

ComputerEdge™ Online — 08/17/12



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Movie Theaters, and More!

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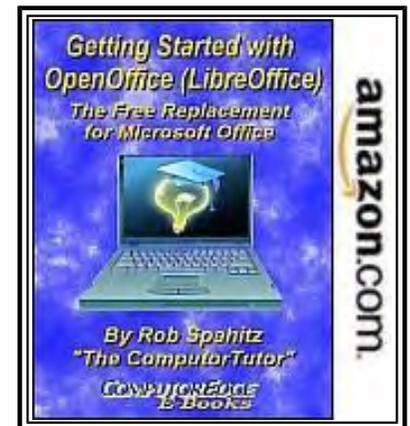
Using the Graphic User Interface (GUI) Controls in AutoHotkey to Build Simple Gadgets
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[Wally Wang's Apple Farm](#) by Wally Wang

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

or, On the Evolution of Online Music Distribution

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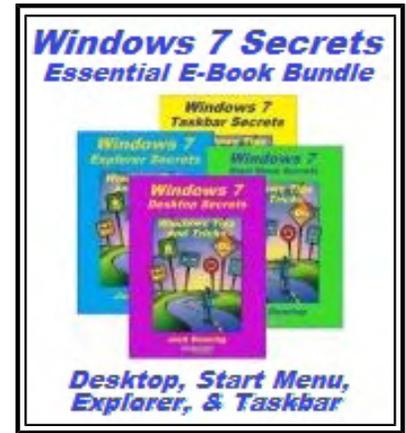
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[Editor's Letters: Tips and Thoughts from Readers](#) by ComputerEdge

Staff

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

"Dropbox Loses All Data If Computer Crashes?" "Videos in Firefox," "Android," "NASA App Available for Android"



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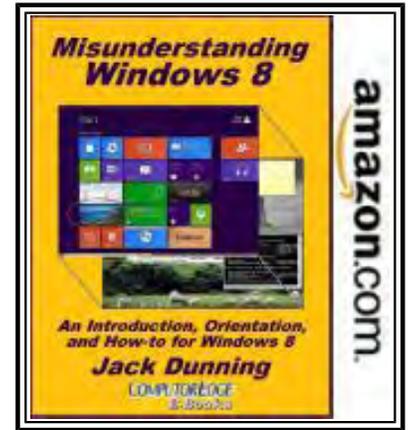
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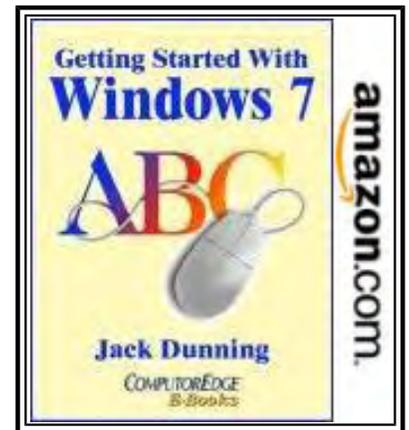
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Digital Dave

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

Delete Personal History From Work Computer; Older 32-Bit Programs Versus 64-Bit Systems; Resizing Pop-Up Windows.

Dear Digital Dave,

I am thinking about quitting my job and want to delete all personal stuff from my work computer. I have sent to the recycle bin (and then emptied the bin) all personal contacts, Web pages from favorites list and documents (after saving to flash drive). Should I also do a secure delete? I have Windows XP and Office 2003. There wasn't anything bad, just running, hiking, cooking and shopping Web sites, but sometimes the Web surfing spilled over into work time. :)

GK
Denver, CO

Dear GK,

If you have already deleted your files (and emptied the bin), then it's probably too late to do a secure delete which would overwrite each file. While your files at least in part remain on the hard drive, the secure delete program may not be able to find them. It is best to execute a secure delete in place of the regular delete, then the program has no problem wiping out particular files.

Having said that, the space occupied by your former files will now be randomly written over every time new files get written or saved. The process will slowly make your files unrecoverable. If you want to speed up the process without wiping out everything else on the drive, then you can first try defragmenting the drive. This process will reorganize the remaining file locations, most likely wiping out many fragments of your old files. Next, copy some huge files to the drive, such as innocuous videos. These will be added to the remaining space which may have been occupied by your old files. Then delete these files. While this is not a perfect solution, it certainly reduces the odds that any of your files can be recovered.

All that assumes that someone would want to recover your files. Based upon what you've said, it doesn't sound like you have much at risk. I suspect that the other people in the company are too busy checking out their own "running, hiking, cooking and shopping Web sites" to worry about what you were doing. Besides, as long as you weren't doing anything illegal, what are they going to do—fire you?

Digital Dave

[Digital Dave does not condone the personal use of company computers—unless of course, the boss says that it's OK.]

Dear Digital Dave,

I have an old recipe program that will not run on my new 64-bit computer. The computer is capable of "emulating" 32-bit. How can I access the recipe program on my C drive using the 32-bit?

Bob Jenkins
San Diego, CA

Dear Bob,

Rather than a 32-bit versus 64-bit problem, it is more likely an operating system incompatibility in the older program. The current versions of Windows are designed to run both 32-bit and 64-bit software. However, there can be problems running older legacy software.

If you're using Windows 7 then you can run a program to help solve the problem called Program Compatibility troubleshooter. You can find it by either typing "program compatibility" into the Start Menu Search field or through the Windows Help features. This wizard will walk you through the process for getting your program to run. (In Windows Vista, it is called the Program Compatibility Wizard and easiest way to find it is through Windows Help.)

You can also check the setting for any program by right-clicking on the program icon and selecting Properties. Select the Compatibility tab where you can adjust the settings for older programs (see Figure 1).



Figure 1. Setting in compatibility mode for Windows legacy software.

If neither of these work, then you may need to upgrade to Windows 7 Professional, which will run Window XP Mode ([/windows.microsoft.com/en-US/windows7/products/features/windows-xp-mode/](http://windows.microsoft.com/en-US/windows7/products/features/windows-xp-mode/)) (free download). This runs Windows XP in a separate virtual machine, Windows Virtual PC.

If you get the program working, I'd recommend backing up those recipes in some fashion—if you want to keep them. At some point in the future, you may not be able to get that program working again. Even if just text, properly named and filed, your saved recipes can be an adequate system for future reference and easy to save to the Cloud. A good recipe collection represents a lot of work, so it'd be a shame to lose it.

Digital Dave

Dear Digital Dave,

Using Windows XP SP3 and Internet Explorer 8. When I click on, for instance, "Ask Dave" a window pops up that is about 60% of a full screen window. What can I change to get the new window to pop up about 80% of full screen?

*William Tiep
Toledo, OH*

Dear William,

It depends upon which window you're talking about: the Internet Explorer window or the editing window inside the "Ask Dave" page. If you're referring to the Internet Explorer window, it works the same way as it does for every other program. Windows will save the size, location and shape of the last window closed for a particular program. That means you need to close all other instances of Internet Explorer windows, then resize the last one to your preference, then close it. Next time and every other new launch of Internet Explorer will take on the same parameters as that last window.

I know that this probably wasn't your question, but if you're referring to the text editing window, then the only easy option for changing it is to switch to the Google Chrome (www.google.com/intl/en/chrome/browser/) or Safari (safari.soft32.com/free-download) browser. These browsers allow the resizing of text editing boxes in Web pages (if not blocked by the site). Merely grab the hashed lower right corner of the box with your mouse and drag it to the desired size (see Figure 2).

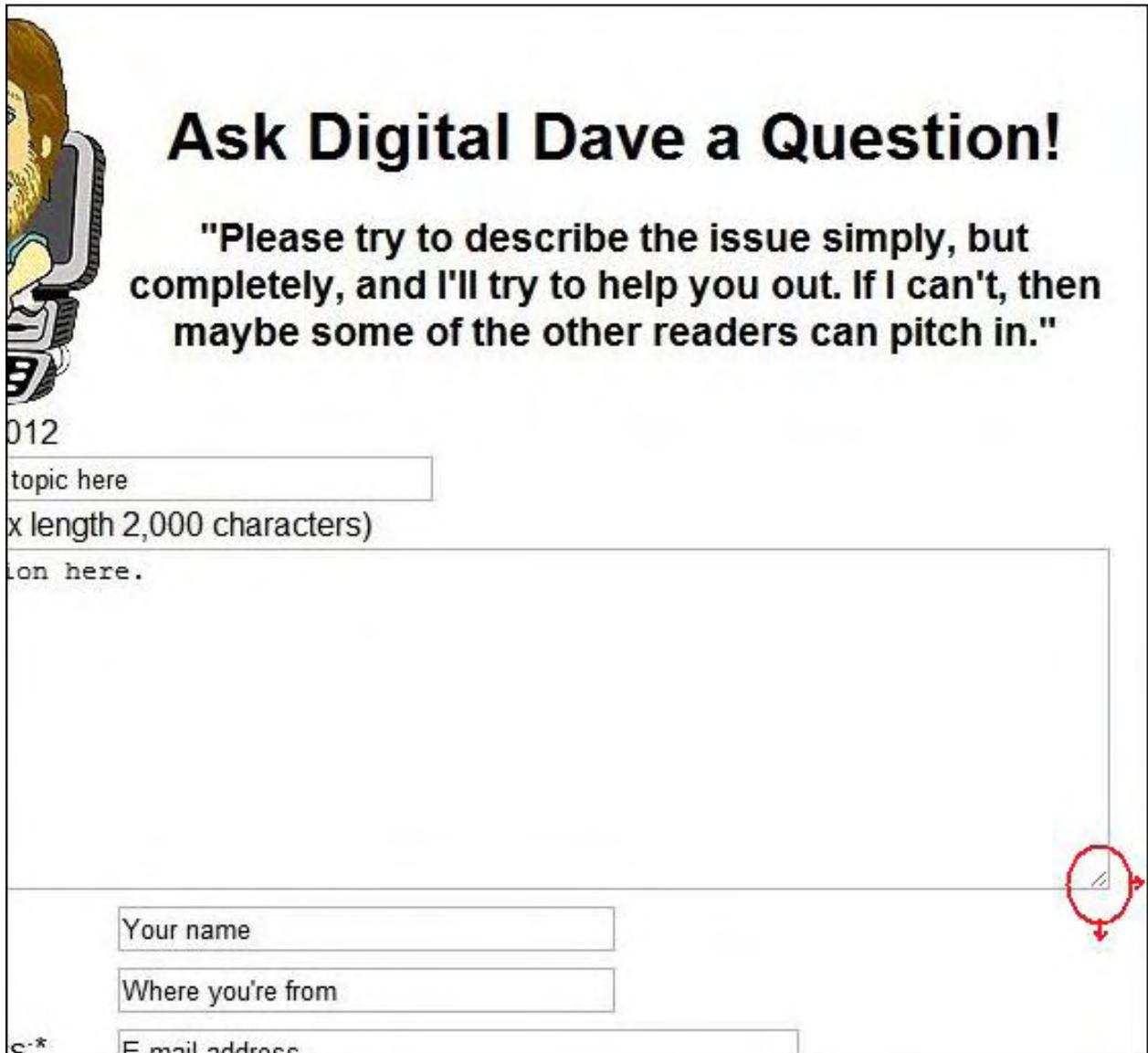


Figure 2. Resize text editing boxes in Google Chrome and Safari browsers by dragging the lower right-hand corner.

This is a great feature when working in edit boxes which default to a size too small.

Digital Dave

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More Little Known High Tech Stories

“Hot Pocket Extruders, 4D Movies, Software to Mimic a Live Organism” by Marilyn K. Martin

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Summertime Suggestions



It's August, and the dog-days of summer are upon us. Here's a quick round-up of suggestions and tips to help your family and electronics make it until Fall. Extreme heat can destroy electronic gadgets (seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/business/technology/2018684150_ptcovers14.html) and smartphones, as well as being dropped into pools or lost in sand. Besides the obvious (don't leave your gadgets in hot cars or direct sunlight), suggestions include buying waterproof cases for phones and cameras, which start at about \$50. For a cheaper suggestion, simply put your devices in sealable plastic food bags, or use slightly more expensive plastic bags just to hold electronics (\$16-\$30), like DryCase (www.drycase.com/). And Bheesti Bags (www.bheestie.com/) boasts that it can actually dry out gadgets that get wet.

For parents on vacation with restless pre-schoolers, how about an iPad app that's a musical coloring book (www.boston.com/business/technology/apptitude_test/2012/07/color_by_number_-_with_perks.html)? 123 Color HD: Talking Coloring Book (itunes.apple.com/us/app/123-color-hd-talking-coloring/id364892854?mt=8) is available from iTunes, and range in price from \$.99 for one coloring book to \$5.99 to purchase all the (virtual) coloring books. It's a color-by-number program with music, sound effects and even virtual stickers.

Outdoor summer fun, unfortunately, also comes with mosquitoes. But one reviewer found an attractive anti-mosquito device (www.boston.com/business/technology/appsampler/2012/07/beautiful_and_deadly.html) that actually lives up to the hype. InaTrap (www.amazon.com/INADAYS-InaTrap-Electronic-Insect-Killer/dp/B00850HCEK) is a softly glowing lamp that attracts insects with both electronics and chemistry. Made in Taiwan, it's available through Amazon for

about \$90.

And for those enjoying a Stay-cation this summer, Google Street View has just added five California state parks you can virtually-visit (www.boston.com/business/technology/2012/07/28/death-valley-drive-with-the-click-mouse/ATjGEM66fGnuGoaqAWM7GM/story.html). Besides the famous Yosemite and Redwood National Parks, this is also the best way to "visit" Death Valley—which can soar to 130 degrees in the summer. And while you're virtually touring California, try the always-popular Hearst Castle's new 360-degree virtual tour (www.regal360.com/clients/hearst/hearstcastle/index.html).

Voice Recognition Tech in Vehicles



In July 2012, California's governor signed a bill to allow no-touch texting (www.contracostatimes.com/california/ci_21073057/new-law-allows-hands-free-texting-while-driving) while driving. The law won't go into effect until January 1, 2013, and will allow drivers to listen, dictate and send text messages—but only if a voice-activated device is connected to your phone. Or, I presume, your vehicle.

In line with the above, it was announced in early July 2012 that Dragon speech recognition (shop.nuance.com/store/nuanceus/html/pbpage.dragon-landing-2012?

“Every time I try to use the voice activated text messaging on my new phone, it says, ‘You talking to me?!’”

www.boston.com/businessupdates/2012/07/09/bmw-rolls-out-new-models-equipped-with-nuance-speech-recognition-technology/Cc0v2nkNkESL3xFS9PWiqJ/story.html) technology would soon be available (www.boston.com/businessupdates/2012/07/09/bmw-rolls-out-new-models-equipped-with-nuance-speech-recognition-technology/Cc0v2nkNkESL3xFS9PWiqJ/story.html) in several new vehicles from BMW. People driving these new vehicles will be able to speak or dictate their e-mails and text messages, instead of using handheld gadgets that can cause deadly distractions.

4D Movie Theaters

With DVDs and now live-streaming at home, movie theaters have been trying out drastic new innovations to attract audiences. I've already written about high-end movie theaters that serve meals and drinks during the movie to patrons in lounge chairs. And new laser technology is upcoming to tackle the too-dark issue with 3D movies. Now comes word that a Korean theater chain is pulling in big foreign audiences with a 4D movie experience (seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/business/technology/2018688688_btfourdmovies16.html). CJ Group's 4DX system is more like an amusement park ride, with seats that rumble and move, with strobe lights and huge fans that can blast out smoke and gunpowder smells to complement the action on-screen. The 4DX system is already a big hit in theaters from Seoul to Mexico City, and now the CJ Group is finalizing deals to install 200 4DX systems in U.S. theaters from Los Angeles to New York.

Gaming News—Paul McCartney to Crossword Puzzles

It was announced in July 2012, that none other than Sir Paul McCartney was writing music for game (www.

computerandvideogames.com/357079/paul-mccartney-writing-music-for-bungie/) developer Bungie (www.bungie.net/) for a secret new game for Activision. An unrelated legal battle involving Bungie, however, revealed a contract between Bungie and Activision (www.activision.com/atvihub/home.do) for several action-shooter titles code-named Destiny.

The annual DefCon Gaming Conference (www.defcon.org/) was held at the end of July in Las Vegas (see later topic). For younger gamers, the Roblox Conference (www.contracostatimes.com/technology/ci_21078500/budding-pre-teen-game-designers-hone-skills-at) in Santa Clara, California in early July 2012, brought together pre-teen game designers to hone their programming skills and network. With the average age of 12, these young geeks-of-tomorrow critiqued Roblox games, snagged autographs from venerated veteran game designers in their late teens, and participated in hackathons. Roblox (www.roblox.com/?rbx_source=google&rbx_medium=cpc&rbx_campaign=Roblox+Brand_GOOGLE_US&gclid=CJfiqMzNv7ECFWROTAod8WgAnA) was launched five years ago to create 3D game-building environments. The company uses its one-day annual conferences to both observe loyal users and "incubate entrepreneurs."

Even amid an ever-growing pile of video-games, crossword puzzles (www.siliconvalley.com/personal-technology/ci_21072071/look-at-crossword-puzzle-apps) remain as popular as ever. The best way to do crossword puzzles today is by smartphone or tablet, and a \$10 app like The Crosswords (itunes.apple.com/us/app/crosswords/id284036524?mt=8) is the "definitive source for iOS and Android devices." It automatically loads publicly available crossword puzzles from various sources, as well as an admirable list of free Starter Puzzles. You also have the option to import more puzzles or even buy bundles of puzzles from publishers. Tapping on a screen square highlights both the square and clue below, with easy "pencil in" temporary answers and correction options.



For players who like more tangible gaming, Lego and Minecraft have teamed up to produce a composite world (blogs.mercurynews.com/aei/2012/07/10/putting-together-the-lego-minecraft-micro-world-set/#more-24580). The Lego Minecraft Micro World set from Jinx (www.jinx.com/p/lego_minecraft_micro_world.html?catid=&gclid=COyG1JPSv7ECFclDTAodiicAxQ) costs about \$35 and takes 3-4 hours to set up.

2012 Black Hat Conference

With the hacker group Anonymous bragging this Spring that they have volunteer hackers (www.theblaze.com/stories/anonymous-claim-we-have-access-to-every-classified-database-in-the-u-s-government/) inside every U.S. government department, cyber-security experts were watching the annual Black Hat Hacker Conference (www.blackhat.com/index.html) held July 25-26 in Las Vegas—where traditionally the government and top corporations actively recruit young computer geniuses.

The 2012 Black Hat Conference (www.pcworld.com/article/260008/black_hat_hackers_highlights_awards_attacks_and_apple.html) was well attended, with presentations of hacked hotel room locks to even ways to trick biometric retinal/iris readers. Key speakers advocated going on the offensive (www.technologyreview.com/news/428584/fighting-hackers-without-sinking-to-their-level/) against illegal hackers and malware, instead of continuing to try to build impenetrable security systems. With the law still murky, an ex-FBI cyber-warrior suggested designing security systems that can instead let malicious hackers in to ID them, and then track down their paymasters.

No word on recruitment at Black Hat this year. But the similar DefCon Gaming Conference (www.defcon.org/), a few days later and also in Las Vegas, had the National Security Agency out in force recruiting (gantdaily.com/2012/07/30/the-national-security-agency-recruits-hackers-at-def-con-conference/).

Programs That Can Finally Mimic a Live Organ or Organism

I'm still waiting for a software program that can mimic an entire human being, to eliminate lengthy drug trials and predict things like drug interactions and incipient health problems. But scientists are steadily moving in that direction, as some amazing new computerized studies attest. The University of Washington, for instance, is working toward growing tissue cells (seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/health/2018763092_tissuechip25m.html) inside three-dimensional chips, in hopes of simulating organs for clinical trails without needing people. They first want to simulate a human kidney, the organ often most susceptible to harm from drugs.

In July 2012, it was announced that scientists at Stanford University and the J. Craig Venter Institute have developed the first software simulation of an entire living organism (www.nytimes.com/2012/07/21/science/in-a-first-an-entire-organism-is-simulated-by-software.html?_r=1&nl=todaysheadlines&emc=edit_th_20120721). The organism simulated is a single-cell bacterium, *Mycoplasma genitalium*, and all 525 genes are modeled in detail. The simulation runs on a cluster of 128 computers, can chart interactions at the molecular level, and can model the complete life span of the cell.

Meanwhile, in Australia, IBM supercomputer Blue Gene/Q can simulate (www.popsci.com/science/article/2012-07/researchers-simulating-common-cold-virus-ibm-supercomputer) the most prevalent cause of the common cold—the human rhinovirus—in 3D. The project wants to study how drugs and viruses interact on a molecular level, to hopefully develop better medications against high-risk rhinovirus complications.

Controversy Over Rovio's Amazing Alex



Amazing Alex (teaser.amazingalex.com/) is Rovio's first non-AngryBirds (www.ign.com/articles/2012/07/13/the-controversial-history-of-rovios-amazing-alex) game in three years, and is now available for iOS and Android. The game is controversial since it is basically just a re-packaging of Casey's Contraptions, which Rovio purchased the full rights to, after which Casey's Contraptions was removed from the App Store.

Some angry Casey's Contraptions fans don't realize they can still download Casey's Contraptions from the App Store if they have already purchased it. But fans will probably have to buy Amazing Alex if they want Rovio support and post-release content. While Rovio was very public about buying Casey's Contraptions, the purchase didn't get a lot of press. Some reviewers fault the App Store for not being more explanatory that Casey's Contraptions is now Amazing Alex.

Third World Tech

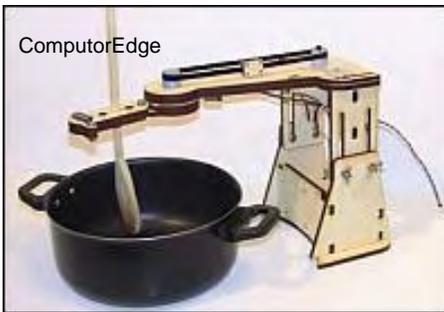
In June 2012, MIT's *Technology Review* reported on rural India's solar micro-grids (www.technologyreview.com/article/427670/solar-microgrids/). With nearly 400 million rural Indians with no access to electric grids, it's a long trip to recharge their cell phones, only to return to homes lit by sooty kerosene lamps. I've already written about other innovations to bring power and light to the rural poor, from plastic bottles in the ceiling/roof for light, to renting a single solar panel to sell electricity in one small village. Now there is an Indian company called Mera Gao Power (meragaopower.com/) that builds and operates micro-electric grids to serve rural customers. These small generation stations can spread the installation cost across an entire village, and utilize efficient, larger-scale generation and storage systems to lower operating costs.

After selling the board game Cranium to Hasbro for \$77.5 Million in 2008, co-founder Whit Alexander wanted to do something to help the rural poor in Africa (seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/opinion/2018708912_bruce18.html), where he had studied and worked. He wanted to develop a for-profit venture to get the necessary commitment from both donor and recipient. He founded Burro (gust.com/c/burrobrand) to "build economic capacity by selling to Africa's poor." Burro's first product was leakproof, rechargeable flashlight batteries, using individual distributors (like Amway). He has now introduced a battery-powered lamp and cell phone charger, and a human-powered irrigation pump to rural African villages with no electricity.

Food Tech—Build Your Own Kitchen Gadgets



In July 2012, *PopSci* explained how techies can make their own cooking gadgets (www.popsci.com/diy/article/2012-06/video-build-your-own-food-helper-



gadgets). An Android-Controlled Pot Stirring Device looks a lot sturdier than the springy/bouncy thing they advertise on TV. Ben Heckendom, known as a game-console-modifier, offers Do-It-Yourself ideas in his videocasts, *The Ben Heck Show* (revision3.com/tbhs/episodes), and has been known to dabble in kitchenware. He designs kitchen gadgets for hungry gamers and geeks who'd rather be online, like using an "Xbox controller's charging port as a food docking system and power supply for a Hot Pocket Extruder." He suggests using a laser cutter to form a plastic ratchet and gear system—or just use a deodorant canister—so a half-eaten Hot Pocket won't slide back down.

Innovative Technologies: Campus to Business

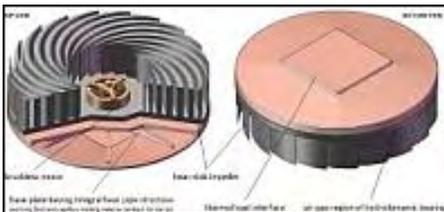
The University of Washington has won another federal grant (seattletimes.nwsource.com/html/localnews/2018749947_translation23m.html) for \$65 Million to help turn medical discoveries into useful medical products. The National Institutes of Health awarded this second, five-year grant to UW's Institute of Translational Health Sciences (ITHS), which includes other local research institutions. The money will help fund activities from engaging technical expertise, to pilot projects and then clinical trials in order to move more discoveries and inventions out of laboratories and to people who could benefit.

The University of Rochester has created a new Web site to help companies and entrepreneurs to find innovative technologies (www.rochester.edu/news/show.php?id=3817) developed by scientists on their campus. U of R holds more than 400 patents for inventions ranging from medicine to computer technology. The new Entrepreneur-Ready Technologies Web site (www.rochester.edu/entrepreneurship/ereadytech) presents the technological innovations in a clear language that business people can understand.

Computer Hardware Updates

According to the *Seattle Times'* Brier Dudley in July 2012, Microsoft is off on a new hardware binge (www.siliconvalley.com/personal-technology/ci_21044362/tech-test-drive-top-external-hard-drives-less). Surface tablet computers were just the start. It was recently disclosed that MS has just purchased Perceptive Pixel (www.perceptivepixel.com), one of the leading makers of big multi-touch displays that use touchscreen systems instead of tuners. Perceptive Pixel won the Smithsonian's National Design Award in 2009, and boasts the Department of Defense among its customers.

Remember the \$35 Raspberry Pi I wrote about earlier, that sold out practically the minute it was offered for sale? Now a Korean hardware manufacturer, Hardkernel (www.hardkernel.com/renewal_2011/main.php), is launching a high-end alternative (arstechnica.com/gadgets/2012/07/korean-company-offers-3-5-inch-quad-core-arm-linux-computer-for-129) for \$129. With four times as much RAM as the Raspberry Pi, and a much more powerful processor, the small Hardkernel board is a good option for "more computationally-intensive usage scenarios."



PopSci announced at the end of June 2012 that the new Heatsink/Cooler developed by the Sandia National Laboratories (techcrunch.com/2012/06/26/this-fanless-heatsink-is-the-next-generation-in-cpu-cooling/) could be up to 30 times more efficient (www.popsci.com/technology/article/2012-06/heatsink-could-be-30-times-more-efficient-modern-setups) than current setups. "It's a heatsink that spins at 2,000 rpm—slow for a fan—but is more efficient because it actually lifts off the chip, floating in midair by about a thousandth of an inch, removing thermal resistance." It has already been optioned by a computer company, so expect to see it in machines in the near future.

An inexpensive new game console in development may not only bring back TV gaming (www.heyuguys.co.uk/2012/07/13/ouya-the-inexpensive-console-set-to-bring-back-tv-gaming/)—but also let game developers be creative again, instead of the public driving what games get made and sold. The Ouya (www.kickstarter.com/projects/ouya/ouya-a-new-kind-of-video-game-console) (pronounced Oh-Yeah!) will be a \$100 Android-powered gaming console designed by industrial designer and philanthropist, Yves Behar. Because Ouya is an Open Console, any video game

company (or even hackers) can submit their games for the system without the need of an expensive development kit, licensing fee, retail fee, or publishing fee.

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

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

* *Computer Confusion in Paradise: Lo! And in the Beginning There Was Total Befuddlement!*, in both EPUB format (www.computoredgebooks.com/Computer-Confusion-in-Paradise-humor-EPUB-iPad-NOOK-COMPHUMOR0001-1.htm?sourceCode=writer) 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.

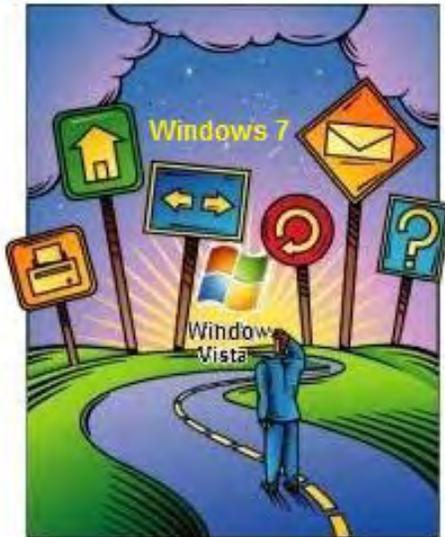
* *Computer Hardware: "Parts Is Parts"*, in both EPUB format (www.computoredgebooks.com/Computer-Hardware-Parts-Is-Parts-humor-EPUB-iPad-NOOK-COMPHUMOR0002-1.htm?sourceCode=writer) for iPad, NOOK, etc., and MOBI format (www.computoredgebooks.com/Computer-Hardware-Parts-Is-Parts-humor-MOBI-for-Kindle-COMPHUMOR0002-2.htm?sourceCode=writer)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

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Windows Tips and Tricks

Windows Tips and Tricks: Powerful Screen Object Controls in AutoHotkey

“Using the Graphic User Interface (GUI) Controls in AutoHotkey to Build Simple Gadgets” by Jack Dunning

The addition of screen objects to AutoHotkey scripts, increases the number of ways that you can use what is "possibly the best Windows utility ever." To see the possibilities, peruse the column or just look at the pictures.

One of the features of AutoHotkey (www.autohotkey.com/) which makes it "possibly the best Windows utility ever" is the GUI (Graphic User Interface) command. The GUI command allows you to add special screen objects (similar to gadgets) to your Windows computer for controls, data entry forms, or custom interfaces. The strength of this set of AutoHotkey tools is that they can be quickly tailored to your needs. While the routines for GUIs may become quite complex, complicated scripts are not necessary for you to make immediate use of these objects. While some of the examples shown below may be generated by more intricate code, it's premature for us to digest those. Only the simpler routines which you can immediately put to use are listed and discussed. (Where possible, the more complex routines are linked for your perusal.)

Note: If you are new to writing scripts and have not been following along from the beginning with the first AutoHotkey article "Possibly the Best Free Windows Utility Ever!", it could be worthwhile to start there and work your way back up to this point. The follow-up "Windows Tips and Tricks" columns are designed to incrementally teach anyone how to write AutoHotkey scripts, building on each earlier column a teaspoon at a time. It is useful to keep working with each section until you feel comfortable with the demonstration scripts and how they work. However, scanning this column for ideas could still be productive.

The GUI (Graphic User Interface) Command

The GUI command (www.autohotkey.com/docs/commands/Gui.htm) takes the following form:

```
Gui, sub-command [, Param2, Param3, Param4]
```

The "Gui" tells AutoHotkey that one of the screen object's sub-commands is being invoked. The sub-command is one of a number of possible actions associated with GUI (Add, Show, Submit, etc., see the linked GUI command page (www.autohotkey.com/docs/commands/Gui.htm) for a list of sub-commands and how they work.)

If the Add sub-command is used, it is followed by the label for the specific object which will be one of the following:

Text, Edit, UpDown, Picture, Button, Checkbox, Radio, DropDownList, ComboBox, ListBox, ListView, TreeView, Hotkey, DateTime, MonthCal, Slider, Progress, GroupBox, Tab, StatusBar

The primary method for making the object appear on the computer screen is through the Show sub-command:

```
Gui, Show
```

Many of the images shown here were created by merely adding the Add and Show sub-commands to a routine. For example, the Button object was displayed with the code (Figure 4 below):

```
Gui, Add, Button, Default, OK
Gui, Show
return
```

While this simple routine will display the GUI object, that's all it does. It will not respond to any hotkeys or return any values without the addition of code such as that found in previous columns. If you want to open the object with a hotkey combination then you will need to add the hotkey to the routine. For example, "^#w:." could be added as the first line in the above routine to make the button window open whenever CTRL++W is pressed (simultaneous depressing all three keys):

```
^#w::
Gui, Add, Button, Default, OK
Gui, Show
return
```

Of course, this will only allow the opening of the button window with the hotkey. Pressing the button still does nothing. The next Text GUI routine below shows one way to cause an action or return a result.

The Text GUI

The Text GUI (www.autohotkey.com/docs/commands/GuiControls.htm#Text) merely opens a window and displays text. This object can be used for something as simple as a list of your AutoHotkey hotkeys or be turned into a text button (see Figure 1).



Figure 1. AutoHotkey Text GUI.

The Text GUI shown in Figure 1 was created with the following code:

```
Gui, Font, underline
Gui, Add, Text, cBlue gLaunchGoogle, Click here to launch Google.
Gui, Font, norm
Gui, Show
return
LaunchGoogle:
Run www.google.com
return
```

In the first line, the Font sub-command is set to "underline" to cause the text to appear as a link by underlining it. The second line Adds the Text object specifying the color blue (cBlue). The letter "g" is used in front of a label (gLaunchGoogle) to specify the name of the routine (LaunchGoogle) which will be activated when the text is clicked. "Click here to launch Google." is the clickable text. "Gui, Font, norm" resets the font to normal. "Gui, Show" activates the control window. "Return" ends this part of the routine.

When the text is clicked, LaunchGoogle activates causing "Run www.google.com" to load Google into the default browser. "Return" ends the activated sub-routine.

Tip: Use the line "Gui,+AlwaysOnTop" to keep your GUI object window always-on-top while it is activated.

The Edit GUI

The Edit GUI (www.autohotkey.com/docs/commands/GuiControls.htm#Edit) is similar to the Text GUI except that it allows editing in a text editing field. In Figure 2, the Text object is combined with the Edit object for entering first and last name. When the "OK" button is clicked, the window on the right is opened displaying the results.

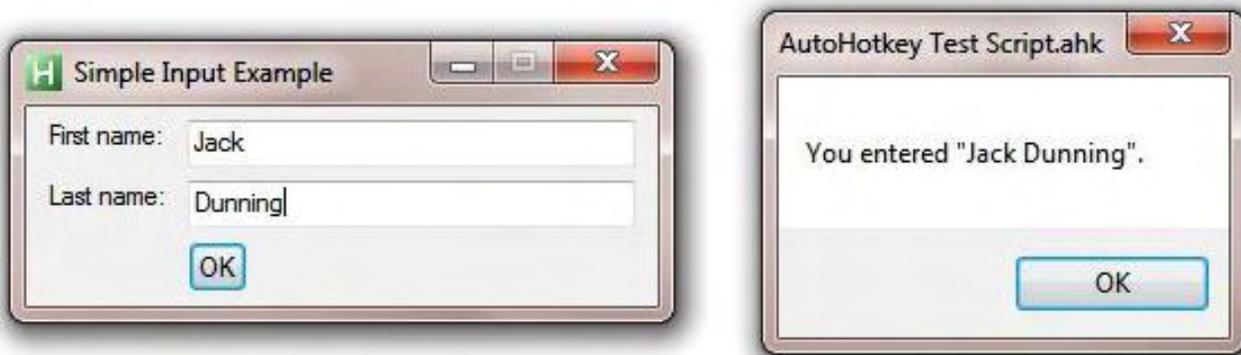


Figure 2. AutoHotkey simple input with Text and Edit GUI.

The GUI in Figure 2 was activated with the following routine:

```
; Example: A simple input-box that asks for first name and last name:
Gui, Add, Text,, First name:
Gui, Add, Text,, Last name:
Gui, Add, Edit, w200 vFirstName ym ; The ym option starts a new column.
Gui, Add, Edit, w200 vLastName
Gui, Add, Button, default, OK ; The label ButtonOK runs when pressed.
Gui, Show,, Simple Input Example
return ; The script is idle until the user does something.
GuiClose:
ButtonOK:
Gui, Submit ; Save the input from the user to each associated variable.
MsgBox You entered "%FirstName% %LastName%".
ExitApp
```

Note that the Add sub-command was used five times to add the two Text and two Edit controls, plus one Button control. While the ButtonOK script is run when the button is clicked, it merely sends the input to a MsgBox (message box). You could just as easily use the script to Send (Send, You entered "%FirstName% %LastName%.") the output to any working text editing field by replacing the MsgBox line.

The UpDown GUI

The UpDown GUI (www.autohotkey.com/docs/commands/GuiControls.htm#UpDown) control uses arrows to change increments of numbers. The example in Figure 3 shows four levels of increments (www.autohotkey.com/community/viewtopic.php?p=82628).

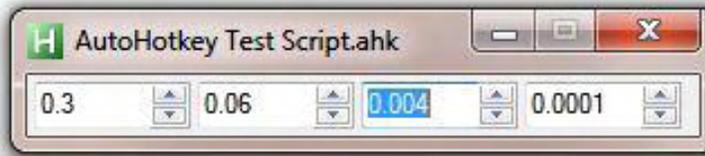


Figure 3. AutoHotkey UpDown GUI for incremental changes.

The Picture GUI

The Picture GUI (www.autohotkey.com/docs/commands/GuiControls.htm#Picture) can be used to add logos and other images to the buttons and objects.

The Button GUI



The Button GUI (www.autohotkey.com/docs/commands/GuiControls.htm#Button) shown in Figure 4 at the left is one of the most commonly used objects for triggering sub-routines. When Button is added with GUI, it automatically creates the label for the routine it will launch:

```
Gui, Add, Button, Default, OK
```

In the example above "ButtonOK" becomes the label. The label could just as easily be any other word, such as, ButtonCancel, ButtonPressMe, or whatever text has been added to the button. (The spaces and special punctuation is automatically omitted.)

The Radio GUI

The Radio GUI (www.autohotkey.com/docs/commands/GuiControls.htm#Radio) is used to set up a group of selection options (see Figure 5). When one radio button is selected, the remaining buttons will be deselected. If multiple selections are needed, the CheckBox GUI is a better option.

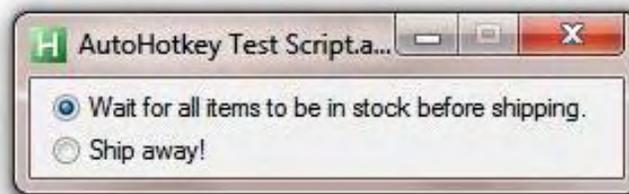


Figure 5. AutoHotkey Radio Button GUI.

The Checkbox GUI

Similar to the Radio GUI, the Checkbox GUI (www.autohotkey.com/docs/commands/GuiControls.htm#Checkbox) toggles on and off with each click. See the GroupBox GUI in Figure 13 for an example of how the Checkbox GUI appears.

DropDownList GUI

The DropDownList GUI (www.autohotkey.com/docs/commands/GuiControls.htm#DropDownList) is essentially a drop-down selection menu (see Figure 6).



Figure 6. AutoHotkey DropDownList GUI.

The ComboBox GUI

The ComboBox GUI (www.autohotkey.com/docs/commands/GuiControls.htm#ComboBox) is similar to the DropDownList except it allows adding text input rather than forcing a menu selection (see Figure 7).

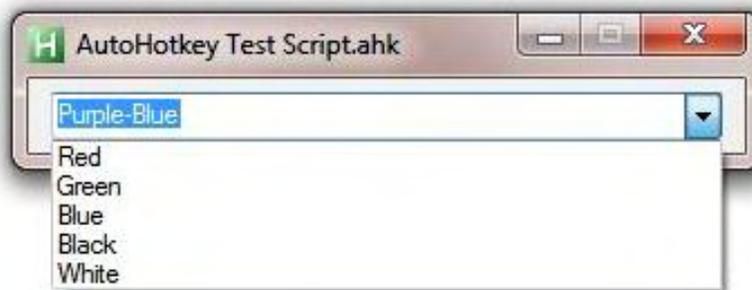
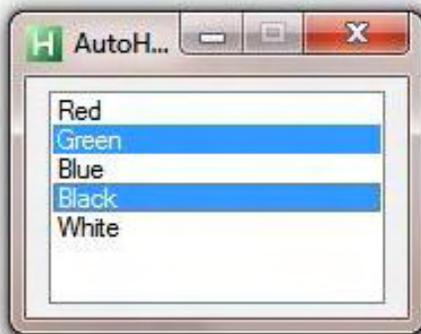


Figure 7. AutoHotkey ComboBox GUI.

In Figure 7, "Purple-Blue" has been typed in rather than selected from the menu

The ListBox GUI



As the name states, the ListBox GUI (www.autohotkey.com/docs/commands/GuiControls.htm#ListBox) is a box containing a selection list (see Figure 8 on the left). When using the "multi" parameter, multiple selections can be made. The "sort" parameter alphabetically sorts the contents of the list. When the list is longer than the height of the box, scroll bars automatically appear.

In the routine below, the "h100" sets the height to 100 pixels. If w200 were added as a parameter, the width would be 200 pixels. There are numerous other parameters for controlling the look of the GUI. The "Red|Green|Blue|Black|White" provides the list of options.

A ListBox routine:

```
Gui, Add, ListBox, h100 multi vColorChoice, Red|Green|Blue|Black|White
Gui, Show
return
```

ListBox is a good alternative to DropDownList when there is a large number of selection items, yet you want to limit the screen space taken up by the control. Also, unlike the DropDownList, ListBox does not pop up when clicked nor close when it is not the focus.

AutoHotkey seems to be pretty liberal when using parameters to control the look and feel of the GUI object. There are specific sub-commands such as Font, Color, Margin which will directly affect the look, but you can also add other parameters (www.autohotkey.com/docs/commands/Gui.htm#Position) directly to certain sub-command lines such as the "h100" (height 100 pixels) in the Add line above or include those parameters in the Show line which affect the window display.

The ListView GUI

The ListView GUI (www.autohotkey.com/docs/commands/GuiControls.htm#ListView) is particularly useful for displaying folders and activating files in Windows (See right side of Figure 9). It seems that with a little bit of coding, the missing Start Menu in Windows 8 Desktop could be replaced with a special AutoHotkey script. (Maybe this is a project for a future column.)

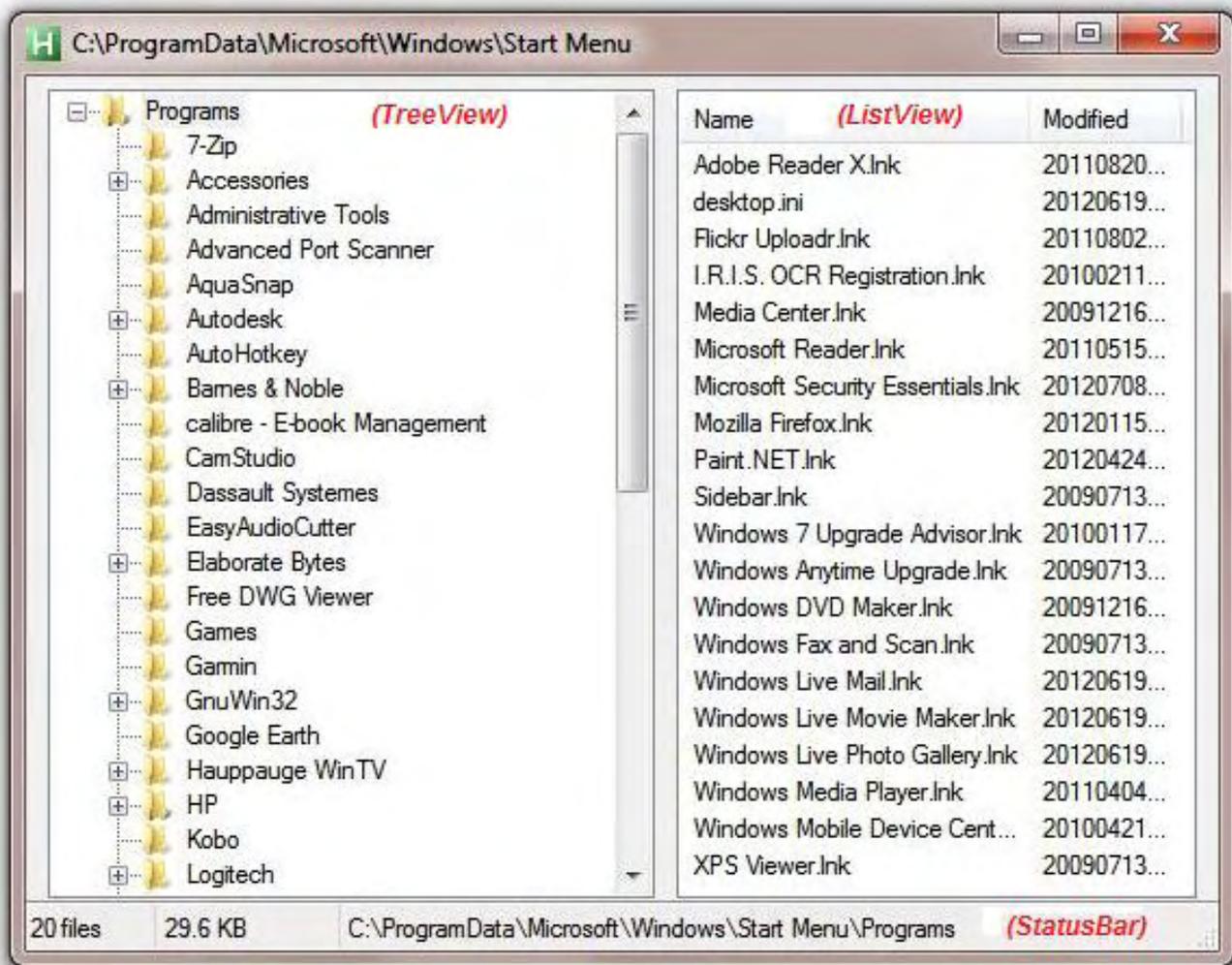


Figure 9. AutoHotkey ListView GUI (right), TreeView GUI (left), StatusBar GUI (bottom).

The TreeView GUI

The TreeView GUI (www.autohotkey.com/docs/commands/GuiControls.htm#TreeView) will display a cascading set of options in a manner similar to Windows Explorer folders (see Figure 10). This is ideal for viewing and selecting items from hierarchical sets of data.



Figure 10. AutoHotkey TreeView GUI.

The Hotkey GUI

The Hotkey GUI (<http://www.autohotkey.com/docs/commands/GuiControls.htm#Hotkey>) is "a box that looks like a single-line edit control but instead accepts a keyboard combination pressed by the user. For example, if the user presses Control+Alt+C on an English keyboard layout, the box would display 'Ctrl + Alt + C.'" This object would most likely be used to allow users to assign temporary hotkeys on the fly.

The DateTime GUI

Similar to the MonthCal GUI discussed last week, the DateTime GUI (www.autohotkey.com/docs/commands/GuiControls.htm#DateTime) offers a drop-down calendar for selecting the date (see Figure 11). One plus in the DateTime control is that the month, day, or year can be incremented with the cursor keys when the corresponding item (red circles in Figure 11) is selected on the main bar. The day of the week will automatically update with any date change.

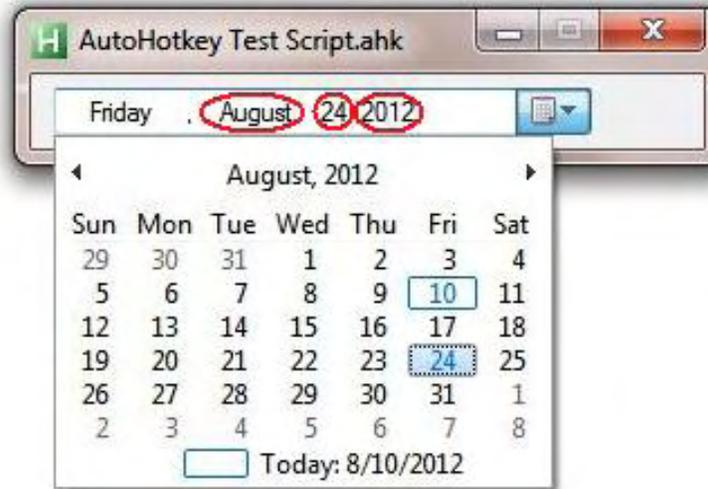


Figure 11. AutoHotkey DateTime GUI.

The Slider GUI



The Slider GUI (www.autohotkey.com/docs/commands/GuiControls.htm#Slider) is a control for selecting from a continuous range of values. (Figure 12. AutoHotkey Slider GUI, seen at left.) The default range is 0 to 100. The Slider GUI can be operated by clicking and holding the left-mouse button on the sliding tab and dragging it right or left. You may also operate it with the cursor keys, HOME, END and the mouse scroll wheel.

The Slider works in the same manner as the volume controls found in videos.

The GroupBox GUI

The GroupBox GUI (www.autohotkey.com/docs/commands/GuiControls.htm#GroupBox) is a container for holding other controls (see Figure 13). The code for creating the panel (www.autohotkey.com/community/viewtopic.php?t=76225) in Figure 13 is a bit more complex, although when broken down line by line, it is merely a long list of simple commands.



Figure 13. AutoHotkey GroupBox GUI.

The Tab GUI

The Tab GUI is used when there are various sets of data which will fit into a three-dimensional array (see Figure 14). Under each tab there is a two-dimensional set of items. The code for the routine (www.autohotkey.com/community/viewtopic.php?t=71148) in Figure 14 opens another window displaying the results when the "Test" button is clicked.

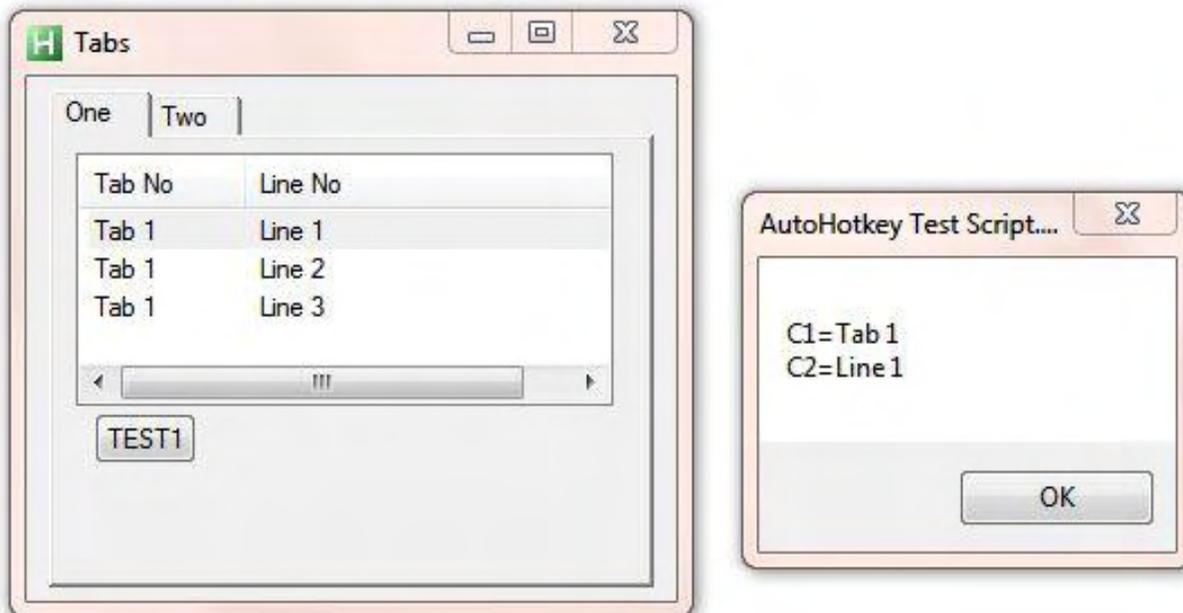


Figure 14. AutoHotkey Tab GUI.

The StatusBar GUI

The StatusBar GUI (www.autohotkey.com/docs/commands/GuiControls.htm#StatusBar) places status information at the bottom of a AutoHotkey GUI window. "It is a row of text and/or icons attached to the bottom of a window, which is typically used to report changing conditions." See the bottom of Figure 9 above for an example of the StatusBar GUI.

So Many GUI Controls

It's a little overwhelming for new programmers to look at so many GUI controls all at once. It's difficult to remember which GUI does what. Yet, I've found that this type overview is a tremendous help in the long run. One day when working on a particular script, the right GUI—which has been languishing in the back of your mind—will pop to the front, helping to create the perfect solution. Writing scripts (or programming) is not about knowing every element of a language by heart—it's knowing where to look for those solutions when you need them.

If you have any questions about writing or using AutoHotkey scripts, please use the "Tell us what you think about this article!" comment link at the top or bottom of this column, or send an e-mail to AutoHotkey Questions (ceeditor@computoredge.com).

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

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 ComputerEdge 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.

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Wally Wang's Apple Farm

“Traveling with Mobile Devices” by Wally Wang

Traveling with Mobile Devices; Mind Mapping; Killing Retail One Store at a Time; Staying Focused; Thinking More Effectively; Safari's Reading List Feature.

Wally Wang's Apple Farm

More people are relying on mobile computing devices such as smartphones and tablets. In the old days, people relied on laptops, but with smartphones and tablets offering greater portability and most of the features people need, the money that would have been spent on a laptop is now going to a mobile device instead and this trend will likely never magically reverse itself any time in the near future. If you're not going mobile, you're being left behind.

The one drawback with mobile devices is power. Charge up your mobile device overnight and if you're on the move, you may not realize your device is running out of power until it's too late.

To avoid running out of power at the worst possible time, carry your mobile device's power cord with you. Now you can plug it in and recharge it anywhere you can find an electrical outlet. Of course, if you're traveling through different airports, you may find open electrical outlets scarce with everyone else charging their laptops, smartphones, or tablets on them. For a better solution, carry a portable battery pack instead of or in addition to a power cord such as the myCharge portable battery (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B0056GJLUI/ref=as_li_tf_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=B0056GJLUI&linkCode=as2&tag=the15minmovme-20).



Figure 1. The myCharge portable battery provides cables for connecting to an iPhone or iPad.

The myCharge battery contains a connector for plugging it into any iOS device such as an iPod touch, an iPhone, or an iPad. In addition, the device includes another cable for connecting to a USB or micro USB port in case you need to charge other types of devices such as a bluetooth keyboard. Just charge all your mobile devices and portable battery before traveling. Now when your mobile devices start running low on power, plug them into the portable battery.

To recharge the battery pack, just plug it into an electric outlet when you get the chance. By carrying your own power around, you'll almost never run out of power unless you're away from an electric outlet for an extended period of time. Just make sure you buy your portable battery pack before you need one because if you buy it through a store or vending machine in an airport, you'll pay full price.



Figure 2. Many airport vending machines sell accessories for mobile devices.

While some people still can't find a use for an iPad just like some people still can't find a use for a computer, mobile phones are becoming more indispensable. In some museums, you had to rent portable audio devices to carry around and listen to descriptions of various exhibits. Nowadays, many museums are dumping these expensive and specialized audio devices in favor of just offering recorded narration through any mobile phone instead.



Figure 3. By dialing a specific number, you can listen to a museum's audio narration on your mobile phone.

What happens if you go to a museum and don't have a mobile phone? You won't be able to listen to the recorded narration. Just as the world now depends on cars, so will the world slowly depend on mobile devices. If you don't have a car, you're severely limited on where you can go conveniently. If you don't have a mobile phone, you'll start missing out on other aspects of life as well.

Start thinking about staying connected with others through mobile devices. Once you realize how mobile devices are changing the world, you may never want to go back to the way things used to be in the past. Unless, of course, you prefer turning away from the obvious and getting upset when reality doesn't coincide with your fantasies of how life should be any more.

Mind Mapping

There are plenty of myths surrounding Apple and its products, and one of the most persistent myths is that it's impossible to create content on an iPad. Yet another example that shatters this myth (although facts will never sway those with an emotional

stake in perpetuating such myths) is a 99 cent mind mapping app called MindHD (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%252Fmindhd%252Fid353534825%253Fmt%253D8%2526uo%253D4%2526partnerId%253D30).

For those unfamiliar with the process, mind mapping lets you jot down short ideas and connect them with colored lines to connect related ideas. Where outlining forces you to think in a linear fashion (good luck editing or rearranging a written outline), mind mapping lets you freely dump your thoughts in any order. To learn more about mind mapping, read *The Mind Map Book* (www.amazon.com/gp/product/0452273226/ref=as_li_qf_sp_asin_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=0452273226&linkCode=as2&tag=the15minmovme-20) by Tony Buzon, the man credited with promoting mind mapping as a thinking tool.

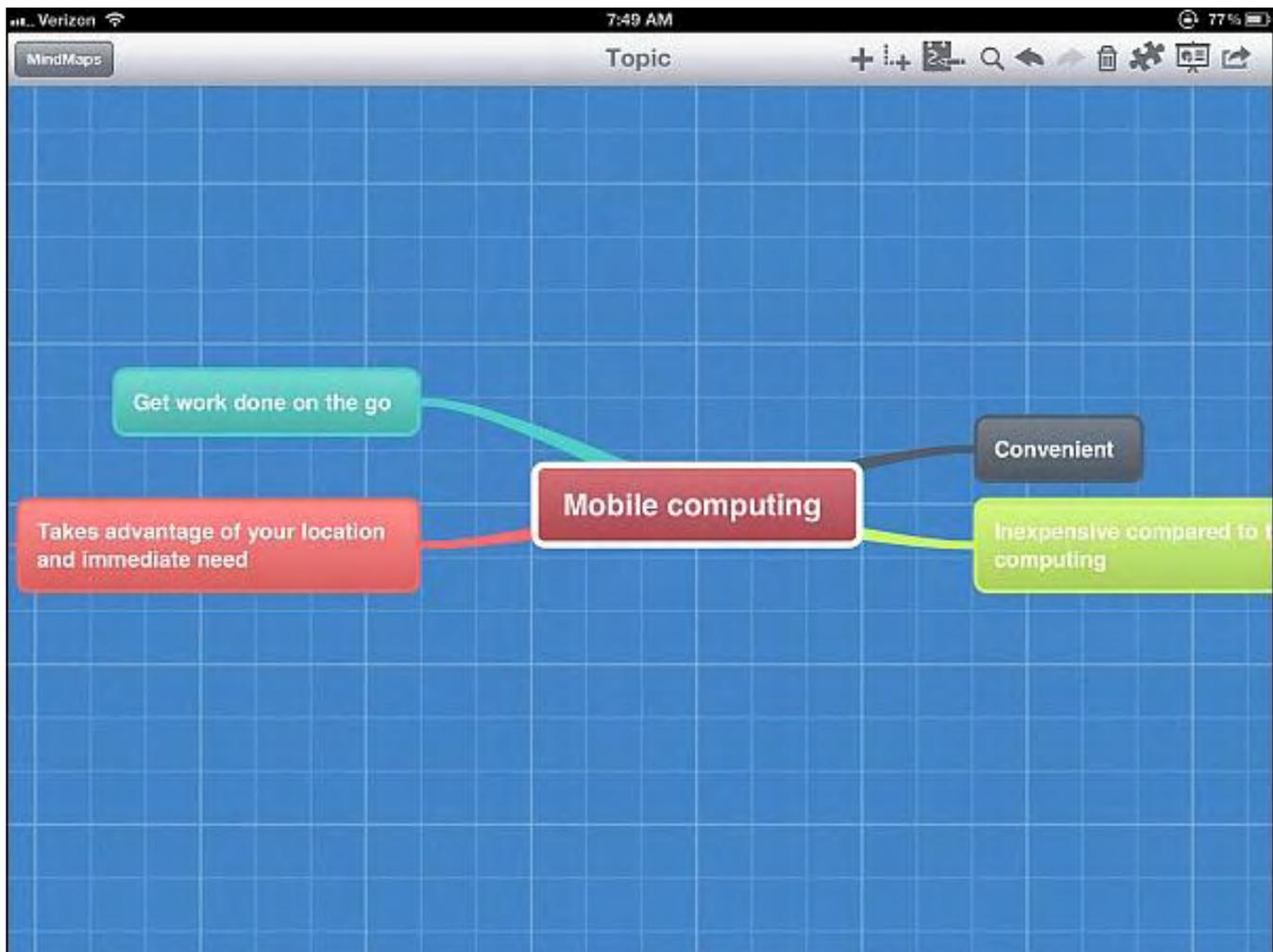


Figure 4. Mind maps let you organize ideas by links that you can rearrange in two-dimensions.

The next time you need to brainstorm, you can start creating a mind map with the MindHD app, which works on both iPhones and iPads. Then as you carry your iPhone or iPad around and come up with another idea, pull out your iPhone/iPad and jot down that new idea on the virtual keyboard. By running on iOS, the MindHD takes advantage of mobile computing so you can edit and view your mind map of related ideas anywhere you go.

Besides making it easy to create and edit mind maps, MindHD offers a unique slide show feature that lets the app highlight each idea in a slideshow. If you connect your iPhone/iPad to a projector, you can present your mind map to others.

Naturally, you can also save your mind map and share it with others through e-mail, Twitter, Facebook, or text messaging. If you have a compatible printer, you can print your mind maps out as well.

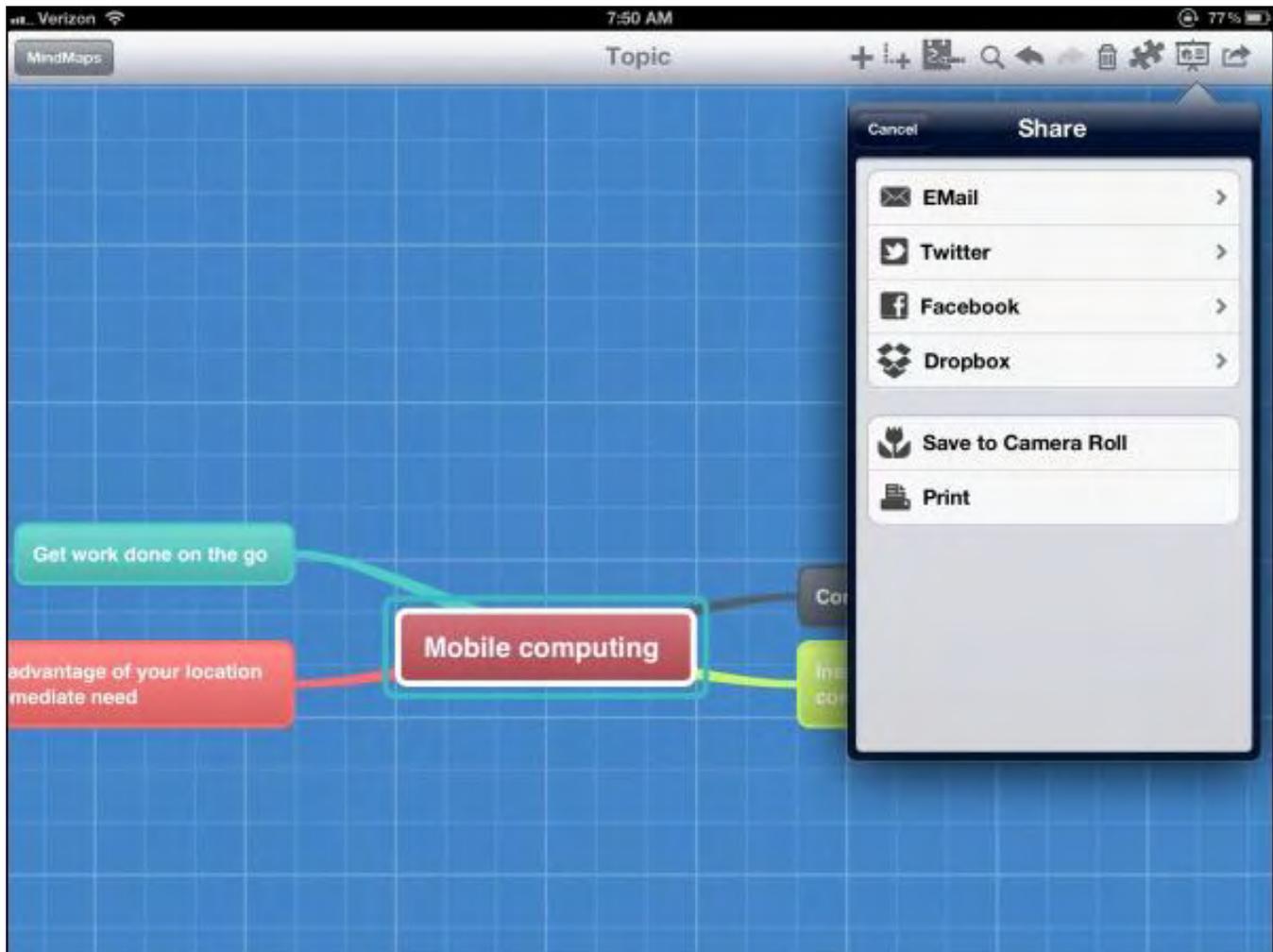


Figure 5. You can share your mind maps with others.

You can find plenty of mind mapping programs for the Macintosh (or Windows PCs), but even if you have a laptop, it's rarely convenient to lug a laptop around all the time, pull it out of its carrying case at a moment's notice, and start editing or viewing your mind map when you need it. With the MindHD app on your iOS device, you can create mind maps on the go whenever you have a new idea. While the smaller screen of an iPhone or iPad may make creating and viewing a mind map less convenient than using a laptop or desktop computer, the trade-off is greater mobility and convenience of having it around when you need it, which is what mobile computing is really all about.

Killing Retail One Store at a Time

Despite the advantage of letting customers see and touch merchandise, retail stores must face the high cost of buying merchandise to display in a retail showroom while leasing expensive commercial property and paying employees to boot. As mail-order competitors offer lower prices that retail stores can't match, the parade of dead and dying retail stores continues to pile up like a bad traffic accident.

Besides experimenting with same-day service, Amazon is now planning to deliver products to storage lockers in public places like convenience stores. The idea is that you order a product from Amazon and rather than have it shipped to your home (where you might not be to pick it up), Amazon delivers it to a storage locker (www.internetretailer.com/2012/08/09/amazon-opens-more-lockers-order-pickup) near you.

By using a code that Amazon sends you, you can open up the locker containing your product. Combine storage lockers with same-day service and people not being home most of the time, you'll soon be able to order something through your smartphone or tablet wherever you are, then head towards the nearest Amazon storage locker to pick up your product a few hours later.

While it still lacks the immediate gratification you can get from taking home a product in a retail store, Amazon's same-day service and storage lockers promise to drive the retail business further into the ground. Retail stores will still be around. They just won't look like today's massive showrooms any more.

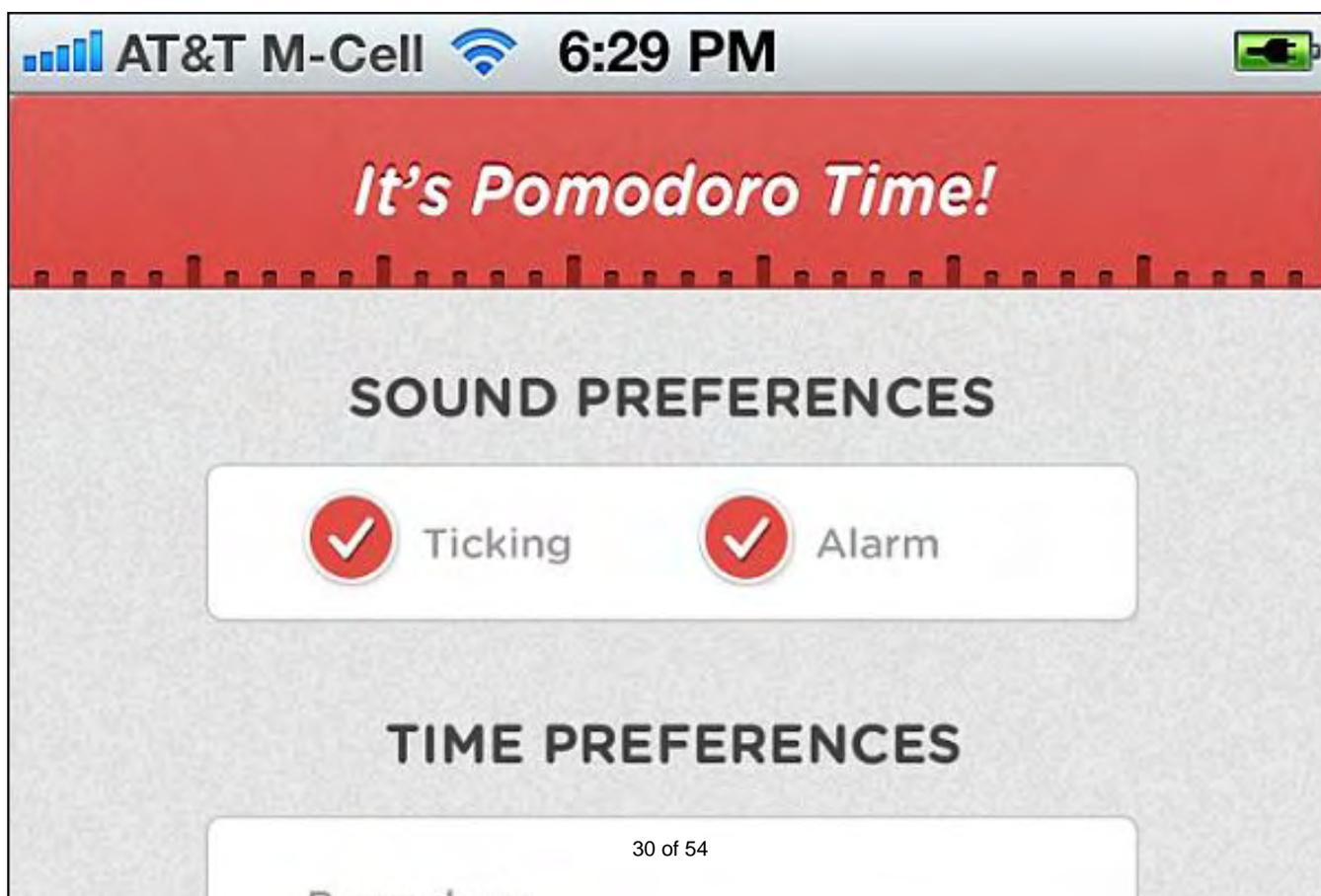
Staying Focused

One common myth is that if you work hard, you'll get more done. Of course, if you work hard on the wrong tasks, you'll just substitute activity for results, which can make you look busy and important while ultimately accomplishing nothing. To achieve results, you need to focus on the tasks that will achieve your goals, whatever those might be. One way to help you stay focused is to use something called the Pomodoro Technique, as explained in the book *Pomodoro Technique Illustrated* (www.amazon.com/gp/product/1934356506/ref=as_li_tf_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=1934356506&linkCode=as2&tag=the15minmovme-20).

The basic idea behind the Pomodoro Technique is to pick a task and focus on it for a fixed amount of time, such as 25 minutes which is called a Pomodoro. Then take a short break of 5 minutes. After this short break, go back to work on your task for another 25 minutes. After four such 25 minutes Pomodoros, take a longer break such as 15 minutes. By forcing you to stay focused for a fixed amount of time, then forcing you to take a break, the Pomodoro Technique claims you can accomplish more. If you allocate time to perform a task and never seem to find the time to get it done, the Pomodoro Technique might be a simple, yet effective way to keep yourself on track.

To help you keep track of time, you could use the ordinary timer that comes with the iPhone, but you might be interested in using the 99 cent It's Pomodoro Time! 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%252Fits-pomodoro-time!%252Fid511682450%253Fmt%253D8%2526uo%253D4%2526partnerId%253D30) for the iPhone and iPad.

By default, the app defines your Pomodoro work time at 25 minutes, short breaks at 5 minutes, and longer breaks at 15 minutes, but you can easily change these settings if you wish. Just make sure you keep the ratio of time roughly the same so you don't want to focus for 5 minutes and then take a short break of 25 minutes.



TIME PREFERENCES

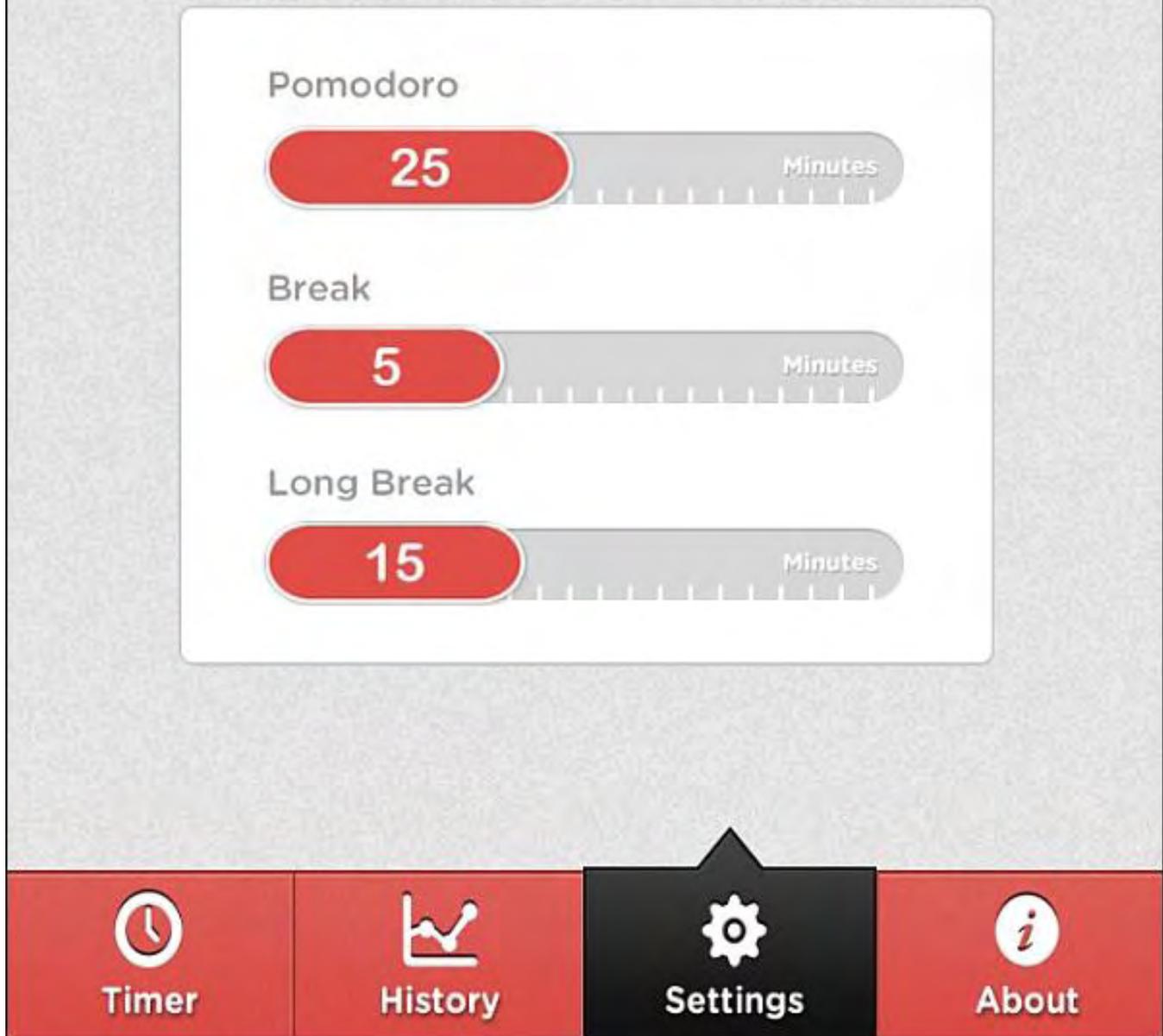


Figure 6. It's Pomodoro Time lets you define your work and break times.

Once you define your settings, run the app and it keeps track of your Pomodoro focus time. When it's time for a break, the app automatically starts timing that too. When you go through four Pomodoros (work sessions), the app lets you know when it's time to take a longer break. Since the app keeps track of your time settings, you just have to follow them on your iPhone or iPad.

Since you can take your iPhone or iPad wherever you go, you can now use the Pomodoro Technique anywhere you happen to be. Such a simple program could easily work on a regular computer, but it's far less convenient to use such a program if you have to lug a laptop with you, open its lid, and start timing yourself while the bulk of the laptop crowds your work area. As a mobile app, It's Pomodoro Time takes advantage of the iPhone or iPad's small size so it's ready whenever you are. If you can easily carry this app with you, you'll be more likely to use it and get more done.



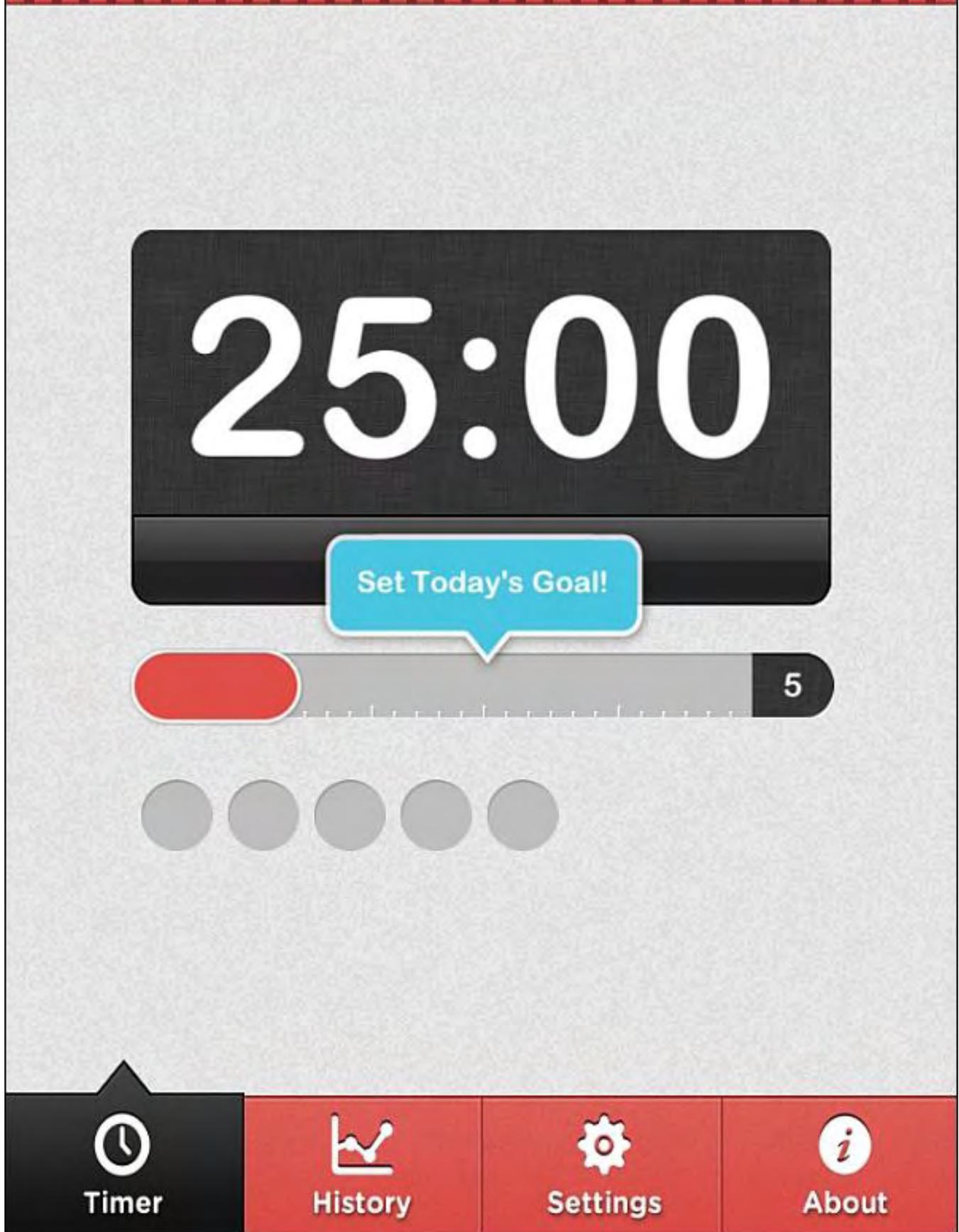


Figure 7. It's Pomodoro Time keeps track of time so you can concentrate on your work.

Thinking More Effectively

While people argue the merits and flaws of Microsoft or Apple products, they're missing the point completely. The actual devices

you use matters far less than how you actually use them. Give a genius a pencil and paper and that person might come up with a revolutionary new idea. Give a supercomputer to a complete imbecile and that moron might come up with the current IRS tax codes.

The main criteria for any tool is whether it's effective or not. It doesn't matter what price you pay for something or how many other people use it if it doesn't give you satisfaction for your purchase. If you buy something that causes more problems than it solves, it's never a bargain no matter how little you paid for it. If reading facts that contradict your belief about a particular tool gets you angry, then the problem isn't the facts (or the person presenting those facts) but your own reaction to that information. Ultimately, it boils down to the boundaries of your own mind.

The best way to recognize the limitations of your thinking is to expose yourself to the thoughts of others, whether you agree with them or not. The way you think defines what opportunities you'll recognize. If you don't see much of a future in your life, it's not because there are no opportunities but because you may not see how to create them with the way you view the world.

One simple way to expose yourself to different ideas is to listen to podcasts. For the iPhone and iPad, Apple has released a dedicated podcast app to make it easy to access the podcasts you want, separate from any music you may have stored on your iPhone or iPad. One podcast you may want to start listening to is 10xTalk (10xtalk.com), produced by Joe Polish (www.joepolish.com) and Dan Sullivan, the author of *The Laws of Lifetime Growth* (www.amazon.com/gp/product/1576754677/ref=as_li_qf_sp_asin_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=1576754677&linkCode=as2&tag=the15minmovme-20).

Both Dan and Joe talk about different ways to market services and products, but ultimately they're discussing nothing more than different strategies for thinking. Rather than simply whine about problems or babble about some business theory that has no real useful application, Joe and Dan talk about how entrepreneurs, and people who want to think like an entrepreneur, can become more effective at whatever they want to do. Load up their podcast and listen to it while driving, exercising, or working at your desk, and you'll see the world from a different perspective that you may not have known even existed before.

In the old days, people used to listen to the radio that played whatever they wanted. Then people had a choice by listening to audiobooks, although cassette tapes and CDs often proved cumbersome to carry all the time. Now with podcasts stored as digital files on an iPhone or iPad, you can take a library of podcasts with you anywhere you go and listen to them at your convenience.

With podcasts, you can open your mind to ideas from some of the best people in their fields. Or you can argue endlessly about trivia like whether a tablet is really a PC, which makes as much sense as arguing whether a trackpad is really a mouse, even though both serve the exact same purpose but solve them in different ways. Given a choice between thinking small or listening to podcasts to help you think big, the choice is yours. Just remember that whatever you choose, you'll have to live with your decision.

* * *

When you're on an airplane, you won't have Internet access unless you pay for it, and even then not all airplanes offer Wi-Fi service. To keep from getting bored, use Safari's Reading List feature. Just visit some Web pages you want to read, click on the Bookmarks menu and choose Add to Reading List.

Now when you're up in the air and stranded in your seat with no Internet access, open Safari again, choose Show Reading List, and pick from the saved Web pages that you want to read on the left side of the screen. This lets you read through different Web pages without an Internet connection. Obviously you can't get real-time updates such as weather or sports scores, but you can read your favorite sites as another way to keep yourself amused while traveling with your Macintosh laptop.



Figure 8. Safari's Reading List feature lets you save and read Web pages at a later time, even without an Internet connection.

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=1590791894)

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

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

Mac Programming For Absolute Beginners (www.amazon.com/gp/product/1430233362?)

ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=1430233362)
99% Fairy Tales (Children's Stories the 1% Tell About the Rest of Us) (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B006QSKM3A/ref=as_li_tf_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=B006QSKM3A)
The Zen of Effortless Selling with Moe Abdou (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B006PUFPGI/ref=as_li_tf_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=B006PUFPGI)
The 15-Minute Movie Method (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B004TMD9K8/ref=as_li_tf_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=B004TMD9K8)

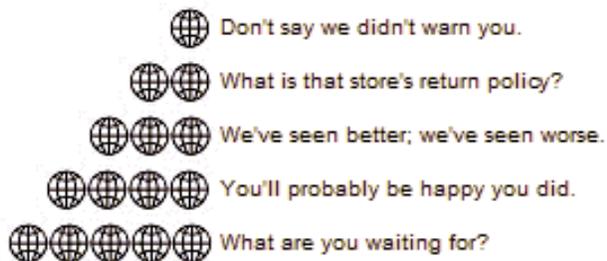
In his spare time, Wally likes blogging about movies and writing screenplays at his site "The 15 Minute Movie Method. (www.15minutemoviemethod.com/)" Wally can be reached at wally@computoredge.com.

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Worldwide News & Product Reviews

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



Five Back-to-School Apps for Your Smartphone; Please Hack my Smartphone—Five Surefire Tips; "State of the Web" Threat Report; Roku 2 XS 1080p Streaming Player.

Five Back-to-School Apps for Your Smartphone

Rebekah Nicodemus of Atomic PR has five free apps (some for iPhone, some for Android, some for both) to help with the back-to-school transition. Check the Apple App Store and Google's Android Market. (Note: The free versions of Cozi and iRewardChart are ad-supported.):

For kids, going back to school means new outfits, school photos and seeing friends again. It also means cracking open the textbooks, juggling homework and activities, and getting back to a regular schedule. For parents, the school year's start means chaotic schedules, budgeting and making sure the kids have healthy lunches. With the right smartphone apps, parents and kids can have their personal assistant, homework helper, traffic reporter and more in their pockets.

1. Cozi Family Organizer—Keep organization at your fingertips with this app. Text and e-mail reminders keep the whole family in the loop no matter how packed their schedules are. Families can manage important school dates, homework assignments, extra-curriculars (like club and sports schedules), carpools, and even download school district calendars with Cozi. Other features include meal planning, shopping lists and a private family journal to share those precious first day of school photos with Grandma.



2. iRewardChart—Bring the traditional reward chart to your mobile device with this app. iRewardChart offers a customizable interface that helps parents keep track of their children’s good behavior (including doing their homework and chores on time), and reward them appropriately.



3. Stanza—Choose from over 50,000 free classic novels and recent original works available from Project Gutenberg with Stanza. With this app, you will have immediate access to many of the books and reference materials your kids will need for English class and book reports this year.

4. StudyBlue—Make instant flashcards so your kids can study wherever they are with this app that gives them instant access to every note they need. Voice-to-text and photo capabilities make it easy and fun to make handheld flashcards for studying on the go.



5. Waze—This social app is powered by users and includes live maps, real-time traffic updates and turn-by-turn navigation. Waze can ease the morning carpool and commute crunch, and you might even help other drivers in your neighborhood by showing them new routes that they never even knew about.

Please Hack my Smartphone—Five Surefire Tips



Alan Wlasuk

Web security expert, Alan Wlasuk, managing partner of 403 Web Security (403.wddinc.com/about-us) writes in this week about the growing security threat to smartphone users and what you can do about it:

Smartphone security threats are increasing, according to the new Symantec Internet safety report, and the two biggest malware offenders spy on users and collect device data. This indicates that cyber criminals are adapting to the mobile world and making it their playground. Most consumers view themselves as an unidentified target but with the rise in mobile business and the "bring your own device" trend, consumers should always fear the hacker.

When I was growing up, my father used to have a saying: "Beauty is only skin deep, but dumb goes clear to the bone." Feel free to draw your own conclusions.

As we collectively wander America with our ubiquitous smartphones glued to our lives, most of us don't realize how fragile the relationship really is with this device. Think about it—you have your diary, wallet, phone, social support system and best friend all wrapped up in one piece of hardware. One slip, and it's all toast.

Your diary is hidden under the mattress; your wallet is securely tucked in your jeans; and your best friend knows your girlfriend is way off limits. Yet your smartphone gets left on the counter at Starbucks and you continue to download apps written in a cyber crime-lab in Ukraine. "Bone-deep dumb" is well within the reach of us all.

Smartphone security disasters come in many forms. Given my security background and, honestly, my circle of friends and relatives, I think I may have seen every smartphone judgment mistake known to mankind.

For your entertainment, education and help in avoiding a big "Hack me, please" sign on your back, I've listed my Top Five Smartphone Mistakes below:

1. Download apps from unverified sources. Whether you know it or not, every app on your smartphone is a potential security risk. A well-meaning app treats you fair, while a malicious app might be recording your keystrokes, accessing your contact list and signing you up for expensive services you never wanted. Every app is a potential risk, but the ones you download from unauthorized sources are far riskier. Either play within the lines (authorized Apple, Google and Microsoft app stores) or risk an unexpected friend sharing your smartphone with you. Yeah, I know, that new version of Happy Bugs that just went viral is so tempting and your best friend did recommend it—but stay away.
2. Jailbreak your smartphone. There seems to be some appeal to be the guy at lunch who holds up his smartphone and proudly says it's been jailbroken (modified to bypass the original security features). At the risk of offending my tech fiends, I always think of this as the geek version of, "Hey, y'all, watch this!" There's a reason they don't let lawn tractors into hotel lobbies, just as there's a reason to trust Apple, Google and Microsoft to have built smartphone operating systems (OS) that protect us from security risks. (OK—everyone who thinks they are smarter than the guys at Google, mount your lawn tractors for the 3 a.m. race.)
3. Going smartphone commando—no passcode. Think about the embarrassment of having a bunch of high-school students sitting around the lunch table wandering through your smartphone! This would be so easy to arrange; just drop your smartphone by accident at the mall without a passcode set. E-mails and photos would be hit first (are any of us safe?), then social apps, and finally any app that could be used for fun and profit. The guitar you just unexpectedly bought for a deserving, yet unknown 16-year-old through your eBay account might be the least of your problems. Explaining your new Facebook status (your upcoming marriage to the Russian cross-dresser) to Grandma might be a bit more of a problem. You will misplace your smartphone sometime in the future—why make it easy for a teen to get it?

Fun fact: 62 percent of smartphone users do not use password protection on their smartphones. (Javelin Strategy & Research)

4. Pride goes before a fall or its smartphone equivalent. So, you're thinking you're one of the smart ones—you've added a passcode and you never, ever download an app that doesn't have a pedigree. Given this feeling of safety, you are storing all kinds of private, secret and embarrassing things on your smartphone. The good news is that the average bear will be thoroughly thwarted by a passcode-protected smartphone. The bad news is that the pasty-looking kid living in his mom's basement could break your code in about 30 minutes. Maybe keeping those pictures from Las Vegas are not the best idea.

Repeat after me—there are no secrets; there are no secure smartphones.

5. Smartphone OS updates are never optional. We're not building rockets here, but when your crazy boyfriend moves out, it's time to change the locks. It's inexpensive, and your flat-panel TV will be there when you get home from work.

It's a cyber war out there; hackers figure out new ways to compromise smartphones, and then new OS versions are released to neutralize the vulnerabilities. When Apple, Google or Microsoft send out a new OS update, it almost always means they have discovered and fixed a security problem. The more updates you skip, the more likely you are to get hacked during normal smartphone operations. Think of the hackers as your crazy ex and Apple (or Google or Microsoft) as handling the new locks. The bill you get for the fake calls to Bolivia (remember that seedy Web site you visited?) will cost you more than a new TV.

A final tip from my dad: Never pay for a subway token with a \$50 bill.

"State of the Web" Threat Report

Bryan De Palma sent in the Q2 Zscaler ThreatLabZ "State of the Web" Security Research Report:

Zscaler ThreatLabZ, the research arm of Zscaler, The Cloud Security Company, is today issuing its quarterly "State of the Web" report.

- 1 out of 5 URLs is likely to be malicious—about one fifth of the 30,156 Web sites tested by users of Zulu (a free service providing real-time security risk and site reputation information) were scored as "highest risk."
- Applications replacing browsers—about 20% of all Web transactions were initiated from applications rather than traditional browsers.
- Most common enterprise security policy blockades—Social network usage is most commonly blocked by corporate security policy. See what else is big on "block" lists.
- Resurgence of FakeAV and Blackhat SEO—Google search engine results being poisoned are again on the rise, with users redirected to FakeAV malware or fraud sites.
- Top-most trusted Web sites are being compromised—prominent Web sites continue to be compromised with hosting injections and malicious content. Sites like Computerworld Mexico and the French Minister of Budget were noted, and researchers also show the top Alexa sites compromised as well as top-rated Google SafeBrowsing sites.
- 15 most frequented Web sites by enterprise users—Zscaler ThreatLabZ has categorized the 15 most commonly-accessed [by enterprise users] Web content categories.
- List of top Web applications—Researchers have also broken down the top Web applications accessed by enterprise users.
- Security by the researchers, for the people—Zscaler ThreatLabZ does something really cool; its researchers develop and then offer free to all some valuable security tools and services. It also makes available research reports and whitepapers. The latest releases issued this quarter are listed in the report.

The Zscaler ThreatLabZ quarterly research report also contains other updates such as these:

- Apple continues its mobile device dominance—iOS continued its upward swing at 56% of all mobile device usage (up from 48% in Q1), while Android usage remained on a slow decline at 34%, down from 37% last quarter.
- Facebook use sees a slight uptick—the social media giant has remained the top dog dominating all Web application usage, but was on a downward trend since Q2 2011, plunging from 52% in Q1 2011 to 41% in Q1 2012. However, this quarter marked the first in 12 months that Facebook use saw an increase from the previous quarter—now at 42%, up one point from last quarter.
- Fewer users on Gmail—while last quarter saw 18% of all Web application traffic heading to Gmail, this quarter observed a drop to 15% of such.
- Users slow to update Adobe Reader—the number of installed Adobe Reader plug-ins that were outdated remained stagnant from Q1 at 62%, representing the largest client-side vulnerable attack surface.

Apple's growing market share is evident—Internet Explorer usage declined during the quarter from 54% in April to 52% in June and Safari experienced a corresponding increase in traffic from 10% in April to 11.5% in June.

Roku 2 XS 1080p Streaming Player

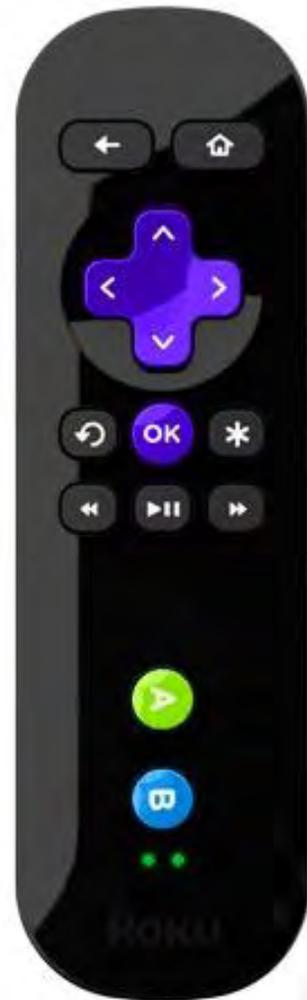
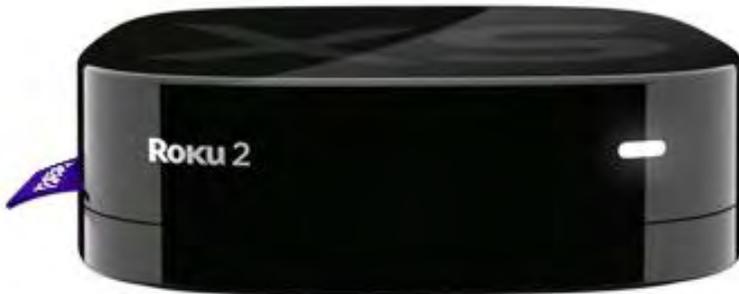
We've been fooling around with a Roku 2 XS streaming player for the past few weeks and, I've got to tell you, it's a pretty neat little gadget. And little is the right word. The entire unit is less than 4" x 4" and just an inch thick. The only other accessories are a small wall wart power supply and a remote control.



Roku makes several iterations of the player. The top-of-the-line XS is the only one with a USB port which allows you to plug in a flash drive and play back videos right off the drive. No AVI support, but MP4s look great.

ROKU 2 XS

STREAMING PLAYER



The company offers two versions of the original Roku player and two Roku 2s, ranging in price from \$49.99 to \$99.99 with free shipping from Roku direct (shop.roku.com). The original (non-2) models have 720p resolution, the two Roku 2's push it up to 1080p. All models offer standard pre-third millennium 480 res, but ... c'mon. You get all that gorgeous video via the built-in HDMI port (you need to provide your own HDMI cable).



Only the XS (the highest-priced model) comes with an Ethernet port and a USB port. All versions have extended-range Wireless N (Wi-Fi b/g/n compatible).

The two Roku 2s have a slot for a microSD card—but don't be fooled, that storage space isn't for your family pics or vids, it's strictly for expanding the number of channels to which you subscribe. So, if you want to watch external media, be sure to get the aforementioned XS, the one with the USB slot.

One of the most common channels customers will want to visit is Netflix—built into every model. Even with the pokey 200 kbps Internet service I get coming into my North County San Diego log cabin (you read it right; that's a "k" NOT an "m"!), we were able to watch movies and TV shows at decent resolution with virtually no buffering hiccups.

And Netflix is free on the Roku 2, assuming you already have—or get—a monthly paid subscription to the Netflix service. Which, by-the-way, is in stark contrast to the Xbox 360, which is also a surprisingly good entertainment streamer, but lamely requires that you pay as much as \$9.95 a month for their Gold Service. Let the gamers pay for Gold and stop charging Netflix viewers, Microsoft.

Other channels that can be added-on include Hulu Plus, Amazon Instant Video, Crackle (free movies, with ads), Pandora, Facebook, CNBC, Fox News, NBA Game Time, Jeopardy, Showtime, and dozens if not hundreds more. You can also download additional content like media players, games and utilities.

The (\$99.99) XS we tested comes with a free version of Angry Birds. Looks and plays fantastic. The special enhanced RF remote that comes only with the XS allows you wave it around like a Wii wand to control action on the screen. Pretty cool. Some users report that the game takes up so much memory that it slowed up the Roku 2 XS's basic operational functions. If you're having trouble getting your unit to respond crisply, try uninstalling Angry Birds. They won't be mad.

All-in-all, an amazing gizmo—and there's even a 30-day money back guarantee, if you buy from Roko.com. Just make sure you 1) get the right model for your needs and 2) don't have 2 TB of AVI video you want to watch.



4.0 globes

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

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

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

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

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

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

compositions.

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

Learn more at www.charlescarr.com.

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Without MP3s, Life Would Be an Error

Without MP3s, Life Would Be an Error

“or, On the Evolution of Online Music Distribution” by Matthew W. Beale

Ryan Adams' Limited Edition Bootlegs Go Digital; Live after Deaf; Pearl Jam's Digital Bootleg Culture; CDBaby SoundCloud = ?; The Dark Knight Rises and Aurora

Ryan Adams' Limited Edition Bootlegs Go Digital



Bootleg culture is among the things in this life that's sort of passed me by—well, something I just never "got." Although there are intriguing possibilities of perhaps even experiencing a version of a concert that took place before I was born, I'm simply not into some of the bands that tend to be synonymous with bootlegs. Ridiculous psychological barriers aside for the moment, sound quality might have been another issue. But high quality so-called bootlegs exist—official ones, too.

Bootlegs have been disseminated in various ways over the years, but the Internet has obviously made it easier to trade and sell, and technological advances have improved the quality of the recordings themselves. The Internet Archive (archive.org) is a free online source of live recordings from bands who are "trade-friendly"—or have consented to allow the posting of their live shows—offering a range of lossless media options, that includes FLAC and Ogg Vorbis, along with 64k and VBR MP3.

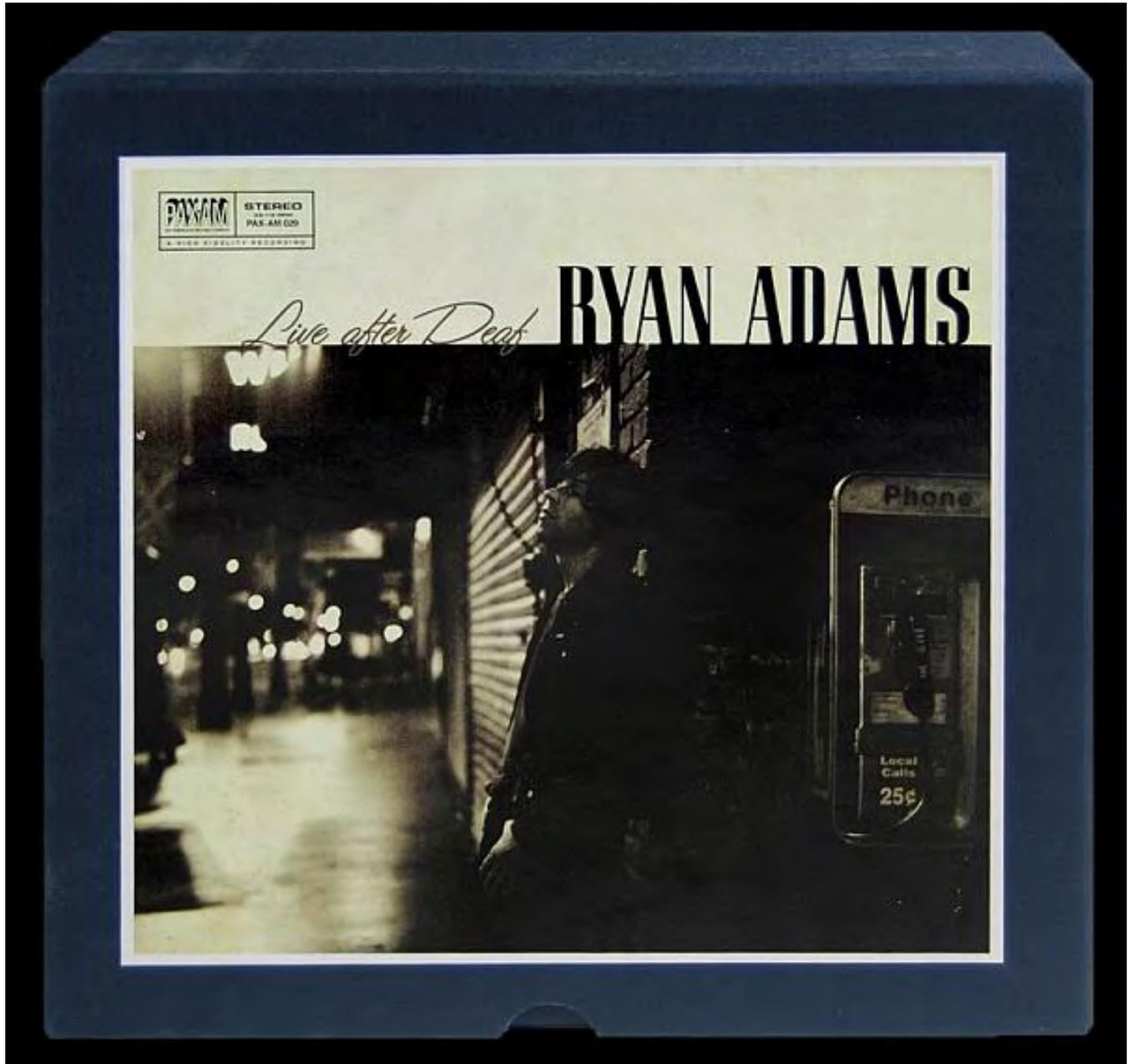
The screenshot shows the Internet Archive website interface. At the top, there is a navigation menu with options like 'Web', 'Moving Images', 'Texts', 'Audio', 'Software', 'Patron Info', 'About IA', and 'Projects'. Below the menu, there is a search bar with the text 'Live Music Archive' and a 'GO' button. The main content area displays the title 'Camper Van Beethoven Live at The Odeon on 2004-10-31' and provides details about the collection, including the date (October 31, 2004), venue (The Odeon), and location (Cleveland OH). On the left side, there is a 'Listen to audio' section with a play button and a list of audio files for download, including VBR M3U (Hi-Fi), 64kbps M3U (Lo-Fi), ZIP (41.5 M), ZIP (131.9 M), and Ogg Vorbis. The page also includes a 'Taped by: NI' and 'Keywords: Live concert'.

Camper Van Beethoven is a great example of a band that participates, permitting people to upload media to the Live Music

Archive (available through a partnership with etree.org). According to the band's rights statement: "We have a simple taping policy. It's okay with us to tape live Camper Van Beethoven performances and trade them freely, so long as no money changes hands." Fans can download individual songs (or an entire MP3 .ZIP concert) in their choice of format, and they can also stream—again, gratis.

As mentioned, there are also bands who have been experimenting with the release their own official bootlegs. In 2009, for instance, The Flaming Lips included a free recording of a concert with the cost of a ticket (delivered afterwards, obviously). They're not the only ones, and Ryan Adams received some attention recently with a release of his own.

Live after Deaf



In the summer of 2011, Ryan Adams returned to performing publicly for the first time since being diagnosed with Meniere's disease two years earlier—a condition that can include such symptoms as Vertigo and hearing loss. The 15 acoustic sets that comprised his European tour were recorded and released in a vinyl box set that was initially a bit enigmatic. Fans were given, along with an image that appeared to be, yes, a box set, a date and a time to sign on to Adams' Kung Fu Store (kungfustore.com) site to see what was being released. After the site reportedly crashed because of an overwhelming response, the

rescheduled event/release reportedly sold out of physical copies in 8 minutes.

"Live After Deaf chronicles the 15-date June 2011 UK/Europe tour that marked Ryan's return to live performance," according to Adams' Web site. "Sandwiched between the completion of his acclaimed Ashes & Fire and its October 2011 release, the shows were the first of a solo acoustic tour."

The collected 15 vinyl LP set included 144 songs, and 30 bonus tracks were added for the digital MP3 release, which is being sold as an entire set or by the specific show through Amazon and iTunes (each of the 174 digital tracks is also available individually). A lucky few were able to pick up the entire digital set for \$8.99 for a limited time on Amazon, a collection that now retails for \$119.99.

When asked if another series of recorded shows would become available at some point, Adams' manager said, "I'm sure we'll release more live material, but there are no immediate plans for any sort of series." For more information, visit PAX-AM Records (paxamrecords.com)

Pearl Jam's Digital Bootleg Culture



Pearl Jam has never discouraged the recording of its performances, but in 2000, they began a larger experiment to distribute their own bootleg concert recordings. With minimal packaging, they initially sold CDs for each of their shows with little more than the essential info of the city, date, and set list—but, most importantly, the sound was relatively good (and yes, we'd certainly presume that the artists received compensation).

According to Nicole Vandenberg, a Pearl Jam spokesperson, "numerous bootlegged audience recordings would always surface for each show," so the "official bootleg releases were born from the band's desire to provide a more affordable and better quality

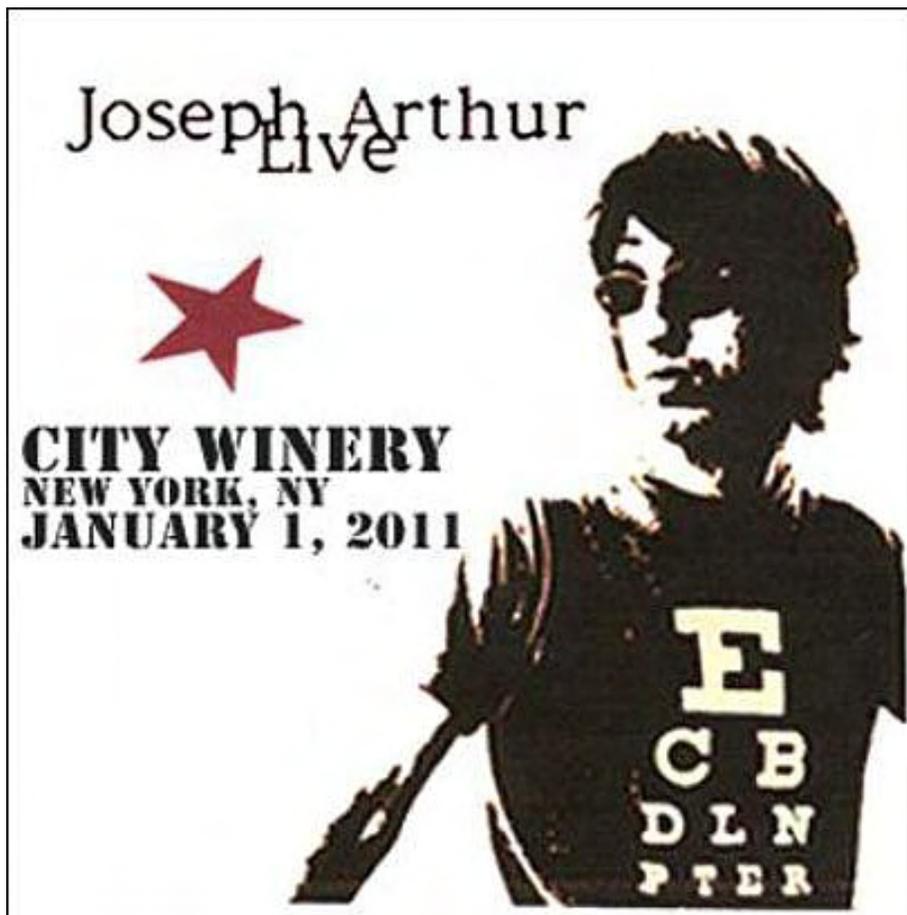
product for their fans."

Pearl Jam's Bootlegs have evolved. Although the recordings were available for a short time exclusively in digital format, the band now offers a choice of either CD or download via MP3 or FLAC—and have now added HD FLAC. Having just finished a tour of Europe, Pearl Jam is now releasing their "EuroTour 2012" Bootlegs—the first of which was recorded on June 20th in Manchester—and premiering them "on Pearl Jam Radio a week before they are available for sale on pearljam.com," said Vandenberg.

Pearl Jam Radio, available on Sirius XM, "features archival concerts from throughout Pearl Jam's celebrated 20+ year career, rarities, unreleased material from the band's personal music library and music from the band's side projects, including solo and pre-Pearl Jam music," added Vandenberg.

As it turns out—according to Pearl Jam's experience, thus far at least—fewer audiophiles are apparently choosing digital formats. "Not many people order FLAC, but we make it available for those who want it because the sound quality is much higher. Even fewer order HD-FLAC, but we offer it for the same reason," said Vandenberg. (Somewhere, a group of vinyl junkies are high-fiving each other.)

For more information, and to look through the catalog of PJ Bootlegs going back to 2008, visit the Pearl Jam (pearljam.com) Web site.



Entirely as a coincidence at press time, as I was e-mailing the first draft of this story to my editor, I received something from Joseph Arthur announcing that years worth of live recordings were on sale during a "summer blowout." The prolific singer-songwriter has evidently become known for recording sets and selling CD-Rs of them immediately after a show. For a limited time, shows going back to 2003 (and one from 2000) are \$5 a pop—as an AAC, FLAC, or MP3 download—at Joseph Arthur (JosephArthur.com).

CDBaby + SoundCloud = ?



SoundCloud (soundcloud.com) recently announced a partnership with CDBaby (www.cdbaby.com), a company that boasts being "the world's largest online distributor of independent music." Since Soundcloud claims that it's "the world's leading social sound platform," besides exhibiting an apparent overabundance of hubris, there's got to be something to all this.

Well, there is. It might make it easier for listeners to discover and support some great independent artists, at generally affordable prices. For musicians, the combination of the two services offers another potentially viable alternative to working with a traditional record label (an option and business model that's growing exponentially thanks to the Internet and digital music).

The Dark Knight Rises and Aurora



I've allotted space in each column for a review an MP3 release—in this case, I need to discuss two that are inextricably linked, unfortunately, by tragedy. The first is the soundtrack to *The Dark Knight Rises*, released in the week leading up to the much-anticipated debut of the final part of Christopher Nolan's trilogy.

Hans Zimmer scored *Batman Begins* with James Newton Howard (who also scored *The Hunger Games* and *The Sixth Sense*, among others). Zimmer then took the reigns, however, working solo on both *The Dark Knight* and *The Dark Knight Rises*. Nolan, the director, reinvented and reimagined the film franchise, drawing upon the darker and more somber tones of some of the Batman literature in comics and graphic novels. Zimmer sought to match Nolan's efforts—to create an atmosphere that would equal his vision.

"I have never worked with someone so dedicated to the idea that the real risk is in playing it safe," said Nolan. "Hans taught me that you sometimes have to go in what appears to be the wrong direction to discover all the possibilities, and that without exploring those possibilities you can never do anything truly exceptional."

For a lot of people, the film itself was worth the three-year wait, and the soundtrack is a wonderful complement. But it's impossible to talk about *The Dark Knight Returns* now without acknowledging what happened on this side of the screen, the truly horrific events that claimed twelve lives in the early hours of July 21st. Appropriately, the second highlight of this section is Aurora.

AURORA

A COMPOSITION BY HANS ZIMMER

Also by Zimmer, the digital released Aurora is a sort of elegiac choral piece with proceeds going to GivingFirst (*GivingFirst.org*)—run by Colorado-based Community First Foundation—which "provides a quick, secure way to find nonprofits that are assisting the victims and their families affected by this devastating occurrence," according to president and CEO Marla J. Williams. "I recorded the song in London in the days following the tragedy as a heartfelt tribute to the victims and their families," said Zimmer in a press release. The track is available for download from iTunes, and WaterTowerMusic (Warner Bros.) where you can pay/donate between \$.10 and \$25 (watertowermusic.moontoast.com/estore/embed/1336).

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 Significantly, I'm returning to work after a prolonged personal leave, functioning in the capacity as a caregiver. Please feel free to contact me with story ideas or suggestions about digital music releases at withoutmusiclifewouldbeanerror@hushmail.com (@).

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Editor's Letters: Tips and Thoughts from Readers

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

"Dropbox Loses All Data If Computer Crashes?" "Videos in Firefox," "Android," "NASA App Available for Android"

Dropbox Loses All Data If Computer Crashes?

[Regarding the August 10 Digital Dave column:]

Maybe I didn't understand, but are you saying that if my hard drive dies and I rebuild my system and reinstall Dropbox with my valid username and password, all my data at Dropbox will be gone?

-Rich Ernst, San Diego, CA

Sorry to be unclear. No, I'm saying just the opposite. Your data should be fine since Dropbox should never have detected your computer problem. The crash probably would have prevented that from happening. As far as Dropbox is concerned, you never lost the data in the first place. Since your computer crashed, it could not signal that any files had changed. Therefore, when you reinstall Dropbox and login, all the files that you still have on Dropbox should automatically load onto your computer.

-Dave

Videos in Firefox

[Regarding the August 3 Digital Dave column:]

In response to the problem with videos not working properly in Firefox, I have found that in the most recent Firefox update not all videos behave the way they did previously. Often a blank black screen will appear as if the video wants to start but never does. I have found that if I expand the video window to full screen using the icon in the upper right hand corner the video will play and will continue playing even if the window is reduced back using the minimize icon.

Don't know why it's like this and not all videos act up. But give it a try.

-John H, Encinitas, CA

Android

I may switch from iPhone to Android, and wonder if anyone is or will make an Android desktop, as well, if I sell my iMac.

Thanks,

-Lee Juskalian, Cardiff, CA

There are rumors of Google working on Android for the desktop (www.pcworld.com/businesscenter/article/250608/android_coming_soon_to_a_desktop_near_you.html) and a USB thumb drive-sized Android mini-PC (liliputing.com/2012/08/89-android-mini-pc-with-1-6-ghz-arm-cortex-a9-cpu.html) has been announced. Wouldn't sell your iMac, yet—unless you never use it.

-Editor, ComputerEdge

NASA App Available for Android

[Regarding the August 10 Wally Wangs Apple Farm column:]

While this is a Mac column, you use it to bash Windows/PCs regularly, you might at least include the fact that the NASA Be a Martian app is also available for Android devices.

-Rich Ernst, San Diego, CA

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

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