

ComputerEdge™ Online — 11/02/12



This issue: Stop! Before You Download Windows 8 Upgrade for that Old PC!

Your dream of upgrading that old Vista machine may go up in smoke, plus Digital Dave, Wally Wang, adding more symbols to your Windows keyboard, and computer humor from Marilyn Martin.

Table of Contents:

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

Digital Dave answers your tech questions.
Can't Remove Wisdom Toolbar (Continued); How to Remove Unwanted Software.

[Stop! Before You Download Windows 8 Upgrade for that Old PC!](#) by Jack Dunning

Even though it's only \$39.99, the Windows 8 Upgrade may not work on your old Windows computer!
Using Windows 8 Upgrade Assistant: The Windows 8 Upgrade download is here. You may have installed Windows 8 Consumer Preview on that old machine, but that doesn't guarantee that the final release upgrade will install. Plus, you may not find out it won't work until after you've paid for it.

[AutoHotkey Tips for Windows: Add Currency Symbols and More to Your Keyboard!](#) by Jack Dunning

A Windows tip for adding special characters to your editing. . . then make it quicker with AutoHotkey
Bring Pennies (¢), British Pounds (£), Euros (€), Degrees (°), Plus or Minus signs (±), and much more to your keyboard with Windows Character Map and single lines of AutoHotkey code.

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

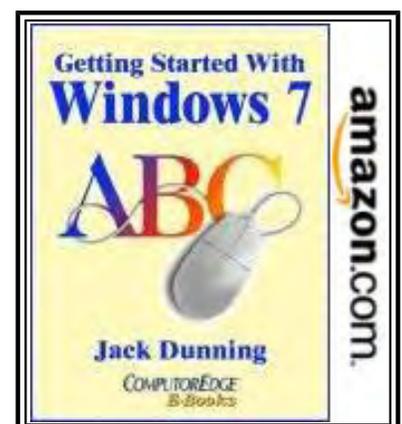
Apple Financial Results
Apple Financial Results; The iPad mini and the Microsoft Surface; The Death of Physical Media; A Visit to Best Buy (or Why Microsoft and Apple Started Their Own Stores); Memorize Something; The Little House on 5th Street; Hands on with the Microsoft Surface Tablet; The Dashboard Display.

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

Younger Generations: "If Only Life Could Be More Like a



(Click Banner)



(Click Banner)

Computer"

Amusing anecdotes about how computers have influenced life.

DEPARTMENTS:

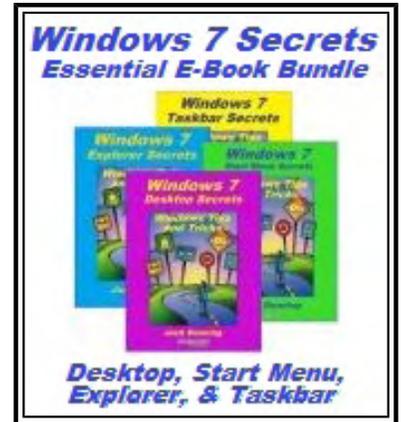
[Editor's Letters: Tips and Thoughts from Readers](#) by ComputerEdge Staff

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

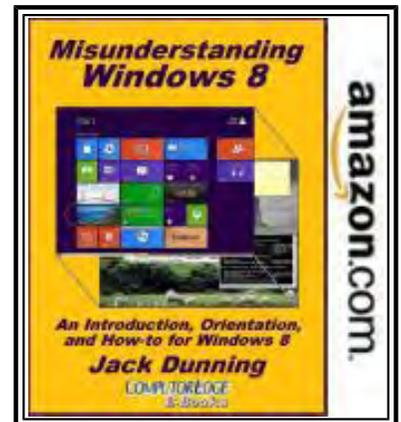
"Realtek Audio Drivers," "Recurring Spam in Name of a Friend," "Statistics"



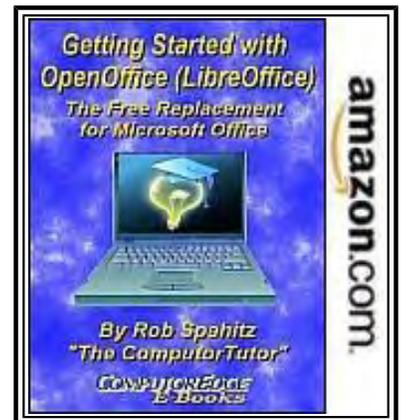
(Click Banner)



(Click Banner)



(Click Banner)



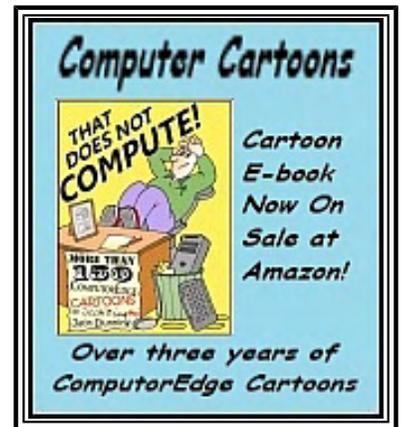
(Click Banner)



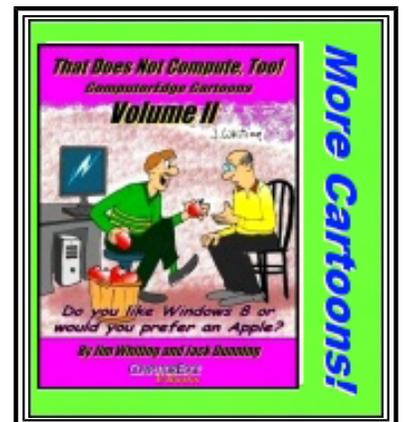
(Click Banner)



(Click Banner)



(Click Banner)



(Click Banner)

Send mail to ceeditor@computoredge.com with questions about editorial content.

Send mail to cwebmaster@computoredge.com with questions or comments about this Web site.

Copyright © 1997-2012 The Byte Buyer, Inc.

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

[Return to Table of Contents](#)



Digital Dave

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

Can't Remove Wisdom Toolbar (Continued); How to Remove Unwanted Software.

Dear Digital Dave,

Thanks for the speedy reply to my question on the Wisdom Toolbar.

Unfortunately, I cannot follow their directions because there is no reference to Wisdom on the (my) Control Panel. And a "Search" session did not turn up any Wisdom reference.

(And while writing this note a big pitch came up for obtaining some info on some software I could purchase.)

And needless to say the Wisdom tool bar still haunts me—Halloween?

*Alfred Donlevy
Vista, CA*

Dear Alfred,

Removing unwanted software can get complicated. The place to look for the program is in "Add or Remove Program" in Windows XP or "Programs and Features" in other versions of Windows (found in the Control Panel). You will not see any reference to Wisdom in the Control Panel itself.

Having said that, see the answer to Gabby's question below. There are more ideas.

Digital Dave

Dear Digital Dave,

Through the years you have answered the two questions I have asked and you really have bailed me out. For that I thank you again. So if you don't want to mess with this one I'll understand.

Well, anyway...two years ago I got a new Dell desktop. Ever since, every once in a while, right after boot up I get a pop-up called Advanced Registry Optimizer. I'll bet you've heard of it. It says to remove it to "click here." When I do, another message says, "Please choose A.R.O. from add and remove programs and click "remove" to uninstall. I do that, then I get I get an error message that says "C:/ProgramFiles (X86)/A.R.O./unins000.dat does not exist. Cannot uninstall." What do I do to get rid of it? It really bugs me that I can't dump it. If you have time I'd appreciate your advice. Thanks in advance.

*Gabby DeDonato
San Clemente, CA*

Dear Gabby,

Lately I've received many questions involving the removal of unwanted software. The process can be complicated (as noted in the answer to Alfred's question above). I think that it's best for me to outline an overall problem solving approach to removing software. There may be other ways to accomplish the same thing, but this is the approach I take.

1. Search the Web for the problem. Is it a virus?

Whenever I see something unusual pop up on my computer screen (or receive a letter with a similar issue), I do a Web search using Google for "problems" along with the software name or words in the pop-ups. By including words such as "problem" or "uninstall" I will get more hits from blogs or forums which have encountered similar type issues with my problem.

First, I want to know what I am dealing with. Is it malware or merely an unwanted program? There is a big difference.

If it is malware, then I will try to remove it with my antivirus software. Usually the Web search will yield some specifics about how I can remove the malware. I may need to try different antivirus programs, or there may be registry entries which need to be edited or removed. If that doesn't work then I will try Step 2, "Return to an Earlier Restore Point." In many cases, I may try returning to the Restore Point first. In worst case scenarios, it may be necessary to do a clean install of the operating system. However, a reinstall is a last resort.

If the Web search shows the program to be merely an annoying piece of software, then there are a number of steps that I can take to try to eliminate it from my system. In some cases, the problem will be resolved almost immediately. In others, it may take a number of steps and get a little messy.

2. Return to an Earlier Restore Point with System Restore

Often—especially if the problem has just popped up—returning to an earlier Restore Point with System Restore will do the job, as long as you have a Restore Point from before the time the software was installed. (Gabby, since you've had the problem for two years, it's unlikely you will have a useful Restore Point.) The easiest way to open System Restore is to do a search from the Start Menu in Windows Vista or Windows 7. Also, doing a search in Windows Help will give direct links to System Restore.

3. If the Problem Happens in a Web Browser

If it's a Web browser issue, you only see the problem when you're using a specific browser (toolbars, etc.), check in the browser Tools => Extension (or Add-ons). You should be able to at least disable (and possibly remove) the extension from there. If you can't remove it from the browser or it's not a Web browser problem, then move to Step 4.

4. Look in "Programs and Features" ("Add and Remove Program" in Windows XP)

Note: If there is an uninstall program in the folder for the software (it should appear in the Start Menu under the program name), give it a try first.

All programs installed on your computer should appear in the Control Panel => Programs and Features (Add and Remove Programs in Windows XP) in Windows. There are options for uninstalling programs when selected.

This is where you ran into your problem. The uninst000.dat file contains the information required to uninstall the software. If it's missing, then the computer doesn't know what to do. One solution is to reinstall the software which should add the uninst000.dat file back, then try the uninstall again.

A free program called Revo Uninstaller (download.cnet.com/Revo-Uninstaller/3000-2096_4-10687648.html) is highly recommended for problem uninstalls. (If you download Revo Uninstaller from this CNET link, be sure to use the "Direct Download Link" below the green Download button to avoid other software offers.) It may do a better job of removing the bits and pieces, although in some cases you may still need to reinstall to restore the uninst000.dat file.

5. Remove Files and Folders Directly

The next option is to go to the program folder and delete all of the files and folders. This is a messy option since there could be Registry entries and other bits which are not removed. This is not an ideal solution.

It is possibly a good time for a program such as the free CCleaner (www.piriform.com/ccleaner) which could help find and remove those orphaned Registry entries.

If you still can't get rid of it, then you need to look elsewhere.

6. Check Startup folders

Not all programs need to be installed to run. If an EXE file is sitting in one of your Startup folders, it will launch upon every startup or login.

To check the Startup folders select Run from the Start Menu (or +R), type *shell:startup*, then OK. This will open your personal Startup folder (loads upon login). Plus, select Run from the Start Menu (or +R), type *shell:common startup*, then OK. This will open the common Startup folder (loads upon Windows startup). There could be a program or program shortcut sitting the one of these Startup folders. If it is a program, delete it. If it is a Shortcut, right-click, select Properties, and then Open File Location. Delete the files and folders. (Be sure you are deleting the right program, otherwise you may disable something you want.) Go back and delete the shortcuts after cleaning out the unwanted programs and files. Run CCleaner just in case.

Anything appearing in the Startup folders should also appear in the System Configuration window. Run *msconfig* (+R, type *msconfig*, then OK). The Startup tab (moved to Task Manager in Windows 8) contains all of the Startup items. The Startup programs can be disabled, but not removed in this window. However, you can get the location (including Registry entries, as appropriate) and the command for running the program—which will coincide with the location of the EXE program. (This can help to find files which need deleting.)

7. Use Regedit to Search for Remnants

The program for editing the Registry is called *regedit.exe*. To load, select Run from the Start Menu (+R), enter *regedit*, then OK. In the Regedit Edit menu, the Find command will locate specific registry items. If you take this step, be careful. If you remove or change the wrong entries, programs or the system can become unstable or unusable. Be sure you know what you're doing.

8. Last Resort, Do a Clean Install of Windows

If you still haven't eliminated the problem (and can't live with it), then maybe it's time to do a clean install of Windows. Maybe.

These steps do not necessarily need to be done in this order. For example, you can check the Startup folders (Step 6) at any time, especially if you suspect a standalone EXE program. These steps are merely guidelines giving you an idea of how complicated the process can become.

Digital Dave

[Return to Table of Contents](#)



Stop! Before You Download Windows 8 Upgrade for that Old PC!

“Even though it's only \$39.99, the Windows 8 Upgrade may not work on your old Windows computer!” by Jack Dunning

Using Windows 8 Upgrade Assistant: The Windows 8 Upgrade download is here. You may have installed Windows 8 Consumer Preview on that old machine, but that doesn't guarantee that the final release upgrade will install. Plus, you may not find out it won't work until after you've paid for it.

The Windows 8 Upgrade is now available and people are starting to put it on their PCs. The process for upgrading is fairly straightforward with a dedicated program from Microsoft for both evaluating the target PC and downloading the purchased install program. As with any new program, there are some jumps and starts during the installation process. People have run into a number of problems, although I would guess that the vast majority of those upgrading have proceeded without issues. Unfortunately, I encountered a problem which need to be highlighted for other owners of older computers.



“I'm really excited about the new Windows 8 computers. I hear they come with two cup holders attached!”

Like many people who have old PCs I was planning to put the low-priced \$39.99 Windows 8 Upgrade on a Windows Vista computer. The computer still runs, but, since it is Vista, it tends to drag. I don't use it very much although it does occasionally come in handy. So, why not upgrade it to Windows 8? The disappointing news is that I can't upgrade it—even though it could run Windows 8 Consumer Preview. Even worse, I didn't know for sure that I couldn't upgrade until after I had paid the \$40.

My guess is that there are a number of people in the same boat. I'm not ready to upgrade any of my other computers to Windows 8 because I'm not sure that Windows 8 is ready for prime-time. I don't want to risk my workhorse computers on an unproven operating system. I'm in no rush. However, I do think it's important for me to pass on my experiences and tell people how the same thing could happen to them.

As I explain the potential problem with installing Windows 8 on an older computer, I cover the process for downloading Windows 8 Upgrade and making a Windows 8 Upgrade installation

DVD. That way even if for some reason you can't complete the installation, you will still have a Windows 8 Upgrade disc which will still be valid and can also help you to quickly identify my installation problem. If it all works for you—great!

The Windows 8 Upgrade

Upgrading to Windows 8 (windows.microsoft.com/en-US/windows/buy?ocid=GA8_O_WOL_DIS_ShopHP_FPP_Light) from Windows XP, Windows Vista, or Windows 7 for only \$39.99 is a pretty good deal, especially when you consider how much Microsoft traditionally charges for Windows upgrades. Also, Windows 8 is supposed to be a little lighter than Windows 7 and is certainly more streamlined than Windows Vista. However, approach installing Windows 8 on an older PC with caution.

The first step in preparing for a Windows 8 Upgrade is downloading the Windows 8 Upgrade Assistant (windows.microsoft.com/en-US/windows-8/upgrade-to-windows-8). This program scans and evaluates your computer for system requirements and eligibility. This program is actually the Windows 8 Upgrade program and walks you through the entire process of purchasing and downloading the installation program. It's a free, so downloading and running it is worthwhile even if you decide not to purchase the upgrade.

When launched, Windows 8 Upgrade Assistant immediately starts checking the system to "see what's compatible." It scans applications and devices looking for potential problems. Eventually, it returns a window stating how many compatible apps and devices are found, and how many need to be reviewed (see Figure 1).

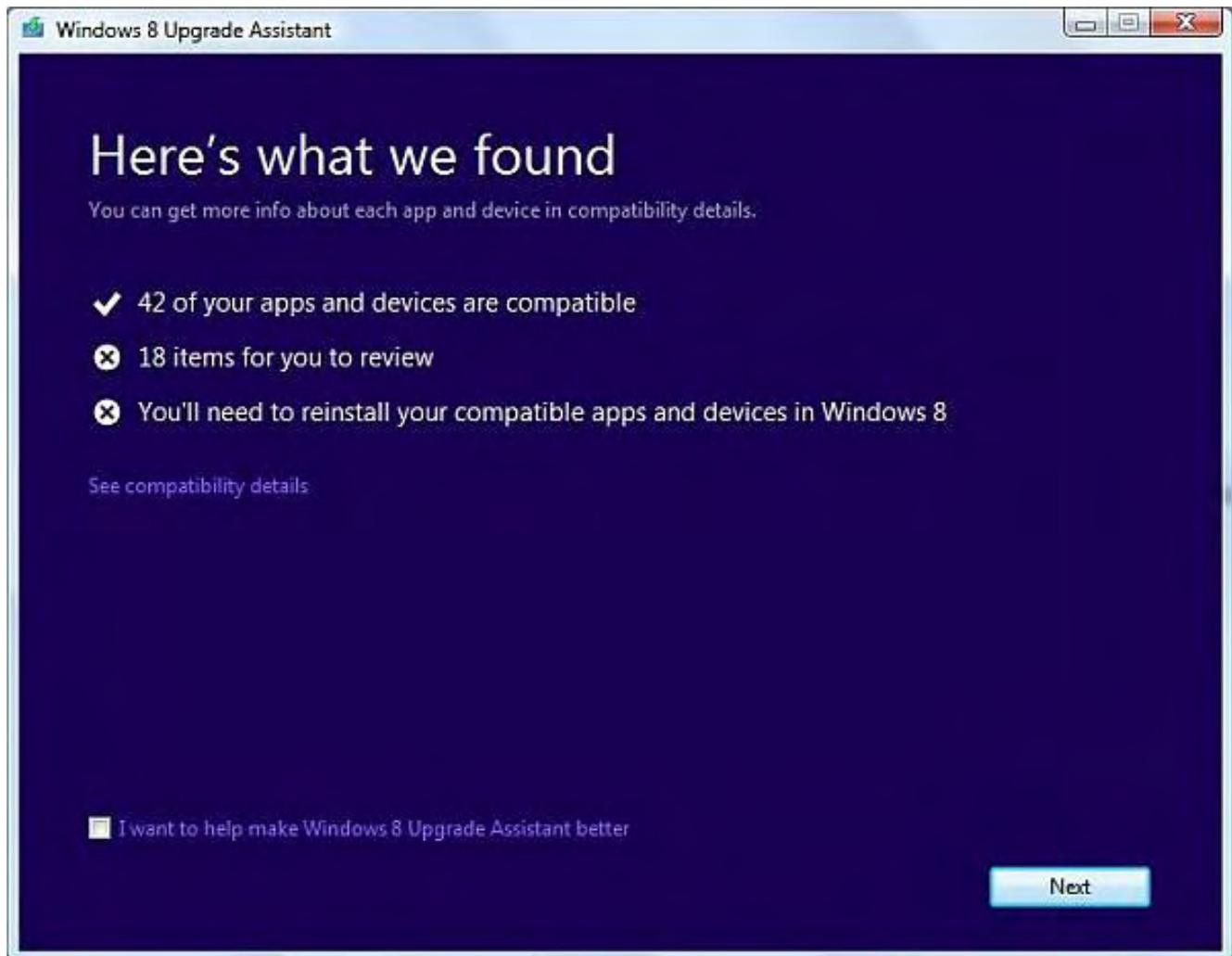


Figure 1. Windows 8 Upgrade Assistant tells you how many apps and devices in your computer are compatible and how many need to be reviewed (potential problems).

Click the link "See compatibility details" to open a new window which lists all of the issues found on the system (see Figure 2). It is a good idea to print or save this list since once Windows 8 is installed you will want to resolve each one. Many of the items have "More info" links which will give more information, although it may not be enough to decide if your machine will install Windows 8. That is the problem with the "Your processor doesn't have NX turned on or might not support NX." If your processor doesn't have NX turned on—no problem. If your processor doesn't support NX—you can't install Windows 8. The problem is determining which it is.

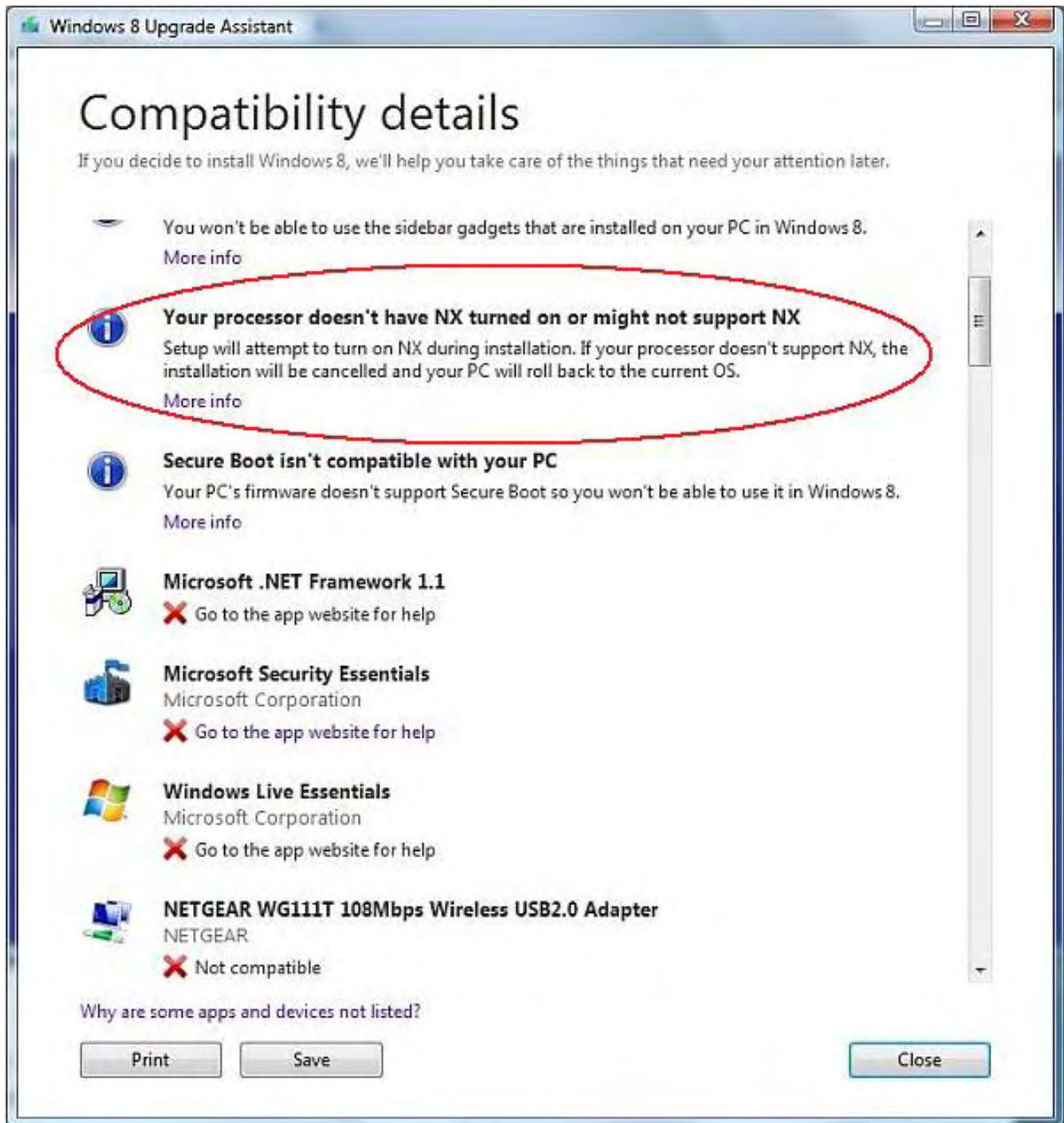


Figure 2. Compatibility Details is a special window from Windows 8 Upgrade Assistant which allows the potential problems to be printed or saved.

The NX (No or Never eXecute) Bit

The NX (No or Never eXecute) bit (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NX_bit) (also called XD bit, for eXecute Disable, or XN for eXecute Never) is a feature of today's CPUs which adds security to computer systems. It has been available in processors for many years,

but was never previously used by Windows. To add additional security to Windows 8, NX is required to be enabled in order to install the operating system on a computer. This is not a problem for the vast majority of computers, but for some of the older, yet still operational machines, you won't know that you can't install Windows 8 until after you've purchased the download and tried it. The Windows 8 Upgrade Assistant will suggest that there may be a problem, but it is not definitive.

What makes this vagueness worse for some people is that they may have installed Windows 8 Consumer Preview on that same computer without a problem, thus creating a false sense of confidence that the final version would load. If they had tried to install Windows 8 Release Preview, they would have discovered the difficulty since Microsoft implemented the NX requirement in that version.

There is a program called `coreinfo.exe` (technet.microsoft.com/en-us/sysinternals/cc835722.aspx) which will tell you the capabilities of your CPU, however, even if this program shows that the CPU is NX capable it may not be implemented. (This is possibly a motherboard/BIOS design issue.)

The best way to determine if you will be able to install Windows 8 is to check the BIOS. (Reboot and hit the Delete key—or whichever key (F1, F2, DEL, ESC, or F10) will access the BIOS on your system—during the initial computer startup sequence prior to Windows beginning to load.) If your computer does support NX, there should be a setting in the BIOS setup for enabling it—generally in Advance Settings under the CPU. As noted above, the setting may be called XD or XN, if NX is not found.

If you can enable NX in the BIOS, there is a good chance that Windows 8 will install. If not, most likely the installation will fail and you may be better off saving the price of the download.

Assuming that there are no killer problems, such as NX not supported, move on to the "Choose what to keep" window.

If you are upgrading from Windows Vista or Windows 7, you should be able to save your settings and files (see Figure 3). With Windows XP, you can only save your personal files. If you plan to do a clean install (save no settings or files) choose "Nothing."



Figure 3. The "Choose what you keep" window in Windows 8 Upgrade Assistant.

You then move through a series of windows which help you make the purchase. This is the point at which you commit your \$39.95 to Microsoft. In return you will receive the Product key. You will also receive an e-mail with the same Product key. Make sure you save that e-mail. In addition to the Product key, it has a link which will make it easy to download the upgrade again—if necessary (see Figure 4).



Figure 4. A section of the e-mail receipt for Windows 8 Upgrade showing the link for downloading Windows 8 installation program. The Product key will be required.

Making a Windows 8 Installation Disc

In the "Install Windows 8" Upgrade Assistant window there are three options: "Install now," "Install by creating media," "Install later

from your desktop" (see Figure 5). I recommend selecting the second option "Install by creating media." This will serve the purpose of creating a boot disk as well as a copy of the Windows 8 Upgrade installation program.

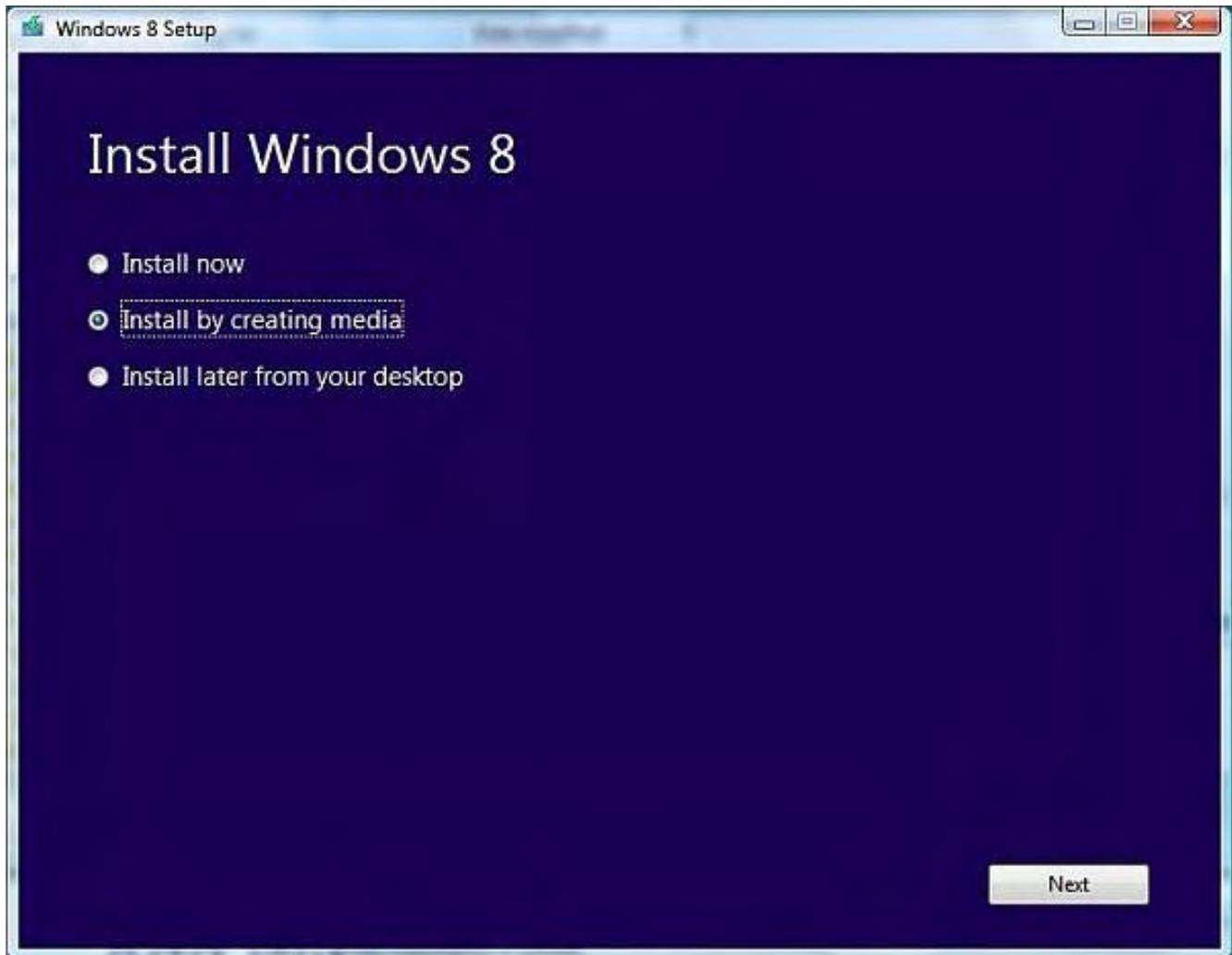


Figure 5. Select "Install by creating media" for burning an installation DVD

The next window gives the option of "USB flash drive" or "ISO file" (see Figure 6). If you are thinking of using a USB flash drive, make sure that your computer can be set to boot from a USB drive. I recommend the "ISO file" option since this is the file type for creating the boot installation DVD.

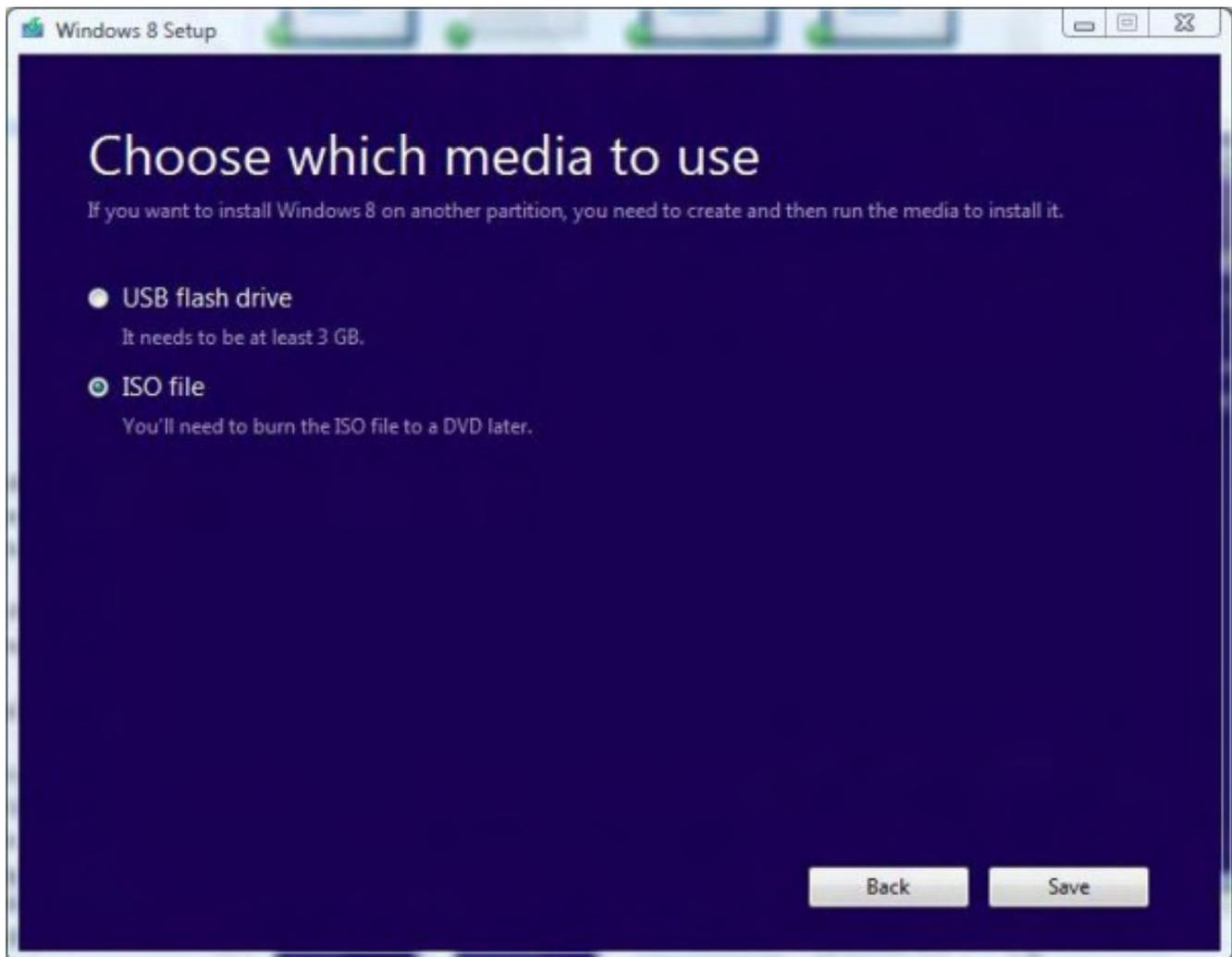


Figure 6. Choose "ISO file" for creating a boot DVD.

Once you have the ISO file you need to burn it to a DVD. Some versions of Windows have a DVD burner included, but I use a separate, free program called Active ISO Burner (download.cnet.com/Active-ISO-Burner/3000-2646_4-10602452.html) (see Figure 7). (If you download from CNET, use the link, "Direct Download Link," under the green download button to avoid the other special offers.)

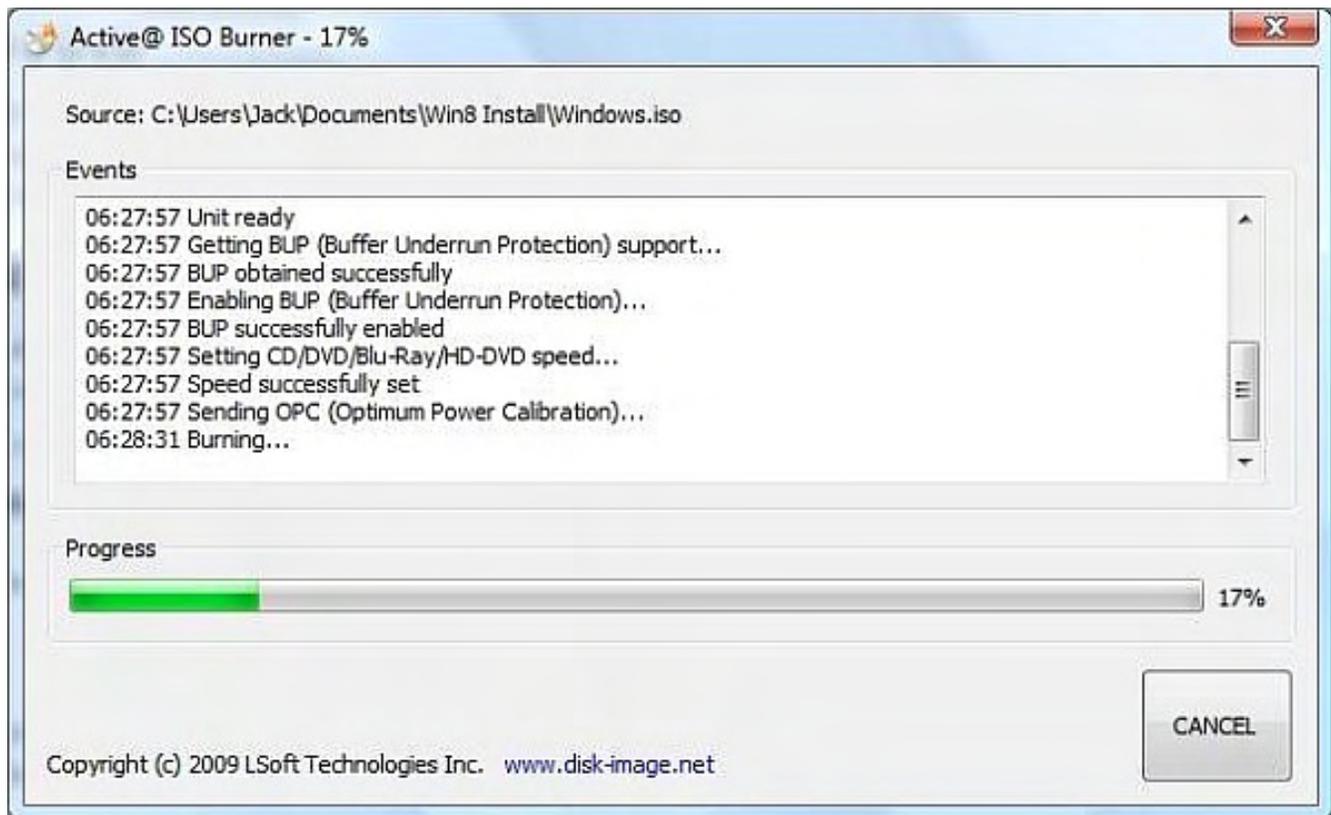


Figure 7.

Put a blank DVD in your DVD reader/writer and you will soon have a boot installation disk.

At this point, you can either reboot the computer from the DVD to start the installation process, or run the setup.exe file directly from the DVD. I recommend trying the reboot first. If you get the following error message, then you know that you have the problem I discussed previously.

```
Your PC needs to restart.  
Please hold down the power button.  
Error Code: 0x0000005D  
Parameters:  
0x030F0205  
0x756E6547  
0x49656E69  
0x6C65746E
```

Windows 8 will not load on this computer due to the NX problem. If you try the second method the result will be the same, but it will be after an hour of an attempted install.

The side benefit of the DVD installation disk is that you can now put it in any Windows computer and quickly tell if you have an NX problem by trying to boot from it. It will first attempt to enable NX, but that failing you will get the error message above. Maybe one of your friends has a copy of the installation download which you can borrow for the test.

I'm sure that most installations will go without problem. (We don't hear about those.) However, if booting from the DVD doesn't do the job, then directly using the setup.exe program on the DVD may work. It uses a slightly different process. Good luck!

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:

Now at Amazon! Jack's *A Beginner's Guide to AutoHotkey, Absolutely the Best Free Windows Utility Software Ever!: Create Power Tools for Windows XP, Windows Vista, Windows 7 and Windows 8* (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B009SI3F52/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=B009SI3F52&linkCode=as2&tag=comput0b9-20).

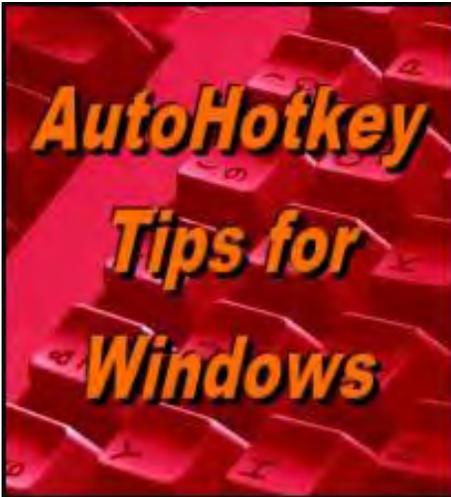
Our second compilation of stupid *ComputerEdge* cartoons from 2011 and 2012 is now available at Amazon! *That Does Not Compute, Too! ComputerEdge Cartoons, Volume II: "Do You Like Windows 8 or Would You Prefer an Apple?"* (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B009JY65QQ/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=B009JY65QQ&linkCode=as2&tag=comput0b9-20)

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).

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.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)



Yet, One More Reason to Use AutoHotkey Free Software!

AutoHotkey Tips for Windows: Add Currency Symbols and More to Your Keyboard!

“A Windows tip for adding special characters to your editing. . .then make it quicker with AutoHotkey”
by Jack Dunning

Bring Pennies (¢), British Pounds (£), Euros (€), Degrees (°), Plus or Minus signs (±), and much more to your keyboard with Windows Character Map and single lines of AutoHotkey code.

"Fred made a 180° turn out the door when he realized the price was £50 rather than €50." "Wilbur's estimates were accurate to the dollar ±50¢."

What makes the statements above interesting is not what they say, but the fact that special characters not typically found on American computer keyboards (°, £, €, ±, ¢) were entered into those statements without any changes to the keyboard setup. Each character was added by a simple, one-line AutoHotkey statement. It's remarkably easy to expand and tailor your keyboard characters to exactly what you want or need. But first you must find the special symbols that suit you.

Adding Special Symbols in Windows with Character Map

Windows has a built-in feature, Character Map, for adding special characters and symbols to any document or text editing window. It is a little cumbersome to use, but includes a vast array of characters which will suit almost any need. With Character Map you can copy the symbols directly to your current work or use the information it provides to add your own hotkey combinations to an AutoHotkey script for easy access whenever you need them.

To open Character Map, run (select Run from Start Menu or +R) *charmap*. (In Windows Vista and Windows 7, type *charmap* into the Start Search field and select from the results. In Windows 8 use the Search Screen.) The Character Map window will open (see Figure 1).

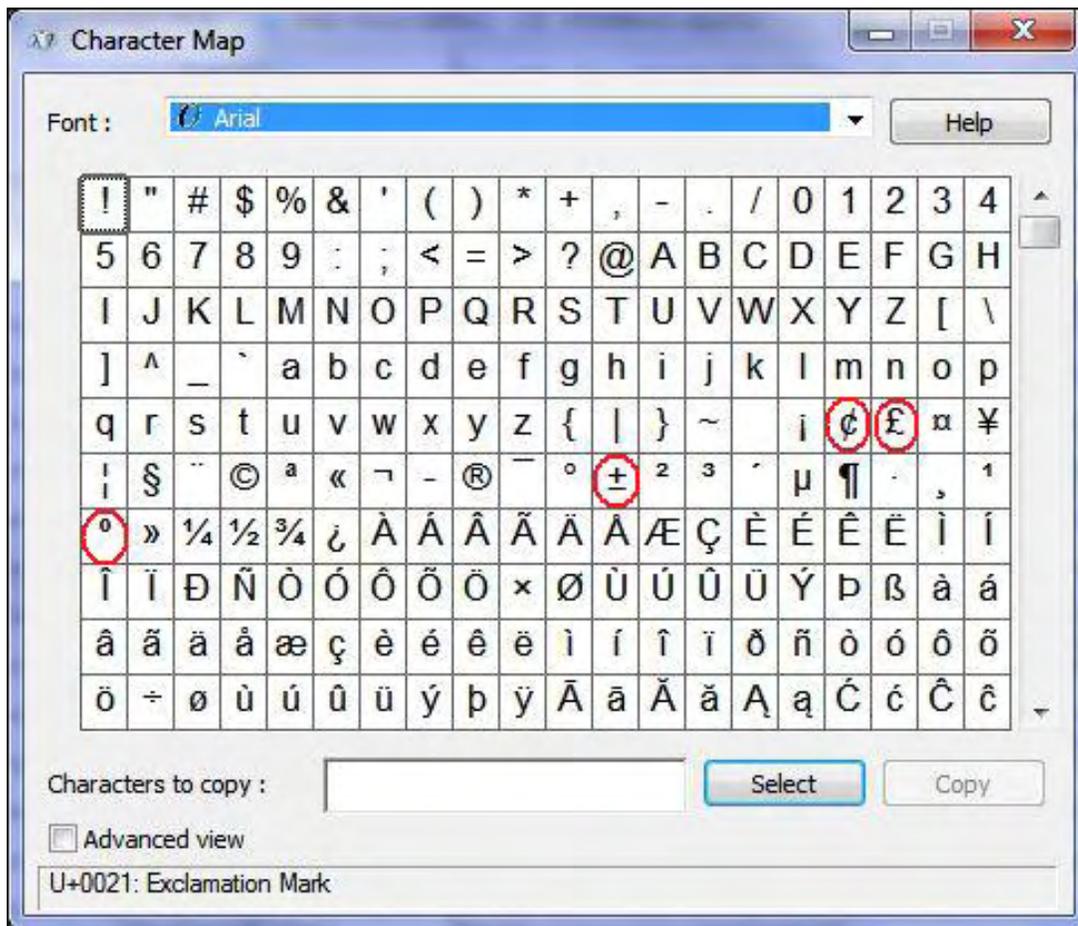


Figure 1. Windows Character Map offers a wide array of characters for use in Windows programs and editing features. (Four of the symbols used in the examples shown here are circled in red.)

As shown in Figure 1, many of the more common special characters are immediately available. Circled in red are four of those used in the examples here. There are quite a few more on the same screen including Yen (¥), copyright (©), and the registered trademark sign (®). Each character can be added directly to editing windows by selecting the symbol and copying it to the Clipboard (double-click the symbol, then click the Copy button), then returning to the editing window and pasting it (CTRL+V) into the desired location.

Clicking on one of the symbols provides additional information (see Figure 2). The Unicode (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unicode) number (hexadecimal) appears in the lower left corner and in a pop-up when you hover over the symbol. The lower right corner shows the keystrokes to directly add the symbol to documents without first copying. (Hold down the ALT key and enter the numbers with the number keypad. When the ALT key is released the symbol will appear.)

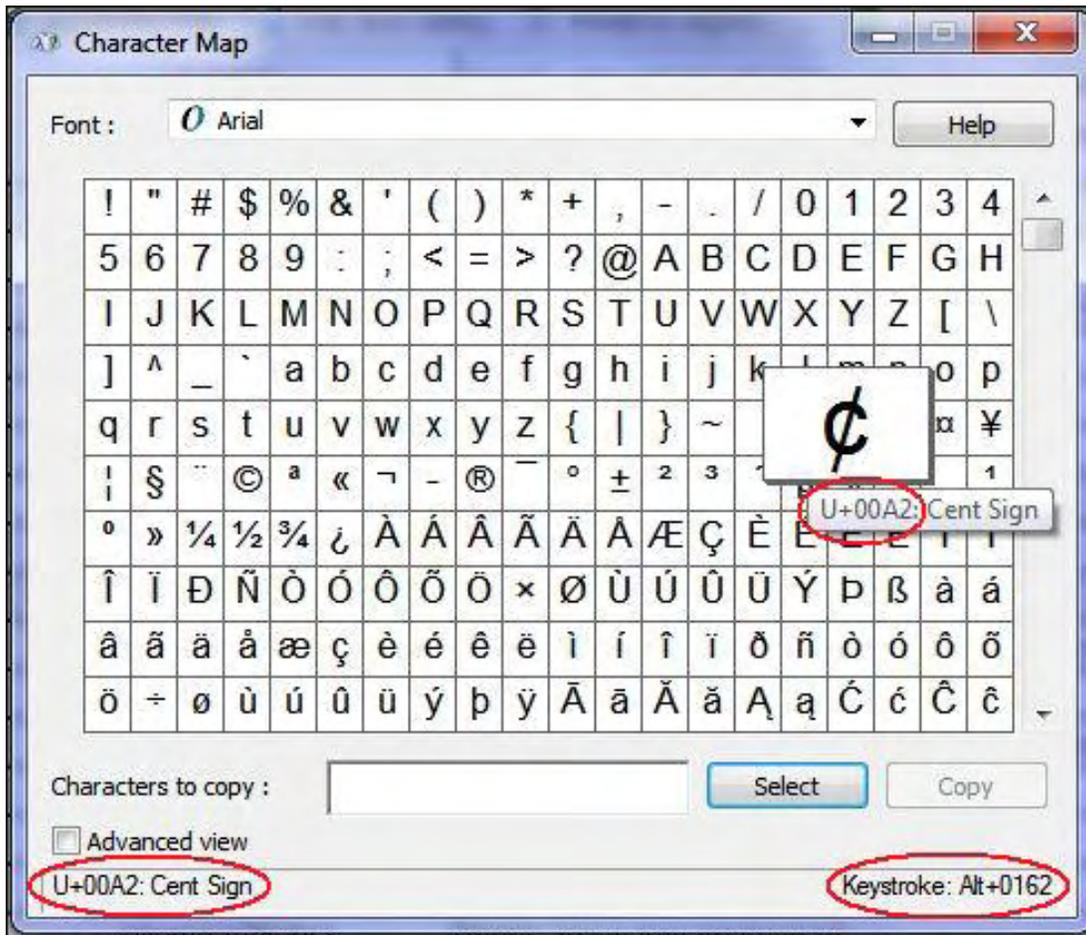


Figure 2. Additional information about a special character is available by clicking on the symbol.

The Unicode value is important in AutoHotkey since it can be used to create hotkeys to expand the capabilities of your keyboard.

Note: The characters available depend upon the font used and programs supporting that font. While many of the symbols are standard and will work in almost all documents and editing windows, some special characters will require the editing software to support the font and may not be properly saved.

While these first four symbols (see Figure 1) were fairly easy to locate, what about the Euro sign (€)? It's nowhere in sight. To find other symbols, check the "Advanced view" box. Additional options will open including a search field (see Figure 3). If you select Unicode Subrange from the "Group by" menu a window will pop up showing common groupings for symbols. If you select Currency, the window displays a group of available symbols for the selected font. (If you are looking for common fractions, select Number Forms.)

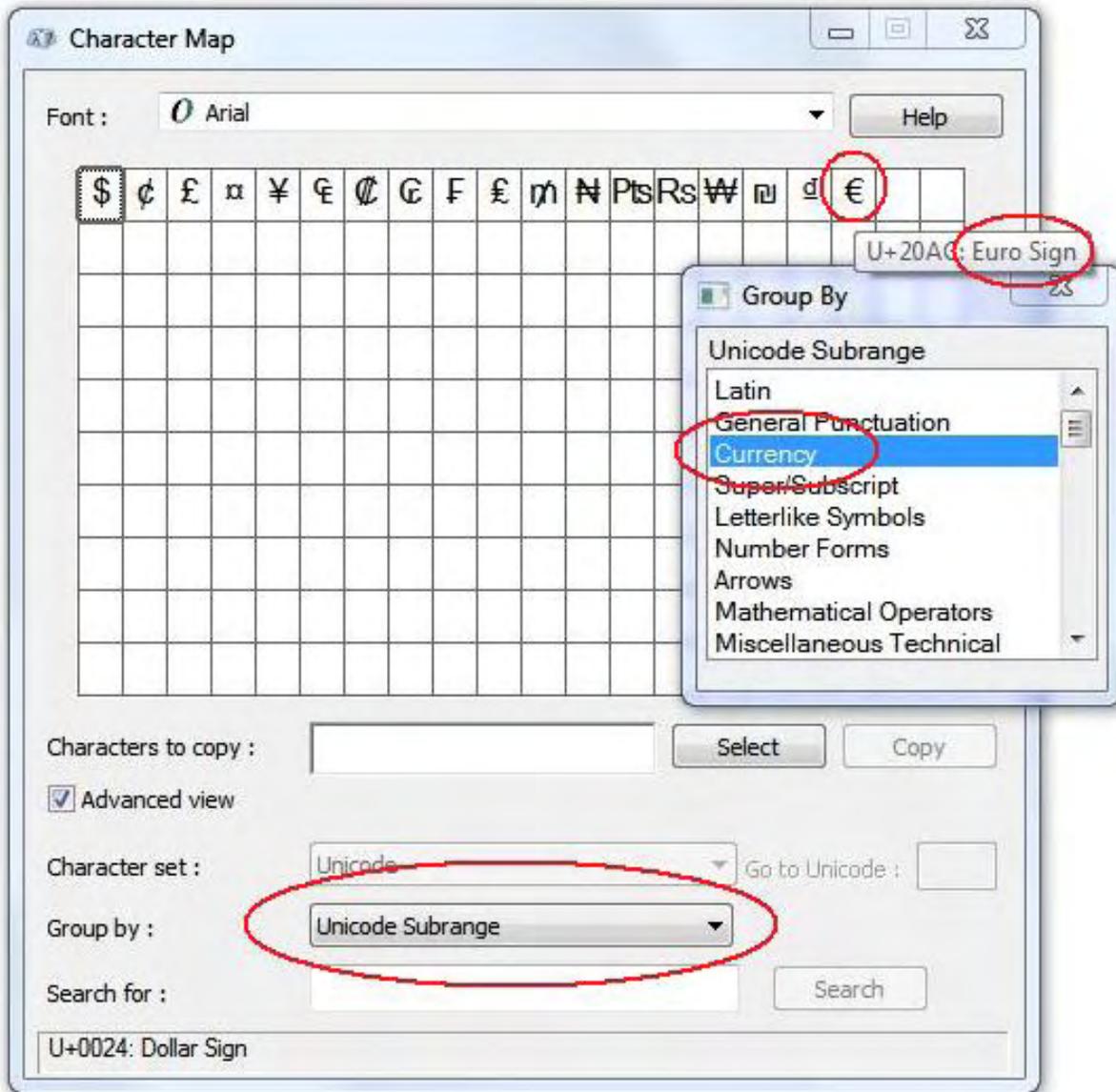


Figure 3. The Advance view of Windows Character Map groups symbols by their use. Select Unicode Subrange from "Group by" and select an option from the Group By window. Availability of specific characters depends upon the font selected.

You can also do a direct search for the symbol by entering the search term into the "Search for" field and clicking Search (see Figure 4).

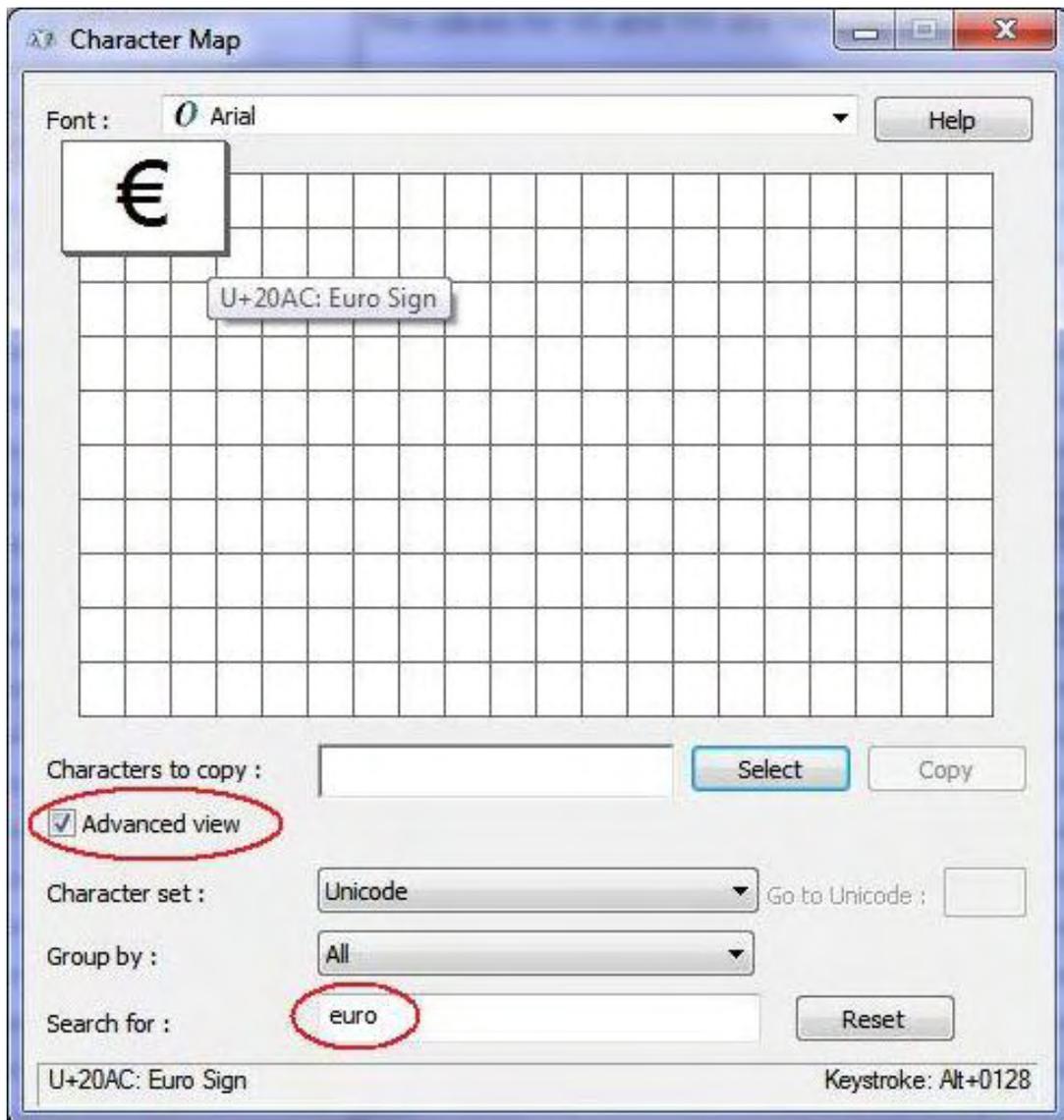


Figure 4. A search for "euro" in the Advance view of Windows Character Map yields the Euro sign.

AutoHotkey to Make It Simpler

While using the Character Map to insert symbols into documents and editing windows is simple enough, if you regularly need symbols not found on your keyboard, the continual jumping back and forth becomes tedious. This is where simple, one-line hotkeys in an AutoHotkey script come to the rescue. The example characters can be added with code shown in Figure 5.

Note: If you're new to AutoHotkey see our Web page "Installing AutoHotkey and Writing Your First Script (www.computoredge.com/misc/Installing_AutoHotkey_and_writing_your_first_script.html)" for how to get started.

```

;
; AutoHotkey Version: 1.x
; Language:      English
; Platform:     win9x/NT
; Author:      A.N.Other <myemail@nowhere.com>
;
;
; Script Function:
;   Template script (you can customize this template by editing
; "shellNew\Template.ahk" in your windows folder)
;
;
#NoEnv ; Recommended for performance and compatibility with future
AutoHotkey releases.
SendMode Input ; Recommended for new scripts due to its superior
speed and reliability.
SetWorkingDir %A_ScriptDir% ; Ensures a consistent starting
directory.

^+4::SendInput {U+00A2} ; ¢ Cents
^#4::SendInput {U+00A3} ; £ British Pounds
^#+4::SendInput {U+20AC} ; € Euros
^+o::SendInput {U+00BA} ; ° Degrees
^+=::SendInput {U+00B1} ; ± Plus or minus

```

Figure 5. Five lines of AutoHotkey code which create hotkeys for the five symbols (¢, £, €, °, and ±).

To add this code to an AutoHotkey script copy-and-paste the following into a script—either new or one of you current scripts:

```

^+4::SendInput {U+00A2} ; ¢ Cents
^#4::SendInput {U+00A3} ; £ British Pounds
^#+4::SendInput {U+20AC} ; € Euros
^+o::SendInput {U+00BA} ; ° Degrees
^+=::SendInput {U+00B1} ; ± Plus or minus

```

Each line sets up one hotkey for the associated symbol.

How It Works

The hotkeys are assigned by the characters in each line of code which appear before the double colon (::). I used hotkeys which could be associated with the current keyboard layout. Note that all of the currency hotkeys use the number four which is also the key for the dollar sign (\$, SHIFT+4). This associates all currencies with the same key. The cents sign (¢) is CTRL+SHIFT+4. The British Pound (£) is CTRL+SHIFT+4. The Euro sign (€) is CTRL+SHIFT+4. This is in an effort to make the hotkeys easier to remember.

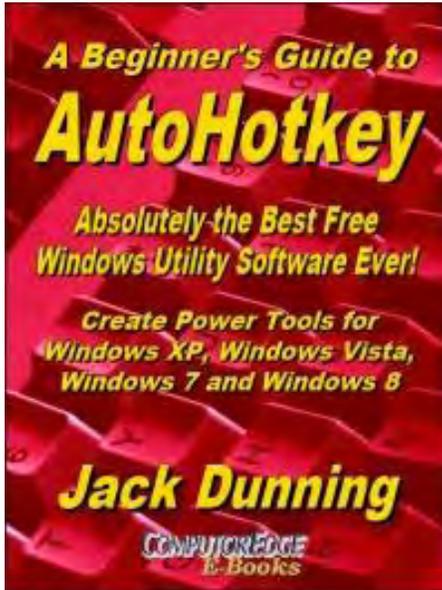
In the case of the degree symbol (°) I used the letter "o" since it looks like a degree symbol. For the plus or minus sign (±) I use the equal sign (=) since the plus sign was on the same key—close enough. Tip: I usually add the SHIFT key or WIN key (WIN) to the hotkey combination since the CTRL alone is often another program or Windows hotkey. For example, CTRL plus the equal sign (= or +) in Web browsers increases the size of the text.

Each line of code sends the assigned character to the active window when the hotkeys are pressed simultaneously. After the double colon (::) the line includes SendInput (www.autohotkey.com/docs/commands/Send.htm) which is "the same syntax as Send but [is] generally faster and more reliable." Plus, the keyboard activity is buffered while the SendInput is

executing, which means (if you're a blazing fast typist) you can keep typing without fear of interference with the AutoHotkey addition from the keyboard.

Notice that I used the Unicode value for each hotkey. While you can usually add the symbol itself directly (i.e. ^#4::SendInput {£}), many of the less used symbols may not save in the scripts. For example, when using Notepad the Won currency would not save directly although I could add it with the Unicode. (How well some of the more obscure characters will react depends upon both the font used and the program supporting the font. Finding these problems requires testing the hotkeys in various programs and editing windows.)

* * *



Now available in e-book format from Amazon, Jack's *A Beginner's Guide to AutoHotkey, Absolutely the Best Free Windows Utility Software Ever!: Create Power Tools for Windows XP, Windows Vista, Windows 7 and Windows 8* ([www.amazon.com/gp/product/B009SI3F52/ref=as_li_ss_tl?](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B009SI3F52/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=B009SI3F52&linkCode=as2&tag=comput0b9-20)

[ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=B009SI3F52&linkCode=as2&tag=comput0b9-20](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B009SI3F52/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=B009SI3F52&linkCode=as2&tag=comput0b9-20)).

Building Power Tools for Windows XP, Windows Vista, Windows 7 and Windows 8, AutoHotkey is the most powerful, flexible, *free* Windows utility software available. Anyone can instantly add more of the functions that they want in all of their Windows programs, whether installed on their computer or while working on the Web. AutoHotkey has a universality not found in any other Windows utility—free or paid.

Based upon the series of articles in *ComputerEdge*, Jack takes you through his learning experience as he explores writing simple AutoHotkey scripts for adding repetitive text in any program or on the Web, running programs with special hotkeys or gadgets, manipulating the size and screen location of windows, making any window always-on-top, copying and moving files, and much more. Each chapter builds on the previous chapters.

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:

Now at Amazon! Jack's *A Beginner's Guide to AutoHotkey, Absolutely the Best Free Windows Utility Software Ever!: Create Power Tools for Windows XP, Windows Vista, Windows 7 and Windows 8* ([www.amazon.com/gp/product/B009SI3F52/ref=as_li_ss_tl?](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B009SI3F52/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=B009SI3F52&linkCode=as2&tag=comput0b9-20)
[ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=B009SI3F52&linkCode=as2&tag=comput0b9-20](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B009SI3F52/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=B009SI3F52&linkCode=as2&tag=comput0b9-20)).

Our second compilation of stupid *ComputerEdge* cartoons from 2011 and 2012 is now available at Amazon! *That Does Not Compute, Too! ComputerEdge Cartoons, Volume II: "Do You Like Windows 8 or Would You Prefer an Apple?"* ([www.amazon.com/gp/product/B009JY65QQ/ref=as_li_ss_tl?](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B009JY65QQ/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=B009JY65QQ&linkCode=as2&tag=comput0b9-20)

ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=B009JY65QQ&linkCode=as2&tag=comput0b9-20)

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).

Available from Amazon, *Misunderstanding Windows 8: An Introduction, Orientation, and How-to for Windows 8* (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B007RMC8H8/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20)! 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.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)



Wally Wang's Apple Farm

“Apple Financial Results” by Wally Wang

Apple Financial Results; The iPad mini and the Microsoft Surface; The Death of Physical Media; A Visit to Best Buy (or Why Microsoft and Apple Started Their Own Stores); Memorize Something; The Little House on 5th Street; Hands on with the Microsoft Surface Tablet; The Dashboard Display.

Wally Wang's Apple Farm

On October 25, Apple announced financial results (www.apple.com/pr/library/2012/10/25Apple-Reports-Fourth-Quarter-Results.html) for the fiscal 2012 fourth quarter ending on September 29, 2012. Despite the recession, Apple sold 26.9 million iPhones in the quarter, representing 58 percent unit growth over the year-ago quarter; 14.0 million iPads during the quarter, a 26 percent unit increase over the year-ago quarter; 4.9 million Macs during the quarter, a 1 percent unit increase over the year-ago quarter; and 5.3 million iPods, a 19 percent unit decline from the year-ago quarter.

Since dedicated MP3 players are a dying market, the drop in iPod sales isn't surprising. What is surprising is that Apple keeps selling more products every year while other companies blame slow sales on the recession. The illogical reason is that the recession only affects sales of non-Apple products and that Apple products really aren't selling that well if you just cover up the sales results with your thumb so you can't see them anymore. The logical reason is that Apple keeps selling more products every year because people keep buying them.

What's also surprising is that slightly more than half of Apple's revenue comes from the iPhone followed by the iPad, the Macintosh, and everything else such as iTunes sales. Apple is less of a traditional computer company and more of a mobile computer company.

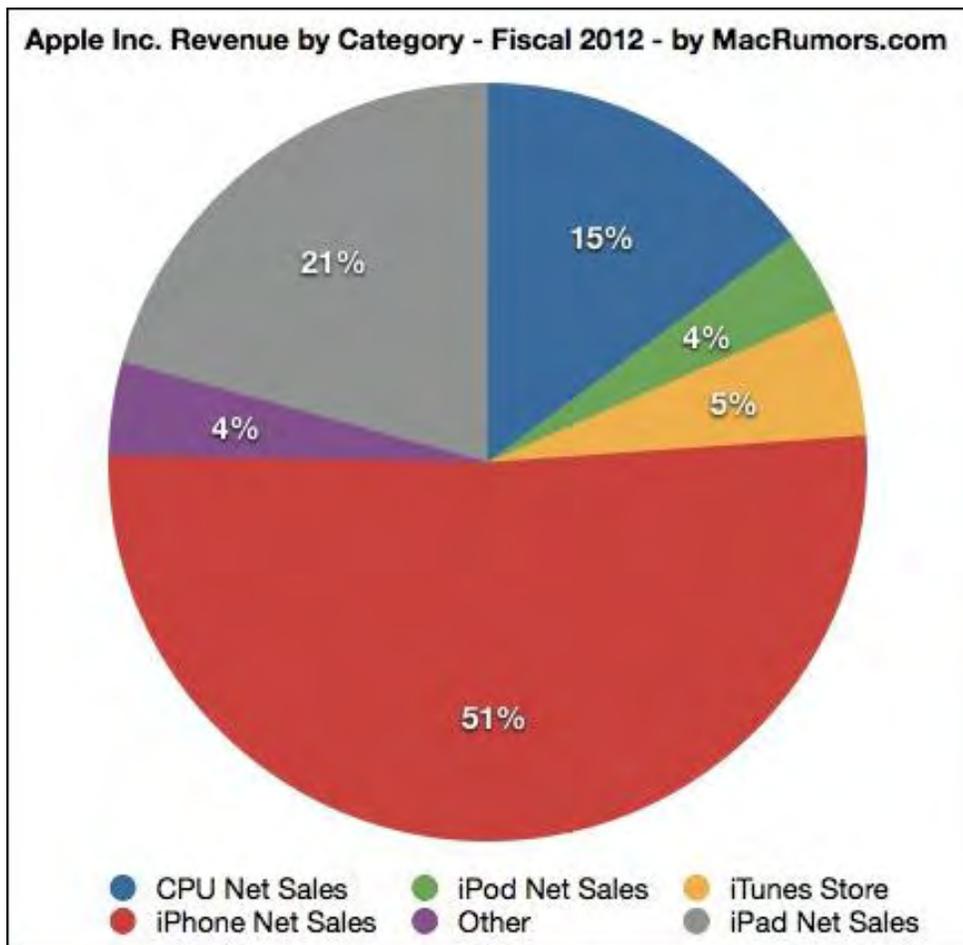


Figure 1. Apple depends heavily on the iPhone.

This is why Meg Whitman, Hewlett-Packard's CEO, recently stated that Hewlett-Packard needs to get into the mobile computing market, although the company won't even get back into the smartphone market until 2013. *The New York Times* states that twenty years ago, Kenneth Olsen, then the leader of Digital Equipment Corporation (DEC), derided the PC as unsuited for business (www.nytimes.com/2012/09/30/technology/meg-whitmans-toughest-campaign-retooling-hewlett-packard.html?pagewanted=all). Within a few years, DEC had been gobbled up by Compaq Computer. Anyone buy a computer from DEC lately?

For everyone who derides tablets as "toys," they're simply repeating the same mistakes that Kenneth Olsen did when DEC dismissed PCs as toys. Naturally, some people never learn so it's likely that they'll gradually drift into obsolescence while the rest of the world moves forward with mobile computing on smartphones and tablets.

As sales of the iPhone, iPad, and Macintosh continue growing, you can expect to see fewer people buying ordinary PCs. That doesn't mean that PCs will disappear completely, but with a shrinking market, the profit margins of all those PC manufacturers competing against each other (and against Microsoft's Surface tablet too) simply means that they'll have to continue fighting harder so they can earn less and less money.

Or they could shift to the mobile computing industry where Apple and Samsung dominate as former computing heavyweights like Dell and Hewlett-Packard flail and scramble, blaming the recession for slow sales when the real problem is that they're not selling mobile computing products that people actually want to buy. Denial is never a solution (jfi.ncsconline.org/facesofdenial.html) to solving any problem. Even the people at Alcoholics Anonymous know that.

Vendor	3Q12 Unit Shipments	3Q12 Market Share	3Q11 Unit Shipments	3Q11 Market Share	Year-over-year Change
Samsung	56.3	31.3%	28.1	22.7%	100.4%
Apple	26.9	15.0%	17.1	13.8%	57.3%
Research In Motion	7.7	4.3%	11.8	9.6%	-34.7%
ZTE	7.5	4.2%	4.1	3.3%	82.9%
HTC	7.3	4.0%	12.7	10.3%	-42.5%
Others	74.0	41.2%	49.9	40.3%	48.3%
Total	179.7	100.0%	123.7	100.0%	45.3%

Figure 2. Apple and Samsung hold the major share of the smartphone market.

The iPad mini and the Microsoft Surface

If you didn't order the white and silver iPad mini at midnight on October 26, it sold out (www.benzinga.com/news/12/10/3029948/apple-sells-out-of-white-ipad-mini) within 17 minutes while the black iPad mini sold out in 35 hours, so if you want either one, your only option is to wait in line at a store and hope they have one in stock. In the meantime, Microsoft has sold out (www.cclonline.com/article/801476299/News/NoCat/Surface-pre-orders-sell-out-despite-the-early-reviews/) of their pre-orders for their Surface tablets too.

The Microsoft Surface tablet may be trying to compete against the iPad, but with the iPad mini competing against e-readers like the Amazon Kindle Fire and Barnes & Noble Nook, we'll have to see how Microsoft plans to compete in that smaller tablet market. Microsoft did sign a partnership with Barnes & Noble so it's possible that future Nook devices will rely on Windows 8 or Windows RT instead of Android.

The Microsoft Surface tablet with Windows 8/RT indicates that even Microsoft can see that tablets are the future and that they can't rely on partners anymore to provide an optimal user experience for their software. With companies like Sony, Dell, and Hewlett-Packard dumping unwanted software (appropriately named crapware) on most PCs and cutting costs by using cheap materials, Microsoft realizes they need to protect their own reputation by creating their own hardware (www.tomshardware.com/news/Surface-Steve-Ballmer-Windows-8-Windows-RT-Kirk-Schell,18703.html).

If Microsoft starts selling their own hardware, the safest bet is to buy Microsoft computers, smartphones, and tablets. They may not be the cheapest Windows products out there, but they'll at least be better built and free of crapware clogging the hard disks.

As Microsoft evolves from just licensing their software to others, to providing complete control over their product from the retail sales experience to the design of their hardware, they can provide a better user experience for all of their customers.

Ironically, what makes the Microsoft Surface tablet so intriguing is the attention to detail in manufacturing and design, which is exactly what makes Apple products so appealing. Perhaps now Microsoft enthusiasts can finally understand the attraction of paying a little more for a well-designed product rather than settling for mediocrity and claiming that it's actually superior despite all evidence that it isn't.

If you buy a Microsoft Surface tablet running Windows RT for \$499, you can start listening to critics telling you how foolish you must be for paying so much when you can get a much cheaper Windows 8 laptop for \$299 that works just as well, has a real keyboard, comes with a CD/DVD drive, and can be opened easily so you can add memory, replace hard drives, or swap out a replaceable battery.

Then Microsoft Surface users can also weather the storm of criticism claiming that Surface users are just buying their tablets as a status symbol to show their blind allegiance to Microsoft because they're too stupid to see that a \$199 Android tablet can be just as good or even better. Android tablets also aren't locked into the "walled-garden" approach where you can only buy apps from a

single, vetted source.

Of course, more people own cheap Windows laptops than Microsoft Surface tablets, so that should also prove that the smaller market share of Microsoft Surface tablets means that Surface tablets must be inferior to Windows laptops too. Even though Windows RT is immune to current Windows viruses, Trojan horses, and spyware, critics can complain that it's only because Windows RT has such a low market share that it's really just as insecure as regular Windows.

Anti-Apple critics so readily embraced these arguments against every Apple product, so it's only logical that they should turn the same amount of venom on Microsoft Surface users and claim that Surface tablets are "toys" that are utterly useless because netbooks are far superior.

When Windows enthusiasts start attacking Microsoft for opening their own stores and celebrating lines of people trying to buy their products like the Surface tablet, then we'll finally know that these critics are consistent in their thinking. If they refuse to remain consistent in their logic, then what does that say about the validity of their arguments in the first place when they were attacking the Macintosh and the iPad?

The Death of Physical Media

For years, people complained that Macintosh computers needed a Blu-ray drive. Now nearly all of the latest Macintosh models have dumped the CD/DVD drive with no plans for including Blu-ray drives any time soon. Phil Schiller, Apple's Senior VP of Worldwide Marketing claims that "These old technologies are holding us back (techland.time.com/2012/10/26/apples-phil-schiller-on-the-state-of-the-mac/). They're anchors on where we want to go."

Schiller added, "In general, it's a good idea to remove these rotating medias from our computers and other devices. They have inherent issues—they're mechanical and sometimes break, they use power and are large. We can create products that are smaller, lighter and consume less power. Blu-ray has come with issues unrelated to the actual quality of the movie that make [it] a complex and not-great technology...So for a whole plethora of reasons, it makes a lot of sense to get rid of optical discs in desktops and notebooks."

Eliminate the physical media and you also eliminate many unnecessary businesses. The post office has already felt the sting of e-mail eliminating the need to send paper letters. Wait until 3-D printers allow people to send objects digitally and recreate them perfectly, and you'll see even less of a need for the post office along with Federal Express and UPS.

Borders Bookstores thought they were in the book business when they were really in the information business. Hollywood Video thought they were in the DVD and Blu-ray rental business when they were really in the movie rental business. Tower Records thought they were in the CD business when they were really in the music business. Kill the physical media in your business and what's left is your real business.

A Visit to Best Buy (or Why Microsoft and Apple Started Their Own Stores)

Since I needed a Windows 8 computer to update my *Microsoft Office for Dummies* (www.amazon.com/gp/product/0470489987/ref=as_li_qf_sp_asin_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=0470489987&linkCode=as2&tag=the15minmovme-20) book, I decided to purchase a \$299 Window 8 Lenovo laptop that the Best Buy Web site claimed was in stock and available for pick up at a nearby Best Buy store.

Upon arriving at the Best Buy store, the Best Buy sales person informed me that they no longer had that \$299 laptop in stock, even though the Best Buy Web site continued to insist that they were in stock. The sales person told me that the Best Buy Web site rarely tracks their inventory accurately, so he steered me towards a similar \$319 Lenovo laptop instead. Resigning myself to paying \$20 more than I really wanted, I picked up the box and headed to the checkout area to pay for it. That's when the cashier kindly informed me that I needed to pay for computer purchases in the computer department, not the checkout area because the checkout area is only to pay for anything but computer products.

Trudging back to the computer department, I foolishly headed towards the computer customer service desk, thinking that anyone

at the customer service desk should be able to provide me with customer service. The man behind the customer service desk informed me that he could not provide customer service if it involved letting me buy anything. He directed me to another area where the original sales person, who steered me to the \$319 Lenovo laptop, was waiting to take my credit card.

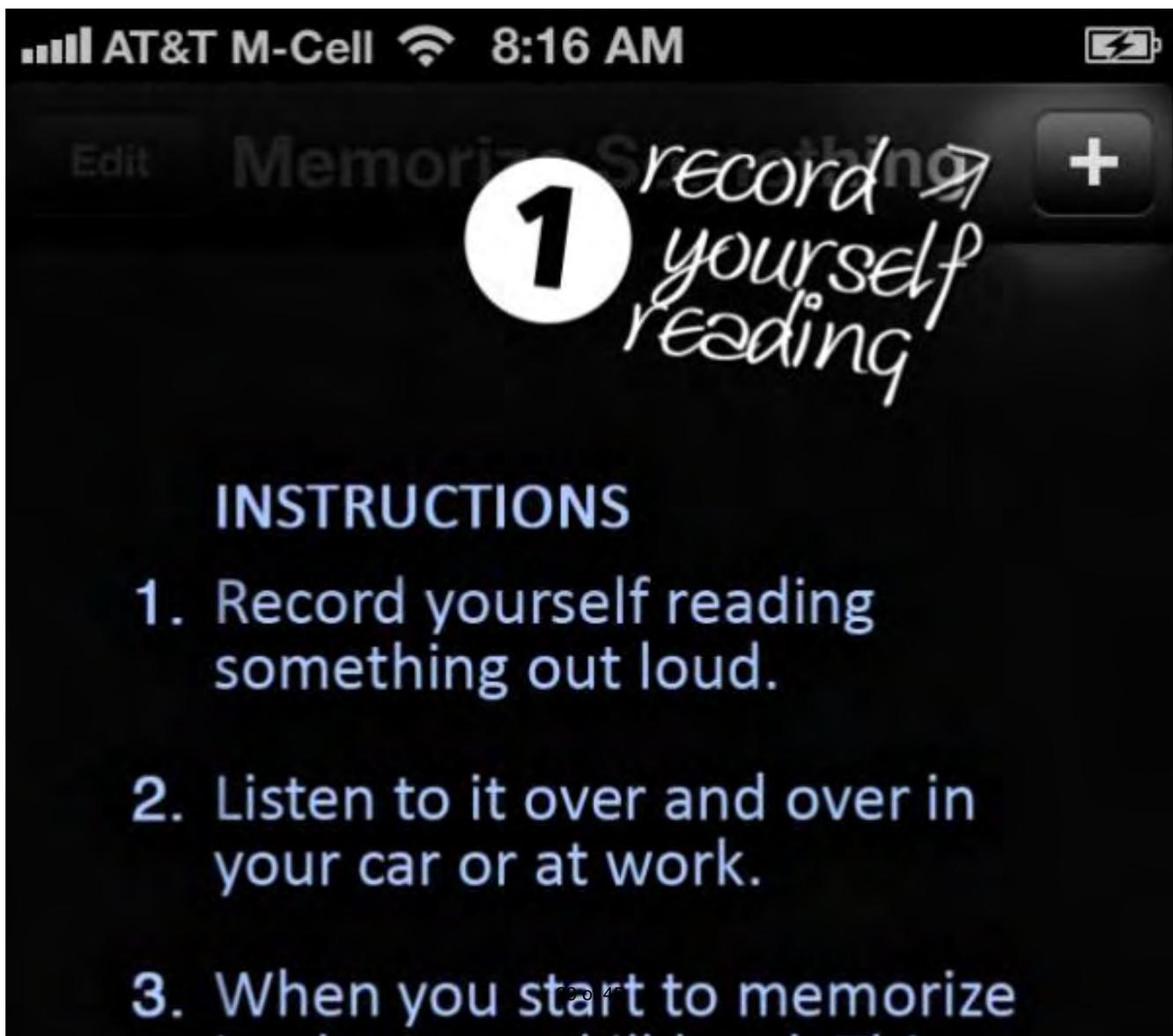
On the way out of the store, I walked past a huge display showcasing Windows 8 computers, although only a few Windows 8 computers were actually on display. The rest of the display was left completely empty despite signs urging people to try Windows 8 with just the keyboard and the mouse.

After seeing how other companies like Dell, Acer, and Hewlett-Packard slaughter the user experience of Windows with mediocre hardware and pre-installed crapware, and how stores like Best Buy absolutely wreck the buying experience for Windows PCs with incompetent organization, it's no wonder Microsoft felt the need to open their own stores just like Apple.

I'm starting to feel sorry for Microsoft. Now I blame Dell, Acer, Asus, Hewlett-Packard, Best Buy, Fry's Electronics, Symantec, McAfee, and all the other leeches who cling to the Windows ecosystem, bleed it dry, and leave Microsoft's reputation in tatters while they run off with the cash and leave frustrated users in their wake.

Memorize Something

In the old days, a smartphone was something that could make phone calls and text messages. Nowadays, a smartphone like the iPhone, can do so much more, especially when you use an app like the Memorize Anything app (click.linksynergy.com/fs-bin/stat?id=15PJQz44Qcc&offerid=146261&type=3&subid=0&tmpid=1826&RD_PARM1=https%253A%252F%252Fitunes.apple.com%252Fus%252Fapp%252Fmemorize-anything%252Fid430219093%253Fmt%253D8%2526uo%253D4%2526partnerId%253D30) for the iPhone and iPad.



3. When you start to memorize it, choose a skill level. This randomly fades the audio out so you can test your progress.



Figure 3. The Memorize Anything app lets you record yourself and practice hearing it multiple times.

To memorize anything, you can record yourself reciting a speech or a passage in a foreign language. With traditional recorders, you could just play the same audio clip over and over again, but with the Memorize Anything app, you can gradually fade out the end of the audio clip to test your memory. As you get better at memorizing an audio clip, let the app keep fading the audio clip out earlier and earlier until you feel comfortable reciting the whole thing.

Now you can practice memorizing something whether you're listening to your iPhone/iPad play in your car or while you're wearing ear buds at work, in a coffeehouse, or on an exercise bicycle or treadmill. Wherever you can take your iPhone or iPad, you can listen to yourself and memorize your recording.

A friend of mine actually taught himself how to pass the Series 7 exam for the finance industry by recording himself explaining different topics and listening to himself recite the answers. As motivational speaker, Jim Rohn, once said, "Formal education will make you a living; self-education will make you a fortune." By using the Memorize Anything app, you now have one more tool to put your education under your own control.

The Little House on 5th Street

A while back, some friends asked me for help in turning their idea for a children's story into a book. Rather than go through the time-consuming process of submitting a manuscript to a traditional publisher, they decided to self-publish their book instead. To reduce costs and get their book out to the market as quickly as possible, they skipped the traditional print options for self-publishers and went straight to the e-book market instead.

Initially, they targeted the Amazon Kindle market since creating Kindle e-books just involves writing your book in a Word document and submitting it to Amazon. The problem with Kindle e-books is that even the latest Kindle 8 format lacks audio and video, making e-book creation simple, but little different than a printed book.

Amazon Throws A Minor Curveball With HTML5-Powered Kindle Format 8

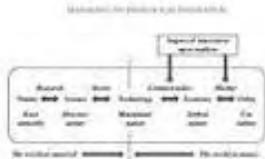


DEVIN COLDEWEY

No audio or video allowed!

Thursday, October 20th, 2011

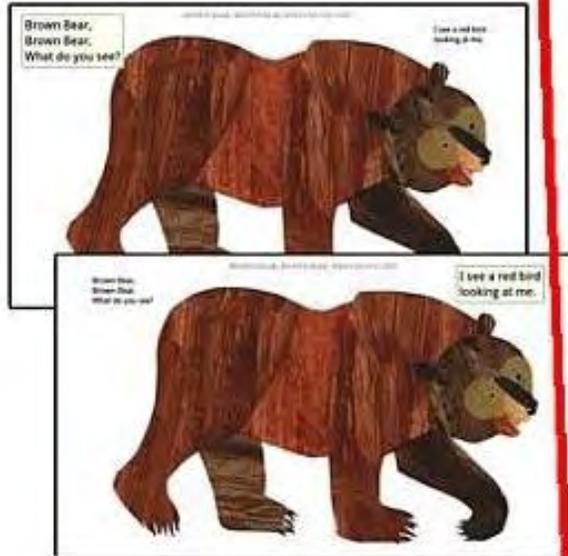
7 Comments



CASE STUDY:
Amazon.com

We have seen how radical technological innovation (e.g., the Internet) has had major impacts on the economy and on business competition (e.g., Google's impact on media advertising). Now we look at another example of this dynamic at the Internet's core: the case of [Amazon.com](#). Amazon completely changed the book-selling business, as one of the first of the dot.com businesses. The competitive advantage of the new Internet technology was so strong that established competitors, such as Barnes & Noble as a bookstore, could not afford to ignore it. The innovation of the Internet resulted in the destruction of actions, but its economic impacts have remained at the macro level of business. It was the late 1990s, when a new business venture named Amazon.com was begun by an entrepreneur, Jeffrey Bezos. One competitor there experienced the technology superiority of Amazon.com as a national U.S. book retailer, Barnes & Noble.

It had been only a decade earlier, in the 1980s, when Howard Ruggie, a new entrepreneur, built Barnes & Noble, and in doing so changed the retail book industry in the United States. In 1981 at Barnes & Noble, Ruggie had given the book retailer into a national and traditional brick-and-mortar retailer. But when the store drive to a show, Ruggie was not a particularly happy 15th Street. What happened the day "Thursday at night, we set a goal for the forward Ruggie... along to his strongest relationship customer base at Barnes & Noble's headquarters in Lower Manhattan. Ruggie just picked it his back... and that his had to be shifted, however, as against with sales of New York and Texas that give Ruggie more great, because north coast there more than Barnes & Noble Inc., a chain of chain bookstores with sales of \$1.



Basic Cupcake Bites

The cupcake pops are extremely popular, but these cupcake bites come in a close second. They rely on the use of a plastic candy mold to help form the shape of the cupcake bottom. No sticks. No tapping off excess frosting. Just a neat, professional-looking finished product. And best of all, they're easy!



When visiting the candy-making sections in craft and cake supply stores, I began to pay attention to the various candy molds that are available. When I saw one for candy caps, I immediately thought it would be perfect to replicate baking cup liners. I love the ease of this method.

Amazon has **announced an update to the Kindle file format** integrating many HTML5 tags and CSS attributes. Many expected a concession by Amazon in the form of an EPUB-compatible upgrade, and this comes as a slight surprise — but it's a natural evolution of the format, really, and of course everyone is already familiar with the toolset.

In a way this makes Kindle formatted books nothing more than extremely long webpages, but that's really a matter of perspective. Flexible layouts and well-known rules for handling text, fonts, images, and so on mean that the file format is adaptable to many devices, zoom levels, resolutions, and so on.

The full list of new tags and such can be found **here**; there's no video or audio tag, tellingly, but apart

Figure 4. Amazon e-books lack audio and video capabilities.

So after I explained the capabilities of interactive e-books through iBooks on the iPad, Jesse and Lydia Montijo decided to enhance their story with an audio narrator to read the book to children along with a picture of different items so kids could see the English and Spanish translations.

Turning their Kindle e-book into an iBook for selling through Apple's iBookstore proved a bit more cumbersome than submitting an e-book to Amazon. First, you need to purchase an ISBN, which is a number that uniquely identifies your particular book (printed or e-book) from any other book on the planet. You can buy ISBNs through Bowker (www.isbn.org/standards/home/index).

asp). Buy them in bulk and you can save money.

You can submit an ordinary ePub file to the iBookstore, but that will lack interactivity. Instead, you need to use Apple's free iBooks Author program to create a special iBook file. You just take the text and pictures, and arrange them in iBooks Author much like using a simple desktop publishing program.

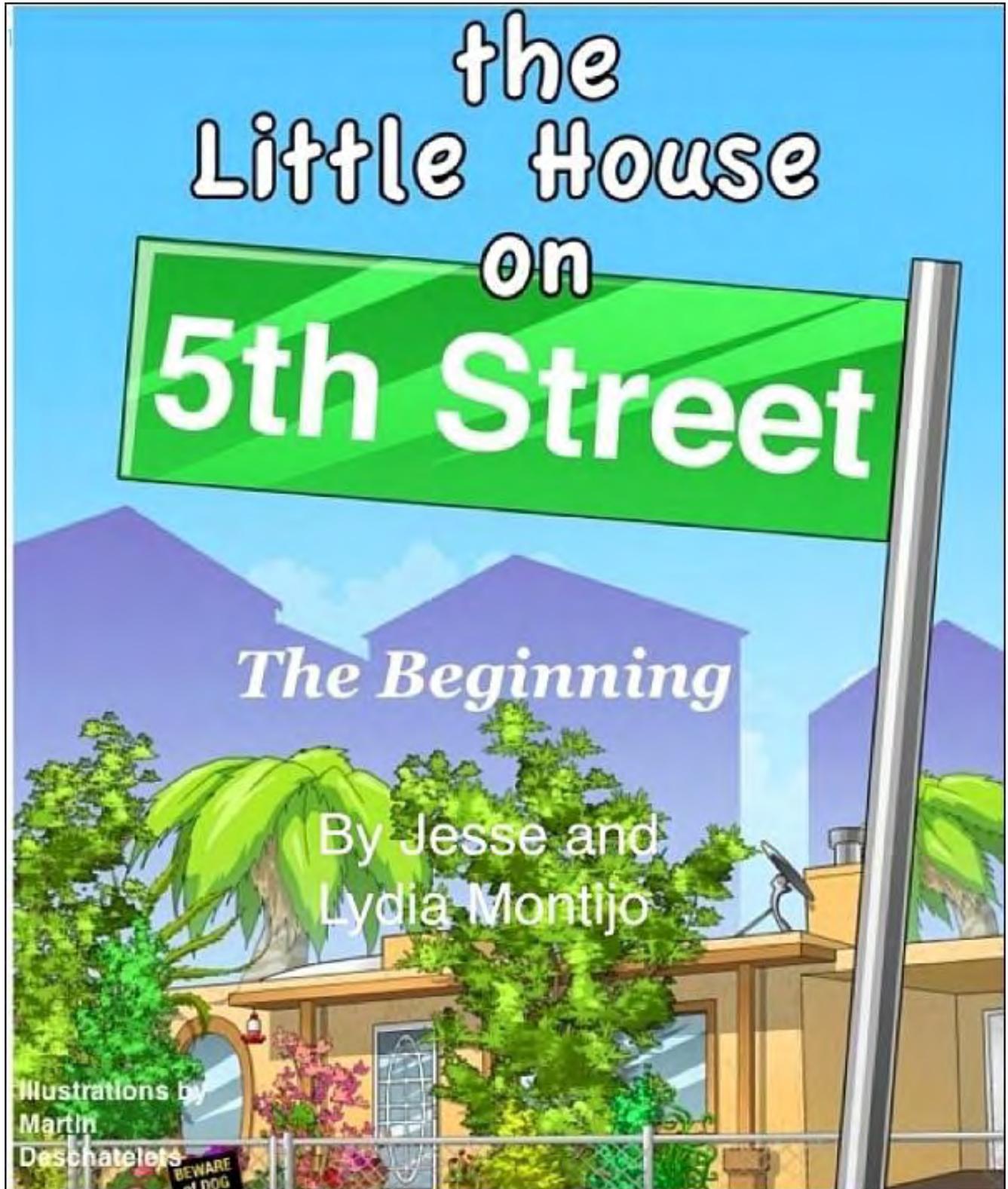


Figure 5. The free iBooks Author program lets you add pictures to text and your own create e-books.

Jesse and Lydia Montijo originally write their story, reminiscing about their own life raising their children in their home they called

The Little House on 5th Street (click.linksynergy.com/fs-bin/stat?id=15PJQz44Qcc&offerid=146261&type=3&subid=0&tmpid=1826&RD_PARM1=https%253A%252F%252Fitunes.apple.com%252Fus%252Fbook%252Fthe-little-house-on-5th-street%252Fid555865359%253Fmt%253D11%2526uo%253D4%2526partnerid%253D30), which was the name of their book. First they wrote the story in English and then found a translator to turn their story into Spanish. (Oddly enough, Apple approved the Spanish version of their iBook several days before the English version. That might indicate that more people are submitting English iBooks, which could mean that competition for iBooks in other languages will be much less.)

Their biggest goal was to write a children's book that would appeal to families raising kids. Since both Jesse and Lydia come from a Mexican background, they also wanted their book to offer a fun story for children while also introducing English-speaking kids to Spanish and vice versa.

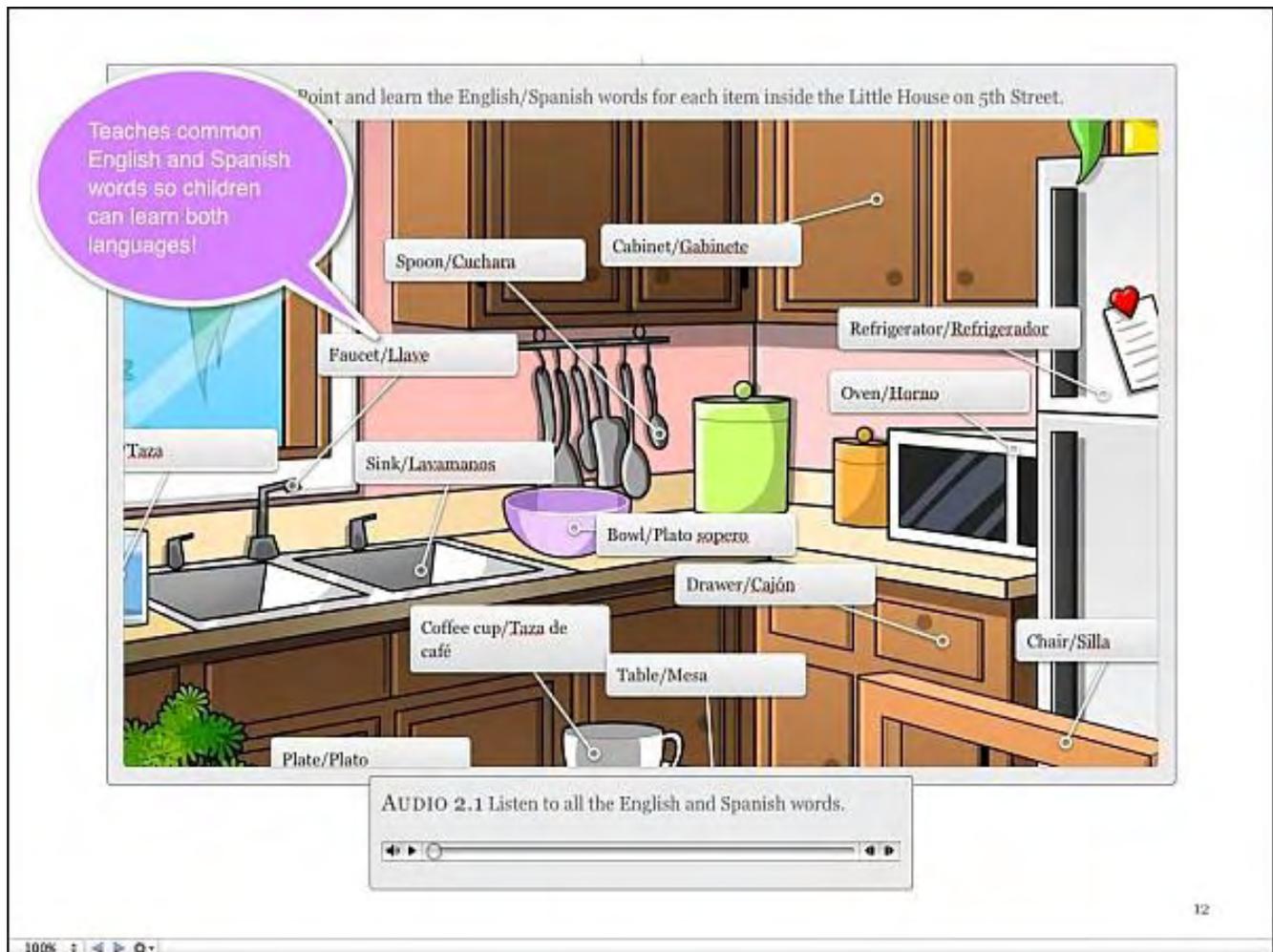


Figure 6. The "Little House on 5th Street" iBook can display English and Spanish while playing an audio clip.

Pictures identify items in English and Spanish. To hear the correct pronunciation of each word, readers can play an audio clip of a narrator. Now if parents don't speak English or Spanish very well, they won't have to since the iBook can teach children the different words as many times as they wish to hear them.

Jesse and Lydia report that since releasing both their English and Spanish version of their children's story, they've received a "very positive response from our readers, they feel a connection to the Little House on 5th Street."

While the experience of converting their Kindle e-book to the iBook format involved additional steps, both Jesse and Lydia still believe that "the advantages of electronic publishing vs. traditional print publisher is convenience and it goes so much smoother. We encourage anyone who has a dream of writing a book to just start writing and follow their dreams since self-publishing is the future."

Hands on with the Microsoft Surface Tablet

If you have a chance, try out a Microsoft Surface tablet at a nearby Microsoft Store. From a hardware perspective, the Surface seems solid. The built-in kickstand snaps out nicely but if you slide it around, the kickstand's edge will make a screeching sound as it scrapes along the table top. You probably don't want to place the Surface on a nice table or you could risk scratching the table top.

Microsoft sells two keyboard covers called the Touch Cover (\$119) and the Type Cover (\$129). The Touch Cover is flat with a keyboard printed on the inside of the cover. Typing on it may feel strange at first, but you'll probably get used to typing on a flat, hard surface after a while.

If you prefer a keyboard, then you'll want to spend a little more for the Type Cover, which has real keys that you can press and feel. The biggest problem with both the Type Cover and the Touch Cover is that the Surface tablet is really designed to use those keyboards rather than its built-in virtual keyboard.

When you're typing in PowerPoint, the virtual keyboard pops up and slides your text up so you can see it as the virtual keyboard covers the bottom of the screen. However, if you're typing numbers into an Excel spreadsheet, the virtual keyboard often covers up the cell you're trying to edit.

The virtual keyboard seems to have the most problems with Excel. Type a number or label and sometimes there's a brief pause before it appears. Use either the Type Cover or the Touch Cover and everything works just fine.

When typing in Word with the virtual keyboard, you may have a side pane displaying information that the virtual keyboard will cover up. What might be more annoying is that as you type, the virtual keyboard keys flash white to let you know that you typed a key. Besides getting used to such brief flashes of light, you'll also have to the keys changing from uppercase to lowercase, depending on whether you pressed the Shift key or not.

On the iPad, the keys flash when pressed, but the flash is much more muted. Also the keyboard only displays uppercase letters at all times. This keeps the keyboard from seemingly changing under your fingertips, but also provides less visual feedback when you're typing upper and lowercase letters.

Overall, the Surface tablet seems more like a hybrid laptop tablet rather than a pure tablet like the iPad or Kindle Fire. You can use the Surface tablet without a Type Cover or Touch Cover, but you probably wouldn't want to.

If you're looking for an ultra-portable laptop, you'll probably be happy with the Surface. If you're looking for a pure tablet without an external keyboard, try the Surface with only its virtual keyboard. The Surface probably won't kill the iPad, but it may still meet the needs of some people anyway.

* * *

Press the F12 key and the Dashboard pops up. In earlier versions of OS X, the Dashboard widgets (calendar, clock, etc.) would pop up directly over your current screen. Then in later versions of OS X, the Dashboard would appear on a separate screen that you could view by sliding back and forth over your current screen.

If you'd rather have the Dashboard display its widgets directly over your current screen, click the Apple menu and choose System Preferences to open a System Preferences window.

Click the Mission Control icon and clear the "Show Dashboard as a space" check box. Now when you press F12, the Dashboard widgets will appear directly over the current screen.

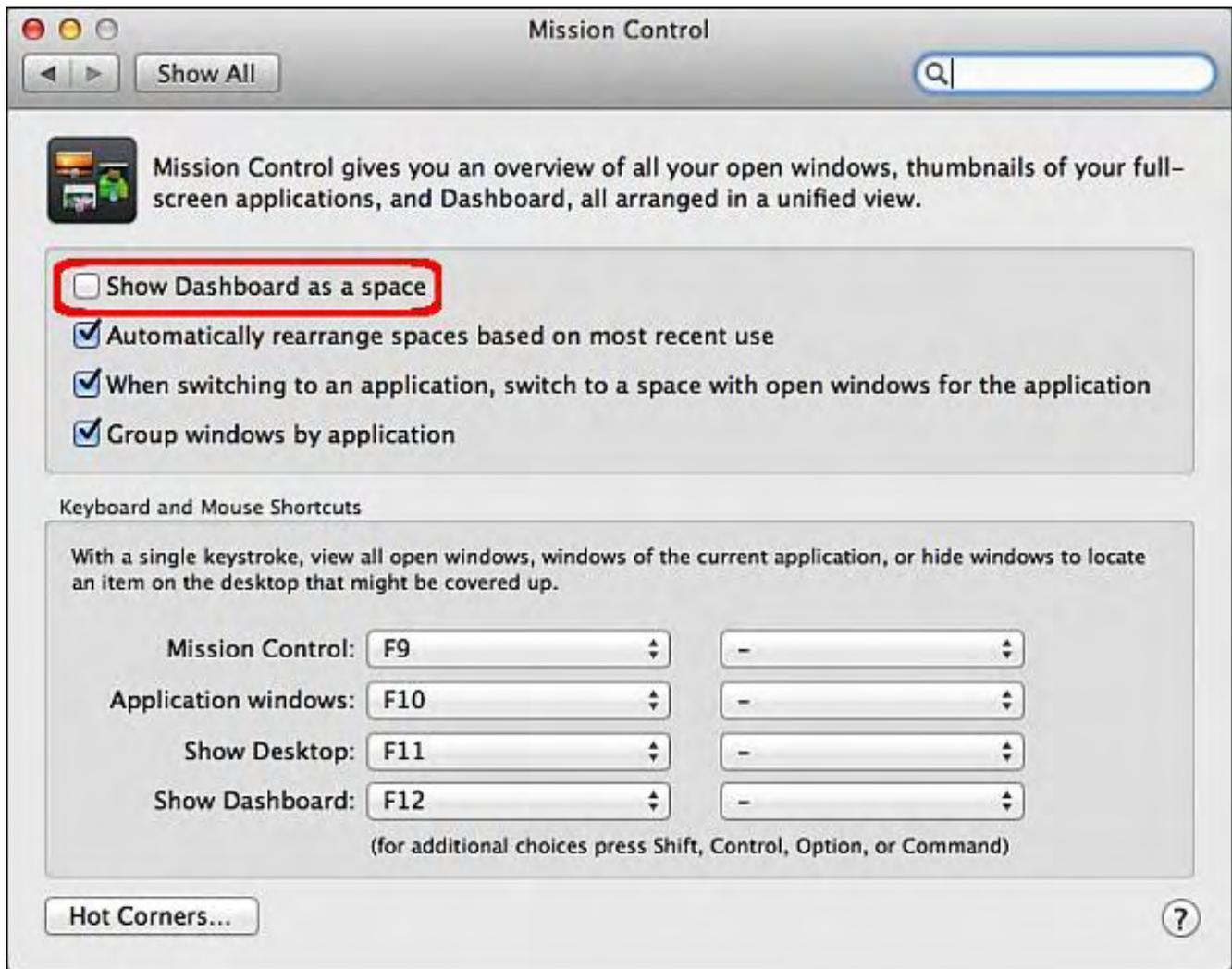


Figure 7. Customizing the appearance of Dashboard widgets.

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 participle 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)

ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=159079189)
How to Live with a Cat (When You Really Don't Want To) (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B006DJYL70/ref=as_li_tf_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=159079189)
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=B006DJYL70)
Mac Programming For Absolute Beginners (www.amazon.com/gp/product/1430233362?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=1430233362)
Republican 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)
Erotophobia (A novel) (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B009POEAJ0/ref=as_li_qf_sp_asin_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=B009POEAJ0&linkCode=as2&tag=the15minmovme-20)

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.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)



Beyond Personal Computing

“Younger Generations: “If Only Life Could Be More Like a Computer”” by Marilyn K. Martin

Amusing anecdotes about how computers have influenced life.

Generations born since the 1960s have never known an unconnected, non-digitized world. Smartphones are as necessary as car keys, and a back-up phone is usually in another pocket. Trips are planned around whether or not an Internet connection will be available and trustworthy, and wilderness hikes are incomplete without playing GPS games.

Scientists have discovered that the Age of Computing has changed the brain patterns of young people, who consider Facebook relationships and uploading video to YouTube as just part of growing up. So why is it so strange that the younger generations compare life to computers?

Tricky Relationships in Our Connected World

- *Why is it that 80% of the “people you may know” on Facebook are people who you already know but deliberately chose not to be friends with?*
- *When you can finally converse with someone you've had a secret crush on, you have to make sure you don't mention anything you've learned about them through casual-stalking on the Internet.*
- *To add or remove someone from your life, wouldn't it be great to just click Settings and Control Panel?*
- *No one thinks it's strange to have dozens of conversations with someone online before meeting them in person.*
- *You feel sorry for friends who get hit by cars while staring at their smartphones, or who get ticketed for having earphones on, and not hear an approaching ambulance or police car. But you just can't find the right e-card to express your thoughts.*
- *You wish there was a simple Cut/Paste program for when you and your best friend want to exchange girlfriends/boyfriends.*
- *A Bride has e-mailed you their wedding dinner seating arrangement, with pre-dinner chat options with the e-mail addresses of the people who will be sitting next to you. You consider cosmetic-camouflage since an ex-flame will be on one side, and a former boss from a job you walked out on will be sitting on the other side.*

- *Hail-yes! You check out a club's current "male to female ratio" before deciding to call the gang to meet you there.*
- *Part of your best friend's job should be to immediately clear your entire computer history if you die.*

Family Matters—Some Assembly Required

- *You love your grandpa who came late to the Digital Age. But why is he now compelled to send you e-mail or text messages every day with lame jokes, fringe-site warnings of impending doom, and urban myths you read and dismissed in grade school?*
- *You wonder why babies grow so slowly. You get sent new photos of your cousin's baby every week, and it's always still in the gooey, bald, and toothless grin stage.*
- *So what's with these nuclear-family edicts: No texting at the dinner table, and computer off by midnight? Don't parents understand what you could be missing?*
- *Start with simplicity when things go wrong with the family computer. Turn it Off then On. Take out the disc, blow on it, and then reinsert it. As a last resort, ask your "power-tools-are-my-friend" father if he has been doing anything unusual to your shared computer since you were last on it.*
- *When your older siblings got grounded, your parents took away the car keys. But when you get grounded, they hijack the portable hard drive!*

Computerized School Daze

- *If people are now making everything, even weapons with 3D printers, why did your Science Faire project—"Rebuilding Roadkill"—get a C-?*
- *Why is it frowned upon to have a dozen Web sites for start-ups you intend to start when you get out of high school?*
- *What's so wrong with making a half-dozen back-up discs of the cartoon superhero you created in the school Computer Lab, and mailing them with "Do Not Open!" instructions to relatives in different states?*

If Health Issues Just Had Special Keys

- *To get your daily exercise just click on Run.*
- *If you need a break from life click on Suspend.*
- *Hit "any key" to continue your life when ready.*
- *To improve your appearance you could just adjust the Display Setting. Or upgrade Personal Graphics to "sparkle."*

Great, Ponderous Thoughts

- *Decided: There is a great need for a sarcasm font.*
- *You have new respect for red traffic lights, since that's your brief opportunity to check your incoming calls and e-mails, dial a friend's number or respond to a text message.*
- *Bad decisions make great stories. Great decisions make bad movies.*

- *When you miss a phone call by picking up on the last ring, and immediately call back, why does it ring ten times and then go to voicemail?*
- *You always have problems locating your car keys and finding the target in blind-fold games. But you can miraculously find and hit the Snooze button on your alarm clock half-asleep and with your eyes closed in under three seconds—every time.*
- *Why can't you just click on "Send Now," and your standard special pizza would be on its way to you?*
- *Why do avatars always look so-o-o-o-o much better than the real person?*
- *Like making clay pottery, anyone can Photoshop. But making something legal that others will pay to see, now that's the trick!*
- *If you ever get stuck on an island in a Reality series with access to only one Internet site—choose YouTube. You can watch video clips from dawn to dusk for years, and never see a repeat.*
- *LOL has gone from meaning "laugh out loud," to "I have nothing else to say."*

Gaming and DVDs

- *While out driving, you saw a banana peel in the road and instinctively swerved to avoid it. Thanks Mario Kart!*
- *Let's all agree to totally ignore whatever format comes after DVDs. No one wants to restart their collection, or spend thousands of dollars converting their collection to a new format.*
- *If Carmen San Diego and Waldo ever got together, their kids would probably be invisible.*
- *Getting beat at most video games by your eight-year-old sibling or child is annoying. Getting repeatedly beat at your favorite game by a one-digit-age relative is a matter of digital-dignity. So you hack into the game to lock the upper levels so no one can win.*

Anxieties

- *You're always terrified when you exit out of Word, and are asked if you want to Save any changes to your 30 page research paper—when you didn't make any changes.*
- *Your four-year old, riding in the back seat, asks you what would happen if you ran over Barney the purple dinosaur. Are there any good answers to questions like this?*
- *Don't you hate it when you find an interesting story title on a news site, and the link takes you to a video instead of an article?*
- *You have a hard time deciphering the fine line between boredom and hunger.*
- *How many times can you say "What?" to a mumblor before you totally give up and just start nodding and smiling?*
- *Why are there so many anger-issues over breaking up or quitting your job by text message?*

Gadget Wisdom

- *You like all the music in your iTunes, except when it's on Shuffle. Then, invariably, you only like one in every fifteen songs.*

- *You keep the phone numbers of people you hate in your smartphone, just so you know not to answer when they call.*
- *You hate to be the one with the remote in a room full of people watching TV. The pressure! Do they love this show as much as you do? Should you ask for a vote to keep watching it? If they all get up and leave will you still be friends?*

(Many of these anecdotes and jokes are available on multiple Internet sites. But special thanks to funny.com (funny.com), borndigitalbook.com (borndigitalbook.com), and shoptcs.com (shoptcs.com).)

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

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).

[Return to Table of Contents](#)



Editor's Letters: Tips and Thoughts from Readers

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

"Realtek Audio Drivers," "Recurring Spam in Name of a Friend," "Statistics"

Realtek Audio Drivers

[Regarding the October 19 Digital Dave column:]

Assuming the OS is Windows XP or higher, removing the device from device manager, then rebooting, should trigger the "new hardware found" wizard that can search the Internet for correct drivers. Might be simpler.

-Rich Ernst, San Diego, CA

Recurring Spam in Name of a Friend

[Regarding the October 19 Digital Dave column:]

Hello Dave,

Thank you for addressing my e-mail Spam problem. I have Windows 7 with IE 9 and when I press the Alt key then the "Enter" key, the only thing that happens is the page expands and I lose the top of my page or the top is hidden. I can't get to any information regarding the source of the e-mails.

Thank you,

-Jerry, San Diego, CA

Hi, Jerry,

I forgot to cover looking at Web mail in Gmail.

1. Open the message you want to investigate.
2. Click on the little down arrow to the right of the time, next to Reply called "More."
3. Select "Show original" from the dropdown menu.

The source for the e-mail should open in a new window. This will be all of it and will include the routing.

I hope this helps. I should have covered this.

-Dave

I have the same problem in my Gmail. I clicked on the filter button and built a filter using the friend's e-mail address and all mail with that address automatically goes to my trash. I never see it.

-Bob Huegel, Centennial, CO

Statistics

[Regarding the October 19 Wally Wang's Apple Farm column:]

Wally:

Try to be a bit less of a rabid Mac proponent, because it makes you look dumb in your use of statistics. You may well have data showing a reduction of PC sales, but we are in a recession. Further, there are a lot of new devices out there which are taking a bite out of the traditional desktop computer. To be fair, compare PCs sold to Macs sold. And not iPads, but Macintosh computers. Compare iPads to all other PDA's (or whatever they are), and compare iPhones to all other phones.

I'm never going to sit under a tree and read an electronic book. I want a big, high-res flat screen, and a keyboard where I can see and feel the keys. And I want the audio to be stereo high fidelity, not some crummy 2" speaker or some dumb ear buds. And when I do business apps, I want a second display too.

For what I want to do, messing around on a screen that's three thumbs wide is totally irrelevant.

-Ed Price, El Cajon, CA

Ed,

Try to be a bit less of an anti-Apple critic because it makes you look dumb in your use of logic.

"You may well have data showing a reduction of PC sales, but we are in a recession."

Yes, we are in a recession, but how does that explain why Macintosh market share (www.tuaw.com/2012/07/12/apples-pc-market-share-now-up-to-12-in-us-reports-state/) in the U.S. has now climbed to 12%?

If the recession is causing fewer people to buy PCs, why are Macintosh sales still climbing and its market share still steadily growing even during the recession?

"Further, there are a lot of new devices out there which are taking a bite out of the traditional desktop computer."

Yes, there are a lot of new devices out there which are taking a bite out of the traditional desktop computer, which is exactly what I stated as follows, so I'm glad you completely agree with me:

"The reason PC sales are falling is because we now have a choice for getting on the Internet, sending and receiving e-mail, and sending instant messages. With so many choices between smartphones and tablets, there's often no reason to get another PC when a smartphone or tablet can be cheaper, lighter, and more versatile."

As far as your boast that "I'm never going to sit under a tree and read an electronic book," apparently you aren't even reading what I'm writing in my column, but seem to be reacting to what you think I'm saying instead. Perhaps if you actually read the words that I wrote, your comments wouldn't look as silly.

Boasting that you would never read an electronic book doesn't mean that other people aren't finding productive uses for reading an electronic book. Why do you feel that not reading electronic books is something to be proud about? Perhaps when printed books first appeared, people boasted they would never read them either but stick to information stored on scrolls instead.

-Wally Wang

Thanks Wally, I always respond positively when people call me dumb and silly. Does that mean that if I appeared to criticize Apple products less, then my logic would be more acceptable to you? As to not reading your words, I guess I was just distracted by your masthead graphic of two kids sitting under a tree

using their electronic media (most likely Apple products located on your farm). I did not make a boast (try reading my words), I simply told you what one PC user (me), does and doesn't do, with his PC. As for you intuiting that I'm anti-Apple, does that mean I will have to throw away my iPhone 4?

I went back over your column again, and perhaps you confused me with your rapid comparisons. Maybe, when you refer to a PC, you mean personal computers, which I understand to include both Macs and generic devices running Windows. To me, you appeared to be comparing iPads to desktop Windows machines.

As for the recession, Mac computers are bought by the more affluent, or at least the people who place cool above value. These people will be less affected by a recession. Less affluent people, or the more frugal ones, will just go it another year or so before buying a new machine. And of course, the business market, in which Apple Mac's are barely considered, will also delay acquisitions until things turn around.

Of course, it may be that you are the one who sees Apple critics behind every tree. Perhaps you have been down on the Apple farm a bit too long and have lost perspective of the greater world; perhaps you can't even imagine a world beyond Apple. Now that I think about it, it seems you have been running on the subject of the "imminent demise of Windows" for over 15 years. I suppose you would call this a Windows fantasy, but why don't you try a mental cold restart and see if you boot up into something other than Mac OS?

-Ed Price, El Cajon, CA

"Thanks Wally, I always respond positively when people call me dumb and silly."

Notice that I just responded in the same manner that initiated the conversation when you stated: "Try to be a bit less of a rabid Mac proponent, because it makes you look dumb in your use of statistics."

So if you don't wish to be called dumb, why would you start off by calling other people dumb? Also I didn't call you silly. I called your comments silly.

"Does that mean that if I appeared to criticize Apple products less, then my logic would be more acceptable to you?"

Nope. What I appreciate is logic whether it paints Apple products in a positive or negative light. Whether your logic is acceptable to me is irrelevant if your logic actually makes sense.

"Maybe, when you refer to a PC, you mean personal computers, which I understand to include both Macs and generic devices running Windows. To me, you appeared to be comparing iPads to desktop Windows machines."

Macintosh and iPad sales have both been steadily climbing even during the recession so the recession isn't an excuse for slow PC sales.

"As for the recession, Mac computers are bought by the more affluent, or at least the people who place cool above value."

Do you have statistics that prove people who buy Macs "place cool above value"? Maybe they just want a better computer.

"Now that I think about it, it seems you have been running on the subject of the "imminent demise of Windows" for over 15 years."

My column has been running since 2008. Not for the past 15 years.

"I suppose you would call this a Windows fantasy, but why don't you try a mental cold restart and see if you boot up into something other than Mac OS?"

I suppose you don't realize that I make the majority of my income off Windows and Microsoft Office for Windows? So I'm forced to use Windows more often than I wish.

-Wally Wang

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/).

*Send mail to ceeditor@computoredge.com with questions about editorial content.
Send mail to cwebmaster@computoredge.com with questions or comments about this Web site.
Copyright © 1997-2012 The Byte Buyer, Inc.*

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