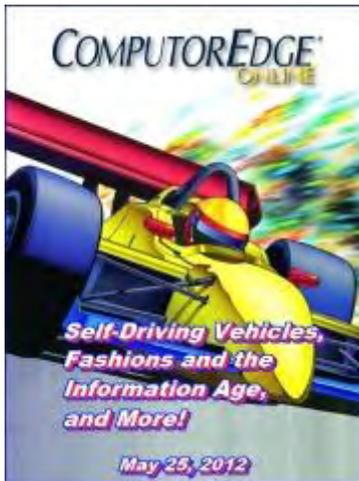


# ComputerEdge™ Online — 05/25/12



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Self-Driving Vehicles, Fashions and  
the Information Age, and More!

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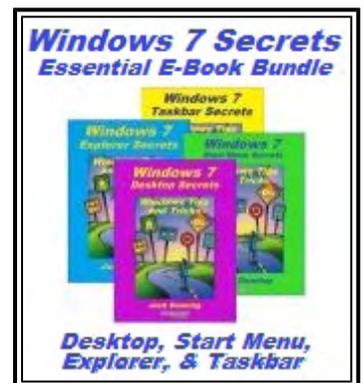
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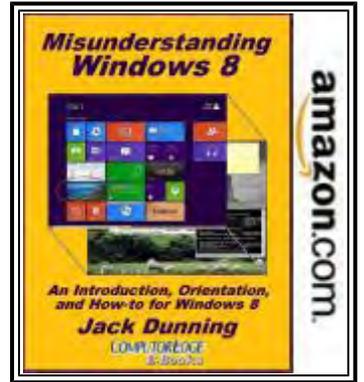
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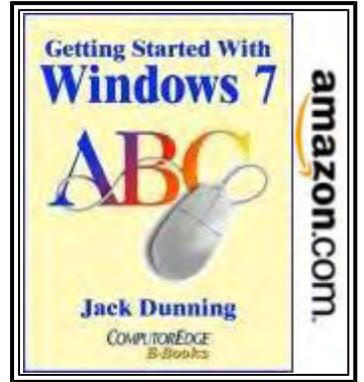
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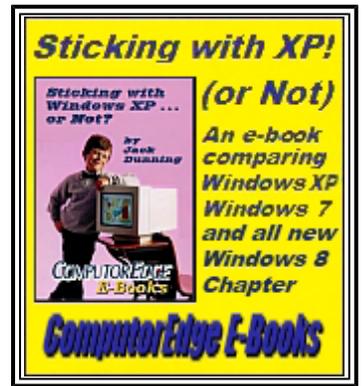
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## Digital Dave

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

New Solid State Drives; Prefetcher & Superfetch; Windows Resize on Their Own.

*Dear Digital Dave,*

*Thanks for bringing us a great technical resource for so many years. I remember the days of The Byte Buyer, and your column was always the first thing I read.*

*I bought a 120GB solid-state drive the other day, I'd like to replace the mechanical disk drive in my Dell Optiplex 390 with it. But the original drive has the operating system installed on it. Is it possible to perform this swap?*

*Thanks!*

*Jim Luschen  
San Diego*

Dear Jim,

Yes, you can do the swap, but you may want to use a third hard drive to back up everything.

The first step is to create a system image with the Windows Backup and Restore program. (If the system image is smaller than the 120GB SSD, then you should have no problem.) If you don't have a Windows system disc, then you should also make a System Repair Disc.

After you install the SSD, use the Repair Disc to boot up and install the system image from the old (or third) drive.

Generally when I install a new drive, I like to do a clean install of Windows. But I install so many programs during the life of a drive that I find it's a convenient way to clean up. I only reinstall those programs which I use all the time. It always amazes me how much junk I've accumulated. But that's just me.

Digital Dave

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*Dear Digital Dave,*

*I believe Prefetch was created for Win XP and Superfetch was an improvement for Vista.*

*In my Win 7 registry I have Prefetcher and Superfetch. Notice the different spellings for each? One is followed by "er" but not the other.*

*Is Prefetcher the same or different than Prefetch?*

*If they are different does Prefetcher do a better job in Win 7 than Prefetch did in Vista?*

*Brent Hunt  
San Diego, CA*

Dear Brent,

Both Prefetch for Windows XP and Superfetch for Vista (with an improved Superfetch for Windows 7) are memory management programs used to speed up the loading and operation of Windows. They work by preloading commonly used programs into memory

when memory is sitting idle. This can significantly improve performance.

The "prefetcher" entries you are seeing in the Windows 7 registry are probably special program files associated with specific programs. The term is commonly used within certain applications. Superfetch is the prefetch program for Windows 7 and, yes, it is supposed to do a better job than it did in Vista.

Digital Dave

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*Dear Digital Dave,*

*My Gateway brand monitor died last week. Without a picture I did a controlled shut down with the power button (I'm using Windows 7). I purchased a new Acer monitor, which is the same size and resolution. Now whenever the monitor sleeps any open windows move to the upper left corner of the screen and resize to a smaller size than I left them. If they aren't open then the size and screen position remains as I prefer. I've checked settings and nothing seems wrong.*

*Do you have any idea what could be happening? Thanks for all your great help.*

*Rich DiSanto  
Denver, CO*

Dear Rich,

The problem is most likely caused by a hardware incompatibility between your video card and your new monitor. You should first make sure that you have the latest video drivers installed.

If the monitor has both a DVI and HDMI connection available, you should try the port you are not currently using. (You may need adapters or another cable ([www.amazon.com/mn/search/?\\_encoding=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20&linkCode=ur2&camp=1789&creative=390957&field-keywords=HDMI%20to%20DVI&url=search-alias%3Delectronics](http://www.amazon.com/mn/search/?_encoding=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20&linkCode=ur2&camp=1789&creative=390957&field-keywords=HDMI%20to%20DVI&url=search-alias%3Delectronics))). They are both compatible with computer monitors, but some people have found the exact same compatibility problem you have when using the HDMI port.

The third option is to replace the video card. The fourth option is to always close all windows before your monitor goes to sleep. The fifth is to disable the sleep mode and settle for a screen saver.

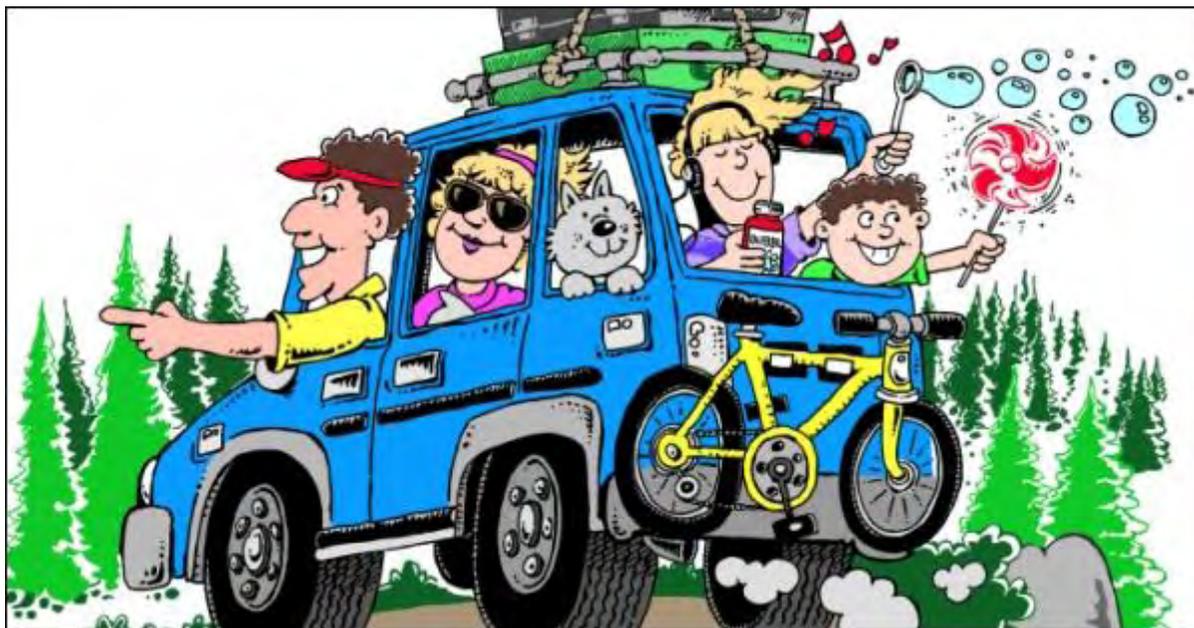
Digital Dave

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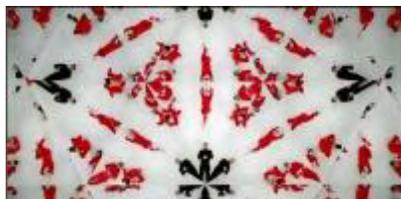


### More Little Known High Tech Stories

“Vibrating Steering Wheels, Recharging by Breathing, and Poo-For-Wi-Fi” by Marilyn K. Martin

Kaleidoscope Dance Troupe; Recharging Devices; Recycling Waste; Robots, Exercise and Photo Apps; Museums and Sports Arenas; Emerging Technologies; Career Issues; Computer Glasses, and Retinal Displays; Glassy Metal and Solar Panel Windows; Self-Driving Vehicles; Digital Help for the Third World; Fashions and the Information Age; Customized Tablets for Airlines; Internet-of-Things Entries.

### High Innovation—Kaleidoscope Dance Troupe; Recharging Devices by Breathing



So you want to shoot a huge and perfectly-choreographed dance troupe, and you only have a few dancers? Just construct a gigantic 60-foot tall kaleidoscope ([gizmodo.com/5905956/faking-a-giant-dance-troupe-is-easy-with-a-60-foot-kaleidoscope](http://gizmodo.com/5905956/faking-a-giant-dance-troupe-is-easy-with-a-60-foot-kaleidoscope))! That's what creative agency We Are Pi ([wearepi.com/](http://wearepi.com/)) shot as a promo for an upcoming summit in Qatar. The promo is very fitting, since people will be coming from all over the world to attend the summit. "And the geometric patterns created by the kaleidoscope are reminiscent of the arabesque style of art popularized in the Middle East."

A young Brazilian inventor, Joco Paulo Lammoglia, has designed a mask ([www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/03/27/aire-mask-charges-breath\\_n\\_1383868.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/03/27/aire-mask-charges-breath_n_1383868.html)) to recharge electronic devices from just breathing. Called the AIRE Mask ([www.joaolammoglia.net/#!/products/photostackergallery0=0](http://www.joaolammoglia.net/#!/products/photostackergallery0=0)), the device is so far just a concept. But it still won the Red Dot Design Award for Design Concept in 2011.

### Exchanging or Recycling Waste



I've written previously about how Japan now has beverage vending machines that also provide Wi-Fi. Now comes word that a Mexican company, Terra Poo gives people free Wi-Fi when they deposit their dog's poo ([www.popsci.com/technology/article/2012-05/mexican-dog-poo-receptacle-accepts-poo-bags-dispenses-free-wifi](http://www.popsci.com/technology/article/2012-05/mexican-dog-poo-receptacle-accepts-poo-bags-dispenses-free-wifi)) in one of their public electro-receptacles. It is a great incentive for dog owners to pick up their pup's poop and, based on the weight of the poo, the owners get so many minutes of free Wi-Fi access.

In a similar vein, there is even a Web site for a company called TerraCycle—Outsmart Waste ([www.terracycle.net/en-US/](http://www.terracycle.net/en-US/)). The idea is to turn non-recyclable waste (like snack wrappers and pens) into recycled products through their waste



collection programs, where people use collection sites or literally mail in their waste. TerraCycle will donate about \$.02 per piece of waste to a charity or school of the donor's choice, and the waste is recycled into everything from park benches to backpacks.

## Robots, Exercise and Photo Apps for Kids and Parents

"Being able to crawl and explore their world is an important part of a baby's development." But for youngsters born with debilitating conditions ([gizmodo.com/5905966/if-you-dont-find-this-video-about-robot-wheelchairs-for-babies-heartwarming-you-probably-dont-have-a-soul](http://gizmodo.com/5905966/if-you-dont-find-this-video-about-robot-wheelchairs-for-babies-heartwarming-you-probably-dont-have-a-soul)), movement by these afflicted babies has been impossible—until now. Professors of physical therapy and mechanical engineering at the University of Delaware teamed up to find a solution for babies who couldn't crawl, and created a robot wheelchair for youngsters aged six months to three years. This robo-chair is controlled by a joystick the kids quickly master, and is augmented with sensors to prevent collisions.

Even with healthy kids, finding ways for Mom and kids to get enough exercise ([resourcefulmommy.com/9011/sneaky-exercise/](http://resourcefulmommy.com/9011/sneaky-exercise/)) is a challenge. One mommy-blogger has fun suggestions for "sneaky exercise," from renting paddle boats to coaching a sports team. Even something as simple as pushing a kid on a swing for 15 minutes, or dancing/running around the living room to music can give all concerned a great cardio workout.

With Mother's Day in May, some mommy-bloggers put out lists of their favorite photo/video apps. Mile High Mamas (Colorado) offered a list of Must-Have Photo and Video Apps for Parents ([www.milehighmamas.com/2012/04/21/must-have-photo-and-video-apps-for-parents/](http://www.milehighmamas.com/2012/04/21/must-have-photo-and-video-apps-for-parents/)).

iPhoto (\$4.99 from Apple) is the favorite photo app, with advanced editing options, artistic effects, correction tools and much more.

Another mommy-blogger site recommends Animoto ([animoto.com/](http://animoto.com/)), which is an award-winning video creation service ([www.5minutesformom.com/54397/make-mothers-day-memorable-with-animoto/](http://www.5minutesformom.com/54397/make-mothers-day-memorable-with-animoto/)). The program makes it easy and fun to create videos from photos, kids' drawings, video clips, words and music. It can even be carried on a smartphone, for Mom (or Dad) to watch away from home, or share with doting grandparents or other parent-friends.

## More Tech-Friendly Museums and Sports Arenas



The legendary Louvre art museum in Paris has just overhauled its audio tour self-guide system ([www.smartplanet.com/blog/smart-takes/navigate-the-louvre-with-nintendo-3ds/25865](http://www.smartplanet.com/blog/smart-takes/navigate-the-louvre-with-nintendo-3ds/25865)).

They now use Nintendo 3D devices that are preloaded with 700 commentaries on their artwork, as well as interactive maps of the Louvre. Designed for the museum's growing young and international patron base, the smartphone-size devices offer commentary in seven languages, with a 3D screen to zoom in on the tops of statues or tiny features in paintings.

Northern California's NBA team, the Warriors, has just updated their Oracle Arena to be more mobile device friendly ([www.siliconvalley.com/mobile/cj\\_20437403/warriors-oracle-arena-adds-new-tech-features](http://www.siliconvalley.com/mobile/cj_20437403/warriors-oracle-arena-adds-new-tech-features)). The venue now offers a free arena-wide Wi-Fi network, and an indoor antenna system to help cell phone attendees get a better signal. The team recently added an iPhone app, which displays team news, upcoming game info, and even virtual trading cards with promotional offers.

## Technology Review's: Annual Top Ten Emerging Technologies to Change the World

MIT's *Technology Review* has chosen their 2012 Top Ten Emerging Technologies ([www.technologyreview.com/tr10/?p1=featured](http://www.technologyreview.com/tr10/?p1=featured)), or the most important technological milestones reached in the last 12 months. From Ultra-Efficient Solar, to a Faster Fourier Transform (a mathematical upgrade which promises a speedier digital world), to Crowdfunding for Start-ups, and High-Speed Materials Discovery (to identify battery materials suitable for mass production).

## Career Issues in the Digital Age

I've already written about businesses trying to decide about letting their employees bring their own digital devices to work. Now another digital issue has arisen: whether to let employees, especially those in cubicles, wear sound-dampening ear-buds or headphones ([www.boston.com/business/articles/2012/05/07/in\\_one\\_ear\\_and\\_in\\_the\\_other\\_firms\\_debate\\_headphone\\_use/](http://www.boston.com/business/articles/2012/05/07/in_one_ear_and_in_the_other_firms_debate_headphone_use/)) as they work. For many, wearing headphones on the job is a way to block out noise distractions and focus easier on the job at hand. Some companies actually issue them to new employees. To others, however, the headphones represent a Do-Not-Disturb sign, and may stifle in-person communication and the free exchange of ideas.

An editorial in the *Boston Globe* advises the career-minded to start networking ([www.boston.com/business/blogs/global-business-hub/2012/04/start\\_networkin.html](http://www.boston.com/business/blogs/global-business-hub/2012/04/start_networkin.html)) outside their Comfort Zone. The author claims that isolated, homogeneous networks are unlikely to help someone "encounter new ideas, learn new skills and regain a sense of purpose." If you rely on your professional network for business, it would be a good idea to expand your network to "explore ideas (and people) that differ from your own."

The economy is bad, and half of all college grads can't find a job. Many of those who do, are under-employed or working in a job far removed from their college major. So what to do? The standard "more schooling" just floods the market with MBAs, and adds more college debt. But Lifehacker has a great idea, enumerating Ten Highly Desired Skills You Can Teach Yourself ([lifehacker.com/5905835/top-10-highly+desired-skills-you-can-teach-yourself](http://lifehacker.com/5905835/top-10-highly+desired-skills-you-can-teach-yourself)). Acquiring these skills doesn't need to be costly, and friends or relatives might help you learn them for free.

"Make A Web Site, Create An App, or Just Learn To Code," and "Become Fluent in a New Language" may seem like no-brainers. But the list also includes "Cook Like a Pro," "Play A New Instrument," and "Build and Hack Electronic Hardware," among others. If you discover a new Career Love, so much the better. If you just become more well-rounded, and can meet or converse intelligently with others about these skills, your professional network will expand.

### Wearable Computer Glasses, and Mass Producing Retinal Displays

People can develop a variety of vision problems by staring at computers or smartphone screens all day. Computer vision syndrome ([seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/health/2017771065\\_computerglasses17.html](http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/health/2017771065_computerglasses17.html)) can cause eyestrain, headaches, blurred vision, dry eyes, and even neck and shoulder pain, according to the American Optometric Association. Convergence fatigue is caused by focusing on a computer screen for long periods, and may require special glasses to help the user focus on the computer/smartphone screen to alleviate the focus-fatigue.

Applied Materials ([appliedmaterials.com](http://appliedmaterials.com)) has developed machines that use an advanced approach for making Retinal Displays ([www.technologyreview.com/communications/39952/?p1=MstRcnt](http://www.technologyreview.com/communications/39952/?p1=MstRcnt)) in electronic devices on a large scale. High Resolution is a popular feature for electronic device buyers, and Apple has introduced the new hi-res in its latest iPhone 4 and iPad. Applied Materials machines make it easier and cheaper to build displays with extra-dense pixels.

### Glassy Metal and Solar Panel Windows

Coming in October 2012, Apple's iPhone 5 will be made, in part, of a kind of metallic glass ([www.boston.com/partners/verticalacuity/va\\_template.html?void=c0885c8976ae6ece80f644bd0bfbb98b](http://www.boston.com/partners/verticalacuity/va_template.html?void=c0885c8976ae6ece80f644bd0bfbb98b)). More accurately called glassy metal, it will not be made of metal oxides but of the pure metal. So the opaque phone case made of this glassy metal, will make it less likely to break, crack or chip.

According to MIT's *Technology Review*, a German company has borrowed the materials and manufacturing process of OLED displays to make a new kind of solar panel ([www.technologyreview.com/energy/40192](http://www.technologyreview.com/energy/40192)). Heliatek ([www.heliatek.com/?lang=en](http://www.heliatek.com/?lang=en)), based in Dresden, is already making its solar panels on a small proof-of-concept production line, in hopes of raising more start-up euros. Heliatek is also trying to fit its new window technology into existing needs. Since these solar panels can be semi-transparent, Heliatek is working with a window manufacturer, for tinted windows that can also generate electricity.

### Marching Toward Self-Driving Vehicles

As we all wait anxiously for vehicles that can drive themselves, new developments continue to tackle drivers' concentration and fatigue factors. Now AT&T has come up with a vibrating steering wheel ([www.technologyreview.com/computing/39947/?p1=MstRcnt](http://www.technologyreview.com/computing/39947/?p1=MstRcnt)) to add to these anti-distraction efforts. "In the prototype, a clockwise pattern of vibrations on the steering wheel means right turn, and counterclockwise vibrations mean turn left. While concentrating on improving delivery of GPS navigation instructions, other applications are in development, such as notifying drivers if there is a car in their blind spot. Called haptic steering, using tactile instead of visual clues, one experiment found that younger drivers' inattentiveness dropped 3.1%.

In anticipation of those upcoming autonomous cars, *Car and Driver Magazine* has come out with a tongue-in-cheek list of tips, hacks and cheat-codes ([blog.caranddriver.com/automated-vehicle-cheat-codes-how-to-get-the-most-out-of-cars-that-drive-themselves](http://blog.caranddriver.com/automated-vehicle-cheat-codes-how-to-get-the-most-out-of-cars-that-drive-themselves)) for human drivers to maintain their dignity, and still have a measure of control over their autonomous vehicles. Sample: Grad Student Mode—engine start + left turn signal + trunk release + hazard flashers. Result: Vehicle possessed by sense of ironic detachment, is unable to start before noon, ashtray self-fills with Nat Shermans.

### More Digital Help for the Third World

I've already written about some helpful high tech among the very poor in the world, from an icon-based language for the illiterate to send e-mails, to small scale solar power in villages with no electricity. Now comes the news that fast-growing mobile social networks in Africa, like iCow ([www.icow.co.ke/](http://www.icow.co.ke/)), are helping rural farmers connect ([www.technologyreview.com/computing/40250/?p1=MstRcnt](http://www.technologyreview.com/computing/40250/?p1=MstRcnt)) with livestock management and other agricultural information. "Facebook has got the younger farmers on it, and iCow has the older farmers on it," according to Su Khumbu, founder of iCow. "We can bridge that gap to the older farmers who don't have access to Facebook and don't use the Internet."

When Libya exploded into war, with freedom-fighters pitted against the heavily armed Qaddafi regime, help and suggestions ([www.technologyreview.com/web/40214/?p1=MstRcnt](http://www.technologyreview.com/web/40214/?p1=MstRcnt)) for the lightly armed freedom-fighters were just a cellphone call away. Conference calls on Skype could connect people on three continents for crucial exchanges of information. When Libya went off-line, and Internet and cell phone access was cut or unreliable, an information-hero went to work. Mohammed "Mo" Nabbous had the knowledge and equipment from an ISP business he had owned, to lash together a satellite Internet uplink. "With supporters shielding his body from potential snipers, Nabbous set up dishes and nine live Web cams, for his online TV channel Libya Alhurra, which ran 24/7 on Livestream."

Danish architects at Eentileen ([eentileen.dk/Content/Pdf/Projectdescription.pdf](http://eentileen.dk/Content/Pdf/Projectdescription.pdf)) have created a way to computerize-mill ([nextbigfuture.com/2012/05/computerized-milling-of-house-in-4.html](http://nextbigfuture.com/2012/05/computerized-milling-of-house-in-4.html)) a stylish wood-frame house in just four weeks. Their Print-A-House project is quasi-prefab, using mainly sheets of plywood, with very little structural steel and no concrete. The house is 1,345 square feet, and sits on screw pile foundations so it can be moved.

## Upscale Fashions Meets the Information Age

Fashionistas love to shop and Internet sites offering high fashion used brand name clothing ([techcrunch.com/2012/04/17/threadflip-gets-1-6-million-from-frc-baseline-a-16z-dave-morin-and-others-to-virtualize-the-clothing-swap/](http://techcrunch.com/2012/04/17/threadflip-gets-1-6-million-from-frc-baseline-a-16z-dave-morin-and-others-to-virtualize-the-clothing-swap/)) and accessories, have had their ups and downs. Popular sites like 99Dresses, Poshmark and Copius have been in the fashion sell/buy/swap game for awhile. And now Threadflip ([www.threadflip.com/landing](http://www.threadflip.com/landing)) is adding social media features of personalized profiles and recommendations, with item categories sorted by Recency, Popularity, Recommended and Size.

If you've ever wondered if popular fashion and laptop computers could ever have an exact meeting point, then you might want to try Eau de MacBook Pro ([fashion.telegraph.co.uk/news-features/TMG9214902/Perfume-company-create-Eau-de-MacBook-Pro.html](http://fashion.telegraph.co.uk/news-features/TMG9214902/Perfume-company-create-Eau-de-MacBook-Pro.html)). Fragrance company Air Aroma (see next paragraph) has recreated a perfume from the intoxicating smell of a brand new Apple laptop, which is also mixed with a hint of ink, paper, foam, sticky tape and glue for the total office experience.

Air Aroma ([www.air-aroma.com/arologic](http://www.air-aroma.com/arologic)) even offers an Arologic Interface, where you can have scent diffusers installed around your home or business. Using your Web browser, you can "operate your Air Aroma scent delivery unit from a desktop computer, laptop or even your smartphone, anywhere in the world." You can set up automatic-scenting from your installed diffusers, and even control the scent strength. Arologic's plug-and-play control unit allows you to control up to a thousand scenting-devices, with up to three thousand different scents to choose from in your network of installed diffusers.

## Customized Tablets for Airlines

Skycast Solutions ([skycastsolutions.com/](http://skycastsolutions.com/)), has just sold its new portable in-flight entertainment tablets ([seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/businesstechnology/2018002585\\_skycast18.html](http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/businesstechnology/2018002585_skycast18.html)) to WestJet, a Canadian low-cost airline. The 8.9-inch Samsung tablet (running Android) has custom content managed software, and can be distributed by flight attendants to passengers who rent them for \$6-\$15 per flight. The tablet weighs less than 2 pounds and clips upright onto the back edge of the seat back tray, so the tray remains free for food. While it is predicted that up to 90% of future passengers will bring their own electronic devices on board, Skycast hopes that offering movies still in theaters will persuade passengers to rent their tablets.

## Some Internet-of-Things Entries

Do you have little chores around your house you'd like to electronically command, but don't want to spend thousands on a security system—or to expensively reprogram the one you've got? Mark Wotton has just invented the answer: Ninja Blocks ([ninjablocks.com/](http://ninjablocks.com/)) to the rescue! These little sensor-filled computerized boxes ([www.technologyreview.com/computing/40193/](http://www.technologyreview.com/computing/40193/)) are about the size of a deck of playing cards, and can "connect to the Internet to carry out preset actions in response to stimuli."

Connected to an online service called Ninja Cloud, a user could program a Ninja Block to be a motion sensor, turn lights on if a baby cries, or even sound an alarm if the family pet jumps on the sofa. Both Ninja Blocks and the similar Twine ([www.kickstarter.com/projects/supermechanical/twine-listen-to-your-world-talk-to-the-internet](http://www.kickstarter.com/projects/supermechanical/twine-listen-to-your-world-talk-to-the-internet)) have recently completed successful campaigns on Kickstarter ([www.kickstarter.com/start](http://www.kickstarter.com/start)).

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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 has converted many of Marilyn's computer humor columns into four e-books.

\* *Computer Confusion in Paradise: Lo! And in the Beginning There Was Total Befuddlement!*, in both EPUB format ([www.computoredgebooks.com/Computer-Confusion-in-Paradise-humor-EPUB-iPad-NOOK-COMPHUMOR0001-1.htm?sourceCode=writer](http://www.computoredgebooks.com/Computer-Confusion-in-Paradise-humor-EPUB-iPad-NOOK-COMPHUMOR0001-1.htm?sourceCode=writer)) for iPad, NOOK, etc., and MOBI format ([www.computoredgebooks.com/Computer-Confusion-in-Paradise-humor-MOBI-for-Kindle-COMPHUMOR0001-2.htm?sourceCode=writer](http://www.computoredgebooks.com/Computer-Confusion-in-Paradise-humor-MOBI-for-Kindle-COMPHUMOR0001-2.htm?sourceCode=writer)) for Amazon Kindle.

\* *Computer Hardware: "Parts Is Parts"*, in both EPUB format ([www.computoredgebooks.com/Computer-Hardware-Parts-Is-Parts-humor-EPUB-iPad-NOOK-COMPHUMOR0002-1.htm?sourceCode=writer](http://www.computoredgebooks.com/Computer-Hardware-Parts-Is-Parts-humor-EPUB-iPad-NOOK-COMPHUMOR0002-1.htm?sourceCode=writer)) for iPad, NOOK, etc., and MOBI format ([www.computoredgebooks.com/Computer-Hardware-Parts-Is-Parts-humor-MOBI-for-Kindle-COMPHUMOR0002-2.htm?sourceCode=writer](http://www.computoredgebooks.com/Computer-Hardware-Parts-Is-Parts-humor-MOBI-for-Kindle-COMPHUMOR0002-2.htm?sourceCode=writer)) for Amazon Kindle.

\* *Computerholics Anonymous: PC Users, Abusers and Confusioners*, in both EPUB format ([www.computoredgebooks.com/Computerholics-Anonymous-humor-EPUB-iPad-NOOK-COMPHUMOR0003-1.htm?sourceCode=writer](http://www.computoredgebooks.com/Computerholics-Anonymous-humor-EPUB-iPad-NOOK-COMPHUMOR0003-1.htm?sourceCode=writer)) for iPad, NOOK, etc., and MOBI format ([www.computoredgebooks.com/Computerholics-Anonymous-humor-MOBI-for-Kindle-COMPHUMOR0003-2.htm?sourceCode=writer](http://www.computoredgebooks.com/Computerholics-Anonymous-humor-MOBI-for-Kindle-COMPHUMOR0003-2.htm?sourceCode=writer)) for Amazon Kindle.

\* *My Computer, My Nemesis: Bravely into the Smiley-Face Virtual Void!*, in both EPUB format ([www.computoredgebooks.com/My-Computer-My-Nemesis-humor-EPUB-iPad-NOOK-COMPHUMOR0004-1.htm?sourceCode=writer](http://www.computoredgebooks.com/My-Computer-My-Nemesis-humor-EPUB-iPad-NOOK-COMPHUMOR0004-1.htm?sourceCode=writer)) for iPad, NOOK, etc., and MOBI format ([www.computoredgebooks.com/My-Computer-My-Nemesis-humor-MOBI-for-Kindle-COMPHUMOR0004-2.htm?sourceCode=writer](http://www.computoredgebooks.com/My-Computer-My-Nemesis-humor-MOBI-for-Kindle-COMPHUMOR0004-2.htm?sourceCode=writer)) for Amazon Kindle.

\* All four e-books can be found at our E-Book Store ([www.computoredgebooks.com/Humor-Computer-and-Internet-Anecdotes-and-Jokes\\_c16.htm?sourceCode=writer](http://www.computoredgebooks.com/Humor-Computer-and-Internet-Anecdotes-and-Jokes_c16.htm?sourceCode=writer)).

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## A Survival Guide for Macintosh Users in the Workplace

“Dealing with an OS X-unfriendly workplace.” by Barry Fass-Holmes

Although resistance is futile for OS X-using employees who face assimilation, hope is not totally lost.

Assimilation is a term from TV's Star Trek Next Generation series that described what the Borg did to almost everyone it encountered. The Borg ([en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Borg\\_\(Star\\_Trek\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Borg_(Star_Trek))) was a collective of cybernetic beings who enhanced, controlled and connected individuals to their hive mind as a means of "achieving perfection." This forced cybernetic enhancement and connection to the hive mind was called assimilation, and resisting it was "futile."

The term assimilation also has been adopted by the Macintosh community to describe what IT departments invested in Microsoft products (Windows and Windows Server, Exchange Server, SQL Server, Active Directory, Sharepoint and Office) routinely do to OS X-using employees—force them to switch from OS X to Windows (Figure 1). Resistance likewise is futile.

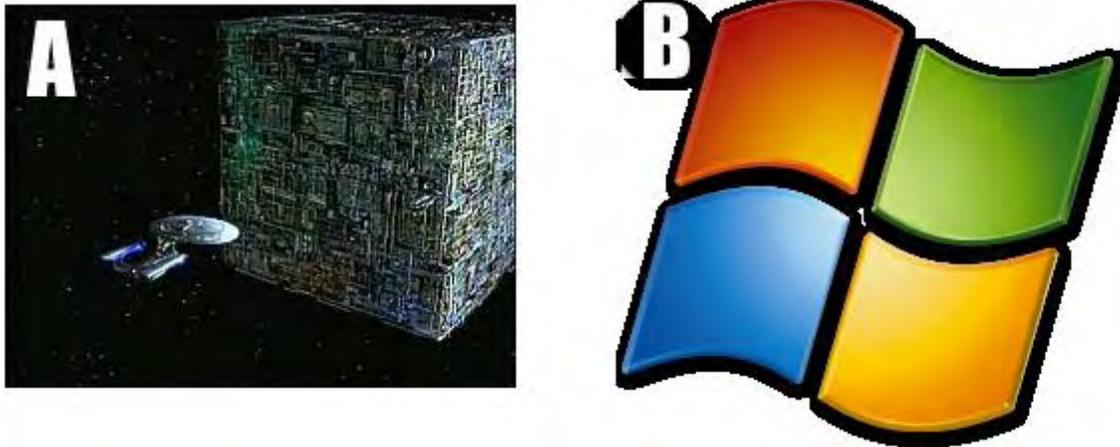


Figure 1A. Star Trek's Borg. Figure 1B. OS X users' Borg.

Although resistance is futile for OS X-using employees who face assimilation, hope is not totally lost. This article will present strategies intended to help such users cope with their situation. These strategies are aimed at the users themselves rather than at IT departments or management. That is because, once the decision has been made to assimilate OS X users, the pragmatic goal must be for the user to survive in her/his job; efforts to change anyone's mind about the decision will be risky with a very low probability of success—futile—for reasons that will be clarified below. But first it's important to understand what assimilation is really all about.

### Why not assimilate?

Why would OS X users even think about resisting a mandatory switch to Windows at their workplace? After all, their employer is footing the bill for hardware and software. Why not just comply and use what you're given (Figure 2)? Aren't personal computers just like telephones, pens, staplers, etc.? Do employees quibble about the brand/model of these other tools that their employers provide? Are OS X users just being smug, stubborn and/or religious?



Figure 2. How come OS X users don't get the message?

The answer to all of the above questions is...it depends. To understand how this answer makes sense, let's take a look at why OS X users might be inclined to resist switching to Windows.

One potential reason why OS X users might fight futility and resist switching to Windows relates to productivity—a characteristic that managers typically value and strive to increase in their employees. OS X's functionality and interface ([en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mac\\_OS](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mac_OS)) can increase a user's productivity by increasing her/his focus on the tasks at hand. This feature of Macs was described in the olden days as user friendly and intuitive. Windows' functionality and interface can have the opposite effect on an OS X user's productivity by increasing her/his focus on customizations and/or maintenance (Properties, Options, malware, the Registry, hard drive fragmentation, etc.) instead of assigned tasks.

In my experience with several assimilations, for example, I consistently have endured a decline in productivity on Windows PCs. Each time I was required to use a Windows PC, it took me more time to perform tasks and I accomplished less. In fact, my original decision to switch from Windows to Mac OS was motivated by my greater productivity working on a Macintosh than on a Windows PC. I just couldn't afford the time involved in fussing with Windows.

I am hardly unique in this regard. Forrester Research, a long-time observer of Windows PCs in the enterprise, reported that ([tech.fortune.cnn.com/2011/10/27/hell-freezes-over-forrester-urges-it-to-support-the-mac/](http://tech.fortune.cnn.com/2011/10/27/hell-freezes-over-forrester-urges-it-to-support-the-mac/)) "...power users [in the workplace] are willing to pay for MacBook Pros out of their own pocket...because their company-supplied Microsoft (MSFT) Windows PCs are slowing them down. Time is the only thing that these fierce competitors can't make more of. Many of today's corporate PCs are saddled with management, backup, and security agents that can bog down a PC."

Here's what Eric Knorr, a long-time Windows user and Microsoft observer, recently had to say ([www.infoworld.com/print/188365](http://www.infoworld.com/print/188365)).

"Until a little while ago, I was determined—even excited—to stick with Windows 7 and follow Microsoft on its journey to Windows 8... I've changed my mind. After 22 years of using Windows for work, I'm opting for a Mac instead. All it took was a long look at Windows 8 Consumer Preview....I was shocked, not only at the clunkiness of Metro on the desktop, but also at the disappearance of the Start Menu—a double-barreled fail...the clincher for me has been the response from Windows gurus I respect, such as InfoWorld's J. Peter

Bruzzese...and Woody Leonhard... And Martin Heller, longtime InfoWorld contributor and Windows expert, who sent us an e-mail last week with a subject line that read: 'I was so impressed with the Windows 8 preview...that I ordered a 21-inch iMac.' "

Just because four long-time Windows aficionados voluntarily chose to switch from Windows to OS X, however, is far from saying that any other Windows users would (or should) do likewise. Those who prefer to stick with Windows probably do so for some reason, and one likely reason is that they're productive with Windows. But one size (Windows) does not necessarily fit all.

Returning to the question why OS X users might attempt to resist switching to Windows, one strong possibility is that they similarly are productive with OS X. If so, what's the point of disrupting a productive employee by requiring her/him to stop using a tool that's productive, and instead begin using an unfamiliar tool which potentially—for that user—will be less productive? More on this in a moment.

Other possible reasons why OS X-using employees might fight futility and resist switching ([www.macworld.com/article/133090/2008/04/mac\\_it.html](http://www.macworld.com/article/133090/2008/04/mac_it.html)) to Windows include efficiency, learning curve, maintenance requirements, risk of malware, hardware durability, tight integration between OS X and Mac hardware, and compatibility (i.e., OS X's native support for Exchange Server, FAT32 media, virtual machines, and Boot Camp). Regardless of whether these additional reasons actually play a role, it would make good business sense for decision-makers to take into account the impact on productivity before implementing a forced-migration from OS X to Windows.

In summary, OS X users in the workplace have several reasons—productivity, efficiency, relatively lower maintenance needs, among others—for attempting to resist a forced migration to Windows. Although resisting assimilation might give an appearance of insubordination that puts an employee at risk, a proxy advocate and strength in numbers possibly could help make a case for at least delaying a forced switch. We'll look at these possibilities in more detail shortly.

### Why assimilate?

If OS X-using employees really are less productive and/or efficient when working on Windows PCs, and if OS X-using employees really require less maintenance and support than Windows-using counterparts, why would any IT department force them to switch? Would it be more cost-effective for OS X-using employees to continue using OS X?

In my experiences with assimilations from OS X to Windows, the reasons that I heard from administrators for forcing OS X-using employees to switch to Windows were 1) budget, 2) refusal to support OS X, and 3) staff reorganizations. Each of these reasons was IT-centric rather than user-centric. Let's take a closer look at them.

I have been involved in forced migrations from OS X to Windows where managers said that Macs cost too much. Cost was one of several factors contributing to Microsoft's historical domination ([www.netmarketshare.com/os-market-share.aspx?qprid=9](http://www.netmarketshare.com/os-market-share.aspx?qprid=9); [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Usage\\_share\\_of\\_operating\\_systems](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Usage_share_of_operating_systems)) in workplaces in general—businesses large and small, non-profit organizations, educational organizations, governments and their agencies, etc. (Figure 3)—and mine in particular.

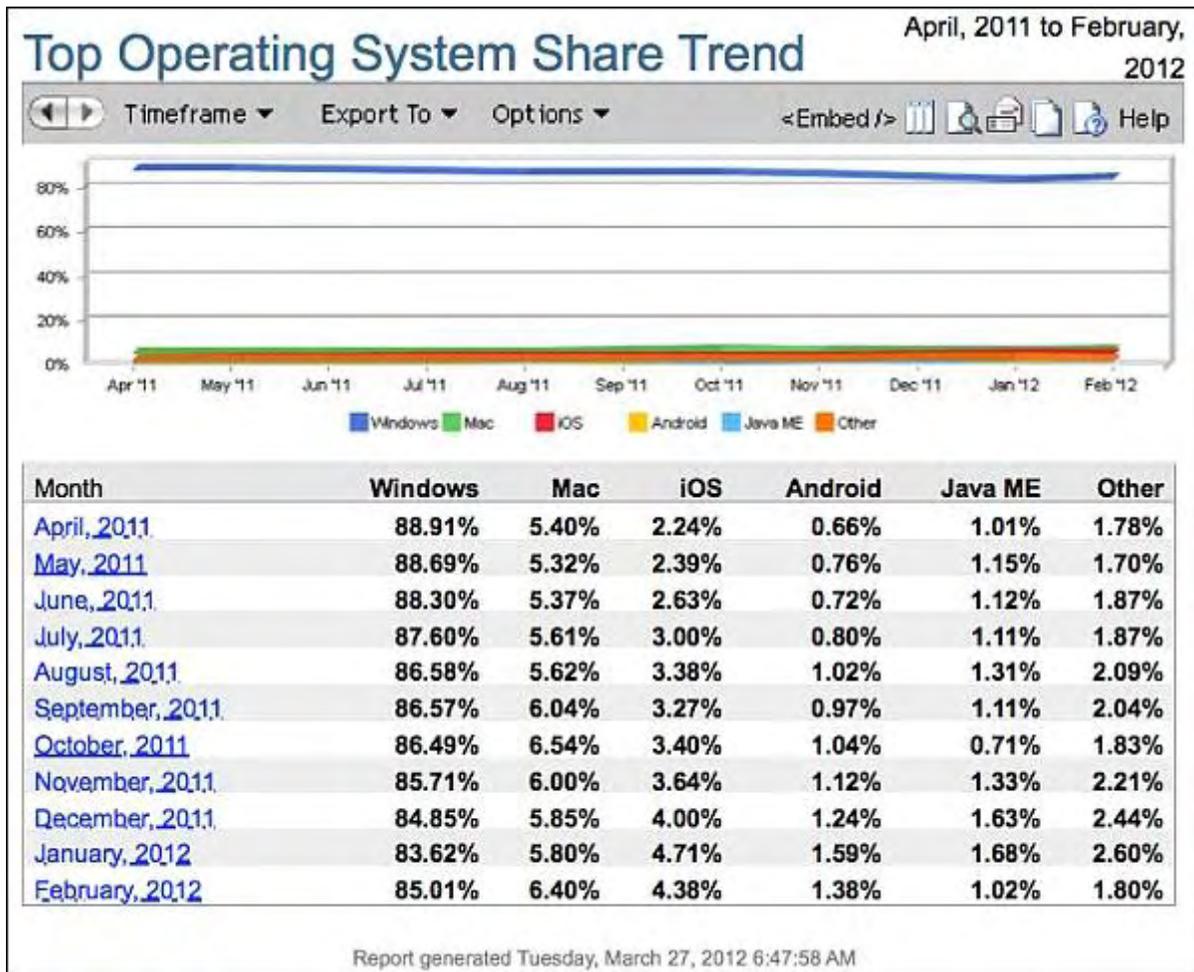


Figure 3. Evidence that Windows dominates workplaces.

How did Microsoft's dominance in workplaces come about? During the 1980s and 1990s, Microsoft's competitors—primarily Apple ([en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History\\_of\\_Mac\\_OS](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Mac_OS))—sold computers that had sizable price tags (the original Macintosh ([en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Macintosh](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Macintosh)) released in 1978 cost \$2,500 and its successor released in 1986 cost \$2,600) and did not run ([lowendmac.com/history/1984dk.shtml](http://lowendmac.com/history/1984dk.shtml)) Disk Operating System (DOS) or business-friendly apps such as dBase or Lotus 1-2-3. In addition, along the way, Microsoft introduced Windows NT ([en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Windows\\_NT](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Windows_NT))—which had networking and server features that outperformed Mac OS' corresponding features—and a series of client Windows versions (3.0, 3.1, 95, 98, Me) which provided a graphical interface similar to Mac OS' in terms of user-friendliness. IT departments at workplaces with hundreds or thousands of employees (each of whom needed a desktop computer) probably saw compelling financial and business advantages in migrating from the antiquated and arcane DOS platform ([en.wikipedia.org/wiki/MS-DOS](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/MS-DOS)) to the more modern, multitasking, and user-friendly Windows platform.

Fast-forward to the 21st century, and the old reasons for favoring Windows PCs over Macs are less tenable. For example, anyone who claims that Macs are unaffordably expensive probably is living in the past. Mac minis cost \$600–800 and are just as suitable as budget Windows PCs for employees whose essential activities are e-mail, Web browsing, and/or word processing.

Spend thrifths might object that low-end Windows PCs cost at most half as much as Mac minis, and they'd be correct. Why equip half your workforce (100 employees, for example) with Mac minis for a total cost of around \$70,000 when you could equip your entire workforce with budget PC models for the same total cost? However, what if you replaced those low-end models after two years of service while Mac minis would have lasted three or four? What if users experienced more down time due to required maintenance and/or malware attacks on Windows PCs than they would have on Mac minis? A return on investment and/or total cost of ownership ([en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Total\\_cost\\_of\\_ownership](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Total_cost_of_ownership)) analysis that covers only the initial hardware cost is likely to overlook additional costs such as replacement cycles, maintenance, and support; this, in turn, would result in purchase decisions based upon incomplete and/or biased information.

I also have been a party to forced migrations from OS X to Windows where IT managers stated that their department supported only Windows and therefore all employees must use Windows. The "support" consisted of centralized distribution of Windows service pack installations, anti-malware and spyware apps' and/or definitions' update installations, and control over (i.e., prevention of)

employees installing third-party programs on employer-supplied desktop PCs.

Centralized distribution and control over hundreds or thousands of PCs certainly is understandable—the potential savings of time and resources are enormous when large numbers of PCs can be managed by "pushing" software over a network en masse rather than manually installing on a one-by-one basis. Additionally, centralized control over installation of third-party software potentially could reduce outbreaks of malware infection, security breaches, and/or technical support incidents ("My computer won't let me..."). If employees are using OS X, how can IT push Windows service packs, malware and/or spyware updates, or definitions to them? Note that these are IT-centric benefits rather than user-centric ones.

The third reason that I heard administrators give for assimilating OS X users was within the context of staff consolidations (i.e., job eliminations)—due to staff reductions, Mac support would need to be eliminated. With fewer IT staff members, it would be necessary to limit the scope of technical support, and that scope would be Windows only.

Limiting the scope of technical support for hundreds or thousands of employees certainly is understandable—again, the potential savings of time and resources are enormous when large numbers of end users have a limited hardware and software platform (one size fits all). If any employees are using OS X, how can remaining IT staff members provide support for them when it will necessarily be different from support for employees using Windows? Note that this also is an IT-centric issue rather than a user-centric one.

## How to cope with impending assimilation

OS X-using employees might benefit from the following actions.

- Update your resume, just in case. Regardless of what else you (don't) do, your position could become expendable and/or your employer's perception of your value might decline in the event that migrating to Windows makes you less productive and/or efficient.
- Be careful of the messages you (un)intentionally communicate about your tools. Avoid putting the quality of your work, reputation, and/or position in jeopardy by (un)intentionally saying something about OS X vs. Windows that creates trouble rather than benefit.
- Knowledge is power—obtain and decipher administrators' messages about the assimilation. Ones like "This has to be better," "Don't be anxious," "I like Windows and I'm sure you will too," and/or "There are plenty of online resources for you to learn Windows" probably indicate that they do not understand how a forced migration will negatively impact OS X-using employees' ability to get their work done productively, efficiently, and on deadline.
- Be mindful that messages like "Macs are too expensive" have little support in the real world. If cost really were the issue, then IT should be migrating everyone to an open source platform (Linux, Google Mail and Calendar, MySQL, Open Directory, Google Docs, LibreOffice) rather than throwing thousands or millions of dollars at Microsoft. And if IT staff are knowledgeable enough to support Microsoft products, then they should be able to learn support for Linux which is at least as secure as and easier to support (due to the relatively lesser threat of malware) than Windows.
- Document and strategically publicize ([en.wikipedia.org/wiki/When\\_Prophecy\\_Fails](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/When_Prophecy_Fails)) your productivity, efficiency and timeliness using OS X. Administrators who make data-driven decisions are your target audience. Data will be less compelling to administrators whose decisions are based upon motivated reasoning.
- Compile a list of Mac-only software that enhances your productivity, efficiency and timeliness. OS X and its Windows compatibility (e.g., built-in support for Exchange Server and Boot Camp for running Windows) belong in this list.
- Seek out OS X-using coworkers—there is strength in numbers. The more employees who strategically publicize their productivity and efficiency using OS X, the stronger the message.
- Find an advocate (preferably someone in management) who is in a position to strategically support publicity about your productivity, efficiency and timeliness.
- If you own a portable Mac or iDevice, bring it to work (unless your employer has a prohibitory policy); however, be careful to stay under the radar, avoid spreading or becoming a source of Windows malware, and do not copy any of your workplace's confidential information onto your portable hardware.

Hopefully, one or more of these actions will prolong your use of OS X where you can be productive, efficient and safe from the Borg.

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Barry Fass-Holmes has been reviewing products for *ComputerEdge* since 2003. He previously worked as a software support representative and quality assurance analyst in San Diego. His product reviews are available in *ComputerEdge's* archives and

at his Web site ([www.barryfhpd.com/](http://www.barryfhpd.com/)).

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## Wally Wang's Apple Farm

“Money = Reality” by Wally Wang

Money = Reality; Don't Buy a Mac (Yet); Save Your Passwords; The Future of Digital Cameras; The Next Dot-Com Bubble; Macintosh Reads out Loud.

# Wally Wang's Apple Farm

The other night I happened to catch a show about people who have survived disasters of some kind. On this particular show, a man was riding a crowded ferry somewhere around Europe when the ferry started to sink. This man said that he had been sitting in the dining room when a geyser of water suddenly burst through the doors and started flooding the room. Immediately, he got out of his seat and ran away from the water towards the nearest exit. When he turned around, he was shocked to see that most people were still sitting in their seats, staring wide-eyed at the onrushing water that was about to engulf them.

Despite clear evidence that their situation was changing and they would be in trouble if they didn't move, most of those people in the dining room continued to sit in their chairs until they all drowned. This survivor remarked that he couldn't believe that none of these people even made an effort to save themselves and seem hypnotized by what they couldn't believe was happening. Paralyzed by fear, they chose inaction and died as a result.

Unfortunately, inaction and disbelief (and often times anger) seem to be the normal way most people deal with change, yet the solution is actually simple. Separate your emotions from your observation and react to what you observe, rather than what you want to believe. Once you throw your beliefs out the window, you can clearly see the facts right in front of you and respond accordingly.

With any technological gadget, it doesn't matter what you use just as long as it meets your needs. If it doesn't meet your needs, then it's foolish to believe otherwise. In the business world, corporations measure reality using money. If technology doesn't help a company make a profit, then it's useless regardless of how fancy or shiny it may be.

In the smartphone market, Android holds over 50 percent of the market, yet all the major carriers want the iPhone because iPhone users tend to be more profitable. For years, AT&T grew tremendously because it was the only carrier that offered the iPhone. Verizon tried to compete by promoting Motorola's Droid, but they eagerly embraced the iPhone because they knew it would retain customers.

Out of all the four major American carriers, only T-Mobile doesn't offer the iPhone, and they're gradually bleeding subscribers ([articles.businessinsider.com/2012-02-23/tech/31089903\\_1\\_iphone-t-mobile-usa-ceo-philipp-humm](http://articles.businessinsider.com/2012-02-23/tech/31089903_1_iphone-t-mobile-usa-ceo-philipp-humm)). T-Mobile's CEO Philipp Humm said, "Not carrying the iPhone led to a significant increase in contract deactivations in the fourth quarter of 2011." Despite offering multiple Android and Windows Phone 7 phones, T-Mobile still needs the iPhone to attract and retain customers.

Sprint got the iPhone after Verizon and has finally stopped losing subscribers. Since they got off to such a late start, Sprint is trying to offer unlimited data plans as an enticement to convince people to switch to Sprint. Sprint's latest promotion ([news.cnet.com/8301-1035\\_3-57437468-94/sprint-aggressively-promotes-iphone-4s-unlimited-plan/?tag=mncol;cnetRiver](http://news.cnet.com/8301-1035_3-57437468-94/sprint-aggressively-promotes-iphone-4s-unlimited-plan/?tag=mncol;cnetRiver)) is to pay \$100 or more for an old iPhone if you switch to Sprint and sign up for a two-year commitment. So if you're tired of AT&T's dropped calls or Verizon's decision to place greater restrictions ([www.latimes.com/business/technology/la-fi-tn-verizon-unlimited-data-clarification-20120517,0,1281550.story](http://www.latimes.com/business/technology/la-fi-tn-verizon-unlimited-data-clarification-20120517,0,1281550.story)) on unlimited data plans, you might want to switch to Sprint for the iPhone 4S, even though the newest iPhone will soon arrive this fall around October.



Figure 1. Sprint will pay you \$100 to switch to Sprint and an iPhone 4S.

Whether they like it or not, carriers need the iPhone to compete because people want the iPhone. As more people use the iPhone, more third-parties will support the whole iPhone ecosystem in the same way that everyone used to only make software and accessories just for Windows PC users back in the 90s.

You can buck the trend and swim upstream like Macintosh users had to do in the 90s when everyone else was buying Windows PCs, or you can go with the trend and enjoy the benefits as a result. Any time you hear about the latest smartphone app, chances are good it will be for the iPhone and probably for Android as well, but Windows Phone 7, Blackberry and webOS phone users will likely be out of luck. That doesn't make those other phone operating systems inferior, but it does make them less versatile, which makes them less useful for most people.

With a choice between buying something useful or buying something that isn't as useful, regardless of the brand name on the device, it's easy to see what's the best choice once your emotions are out of the way.

For an interesting children's book that highlights the importance of thinking in a way that's often prominent in children but sorely lacking in many adults, read Norton Juster's *The Phantom Tollbooth* ([www.amazon.com/gp/product/0394815009/ref=as\\_li\\_qf\\_sp\\_asin\\_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=0394815009](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0394815009/ref=as_li_qf_sp_asin_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=0394815009)). In this book, a boy named Milo is bored and depressed until he discovers a toy tollbooth in his room one day after school. With nothing better to do, he hops in a toy car and drives past the toy tollbooth, only to find himself in a land where people literally jump to conclusions (and wind up trapped on an island off the coast), eat their own words, and suffer from the lack of Rhyme and Reason (the names of two princesses) in their lives.

For another story from Norton Juster, watch the "The Dot and the Line: A Romance in Lower Mathematics ([www.youtube.com/watch?v=OmSbdvzbOzY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OmSbdvzbOzY))," which won the 1965 Academy Award for best short film. In this story, a line is in love with a dot, but the dot scorns his affections because he's too rigid. Only after he learns to bend and discovers that by being flexible, he can create marvelous shapes and designs, does the line finally win the affection of the dot away from the chaos and anarchy of a squiggly line rival.

Phil Roman, a noted Hollywood animator who worked on *Sleeping Beauty*, *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*, and *Garfield*, once told a story about meeting a small child at an animation conference. After seeing how curious Phil Roman still remained as an old man and noting his own curiosity about life, the child remarked, "Little kids and old people have a lot in common. It's the people in the middle who we need to fix."

### Don't Buy a Mac (Yet)

The next time you're looking to buy a Macintosh, check the Mac Buyer's Guide ([buyersguide.macrumors.com/](http://buyersguide.macrumors.com/)) first. Apple tends to release new products on a fairly regular schedule, so by checking the Mac Buyer's Guide, you can time your next purchase to coincide with the latest models.

Most likely, Apple will announce new Macintosh models on June 11, the date of their Worldwide Developer's Conference. This will give you a chance to buy the new Macintosh for the current price of today's models, or buy today's models at a discount as Apple clears out their inventory. Either way, you either get the latest model or a less expensive Macintosh that's one generation behind the latest models.

For those who prefer building their own computers, you can choose between Windows or Linux. However, if you don't mind violating the

legal license agreements that only allow Mac OS X to run on Apple hardware, you can build your own computer and turn it into what's called a Hackintosh. The Hackintosh site ([www.hackintosh.com](http://www.hackintosh.com)) even provides instructions for helping you install Mac OS X on a regular PC.

Of course, you'll need to be comfortable fiddling with technology, but if this appeals to you, then try converting your PC into a Hackintosh and get the benefits of creating a custom computer running Mac OS X. With Hackintosh instructions freely available there's no reason why you can't enjoy the benefits of Mac OS X on any hardware of your choice.

## Save Your Passwords

If you visit multiple Web sites that require passwords, you have two choices. First, you can memorize multiple passwords and then likely forget them over time. Second, you can just use the same password multiple times, thereby increasing the risk that someone will get access to everything if they manage to guess or steal your password.

For a better option, use a password manager such as LastPass ([lastpass.com](http://lastpass.com)). The basic idea behind LastPass is that you store all your passwords in a single program and then use one password to access that program. Now when you need a password to get into a particular Web site, you can just use LastPass to access the appropriate password.

Now you can create wildly different passwords for multiple sites and store them once in LastPass. Just as long as you don't forget your password to LastPass, you'll have the protection of different passwords without the hassle of trying to memorize all of them. Best of all, LastPass is free and works with all the popular browsers such as Safari, Firefox, Chrome and Opera. If you want more features, you can pay \$1 a month to use LastPass Premium.

## The Future of Digital Cameras

Patently Apple ([www.patentlyapple.com/patently-apple/2012/05/apple-reveals-tap-to-focus-camera-feature-advancements.html](http://www.patentlyapple.com/patently-apple/2012/05/apple-reveals-tap-to-focus-camera-feature-advancements.html)) has uncovered a new patent by Apple, which describes a multi-touch focus feature for capturing pictures on a touch screen device. By aiming at an image and touching the items you want the camera to focus on, you can theoretically capture sharper images of the items that are most important to you.

### Apple's Invention Presents New "Multi-Point Touch Focus" Feature for Future iOS Cameras

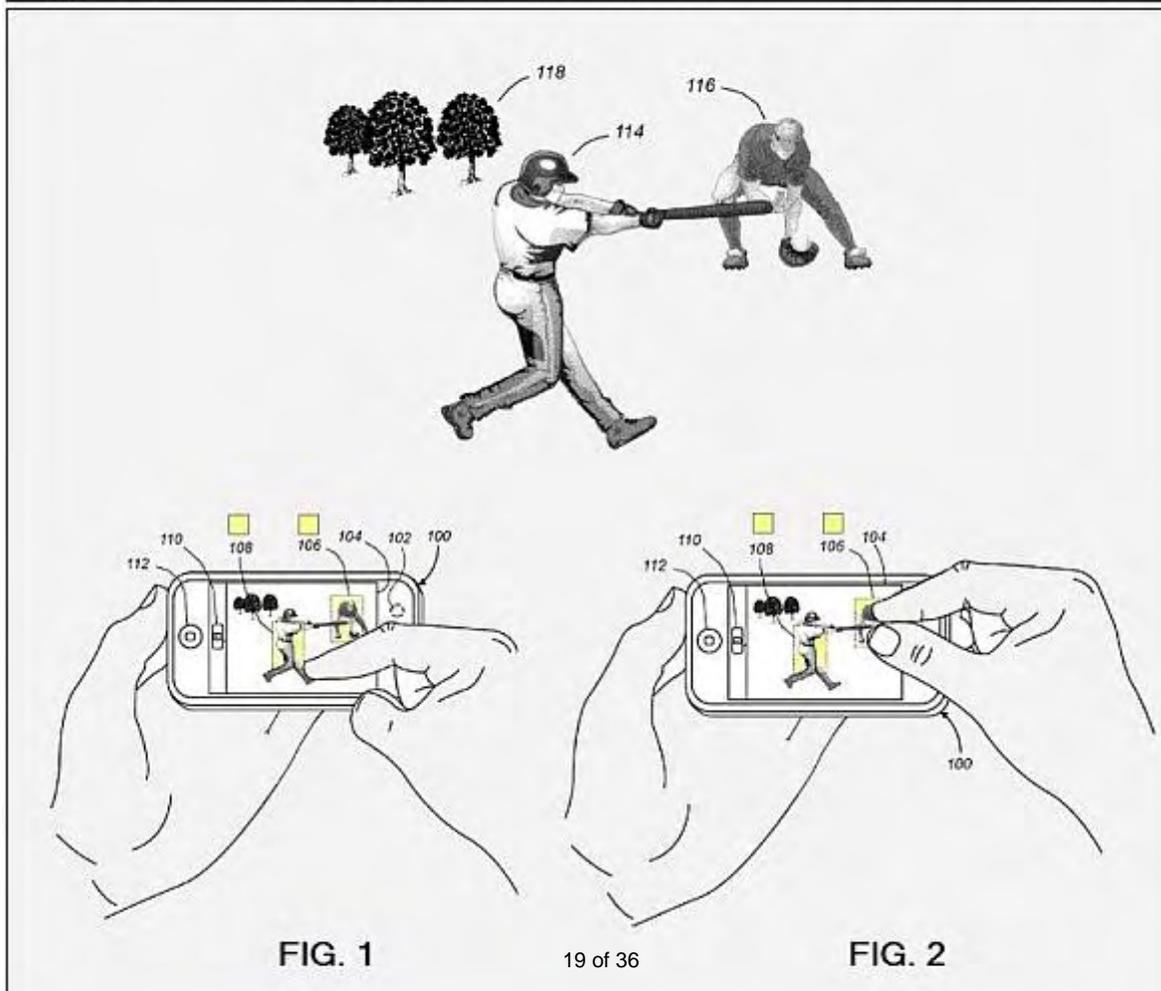


FIG. 1

FIG. 2

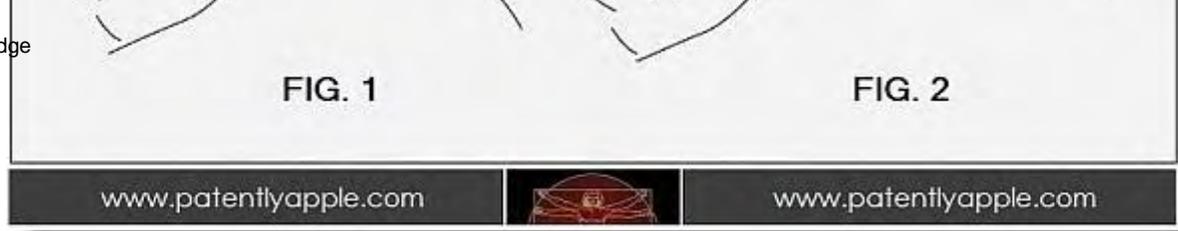


Figure 2. Apple's new touch to focus patent possibly coming to an iPhone/iPad soon.

After you tap on an object, you can further define the exact area you want to focus on by enlarging or shrinking the area. Capture several pictures of the same scene, but focus on a different object, and then you'll be able to combine those pictures to create the best image possible.

Today's digital cameras can already capture more than just images, but can also store the actual sensor data (the RAW format) from the camera to allow for more detailed alterations not possible with ordinary pictures. Digital photography is rapidly progressing from just mimicking film photography to offering unique features that film photography can never duplicate.

Anyone remember when digital cameras were expensive and only captured grainy images? Any time new technology appears, it's easy to focus on its many faults while overlooking its future potential. When current technology stands still while new technology rapidly improves, it's only inevitable that the newer technology will eventually overtake the current technology. Just ask Kodak how well their film photography business ([online.wsj.com/article/APb113d9ab7a18460a8eb5e486e667b357.html](http://online.wsj.com/article/APb113d9ab7a18460a8eb5e486e667b357.html)) is doing these days.

### The Next Dot-Com Bubble

Back in the 90s, any Internet-related stock soared for no apparent reason. If you ran a company that used the Internet somehow, investors were willing to throw wads of cash in your direction. Today, Internet stocks are all the rage once more, even if their business model makes little sense.

First, there's Groupon (stock symbol GRPN), which started at \$20 a share and has steadily dropped from there. The main idea is that Groupon offers discounts to customers. The problem is that this discount comes at the expense of the merchants.



Figure 3. Groupon's stock has been steadily sinking since its introduction.

Typically, a merchant must discount a product or service by a fixed amount, such as 25 percent. Now the merchant is not only making less money selling the exact same product or service they were selling before using Groupon, but they also have to split the profits with Groupon. For merchants, this means they're often discounting their product or service by 75 percent or more (including both their original discount and the split of the profits to share with Groupon), which leaves them little room for making any money at all. In fact, some merchants have even lost money because they must now spend more money hiring people to sell products at a loss. A bakery in London reportedly lost \$20,000 ([articles.businessinsider.com/2011-11-22/strategy/30427884\\_1\\_groupon-daily-](http://articles.businessinsider.com/2011-11-22/strategy/30427884_1_groupon-daily-)

*deals-site-cupcake-frenzy*) selling cupcakes .

The promise of Groupon is that they'll attract new customers to your business. Unfortunately, the reality is that customers will likely continue chasing additional Groupon discounts and ignore your business the moment you no longer offer any more Groupon discounts. By going through Groupon, businesses risk making little or no money while working harder to service hordes of cheap customers who will leave the moment you no longer offer a discount that you can never sustain over time.

From a business model perspective, Groupon does nothing different than rivals such as LivingSocial. From a merchant's perspective, working with Groupon or any other discount service rarely attracts customers who will continue buying your product or service. In general, if you have to compete on price, you probably have no other redeeming qualities to offer customers, so you'll likely wind up going broke in the near future anyway.

As a business, you don't want cheap customers; you want high-paying, repeat customers, and you'll likely never get that by offering massive discounts through Groupon. When enough merchants realize that cutting prices forces them to work harder for less money, they'll either go out of business or kill themselves working to support cheap customers who will demand much while paying for little. Groupon's future looks about as appealing as riding an airplane with no wings.

The next big Internet stock is Facebook (stock symbol FB). Like Google, Facebook expects to make money from advertising, but when people use Google, they're often searching for something they want to buy, such as a particular product like a bicycle or computer accessory. When they see ads while searching, they'll be more likely to find those ads useful and click on them where a certain percentage of people will buy something.

When people visit Facebook, they're often looking to communicate with their friends and not look at ads. As a result, fewer Facebook users will likely click on an ad to buy something, which means Facebook's potential ad revenue will be far less than their growing user base. General Motors recently decided to stop advertising on Facebook ([www.forbes.com/sites/benzingainsights/2012/05/16/gm-doesnt-like-facebook-drops-ads/](http://www.forbes.com/sites/benzingainsights/2012/05/16/gm-doesnt-like-facebook-drops-ads/)) because they couldn't see how their ads were increasing sales.

Then again, many companies cheerfully throw away money on useless ads that return no sales whatsoever. In Australia, a bunch of people showed up at an Apple Store and shouted "Wake Up" to the confused shoppers as part of an advertising campaign. The problem was that this ad campaign did not compel anyone to buy anything because nobody knew who was behind the ad or what this publicity stunt was trying to get them to do.

Suppose you wanted to sell your house and you placed a huge, full page ad in the newspaper urging people to "Wake Up!" How many people would equate this ad with your desire to sell your house? How many people would even know you were trying to sell your house? If this type of confused advertising campaign doesn't make sense when trying to sell a house, why did anyone think it would help sell a product that wasn't even mentioned?

As it turns out, Research in Motion (stock symbol RIMM) paid for this "Wake Up" advertising stunt ([www.theverge.com/2012/5/7/3004202/rim-wake-up-be-bold-website](http://www.theverge.com/2012/5/7/3004202/rim-wake-up-be-bold-website)), but since they didn't even mention Research in Motion's Blackberry phones, how did the company think that telling Apple shoppers to "Wake Up" would convince them to rush out and buy Blackberry products?

The bottom line is that multimillion dollar corporations often think with less common sense than a cockroach. Don't be fooled by the hype surrounding Internet stocks or major corporations that can't make a single intelligent advertising decision if their lives depended on it.

When it comes to advertising, most companies waste their money so if you can recognize these pointless ad campaigns, you can see which companies will likely nose dive in the future. When you see Internet stocks hyped on the stock exchange, study their business model carefully. In many cases, what they offer is nothing more than a lot of hot air that represents potential that will never be realized. Common sense really isn't that common, as countless corporate executives can prove time and time again.

\* \* \*

Many people mistake complication for intelligence. That's why much academic writing consists of long-winded sentences and paragraphs that make no sense whatsoever, but look important because they use a lot of big words and long sentences. Many academic journals contain useful information, but the people writing these academic papers falsely believe that they need to write in stilted prose that serves only to confuse and bore everyone.

To avoid this problem, read your writing out loud. If you have trouble reading your own writing, chances are good that others will have trouble reading it as well.

In case you don't like reading your writing out loud, have your Macintosh do it for you instead. In many programs that follow Apple's guidelines for writing software (such as Pages, but not Microsoft Word), you can highlight a chunk of text, right-click, and when a menu appears, choose Speech → Start Speaking. Now your Macintosh will read your text in a robotic voice so you can listen for stilted phrases or awkward sentences.

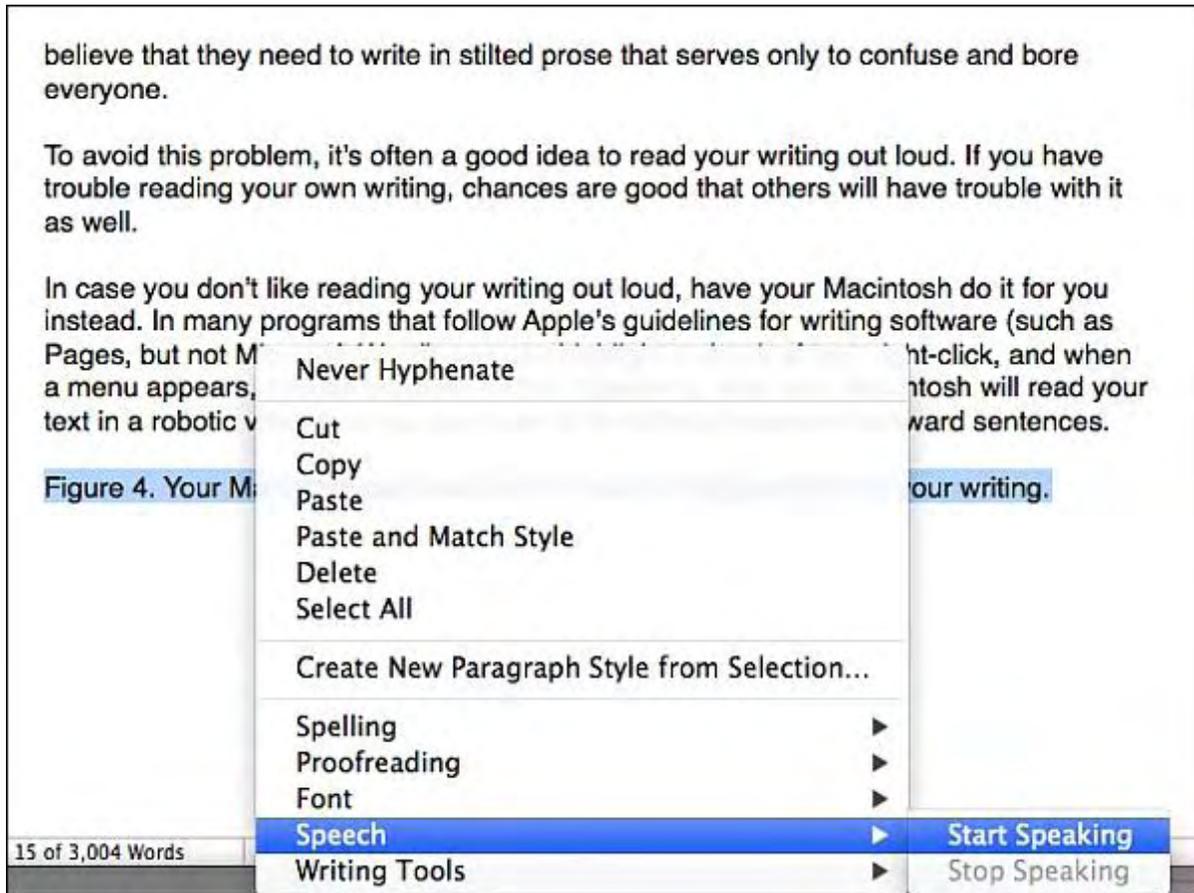


Figure 4. Your Mac

Figure 4. Your Macintosh can read text out loud to help you simplify your writing.

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 particples 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?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=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?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=0470088702](http://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](http://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](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0764554468?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=0764554468))
- Strategic Entrepreneurism with Jon and Gerald Fisher* ([www.amazon.com/gp/product/1590791894?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=1590791894](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1590791894?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=1590791894))
- How to Live with a Cat (When You Really Don't Want To)* ([www.amazon.com/gp/product/B006DJYL70/ref=as\\_li\\_tf\\_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=217145&creative=399373&creativeASIN=B006DJYL70](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B006DJYL70/ref=as_li_tf_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=217145&creative=399373&creativeASIN=B006DJYL70))
- The Secrets of the Wall Street Stock Traders* ([www.amazon.com/gp/product/B006DGCH4M/](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)

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

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

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

**The Zen of Effortless Selling with Moe Abdou** ([www.amazon.com/gp/product/B006PUFPGI/](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)

[ref=as\\_li\\_tf\\_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=B006PUFPGI](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))

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

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

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

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## Worldwide News & Product Reviews

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

 Don't say we didn't warn you.

  What is that store's return policy?

   We've seen better; we've seen worse.

    You'll probably be happy you did.

     What are you waiting for?

Survey: PC Users Not Practicing Safe Computing; Consigned to the Slagheap History by the Smartphone; Casio XJ-H1650 Hybrid Projector; The Case for Cases.

### Survey: PC Users Not Practicing Safe Computing

Katia Shabanova, PR Director for Paragon Software Group ([www.paragon-software.com](http://www.paragon-software.com)), has the results of her company's latest survey of PC users:

Ten thousand users surveyed backup and defrag regularly, but do not take advantage of alignment, wiping and other data safety technologies.

Paragon Software Group (PSG), a leader in data backup, disaster recovery and data migration solutions, has conducted an online survey of more than 10,000 owners of the company's latest Hard Disk Manager products. The survey highlighted some gaps in technology adoption and personal data safety procedures.

About 45% of respondents stated that they do not utilize automatic partition alignment, which can significantly improve performance of a hard disk during partitioning and copy operations and restoring a backup image to new hard drives. Further, despite the efficiency and maintenance benefits of virtualization and cloud storage, 58% of respondents currently do not use data virtualization.

In terms of external storage options, nearly 40% of those polled do not use or plan to use solid-state drives (SSDs), while 23% plan to move to an SSD in the near future, making a full-suite product crucial to those technology adopters. Manual data installs, as in the case of 66% of those polled who use no special programs or tools for data and system migration when upgrading or replacing their PCs, represent an opportunity for PC users to conserve effort and ensure fidelity by automating their migration procedures.

A full 15% of all those who do back up their data reported storing their backup files on the same drive that hosts the stored info. "While data backups are crucial components to disaster recovery, it's just as important to have a safe place to host the backups," said Pavel Astafurov, supervisor of the survey. "By conducting this survey, we hope to bring some safer techniques and procedures to light."

More disturbing, around half of all PC users polled either do not utilize any data wiping tools or only use the standard "format disk" wiping functions to erase personal information on old hard drives, leaving potentially sensitive information available to anyone who may gain access to the hardware.

"According to the survey, the top three most important factors when selecting software include reliability, performance and hardware/software compatibility," said Astafurov.

Paragon Software found that the most popular hard drive operations were those related to backing up and defragmenting, with 80% of respondents stating that they do both regularly.

### Consigned to the Slagheap History by the Smartphone

Steve Watts, co-founder of British security firm, SecurEnvoy ([www.securenavoy.com](http://www.securenavoy.com)), opines about the rise of the smartphone and the demise of a number of technologies now incorporated routinely into phones (minimally edited for US readers):

It might seem hard to believe but the mobile phone was first introduced to the UK in 1985. Just twenty seven years later and the device that we now love is hardly recognizable to those first Motorola handsets. And it's not just the size and battery life that's changed. Let's face it, if you were to upgrade your handset tomorrow, would you just be looking for one that can make calls?

Considered the top executive toy, the mobile phone became the status symbol of the Yuppie—short for "young urban professional" or "young upwardly mobile professional." Today, with more handsets than people on the planet, it's changing more than the way

we communicate, but consigning some parts of every day life to the history books.



**Making calls:** It's almost easy to forget, especially with increasing functionality, but the primary reason for having a mobile phone is for making and receiving phone calls. Spare a thought then for the humble phone box. Last year, one large corporation announced that almost a quarter of phone boxes in Wales were making less than one call a month.

**Sending letters:** You only have to travel on a train or bus and you'll witness people busily tapping away on their phones. It is this phenomenon that the Hooper Report gives as a primary argument for the privatization of Royal Mail (the traditional mail system in Great Britain).

**Fax machine:** With many completely ignorant to its predecessor, the telex, the fax machine is also close to becoming obsolete. While it's true that e-mail is the greater villain, the fact that many phones offer the ability to scan (via their cameras) and send as an e-mail attachment means, in my book, that they're hardly blame free.



**Cameras:** Speaking of cameras, how many megapixels is your handset capable of? While digital cameras obliterated film cameras, they are now facing their own nemesis. With the iPhone reportedly more sophisticated than traditional compact cameras, and it's not the only device to boast superior resolution, it's hardly surprising that both these and video cameras are on their way into the nearest museum.

**Music:** Hands up if you remember the walkman! For those of you too young to know, these were portable cassette players. Of course, there was also the boom box blasting out in the park way back when on a warm summer's day. With even the most basic smartphone capable of storing the entire Elvis back catalog without even flinching, and playback that most dream of, you too can have music wherever you go.

**TV:** As screens become bigger, with better resolution, it is now possible to watch your favorite programs when out and about. That said, I don't think the HD TV has too much to fear just yet—but perhaps the set top box suppliers may need to watch their backs.

**Games Console:** Video games consoles have been in decline for a few months with many experts blaming the trend on the increased popularity of casual mobile gaming. One major gaming retailer only just managed a stay of execution, suggesting its days could be numbered.

**Signature:** Mobile phones are becoming so integral to everyday life, they're capable of confirming our identities. This could mean, one day, we'll no longer need to sign for things. For example, two factor authentication (2FA) combines something you know, with something you have—an existing example of 2FA in action is "chip and pin" for authorizing credit and debit card payments. When accessing corporate networks, completing financial transactions, etc. mobiles offer the perfect tokenless 2FA solution. A passcode is received as an SMS, which you then key in to confirm your identity.

**Tracking device:** Of course, with GPS functionality, it's hardly surprising mobiles are replacing maps, satellite navigation specific devices and telephone books. You can use them to pinpoint your position if you're not entirely sure where you are, while services offer to send you numbers based on your location, for example taxi firms or curry houses. But, perhaps rather controversially, you can now download an app for an iPhone, iPad, or iPod touch that allows you to track your friends. While handy for checking your child is at school, partner at the office, or how far away your mate is when you're waiting for them, I'm not sure how comfortable I would be that someone could locate me at their will and not mine.

**Banking:** Today, you can practically carry your high street branch on your handset. Many banks offer mobile banking apps that allow you to make payments, transfer money between accounts, check your balance and view recent transactions.

**Money:** And its not just banking you can do with your phone—you can also carry cash. While not quite consigned to history, could the smartphone be eyeing up the credit card or even physical change as its next casualty? For some time now people have been able to pay for things, such as make charity donations or pay for parking in car parks, but that's almost immature when compared to many banks now offering mobile apps that allow sophisticated transactions to be made. While the jury is still out as to whether it's secure enough, or will even prove popular, I'm sure Dr. Martin Cooper never imagined it would be possible when he invented the first practical mobile phone.

I'm sure you'll agree, your smartphone is so much more than just a way to talk to people—you're practically carrying your life on it. If you lose it, how devastated would you be? For organizations the risk is too awful to contemplate and for that reason many are adding encryption to prevent any information on the device being stolen.

Love it or loath it the smartphone has completely revolutionized our lives. And our living rooms, bedrooms, offices, cars. The question on my mind is, in the next twenty-five years, will there be anything smarter than the smartphone or will it have taken over the world?— Cue villainous laughter and white cat stroking.

## Casio XJ-H1650 Hybrid Projector

Right out of the gate Casio's XJ-H1650 projector ([www.casio.com/products/Projectors/Pro\\_Models/XJ-H1650](http://www.casio.com/products/Projectors/Pro_Models/XJ-H1650)) has got a whole lot going for it, but one very special feature sends it way ahead of most of the pack and over the finish line. **[Available at Amazon.com** ([www.amazon.com/gp/product/B005GNPDBM/ref=as\\_li\\_ss\\_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B005GNPDBM/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20)).]



## XJ-H1650

Like the best projectors on the market, the XJ-H1650 offers great styling, low energy consumption, excellent picture, reasonable price, and enough settings and options to make the geekiest A/V guy or gal think they've died and gone to tech heaven. But what really sets the XJ-H1650 apart is the way it addresses the Achilles Heel of pretty much every projector on the market up to now: expensive, hot, short-lived bulbs.

The XJ-H1650 combines a laser, a fluorescent element, and LED technology to create what they describe as a "mercury-free hybrid light source capable of generating high brightness. Red is emitted by a high-lumen red LED. Blue is emitted by a high lumen blue LED. Green is achieved by converting blue laser light using a phosphor element."

According to the company, the XJ-H1650 is the brightest projector on the market without a mercury lamp and is virtually maintenance free.

The result is a super-bright, quiet projector that runs cool to the touch with a light source that lasts ten times longer than a traditional mercury lamp. Impressively, the XJ-H1650 reaches maximum brightness in less than 10 seconds and requires no cooling down period before you can stuff it into its carrying bag and hit the road.



I put the XJ-H1650 through its paces projecting a dream sequence video for one of my original plays. The AVI we created had to be first converted (using a program made by ArcSoft that comes with the projector) to a format the unit could read via a thumb drive plugged into its USB port. We suspended the unit from the ceiling and used the remote to control every aspect of the presentation. Worked like a champ every time. The picture was big and bright, and we never had to worry about the unit overheating.

Until LED projectors reach this level of brightness (around 2000 lumens looks to be the max at the moment), this is the way to go—heck, it may be the way to go even after that.

We've seen a ton of projectors here at the magazine and this is the best one yet. Period.

Specs (from Casio):

Casio XJ-H1650 XGA pro series projector with 3500 lumens and wireless network adapter

Price: \$1,799

3500 Ansi Lumens

Projection screen size 27 inch to 300 inch Diagonal

XGA and a 4:3 contrast ratio

Projection lens 1.2 x manual

Three year warranty on the unit, three years or 6,000 hours on the bulb

10 watt speaker

DLP 3D ready with XGA resolution

Wired LAN

Auto brightness adjustment saves power and reduce eye fatigue.

Wireless presentations (802.11b/g/n)

Up to 32 PCs can be connected at one time with four simultaneously active on screen

PC Requirements: Microsoft : Microsoft® Windows® Vista™ (32 bit), XP (32 bit) SP2 or equivalent.

Operating System: Windows XP or Windows 7

CPU: Intel® Core™2 Duo and higher required. 1GB memory or higher (2GB recommended). Recommended 1GB hard disk space.

Graphics Card Requirements:

Laptop: nVidia Quadro Graphics card or equivalent, must be Quad Buffered and Open GL 3D

Desktop: nVidia FX580 or higher

Software: DirectX® 9.0c or equivalent; Windows Media Player 11 or equivalent.



## The Case for Cases

iPhone cases have become some of the most specialized accessories on the market. They offer cases that can fit any possible need. There are designer cases that are only for looks, protective cases that are bulky and built like tanks, and then just about every possible combination in between. Finding the right iPhone case is a matter of trying them out individually and seeing if one's a good fit for your style.



The Vapor Pro case from ElementCase ([www.elementcase.com](http://www.elementcase.com)) is definitely the sleekest and sexiest case I have ever gotten my hands on. Given, it is also the most expensive case my eyes have ever seen, coming in at a hefty \$120 ([www.amazon.com/gp/product/B005LZR1UQ/ref=as\\_li\\_ss\\_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B005LZR1UQ/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20)). It is made from aircraft grade aluminum, and coated with a finish that resists scuffing and prevents tarnishing. It's very slim and light and has no problem fitting in my hands when

calling or typing. This case is extremely sturdy; my friends told me I could use it as a weapon if I needed too. We drop-tested it to see how the case would come out and, after taking a chunk out of the corner of the tile floor, the case had no cosmetic damage and the phone was still kicking. It has a clear polycarbonate brick that sits over the antennae to prevent the dreaded "death-grip" signal loss problem associated with iPhones.

Overall, the case protects and fits well on the iPhone. It also comes with an adhesive backing that protects the back of your phone and back plates made of different materials can be purchased from ElementCase.

The Vapor Pro is a great case, but not without a few flaws in my book—which may not be problems for you at all.

The first thing that got to me was the headphone slot. Even though it is touted as being wider than those of most other cases, it still struggles to accept many after-market jacks. The same thing goes for the base, which eliminates the possibility of docking your phone in most iHomes or other docks. ElementCase offers universal adapters for both the docking port and headphone jack for an extra \$20 but, after already spending \$120 for the Vapor Pro, you may not be thrilled at the prospect of forking out yet more cash. To get to these ports without buying the adapters requires a screwdriver to pull off the four screws that hold the case onto your phone. This proves to be a nuisance as you must always carry the tool they provide you with you (small and attaches to a key ring). The need to constantly remove the case to dock it proved to be the real stickler for me—and with a price tag of \$120 it's something you should really be aware of before buying.

Now, with all that said, this could be the perfect case for someone looking for an extremely sexy, durable case who isn't looking to dock or play the phone through speakers—a mobile businessman for example.

So, if you're looking for the ultimate in protection and looks, while sacrificing the flexibility when it comes to docking, definitely pickup the Vapor Pro.



The MonCarbone ([www.apexcase.com/search.php?search\\_query=moncarbone](http://www.apexcase.com/search.php?search_query=moncarbone)) pure carbon fiber case is a sweet snap-on case for anyone looking to add some sleek flair to their phone with only modest protection. The pure carbon fiber molding is flawless and is the perfect designer touch. A second model of the case features a high-strength magnet on the back, this allows you to stick your phone on metal surfaces and use it hands-free—maybe playing music while working out or just.



For anyone looking to spice their phone's looks up considerably and isn't too concerned about dropping it, you can pick up the

MonCarbone, either non-magnetized or magnetized, for \$50.



Reviews contributed by Jeremy Halligan

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Learn more at [www.charlescarr.com](http://www.charlescarr.com).

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## EdgeWord: Windows 8 Screen Cast for YouTube

“The difference between Windows 8 and being in Windows.”

by Jack Dunning



Is the Metro Interface in Windows 8 really Windows or merely a second interface laid over the real Windows.

As part of an article I'm working on, I put together a two-minute screen cast video for YouTube about using the Microsoft Windows Key in Windows 8 ([www.youtube.com/watch?v=u5C6b6urgH4](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u5C6b6urgH4)). Shortly after posting the clip, there appeared a comment pointing out the error of my ways. (I guess that I have trouble walking and chewing gum at the same time. Or, to put it more precisely, talking and operating a computer at the same time.) I was using the word "Windows" when I meant "Desktop" (or "Windows Desktop").

I made a number of mistakes in the video, the most obvious of which was continually calling the Windows 8 Desktop "Windows." At first I was planning to redo the video. (I had already recorded it about ten times. What would a few more attempts mean to me? I was slowly growing accustomed to the sound of my own voice, although I don't think I could ever have a future in voice-over work.) Then I asked myself why I was continually making a seemingly obvious error over and over again. It came to me. That's the way I see Windows.

I don't think of Windows 8 as Windows, but rather a version of Windows hidden under the Metro Start screen (see Figure 1). The Metro Start screen is not Windows, but a totally different interface for running tablet-like apps. It's a Windows feature added-on to replace the old Start Menu. When I loaded the Windows Desktop, I wasn't merely leaving the Metro screen, but I was actually entering Windows—at least in my mind. I think that it will be the same way for millions of other Windows users.



Figure 1. Windows 8 is merely Windows hidden underneath the new Metro Start screen.

I would guess that the first question that many new Windows 8 users will ask when confronted with the Metro screen is, "Where's Windows?" They won't be asking, "How do I get to the Desktop?" because the Desktop is merely a piece of Windows. They will need to

be told to click the Desktop tile—then they will find "Windows." A person could just as easily ask where's the Taskbar which is also an integral part of "being in Windows."

The Metro screen is not Windows. People know when they are "in Windows" and the Metro screen isn't it. (Maybe Metro could be called "Window"—since it only has one window, but that would be too confusing.) I think it should be accepted that "being in Windows" is just that—a state of being.

There is also a possibility that some tablet computers will get Windows 8 without "Windows." They would only include Metro and only run Metro apps—no Desktop, no Taskbar, no Windows. This could make a lot of sense for lower cost tablets. But it wouldn't make much sense to have Windows as an option in an operating systems named Windows 8.

Maybe I should change the title of my YouTube video to "How to Find Windows in Windows 8" or "How to Get In and Out of Windows in Windows 8." Microsoft should come up with another name for the total Windows 8 package, such as just plain Metro (with or without Windows). Then all we would need to learn is how to get in and out of Windows in Metro. That would be so much simpler.

\* \* \*

*For more on Windows 8 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](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B007RMCRH8/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20))! Also available at Apple iTunes ([itunes.apple.com/us/book/my-windows-8-consumer-preview/id517331413?mt=11](http://itunes.apple.com/us/book/my-windows-8-consumer-preview/id517331413?mt=11)), Barnes and Noble ([www.barnesandnoble.com/w/misunderstanding-windows-8-jack-dunning/1109995715?ean=2940014229463](http://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/misunderstanding-windows-8-jack-dunning/1109995715?ean=2940014229463)) and ComputerEdge E-Books ([www.computoredgebooks.com/Windows-Tips-and-Tricks\\_c4.htm?sourceCode=writer](http://www.computoredgebooks.com/Windows-Tips-and-Tricks_c4.htm?sourceCode=writer)).*

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](mailto: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](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B007RMCRH8/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20))! Also available at Barnes and Noble ([www.barnesandnoble.com/w/misunderstanding-windows-8-jack-dunning/1109995715?ean=2940014229463](http://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/misunderstanding-windows-8-jack-dunning/1109995715?ean=2940014229463)) and ComputerEdge E-Books ([www.computoredgebooks.com/Windows-Tips-and-Tricks\\_c4.htm?sourceCode=writer](http://www.computoredgebooks.com/Windows-Tips-and-Tricks_c4.htm?sourceCode=writer)).

Available exclusively from Amazon, *Windows 7 Secrets Four-in-One E-Book Bundle* ([www.amazon.com/gp/product/B00801M5GS/ref=as\\_li\\_ss\\_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B00801M5GS/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20)), *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)), *Sticking with Windows XP—or Not? Why You Should or Why You Should Not Upgrade to Windows 7* ([www.amazon.com/gp/product/B00758J4L6/ref=as\\_li\\_ss\\_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B00758J4L6/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20)), and *That Does Not Compute!* ([www.amazon.com/gp/product/B0052MMUX6/ref=as\\_li\\_ss\\_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B0052MMUX6/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20)), brilliantly drawn cartoons by Jim Whiting for really stupid gags by Jack about computers and the people who use them.

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**Editor's Letters: Tips and Thoughts from Readers**  
 "Computer and Internet tips, plus comments on the articles and columns." by ComputerEdge Staff

"Paint.NET," "Two Internet Connections while Traveling"

### **Paint.NET**

*[Regarding Jack Dunning's May 4 article, "My Favorite Free Windows Paint Program":]*

*Jack, thanks for the Paint.NET heads-up. I've already downloaded and used it.*

*Is there a way to get a single frame from a YouTube video into Paint.NET so I can work with it I don't want to make a video, I just want to capture a frame for use as a "photograph."*

*Thanks again,*

*-Peter, Los Angeles, CA*

What I usually do is pause the video at the appropriate point and do a screen capture (CTRL+Print Screen for the entire screen, ALT+Print Screen for the window). Then I use Irfanview ([www.irfanview.com/](http://www.irfanview.com/)) (my favorite free image manipulating program) to crop out the image and resize (if necessary). Copy and paste will do the rest.

-Jack

*Hello Jack,*

*Thanks very much for the article on Paint.NET. I hadn't heard of it.*

*I too am a dabbler and have Photoshop Elements ([www.amazon.com/gp/product/B005MMMMT6E/ref=as\\_li\\_ss\\_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B005MMMMT6E/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20)) for my image work. Have you ever tried Elements? It is the low priced version of Photoshop and also easy to use. You've got me curious about Paint.net though and I plan to give it a try.*

*Thanks again for the many great articles.*

*-Joe Piluso, San Diego, CA*

*Is it Mac compatible?*

*Oh! But I read every issue—you are great and so is Wally Wang!*

*-Norman R. Smith, La Jolla, CA.*

I don't think that Paint.NET is available for the Mac, but I see that PaintBrush ([paintbrush.sourceforge.net/](http://paintbrush.sourceforge.net/)) is popular and you can check out more options at CNET ([download.cnet.com/mac/illustration-software/3150-2191\\_4-0.html?tag=&filter=licenseName%3D%22Free%22%7C&filterName=licenseName%3DFree%7C&hpp=10&sort=downloadCount%20asc](http://download.cnet.com/mac/illustration-software/3150-2191_4-0.html?tag=&filter=licenseName%3D%22Free%22%7C&filterName=licenseName%3DFree%7C&hpp=10&sort=downloadCount%20asc)).

-Jack Dunning

### **Two Internet Connections while Traveling**

*[Regarding the May 11 Digital Dave column:]*

*I would take along a network switch, a power adaptor for the switch (??? VAC @ ?? Hz to ?? VDC. Also called a universal AC input DC power supply), and a couple of CAT5 cables. Plug the switch into the hotel CAT5 and*

*hotel power, then the computers into the switch using your own supplied cables.*

*-Chuck, Broomfield, CO*

*Actually, there is an inexpensive solution to the dilemma of two computers, but one Cat 5 connection. Several manufacturers make what are commonly called "Travel Routers ([www.amazon.com/gp/product/B002G1CLS0/ref=as\\_li\\_ss\\_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B002G1CLS0/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20))."* Hook one of these to the Cat 5 connection then connect (wirelessly) to the travel router. Both computers can share a connection this way, but to the electronics it looks like only one computer is hooked to the wired Internet connection.

*-Terry Quinn, Colorado Springs, CO*

*As I read the two comments above, I would like to ask:*

*With both of these, would both computers have to pay \$30 to log onto the network and have Internet connection? One reason I wrote was to find some way to log on to the hotel network, but only make one payment of \$30 or whatever the hotel charges.*

*As one can see, if we are in a hotel for three days, both my wife and I are on for her college courses and I am on for the Web site, that can amount to \$180. A little steep.*

*Thanks for the above thoughts. I would appreciate any others.*

*-Vic Garcia, Monument, Colorado*

Vic, I understood that you wanted only one payment. I guess I could have been clearer. The reason for using a travel router or turning your computer into a router (sharing your connection) is so the hotel service only sees (and charges) one device (IP). When you hook up to the hotel service your computer is assigned an IP address. You will be charged for each IP. When you use a router or your computer to share the connection only one IP is assigned. All other computers become part of an internal network shielded from the original connection. You should not be double charged since the hotel will not see the existence of the second computer—only the router or first computer.

As for using a network switch, it will not solve the problem of the double charge. You will still need a router setup to share the Internet by creating an internal network. Network switches are used for connecting computers in a network, but do not set up a separate network. They use the MAC address of individual devices to distinguish each, rather than IPs. Without a router, the hotel system will continue to see individual computers and assign an IP to each. There are some switches with router capabilities, but they should be called routers rather than switches.

*-Digital Dave*

*Dear Digital Dave:*

*This letter is in response to your reply to Mr Vic Garcia's question about him being able to have two notebooks accessing the Internet at same time somewhere in this world.*

*However, you may not have outlined all the possibilities for him in your very informative response thereof; but I thought perhaps you would be kind enough to allow yours truly to humbly present my thoughts as follows:*

*In my case—yours/his may vary, of course—I have had success by using a LAN cable to connect one notebook to a given Network, and thereby accessing the Internet, then attaching a USB Wi-Fi router/broadcaster to one of the USB ports of the first notebook; and thus accessing the Internet on the second notebook through its Wi-Fi. In other words, I would be tethering the second notebook to the first one, and accessing the Internet on the second notebook by using the USB Wi-Fi router/broadcaster accordingly thereof on the first notebook—if you know what I mean.*



*Please, have a look at the attached image [at left] of the USB Wi-Fi router/broadcaster that I have used thus far. I paid approximately USD10 for it. They are probably cheaper by now!*

*Furthermore, you would still need the password to access a given Hotel's network once the USB Wi-Fi router/broadcaster*



*has successfully begun to do its magic thereof—which means one has to give the USB Wi-Fi router/broadcaster enough time to introduce itself to the hardware/software, and to shake hands with all the parties involved. A few minutes has been enough in my case—yours/his will be different!*

*Anyhow, I have found my "system" mentioned above to be the simplest, cleanest and cheapest approach that I have been able to conceive thus far in order to connect many computers to a given Network.*

*What do you think?*

*In closing, I hope my input herein is somewhat helpful for Mr Vic Garcia to consider thereof.*

*I remain,*

*Peacefully,*

*-Tony Buckland, Limoges, France*

*Thanks Dave and everyone who contributed ideas. Now to try to set up the system.*

*-Vic Garcia, Monument, CO*

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*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](http://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](http://ComputerEdge E-Books) ([www.computoredgebooks.com/](http://www.computoredgebooks.com/)).*

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