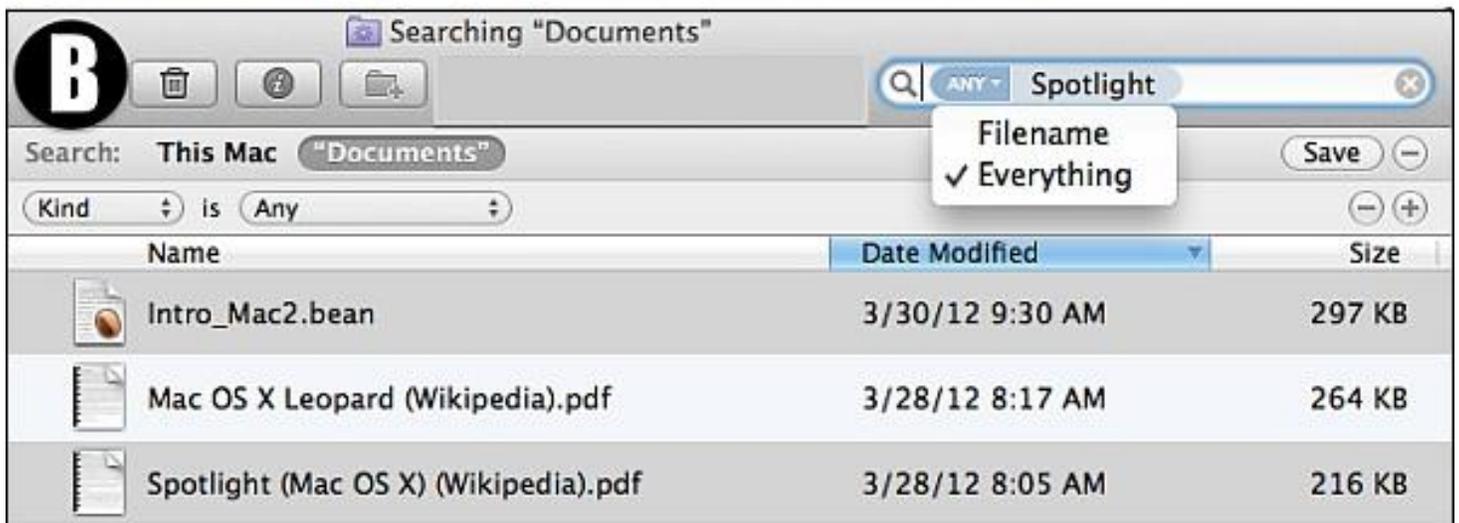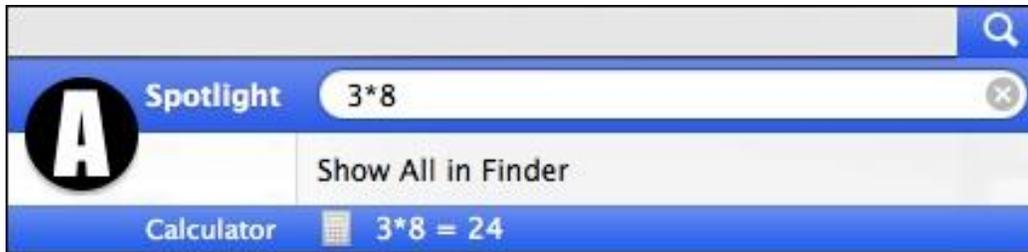

Figure 2A. Spotlight is OS X's system-wide search feature. It can perform simple calculations in addition to finding character strings within files' names or within files contents. Figure 2B. To access Spotlight, single click or tap the magnifying glass icon in the menubar's upper right corner (regardless of what program is currently active), or switch to the Finder and press command (⌘) F to display a search window. Lion's Spotlight provides a pop-up menu for choosing one of two options—search files' names, or search files' names and contents.

The Dock (*en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dock_(OS_X)*) (see Figure 3A) has been a signature feature in OS X since its inaugural version 11 years ago. This feature is a strip that functions as a customizable application or file launcher. Drag the icons of frequently used programs, folders, or files into the Dock to add them; drag undesired ones out of the Dock to remove them. After dragging an item into the Dock, a pointer (see aliases below) to that item is automatically added to the Dock. After dragging an item (pointer) out of the Dock, the pointer (not the original item) is automatically deleted (OS X displays an animated puff of smoke; see Figure 3B). In addition, for programs whose icons are not already in the Dock, OS X automatically adds a program's icon in the Dock after the user launches that program, and removes it after the user quits the program.

Figure 3A. The Dock functions as a convenient and customizable application launcher. Each icon in the Dock is a pointer (alias) to that icon's original item. Single-click a program's icon and the program launches; drag and drop a file on a program's icon and the file opens in that program. Figure 3B. The Dock's appearance is customized in the Dock System Preference. The Dock's contents are customized by dragging items (programs, files, folders, hard drives) into or out of the Dock. Items dragged into the Dock remain there; items dragged out of the Dock are removed in an animated puff of smoke without affecting the original item.

2. Aliases

The Desktop is a feature of the OS that serves as a virtual metaphor (*en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ Desktop_metaphor*) of a physical desk's surface. I've seen Mac Desktops that have countless objects (programs, files, folders, etc.; see Figure 4). However, this is a potentially risky practice because a user could inadvertently move an important file from the Desktop to the Trash.
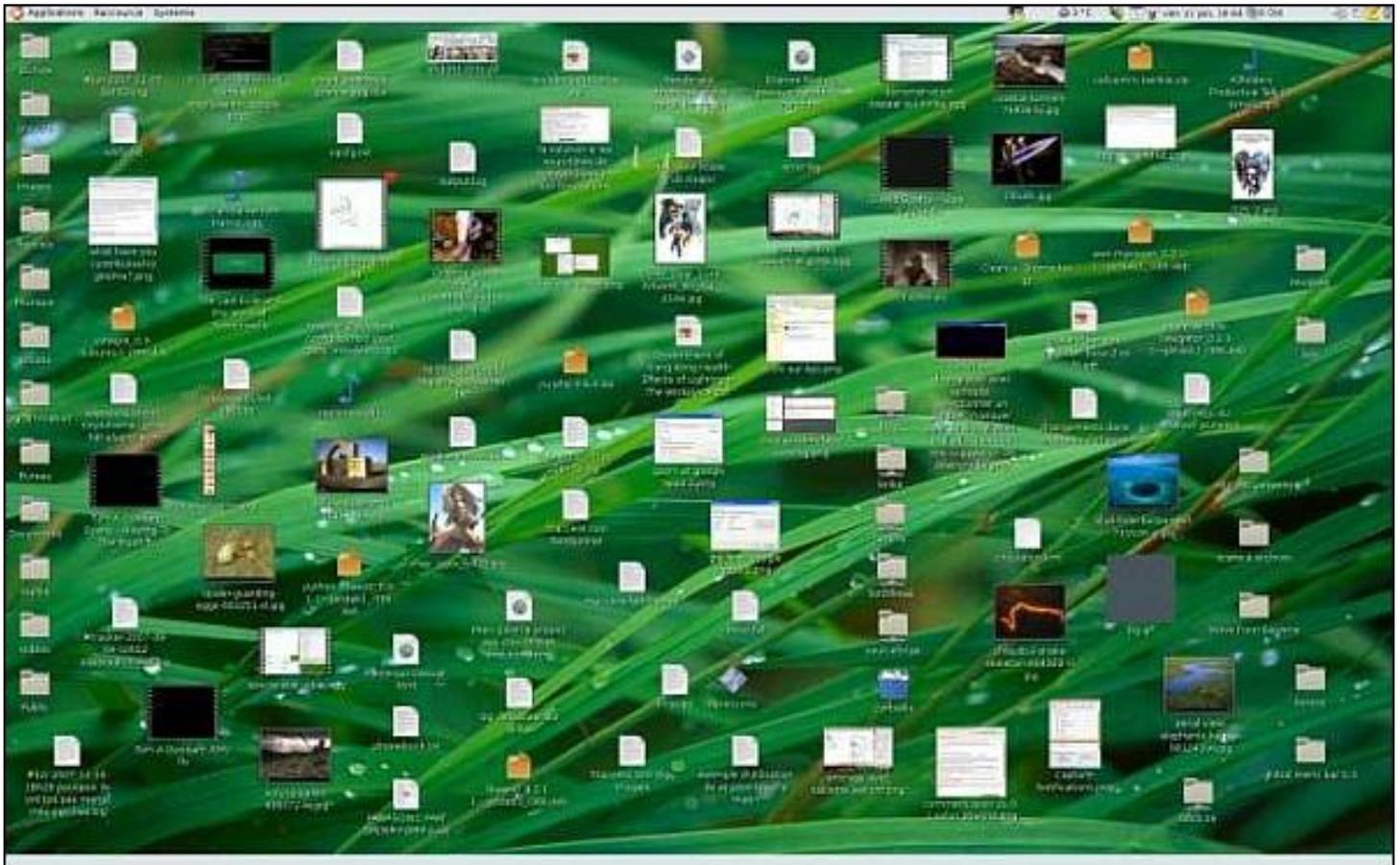

Figure 4. If your OS X Desktop looks like this, you're at risk of accidentally deleting one or more of these files. Instead, all of these objects should be relocated to appropriate folder(s) within the user account's home folder and replaced on the Desktop by aliases.

Instead of putting original objects on the Desktop, users should make an alias ("shortcut" in Windows parlance) of each item and put aliases on the Desktop (see Figure 5). An alias is a content-less file that points to an object. Double-clicking an alias is functionally equivalent to clicking the original item, but Trashing an alias leaves the original item safe and sound in its current location.

Figure 5. An alias in OS X (shortcut in Windows) is a pointer to an object (program, file, folder, hard drive, etc.). To make an alias of an object which is located safely within the Mac's hard drive, switch to the Finder and single-click (or tap) the object, then select File>Make Alias from the menubar (or right-click the object and select Make Alias from the contextual menu that displays). Finder then creates an alias that has the same name and icon as the original object, except it has "alias" appended to the end of its name and it has a black arrow badge in the lower left corner of its icon.

3. Filenames and Their Extensions

OS X is a flavor of UNIX (*en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unix*) and therefore it supports long extensions in addition to long filenames. Files created in Apple's Numbers spreadsheet program, for example, automatically have the extension ".numbers" (files created in Windows programs such as Excel, by contrast, have extensions limited to three characters such as ".xls"). Consequently, Numbers can save a file named "List of my favorite articles published in ComputorEdge magazine.numbers."

Extensions' function in OS X is similar to their corresponding function in Windows—they determine which program is the default one for opening the file. For instance, the default program for files with the extension ".rtf" is Apple's TextEdit. This was a new feature (*db.tidbits.com/article/10537*) in Snow Leopard, intended to accommodate users who switched from Windows and were accustomed to the extension determining the default program (previous OS X versions used each file's creator type, instead; for instance, document files with rtf's specific icon type automatically opened in TextEdit).

Because files' extensions can be long in OS X, hiding them might be easier on the eyes. Extensions can be hidden on a per-file basis by clicking the Hide extension check box in the Get Info window's Name & Extension pane (see Figure 6); they can be hidden system-wide by unchecking "Show all filename extensions" check box in the Advanced pane in Finder Preferences.
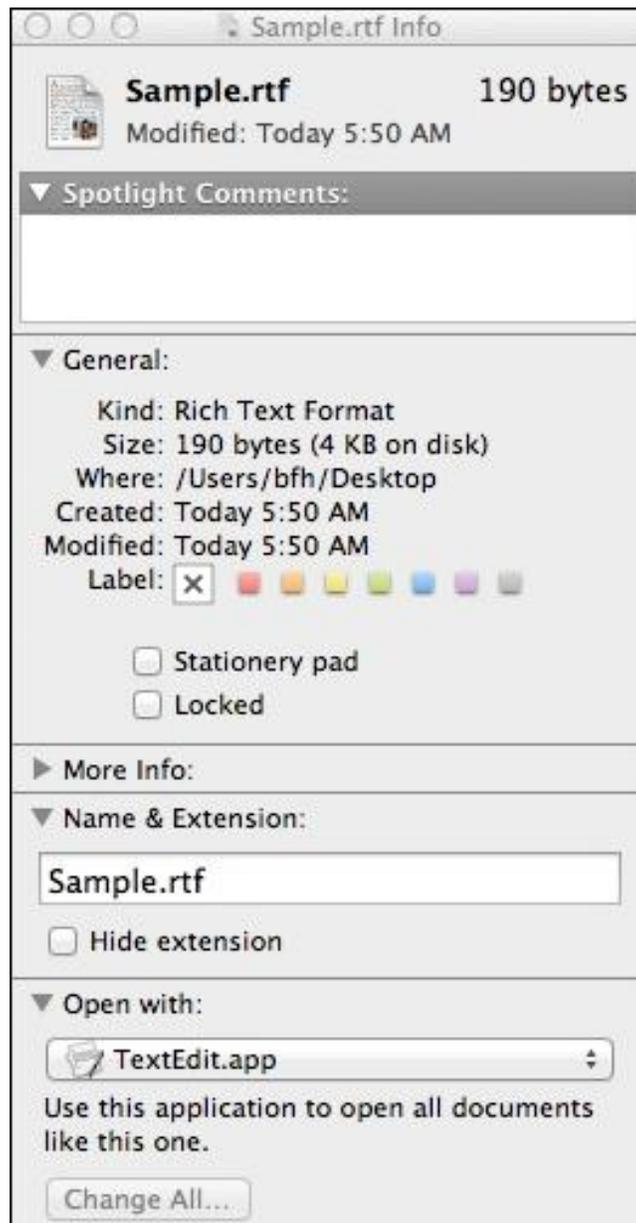
Figure 6. Document files automatically display an extension after their filename. Extensions can be hidden on a per-file basis by checking the Hide extension check box in the Name & Extension pane of a selected file's Get Info window. Rich text format (rtf) files automatically open in Apple's TextEdit program because OS X Snow Leopard and Lion associate their .rtf extension with TextEdit by default. This association can be changed on a per-file basis by selecting a different program from the "Open with" pop-up menu in a selected file's Get Info window.

OS X does not natively contain files with "exe" or "dll" as their extension. Any file with "exe" as its extension that is copied from a Windows PC to a Mac will not execute (in part) because OS X does not recognize the "exe" extension as a launchable program (instead, OS X programs have "app" as their extension). This explains why malware written for Windows programs cannot infect OS X (although such malware can infect Windows virtual machines and Windows installations in Boot Camp partitions on Macs).

4. Copying Versus Moving

OS X supports the relocation of objects (files or folders) which is a bit different than in Windows. In OS X, copying a file or folder results in two instances of the selected object; one instance is in the original location, the other is in the destination location. Moving a file or folder, by contrast, results in only one instance of the selected object; it is in the

destination location.

To copy an object from its current location on the Mac's internal hard drive to a new one on the same hard drive via drag and drop, press the option key while dragging. To move an object, simply drag and drop.

Copying and moving via drag and drop work a little differently when the destination location is on a different storage device than the Mac's internal hard drive. To copy an object from its current location on the Mac's internal hard drive to a new one on an external hard drive via drag and drop, simply drag and drop. To move an object, press the command (⌘) key while dragging.

Users who switched to OS X from Windows can take advantage of the familiar copy and paste (copying) or cut and paste (moving) technique via the appropriate menubar items, contextual menu items, or keystrokes.

5. Hidden Files & Folders

OS X, like other flavors of UNIX, automatically makes invisible or hides certain folders and files to deter (un) intentional modification or deletion by the user; otherwise, the Macintosh could end up in a malfunctioning or unbootable state. Examples of invisible folders include bin, private and usr. Examples of hidden objects are ones whose name begins with a period, such as .DS_Store (*en.wikipedia.org/wiki/.DS_Store*) files.

Another invisible folder in Lion is the user account's Library folder (described below). Previous OS X versions displayed this folder by default, but Apple evidently decided that the user's experience would be safer by making the user account's Library folder invisible by default. To display this folder (*hints.macworld.com/article.php? story=20110704093233123*) temporarily, press the option key while selecting the Go menu from the Finder's menubar and a selectable Library option will be included in the menu that displays.

6. Standard Folders and Their Hierarchy

OS X, like Linux and other UNIX variants, includes a collection of standard folders which are organized in a standard hierarchy.

After double-clicking the Macintosh HD icon that displays on a Mac's Desktop, a Finder window opens that contains at least four standard folders—Applications, Library, System and Users (Apple included a fifth standard folder in Lion —Incompatible Software). The Users folder contains the root level folder for each account that the user creates; for example, if you create a user account named my_account, the Users folder will include a folder named my_account."That folder, in turn, contains standard folders named Desktop, Documents, Downloads, Library (invisible), Movies, Music, Pictures, Public, and Sites.

Although some of OS X's standard folders can be moved to a different location, this is not advisable because it could produce unexpected malfunctions. Additionally, although objects can be placed on the Desktop or at the Macintosh HD root level, users instead should put them in the appropriate standard folder within the user account's folder to minimize the likelihood of accidental deletion.

7. Compatibility with Windows

Anyone who says "Macs are incompatible with PCs" is living in the past. In fact, OS X has been more compatible with Windows than vice versa. At the very least, OS X natively (without purchasing and installing third-party programs) reads and writes to FAT32-formatted (i.e., Windows-compatible) media. Windows, by contrast, cannot natively read or write OS X-formatted media; third-party software must be purchased and installed. OS X Snow Leopard and Lion

also natively (without purchasing and installing any third-party programs) are compatible with Microsoft Exchange 2007 servers that are used for large-scale address books, calendars and/or e-mail.

8. Print to PDF is Standard Equipment

All versions of OS X natively (without purchasing and/or installing third-party programs) support the conversion of just about any document file to a portable document format (PDF) file. Such files can be viewed under just about any operating system, even without the program that created the original document file and without the typefaces used in that document.

OS X's support for conversion to PDF is contained in the system-wide Print dialog or sheet. Simply select File>Print from almost any program's menubar, and a Print dialog or sheet will display that includes a "PDF" button in the lower left hand corner. This button, upon clicking, displays a menu of options that includes converting the current document to PDF (see Figure 7).
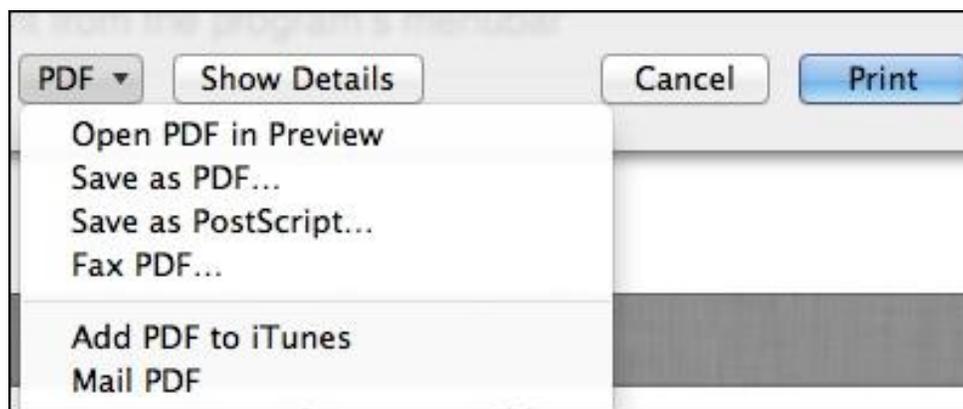

Figure 7. OS X's system-wide Print dialog or sheet contains a standard "PDF" button in the lower left corner. Clicking this button displays a menu of options related to PDF.

9. Finder Windows' Sidebar

OS X's Finder windows have a sidebar that functions differently from its counterpart in Windows. The former is a place where the user can put aliases to favorite folders, servers and other storage media for one-click access while working in the Finder.

By default, the sidebar includes all of the objects that are checked in the Sidebar pane in Finder Preferences. In addition to (un)checking these objects, you can drag and drop favorite objects into the sidebar to add them or drag objects out to remove them (like the Dock).

The sidebar in Open and Save As dialogs also behaves as described above.

10. Time Machine

Have you ever lost files as a result of mistakenly trashing them and emptying the Trash, or some other mishap? If so, this experience demonstrates the importance of backing up. An additional benefit of backing up is that, if something goes wrong with your OS X installation, you can recover simply by reverting to a recent backup.

OS X's Time Machine (*reviews.cnet.com/8301-13727_7-57407390-263/how-to-set-up-time-machine-on-your-mac/*) is one of those "ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" features because it makes backing

up to an external hard drive relatively easy and painless. Many third-party programs for backing up are complex and/or have a user-unfriendly interface. Time Machine System Preference, by contrast, has a minimalist interface with a button for turning the backup mechanism on or off plus a user-definable list of folders to exclude from a backup (such as a folder containing third-party installer files readily available from the Web). Additional controls include the option to perform backups on an ad hoc basis rather than hourly, and Lion's new option to encrypt the backup (*hints. macworld.com/article.php?story=20110721124750102*).

Backing up makes good sense. Consider the amount of time it would take to recreate documents that have been lost or deleted accidentally vs. the amount of time a Time Machine backup involves. Consider how long it would take to reinstall OS X and/or your user account in the event of some mishap vs. how long it would take to restore from a Time Machine backup. In both situations, backing up is insurance that protects your time. And your time is highly valuable.

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Wally Wang's Apple Farm
"The Flashback Trojan" by Wally Wang

> The Flashback Trojan; E-Books Encourage Reading; Turn the iPad into a Fishing Game and Personal Magazine; The High Cost of Windows (Again); Becoming an iBooks Author; Create Your Own Audiobooks.

The inevitable has finally happened and a major malware outbreak has spread through Macintosh computers. Of course the only people surprised by this outbreak are those who naively believed that any operating system could be immune to malware infections. In the world of espionage, everybody knows it's impossible to create an unbreakable code because anything someone creates, another person can unravel. Likewise, any technology someone creates, another person will always find a way to defeat it.

With the Flashback Trojan horse currently infecting roughly 600,000 Macintosh computers around the world into a botnet, the facts are simple. The problem stems from an unpatched flaw in Java (that Apple left open for several months even after this flaw had been discovered), which is the reason why the latest version of Mac OS X Lion does not include Java. Eliminate third-party products like Java, Adobe Flash, or Adobe Acrobat, and you immediately reduce the number of ways malware can attack any computer.

If you're using Mac OS X 10.7 Lion and didn't specifically install Java, you're safe from the Flashback Trojan horse since Lion doesn't include Java by default. If you're using an earlier version of Mac OS X or did install Java on Lion (such as transferring all your programs and files from an older Macintosh to a new one), you might be vulnerable to the Flashback Trojan. The first step is to click the Apple menu, choose Software Update, and download the latest Java updates that shut down the flaws in Java that the Flashback Trojan exploits. Of course, this won't stop someone from coming up with a new way to attack your computer, but at least it will stop the Flashback Trojan from infecting your computer (if it hasn't already).

F-Secure (*www.f-secure.com/v-descs/trojan-downloader_osx_flashback_i.shtml*), a noted antivirus company, provides manual instructions for checking if your Macintosh might be infected with the Flashback Trojan. For a much easier solution, just visit the Dr. Web site (*public.dev.drweb.com/april/*) and type in information uniquely identifying your Macintosh or download the free Flashback Checker (*github.com/jils/ FlashbackChecker/downloads*) program.

One oddity about the Flashback Trojan is that if it detects any of the following folders indicating the presence of certain programs such as the free ClamXAV (*www.clamxav.com/*) antivirus program or the commercial VirusBarrier (*www.amazon.com/gp/product/B0033CYP8U/ref=as_li_tf_tl?*

ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-
20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=B0033CYP8U) program, the
Flashback Trojan deletes itself from the Macintosh without infecting it.

/Library/Little Snitch
/Developer/Applications/Xcode.app/Contents/MacOS/Xcode
/Applications/VirusBarrier X6.app
/Applications/iAntiVirus/iAntiVirus.app
/Applications/avast!.app
/Applications/ClamXav.app
/Applications/HTTPScoop.app
/Applications/Packet Peeper.app

So far the Flashback Trojan doesn't appear to do anything but turn a Macintosh into a zombie that someone can control remotely through a botnet. Typically botnet masters rent out their botnets to spammers who blast e-mail spam through the infected computers that make up the botnet, thereby circumventing any filters designed to block spam coming from a known spam mail server.

Will malware threats grow on the Macintosh? Probably since the market share of Macintosh users also continues to grow. As long as hackers can spend all day long probing for flaws in the safety of their home, there's nothing to stop someone from finding another flaw to exploit in the future.

Since most malware spreads through the Internet, the simplest solution is to cut your computer off from the Internet. Although this isn't practical, you can emulate this by running Linux in a virtual machine under a program like VirtualBox (*www.virtualbox.org*) and access the Internet only through your virtual machine. Anything trying to attack your computer through the Internet will wind up getting trapped inside your virtual machine, leaving your main computer completely safe.

To avoid the hassle of setting up a virtual machine, the next best step is to turn off Java in your browser. To do this in Safari, click on the Safari menu, choose Preferences, and then click the Security icon. Now clear the Enable Java check box. The fewer plug-ins and third-party programs you use, the more likely you'll shut off flaws that malware could exploit to infect your computer. This is why the Macintosh uses its own Preview program by default to view PDF files instead of Adobe Acrobat.

Figure 1. Turning off Java in Safari.

The problem is that malicious hackers will always find a way to break into any computer. The second problem is that third-party software (Java, Flash and Acrobat) always provides additional flaws for malware to exploit. The third problem is that people need to be careful and trust no one when browsing the Internet. In the case of the Flashback Trojan, just visiting a booby-trapped Web site can infect your computer, so stick to well-known sites and you'll eliminate the majority of potential problems.

Better yet, do all your Web browsing on an iPad and you'll dramatically reduce the possibility of infecting your main computer. Anyone still think the "walled garden" approach of the iPad and iPhone is such a bad idea anymore as malware spreads through more "open" systems like Windows, Mac OS X and Android?

E-Books Encourage Reading

CNN recently reported an interesting claim that e-books are actually increasing reading (*www.cnn. com/2012/04/05/tech/gaming-gadgets/e-reader-survey-pew-gahran/?hpt=hp_bn11*) among Americans. Considering that the average American only reads one book a year, e-books have the potential of making reading more accessible to a wider audience.

The Pew Research Center reports (*libraries.pewinternet.org/2012/04/04/the-rise-of-e-reading/*) that "Those who have taken the plunge into reading e-books stand out in almost every way from other kinds of readers. Foremost, they are relatively avid readers of books in all formats: 88% of those who read e-books in the past 12 months also read printed books. Compared with other book readers, they read more books. They read more frequently for a host of reasons: for pleasure, for research, for current events, and for work or school. They are also more likely than others to have bought their most recent book, rather than borrowed it, and they are more likely than others to say they prefer to purchase books in general, often starting their search online."
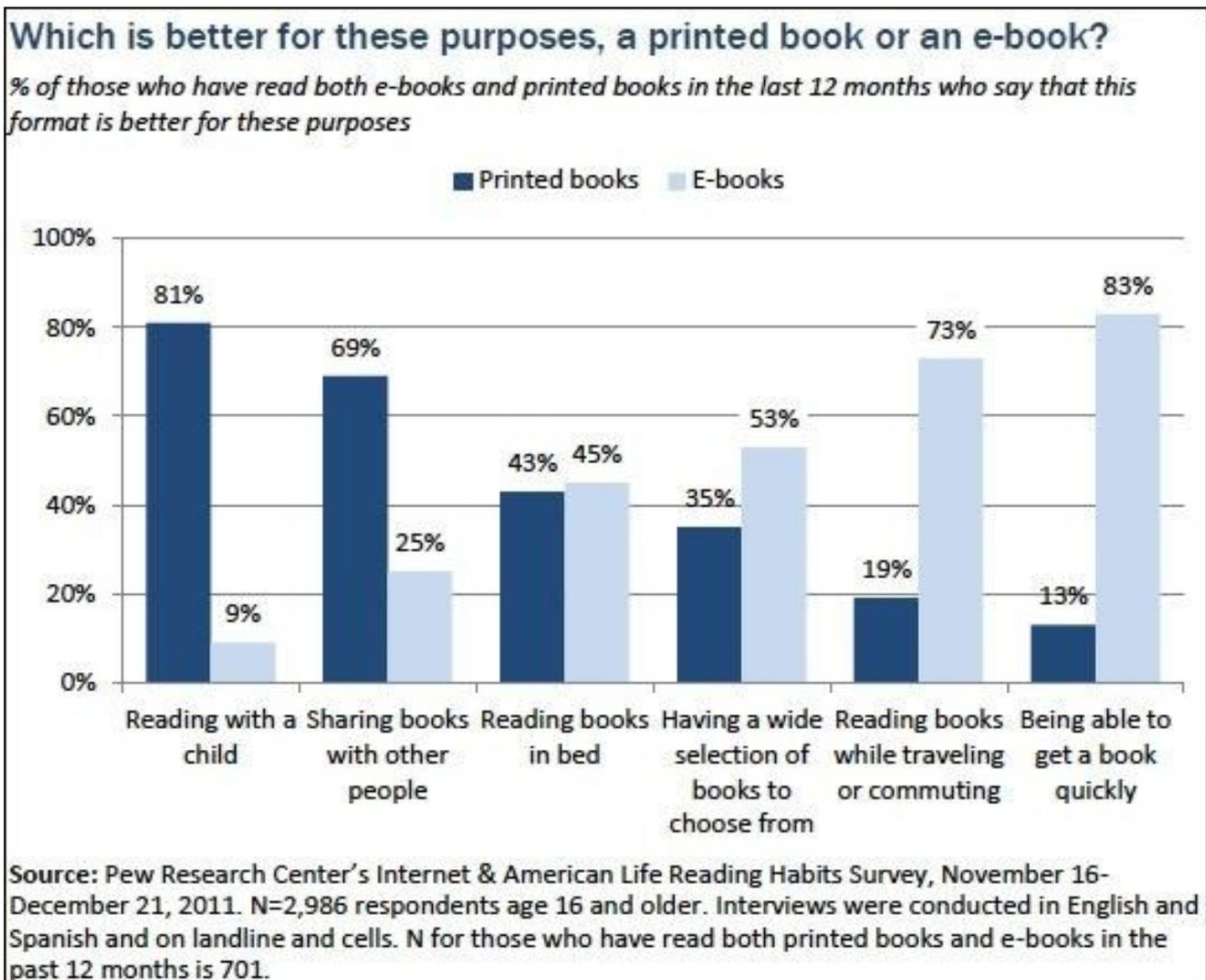
Which is better for these purposes, a printed book or an e-book?

% of those who have read both e-books and printed books in the last 12 months who say that this format is better for these purposes

■ Printed books   ▪ E-books

[Bar chart showing percentages for Printed books and E-books across six purposes:
- Reading with a child: Printed books 81%, E-books 9%
- Sharing books with other people: Printed books 69%, E-books 25%
- Reading books in bed: Printed books 43%, E-books 45%
- Having a wide selection of books to choose from: Printed books 35%, E-books 53%
- Reading books while traveling or commuting: Printed books 19%, E-books 73%
- Being able to get a book quickly: Printed books 13%, E-books 83%]

Source: Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Reading Habits Survey, November 16-December 21, 2011. N=2,986 respondents age 16 and older. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cells. N for those who have read both printed books and e-books in the past 12 months is 701.

Figure 2. The difference between e-books and printed books.

Two huge advantages of e-books is the convenience of reading them while traveling and quick access to practically any topic you want. Some other interesting findings of this research include:

• One-fifth of American adults have read an e-book in the past year

• The average e-book reader has read 24 books in the past year compared to an average of 15 books by non-e-book readers

• 30 percent of e-book readers say they now spend more time reading

• Four times as many people are reading e-books compared to less than two years ago

• People read e-books on a variety of devices including smartphones

• The two most popular devices to read e-books are computers and e-readers like the Kindle or Nook

• People prefer e-books for speedy access and portability, but want printed books for sharing or reading to children

As the cost of smartphones, tablets and e-readers continues to drop, more people will be able to afford access to e-books. With the greater portability of e-books, e-books can help further spread literacy among people and make

reading more popular. In the old days, only rich areas could afford to store and sell a huge variety of books. Today, Internet access means even the poorest areas can access the same library of books. (Whether they can afford to buy them is another question altogether.)

Printed books will never disappear completely in the same way that television and movies never eliminated stage plays. However, more people watch TV or movies than attend a stage play, so it's logical to assume that in the future, more people will read an e-book than a printed book, especially as the cost of printing, shipping and storing printed books keeps climbing.

Portrait of e-book readers – 29% of those who read books in the past year

The % of the book readers ages 18+ in each group who read an e-book in the past 12 months

*Asterisk denotes statistically significant difference with other rows

	% of the book readers who read an e-book in the past 12 months
All those age 18 and older	29%
Gender	
Male	29
Female	28
Age	
18-29	34*
30-49	34*
50-64	23
65+	17
Race and ethnicity	
White, non-Hispanic	29
Black, non-Hispanic	22
Hispanic	23
Educational attainment	
High school grad or less	19
Some college	34*
College graduate	35*
Household income	
Less than $30,000	20
$30,000-$49,999	25
$50,000-$74,999	35*
$75,000+	38*

Source: Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Winter Tracking Survey January 20-February 19, 2012. N=1,377 of adults who read a book in the past 12 months. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cells. N for number of readers who had read an e-book in past 12 months=321.

20-February 19, 2012. N=1,377 of adults who read a book in the past 12 months. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cells. N for number of readers who had read an e-book in past 12 months=321.

Figure 3. The demographics of readers.

Not surprisingly, e-book readers tend to be younger and better educated while earning a higher income. The cost of buying any device to read an e-book may be a luxury right now, but cars, computers and mobile phones were once a luxury item as well. With each passing day, e-books will continue growing in popularity as printed books gradually fade from sight.

Turn the iPad into a Fishing Game and Personal Magazine

Friskies, the company that sells cat food, has found a unique way to expand their presence by releasing a free iPhone/iPad game called Cat Fishing 2 (*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%252Fcat-fishing-2%252Fid494384429%253Fmt%253D8%2526uo%253D4%2526partnerId%253D30*). The game works by displaying cartoon fish swimming around on the iPad's screen. Show the iPad to your cat and your cat can have minutes of fun (or frustration) trying to grab the fish. Each time your cat taps a fish on the screen, he or she gets points. The more fish tapped, the more points.
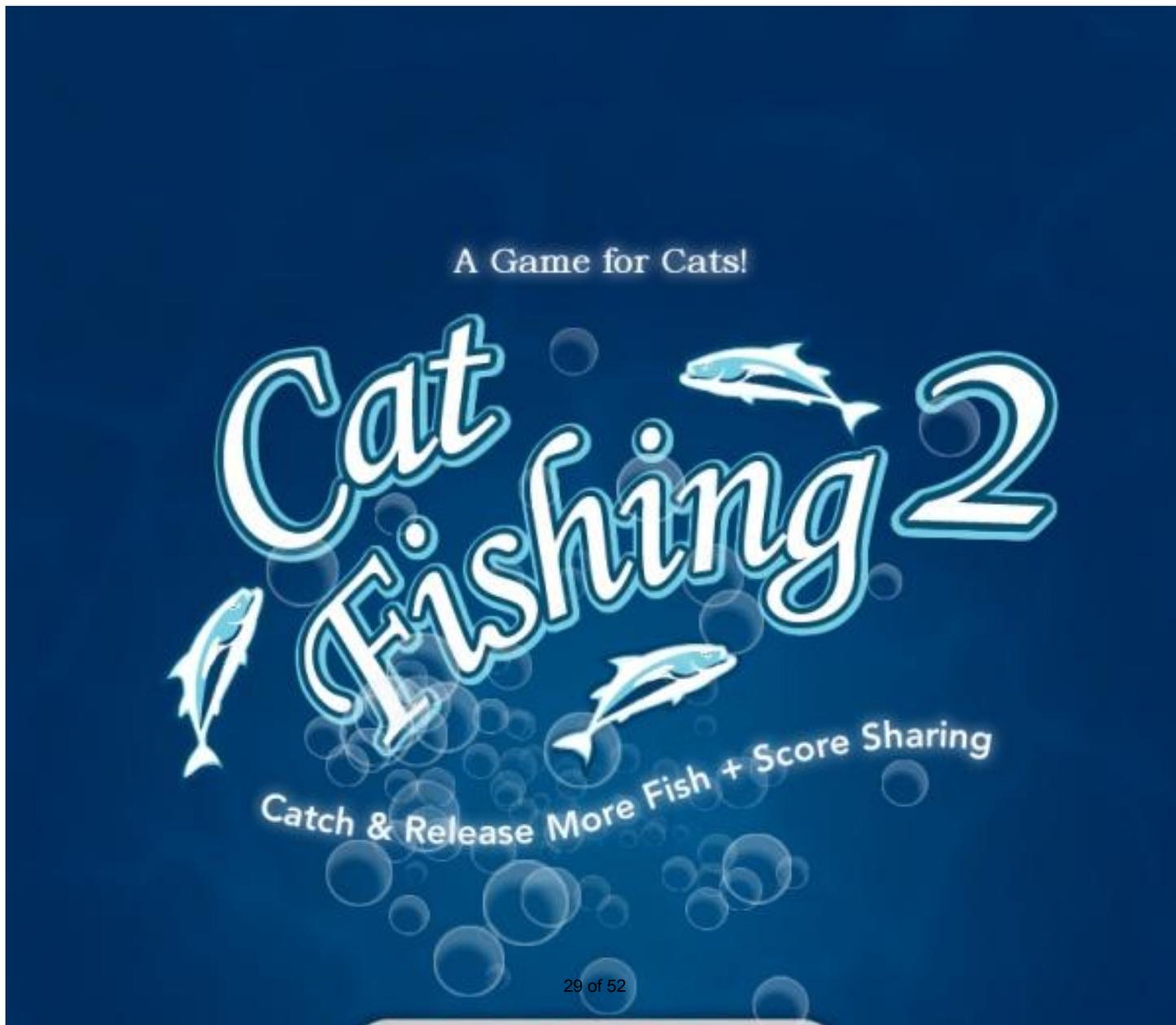
Figure 4. Cat Fishing 2 turns your iPad into a game for cats to play.

Perhaps a more useful app for your iPad is the free Zite app (*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%252Fzite-personalized-magazine% 252Fid419752338%253Fmt%253D8%2526uo%253D4%2526partnerId%253D30*), which lets you create a custom newspaper containing only those topics you wish to read about. The first time you run Zite, you have to choose the categories of news you want to read.
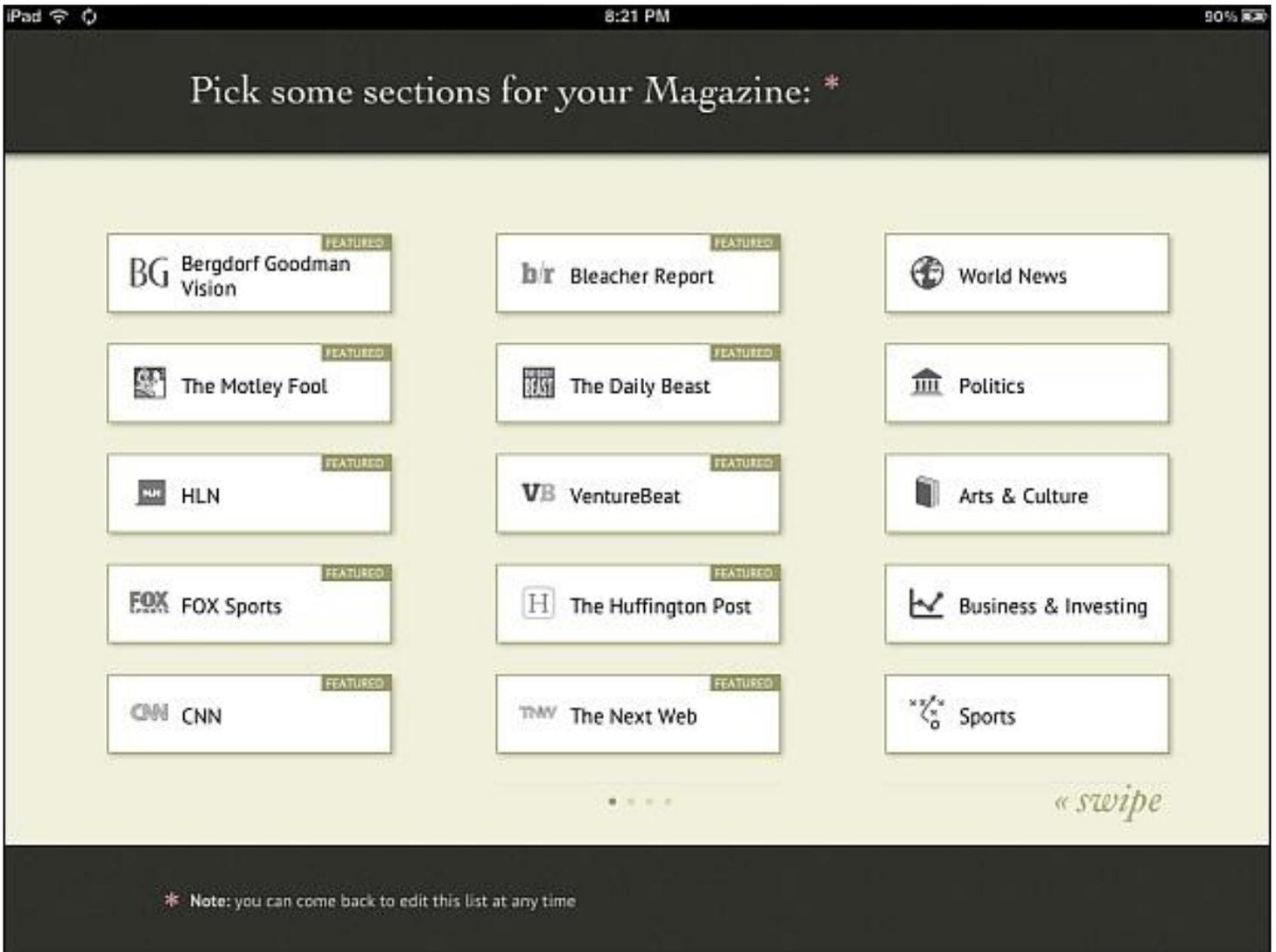
Figure 5. Zite lets you choose different categories of news topics to read.

After you select the types of news of interest to you such as sports, technology, or world news, Zite displays the latest news in each category automatically so you can keep up with your favorite topics effortlessly. Since Zite is free, you have nothing to lose by trying it. By using Zite, you can avoid browsing through multiple sites just to get your daily dose of news.
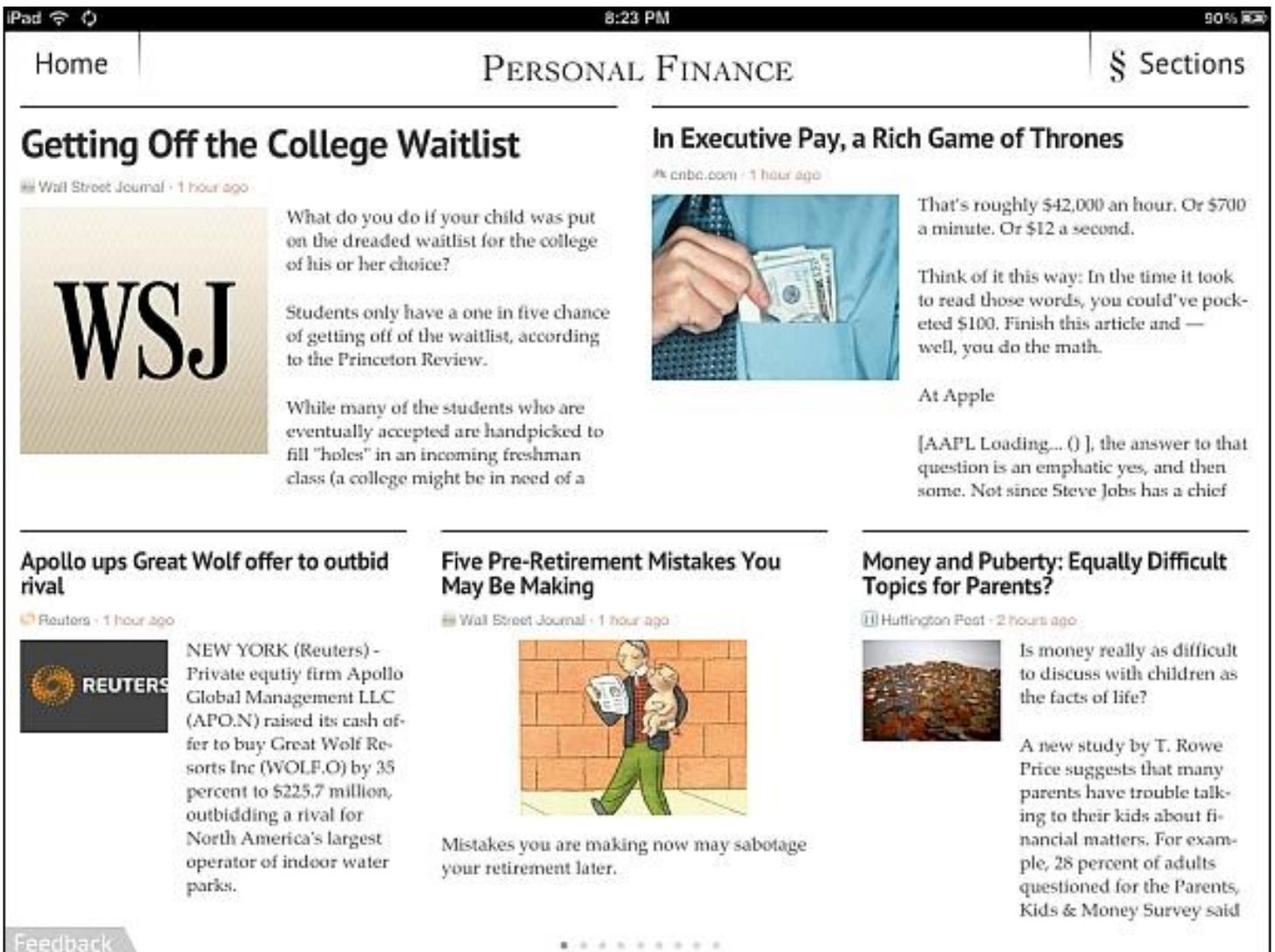
Figure 6. Zite displays news categories.

The High Cost of Windows (Again)

The Veteran Affairs Department recently announced that they could save an estimated 30 percent (*www.nextgov. com/nextgov/ng_20120403_2451.php*) of annual license fees by dumping their enterprise software license agreement for Microsoft products. Although the department won't confirm the exact amount they're paying for Microsoft licensing fees, in 2002, the department signed a $225 million agreement with Hewlett-Packard for Microsoft software licenses under an internal VA contract that ran through 2006.

Tim Hegedus, an analyst with Miro Consulting in Woodbridge, N.J., said the licensing agreement is not "one of the best bets" an enterprise can make, particularly if its upgrade path does not dovetail with Microsoft's upgrade roadmap.

Rather than rely on the traditional server/desktop environment, the Veteran Affairs Department plans to shift to smartphones, tablets and cloud services. Chief Information Officer, Roger Baker, said, "The market for desktop and server software is changing, with substantial impact from both cloud service providers and personal mobile devices. In the future, we are looking to increase our flexibility and the amount of competition for our business to ensure that we provide the best value and emergent technologies to our customers."

The reliance on smartphones, tablets and cloud services is good news for Apple's iPhone and iPad. While Android

has the largest market share for smartphones, they're still struggling with tablets. Microsoft has almost no presence in both smartphones and tablets, so as more companies shift away from servers and desktop PCs to smartphones and tablets, they'll also shift away from Microsoft.

Can Windows 8 save the desktop PC market and compete in the tablet market and possibly the smartphone market at the same time? Maybe, but for a single operating system and user interface to work optimally on both computers and mobile devices like tablets and smartphones may mean compromises, which may mean lower market share as a result of lower customer satisfaction. In the meantime, more and more companies are finding that the benefits for using Windows are no longer worth the cost.

Becoming an iBooks Author

Although Apple's iBookstore only represents approximately 10 percent of the e-book market, interactive iBooks are the main reason to consider creating and selling iBooks. In the past, you needed to go through a third-party to create and sell e-books through Apple's iBookstore, but now you can create and sell e-books yourself.

If you want to sell e-books, you'll first need to get a free Employee Identification Number (EIN) from the Internal Revenue Service even if you don't live in the United States. Second, you'll need to get an International Standard Book Number (*www.myidentifiers.com/isbn/main*) (ISBN) from Bowker Identifier Services. The cost for one ISBN is $125, 10 ISBNs is $250, 100 ISBNs is $575, and 1,000 ISBNs is $1,000. Each e-book you submit to iBookstore must have its own unique ISBN. Finally, you need to set up a Paid or Free Books Account (*itunesconnect.apple.com/ WebObjects/iTunesConnect.woa/wa/bookSignup*) at Apple's site. Now you'll be able to submit e-books in the EPUB or iBooks format.

To create an EPUB file, you can use Apple's own Pages word processor that can export files to the EPUB format. To create an iBooks file, you can use Apple's free iBooks Author (*www.apple.com/ibooks-author/*) program. If you're going to use iBooks author, you might also want to get two additional programs for creating widgets that can give your iBooks greater interactivity.

First, consider getting Dashcode, which you can download after you sign up for Apple's $99 a year developer program (*developer.apple.com/*). Dashcode lets you create widgets such as a clock or calculator that you can view on your Macintosh by pressing the F12 function key.

Second, consider getting an HTML5 editor such as Hype (*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%252Fhype%252Fid436931759%253Fmt% 253D12%2526uo%253D4%2526partnerId%253D30*). This $49.99 HTML5 editor lets you create HTML5 animation as simple as dragging pictures on a screen and moving them around.

Figure 7. Hype makes it easy to create simple HTML5 animation.

More importantly, Hype can also export Dashboard widgets. If you don't want to build interactive widgets using Dashcode, you might find it's easier to build interactive widgets using Hype. Hype was actually created by two former Apple engineers so the program looks and behaves like other Apple programs such as Pages and Keynote.

Figure 8. Hype can export Dashboard widgets that you can import into an iBook.

Together with iBooks Author, Dashcode and Hype, you'll have nearly all the tools you need to create your own interactive iBooks that you can start selling on iBookstore. Apple's iBookstore may have a smaller audience than Amazon, but since only iBooks on the iPad can play interactive e-books, your iBooks can potentially reach every iPad user in the world, which is a growing market. With few rivals, the iPad will likely remain the dominant tablet computer for the near future.

*   *   *

In the old days, publishers only created audio versions of popular books. If you wanted to hear a book that wasn't popular, too bad. No audio book for you.

Fortunately you can create your own audiobooks from PDF files. Just open a PDF file using the Preview program, select the text you want to hear, then right-click. When a menu appears, choose Add to iTunes as a Spoken Track. This will give you the option of creating a computer-synthesized voice to read your selected text and store this audio clip as a file you can play in iTunes.
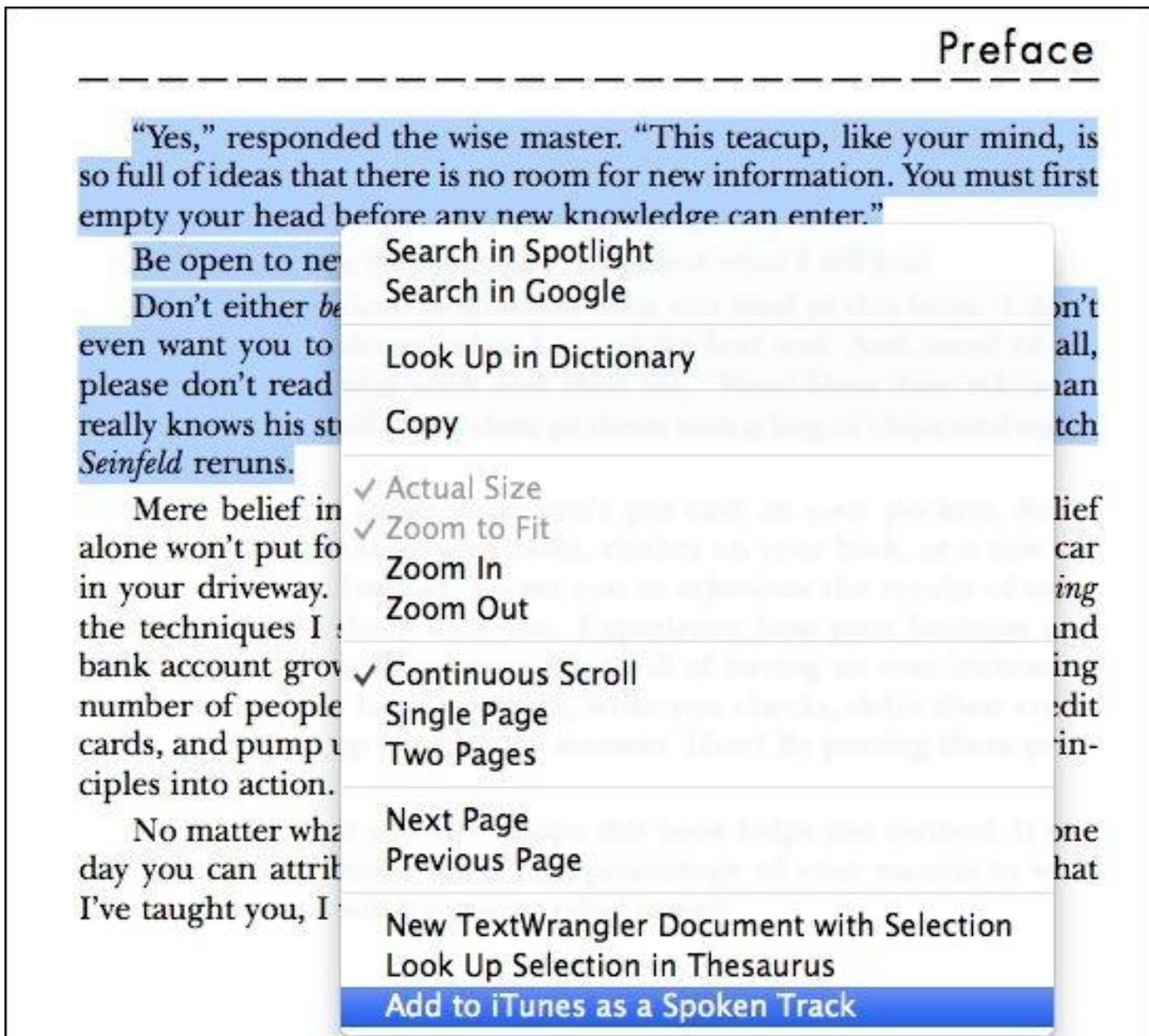
Figure 9. You can create your own audiobooks from a PDF file.

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=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-
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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You'll probably be happy you did.

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Worldwide News & Product Reviews

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

What a Difference a (Leap) Year Makes; The Web is Missing One "D." It's Coming; Six Tips to Improve Mobile Device Security; CharityDeductions.com Rewards Your Generosity.

What a Difference a (Leap) Year Makes

Juan Cornejo, PR rep for T-Mobile, reminds us how much has happened right in the palms of our hands in just four short years:

Leap year only comes once every four years, prompting us to look back at what things were like the last time February had 29 days. In the wireless world, four years feels like a lifetime! T-Mobile took a look at its records and industry stats to paint a picture of how much the wireless industry has progressed since the last time February 29 showed on the calendar.

• Americans Are Smarter Than Ever: In 2008, less than 10 percent of Americans had made the switch from feature phones to smartphones. Today, that number stands at 41.8 percent of Americans using smartphones, according to comScore. In fact, more than 90 percent of T-Mobile device sales in the fourth quarter of 2011 were 3G and 4G smartphones.

A few of the cellphone industry's greatest hits from 2008.

• So Are Their Mobile Operating Systems: On leap day 2008, Android smartphones were still more than six months away, and the introduction of Microsoft's revamped Windows Phone OS was still two years away. Fast forward and these new, smarter operating systems have brought choice, value and hundreds of thousands of app experiences to life for millions of Americans.

A few of the cellphone industry's greatest hits of today.

• Typing, Not Just Talking: The average daily SMS activity via T-Mobile's network increased nearly 74 percent, while MMS saw an increase of more than 87 percent.

• The Need for Speed and the Rise of Data: With increasing speed capabilities comes a growing hunger for data. Data traffic on T-Mobile's network has grown exponentially as networks have gotten faster, smartphones and Internet enabled devices make it easier than ever to stay connected, and the availability of mobile content has exploded.

The Web is Missing One "D." It's Coming

Daniel Burrus, technology futurist, author of Flash Foresight and Technotrends, founder, and CEO of Burrus Research, is predicting that the next technology phase will focus on the 3D experience (without the glasses):

When the World Wide Web first started—what we call Web 1.0—it was all about search and having access to information. It's when we used the Web as an information age tool for our information age world.

Today it's all about Web 2.0, where the key activities are sharing and communicating rather than just informing. I wrote about this in my 1993 book Technotrends, where I talked about how the information age would shift to the communication age. I said that when our devices become true communication age devices—when we could use them for informing and communicating—then we'd have another revolution.

Well, look where we are today. Apple helped to spur this revolution when they came out with the iPhone and gave us a true communication/information age device. In other words, it combined the information age and communication age.

So where is the Web going? It's Web 3.0, and that is immersion.

Web 3.0 is about the 3D experience. And I'm not talking 3D where you have to wear fancy glasses. That's too cumbersome. I'm talking about using our main computers, tablets, smartphones and games and not having to wear glasses to have a fully-immersed 3D experience. Web 3.0 allows you to go into environments (think Xbox gaming), as well as experience 3D where things stick out at you, like when you go to the movies and put on those glasses.

This means in the future we'll have 3D Web browsers where we see Web pages in 3D. Currently Web pages are like flat pieces of paper. Sure, they may have a hyperlink or a video embedded, but in the end it's still a flat experience. The company that brings us the first 3D Web browser will be an enviable and formidable competitor, for sure.

AT&T 3D Web browser.

But let's look even further down the road, and that's Web 4.0, which is all about intelligence. With Web 4.0 comes a personal assistant. Apple has given us a taste of this with Siri, where you can talk to your phone and Siri answers. But Web 4.0 will go even further. Your personal assistant with Web 4.0 will search for you without you even specifically asking. Your personal assistant will know your preferences, your likes, and your needs and will automatically compile, present and share what's pertinent.

Realize, too, that this evolution will come to us fast. While it took us many years to get from Web 1.0 to Web 2.0, with processing power, bandwidth and storage growing exponentially, Web 3.0 will be here soon, and Web 4.0 will be close behind. So be ready for the next generation of Web. It's sure to be a fun and exciting ride.

See the AT&T browser (*blip.tv/scripts/flash/showplayer.swf?enablejs=true&feedurl=http%3A%2F% 2Fcrunchgear%2Eblip%2Etv%2Frss%2F&file=http%3A%2F%2Fblip%2Etv%2Frss%2Fflash% 2F782432&brandlink=http%3A%2F%2Fcrunchgear%2Eblip%2Etv% 2F&brandname=CrunchGear*) in action.

Six Tips to Improve Mobile Device Security

Nicholas Skrepetos, CTO of Consumer Software at Support.com (*Support.com*), provider of cloud-based technology services and software for consumers and small business, writes in this week with tips for keeping mobile devices secure and data safe if lost or stolen:

According to Mobithinking.com (*Mobithinking.com*) there are nearly 6 billion mobile phone subscribers worldwide. Unfortunately, when compared to PCs, mobile devices and smartphones are more prone to be lost or stolen, which significantly increases the risk of identity theft, compromised information, and ultimately, financial loss for the consumer.

There are a number of things you can do to mitigate security risks and protect your mobile device, including the following six tips:

1. Enable Auto Lock: Whether using an iPhone, an Android smartphone, or a BlackBerry, enable the built-in phone lock feature with a strong password. This adds an extra layer of security to your mobile device and prevents unauthorized access particularly if lost or stolen. To password-protect your iPhone follow these steps. If you have an Android phone, check out these tips and forums at Android Central. And for BlackBerry devices, try this app.

2. Install a Mobile Tracking App: To reduce the risk of lost or stolen mobile devices, consider a device tracking

application such as:

• Android: Android Lost, Where's My Droid
• iPhone: FoneHome, Bar Heist, MobileMe
• BlackBerry: Berry Locator

3. Erase Personal Data Remotely: These applications enable you to remotely access a smartphone from a PC, then wipe its data clean when necessary—for example, try MobileMe for iPhones.

4. Lock-Sensitive Applications: Another useful way to protect personal data on smartphones is to make use of an application locker utility which prevents unauthorized access to applications that contain sensitive personal information. Even if someone finds or steals your phone, they cannot access these protected apps without a valid password (and while they fumble around you can remotely wipe all data clean).

5. Device Backup: This is perhaps the wisest thing you can do to both protect vital data (and ensure you can restore it on a new device in the event of loss or theft). When choosing an application, always consider a solution that offers remote backup and restore (such as Lookout, a free application for iPhones and Androids).

6. Real-Time Protection: Ensures that all files stored on your mobile device are analyzed each time you attempt to access them. It will also scan all incoming content, such as text messages and files received via Bluetooth.

CharityDeductions.com Rewards Your Generosity

If you're doing your income taxes over the weekend, there's a site you might want to check out called CharityDeductions.com (*CharityDeductions.com*) that could significantly lighten the pile you're fixing to fork over to Uncle Sam. The average taxpayer can save somewhere in the neighborhood of $250-$350 for each $1,000 in donations.

CharityDeductions.com is a browser-based subscription service that has come up with a pretty clever system for gauging the value of items you have donated to places like Goodwill, the Salvation Army, AmVets and St. Vincent de Paul. Because of a licensing deal made with eBay, CharityDeductions.com is able to use the online auction giant's enormous cache of sales info (called Market Data) to estimate the value of your donations.

Make sure your donations go to an IRS approved charitable organization using IRS.com. If you use our website, enter the charitable organizations you donate to and you'll only have to do it once. You can always edit, delete, or add additional organizations later.

BUY NOW

2 Value of Items & Cash Donations

Your donations are worth more than you think! Quickly enter your item donations from our database of thousands of fair market values. Our valuations are backed by completed eBay® auction transactions that comply with IRS approved valuation methods. You can view IRS Publication 561 for more details. Keep accurate records of your cash donations.

BUY NOW

values based on

ebaY

market data

3 Print Detailed Reports

Print a donation report to take with you when you donate--just write "See attached list" on your receipt. Print detailed itemized reports for your tax records or a summary report to give to your tax professional. You'll save them time and save yourself some cash!

The service throws in several useful tools: control over condition of items donated, running tallies of both total donations and estimated tax savings, PDF reports for your tax preparer (or IRS auditor), and a nifty DonationApp which allows you to take and store photos of your donations using your iPhone's (Android, soon) built-in camera. CharityDeductions.com can even track cash donations and record and value mileage you've run up while doing charity work.

CharityDeductions.com allows you to use their service for free for up to $500 in donations (as determined by eBay)—the IRS' allowable limit before having to file a separate form. They're betting you'll want to make use of the tools available to paying customers ($24.95 per year) to discover and manage donations greater than $500.

Indeed, it may be well worth being generous with CharityDeductions.com if you have been generous with others the rest of the year.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Learn more at *www.charlescarr.com*.

EdgeWord: Amazon Publishing Update and a Free E-Book
"Amazon KDP Select, 99 Cent "Misunderstanding," and a Free Cartoon E-Book" by Jack Dunning

Jack gives results of the Windows 7 e-book give-away on Amazon, makes a special 99 cent offer for the Windows 8 e-book, and starts a two-day free offer of Jim Whiting's cartoon book.

A couple of weeks ago as an experiment, I ran the Amazon give-away of the e-book *Getting Started with Windows 7 (*www.amazon.com/gp/product/B007AL672M/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20*)* . While 1,021 free copies were picked up, the actual results were inconclusive. When I picked up my free copy I also picked up a number of other free books in the same category. Since then I haven't gone back to look at any of them, I'm afraid that this is what happens with most freebies. However, the sales of that book have been good enough to keep it near the top of its category.

At the end of March, I changed the price of the *Getting Started* e-book from 99 cents to $2.99. I figured that most *ComputorEdge* readers who wanted a copy already had one. I wanted to see the effect on sales. The sales did not drop off at all, plus under the Amazon royalty structure on each $2.99 sale we earn five times that of a 99 cent book. (I think Wally was right when he suggested that pricing a book too low might also suggest low quality—although a higher price book is not necessarily higher quality.) One of the most difficult decisions in business is pricing your product. One of the advantages to a system such as Amazon is that you can easily test different price levels.

Since books can be hard to find on Amazon (unless you know the title or author) it makes sense to try to stay near the top of your category, although I think showing up in key searches is probably more important. To give *ComputorEdge* readers an early chance at an inexpensive copy, for a limited time I've priced the *Misunderstanding Windows 8* e-book at 99 cents on both Amazon (*www.amazon.com/gp/product/B007RMCRH8/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20*) and Barnes and Noble (*www.barnesandnoble.com/w/books/1109995715?ean=2940014229463*). Later (probably next week) I will increase the price back to $2.99. Both Amazon and Barnes and Noble have pretty much the same rules, so I need to maintain the same price at both. A book cannot be priced lower at competitive e-book dealer, plus the best royalties percentage wise are for e-books priced between $2.99 and $9.99.
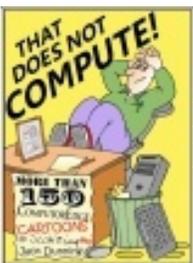
I've put the Jim Whiting cartoon book, *That Does Not Compute! (*www.amazon.com/gp/product/B0052MMUX6/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20*),* in the Amazon KDP Select program. If you want a free copy, they will be available today (Friday) and tomorrow (Saturday) for loading onto your Kindle or free Kindle software (*www.amazon.com/gp/feature.html/ref=sv_kstore_1?ie=UTF8&docId=1000493771&tag=comput0b9-20*). This is another test of the Kindle program, so the cartoon book is exclusive to Amazon for the next few months.

We now have e-books at Amazon, Barnes and Noble, and iTunes. Amazon and Barnes and Noble are relatively easy to work with, but it takes almost a month to get anything approved for iTunes. I think the delay is more policy than necessity. Amazon is the most innovative of the three with special promotion programs such as KDP Select. Plus, readers (or anyone) can add their own images to Amazon product pages.

I've noted that there are many scam reviews on Amazon. When you look at all the reviews from certain "users," they will give all five-star reviews without ever having purchased any of the products from Amazon. When a reviewer has purchased the reviewed product from Amazon, "Amazon Verified Purchase" will appear just above the review. It's still worth it to check the reviews, but pay the closer attention to those with "Amazon Verified Purchase."

I could never bring myself to put in a fake review (or ask someone else to do it), even if it boosted sales. It's just another way to perpetrate a fraud on readers. Fortunately Amazon has a liberal return policy if you feel you've been ripped off.

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:

Just released and available from Amazon, *Misunderstanding Windows 8: An Introduction, Orientation, and How-to for Windows 8 (*www.amazon.com/gp/product/B007RMCRH8/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20*)!*

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*)!*

Now available, the four book Windows 7 Secrets Essential Bundle (includes the primary tools or Windows 7, the Desktop, Start Menu, Windows Explorer and Taskbar (e-books listed individually below):

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Secrets-Essential-Bundle-EPUB-for-iPad-etc-WinEssentials-1.htm?sourceCode=writer)
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Essential-Bundle-MOBI-for-Amazon-Kindle-WinEssentials-2.htm?sourceCode=writer)

Or individually:

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Secrets-EPUB-for-iPad-NOOK-etc-Wintips0005-1.htm?sourceCode=writer*)*
*Windows 7 Desktop Secrets (MOBI for Amazon Kindle) (*www.computoredgebooks.com/Windows-7-Desktop-Secrets-

MOBI-for-Amazon-Kindle-Wintips0005-2.htm?sourceCode=writer*)*

*Windows 7 Start Menu Secrets (EPUB for iPad, NOOK, etc.) (*www.computoredgebooks.com/Windows-7-Start-Menu-

Secrets-EPUB-for-iPad-NOOK-etc-Wintips0004-1.htm?sourceCode=writer*)*

*Windows 7 Start Menu Secrets (MOBI for Amazon Kindle) (*www.computoredgebooks.com/Windows-7-Start-Menu-

Secrets-MOBI-for-Amazon-Kindle-Wintips0004-2.htm?sourceCode=writer*)*

*Windows 7 Explorer Secrets (EPUB for iPad, NOOK, etc.) (*www.computoredgebooks.com/Windows-7-Explorer-

Secrets-EPUB-for-iPad-NOOK-etc-Wintips0003-1.htm?sourceCode=writer*)*
*Windows 7 Explorer Secrets (MOBI for Amazon Kindle) (*www.computoredgebooks.com/Windows-7-Explorer-Secrets

-MOBI-for-Amazon-Kindle-Wintips0003-2.htm?sourceCode=writer*)*

*Windows 7 Taskbar Secrets (EPUB for iPad, NOOK, etc.) (*www.computoredgebooks.com/Windows-7-Taskbar-

Secrets-EPUB-for-iPad-NOOK-etc-Wintips0002-1.htm?sourceCode=writer*)*
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Editor's Letters: Tips and Thoughts from Readers

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

"Windows 8 Beta?" "Burning Multiple Discs," "USB 2.0 to SATA/IDE Adapter," "Cloud Coverage," "iPad Screen Resolution, Voice Dictation"

Windows 8 Beta?

[Regarding Jack Dunning's March 23 article, "Windows 8 Update":]

Jack,

The "Siamese Fighting Fish" is aka a "Beta." Get it? Beta.

-Joe Piluso, San Diego, CA

The Fish...I have a slightly different explanation based on the Wikipedia definition of SFF = betta (pronounced beeta): "In the 1963 James Bond movie From Russia with Love, the strategy of the criminal organization SPECTRE is compared to three Siamese fighting in the same tank: Two will fight each other to the death while the third will wait its turn to fight the exhausted victor, symbolizing the conflict between the USA and the Soviet Union, with SPECTRE as the fish that waits." In other words iOS and Android are currently fighting while Windows 8 waits its turn to beat the victor.

-Ron Cerrato, San Diego, CA

Burning Multiple Discs

[Regarding the March 23 Digital Dave column:]

I have been using Nero Burning ROM for years. It has capability to burn four discs simultaneously and I use it with four external CD/DVD burners on a hub. This software is in the $90 range (*www.amazon.com/gp/product/ B005CSF1VI/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20*), but very versatile with multiple burning and editing capabilities.

-Richard Manteufel, Lemon Grove, CA.

USB 2.0 to SATA/IDE Adapter

[Regarding the March 16 Digital Dave column:]

These things are *great*!

Just be *very* careful if using on an older laptop/2.5" IDE drive as the connectors are rarely marked and since the

brilliant designers of these drives provided no key to ensure they weren't connected wrong, you can plug them in backwards. With normal desktop ribbon cables, this isn't a problem, but with the small drives, the power is also supplied through the cable and if connected backwards, it'll fry the circuit board. Consider yourself warned.

If it's a SATA laptop/2.5" drive, no problem they use the same, keyed connectors as their larger brethren.

-Rich Ernst, San Diego, CA

Cloud Coverage

[Regarding the March 23 Editors Letters: Tips and Thoughts from Readers column:]

Jack:

Love your *ComputorEdge*. Could you add some coverage of what is available in the Cloud for us "little guys"?

For example, I spoke with the owner of a small Los Angeles textile manufacturing company earlier this week and he said that they got rid of their various design computers and now use a vector graphics program "in the Cloud" (he couldn't remember which one). He receives 300 dpi output in PDF format which goes straight to the manufacturing line.

I don't know where to start looking for this kind of stuff; either my Google search queries don't contain the right keywords or it's truly hard to find. There must be Web sites, trade lists, user groups and forums which talk about Cloud apps—a "freecode.com" of apps for the cloud.

Maybe Marilyn could switch from comedy to the Cloud? Or Dave, Wally and you could tag each weekly column with a one-line about a cloud app or cloud setup for Win/Mac/Linux?

No more local updates, no more configuration problems, no more viruses, no more memory leaks, no more project backups, no more platform restrictions.

-Peter, Los Angeles, CA

iPad Screen Resolution, Voice Dictation

[Regarding the March 23 Wally Wangs Apple Farm column:]

Wally, another excellent column, thanks.

On the iPad Figure 2 showing the new screen resolution, did you simply put a 3.5x physical magnifier on top of each screen? What are the old and new iPad resolutions, anyway?

And the iPad's voice dictation with "a Bluetooth microphone and headset" would be a great improvement over my dictation unit that I use while driving for hours; how slowly do you have to speak to get good accuracy? And exactly how do I get each dictated part (I assume they end up in separate text files) into the computer so I can spell check and use them? Are there any "gotchas" which makes this procedure unwieldy or dangerous while driving? For example, I can't be entering a new file name each time I dictate something if I'm simultaneously watching the road.

-Peter, Los Angeles, CA

The new iPad's screen resolution is 2048-by-1536-pixel resolution at 264 pixels per inch (pip) while the old iPad's screen resolution is 1024-by-768-pixel resolution at 132 pixels per inch (pip).

The voice dictation lets you talk in a normal voice and works with any iPad app such as Pages, Notes, or Safari. So if you have any word processor on your iPad, you can just talk and the iPad will transcribe your voice into text. Now you can save your file on the iPad and transfer it to your computer for editing later.

-Wally Wang

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