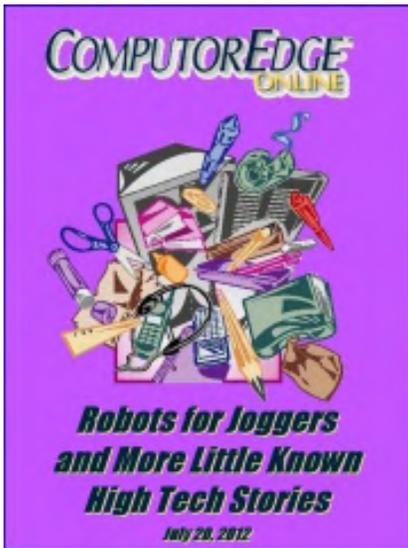# *ComputorEdge™ Online — 07/20/12*

This issue:
Robots for Joggers and More Little Known High Tech Stories

Little known stories, plus a new MP3 column, AutoHotkey continuing ed, Apple Mountain Lion, and an e-book giveaway.

Table of Contents:

[Without MP3s, Life Would Be an Error](#) by Matthew W. Beale

or, On the Evolution of Online Music Distribution

"Recent controversy aside for the moment, streaming subscription services are becoming more viable and, not coincidentally, the ubiquity of smartphones and social media are driving development and innovation."

DEPARTMENTS:

[EdgeWord: Free OpenOffice/LibreOffice E-Book, Plus Hear the Music](#) by Jack Dunning

Rob the ComputorTutor's E-Book is Now Available on Amazon and Matthew Beale Introduces a New Music C

Rob Spahitz's OpenOffice (LibreOffice) e-book is now available free from Amazon.com for two days, Friday and Saturday. Obsessed with MP3s, Matthew Beale begins a new journey with *ComputorEdge*.

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

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

"Also Consider Macro Express," "Cursoring on iPad"
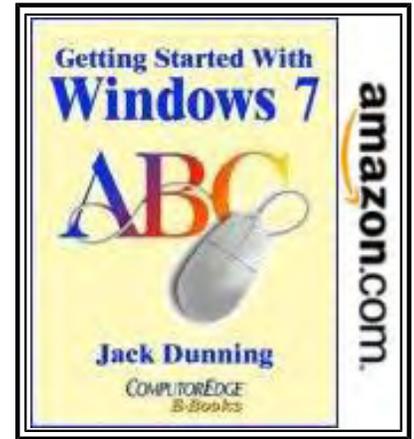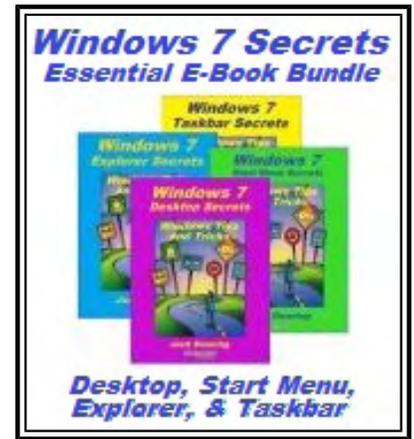
Digital Dave

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

Changing Drive Letters; Sending Large Files; Make a Password Reset Disk.

Dear Digital Dave,

I use an external hard drive to do regular backup. It normally comes up as the F: drive and I've used that as setup for the backup parameters. The problem is that after plugging in various SD cards and other USB devices, the drive letter has changed. I could change the backup setup, but that won't solve the problem if it happens again.

Thanks,

Gene
Chula Vista, CA

Dear Gene,

This type of drive letter change usually occurs when you forget to plug in the drive before you start-up the computer, then add other USB devices. Otherwise the drive assignment will generally remain the same. This is a common problem with laptop computers which require the external devices to be plugged in again every time you move the computer. You only need to forget once.

There are even more reasons for wanting to reassign drives back to their original letter. Although not as common as it used to be, some programs may use drive letters to find the files that they use or need. Or as I do, you may have favorites that automatically load from a thumb drive. When the drive letter is different, the favorites won't find the files. That means that there may always be occasions for reassigning drive letters.

While it is fairly easy to reassign drive letters in all versions of Windows (Windows XP, Windows Vista, Windows 7 and Windows 8 Pro), it's not always easy to find the place to do it. If you enter Computer Management (compmgmt.msc), Disk Management is one of the options (see Figure 1).
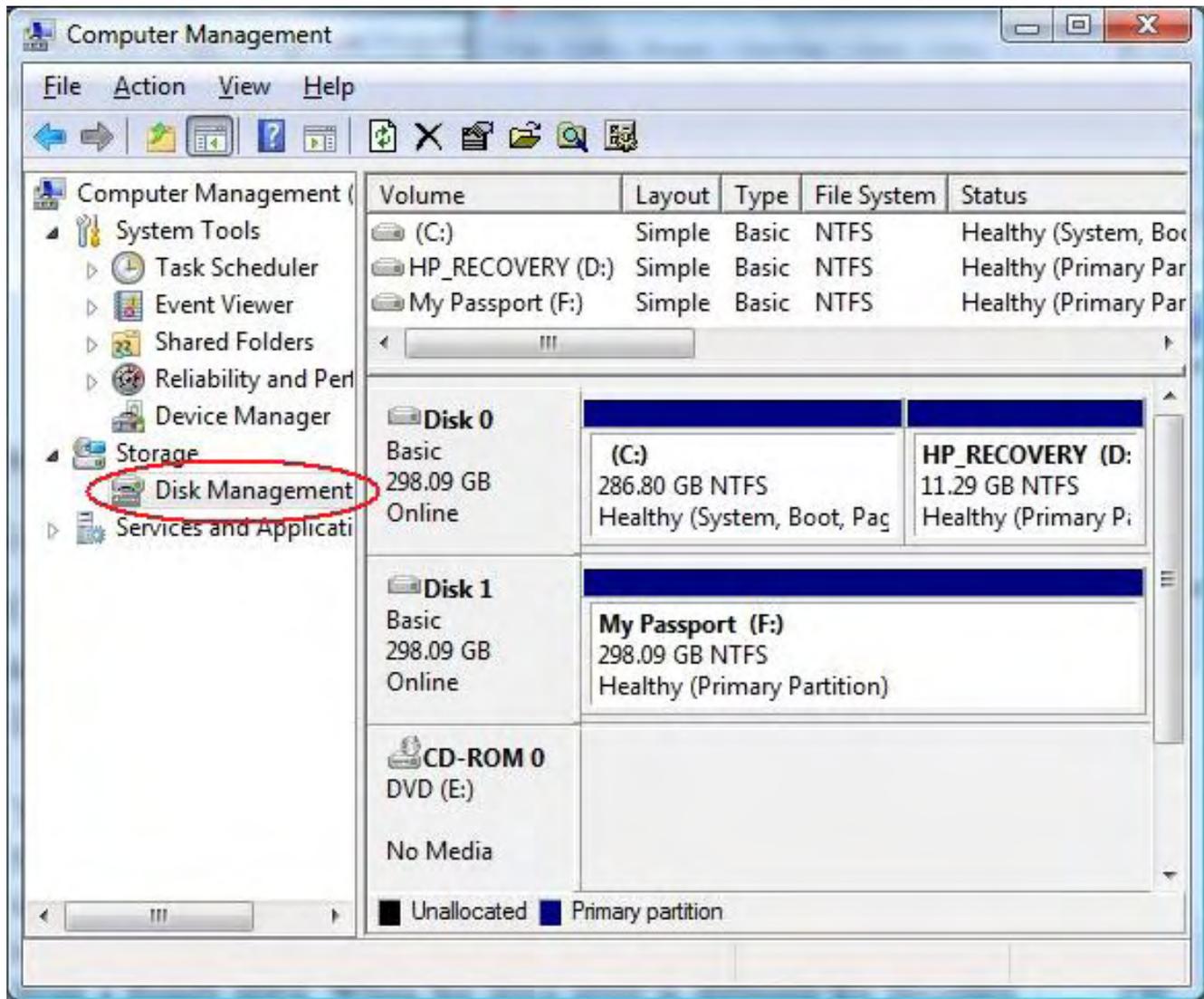
Figure 1. Computer Management in Windows Vista.

However, Computer Management is not as easily found on all versions of Windows. Therefore, you can Run the file compmgmt.msc to open the Computer Management window. If you want to open Disk Management directly, Run diskmgmt. msc for a window without all the other options (see Figure 2).
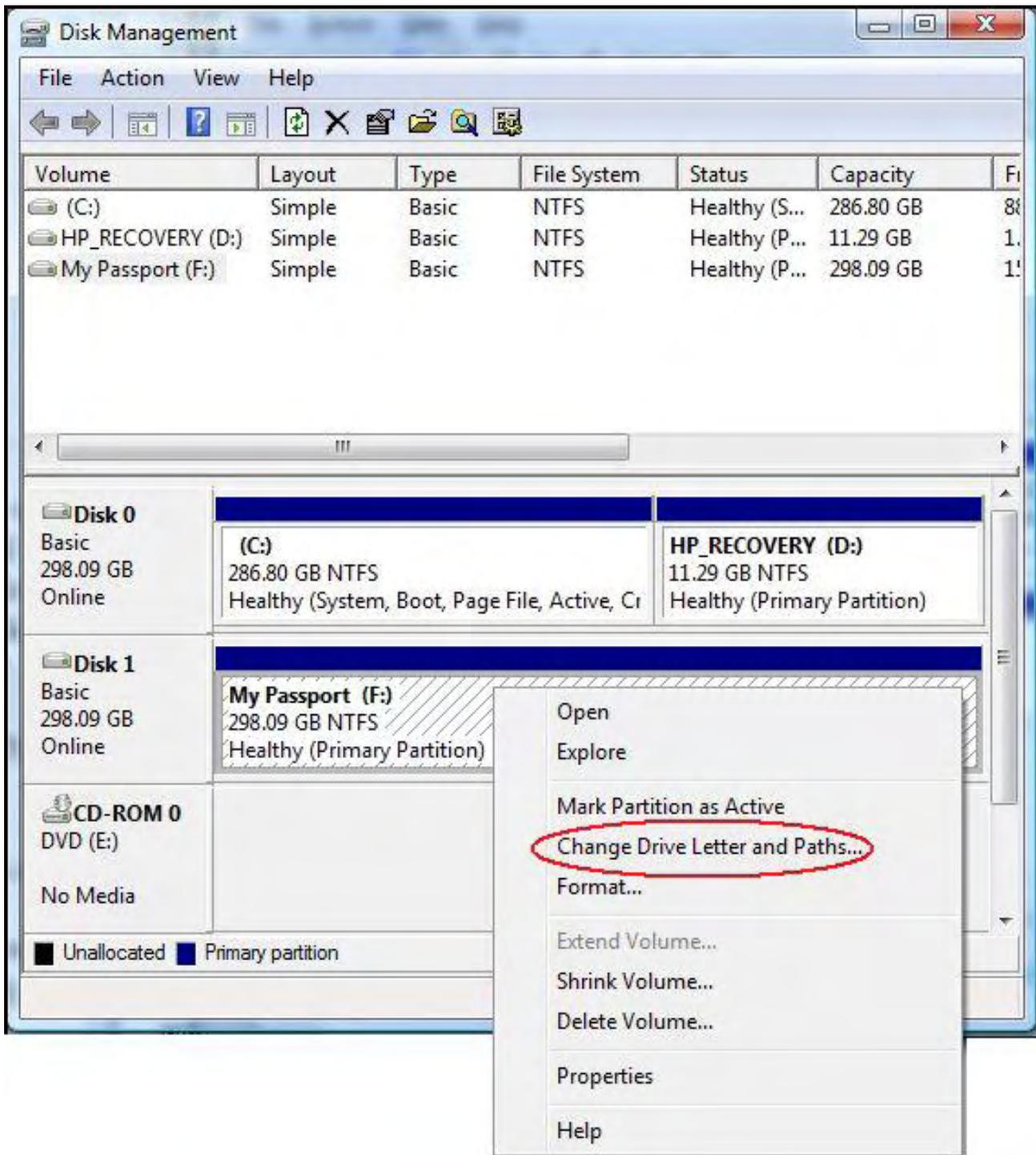
Figure 2. Disk Management in Windows Vista. Right-click on the drive to change the drive letter.

Once you have the Disk Management window open, you can change the drive letter by right-clicking on the target drive and selecting "Change Drive Letter and Paths..." Once you have reset the assignment, it should remain that way until you mess it up again by adding devices without the external drive plugged in.

Digital Dave

Dear Digital Dave,

My brothers think I am a computer genius. Most everything I know I learned here from you and ComputorEdge *magazine. They stumped me. How do we send e-book files to each other? Regular e-*

mail wont send such large files. We just want to send each other books. Any ideas ?

Thank You. I will be watching for an answer.

Morgan
Valley Center, CA (east San Diego County)

Dear Morgan,

This has been a problem for a long time since most e-mail programs limit the size of attachments. However, the Internet Cloud is now providing a solution in a number of different forms.

One of the most universal services I've found for sharing large (or a large number of) files is Dropbox (*www.dropbox. com*). (I was actually introduced to Dropbox when I answered a question from a reader who had a problem understanding how to get Dropbox working on multiple devices. Since then I've become a fan.) You can get two gigs of storage free and, best of all, it works across virtually all platforms (Windows, Macs, Linux, iPad, Smartphones, etc).

All you need to do is copy the file (e-book) to your Dropbox folder and it will be uploaded to the Cloud, then distributed to all associated Dropboxes on computers or devices in the same account. However, others do not need to be Dropbox users for you the share with them. Just create a link via the Dropbox site to the folder you want to share, then e-mail that link to your brothers. They can follow the links and download your e-books.

I'm sure that there are other such services in competition with Dropbox that other readers may want to endorse.

Digital Dave

Digital Dave's Tip

It time for you to create another Password Reset Disk for all of your Windows computers. Why? Because you have either lost the last one you made or don't remember where you put it so that you wouldn't lose it (same thing as losing it). It's also possible that the media you used years ago to create that reset disk has gone bad. So just to be on the safe side, make another one. This is probably something that you want to do on a regular basis.

There can only be one reset disk per computer, but you want to be sure you have one for the next time your three-year-old accidentally resets your administrative password. (Can't happen? How about your cat?) Then you will still be able to get into your computer.

All you need is some type of removable media. I would recommend a Secure Digital chip (*www.amazon.com/gp/ product/B007JRB0QA/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20*) or USB drive (*www.amazon.com/ gp/product/B0041Q38SA/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20*). It doesn't need to be very big, but they are so inexpensive that you are still likely to end up with two gigs. (It's time to replace the 3 1/2" floppy disk that you used the last time you made a password reset disk.) All you need to do is plug in the device and open User Accounts (see Figure 3).
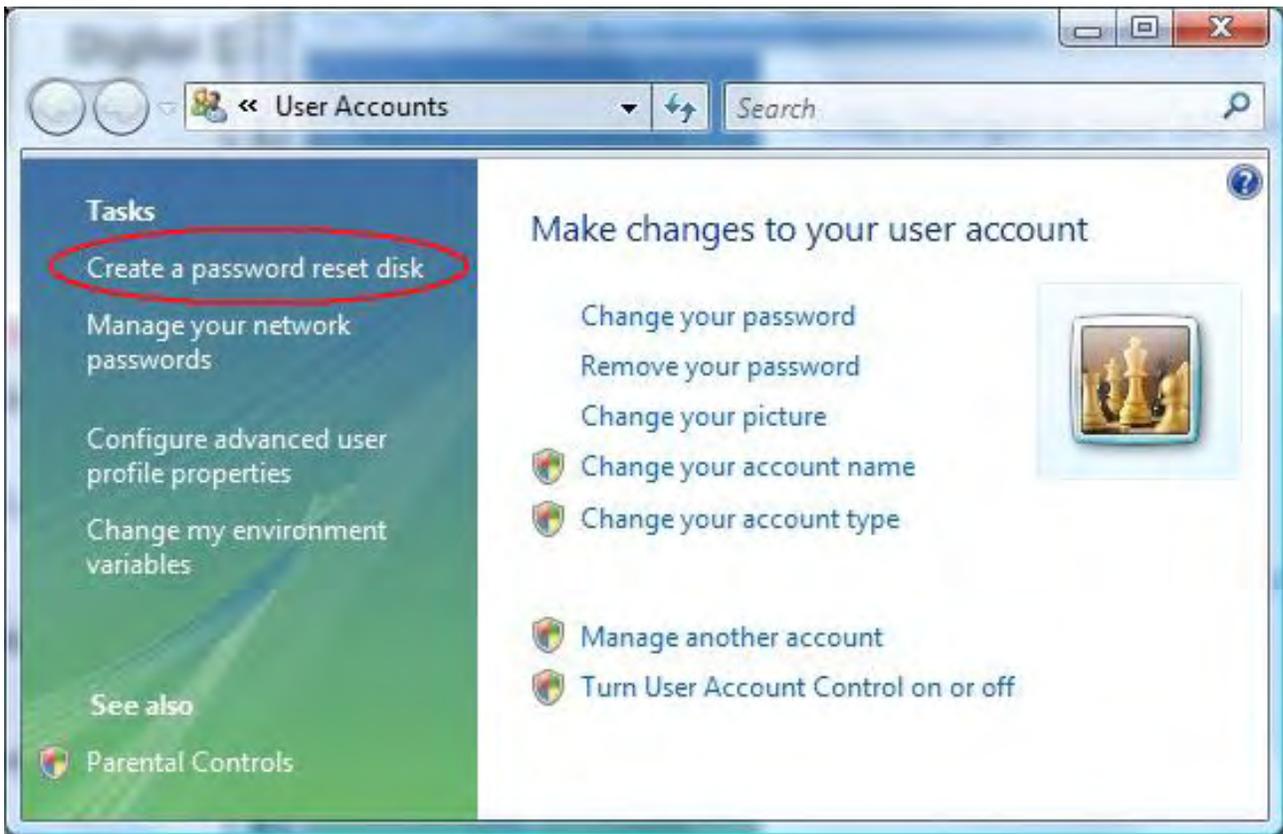
Figure 3. Open User Accounts in Windows to make a password reset disk.

In many versions of Windows the link to the wizard says, "Create a password reset disk," but in XP it's, "Prevent a forgotten password." After you make the new reset disk, label it clearly and put it somewhere you won't forget. You'll probably find your last reset disk there—dispose of the old one to prevent confusion. Do this for every Windows computer you own.

Digital Dave

Little Known High Tech Stories

"Robots for Joggers, Mobile Mapping, Measuring Innovative Mojo, Virtually Expensive Monsterberries" by Marilyn K. Martin

Wall Street Now Betting on Las Vegas; Texting Issues; Ditching Cable; Innovative Mojo; Gaming Updates; New and Unusual Apps; Digital Artists; 3D Modeling; Notable Start-Ups; Very Personal Robots; Mobile Maps; Fastest Supercomputer.

Technology from Wall Street Now Betting on Las Vegas

From second-in-command at the famed London financial institution, Cantor Fitzgerald, (one of the world's largest brokers of government bonds), Lee Amaitis now lives and works in Las Vegas (*seattletimes.nwsource.com/html/ businesstechnology/2018328174_gambling03.html*). As head of the new Cantor Entertainment Technology (*www. cantorgaming.com/*), Amaitis is betting on this off-shoot being "a leading innovator in mobile casino gaming, race and sports wagering." Parent company Cantor Fitzgerald is known for "playing tough," continuing to launch lawsuits for patent infringement and broker poaching. So it's probably perfectly suited for the rough-and-tumble world of Vegas sports betting.

Texting Issues: Pedestrian Bans, and Getting to the Truth

"Just a second while I

While cities and states are increasingly banning texting while driving and even biking, some communities are now banning texting while walking (*www.usatoday. com/news/nation/story/2012-05-15/texting- while-walking-illegal/54979480/1*). "Fort Lee, New Jersey, police have begun issuing $85 fines for "careless walking," and the Utah Transit Authority made "distracted walking around trains" punishable by a $50 fine." A December 2011 article (*www.usatoday.com/ news/nation/story/2011-12-08/pedestrian- casualties-increase/51748592/1*) highlighted the facts that pedestrian fatalities rose 4.2% in 2010, and pedestrians injured in motor vehicle crashes has risen by 19%. Some communities are trying warnings, like the large sidewalk stickers saying "LOOK UP!" near crosswalks in Wilmington, Delaware, and Newark, New

"Just a second while I finish this text message."

Jersey.

Results of a new study (*lifehacker.com/5911271/if-you-want-the-truth-out-of-someone-send-them-a-text-messagetheyre-less-likely-to-lie-via-sms*) released in May 2012, has found that people are more likely to tell the truth in text messages than phone calls. The study interviewed 600 iPhone users and asked them sensitive questions (such as their drinking and exercise habits) over both their iPhones and through texting. The researchers found that the interviewees were more likely to tell the truth by texting. The researchers chalked up the results to the "less immediate nature" of texting, versus the real-time pressure on smartphone users to answer immediately.

Ditching Cable—But Still Finding Your Favorite Shows

I've already written about how more and more people are ditching their cable and satellite TV providers, and gone searching for cheap or free entertainment through the Internet. But can you still watch your favorite cable/satellite TV shows? A Web site called Cancel Cable (*www.cancelcable.com/db/showfinder.php*) offers a free ShowFinder tool that displays which TV shows can be watched or ordered online. A small $7.99/month subscription fee can get you Netflix movies and TV episodes.

Hulu (*www.hulu.com/tv*) has free TV shows, and is now offering a $7.99/month Unlimited Instant Streaming service. You can also check out sites like WorldTVPC (*www.worldtvpc.com/*) and FreeWatchTV (*www.freewatchtv.info/contactus.html*), which also link to TV show Web sites for free episodes, as well as streaming shows and movies from all over the world.

Innovative Mojo—Patents and Collaborations

One way to discern a region's "intellectual capital" or "subculture of innovation," is by looking at the number of patents (*seattletimes.nwsource.com/html/pacificnw/2018272260_pacificpinnovators03.html*) issued each year. Patents issued to innovators in and around San Francisco grew by 26% between 2006-2010. But patents issued in the Seattle area grew by an astounding 79% in the same time frame. A business-plan competition at the University of Washington in 2007, brought together inquisitive and enthusiastic graduate students, and medical device company Impel Neuropharma (*www.impelneuropharma.com/*) was born. "Thinkers and tinkerers" also need a receptive and encouraging environment, from which to meet and bounce around ideas. Even Seattle's Gates Foundation encourages local innovators through its Grand Challenges Exploration grants, "for which applicants must make a convincing pitch in just two short pages."

Chicago too is trying to build a "stronger innovation ecosystem (*www.suntimes.com/business/13023461-452/a-stronger-innovation-ecosystem.html*)." With the final details worked out in June 2012, Chicago's "Northwestern-Argonne Institute for Science and Engineering is combining their supercomputing and nanoscale materials' prowess with Northwestern University's engineering, chemistry and materials science". Both entities are contributing undisclosed amounts of seed money to create the new institute, with the goal of "Bringing together the best people to work on science problems, and then tackling the biggest issues we face," according to Pete Beckman, the supercomputing expert and director of the Exascale Technology and Computing Institute at Argonne. Also helping will be Argonne's soon-to-open "green" supercomputer, Mira, which will be "the world's first petascale machine capable of churning through 5 billion computer hours of scientific data in a year."

Gaming Updates—Smartglass, New Nintendo Hand-Held and Monsterberries

Microsoft, aiming to turn their Xbox into a "nexus of household entertainment," unveiled new software (*www.siliconvalley.com/ci_20779141/xbox-microsoft-ability-communicate-mobile-devices-including-android-apple*) at the Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3) in Los Angeles in early June 2012. MS Xbox (*www.amazon.com/gp/product/B003O6JKLC/ref=as_li_ss_tl?*

ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=B003O6JKLC&linkCode=as2&tag=comput0b9-20), which already streams Netflix and ESPN among other channels, also unveiled a Smartglass application that links the Xbox console to "mobile devices powered by Windows or Apple's iOS and Google's Android." Microsoft also announced at E3 that Internet Explorer's browser (including voice recognition) will also be available to Xbox owners, to help Microsoft compete with other "smart" or Web-enabled TVs, such as those made by Samsung and others.

According to Brier Dudley at the *Seattle Times*, Nintendo is launching a new hardware system (*seattletimes.nwsource.com/html/ technologybrierdudleysblog/2018500921_nintendo_launching_jumbo_3ds. html*) this year. A larger version of its hand-held 3DS (*www.amazon.com/gp/ product/B002I096AA/ref=as_li_ss_tl?*

ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=B002I096AA&linkCode=as2&tag=comput0b9-20)—called 3DS XL—goes on sale August 19th for $200. Nintendo claims that the new hand-held will have "90% larger screens," with "a slider-control to adjust or turn-off the 3D." The bigger screens will also let users enjoy other entertainment applications, like Nintendo Video and Netflix.

Kids playing video games and making in-app purchases can surprise parents with big charges (*seattletimes.nwsource. com/html/businesstechnology/2018143849_ptteenstweens05.html*). The kids may think they are buying Monsterberries to feed their Monsters in Monster Pet Shop with points earned from playing the game. But the real-money bill may be larger than the weekly food budget, and leave parents reeling. The advice to parents is to sign up for e-mail notifications for every purchase made on any online account, or disable in-app purchases. Apple (which is already being sued by California parents over these alleged bait apps) has their iOS devices' controls under the Settings Icon. On Android, parents can open the Google Play Store from the Menu, then go to Settings and set up a PIN number required for purchases. Kindle has parental controls under Settings.

New and Unusual Apps—From a Power Company to Medical Monitoring

Power provider, ComEd, announced in early June 2012, that they were launching a new mobile app for smartphones (*tdworld.com/customer_service/comed-outage-map-0512/*). The new app (*www.comed.com/customer-service/mobile/Pages/mobile-application.aspx*) will allow customers to do everything from visit their account, to report or check on power outages.

A self-recording medical app (*seattletimes.nwsource.com/html/ technologybrierdudleysblog/2018484264_youd_think_the_last_thing.html*) has just been released by the Seattle App Lab (*www.seattleapplab.com/*), working with the University of Washington Department of Urology. The app is designed to help men affected by Peytonie's Disease, or a severe deformity of the penis. The app is for affected men to take photos over time to monitor any changes. Due to the considerable privacy issues, the app won't be used to transmit images, so the phone and app's recordings must be presented to the physician in person. The free app will be submitted to Apple for distribution through iTunes by August 2012, and can be downloaded whether or not a man is a UW urology patient.

Digital Art and Artists

A mid-June 2012 article in the *New York Times* illuminated the problem artists have (*www.nytimes.com/2012/06/18/arts/design/web-site-gives-artists-fame-in-times-square.html?nl=todaysheadlines&emc=edit_th_20120618*) getting

noticed without the backing of a major museum or gallery. New Web sites like ArtistsWanted.org (*www.artistswanted.org/site/*), among others, hope to turn a profit by connecting an artistic talent to a buying audience. Investors are already pouring millions into these for-artists start-ups, as founders and users alike talk of open-sourcing art to democratize culture. They also highlight new artistic questions in the Internet Age, about who are artists and who are just hobbyists. Especially since everyone with a smartphone can now be a photographer, and anyone with a Facebook page can have a massive following. "As technology has made it easier for people to create things," says William Etundi Jr, founder and CEO of Artists Wanted, "More people become creators. The idea is to inspire creative people to make works they wouldn't otherwise create, to give them an audience, to give them connection, to give them deadlines within competitions."

Last year, New York's Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) opened a Materials Lab for kids (*www.nytimes.com/2012/06/24/ nyregion/moma-art-lab-offers-a-digital-art-space-for-children.html?ref=technology*) to "stop looking at art and start making some." The small Lab in MoMA is popular and noisy, as children try out various mediums to make art. Now the museum has introduced a $5 iPad app called MoMA Art Lab (*www.moma.org/explore/mobile/artlabapp*) for kids everywhere to make art at home. The app uses digital "drawing exercises to highlight the styles of modern artists in the museum's collection." Little artists can save their artwork to the iPad's camera roll, share it or even send it to MoMA. While the reviewer found the app's educational content thin, there is a blank-canvas option for kids to move on to freely create after going through the structured activities.

3D Modeling—Software to Screens
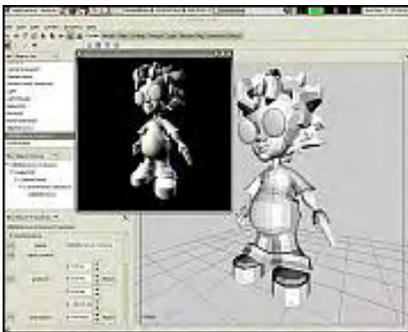
3D modeling is exploding right now, and Hongkiat has tallied the "25 Free 3D Modeling Apps You Should Not Miss (*www.hongkiat.com/blog/25-free-3d-modelling-applications-you-should-not-miss/*)." CNET also offers their own list of 3D Modeling Software (*download.cnet.com/windows/3d-modeling-software/*). Their list is lengthy (over 800) and not all are free, but if you are searching for a specific, niche type of 3D software, you can probably find it on this list.

Autodesk (*usa.autodesk.com/*), a company that does 3D design, has announced their free 123D app (*tech2.in.com/news/ios/autodesk-123d-catch-for-ipad-turns-your-photos-into-3d-models/306802*) for iPad. Users upload their photos to Autodesk's cloud service, where they are converted into 3D models.

But how great can all this 3D modeling be, if you don't have an equally great 3D screen to view it on? An article in *bit-tech* last May 2011 explained that gamers were initially the main market for 3D screens (*www.bit-tech.net/hardware/ monitors/2011/05/26/investigating-3d-screens/1*), but most gamers viewed them as a too expensive, non-priority. Most industry experts now say that the best 3D screen technology is going into expensive TV sets.

But all isn't rosy for big screen 3D either. In April 2012, famed director Martin Scorsese admitted that he wanted to film all his future films in 3D, but that the darkness issue (*www.guardian.co.uk/film/2012/apr/26/scorsese-film-3d-dark-screens*) of 3D movie screens had to be addressed first. "If the movie screens are too dark and you can't see (what's going on), why should the movie-goers want to come back and watch another 3D film?" he asked. Some say that the new laser technology will solve the too dark 3D movie screen issue, among other improvements, and should start to be installed in movie theaters by the end of 2012.

Notable Start-Ups—Human Translations to Mid-East Unrest

Using computers to translate text is not as easy as it sounds. Computers don't know a river bank from a savings bank, and can't understand the subtleties of satire, humor, irony, wordplay or cultural context. So a new start-up called Duolingo (*duolingo.com/*) advertises "Learn a language for free while helping to translate the Web (*/bits.blogs.nytimes. com/2012/06/19/a-computer-scientist-banks-on-human-superiority-over-machines/?ref=technology*)."

Computer Scientist Luis von Ahn "proposes to put armies of language learners to work translating text on the Web." Limited for now to just English, Spanish, French and German, individuals and companies can submit their content for translation, which is currently free—but probably not for long.

According to the *New York Times* in June 2012, "Young Arab techies are anxious to start local businesses that tap into a rapidly growing market for Internet and mobile telecommunications' applications." Local investors are even ready to provide up to $500 Million (*www.nytimes.com/2012/06/07/world/middleeast/unrest-encourages-start-up-funding-for-the-middle-east.html?partner=rss&emc=rss*) as seed money for these new businesses in Arab Countries. The important role social media played in the Arab Spring political movement has helped to encourage the growth of online start-ups across the Arabic-speaking MidEast. Creating start-ups opens up new jobs, and can contribute less violently to social change "just as revolutionary as marching in demonstrations."

Very Personal Robots

Artist Dan Chen from the Rhode Island School of Design has created a controversial new mini-robot to comfort the dying (*theweek.com/article/index/229018/the-last-moment-robot-that-comforts-patients-dying-alone*), when there are no family or friends around. Called the Last Moment Robot, it caresses the dying person's forearm, and delivers an "I am here to help you and guide you through your last moment on Earth" speech. The clunky device raises questions about the need for human intimacy in an increasingly technological world, and it is most gratifying to some that the mini-robot is *not* planned for commercial use.

A small, new helicopter (*theweek.com/article/index/228873/joggobot-the-robotic-jogging-companion*) may help joggers be more willing to stick with their healthy routine. The small helicopter-drone, called Joggobot (*exertiongameslab.org/projects/joggobot*) from Exertion Games Lab, flies in front of the jogger. The jogger can control the heli-bot from a smartphone, which can be set at either "companion mode" or "coach mode."

Is the world ready for robot prostitutes (*/theweek.com/article/index/227374/why-the-world-might-need-robotic-prostitutes*)? A research paper published in the journal *Future*s in April 2012 considers a mechanized sex industry preferable to human prostitutes.'Commercial sex robots would be disease free, could significantly reduce the global sex trafficking of women and children, and will probably be a reality by 2050.

Comparing Mobile Maps—as Apple Enters the Fray

Beyond GPS, people with smartphones now rely on mobile maps to navigate their world, whether for business or pleasure. A recent, first-hand review of comparing mobile mapping (*seattletimes.nwsource.com/html/businesstechnology/2018335966_ptmapping02.html*) services declared Google the winner, with AOL's MapQuest close behind. Google's click-and-drag map feature that doesn't require reloading, blew past the competition when it was introduced in 2005. The reviewer also liked Google's "suggestions" as you type in each letter of your destination. Bing and Yahoo mobile maps wait until you finish typing—and then offer suggestions in other states or even countries. Both Google and MapQuest also offer the "free phone app with turn-by-turn directions spoken aloud," which is helpful if driving by yourself.

So Google has reigned supreme in mobile mapping, with maps pre-loaded on every iPhone and Android phone. But now Apple is going to join the battle (*www.nytimes.com/2012/06/18/technology/apples-goes-head-to-head-with-google-over-mobile-maps.html?_r=1&nl=todaysheadlines&emc=edit_th_20120618*). According to the *New York Times* in mid June 2012, Apple has announced that by this Fall, iPhones will only carry Apple's mobile maps. Beyond the brand competition, most people just want to know if Apple's mobile maps will be up to Google's quality, since they have spent millions of dollars and man-hours in mapping projects like Street View. Apple just released its "software development kits" to developers, who can hopefully design the mapping apps Apple—and the public—wants.

U.S. Once Again Has Fastest Supercomputer

If you follow the global ranking of supercomputers, you'll be happy to know that the National Nuclear Security Administration's new Sequoia supercomputer puts the U.S. back on top with the world's fastest supercomputer (*www.engadget. com/2012/06/18/nnsa-sequoia-supercomputer-takes-worlds-fastest-title/*). Located at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, Sequoia is a sustained sixteen petaflop rig that is now the fastest supercomputer on the planet. With 1.6 million cores and 1.6 petabytes of memory spread across 96 racks, Sequoia's computational power will keep the U.S. nuclear stockpile stable without having to resort to nuclear testing.

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

ComputorEdge E-Books 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*) for iPad, NOOK, etc., and MOBI format (*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*) for iPad, NOOK, etc., and MOBI format (*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*) for iPad, NOOK, etc., and MOBI format (*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*) for iPad, NOOK, etc., and MOBI format (*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*).
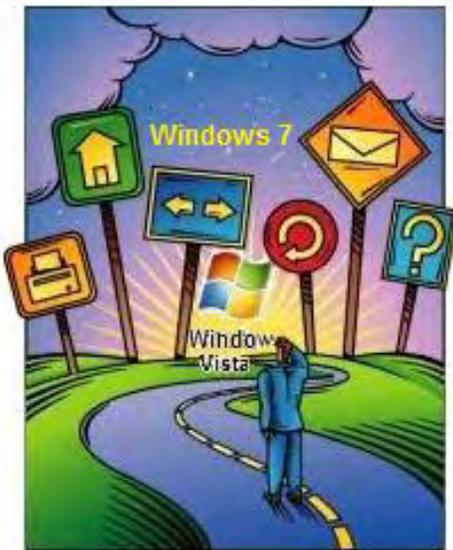
Windows Tips and Tricks: AutoHotkey Techniques
"Changing the Case of Text from Upper to Lower and Back Again" by Jack Dunning

After introducing the free AutoHotkey utility program last week, Jack adds a few more techniques which can be used immediately by anyone with a Windows computer.

Last week I introduced AutoHotkey as "possibly the best free Windows utility ever!" While that beginning-level article gives an overview of AutoHotkey and demonstrates how to write a simple script, it's not enough to expose the true power of the software. Over the next few weeks I will offer more insights (and scripts) for learning how to use AutoHotkey with Windows. Each week we will build on the previous.

Changing the Case or How to Capitalize

There are some people who only write in all capital letters. This is especially annoying since many programs and text editing fields don't offer an easy way to change the case of the text from upper to lower. (Plus, on the Web all capital letters is considered SHOUTING!) What if you had an easy way to select text in capitals and instantly convert it to lower case? Not only that, what if it worked in almost all of your word processors, text editors, e-mail program, and Web editing fields? It's relatively simple in AutoHotkey.

The first step as outlined last week is to create an AutoHotkey file (AHK) by right-clicking on the Windows Desktop and selecting New => AutoHotkey Script. (AutoHotkey needs to be installed on the computer per last week's article.) Give the new file a name such as ChangeCase.ahk to help you remember its purpose. Then right-click on the icon for the new file on the Desktop and select Edit Script. The new file will open with the default text editor, probably Notepad. You will see the standard embedded lines mentioned in the previous article. Next cut and paste the following code into the file:

```
^u::                                ; CTRL+U converts text to upper
 Clipboard:= ""
 Send, ^c ;copies selected text
 ClipWait
 StringUpper Clipboard, Clipboard
 Send %Clipboard%
return
^l::                                ; CTRL+L convert text to lower
 Clipboard:= ""
 Send, ^c ;copies selected text
 ClipWait
 StringLower Clipboard, Clipboard
 Send %Clipboard%
return
+^k::                               ; SHIFT+CTRL+K converts text to capitalized
```

```
 Clipboard:= ""
 Send, ^c ;copies selected text
 ClipWait
 StringUpper Clipboard, Clipboard, T
 Send %Clipboard%
return
```
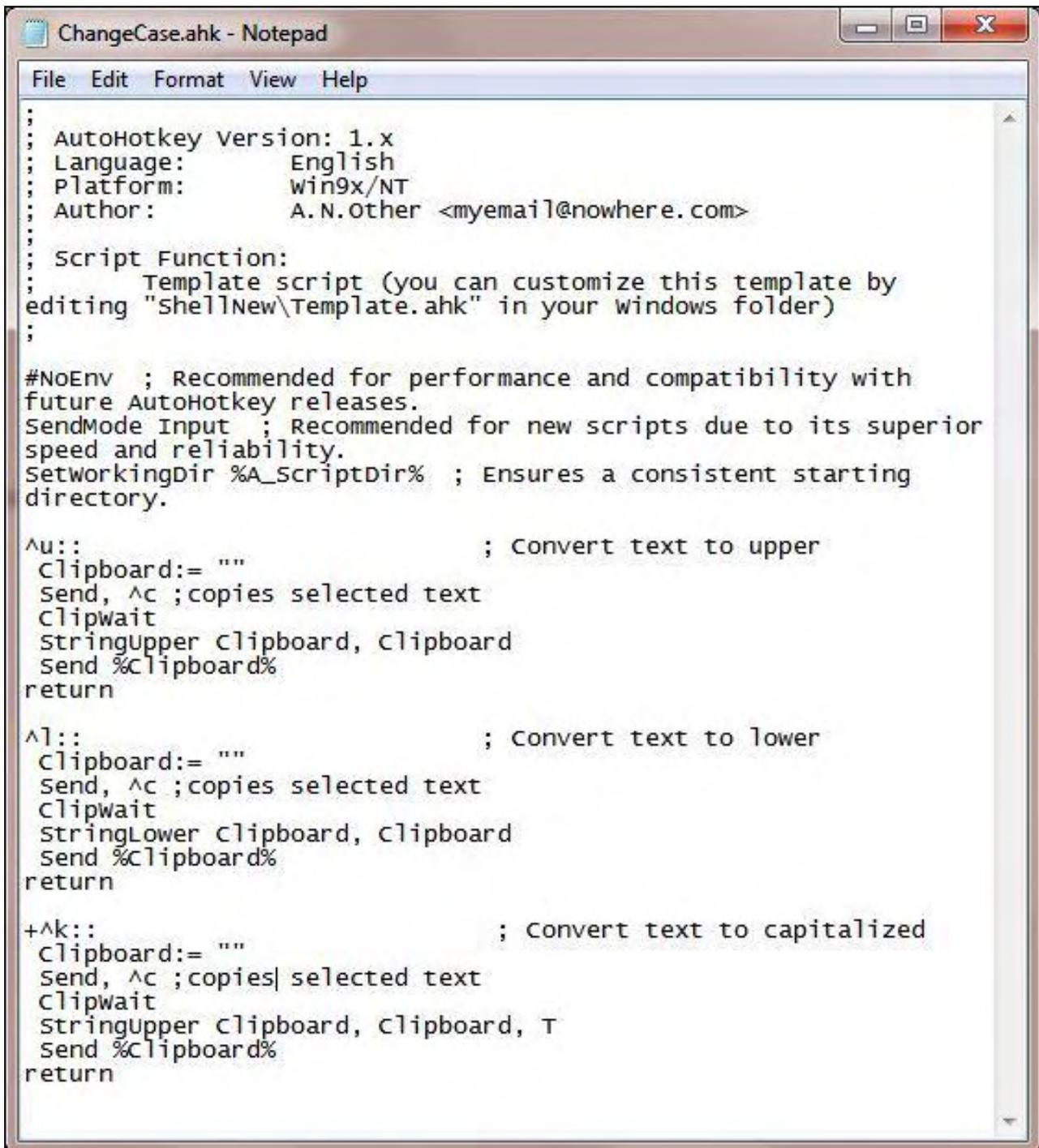
The file should look like Figure 1.

Figure 1. The AutoHotkey script with routines for changing the case of text.

Save the file, then right-click on its Windows Desktop icon and select Run Script. Now after you select text when editing by holding down the left mouse button and highlighting the desired portion, you can replace the text with all caps, CTRL+U, all lowercase, CTRL+L, or capitalize the first letter in each word, SHIFT+CTRL+K.

How It Works

All three of these routines are almost identical in how they work. They depend upon using the built-in Windows Clipboard which is routinely accessed with Windows hotkeys CTRL+X (cut), CTRL+C (copy), and CTRL+V (paste). In AutoHotkey the variable which represents the Clipboard is simply the word "Clipboard." Whenever dealing with the contents of the Windows Clipboard the variable "Clipboard" is used as shown in the code above.

The first line of each routine is the hotkey being assigned to the routine (^u, ^l, and +^k) followed by the double colon (::) which designates the start of the routine. The ^ (symbol above the number "6" key—SHIFT+6) represent the CTRL key; the + represents the SHIFT key, and the following letters each represents their respective key. After the script is activated, these key combinations will invoke the featured change (CTRL +U change to uppercase, CTRL+L change to lowercase, SHIFT +CTRL+K change to initial caps).

The second line of each routine is:

```
Clipboard:= ""
```

This command sets the value of the Clipboard to "" which represents nothing since there is no text between the quotes. This is a technique used for clearing the Clipboard before making any changes. While this may not be necessary in most cases, it does start the routine with a clean slate. If you wanted to keep the old value of the Clipboard, you could save it to a new variable such as "OldClipboard" (OldClipboard:= Clipboard), then restore it at the end of the routine (Clipboard:= OldClipboard).

Alternatively, the second line could be:

```
Clipboard=
```

Notice that there is no colon nor quotes in the expression. Using that same syntax for saving the old Clipboard would be:

```
OldClipboard= %Clipboard%
```

When the = sign is used without the colon, the % signs are necessary to store the contents of the variable. Otherwise only the name of the variable would be stored. While it is not necessary for most people to spend too much time on this difference (as long as the script works), there are advanced techniques possible when you can create and store both variable names and their values separately. For more information on these differences in "=" and ":=" see Variables and Expressions (*www. autohotkey.com/docs/Variables.htm*)—the sign and variable content format need to match properly. If a script is not working properly, it could be due to the use of the wrong syntax (programming vocabulary).

The third line of code copies the selected text to the Clipboard:

```
Send, ^c ;copies selected text
```

The AutoHotkey Send command is used to execute the CTRL+C combination (^c). This is the same Windows command

(CTRL+C) for copying selections to the Clipboard. (Note that any text after a semicolon (;) is a comment and not part of the executable script.)

The fourth line is added merely to ensure that the routine waits until the copy command is completed:

```
 ClipWait
```

Otherwise, with long selection, it is possible that partial results would be returned since the routine would continue processing regardless of whether the copying to the clipboard was completed.

The fifth line is where the three routines vary:

```
StringUpper Clipboard, Clipboard
```

StringUpper and StringLower are commands built into AutoHotkey (*www.autohotkey.com/docs/commands.htm*). A great deal of the power of AutoHotkey comes from these commands. While it is worthwhile to peruse the list of commands, it may be daunting for the novice script writer. In the early days of learning how to write scripts, it is often best to only dig into those commands that you need for your first projects. Otherwise you may soon find yourself overwhelmed with terminology. It will come much easier later in the process. In this case, StringUpper changes text to uppercase letters while StringLower changes text to lowercase. These commands (functions) use the following formats:

```
StringLower, OutputVar, InputVar [, T]
StringUpper, OutputVar, InputVar [, T]
```

OutputVar is the result delivered back (returned) and InputVar is the value acted upon by the command. If you add the T parameter (Title) as is shown in the third routine, the first letter of each word will be capitalized. In these routines the Clipboard variable is used for both the input and output, meaning the change will occur within the Windows Clipboard.

The sixth line of the routines uses the Send command to paste the new Clipboard contents back into the text:

```
Send %Clipboard%
```

The percent signs (%) surrounding the Clipboard variable says to return the contents of the Clipboard.

The last line is the "return" command which indicates the end of the routine.

If you regularly need to make repetitive changes to text, then using this Windows Clipboard technique can be a powerful tool in AutoHotkey. Another related command (function) which could be used in this type of routine is StringReplace which would replace any selected text with a new value.

Next time we'll look at converting AutoHotkey to executable files (EXE) which will run on other Windows computers without first installing AutoHotkey. This is handy for distributing your scripts for use on other Windows computers or carrying them around on a thumb drive.

Jack is the publisher of *ComputorEdge* Magazine. He's been with the magazine since first issue on May 16, 1983. Back then, it was called *The Byte Buyer*. His Web site is *www.computoredge.com*. He can be reached at

ceeditor@computoredge.com. Jack is now in the process of updating and compiling his hundreds of articles and columns into e-books. Currently available:

Currently only at Amazon.com, *Jack's Favorite Free Windows Programs: What They Are, What They Do, and How to Get Started! (*www.amazon.com/gp/product/B008BLUZRS/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20*).*

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*)!* Also available at Barnes and Noble (*www.barnesandnoble.com/w/misunderstanding-windows-8-jack-dunning/1109995715?ean=2940014229463*) and ComputorEdge E-Books (*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*),*
*Getting Started with Windows 7: An Introduction, Orientation, and How-to for Using Windows 7 (*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*),*
and *That Does Not Compute! (*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.

Wally Wang's Apple Farm
"The Coming of Mountain Lion" by Wally Wang

The Coming of Mountain Lion; Creating E-Books with HTML5; Choice in Watching the Olympics; The Future of the Internet; Future Apple Products; The Future is in the Cloud; Free Space on Your Hard Disk.

The new OS X 10.8, dubbed Mountain Lion, will be arriving by the end of July. However, before you get too excited, first check if your Macintosh can run Mountain Lion by viewing Apple's list of supported machines (*www.apple.com/osx/ specs/*). If you have a fairly new Macintosh, you'll be able to run Mountain Lion, but if your Macintosh is more than a few generations old, you may not be able to run Mountain Lion.

Like most operating system upgrades, you may want to wait a few weeks or months before upgrading. Not only will this give Apple time to work out the inevitable bugs that come with any new operating system version, but it will also give other software vendors a chance to update their own software to run on Mountain Lion. After all, it won't do you any good to run a new operating system if your favorite software won't work with it.

To see which programs will and will not work with Mountain Lion, visit the Roaring apps site (*roaringapps.com/*). By browsing through this list of compatible Mountain Lion programs, you can see if you should wait to upgrade or upgrade right away.

Figure 1. The RoaringApps site lets you see if your favorite software will run on Mountain Lion.

If you choose to upgrade, Mountain Lion will cost you $19.99 through the Mac App Store. Just make sure you back up your hard disk through Time Machine or a similar backup program so if anything happens, you can restore your Macintosh back to its original working condition. For maximum convenience, just wait to buy a new Macintosh as soon as Apple announces Mountain Lion.

Then again, don't feel compelled to upgrade to the latest version of any software unless it offers something you need. By sticking with your current operating system and software, you can continue getting years of useful work out of any computer. Just look at how many years Windows XP users have stuck with their operating system while cheerfully ignoring Vista and Windows 7.

Creating E-Books with HTML5

One way to create an e-book is through Apple's free iBooks Author program. While iBooks Author is easy to use, it's not always as versatile as you might expect. For those who bump into its limitations, you can just create your e-book as an iPhone or iPad app. For many people, creating an app through Objective-C programming can be difficult, so there's now a third choice: use HTML5.

Baker E-Book Framework (*bakerframework.com/*) is an open source library that lets you design your e-book using HTML5 and then compile it into an app using Apple's Xcode compiler. This gives you the simplicity of designing an e-book using any HTML editor, testing it on your browser, and then converting it into a real iPhone/iPad app that you can sell or give away through Apple's App Store.

Figure 2. Baker E-Book Framework lets you create e-books out of ordinary Web pages.

Numerous people have already used Baker e-book framework to create and sell e-books for the iPhone and iPad, so you can download these creations to see what's possible for your own project. Best of all, if you create your e-book as HTML files, you can easily post those same files on your Web site to display your entire e-book or just a portion so anyone with a browser can sample your creation. In case you find Baker e-book framework lacking, just use the equally free Laker framework (*www. lakercompendium.com/*), which is based on Baker e-book framework.

With so many options available for creating e-books, there's no excuse for not developing your e-book and selling or giving it away today. Beyond e-books, you can also use Baker or Laker e-book framework to create simple apps without learning Objective-C. Anything you can create as a Web page can now be turned into an app, so let your imagination run wild and see

what you can create.

Choice in Watching the Olympics

In the old days, you could only watch the Olympics on TV and even then you were at the mercy of whatever the TV network wanted to show you. If you happened to be a fan of an obscure event, chances were good the TV network would never show it.

To avoid this problem, download NBC's two apps that will provide real-time coverage of every Olympic event: NBC Olympics (*click.linksynergy.com/fs-bin/stat? id=15PJQz44Qcc&offerid=146261&type=3&subid=0&tmpid=1826&RD_PARM1=http%253A%252F% 252Fitunes.apple.com%252Fus%252Fapp%252Fnbc-olympics%252Fid542497845%253Fmt% 253D8%2526uo%253D4%2526partnerId%253D30*) and NBC Olympics Live Extras (*click.linksynergy.com/fs-bin/stat?id=15PJQz44Qcc&offerid=146261&type=3&subid=0&tmpid=1826&RD_PARM1=http%253A% 252F%252Fitunes.apple.com%252Fus%252Fapp%252Fnbc-olympics-live-extra%252Fid542511686% 253Fmt%253D8%2526uo%253D4%2526partnerId%253D30*). Both apps promise real-time, streaming video coverage of every event with the ability to switch camera views so you can actually have a better view of the event than someone who's actually watching it live in the stadium.
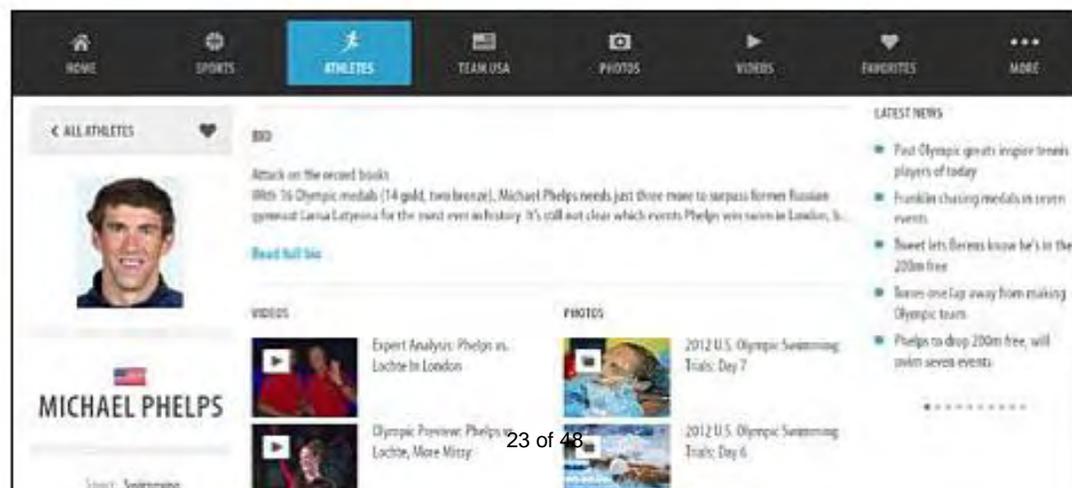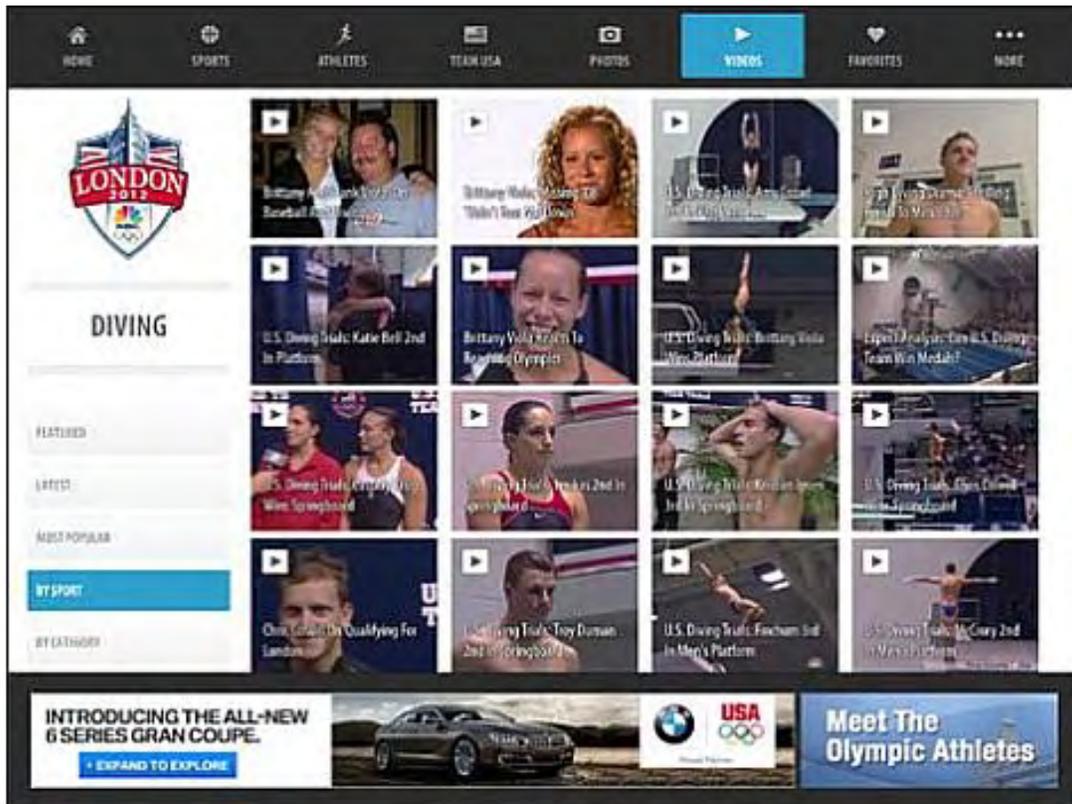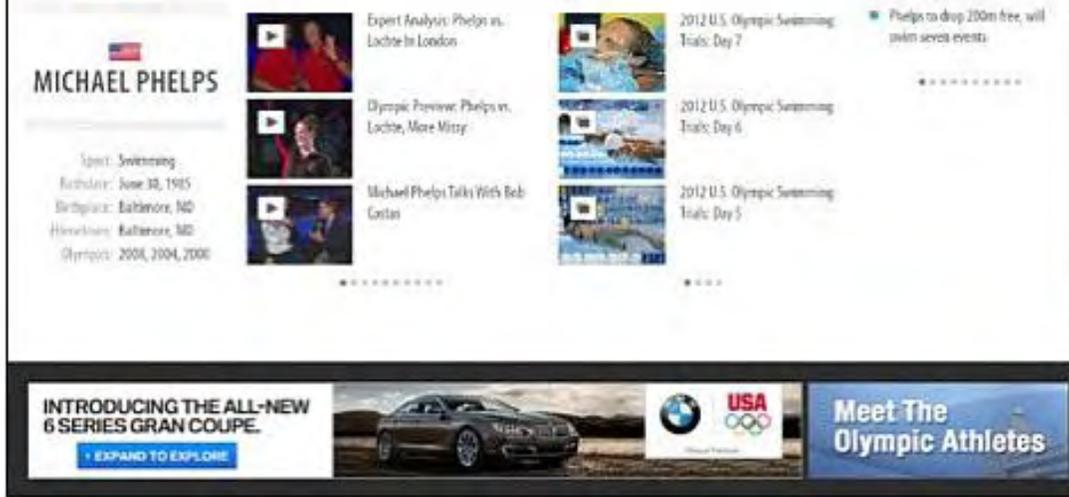
Figure 3. NBC Olympics app lets you watch the Olympic events in real-time, streaming video.

By choosing what you want to watch from the angle you like best, these two apps promise to give you the best view of the Olympics, provided the streaming video servers don't get overwhelmed by multiple users trying to access it simultaneously. If the NBC Olympics apps work as designed, you can expect all future sporting events to offer similar real-time, multiple camera angle options. Now you can watch your favorite Olympic event or follow your favorite country instead of being at the mercy of whatever the TV networks feel like showing you at the time. If you don't have a smartphone or tablet, then you'll just have to watch the Olympics on TV the old fashion way.

The Future of the Internet

In the old days, every business needed an e-mail address. Then every business needed a Web site. Soon every business needed a social media presence on MySpace, Facebook, or Twitter. Now the latest trend is that every business will need an app.

By providing an app, businesses can direct users directly to their content without the distraction of browsing on the Internet and wandering off to follow something more interesting at the moment. Check your local city newspaper's Web site and there's a good chance they'll have their own app. For movie buffs, you can visit the Internet Movie Database (IMDB) at their regular Web site, or download their IMDB app (*click.linksynergy.com/fs-bin/stat? id=15PJQz44Qcc&offerid=146261&type=3&subid=0&tmpid=1826&RD_PARM1=http%253A%252F% 252Fitunes.apple.com%252Fus%252Fapp%252Fimdb-movies-tv%252Fid342792525%253Fmt% 253D8%2526uo%253D4%2526partnerId%253D30*), which has been downloaded over 20 million times by iOS and Android users.
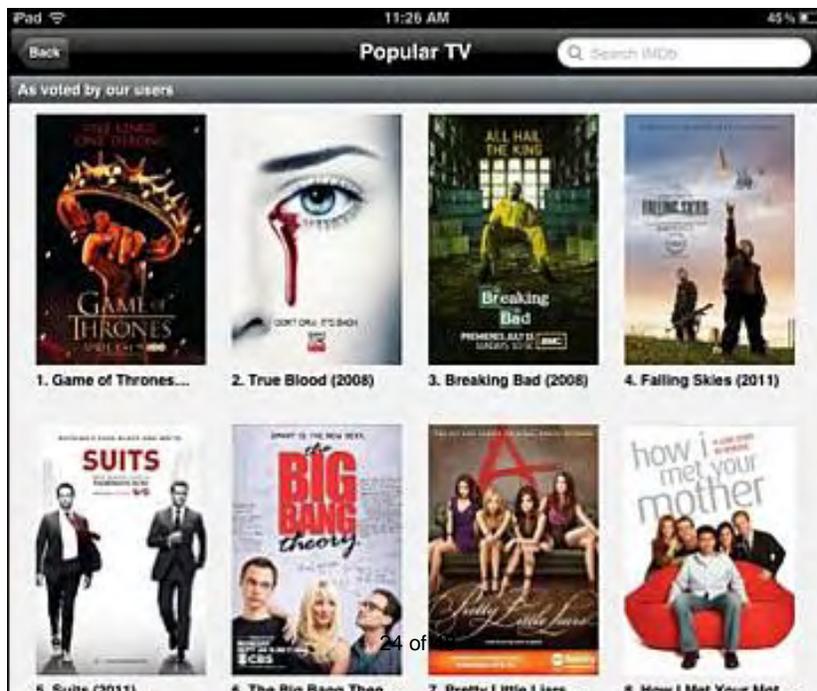
Figure 4. The IMDB app lets you access content without using a browser.

There's a growing trend for businesses to offer their own app that mostly duplicates everything you can access through a browser. The difference is that an app lets a business provide a convenient way for people to access their content, and if people want to access specific content through an app, they're more likely to be more loyal customers. The existence of an app alone singles out the best customers who are willing to download, install and use the app. With a dedicated app, a business can target the most motivated customers and turn that customer base into sales.

If you have a business, a Web site alone isn't enough any more. While small businesses can still get by without their own

app, the day will likely come when apps will be as important as a Web site and e-mail address. The future of the Internet may depend less on ordinary browsing and more on dedicated apps to visit your favorite sites. Browsers will never go away like telephones have never gone away with the introduction of the Internet and e-mail addresses, but the future of the Internet is heading towards apps on mobile devices. Given the choice between typing in a name or Web address in a browser, or simply tapping on an app, guess which option will be more convenient for mobile users?

Future Apple Products

Two of the most anticipated (and rumored) products from Apple include the iPad mini and a revamped AppleTV. The idea behind the iPad mini is to offer a smaller tablet that can still run all the same apps for the iPad, but on a smaller screen. The rationale for the iPad mini (*www.smh.com.au/digital-life/tablets/apple-eyes-prize-with-ipad-mini-20120717-226xd.html*) is that its smaller size and lower price could attract more customers, especially since 7-inch tablets seem popular with Amazon's Kindle Fire and other e-reader devices. Although Steve Jobs famously rallied against a 7-inch tablet, he also criticized the possibility of video on an iPod, so many of his rants often hid Apple's true intentions.

If Apple releases an iPad mini or simply a larger iPod touch, they could snuff out the growing 7-inch tablet market before it has a chance to grow. Why bother with a rival 7-inch tablet that lacks the apps that an iPad offers? By capturing the low-end tablet market, an iPad mini could drive rival tablet makers to cut prices and quality even further in an attempt to compete, which would effectively lock up the majority of the tablet market for Apple.

Shrinking the iPad to a smaller size and lower price would cannibalize sales of the larger iPad, but since Apple gets a cut of all revenue generated from selling apps, they'll simply expand their market. The likelihood of an iPad mini appearing seems relatively high.

AppleTV is the second most talked about product. While Apple currently offers a simple version of their AppleTV device that connects to an existing TV, rumors insist that Apple will eventually create an entire TV set of their own. While the physical nature of an AppleTV might be a bit puzzling, the rationale behind it lies in eliminating TV as a fixed time schedule dictated by the networks with flexible viewing of shows at the user's convenience.

Imagine how clumsy using a word processor would be if it were only available between the hours of six and nine o'clock every morning. That's the way current television programming works, although digital video recorders have made network schedules less important. Yet how much more liberating would television watching be if you could not only pay for the shows you wanted (rather than paying for bundles of channels you may not care about) and view them on your schedule. That's the future of television that AppleTV targets. It's less about hardware and more about licensing rights, which explains why the fate of AppleTV may be out of Apple's hands.

While everyone's waiting for the iPad mini or AppleTV to arrive, we can all wait for the more certain arrival of the next iPhone this autumn. What the next iPhone may offer may still be a mystery, but you can be certain it will have to offer something big that will give people a reason to get it. The last iPhone model introduced Siri and the model before that debuted the Retina display. Whatever Apple introduces next, it will likely redefine people's expectations once more.

The Future is in the Cloud

Microsoft recently released a preview of their latest Microsoft Office suite that only runs on Windows 7 or Windows 8. Beyond the addition of some new features, the two main changes involve touch computing and storage on Microsoft's SkyDrive cloud service, which works similar to Apple's iCloud.

The idea behind both iCloud and SkyDrive is that you can create files and store them in the cloud. Then you can access those files from another device at the exact spot where you last edited them. So if you're editing a twenty page document on a computer and stop on page ten, you can jump to a tablet or smartphone, open that same file, and see your last changes on page ten. The main idea is to give you access to your documents anywhere you go, provided, of course, that you use that company's products.

Once people get locked into Microsoft Office, they'll be more likely to stay with Microsoft products. Likewise, once people start using Apple's iWork with iCloud, they'll be more likely to stick with Apple products. The key is seeing how far both Apple and Microsoft will go towards supporting rival platforms.

If you want to take advantage of SkyDrive to share Microsoft Office documents between multiple devices, you can do so using the latest Microsoft Office on a desktop and laptop computer. Theoretically, you should also be able to share documents on Microsoft Office running on a Windows 8 tablet or smartphone. If you're using an iPhone, iPad, or Android device, will it be just as easy to share Microsoft Office documents?

On the other side, you can easily share files between a Macintosh, iPhone and iPad. However if you prefer a Windows PC or an Android device, will Apple make it easy to share files with those other devices?

Both Microsoft and Apple have a dilemma. If they make it easy to share files with other devices, they risk extra costs supporting rival devices and risk losing sales to those rival devices. If they keep their cloud services closed to their own devices, they could encourage sales of their products, but also risk alienating other customers who don't want to rely on a single vendor's product line.

How this delicate balancing act plays out should be interesting to watch. Microsoft dominates the computer market, but needs to get Windows 7 and Windows 8 on more computers to take advantage of the latest version of Microsoft Office. Apple dominates the tablet market along with a good chunk of the smartphone market, but still trails in the computer market. Google's Android dominates the smartphone market, but lags behind in both the computer and tablet market.

Whoever dominates the cloud computing market will eventually dominate the technology market so this battle is critical for all companies. Microsoft needs Windows 8 to succeed on tablets and smartphones, Apple needs the Macintosh to grab more market share, Google needs Android to grab more tablet market share. The only sure losers in this scenario are those companies who don't have a strong presence in the computer, smartphone, or tablet market such as Research in Motion.

With workers willing to bring their own devices to work, both Apple and Google will likely grow stronger. To compete, Microsoft needs people to get excited about their Windows 8 operating system running on PCs, smartphones and tablets. With all the changes in Windows 8 that will inevitably alienate a percentage of current Windows users, Microsoft is facing their biggest challenge since the introduction of the Internet.

*   *   *

With files and programs getting bigger, you might start running out of space on your hard disk. One solution is to buy an external hard disk but a simpler solution is just to start wiping out files you don't need.

To check to see how much space you may have left on your hard disk, click the Finder icon on the Dock and from the Finder menu bar, click Go => Computer to display an icon that represents your main hard disk.

Right-click on the hard disk icon and when a menu appears, choose Get Info. In the Info window, you can see the remaining free space on your hard disk.
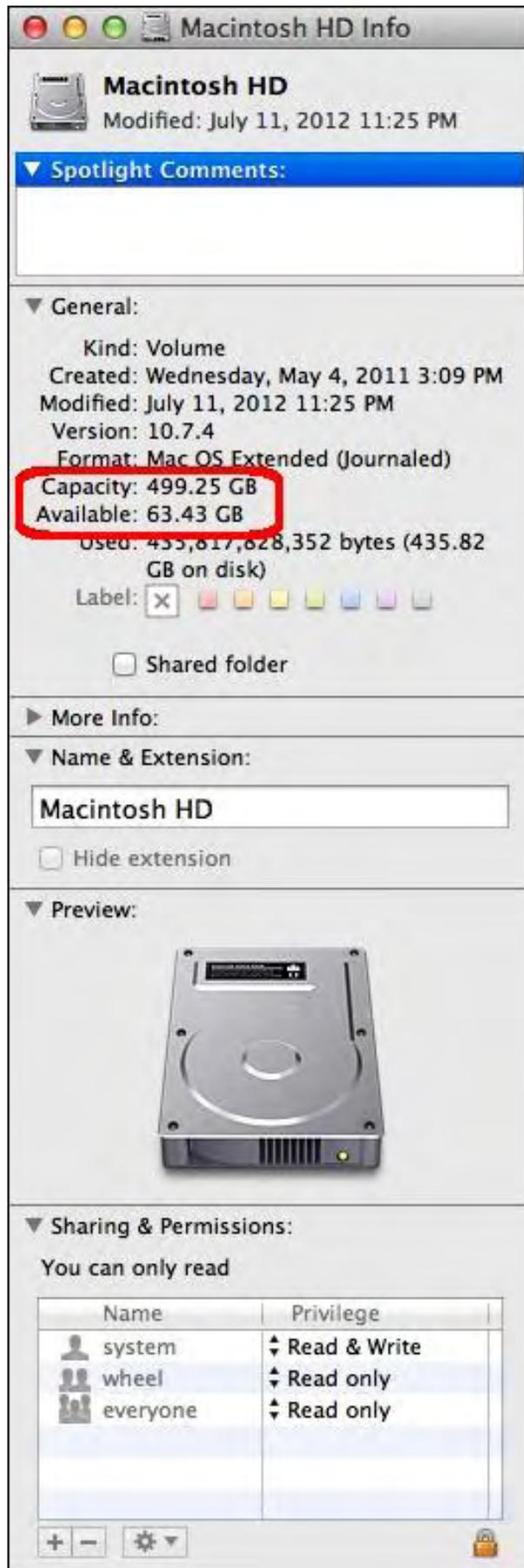
Figure 5. The Info window shows the remaining space on a hard disk.

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

Wally is responsible for the following books:

*My New Mac, Lion Edition (*www.amazon.com/gp/product/1593273908/ref=as_li_tf_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=217145&creative=399373&creativeASIN=1593273908*)*

*My New iPad 2 (*www.amazon.com/gp/product/159327386X/ref=as_li_tf_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=217145&creative=399373&creativeASIN=159327386X*)*

*Steal This Computer Book (*www.amazon.com/gp/product/1593271050?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=1593271050*)*

*Microsoft Office 2010 For Dummies (*www.amazon.com/gp/product/0470489987?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=0470489987*)*

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

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

*Breaking Into Acting for Dummies with Larry Garrison (*www.amazon.com/gp/product/0764554468?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=0764554468*)*

*Strategic Entrepreneurism with Jon and Gerald Fisher (*www.amazon.com/gp/product/1590791894?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=159079189*)*

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

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

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

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

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

*The 15-Minute Movie Method (*www.amazon.com/gp/product/B004TMD9K8/ref=as_li_tf_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=B004TMD9K8*)*

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

Worldwide News & Product Reviews

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

Smart and Getting Smarter; How Always Flush the Ones We Love; Your Zombie Survival Guide—Part 1.

Smart and Getting Smarter

Daniel Burrus, a technology forecaster, business strategist, and founder and CEO of Burrus Research, a research and consulting firm that monitors global advancements in technology driven trends, writes in this week:

Most people agree that our technology is getting smarter, but most don't realize just how smart. Sure, they know their smartphones have GPS capability and their smart appliances are capable of improving efficiency, but that's just the tip of the iceberg. In reality, smart technology is around us every day. From surveillance cameras to clothing, today's smart technology is watching us, helping us, and getting smarter because of us.

Smart Video

As an example, let's look at in-store surveillance cameras. In the past, the video quality of those cameras was poor. Most of us can remember watching the nightly news and seeing blurry footage of a robbery and not being able to make anything out.

Today we have two things taking place that alleviate that scenario. 1) We have software that can clean up the video footage so we can see the detail. 2) We have inexpensive cameras that can replace those old, bigger cameras, and that can give us full 1080P HD video resolution at a low-cost.

Now you might be thinking, "So, what? That just means the police will be able to better identify who was robbing a store."

Actually, it's a much bigger deal than that. With today's smart technology, companies are tapping into these video streams and, using high-speed computer analytics, are doing shopping analyses within the store, based on the security camera footage. In other words, security cameras are able to expose a wealth of sales and marketing data.

We can see customer movements, what products they stop in front of, and how often they stop in front of them. We can see if that display at the end of the counter is working or not. At the end of each evening, we can get a report on all the traffic patterns in the store without having to watch all the video because it's all automated. The report can show where delays are taking place in the store, where the lines are building up, where people are spending most of the time in the store, where people are not going in the store, what products are the hottest, and which aisles are being browsed and for how long.

And that's just information from inside the store! When you take the camera outside the store, its uses are even more amazing.

Smart Audio

Increasingly, we're using cameras outside to analyze traffic patterns and to look at high crime areas. The nation that is most advanced in this practice is Great Britain. They have cameras all over their cities and towns capturing the video of 24/7 life and using high-speed analytics to analyze traffic flows, people movement, crime, etc.

But it doesn't stop at video footage; they're also capturing the audio. That means after a video has been recorded, they can do an audio zoom and listen to the conversation that is happening at an intersection, for example.

You might think, "Who is going to listen to all of those conversations?" The answer: No one. Since it's digital audio, you can search the audio content for keywords and pull up the conversations that are specific to the phrases you're searching for.

This is already happening in Great Britain. Now the question is, will it only be used there, or will other countries, including our own, start using this smart technology in the future? The answer is, of course we will be using it here and in other countries as well. So while seeing is believing, seeing and hearing something is undeniable.

Smart Technology You Can Wear

Realize that smart technology isn't always about something you hold in your hand or a device you intentionally manipulate. Now, even the clothes you wear can have a technological component.

For example, there already is a product called "The Helmet Hero." With it, you can take a helmet, such as a bicycle, ski, or motorcycle helmet, and mount a small high-definition camera on it that can record as HD video or capture still photography. Thanks to an SD card, you can record up to 2½ hours on a single charge.

Additionally, since one of the hard trends of technology is the ability to make things smaller and smaller, you can create high-quality video or still camera pictures from a very small lens that's clipped to or embedded in your sunglasses, and then upload it directly to Facebook or other social media platforms. So, for example, if you're walking on the beach or hiking a mountain, you can have that feed go directly to your video Facebook page.

While this might sound great, the newest wearable technology goes even beyond all this. For example, Adidas has created an "intelligent football boot" that can upload performance data, including your maximum speed, minimum speed, the number of sprints you took, the distance you took for each sprint, the distance you went at a high-intensity level, etc. In other words, they've created a true training device that keeps track of your entire training regimen. They started with football, but it will surely spread to other sports.

Going a little further, the US military has developed smart underwear. It looks just like normal underwear, but it has micro sensors that can monitor respiration, heart rate, body posture, and skin temperature. Now we can really see what's happening with troops in the field. And since all the data can be transmitted wirelessly, we can monitor the well-being of all of the people in real-time. If someone has a problem or has been wounded, we already have body monitors on them in their underwear.

Now let's take that to the next level. If this technology works for the military, couldn't intelligent underwear work for professional sports too? Of course. It can track hydration levels, heart rate, and other things to help coaches determine when to pull someone from the field.

Going even further, smart underwear has a medical application too. People who are having a medical problem and who need to be monitored over time can wear the smart underwear and the data can be instantly streamed to the doctor's office for analysis. Currently you have to wear expensive monitors and report to the doctor's office to get the information from the monitor read. It's both costly and time-consuming. But with the smart underwear, it's quick and much less expensive.

The Next Generation of Smart

Here's the really exciting part of all this: You may remember the old Star Trek television series, where they wore a little piece of jewelry on their shirt that they would touch to communicate with people in other parts of the ship or those who beamed

down to a foreboding planet. If you think about Apple's Siri, you'll see that we're actually beyond that piece of science fiction right now. With Siri, we have an ultra-intelligent electronic agent with us at all times. Currently, we need the smartphone to use Siri, but soon we won't.

Imagine wearing a piece of jewelry that you touch to activate. You might say, "Read my voicemails," and then respond to them. You can do that now with Siri, so why not just make it a piece of jewelry rather than phone? We don't need to have that whole big phone with a touch screen to do this. Imagine walking around hands-free and running your day: "What's my next appointment? Write an e-mail. Read my messages. Where is the nearest Starbucks?"

Yes, that's what we're going to see soon rather than needing a full smartphone. When you have no screen and use voice input only, you could, in reality, have a device small enough to be a Star Trek-like communicator, only better.

Smartness at Your Fingertips

As our processing power, bandwidth and storage continue to expand, we will definitely see more and more smart technologies in our life. From cameras to clothes, the wealth of information that can be gleaned, stored, and transmitted will grow exponentially, giving us access to new and usable knowledge that can enhance both business and life. The key question for you is: How can you and your company work smarter with these and other types of smart technologies?

Daniel Burrus is also the author of six books, including the *New York Times* and *Wall Street Journal* bestselling *Flash Foresight: How To See the Invisible* and *Do the Impossible*. More at www.burrus.com (*www.burrus. com*).

How We Always Flush the Ones We Love

T-Mobile reveals how smartphones are (mis)treated and pitches a plan you might find useful if, for example, you spend an inordinate amount of time doing your business while...er, doing your business:

Did you know that two in five Americans have had their smartphone lost, stolen or damaged? Or that 59% of Americans would reach into a toilet bowl to retrieve their submerged device? Smartphones have become an essential part of our daily lives. Some people would even argue that they are just as necessary as brushing your teeth or eating breakfast. But how do we feel about our devices and what lengths would we go to protect this critical item?

HOW DO OUR PHONES GET DAMAGED AND LOST?

2 IN 5 smartphone owners have actually had their smartphone lost, stolen or damaged.

AMONG THOSE WHO HAVE DAMAGED THEIR PHONE...

37% scratched the screen

29% spilled a drink on it

29% dropped it down a flight of stairs

20% dropped it in the toilet

SMARTPHONE USERS...
73% insure their cars
35% insure their smartphones

AMONG PARENTS...
1 IN 4 have had their devices damaged by a child.

54% lost their phone on public transportation (bus, taxi, subway, etc.)

23% have accidentally left their device in a bar/nightclub

According to a recent survey by Kelton Research, 87% of Americans would be at a loss without their smartphones by their sides, but while 73% insure their cars, only 35% protect their valued mobile sidekick. Yes, it's a dangerous world out there for smartphones but anxiety relief exists in the form of insurance protection—which shouldn't be reserved for those attached to a contract.

SEPARATION ANXIETY

55%

55% of women would rather leave home without makeup

29%

29% of smartphone users would leave the house without cash

CENSORED

28%

28% would leave the house without a credit card

TWO IN FIVE AMERICANS would begin to miss their smartphone in less than an hour without it.

11% of Americans with smartphones would rather leave home without their pants than their phone

MEN THINK THEY COULD GO ABOUT 2 HOURS LONGER THAN WOMEN before they'd begin missing their phone.

7 VS. 9

To address the issue, T-Mobile has announced the availability of a new mobile device protection program for the company's Monthly4G customers in the United States. The program, called Monthly4G Handset Protection (MHP), includes coverage for accidental damage, water damage, loss, theft, and mechanical or electrical malfunction after the manufacturer's warranty has expired.

T-Mobile customers can enroll in the program for $7 per month when they purchase a new T-Mobile phone with an accompanying Monthly4G rate plan, like the T-Mobile Monthly4G No Annual Contract $50/mo. unlimited plan which offers unlimited talk, text and Web with no overage charges, and the first 100MB of data at up to 4G speeds.

To learn more, see a plan brochure (*t-mo.co/MowJt2*).

Your Zombie Survival Guide—Part 1

The zombie apocalypse is drawing near at a fast pace, we're halfway to December and rapidly approaching outbreak that could cause the entire world as we know it to crumble.

When the zombies arrive, though, are you going to be prepared? We put together a survival guide so, when the dead come knocking on your door, you can send them right back to where they came from. Part 1 is devoted to training which, thankfully, several popular video games have selflessly provided as a service to humanity.

In an upcoming issue of *ComputorEdge*, we'll be looking at peripherals like controllers, keyboards and mice, to improve your chances of survival.

Scenario time; you're on the run from a group of zombies and you get cornered. Luckily you have your favorite weapon slung on your hip. But in order to achieve maximum zombie killing potential, you're going to need some training prior to throwing some lead. Here's a few training programs that proved to be most effective during our tests:

The Walking Dead

Scenario 1: When it comes down to searching an abandoned house for supplies, do you take the front door or enter through the window? Crucial decisions will be faced like this on a daily basis, and preparedness is key.

This game is based on The Walking Dead TV series, and during our test, the group that used this as their training method had the highest survival rate. The game follows Lee Everett, and his encounters with survivors as they push through life threatening battles and decisions. Along the way, you'll have to decide whether to hunt and risk the threat of drawing in zombies from the noise and you'll even have to decide who gets fed. This game teaches you the core aspects of decision-making in survival. For those of you looking for an action packed game, this isn't for you; however, if you're a fan of point and click adventures, with a deep story line and a few actions scenes strung throughout, this is not a game you want to miss.

The Walking Dead (*www.telltalegames.com/walkingdead/*)
(For PC and consoles; about $25 for the entire five-part series (*www.amazon.com/gp/product/B008J16ARY/ ref=as_li_ss_tl? ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=B008J16ARY&linkCode=as2&tag=comput0b9- 20*))

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Dead Island

Scenario 2: You and your significant other are on a plane, on your way to vacation. All of a sudden, *Bang*! The airplane goes down, and you wake up on an island. This is no ordinary island though, this is a *Zombie* Island (er... Dead Island... get it?)

That's how the story of Dead Island starts, and boy does it get going after that. Dead Island will teach you core strategies for surviving, like: whether that zombie horde is too large to take on solo (and from my experience… it usually is), how to maintain weapons, and how to scavenge and sneak around at night properly. This game has a lot going for it, and I absolutely love the realism level of the game. What tends to get a bit pesky is how the weapons have a "wear" level and break after too much use. For me, it happened way too frequently and I found myself running around fixing them rather than actually moving forward in the story. Other than that, this is a great training tool; and is an awesome choice for any survival fans.

Dead Island (*www.deadislandgame.com/*)
(For PC and consoles; about $25 (*www.amazon.com/mn/search/?*
_encoding=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&keywords=dead%
20island&linkCode=ur2&qid=1342650487&rh=i%3Avideogames%2Ck%3Adead%
20island&tag=comput0b9-20))

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Gears of War 3

Scenario 3: You and a group of friends are meandering, when dead ahead a group of advanced weapon wielding zombies charge straight forward at you, how do you handle it?

OK, that's not exactly the story of Gears of War but it's close enough. Gears 3 follows Marcus and his team through the latest fight to save mankind and push off the locusts. The locusts are an alien race (if you think of them as zombies, your training will work better) sent to invade earth and harvest its resources. You play as Marcus Fenix, and push through the invaders wielding everything from a chainsaw bayoneted machine gun, to a torque bow (which probably has somewhere near 4 or 5 hundred pounds of torque...trust me).

This game will have you on edge, as you run from cover to cover shooting and slashing your way through waves of enemies. It does tend to get a bit repetitive, so if you're not a fan of: take cover, shoot, move forward, repeat; then this game isn't for you. However, for the serious Gears fan, shooter enthusiasts, or Zombie training junkie, this game is a must.

Now you can defend yourself, but what happens in that moment when your out of ammo? Or maybe your weapon breaks? Or maybe you're caught and there's a swarm after you, and you need to get away?

Well you're going to need to swing by next week, when we go over how to prepare your hideout to be zombie safe. Stay safe out there until then, it's a crazy world.

Gears of War 3 (*www.gearsofwar.xbox.com/en-US/*)
(For Xbox only; about $20 (*www.amazon.com/gp/product/B002I0H79C/ref=as_li_ss_tl?*
ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=B002I0H79C&linkCode=as2&tag=comput0b9-
20))

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Reviews contributed by Jeremy Halligan

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Learn more at *www.charlescarr.com*.

Without MP3s, Life Would Be an Error

"*or*, On the Evolution of Online Music Distribution" by Matthew W. Beale

"Recent controversy aside for the moment, streaming subscription services are becoming more viable and, not coincidentally, the ubiquity of smartphones and social media are driving development and innovation."

It's the end of Napster as we know it. Metallica's going after you! Apple's rumored to be launching an online music store. These were the some of the biggest headlines when I first started tracking the evolution of online music distribution years back, and as much as things change, that's right. Services still routinely rise and fall, intellectual property crackdowns continue to pop up in the news, ad nauseam.

Recent controversy aside for the moment, streaming subscription services are becoming more viable and, not coincidentally, the ubiquity of smartphones and social media are driving development and innovation. Pure download sites are still strong competitors, and hybrids are a Darwinian inevitability. These days, the online music multiverse is as heady a place as it always has been, if not more so, and I'm happy to launch a new column to try to organize news from the front—and add an MP3 album review to boot.
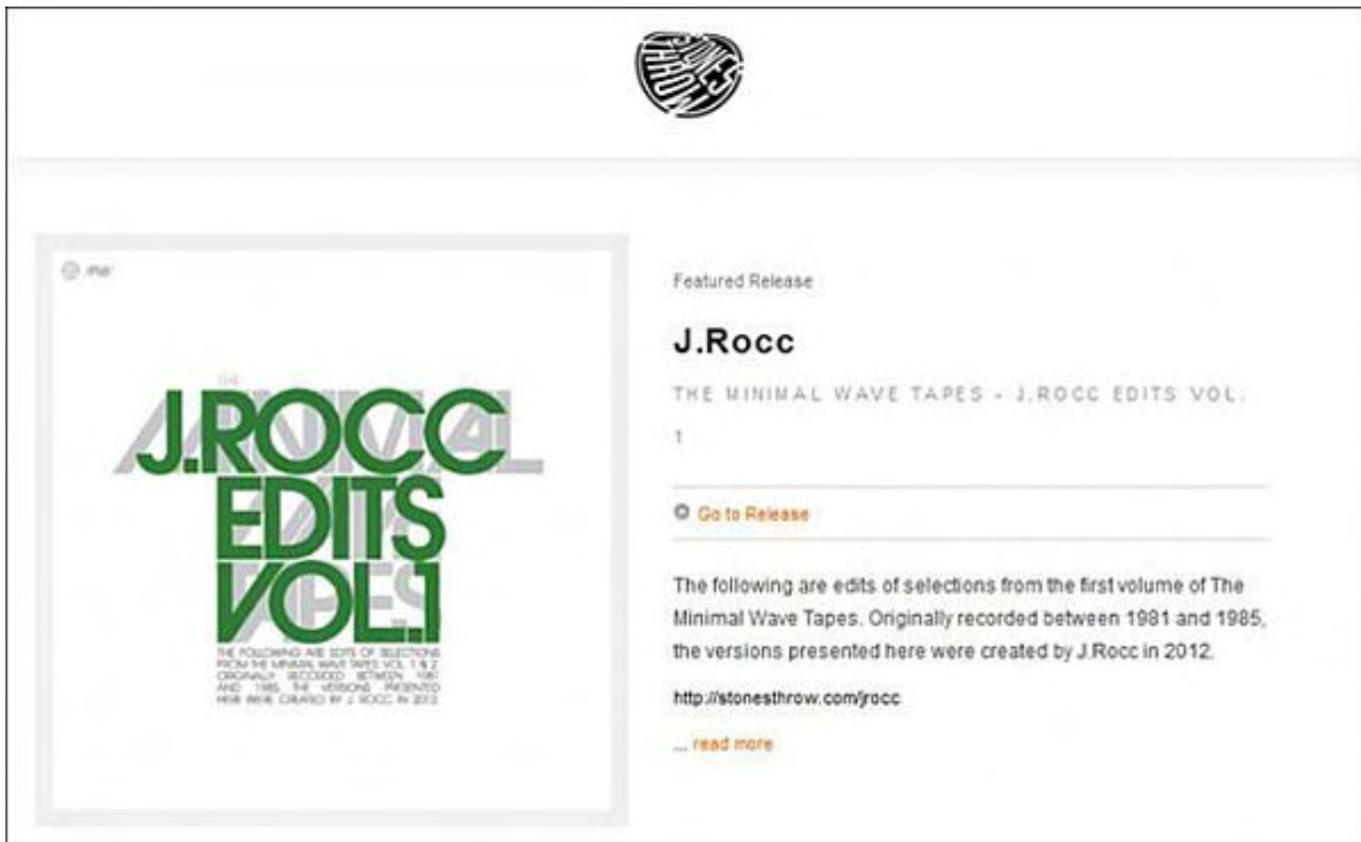
Drip.fm

Domino Records, using technology created by Ghostly International, has launched a subscription service that delivers all of their new release albums—along with extras—every month. The offering is simply called Domino Drip, and they are one of a small group of independent labels that have done the same, focusing on actual downloads instead of streaming media (although subscribers can "stream" music from their collection online after logging on to Drip.fm (*drip.fm*)).

"Drip.fm grabbed my attention because we've played with the idea of doing a record club in the past, but nothing felt quite right until we started thinking seriously about Domino Drip," said Kurt Lane, Head of Digital for Domino Records. "Culturally and commercially, the subscription model is ascendent and we felt the time was right given our fan base and the artists we represent."

In exchange for between $10 and $15 a month, subscribers receive instant access to up to three digital albums and subsequent new releases, via 320k MP3 or WAV format. Drip.fm uses e-mail notification when a new download becomes available. In a subscription market dominated by streaming radio giants, Drip.fm is closer to being a sort of digital variant of Sub Pop's singles club or Third Man Records' Vault.

"There's only two digital platforms that I ever thought were a good idea. First one was iTunes, second one was Drip," said Jeff Jank, Arts and Web Director for Stone's Throw Records. "Most everything in between seems corporate-minded, aimed at major labels and mass audience."

Drip.fm targets very specific listeners—devotees or connoisseurs, perhaps—and could offer a compelling digital distribution model. The labels involved don't seem interested in supplanting their existing channels, however, just supplementing with an additional option. The current lineup includes—besides Domino, and Ghostly, of course—Stone's Throw, Now-Again, Fools-Gold, Mad Decent, dirtybird, Planet E, Morr Music, and Dead Oceans.

Still relatively young, Drip.fm is working on a few tech issues, such as offering lossless FLAC, and building an uploader so that labels can more easily include Metadata in the music files. Beyond that, users can post comments on individual album pages, but the service doesn't offer a personal page—a users' icon doesn't function as a link—and there aren't additional social-related elements (beyond e-mail notification of a response to a posted comment).

At the moment, what Drip.fm does offer is a clean, simple user experience, and a decidedly eclectic mix of choices. Now-Again, for instance, reissues obscure funk, jazz and soul albums (although it's hard to assign categories for a label that just released a box set by a band whose songs they describe as "garage-, psych-, prog-, funk- and afro-rock"), with original liner notes by Founder Eothan Alaplatt.

In listening through albums by Atomic Forest, or the The Original Raw Soul III compilation, it's hard to escape the feeling that you've discovered some lost treasure. But that seems to be the point for Alaplatt, who writes the Funk Archaeology column for NPR. Alaplatt, aka Egon, also heads Madlib Invazion, a hip-hop focused label that is considering a move to the Drip universe as well.

"For us Drip is somewhat of an experiment, but seven months into it things are working out," said Stone Throw's Jank. "We don't know the long-term, but who knows anything long-term in music right now?"

Drip.fm offers a range of additional incentives, from early subscriber gifts, to discounts and exclusives. Visit Drip.fm (*drip.fm*) for more info.

"In the past few months we've had one full album exclusive to Drip, two exclusive EP's, and on top of that most of the releases have been sent to Drip subscribers before they're released to the public—not all of them, but a few. We plan to keep this up," added Jank.

Amazon for Apple

If you have an iPhone or iPad, but appreciate the regular MP3 deals available through Amazon and access to previous purchases, the company has launched the Amazon cloud Player app. When I first tried out an iPhone, I ordered a digital album from Amazon, only to be disappointed that they didn't have an appropriate version of the MP3 downloader. Unlike the desktop/laptop experience, the new app confers limited options, essentially to download or stream Amazon content—and all other music, including iTunes purchased music, is added to the Amazon player. I'll look forward to seeing how this app evolves.

Almost immediately after the Amazon's cloud-related launch, eMusic began offering an app for Android, which also functions as a player, with access to eMusic radio and downloads. Music downloaded to an Android phone would have to be transferred to a computer via USB because eMusic charges for "repeat-downloading." Amazon gets around this problem with its cloud service, and iTunes allows additional downloads of previously purchased files.

Moon Ate the Dark

It's hard to find a clearer example of both the dichotomy and the potential harmony between the traditional and online music

worlds than Sonic Pieces. Founded initially as a project to create "beautiful, handmade CD covers," it evolved into a label that both distributes digital music and adheres to a "beautiful music in beautiful packaging" philosophy.

"I guess I kind of established the right business model without actually thinking about it too much," said Founder Monique Recknagel. "Having special packaged, limited CDs or vinyl for those who still care about physical copies and a digital version for all the other listeners seems to be the way to go right now."
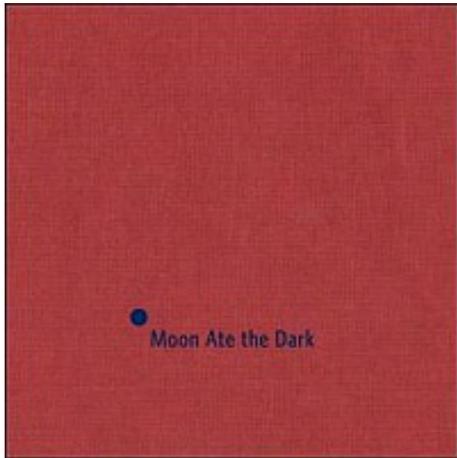
Sonic Pieces' latest release, Moon Ate the Dark, is an engaging excursion into the experimental, extending a sometimes plaintive solo piano with various effects, in studio layers, using a range of options, including a guitar amp. The result is at times jarring, but mostly hypnotic and, of the hundreds of hours of music I've experienced lately, is perhaps the most enchanting. Available now for download through *anost. net*.

It's the end of the column as I know it, and I feel, well, OK—the end of this, my first column, that is. We'll see how the next one goes. Please feel free to contact me with story ideas or suggestions about digital music releases at *withoutmusiclifewouldbeanerror@hushmail.com*. Prost.

My first published work focused on music, and related obsessions pushed me to become a DJ, Producer, and Music Director in college radio. With this column, I feel as though I'm sort of returning to something I love (although I've never left, really). I've been tracking the evolution of online music distribution since the days of Napster, and obsessively follow music releases across a range of genres. One of my music players (on each of my devices) is going from the time I wake up until the end of the day, lulling me to sleep (or what little I actually grab). "Without music, life would be an error." ~ Fred, the mad German

Please feel free to contact me with story ideas or suggestions about digital music releases at withoutmusiclifewouldbeanerror@hushmail.com (@).

EdgeWord: Free OpenOffice/LibreOffice E-Book, Plus Hear the Music

"Rob the ComputorTutor's E-Book is Now Available on Amazon and Matthew Beale Introduces a New Music C" by Jack Dunning

Rob Spahitz's OpenOffice (LibreOffice) e-book is now available free from Amazon.com for two days, Friday and Saturday. Obsessed with MP3s, Matthew Beale begins a new journey with *ComputorEdge*.

All of Rob Spahitz's columns on OpenOffice.org have been combined into one e-book, *Getting Started with OpenOffice (LibreOffice): The Free Replacement for Microsoft Office (*www.amazon.com/gp/product/B008KMAN16/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=B008KMAN16&linkCode=as2&tag=comput0b9-20*)*, and is now available free for two days from Amazon.com, Friday, July 20 and Saturday, July 21. Rob the ComputorTutor's book compares the free software with the packages in Microsoft Office while introducing many useful techniques. If you don't want to pay for word processing, spreadsheet and presentation software, then OpenOffice (or LibreOffice) is the program to use.

Note: LibreOffice is a fork of OpenOffice.org and is 99% the same as the original office suite of programs.

Listen to the Music

We welcome back Matthew Beale, a long-time *ComputorEdge* writer. This week he's introducing a new column on digital music—his obsession—called "Without MP3s, Life Would Be an Error." Please post any comments or questions by using the "Tell us what you think About This Article!" link at the top or bottom of the column.

Jack is the publisher of *ComputorEdge* Magazine. He's been with the magazine since first issue on May 16, 1983. Back then, it was called *The Byte Buyer*. His Web site is *www.computoredge.com*. He can be reached at *ceeditor@computoredge.com*. Jack is now in the process of updating and compiling his hundreds of articles and columns into e-books. Currently available:

Currently only at Amazon.com, *Jack's Favorite Free Windows Programs: What They Are, What They Do, and How to Get Started! (*www.amazon.com/gp/product/B008BLUZRS/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20*).*

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*)!* Also available at Barnes and Noble (*www.barnesandnoble.com/w/misunderstanding-windows-8-jack-dunning/1109995715?ean=2940014229463*) and ComputorEdge E-Books (*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*)*,
*Getting Started with Windows 7: An Introduction, Orientation, and How-to for Using Windows 7 (*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*)*,
and *That Does Not Compute! (*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.

Editor's Letters: Tips and Thoughts from Readers

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

"Also Consider Macro Express," "Cursoring on iPad"

Also Consider Macro Express

[Regarding Jack Dunning's July 13 article, "A Look at the Power of AutoHotkey":]

I have been a user of Macro Express for years. I have never used AutoHotkey, however based on your description I suspect that Macro Express would be more desirable for those that are put off by the coding. Macro Express has a user friendly interface that does the coding for you. Also it has incredibly cool written help files complete with examples if you ever get stuck.

-Paul Anthony, San Diego, CA

Cursoring on iPad

[Regarding Jack Dunning's June 29 article, "A Peek at the Coming Microsoft Surface Tablet":]

I too was having problems with cursoring in text fields and could only get to word boundaries. Also frustrating was not having a delete and backspace key or cursor keys so if you get close with your finger you can then micro adjust. My recently acquired Zagg keyboard allows me to use cursor keys, but I don't always want to use it. But my younger daughter told me to use the magnifier. *What?* I put my fat finger in the text field and hold it there until a little magnifying bubble pops up then I can move my finger until I get to the exact letter I want to fix.

-Marcus, Alabama

I do that myself, but even that can be hit or miss.

-Jack

The article states "…Steve Jobs…banned any type of cursor keys on the iPad. This has been one of my aggravations with the iPad. Trying to accurately place the iPad cursor with my finger is a challenge at best. I'm sure that he envisioned the iPad as primarily a keyboard-less tool."

For readers who have yet to experience iOS on any of Apple's iDevices, this statement needs clarification.

iOS actually does not have a cursor—the arrow pointer in Windows, Mac OS X, and Linux. In all of iOS' home screens and its built-in apps' screens, there is no cursor. The user instead points at and taps or slides on-screen objects with a finger. Therefore, cursor keys are irrelevant rather than "banned."

In some of the Settings screens and in some apps for iOS, however, there is an insertion point; i.e., the vertical bar resembling an uppercase "i." The insertion point might be what the article's statement refers to.

The insertion point can be positioned more easily and precisely by performing the following steps without hurrying.

1. Enlarge/magnify the screen in question—touch thumb and index fingers to the iDevice's screen, then spread them apart.

2. Touch and hold the index finger to the screen at the desired location until the insertion point displays.

3. If repositioning the insertion point is necessary, continue holding and drag to new position, then remove finger from the screen.

Hope this helps!

-Barry Fass-Holmes, San Diego, CA

ComputorEdge 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 ComputorEdge.com (*webserver.computoredge.com/online.mvc?src=ebook*). Your comments will be attached to the column and may appear at a later time in the "Editor's Letters" section.If you want to submit a short "ComputorQuick Review", or yell at us, please e-mail us at *ceeditor@computoredge.com*. If you would like to review our recent e-books, please visit ComputorEdge E-Books (*www.computoredgebooks.com/*).