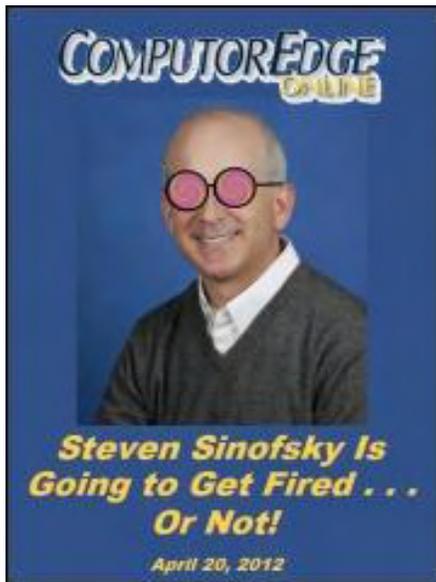


# ComputerEdge™ Online — 04/20/12



## This issue: Steven Sinofsky Is Going to Get Fired...Or Not!

Windows 8's release is scheduled for Fall 2012. This may be Microsoft's biggest gamble yet.

### Table of Contents:

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

Digital Dave answers your tech questions.  
Inserting a Username and Password onto New Web Site; Jumpy Typing with Windows 7; Protecting Data on a Bad External Drive.

#### [Steven Sinofsky Has Gone All-In on Windows 8](#) by Jack Dunning

A Look at the Man Behind Changes in the Microsoft Culture  
Steven Sinofsky is pushing Microsoft's dual interface one-size-fits-all approach to Window 8. Is he onto something or on something?

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

How to Save the Newspaper Industry  
How to Save the Newspaper Industry; Programming Tool for iOS; Creating Timelines; More Rapid Changes for Dinosaurs to Ignore; Spam Books; Automatically Reboot.

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

Buying the Wrong Computer  
Amusing anecdotes about the process of buying a computer.



(Click Banner)



(Click Banner)

### DEPARTMENTS:

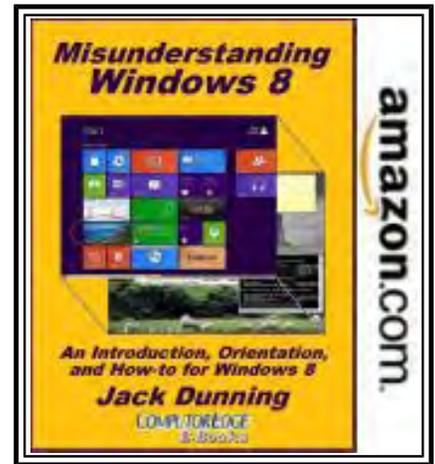
[Editor's Letters: Tips and Thoughts from Readers](#) by  
ComputerEdge Staff

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

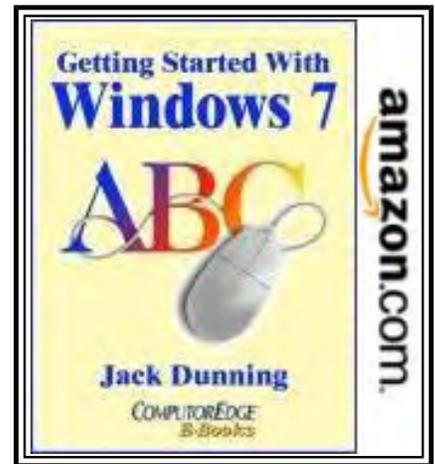
"Misunderstanding Windows 8," "Backup and Restore," "The Windows 8 Touch Keyboard," "XP Please"



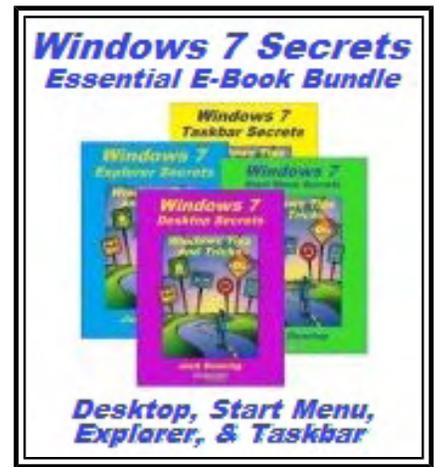
(Click Banner)



(Click Banner)



(Click Banner)



(Click Banner)



(Click Banner)

Send mail to [ceeditor@computoregde.com](mailto:ceeditor@computoregde.com) with questions about editorial content.  
Send mail to [cewebmaster@computoregde.com](mailto:cewebmaster@computoregde.com) with questions or comments about this Web site.

Copyright © 1997-2012 The Byte Buyer, Inc.

ComputerEdge Magazine, P.O. Box 83086, San Diego, CA 92138. (858) 573-0315

---

---

[Return to Table of Contents](#)



## Digital Dave

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

Inserting a Username and Password onto New Web Site; Jumpy Typing with Windows 7;  
Protecting Data on a Bad External Drive.

*Dear Digital Dave,*

*I am building a new Web site using Dreamweaver CS4 and want to restrict it to specific users. How do you recommend that I do this?*

*Thank you,*

*Rudy Flores  
San Diego, CA*

Dear Rudy,

The key to adding password protection is saving user names and passwords on the Web server. Any step that you take in HTML and JavaScript tricks will not be sufficient since ultimately the source code will be available to anyone on the Web. You need a server side solution.

Fortunately there is a solution built into Apache servers and now I believe supported by most other servers. It is called .htaccess ([en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Htaccess](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Htaccess)). The security is implemented with two hidden files on the server: .htaccess and .htpasswd. There are a number of sites which give a Web directory password protection how-to ([css-tricks.com/easily-password-protect-a-website-or-subdirectory/](http://css-tricks.com/easily-password-protect-a-website-or-subdirectory/)). The one that I linked also gives a demo.

To learn more about .htaccess, there is an extensive Web guide ([www.htaccess-guide.com/](http://www.htaccess-guide.com/)). If you are using a Windows IIS Web server, then this Microsoft Support page ([support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=KB;EN-US;q324064](http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=KB;EN-US;q324064)) may be of use.

While you're at it, go ahead and use SSL (https) as well. This is the secure Internet transmissions commonly used by shopping carts and financial institutions. This will encrypt the user names and passwords when sent over the Internet. It's not good to send passwords or protected data in clear text. The only problem is that you will need a security certificate ([en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Digital\\_certificate](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Digital_certificate)) installed on your site. You can generate one yourself or buy one—depending upon your situation.

To help keep unwanted people away from your protected page, do not put any links to the page anywhere on the Web. If you don't link it, the search engines will not be able to index it. As far as most people will be concerned, your Web page will not exist. This will not protect the page (you need to implement .htaccess for that), but it will cut down

on the odds of getting hacked.

Digital Dave

---

*Dear Digital Dave,*

*I'm using Windows 7 Home Premium with Internet Explorer 9 and when I type, either in an e-mail or filling out a form online, many times the page and typing size, etc. change and jump around, expand, get smaller, etc. Can you please tell me how to correct this? Would this be related to my touchpad? Don't know.*

*Thank you,*

*Jerry Hughes  
San Diego, CA*

Dear Jerry,

Yes, this type of flakiness can be related to your touchpad, mouse or other input device (keyboard). If the device is faulty, it may send erroneously signals to the computer. For example, I have a mouse that will occasionally send a scroll wheel signal to my computer making the screen jump up or down. I know it's the mouse because it only happens when I position the cursor within a scroll-able box. It isn't bad enough for me to replace the mouse, but it is occasionally annoying.

The changing of font size can also be related to the touchpad or a mouse with a scroll wheel. A common way to change the size of text in a browser is to hold down the CTRL key while scrolling on the touchpad or mouse scroll wheel. These signals can also come from a faulty pointing device.

If you think that your problem is related to your touchpad, then disable the touchpad in your control panel and switch to a mouse. If the problem goes away, you have your answer.

In many cases this kind of problem can be resolved by downloading the latest drivers from the manufacturer of the touchpad or mouse. If that doesn't work then you may need to get a new pointing device ([www.amazon.com/mn/search/?\\_encoding=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20&linkCode=ur2&camp=1789&creative=390957&field-keywords=touchpad&url=search-alias%3Dcomputers#/ref=nb\\_sb\\_ss\\_i\\_1\\_5?url=search-alias=computers](http://www.amazon.com/mn/search/?_encoding=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20&linkCode=ur2&camp=1789&creative=390957&field-keywords=touchpad&url=search-alias%3Dcomputers#/ref=nb_sb_ss_i_1_5?url=search-alias=computers)).

I personally keep the touchpad turned off on my laptop computer because I'll accidentally touch the pad while typing. That causes the cursor to jump to a new location. It's a real mess if I don't notice the repositioning.

Digital Dave

---

*Hi Dave,*

*I have a Western Digital external drive that has crashed and needs to be replaced. It's under warranty, so I've contacted WD, requested an RMA, and am ready to send it in. The thing is, I was using this drive as my daily backup via Time Machine on my iMac. I'm reluctant to send this drive in without wiping it first. Is there a DIY method or a local (SD coastal North County) outfit that could do this without resorting to a hammer and a drill?*

*Thanks!*

*Michael Cooper  
Encinitas, CA*

Dear Michael,

Every hard drive manufacturer needs to take data security precautions for returned drives very seriously. That's why they have policies governing the handling of those bad hard drives. From the Western Digital Community site ([community.wdc.com/t5/Off-Topic-Discussions/Data-Privacy-When-Returning-HDD/td-p/373785](http://community.wdc.com/t5/Off-Topic-Discussions/Data-Privacy-When-Returning-HDD/td-p/373785)):

"When a drive is RMA'd the returned defective drives are pulled from the cases and stuck in machines that analyze the drive to see if it's any good, while destroying the data at the same time. If the drive is non-functioning the drive case is opened and the platters are pulled and destroyed."

The policy alone wouldn't necessarily prevent an unscrupulous employee from breaking the rules, but my guess is that they handle so many drives that it would be highly unlikely that yours would be searched for data. I suspect that the system for handling returns at WD would make it difficult for anyone to sit and peruse any drive, although I don't know this to be a fact. This is a legal vulnerability that any company would want to avoid.

I don't think it would be worthwhile to outsource the wiping of your drive. The cost is likely to be as high, or higher, than the price of a new hard drive ([www.amazon.com/mn/search/?\\_encoding=UTF8&node=595048&tag=comput0b9-20](http://www.amazon.com/mn/search/?_encoding=UTF8&node=595048&tag=comput0b9-20)). If you are super concerned about the data, then keep the old drive and buy a new one. You can smash the old one with a sledge-hammer, drill holes in it, melt it down with a welding torch, encase it in cement, and bury it in the backyard (or dump it in the deepest part of the ocean). Tossing it in a volcano would also work.

Me? I would take my chances with Western Digital. I don't think that there is much risk.

Digital Dave

---

---

---

[Return to Table of Contents](#)



## Steven Sinofsky Has Gone All-In on Windows 8

“A Look at the Man Behind Changes in the Microsoft Culture” by Jack Dunning

Steven Sinofsky is pushing Microsoft's dual interface one-size-fits-all approach to Window 8. Is he onto something or on something?

Steven Sinofsky is getting fired—or not! I know—“Who is Steven Sinofsky?” That was my question. Until recently I never paid much attention, but it has come to my attention that he has a lot on the line. Sinofsky is the president of Microsoft's Windows division.

When someone thinks of Microsoft, Bill Gates comes to mind. Gates has always been the dominant force behind Microsoft and he probably still is. The other names are usually lost in the massive size of Microsoft and unless you're a Microsoft groupie (or possibly detractor) who watches Microsoft's every move, you most likely have never heard of Sinofsky. That's all about to change. Sinofsky's reputation will live or die on the success or failure of Windows 8. It's his baby.

It's not that Sinofsky hasn't had plenty of success at Microsoft ([en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Steven\\_Sinofsky](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Steven_Sinofsky)). He was in charge of the designs of Microsoft Office 95 and Microsoft Office 97 and oversaw the Office products which followed, including the Office 2007 effort and the development of the ribbon user interface. In 2009 he became president of the Microsoft Windows division.

Sinofsky, along with Jon DeVaan, is credited with leading the effort to save Windows from the Windows Vista debacle with the release of Windows 7. He has developed a reputation for shipping products on time. Now Sinofsky seems to be the primary driving force behind Windows 8 and the controversial dual interface approach: one interface designed for tablets (Metro) and the other for desktops and laptops (Windows). In Windows 8 the two views coexist giving users both. Sinofsky has gone “all in” on Windows 8.

There are plenty of people who feel strongly that Windows 8 will fail. You only need to Google “Windows 8 fail.” Of particular interest are the comments from readers at the end of the articles which tend to rip apart Windows 8 and Microsoft. You can also Google “Windows 8 succeed” and half of the articles will be about it failing. Expectations for

Windows 8 are really low—which is probably a good thing for Sinofsky and Microsoft.

## Who Is Steven Sinofsky?

In "Microsoft's next Steve: Windows boss faces biggest test ([www.reuters.com/article/2012/02/28/us-microsoft-sinofsky-idUSTRE81R0FJ20120228](http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/02/28/us-microsoft-sinofsky-idUSTRE81R0FJ20120228))," Bill Rigby notes that one thing we can expect is that Windows 8 will ship on time. Sinofsky has "established a reputation as a 'shipper.'"



It appears that Sinofsky is the man behind a change in the way Microsoft does business. He takes a systematic approach to product development. "Supporters credit Sinofsky with bringing order to the sometimes chaotic software development process at Microsoft—partly by cutting layers of management through what is now referred to internally as 'Sinofskization'—and getting products out the door."

"This streamlining, along with rigorous planning, has become his signature at Microsoft, but has ruffled some feathers at the company because it has reduced the number of general manager positions, where people got to use a wide variety of skills, and focused instead on the core functions of making software: developing, testing and managing specific programs"

In his article "Meet the Next CEO of Microsoft: Steven Sinofsky Is The Heir Apparent ([articles.businessinsider.com/2012-02-28/tech/31106885\\_1\\_steve-ballmer-windows-team-steven-sinofsky](http://articles.businessinsider.com/2012-02-28/tech/31106885_1_steve-ballmer-windows-team-steven-sinofsky))," Matt Rosoff points out that there is plenty of grumbling about Sinofsky. "As one former engineer explains, there's no role in a Sinofsky organization for architects who think about strategy—if you don't want to manage people, you have to write code, test products, or come up with specs. 'So at the upper tier, people are under severe pressure to find roles they consider appropriate. That's what's driving a lot of senior guys away.'"

Sinofsky's approach to software development does not seem to be conducive to the stereotypical programming environment of loose teams independently releasing their creative juices while pursuing strategic (possibly vague) goals. "The Sinofsky method is quite different: A product leader sets the product vision early on, then large teams set off on a well-defined course to reach that vision. It's more 'measure twice, cut once' with 'very discrete stages,' says a former exec who approves of his methods."

As would be expected, anyone who is making substantial changes to the way of doing business in a company as large as Microsoft will encounter criticism. "Sinofsky would also be an absolute leader. Several people told us he demands 100 percent loyalty to his methods—and he can be ruthless and backhanded in undermining people who disagree with him."

## The Vision Thing

Some commentators have even gone so far as to compare Steven Sinofsky with Steve Jobs ([betanews.com/2011/09/14/steven-sinofsky-is-the-new-steve-jobs/](http://betanews.com/2011/09/14/steven-sinofsky-is-the-new-steve-jobs/)). Joe Wilcox dares to give a blow by comparison of the two.

However, as Woody Leonhard points out in "Steve Jobs vs. Microsoft's Sinofsky: Vision vs. hindsight ([www.infoworld.com/t/microsoft-windows/steve-jobs-vs-microsofts-sinofsky-vision-vs-hindsight-188185](http://www.infoworld.com/t/microsoft-windows/steve-jobs-vs-microsofts-sinofsky-vision-vs-hindsight-188185))," the two seem to approach new products from opposite ends. Jobs would envision a product without regard for what the end-user might say (after all, they didn't know what they wanted until Jobs showed them), then he would drive to that end result until it came to fruition.



"Sinofsky, on the other hand, is a master at assembling and dissecting information about the way a product is used." He depends heavily upon data that comes from user experiences. This collection of data is now automatic in Microsoft products and results in many improvements.

I've personally experienced this continual improvement with Windows 7. For a while my version of QuickBooks would not run in Windows 7, even after spending a good deal of time with Intuit support. There seemed to be no solution and I abandoned the attempts. Then, a few months later, I gave it another try. It ran perfectly. It was like magic. The only thing that I had done was to regularly run the Windows Updates. I have no doubt that the data collection system helped Microsoft to resolve this issue.

**"Watch out! Steven is wearing his special X-Ray Visionary glasses!"**

Few people would dispute that Jobs was a person of vision. "The Jobs approach relies on vision and guts." Despite his early successes, the critics are skeptical of Sinofsky's vision—especially in relation to Windows 8. "The Sinofsky approach relies on massive user input, insight and analytical abilities. My sailing friends have a term for it. They call it 'steering a boat by its wake.'" Is this the type of vision that will create new markets as Jobs did over and over again? Perhaps not, but the problem with evaluating vision is that we never know if people have it until after they bring their inner view into reality

## As Goes Windows 8, So Goes Sinofsky

In many ways it seems that Windows 8 is Sinofsky. If Windows 8 is a success, it is felt that Sinofsky may have a lock on succeeding Ballmer as CEO. Not everyone is rooting him on ([www.winsupersite.com/article/windows8/windows-8-consumer-preview-sense-142496](http://www.winsupersite.com/article/windows8/windows-8-consumer-preview-sense-142496)). "Inside Microsoft, there is a related fixation on whether Windows 8 will succeed and, yes, there is a contingent of people stuck in a paradoxical position: They understand that the success of Microsoft is inexorably linked to Windows, and thus that Windows 8 must succeed. But they desperately want Steven Sinofsky, and thus Windows 8, to fail. That both can't happen is of course the unresolvable issue."

Not only might he not have the vision thing, but maybe he's lacking in other important traits to become CEO ([www.pcpro.co.uk/features/373174/steven-sinofsky-the-next-microsoft-ceo](http://www.pcpro.co.uk/features/373174/steven-sinofsky-the-next-microsoft-ceo)) of Microsoft. "Critics say he lacks the necessary charisma for the top job, and question whether he has the technical brilliance of Gates or the incisive analytical ability and forceful personality of Ballmer."

If Windows 8 is a success, Steven Sinofsky will be hailed as the conquering hero of Microsoft. Yet, if the odds are based upon the early reactions to the Windows 8 Consumer Preview, they could be very long indeed. I've written numerous columns and articles on Windows 8 (and one e-book, *Misunderstanding Window 8: An Introduction, Orientation, and How-to for Windows 8* ([www.amazon.com/gp/product/B007RMC8H8/ref=as\\_li\\_ss\\_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B007RMC8H8/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20)), available at Amazon) and most of the feedback has been negative

toward Windows 8 and Microsoft.

Few people will line up for Microsoft the way they do for Apple. Jobs was able to create new markets because his users trusted him to deliver the best he knew in an innovative manner. Microsoft has worked on the tablets for over ten years but never was able to get anything to stick. The Apple iPad was an immediate success and established the tablet as a force to be reckoned with. All it needed was a blessing from Steve Jobs. Microsoft does not have that type of new market influence. If anything, it's the opposite. Most people view Microsoft with suspicion and skepticism.

From Woody Leonhard at *InfoWorld* ([www.infoworld.com/d/microsoft-windows/windows-8-something-old-something-awkward-187992](http://www.infoworld.com/d/microsoft-windows/windows-8-something-old-something-awkward-187992)), "I'm tempted to call it a 'Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde' operating system, but I can't decide which name to assign to the Metro side of the fence and which to the Windows 7-like desktop...In my experience, with rare exceptions, longtime Windows users don't like Windows 8. There's too much change, and it isn't at all clear that the adjustments benefit people who've grown accustomed to mice and 'legacy' programs."

Some are predicting that the Windows 8 tablet will fail ([www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/g/a/2012/04/11/businessinsidergartner-windows-8-ta.DTL](http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/g/a/2012/04/11/businessinsidergartner-windows-8-ta.DTL)). Others attack Windows 8 ([gnumicro.tumblr.com/post/12571210528/why-windows8-will-fail](http://gnumicro.tumblr.com/post/12571210528/why-windows8-will-fail)) because that's what they do. "First of all I want to state that I do, and always have, hated Microsoft. I hate Windows in every way and I hate pretty much every product they bring out (with the exception of Kinect, that was pretty cool)." Still more are taking this opportunity to "finally" switch to the Mac ([www.infoworld.com/print/188365](http://www.infoworld.com/print/188365)).

"So with Windows 8, we have an operating system that is stirring outrage in some of Microsoft's staunchest supporters, produced by a company apparently experiencing dysfunction at a fundamental level. Microsoft cannot afford another Vista—and Windows 8 promises to be just that sort of debacle. Moreover, it seems as if internal politics may be overwhelming Microsoft's ability to execute."

I wonder how many of these same people wrote that the Apple iPad would fail?

As I've stated in the past, I'm not predicting that Windows 8 will be a success. However, in the course of writing about Windows 8 I experienced an insight that only comes from trying to explain the operation of a system to someone else. I slowly began to understand the "why" as I learned the "how." Despite the missing Start Menu and the uncomfortable Metro screen, I found a means in this madness. That is why I titled my e-book *Misunderstanding Windows 8*.

I could have called the e-book *The Zen of Windows 8* or *The Windows 8 Gestalt*, but that may have been over the top. I'm not trying to defend or promote Windows 8, but merely reveal what I saw as the pieces formed a total image in my brain pan. That's why I came up with the catch phrase "Aw, come on! It not all *that* bad!" After learning more about Steven Sinofsky and putting that together with my personal understanding of Windows 8 (not what others say about it), I felt like I might seeing a glimpse of what Sinofsky sees.

Is Sinofsky going to be fired? Probably not. Even if Windows 8 does fail, he has too good of a track record to be dumped. If Microsoft eases Windows 8 into the market by allowing it to be an alternative to Windows 7 rather than *the* replacement, then people will not feel trod upon like they did with Vista. If Microsoft makes Windows 8 into a tablet computer which just happens to run traditional Windows, then they may make some headway into iPad territory.

I've never been a Microsoft lover, but I'm not betting against Sinofsky on this one.

---

Jack is the publisher of *ComputerEdge* Magazine. He's been with the magazine since first issue on May 16, 1983. Back then, it was called *The Byte Buyer*. His Web site is [www.computoredge.com](http://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/B007RMC8RH8/ref=as\\_li\\_ss\\_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B007RMC8RH8/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](http://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):

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

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

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

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

Or individually:

*Windows 7 Desktop Secrets (EPUB for iPad, NOOK, etc.)* ([www.computoredgebooks.com/Windows-7-Desktop-](http://www.computoredgebooks.com/Windows-7-Desktop-Secrets-EPUB-for-iPad-NOOK-etc-Wintips0005-1.htm?sourceCode=writer)

[Secrets-EPUB-for-iPad-NOOK-etc-Wintips0005-1.htm?sourceCode=writer](http://www.computoredgebooks.com/Windows-7-Desktop-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-](http://www.computoredgebooks.com/Windows-7-Desktop-Secrets-MOBI-for-Amazon-Kindle-Wintips0005-2.htm?sourceCode=writer)

[MOBI-for-Amazon-Kindle-Wintips0005-2.htm?sourceCode=writer](http://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-](http://www.computoredgebooks.com/Windows-7-Start-Menu-Secrets-EPUB-for-iPad-NOOK-etc-Wintips0004-1.htm?sourceCode=writer)

[Secrets-EPUB-for-iPad-NOOK-etc-Wintips0004-1.htm?sourceCode=writer](http://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-](http://www.computoredgebooks.com/Windows-7-Start-Menu-Secrets-MOBI-for-Amazon-Kindle-Wintips0004-2.htm?sourceCode=writer)

[Secrets-MOBI-for-Amazon-Kindle-Wintips0004-2.htm?sourceCode=writer](http://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-](http://www.computoredgebooks.com/Windows-7-Explorer-Secrets-EPUB-for-iPad-NOOK-etc-Wintips0003-1.htm?sourceCode=writer)

[Secrets-EPUB-for-iPad-NOOK-etc-Wintips0003-1.htm?sourceCode=writer](http://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-](http://www.computoredgebooks.com/Windows-7-Explorer-Secrets-MOBI-for-Amazon-Kindle-Wintips0003-2.htm?sourceCode=writer)

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

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

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

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

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

*Sticking with Windows XP—or Not? (EPUB for iPad, NOOK, etc.)* ([www.computoredgebooks.com/Sticking-with-](http://www.computoredgebooks.com/Sticking-with-Windows-XP-or-Not-EPUB-for-iPad-NOOK-etc-Wintips0001-1.htm?sourceCode=writer)

[Windows-XP-or-Not-EPUB-for-iPad-NOOK-etc-Wintips0001-1.htm?sourceCode=writer](http://www.computoredgebooks.com/Sticking-with-Windows-XP-or-Not-EPUB-for-iPad-NOOK-etc-Wintips0001-1.htm?sourceCode=writer))

*Sticking with Windows XP—or Not? (MOBI for Amazon Kindle)* ([www.computoredgebooks.com/Sticking-with-](http://www.computoredgebooks.com/Sticking-with-Windows-XP-or-Not-MOBI-for-Amazon-Kindle-Wintips0001-2.htm?sourceCode=writer)

[Windows-XP-or-Not-MOBI-for-Amazon-Kindle-Wintips0001-2.htm?sourceCode=writer](http://www.computoredgebooks.com/Sticking-with-Windows-XP-or-Not-MOBI-for-Amazon-Kindle-Wintips0001-2.htm?sourceCode=writer))

---

---

[Return to Table of Contents](#)



## Wally Wang's Apple Farm

“How to Save the Newspaper Industry” by Wally Wang

How to Save the Newspaper Industry; Programming Tool for iOS; Creating Timelines; More Rapid Changes for Dinosaurs to Ignore; Spam Books; Automatically Reboot.

# Wally Wang's Apple Farm

By the time most newspapers print national and international news stories, it's already been on the Internet the day before. Today's newspapers are out of date the second they're printed. In the old days, newspapers acted as the middleman between news services and the public. Now the public can access those same news services and even do their own reporting with the help of mobile phones with cameras and video sharing sites like YouTube.

Toss in classified ad sites like Craigslist that decimated the advertising revenue of newspapers, and you can see that the business model of today's newspapers is woefully out of date. While journalists in Mexico risk their lives to report on corruption in the government or on the activities of the drug cartels, journalists in America slavishly follow reality TV stars like Kim Kardashian and speculate on who she might be sleeping with this week.

One way newspapers can survive is by reporting local news that the bigger news services will often ignore. A second way newspapers can survive is by actually reporting facts and delivering more in-depth coverage rather than providing simplistic news stories that are no different than a dozen other news sites on the Internet.

*The Guardian* newspaper in England has found another way to survive. Rather than just report the news, *The Guardian* plans to offer classes teaching people about digital media production ([www.zdnet.com/blog/foremski/heres-how-newspapers-could-save-themselves-teaching/2228?tag=mantle\\_skin;content](http://www.zdnet.com/blog/foremski/heres-how-newspapers-could-save-themselves-teaching/2228?tag=mantle_skin;content)). Some basic media authoring skills involve learning how to produce and edit videos, posting blogs, interviewing techniques, audio recording, photography and story-telling.

The more people know these skills to report on news, the more likely we'll get accurate information from multiple sources. Just from a business perspective, knowing how to communicate effectively using digital media can be useful for landing a job, advertising a product or service, or expressing your point of view that goes beyond simple name-calling and insults.

Newspapers won't survive by parroting back stories submitted by news services or acting as unofficial propaganda outlets for government agencies, so they'll need to provide useful services based on their unique experience in reporting and manipulating public opinion. Basically, newspapers can survive by changing from total reliance on an advertising medium (newspapers) to teaching digital media skills based on their own long experience in publishing.

Newspapers are becoming increasingly irrelevant so they better find a new way to be useful in a hurry or they'll simply fade away like town criers in public squares. As a general rule, if it's printed on paper, it's going to be obsolete.

In the world of book publishing, print publishers are still trying to figure out how to profit from e-books ([www.macworld.com/article/1166323/dojs\\_antitrust\\_case\\_may\\_have\\_huge\\_implications\\_for\\_publishing.html](http://www.macworld.com/article/1166323/dojs_antitrust_case_may_have_huge_implications_for_publishing.html)). Allen Weiner, vice president of research in Gartner's media research group, said, "Book publishers have absolutely no idea on how to price e-books."

Publishers worked with Apple to find a pricing model that was meant "to stay away from the major business problems encountered by newspapers in the Internet environment."

Despite this, publishers still make "pennies" per sale on an e-book, compared to dollars per printed book, Weiner said. While more of the publishing business moves to e-books, publishers continue to pay large sums of money to major authors, who could decide to go independent and publish e-books on their own.

Print publishers, like newspapers, have to change quickly while dragging around the baggage from their old business as they shift to the new. Most likely the old baggage will simply sink them before they can make the transition successfully. The *Yellow Pages* were an early print version of search engines and should have logically evolved into Google or Yahoo! Instead, they stayed focused too long on their slowly dying print business and let newcomers take over the Internet search engine market. To expect book or newspaper publishers to shift to a new business model while shedding their old one seems possible, but highly unlikely given the nature of executives unable to see farther in the future than the next three months.

Newspaper and book publishers are simply middlemen that are no longer necessary in today's world, much like traffic cops on every street corner who lost their jobs when traffic lights appeared. If you're an author or writer, the quickest and easiest way to get published is to avoid the middlemen and do it yourself, whether through blogs or e-books. In both cases, you can bypass the newspaper and book publishers altogether, and this option alone threatens the entire newspaper and book publishing industry.

## Programming Tool for iOS

In the early days of the Macintosh, Apple gave away a free copy of HyperCard with every computer. Soon people started buying Macintosh computers just to use HyperCard, but back then, Apple was too short-sighted to realize that HyperCard helped sell Macintosh computers, so they killed HyperCard since they couldn't see how pouring resources into a free program could help them in any way.

People loved HyperCard because it made programming accessible to the average person. Now Apple may be trying to duplicate HyperCard's success with a new programming tool for iOS devices (iPhone and iPad). Patently Apple ([www.patentlyapple.com/patently-apple/2012/04/apple-reveals-new-whiz-bang-no-code-content-authoring-tool.html](http://www.patentlyapple.com/patently-apple/2012/04/apple-reveals-new-whiz-bang-no-code-content-authoring-tool.html)) recently revealed a patent for a programming tool that would make it easy to create iOS apps with little or no programming experience. The idea may be to give this programming tool away for free and help flood the iOS app market. Not only would this give people more of a reason to buy an iPhone or iPad, but it will also give them more of a reason to use a Macintosh just to use this programming tool.



Figure 1. Apple's new patent could create a new iOS programming tool.

As this Apple patent points out, people could drag and drop items they want and use JavaScript to create interactivity. While this seems strangely similar to Apple's iBooks Author program used to create interactive iBooks, it could also be used to create iOS apps as well.

If Apple can make creating iOS apps easy and fun, then they'll cement the iPhone and iPad's lead in available apps that rivals will have a hard time catching. In the old days, people chose a Windows PC because it offered the largest software library. Nowadays, people can use that same reasoning to choose an iPhone and an iPad.

## Creating Timelines

Nearly everyone has seen a timeline printed in a history book showing a horizontal line representing time with various items appearing on the timeline such as the era of the dinosaurs and the introduction of mammals. While timelines may seem to have limited uses, they can actually be extremely versatile in showing the progression of different types of events. To learn more about creating timelines, grab a copy of the \$65 Timeline 3D ([www.beedocs.com/timeline3D/](http://www.beedocs.com/timeline3D/)) program or the less expensive \$19.99 Timeline ([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%252Feasy-timeline%252Fid443213453%253Fmt%253D12%2526uo%253D4%2526partnerId%253D30](http://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%252Feasy-timeline%252Fid443213453%253Fmt%253D12%2526uo%253D4%2526partnerId%253D30)) program with fewer features.

At the simplest level, you can create a typical timeline by specifying a range of dates and place events at specific times. While that might be handy for a history lesson, timelines can be so much more versatile by importing data from

other programs.



Figure 2. Timeline can import data from other programs.

If you stored a bunch of pictures in iPhoto, Timeline can yank out those pictures and display them on a timeline. Now you can clearly see when you captured particular pictures in relation to the rest of your photographs.



Figure 3. By placing photographs on a timeline, you can easily see their chronological order.

Import appointments from iCal and you can view a visually pleasing arrangement of your upcoming appointments for the day, week, or month. Import data from iTunes and you can track when you played a particular album on different dates. Import data from your software updates and you can clearly identify when you applied a particular patch to your Macintosh. Such information can be particularly useful for system administrators who need to maintain multiple Macintosh computers in a network.

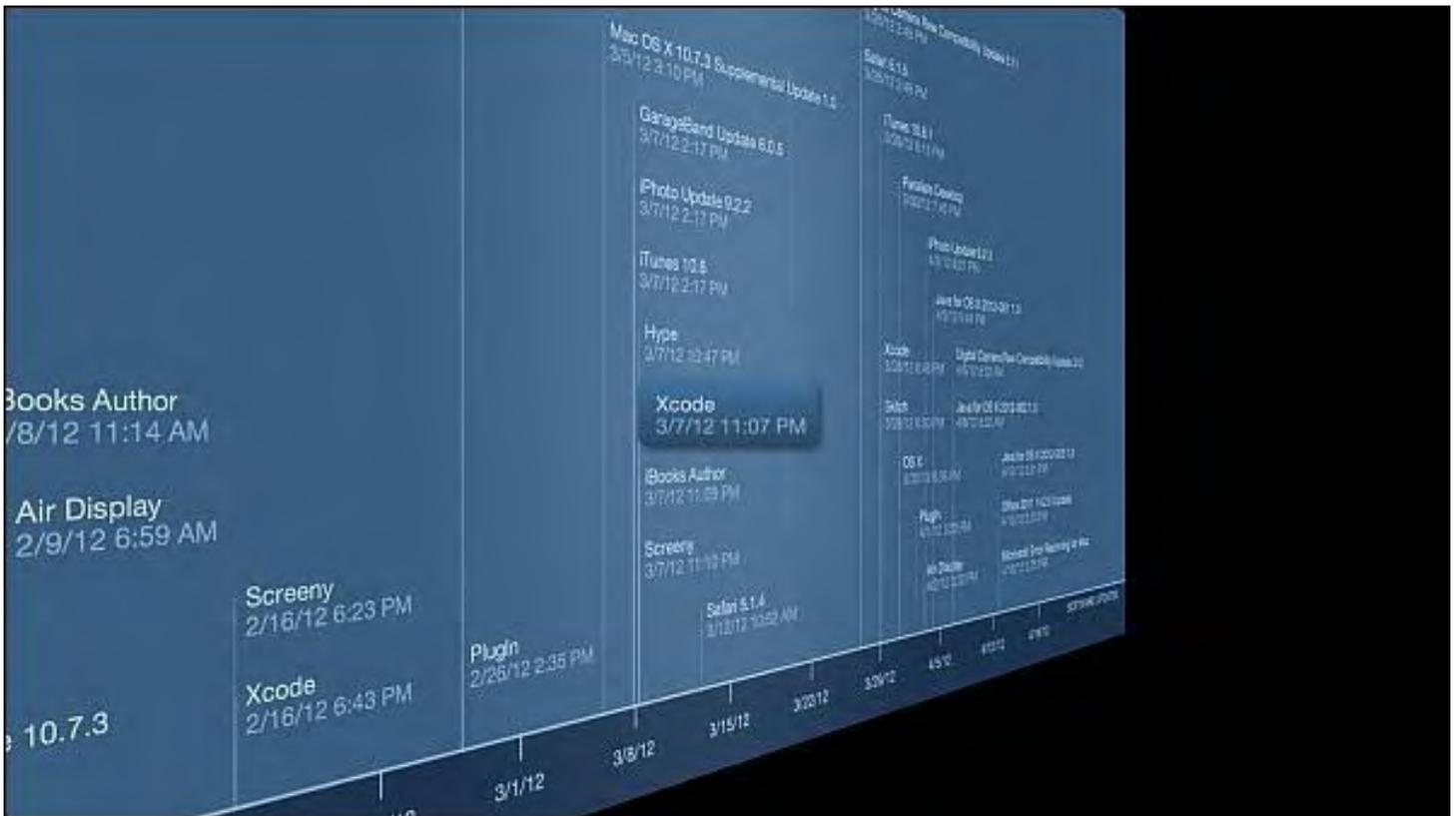


Figure 4. Timelines can show you the exact dates of different software updates.

Whether you create your timeline from scratch or automatically from data imported from another program, you can now export your data in a variety of different ways. For example, you can turn each item of your timeline into an individual slide for a Keynote presentation. Turn your timeline into an HTML file and post it on your Web page or save it as a video and post it on YouTube. By using Timeline, you can even turn any timeline into an iBooks Author widget that you can include in an interactive iBooks file.

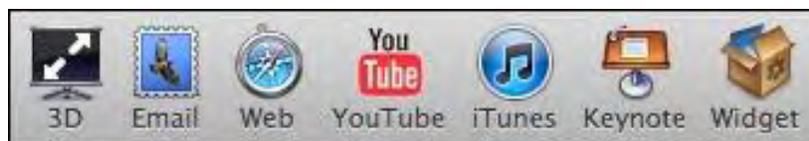


Figure 5. Timeline can export to a variety of different formats.

Timeline 3D is an amazingly versatile program that might make you initially scratch your head until you figure out different ways to use it. Once you start toying with timelines and see the visual clarity of a timeline to arrange appointments, photographs, or software updates, you'll start to see that timelines can be more than just boring history lesson tools in textbooks. Instead, you may find timelines can be far more useful than you ever thought possible just by using a deceptively simple program like Timeline 3D.

### More Rapid Changes for Dinosaurs to Ignore

If you still think that a Windows PC represents the pinnacle of technological progress, you can ignore this next section just as easily as you probably ignore skyrocketing sales of the iPhone, iPad and Macintosh computers. For the rest of us willing to deal with reality, here are two more changes to think about.

First is the deceptively simple, but popular 99 cent game called Draw Something ([click.linksynergy.com/fs-bin/](http://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%252Fdraw-something-by-omgpop%252Fid488627858%253Fmt%253D8%2526uo%253D4%2526partnerId%253D30). Basically you draw something and someone else on the Internet tries to guess what you're drawing, or you study someone else's drawing and try to figure out what they're trying to draw.

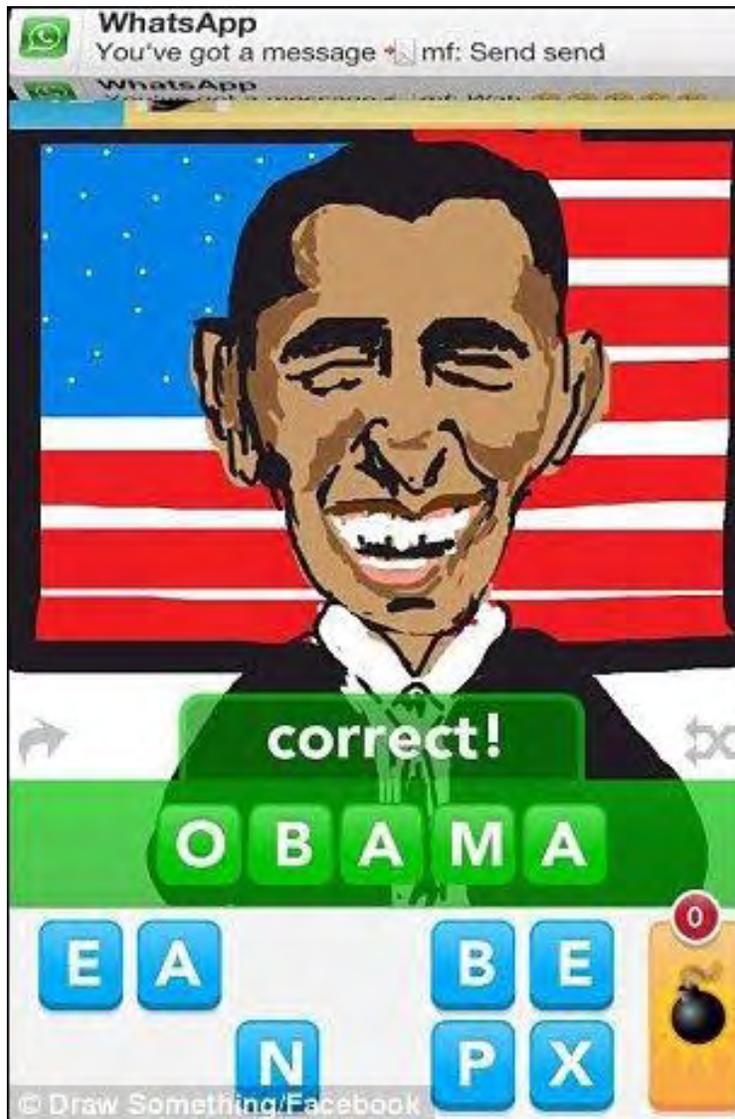


Figure 6. Draw Something lets you practice your drawing skills and share them with others.

In the past, such a game would involve corralling a group of people in a room and sharing your drawings. With a game like Draw Something, you can play by yourself, at any time, with people anywhere in the world. The world of gaming is fast expanding beyond something only one person can play to something you can play with others at any time. Without such Internet connectivity, games simply feel too limiting. It doesn't matter that you can play a game against the computer. What's far more flexible is playing a game against a human opponent.

The world of gaming is changing to incorporate the social aspect of the Internet. As sales of Sony and Nintendo's handheld gaming consoles continue tanking ([www.inquisitr.com/176291/playstation-vita-sales-continue-to-decline-in-third-week](http://www.inquisitr.com/176291/playstation-vita-sales-continue-to-decline-in-third-week/)), gaming on smartphones and iPads continue growing. When people can play games on smartphones and tablets, and see a new parade of games arrive on those platforms almost daily, the dedicated gaming console market of distributing new games in physical packages through retail stores suddenly seems too

slow.

The second big change to watch is 3D printing. Everyone understands ordinary printing on paper, but 3D printing lets you design an object in three-dimensions and then send it to a special 3D printer that can physically create those objects using plastics and other materials. Hollywood is already using 3D printing to create costumes ([news.cnet.com/8301-10797\\_3-57413967-235/why-hollywood-loves-3d-printing/?tag=mncol;editorPicks](http://news.cnet.com/8301-10797_3-57413967-235/why-hollywood-loves-3d-printing/?tag=mncol;editorPicks)) for movies such as "Iron Man 2."

If you thought the post office couldn't survive the popularity of online bill paying and e-mail, wait until you see UPS and Federal Express suffer when 3D printing becomes inexpensive and reliable. In the future, you'll be able to watch someone demonstrating a new plastic item on TV, order it, have it sent over the Internet to your 3D printer, and you'll have your item in seconds instead of waiting for a delivery service to ship it to you several days later.

Visit the Objet site ([www.objet.com/](http://www.objet.com/)) where you can see what a 3D printer looks like and how they actually work. With a 3D printer, you can make your own toys, tools, or models and share your designs with others. The world of 3D printing might seem too remote today, but color laser printers used to feel like science fiction until they became inexpensive consumer items.

As games become more dependent on the Internet and 3D printing becomes commonplace, old industries will die and new opportunities will open up for those willing to embrace change. Think now how you can take advantage of the future. If that thought frightens you, then sit around and complain that anything new should be ignored and make up reasons for why nothing should ever change in the world ever again.

## Spam Books

Be careful what you buy on Amazon. According to CNN, many "authors" are selling deceptively titled ([tech.fortune.cnn.com/2012/04/16/amazon-knock-off-bestsellers/?iid=HP\\_LN&hpt=hp\\_bn11](http://tech.fortune.cnn.com/2012/04/16/amazon-knock-off-bestsellers/?iid=HP_LN&hpt=hp_bn11)) print books and e-books with names like *I Am the Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* (imitating the better known *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* ([www.amazon.com/gp/product/0307949486/ref=as\\_li\\_tf\\_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=0307949486](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0307949486/ref=as_li_tf_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=0307949486))) by Steig Larsson and *Thirty-Five Shades of Grey* (imitating the better known *Fifty Shades of Grey* ([www.amazon.com/gp/product/0345803485/ref=as\\_li\\_tf\\_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=0345803485](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0345803485/ref=as_li_tf_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=0345803485))) by E.L. James.)

By producing cheap knockoffs of better known books, con artists can trick people into buying the wrong book and earn sales. Since Amazon makes a percentage of the sale, the company profits whether people buy the book they originally wanted or a cheap imitation by mistake. Although Amazon does remove these imitation books when they discover them, they're often slow to do so, which results in people buying the wrong items.

Such imitation knockoffs, dubbed "spam books," simply involve writing a novel and giving it a similar title as a more popular item. Since Amazon makes money whether they sell real books or spam books, make sure you're really buying the book you wanted by verifying the exact title and author's name. Better yet, perhaps it's time to simply avoid Amazon altogether until they decide to start protecting legitimate author's books and shutting down the fakes.

\* \* \*

Occasionally, every computer freezes up. Although Mac OS X Lion tends to be far more reliable than other operating systems, you might want to turn on a special setting that lets your Macintosh automatically reboot itself if it freezes.

Just click the Apple menu and choose System Preferences. When the System Preferences window appears, click the Energy saver icon under the Hardware category. Now click the Restart automatically if the computer freezes check box.

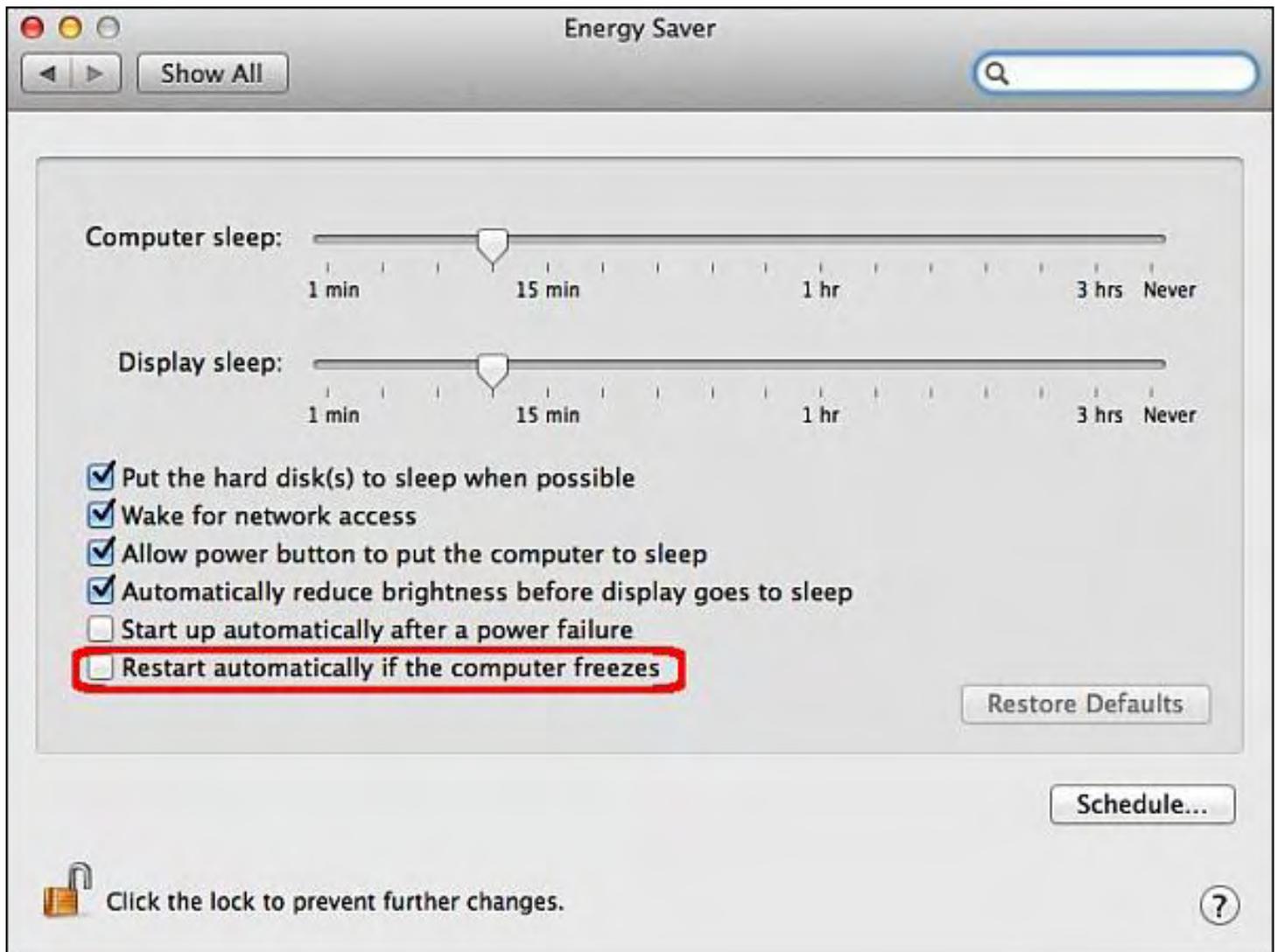


Figure 7. You can make your Macintosh restart itself if it should freeze.

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](http://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](http://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](http://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?](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0470489987?))

ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=0470489987)

***Beginning Programming for Dummies*** ([www.amazon.com/gp/product/0470088702?](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0470088702?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=0470088702)

ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=0470088702)

***Beginning Programming All-in-One Reference for Dummies*** ([www.amazon.com/gp/](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0470108541?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=0470108541)

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?](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0764554468?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=0764554468)

ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=0764554468)

***Strategic Entrepreneurism with Jon and Gerald Fisher*** ([www.amazon.com/gp/product/1590791894?](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1590791894?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=1590791894)

ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=1590791894)

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

ref=as\_li\_tf\_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-

20&linkCode=as2&camp=217145&creative=399373&creativeASIN=B006DJYL70)

***The Secrets of the Wall Street Stock Traders*** ([www.amazon.com/gp/product/B006DGCH4M/ref=as\\_li\\_tf\\_tl?](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B006DGCH4M/ref=as_li_tf_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=217145&creative=399373&creativeASIN=B006DGCH4M)

ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=217145&creative=399373&creativeASIN=B006DGCH4M)

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

ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=1430233362)

***99% Fairy Tales (Children's Stories the 1% Tell About the Rest of Us)*** ([www.amazon.com/gp/product/](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B006QSKM3A/ref=as_li_tf_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=B006QSKM3A)

B006QSKM3A/ref=as\_li\_tf\_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-

20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=B006QSKM3A)

***The Zen of Effortless Selling with Moe Abdou*** ([www.amazon.com/gp/product/B006PUFPGI/ref=as\\_li\\_tf\\_tl?](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B006PUFPGI/ref=as_li_tf_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=B006PUFPGI)

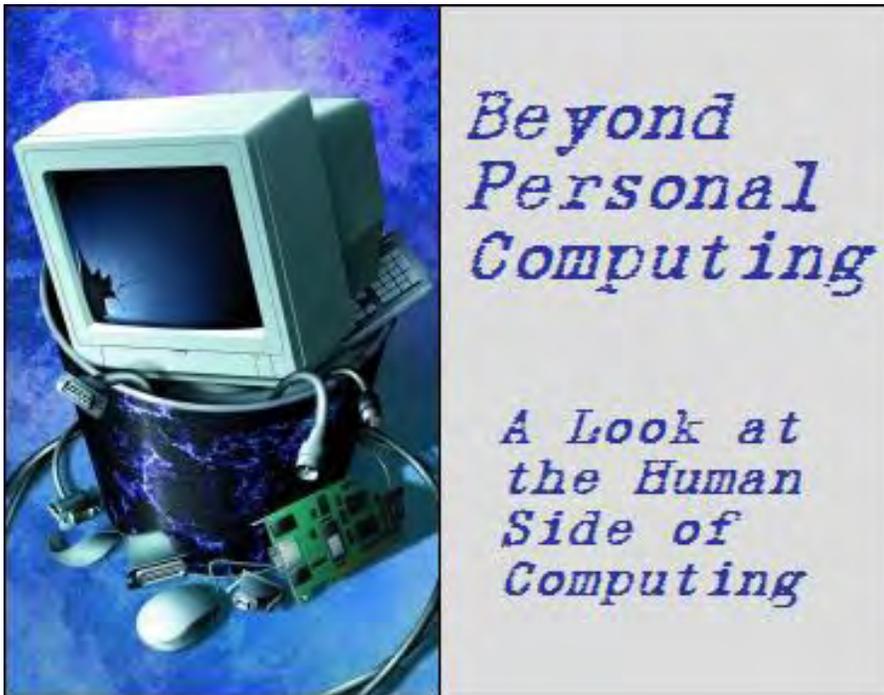
ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=B006PUFPGI)

***The 15-Minute Movie Method*** ([www.amazon.com/gp/product/B004TMD9K8/ref=as\\_li\\_tf\\_tl?](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B004TMD9K8/ref=as_li_tf_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=B004TMD9K8)

ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=B004TMD9K8)

In his spare time, Wally likes blogging about movies and writing screenplays at his site "The 15 Minute Movie Method. ([www.15minutemoviemethod.com/](http://www.15minutemoviemethod.com/))" Wally can be reached at [wally@computoredge.com](mailto:wally@computoredge.com).

[Return to Table of Contents](#)



## Beyond Personal Computing

“Buying the Wrong Computer” by Marilyn K. Martin

Amusing anecdotes about the process of buying a computer.

“The truth is that if you take a little time to learn a few basic principles and some of the technical lingo, buying the right computer and getting it to work properly is no more complicated than building a nuclear reactor from wristwatch parts in a darkened room—using only your teeth.” -*Dave Barry in Cyberspace*

### OK, It Does Happen...

You've read reviews, had glowing reports from friends and strangers, and saved up your money to upgrade to your dream desktop PC. Or maybe you went computer shopping with a friend, and fell for the advertising for the “absolute perfect laptop,” and bought it on the spot. Maybe you just wanted an inexpensive computer for your garage or man cave, and found a deal at the flea market.

Then, a few days to a week after purchase, it finally dawns on you: You're stuck with the computer equivalent of an Edsel. Only the Edsel had no start-up problems, and an understandable dashboard. You hear bizarre blips!, peeps! and dongs! when you start your new computer. And the opening screen has more bizarre icons than your daughter's page of sparkly, dancing cursor choices.

### Computer Salesman Truisms

Computer and car salesmen differ only because the latter knows when they are lying.

The software they sell *never* has bugs. It just “develops random features”—which is somehow your fault.

Buffer: The only other job—involving a chamois at the car wash—for which most computer store salespeople are qualified.

“No, it's not bogus, it's an IBM standard. Although I can look up this Bogus brand on the Internet for you, if you like. Sounds Russian-made.”

### Such a Deal!

"We've thrown in Bundled Software for free!" (Translation: Free applications like Home Dentistry and Esperanto Spelling Dictionaries are included in this cheap clone, so you'll think you're getting real value for your money.)

"And it has several expansion slots!" (Translation: This computer doesn't come with everything you need.)

"And it is Value-Added!" (Translation: It's a lot more expensive, but no one knows why.)

"Could I interest you in a Workstation?" (Translation: Any PC that sells for more than \$10,000.)

"And it's user friendly!" (Translation: Any feature, device or concept that makes perfect sense—but only to a programmer.)

## Historical Value of Bad Computers

The story goes that one Duffy Dumpster invented a terrible computer and sold it to Adolf Hitler in a plot to end the war. DD succeeded. Hitler became so enraged at the "Incompatible File Format" that he shot himself. WWII ended, and DD went to work for IBM.

Rumor is that the invention of laptops turned many an innocent young person into a Hacker. They had to find some way to retrieve their work, after working for three hours and forgetting to Save before the battery died.

They say the first super-computer was invented when a group of programmers kept getting "more of same" prompts.

## Three Types of Users Stuck with Bad Computers

Novice: People who are afraid that simply pressing one key might break their computer.

Intermediate: People who don't know how to fix their computer after they've just pressed a key that broke it.

Expert: People who break other people's computers.

## Inside a Bad Computer

A Central Propulsion Unit (CPU) that consists of a hard drive, and interface card and a tiny spinning wheel. The wheel is powered by a gerbil for a 286, a ferret for a 386, and a ferret on speed if it's a 486.

## Truth From a Tyke

"Daddy? What does 'Formatting Drive C' mean?"

"Mommy? Is 'General Failure Error Reading Drive C' a bad thing?"

## Key Signs You Have a Bad Computer

- 1) Lower corner of screen has the words "Etch-A-Sketch" on it.
- 2) In order to start it, you need some jumper cables and a friend's car.
- 3) Whenever you turn it on, all the dogs in your neighborhood start howling.

- 4) The manual contains only one sentence: "Good Luck!"
- 5) The only chip inside is a Dorito.
- 6) It comes with a Kick Here sticker to be applied to side of tower.
- 7) You have to sign a Mediation Clause before purchase.

### Murphy's Laws of Working on a Bad Computer

- A complex system that does not work, is invariably found to have evolved from a simpler system that worked just fine.
- The first place to look for information is in the section of your computer manual where you least expect to find it.
- When the going gets tough, go into debt to upgrade to a different brand.

### That Sinking Feeling When You Read a New Computer Manual That Says:

- 1) As far as we know, our computer has never had an undetected error.
- 2) All our features (not bugs) were deliberately developed to challenge your skills.
- 3) Experiencing reboots are character building. And our computers hold the industry record for requiring reboots. You should be proud.
- 4) Remember: Put on that smile! You need to be a friendly user to get along with our user friendly computer.
- 5) Any errors in spelling, tact or fact are transmission errors.
- 6) Need extra cash? We will pay you \$1,000 for each software bug you can find.
- 7) If you have read this entire manual through at least once, you are a Power User.
- 8) If you are a stickler for real life applications, put this manual under your monitor to raise it to eye level. Can also be used to compensate for that short table leg under your leaning printer.

### The Many Definitions of Compatible

- 1) Gracefully accepts erroneous data from any source.
- 2) If you are trying to upgrade your operating system, you'll still have to use your old operating systems, since they are the only ones compatible with your old games.
- 3) Downward Compatibility means you don't need to waste money on an upgrade, since all you use are the oldest set of features.

### You Know Your Computer is a Clunker If...

You try to put in a new operating system, and your computer screen says "Insert disk 5 of 4 and press any key to continue."

Every time you try to remove a file, you get an electric shock and "File Format Unknown" pops up on the screen.

Every time you use the Help feature, you are put through a series of Help screens and end up where you started, without learning anything.

It brags of being an Open System, meaning that it has parts from different manufacturers. So that when the computer crashes, each vendor can blame the other.

## Top Ten Signs You Bought the Wrong Computer

- 10) The monitor is certified for low emissions by Jiffy Lube.
- 9) The logo on your receipt says "International House of Lame Computers."
- 8) The infrared cordless keyboard has only 15 keys, and one of them is marked Fast Forward.
- 7) You see the salesman you bought it from hawking "genuine" Rolex watches on street corners.
- 6) The sound board and speakers are a separate unit, and they only receive AM.
- 5) Their ad slogan: More Fun Than Clown College—and Cheaper!
- 4) It has only two expansion slots, and they just popped up a couple rounds of toast.
- 3) It's labeled "energy saving" only because there's no power supply.
- 2) You just got another one with your Happy Meal.
- 1) The sticker reads "nothing of value inside."

## In the End ...

A user with a bad computer spends 1/3 of his life sleeping, 1/3 of his life working, and 1/3 of his life waiting.

The nanosecond your warranty expires, your hard disk starts making a noise resembling a monkey wrench in a blender.

You're not alone. P.T. Barnum said there is one born every minute. (Rhymes with pucker.)

(Most of these amusing anecdotes can be found on multiple Internet joke sites. But special thanks to squarewheels.com ([squarewheels.com](http://squarewheels.com)), butlerwebs.com ([butlerwebs.com](http://butlerwebs.com)), its-hilarious.com ([its-hilarious.com](http://its-hilarious.com)), and workjoke.com ([workjoke.com](http://workjoke.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](http://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](http://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](http://www.amazon.com/Chronicles-Mathias-One-Reptilian-Rebirth/dp/1598249002)). Volumes One and Two have received a "Gold Star for Excellence" from TeensReadToo.com ([www.teensreadtoo.com/ReptilianRebirth.htm](http://www.teensreadtoo.com/ReptilianRebirth.htm)), and are available from most on-line bookstores.

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

The second book, *Computer Hardware: "Parts Is Parts"*, is now available at our E-Book Store ([www.computoredgebooks.com/Humor-Computer-and-Internet-Anecdotes-and-Jokes\\_c16.htm](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://www.computoredgebooks.com/Computer-Confusion-in-Paradise-humor-MOBI-for-Kindle-COMPHUMOR0001-2.htm)) for Amazon Kindle.

---

---

[Return to Table of Contents](#)



## Editor's Letters: Tips and Thoughts from Readers

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

"Misunderstanding Windows 8," "Backup and Restore," "The Windows 8 Touch Keyboard," "XP Please"

### Misunderstanding Windows 8

[Regarding Jack Dunning's April 6 article, "Misunderstanding Windows 8":]

The computer is a tool. The OS also is a tool. Office too is a tool. If you can't get the job done, the tool is no good.

I see the ribbon in Office 2007 & 2010 and Windows 8 like a car that the manufacturer has taken all the controls, jumbled them up, and thrown them back into the car. If you have to drive that car, it's your job, you are going to take too long. You just may be fired.

I think the computer is getting like (maybe already is) cars. Stuff has to be in the same place or it won't be easy to drive.

-Paul Lee, San Diego, Calif.

Jack,

Well done! Most informative! Keeping my XP as long as PC holds together...and then some. May go with HP for next PC. Any advice on this? Loyal, so far, Dell customer.

-Joe McGuire, San Diego CA

*I don't know which is the best computer. When ready to buy, I would check the user reviews (www.amazon.com/gp/browse/?ie=UTF8&node=565098&tag=comput0b9-20) at some place such as Amazon which carries all types of computers, then look for the best deal and service.*

*-Jack*

Misunderstanding Mac Supporters: This article states "many people flat-out want Microsoft to fail—especially Mac fanatics....Now some of those same Apple supporters find themselves making similar doomsday predictions for Windows 8. They may be right, but their opinions appear to be based more upon wishful thinking than any particular facts."

What are the particular facts backing up the claims in this statement? The reason for asking is that, without evidence to back up these claims, the above statement reads like additional misunderstandings.

For instance, exactly who are the "Mac fanatics" that "want Microsoft to fail?" Names? References to published articles in which the author expressly wrote "I want Microsoft to fail?"

In addition, wanting and predicting are two different activities. A prediction does not necessarily involve a want. For instance, three of the U-T's four baseball writers predicted that the Padres will finish last or next to last in 2012, the fourth predicted a third-place finish (4-1-12 "Padres Preview ([www.utsandiego.com/news/2012/apr/01/tp-theyre-nowhere-near-top-but-are-padres-moving/](http://www.utsandiego.com/news/2012/apr/01/tp-theyre-nowhere-near-top-but-are-padres-moving/))"). Does this warrant inferring that U-T sportswriters want the Padres to fail?

I think that we don't know whether the alleged "Mac fanatics" actually "want Microsoft to fail." After all, exactly how many hundreds of thousands or millions of "Mac fanatics" use Microsoft Office for Mac ([www.macworld.com/article/1138050/microsoft\\_says\\_that\\_77\\_of\\_mac\\_users\\_use\\_office.html](http://www.macworld.com/article/1138050/microsoft_says_that_77_of_mac_users_use_office.html))?

I think a more factual statement would be that some of Microsoft's observers (for example, *InfoWorld's* Eric Knorr ([www.infoworld.com/print/188365](http://www.infoworld.com/print/188365))) have predicted that Windows 8 will be a tough sell to the installed base of Windows 7 users, similar to how Windows Vista was a tough sell to the installed base of Windows XP users (for some similar reasons and for some different ones).

-Barry Fass-Holmes, San Diego, CA

OS X vs. Windows Cost Comparison: This article states "The much less expensive Apple Mac OS X is often cited as a reasonably priced operating system. The upgrade to OS X Lion is only \$29.99. If you don't have Snow Leopard, then it will cost you about \$60 to upgrade. However, it should be noted that Apple has released a new version of OS X almost every year since 2002. You may get charged less by Apple, but it's more often. It hardly seems a good comparison."

"Often cited?" Who cited OS X as "reasonably priced?" References?

Here are some relevant facts.

OS X Snow Leopard ([www.tuaw.com/2011/03/24/happy-10th-birthday-os-x/](http://www.tuaw.com/2011/03/24/happy-10th-birthday-os-x/)) (10.6) was released in August 2009 and was the first version to cost \$30 or less.

OS X Lion (10.7), the current one, was released in July 2011 (i.e., almost two years ([en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History\\_of\\_Mac\\_OS](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Mac_OS)) after Snow Leopard's release) and is the second version to cost \$30 or less ([www.apple.com/macosex](http://www.apple.com/macosex)).

Previous OS X versions cost \$130.

Therefore, the cost comparison between OS X upgrades and Windows upgrades in which OS X is "reasonably priced" pertains only to these latest two versions of OS X.

How much did Microsoft charge for the latest two upgrade versions of Windows?

-Barry Fass-Holmes, San Diego, CA

Backup and Restore

[Regarding the April 6 Digital Dave column:]

Dave,

I'm one of those dinosaurs who still uses a desktop computer as my primary computer so all of my important documents, files, e-mail, etc. is on it. Starting two desktops ago, I added RAID 1 drives to the desktop when I ordered it to safeguard the data. I also backup to an external drive on a regular basis using backup software.

The RAID has saved me once. One of the primary drives died in my new PC (less than 6 months old by the way!) and the warning popped up. It was a simple matter of pulling out and sliding in a new drive (under warranty) and the system rebuilt it mirroring the backup drive. I was surprised at how simple it was. Yes, it adds a few dollars to the build, but trust me when I say that one failure made it worth much more than I paid. Oh, and the system was never down during the change out and rebuild...but boy was I nervous that I only had one drive!

-John H., Encinitas

### The Windows 8 Touch Keyboard

[Regarding the March 30 Windows 8 Tips and Tricks column:]

Can keyboard layout be Dvorak or are we stuck qwerty?

-Walter, San Diego, CA

*Yes, you can change to Dvorak. It seems that the keyboard options are controlled by the Language selections in the Control Panel. You have the option to add more language and keyboard types. Once that is done, they will appear in the menu on the the keyboard as shown.*



-Jack Dunning, ComputerEdge

### XP Please

[Regarding the March 30 Windows 8 Tips and Tricks column:]

I realize that you need to address Windows 7 and 8, however you must also realize many of us retain XP as our o/s. I'd like to suggest more articles/discussions on XP. **ComputerEdge** is becoming less relevant to those of us using XP, and it's not going away.

Thank you,

-Gary Weinstein, Groveland, CA

---

**ComputerEdge** always wants to hear from you, our readers. If you have specific comments about one of our articles, please click the "Tell us what you think about this article!" link at the top or bottom of the specific article/column at ComputerEdge.com ([webserver.computoredge.com/online.mvc?src=ebook](http://webserver.computoredge.com/online.mvc?src=ebook)). Your comments will be attached to the column and may appear at a later time in the "Editor's Letters" section. If you want to submit a short "ComputerQuick Review", or yell at us, please e-mail us at [ceeditor@computoredge.com](mailto:ceeditor@computoredge.com). If you would like to review our recent e-books, please visit ComputerEdge E-Books ([www.computoredgebooks.com/](http://www.computoredgebooks.com/)).

---

---

Send mail to [ceeditor@computoredge.com](mailto:ceeditor@computoredge.com) with questions about editorial content.

Send mail to [cwebmaster@computoredge.com](mailto:cwebmaster@computoredge.com) with questions or comments about this Web site.

Copyright © 1997-2012 The Byte Buyer, Inc.

ComputerEdge Magazine, P.O. Box 83086, San Diego, CA 92138. (858) 573-0315