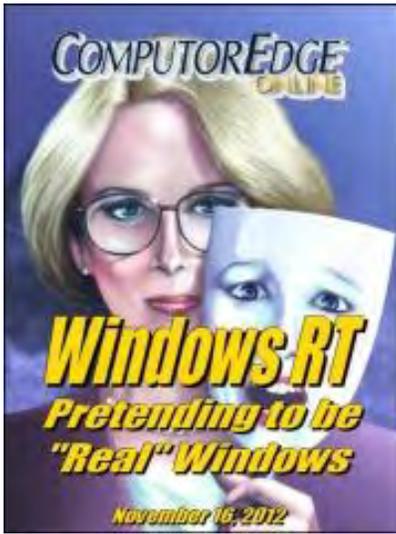


ComputerEdge™ Online — 11/16/12



This issue: Windows RT: Pretending to be "Real" Windows

What you need to know before you buy the Microsoft Surface with Windows RT, plus Digital Dave, Wally Wang, an AutoHotkey Web research assistant, and humor from Marilyn Martin.

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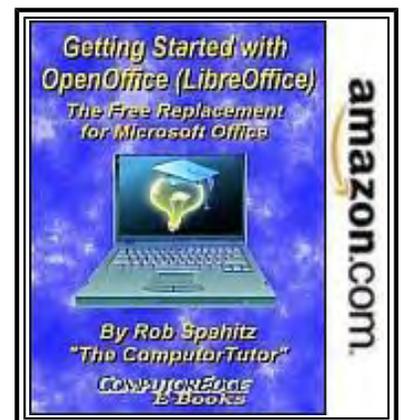
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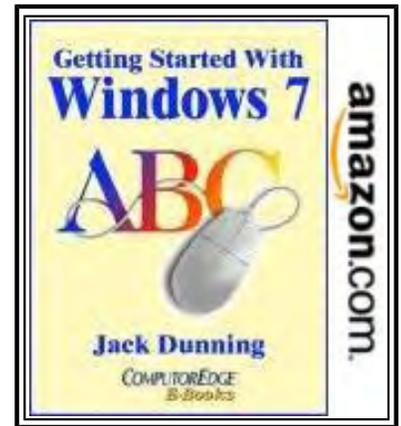
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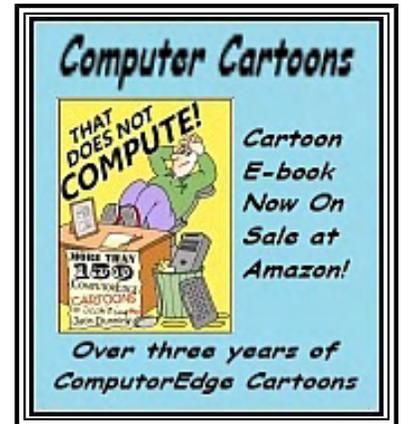
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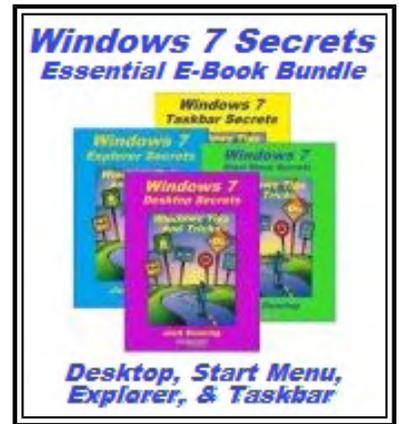
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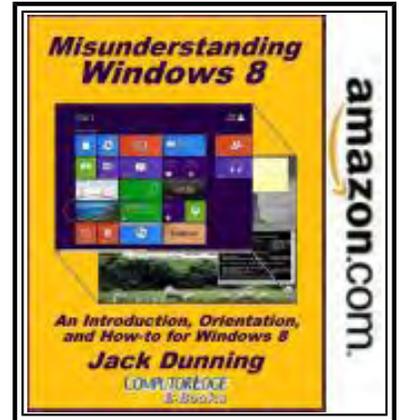
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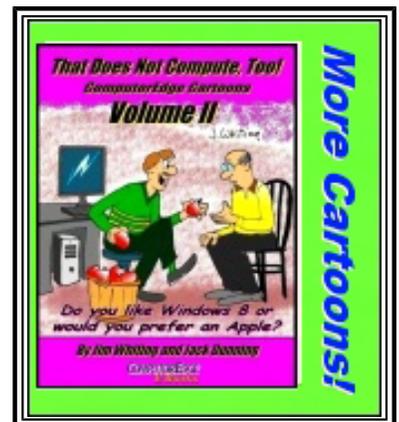
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Digital Dave

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

Copied CD Music Files Are Gone; Setting the Time in the Android 4.0 (Ice Cream Sandwich) Tablet; Too Much E-mail History.

Dear Digital Dave,

Whenever I buy a music CD I copy it to my computer. I like the quality of the playback and sometimes I like to let Windows Media Player play all my CDs randomly. I just noticed, while using Windows Explorer that a number of the music folders appear to be empty. Yet, when WMP plays my music folder and selects the tunes randomly, the tunes that were in the now "empty" folder still play. So, they are still there, but don't appear in Windows Explorer. How do I get them to reappear?

*David
San Diego*

Dear David,

There are a couple of possibilities. The first is that the music is not actually located where you think it is. The second is that the music files have now somehow become hidden files.

Possibly the easiest way to uncover a music file's location is to right-click on one of the playing files in Windows Media Player and select "Open file location." Windows Explorer will open hopefully displaying your files.

If you don't see any files, then they may now be hidden files. From the Organize menu select Folder and Search Options (Windows Vista and Windows 7). In the View tab select "Show hidden files and folders" and Apply (see Figure 1). If the files are hidden, this should make them appear.

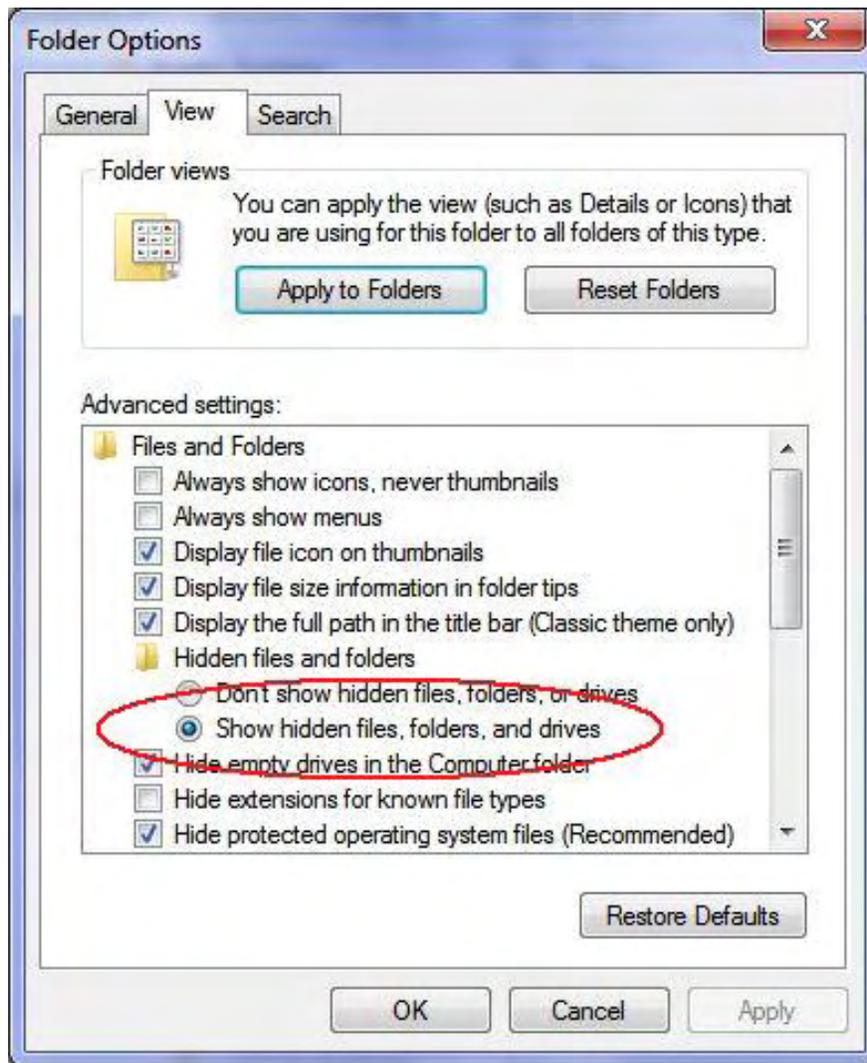


Figure 1. Select "Show hidden files and folders" in View tab of Folder Options.

If this doesn't work then there is something more mysterious going on—possibly a virus.

Digital Dave

Dear Digital Dave,

I know that your primary interest/knowledge concerns Windows based systems, but I am at a loss for info. I just purchased an ASUS TF700T tablet and cannot set the time and cannot find any info on the subject on the Internet!

Can you help?

*Ray
San Diego*

Dear Ray,

I'm interested in all types of computing. It's just that most of the questions I get are related to Windows. While I don't always know the answer, I try to point people in the right direction.

In your case, since the ASUS TF700T is an Android 4.0 (Ice Cream Sandwich—sounds delicious) tablet. It should operate in much the same manner as other similar tablets. I did manage to find a TF700T manual (dlcdnet.asus.com/pub/ASUS/

EeePAD/TF700T/e7048_Ttransformer_TF700_emanual.pdf), but I didn't see anything that specifically addresses setting the time. However, I did locate this YouTube video (www.youtube.com/watch?v=hlbZUny5Wlg&noredirect=1) which seems to address your specific problem—although for a different tablet with the same operating system.

Most tablets will automatically update the time when connected to the Internet, usually via Wi-Fi. The primary setting would be the time zone. However, there should be a way to set the time manually. Perhaps another reader who has more insight into this issue can update us.

Digital Dave

Dear Digital Dave,

I sure hope you can help me on this question because nobody else can. I am running Yahoo for most of my eBay or looking up things, or even most of my mail. I have the address book and can delete anyone from that, but there is that feature when forwarding where you can just put in the first or two letters from the alphabet and anyone that I have ever e-mailed who has those letters in their address comes up even when they are not in my address book. How can I delete them? It is easy to do over at Gmail, Road Runner or Hotmail.

Thanks,

*Jim S.
San Diego, CA*

Dear Jim,

The saving of those e-mail addresses in a dropdown menu is not necessarily a function of Yahoo Mail or whatever Web mail that you're using. It is generally the browser which is saving these entries in its history. That is why you can delete an address from your address book but continue to see it in the recommendations. If you used a different Web browser, you would see a different list.

Generally, these lists can be cleared by clearing the Web browser history. The technique would be similar to the Internet Explorer method of opening Tools => Internet Options => General tab => Browsing history then clicking the "Delete..." button. Checking Form data and clicking Delete should remove the saved recommendations (see Figure 2).

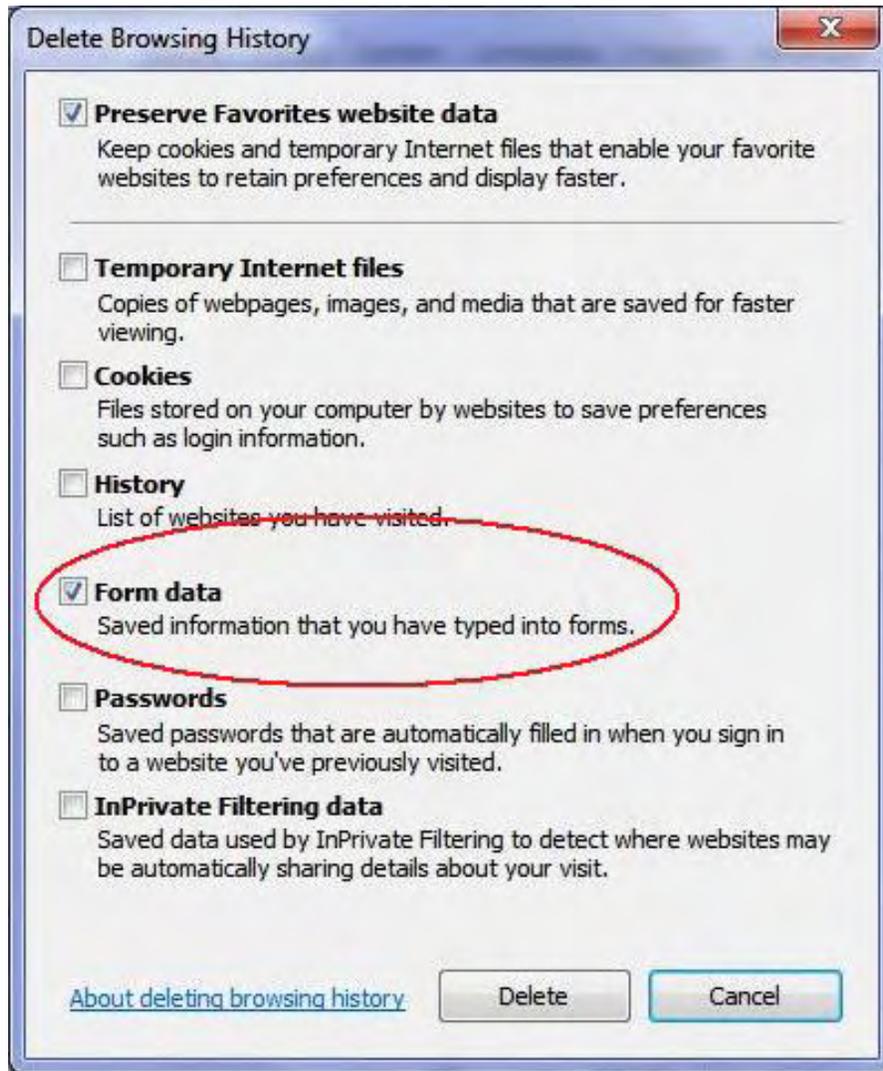


Figure 2. Deleting saved form data in Internet Explorer.

It is possible that a browser extension or toolbar is controlling this e-mail address history. If that is the case, then the solution will be found in the add-on.

Digital Dave

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Windows RT: Pretending to be "Real" Windows

“What You Need to Know about Microsoft's Surface with Windows RT Tablet Computer” by Jack Dunning

"I'm not saying that the Surface RT isn't a good tablet computer. Just don't be fooled into thinking that you're getting full functioning Windows with it."

If you're looking at Microsoft's new Surface tablet with Windows RT, be warned: *Windows RT is not "real" Windows*. Although I don't think it was intentional, Microsoft has created a situation which is both confusing and a little deceptive. This is compounded by the fact that in a couple of months, Microsoft will release a tablet with "real" Windows, the Surface Pro with Windows 8 Pro. The importance of this possible confusion didn't hit home with me until I played with some Surface with Windows RT tablets at the mall.



I'm not saying that the Surface RT isn't a good tablet computer. Just don't be fooled into thinking that you're getting full functioning Windows with it. The Surface with Windows RT is a tablet which may be very competitive with the Apple iPad. It appears to be well-built and has features lacking in the iPad—USB 2.0 port for hooking up devices and a microSDXC card slot for adding storage. Plus, for an extra \$120 dollars you can get a detachable keyboard/cover to turn the tablet into a netbook computer.

I like the Surface, but I'm not planning to buy the Windows RT model. I already own an iPad and a Kindle Fire for sharing photos, watching Netflix, reading Kindle e-books, and looking up obscure knowledge on the Web while watching TV. If I were to get a Surface tablet, I would want the Windows 8 Pro model with "real" Windows—which won't be on the market before January. I don't need another closed system tablet computer which requires me to get all my

software from one source—in this case the Microsoft Store rather than Apple iTunes or Amazon.

How Microsoft Fools You

I've been using Windows 8 since the Consumer Preview came out (and I had Windows 8 running on an older computer—formerly Windows XP—until the motherboard died). I already knew that Windows RT wouldn't support any of my Windows programs, so when I tested the Surface RT models at the mall, I was surprised to see the Desktop tile on the Modern interface. The Desktop tile is the primary access to "real" Windows in Windows 8 Pro. I touched the tile and a Windows Desktop opened. It appeared that there was a working version of the Windows 8 Desktop available in Windows RT. To the unwitting buyer, the mere fact that a Desktop will open may suggest that the tablet supports Windows programs. It doesn't.

I knew going in that the Surface with Windows RT wouldn't install or run other Windows programs. All I was expecting to see was the Modern interface with its colorful tiles with a number of games and apps. I also thought that the Microsoft Office apps which come with the Surface RT (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and OneNote) would run in the same Modern interface. I didn't think that Windows RT would have a Desktop looking just like the one we use in all other versions of Windows. I was wrong!

However, the only programs you can run in the Desktop in Windows RT are the slightly limited versions of Microsoft Office modules and Internet Explorer which are included with the Surface RT. (This version of Microsoft Office does not support macros, add-ins, forms, and custom programs, or e-mail. There is no Outlook.) You won't be able to load any other Windows software unless at some future date Microsoft offers it through the Microsoft Store. You won't be installing Google Chrome, OpenOffice, or AutoHotkey. You can't even run a simple executable file (EXE).

One advantage Microsoft gets by including the limited Desktop is that anyone who uses a Surface RT tablet will be interacting with a Windows Desktop (no matter how limited). That means a transition to Windows 8 Pro on a laptop or desktop computer will be that much easier for that user. Apple iPad users get no help with the Mac learning curve from the iOS operating system. Plus, anyone using Windows 8 on a laptop or desktop will gravitate to the familiar Surface computer operating system whether it's the restricted RT version or the complete Pro. From Microsoft's point of view this makes sense, in spite of the initial confusion caused by the Surface with Windows RT.

While the fact that Microsoft Office is included with the Surface RT is no small thing, it is important for buyers to realize that they are buying a tablet computer and not a smaller replacement for their Windows laptop. That fully Windows capable tablet computer won't arrive until next year with the Surface with Windows 8 Pro.

The Surface with Windows RT as a Tablet Computer

Having given you my warning, if all you want is a tablet computer with the apps available from the Microsoft Store, then the Surface with Windows RT may be the tablet for you. It has many good points.

The Size and Weight

One of the first things I did when testing the models at the mall was pick up the Surface RT and rip off the keyboard cover. (The cover is attached magnetically and removes quite easily.) I wanted to see how the weight felt in my hands compared to the iPad. I noted that it felt about the same as holding the iPad. The iPad and Surface (1.5 lbs) are very close in weight. (The Surface Pro will be 2.0 lbs.) This is okay for many operations where the tablet sits in your lap or on a crossed knee, but is not ideal for extended periods of one-handed computing.

The shape of the Surface screen is less square than the iPad. This is fine for watching videos, however, the wider shorter screen of the Surface is less suitable for browsing the Web than the iPad. The Web page is too short when in the horizontal landscape mode and too narrow when in the vertical portrait mode. (This is also one of my complaints about the shape of the Kindle Fire, although the larger screen of the Surface is better than the Kindle for Web browsing.)

Using the Touchscreen

I needed a little help getting started with the touchscreen. There were no problems poking tiles and scrolling the screen from side to side, but I couldn't figure out how to open the control charms or reposition the tiles by touch. I was quickly shown that a short downward movement of a tile both opened the app option bar at the bottom of the screen and allowed me to move the tile to a

new location. An inward swipe on the right side of the screen opened the Charm bar (Search, Share, Start, Devices, and Settings). See Figure 1.



Figure 1. An inward swipe of the right side of the touchscreen opens the Surface RT Charms.

I found the Web links in Internet Explorer a little unresponsive to touch. I don't know whether this was my fat-finger technique or if there is a sensitivity adjustment in settings. Eventually I was able to open links, but it often took five or six attempts. Perhaps I needed a little more training. I should have brought my stylus pen for testing.

The Keyboards

The keyboard covers are a major plus for the Surface. While it has an onscreen virtual keyboard with various configurations which include a split thumb keyboard for typing while holding the tablet with both hands, I've never been fond of typing on a screen. Too many accidents happen. I use the iPad's virtual keyboard, but it's with one or two fingers. If you do any reasonable amount of text input, a separate keyboard is handy.

I liked both of the keyboards: the Touch Cover (\$119.99) and the Type Cover (\$10 more). The Touch Cover keyboard worked well although I preferred the positive mechanical action of the Type Cover. It is important to note the Charms also have dedicated keys on the Surface keyboards (see Figure 2). The key for the Start Charm is the Windows logo key (⊞).



Figure 2. The mechanical action of the Type Cover for the Surface Tablet feels like a real keyboard because it is a real keyboard. (The Charm keys are circled in yellow.)

Note that the keyboards also include a touchpad to simulate mouse movement.

Don't Forget the Pop Out Stand

This may seem trivial, but the pop out stand which holds the Surface tablet upright is similar to cup holders in a new car. It could be the key to the buying decision. The stand is a convenience that makes one wonder why all tablet computers don't include one. I don't have a stand for my iPad (early model) so I just live with it. It isn't that big of a deal, but if it had one built-in, I wouldn't hate it.

The Windows Desktop

Don't get me wrong. The Desktop on the Surface RT looks and acts like Windows Desktop (see Figure 3). (That's part of the problem. Some people will see it and assume that they will be able to install their other Windows programs in it.) It includes some important applications in Microsoft Office and Internet Explorer. Plus it also includes the Windows 8 version of File Explorer (formerly Windows Explorer) which can be used to view and move files on the Surface, as well as those on a microSDXC card or USB flash drive inserted into the tablet. (Don't expect all or your USB devices to work with Windows RT, even if they work with Windows 8 Pro. New drivers may come in the future, but older devices may never be compatible.)

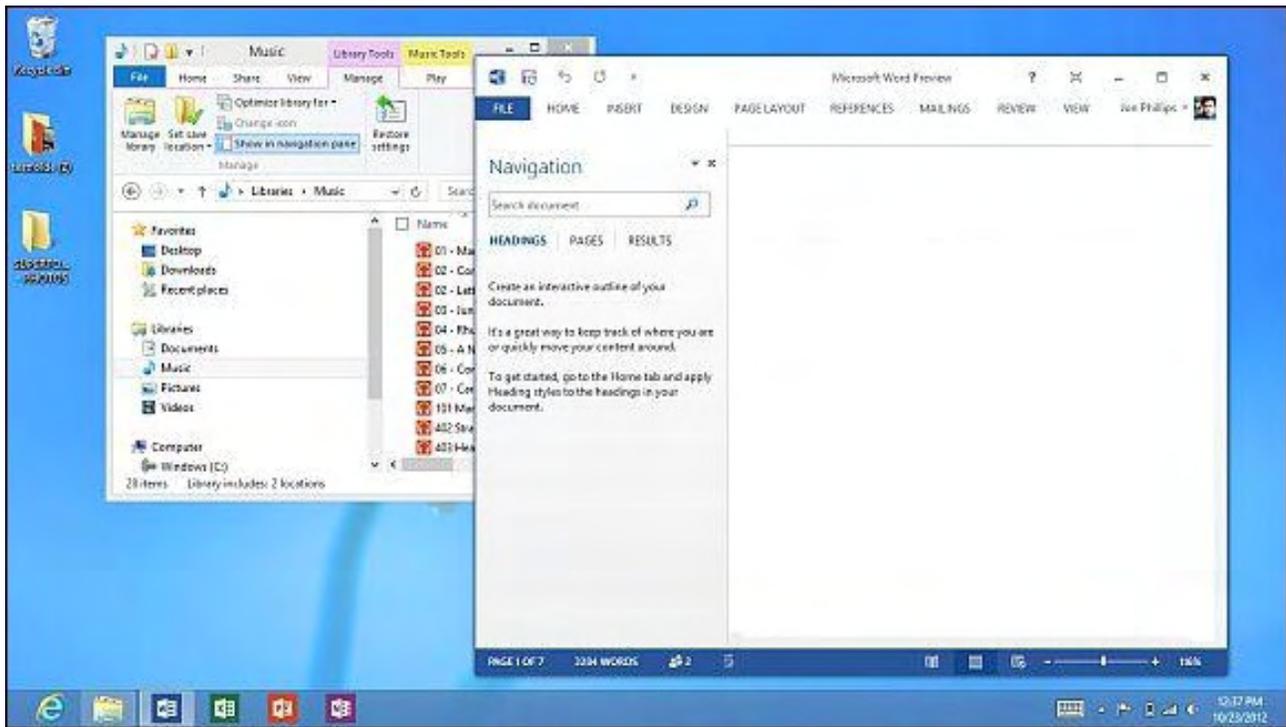


Figure 3. The Desktop in the Surface RT looks and acts like the "real" Windows Desktop although no outside Windows programs can be installed.

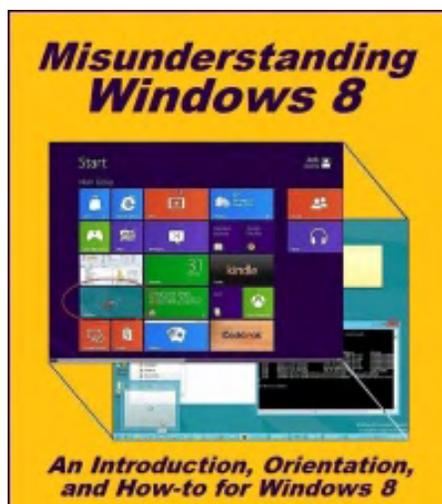
If you want quick access to many of the usual Windows tools, then WIN+X (⊞+X) will open a power menu from anywhere on the Surface tablet. The options on the menu include Control Panel, Task Manager, Device Manager, and many of the other old standard Windows tools. Of course, these tools will also be limited by capabilities of the Surface RT Desktop.

Competitive with the iPad?

Apple has owned the tablet market for a number of years while others try to break into their near monopoly. The Surface tablet is Microsoft's attempt to make some inroads. From a technical view-point, Microsoft is certainly offering value for the same price. If I were looking at my first tablet (which I'm not), I would need to consider the Surface RT as an alternative to the iPad. I'm not worried about the fact that Apple has hundreds of thousands of apps available for the iPad. I only use a few apps and most of them (Kindle, Netflix, etc.) are already available for the Surface. Both tablets include front and back cameras and overcharge for extra internal memory storage. (I wonder how much people actually use the cameras on tablets.)

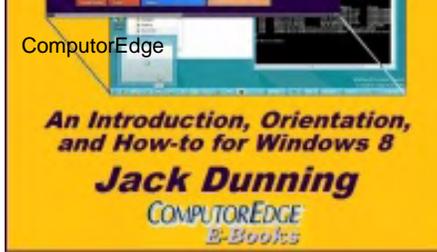
What would make me gravitate to the Surface RT are the extra features, including the USB 2.0 port, a slot for a microSDXC card, and Microsoft Office. However, since I'm not looking for another tablet computer, I'll wait at least until I see the Surface with Windows 8 Pro—"real" Windows.

* * *



For more information on Windows 8 see, *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) at Amazon. Also available at iTunes (itunes.apple.com/us/book/misunderstanding-windows-8/id517331413?ls=1), 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).

Deciphering the madness of Windows 8, the new operating system from Microsoft, while comparing it to Windows 7.



Whether you're an old-line Windows user or merely curious about what Microsoft is up to, this book gives clear guidelines for understanding and tricks for using the new Windows 8 operating system. Jack Dunning, author of *Getting Started with Windows 7* (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B007AL672M/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=B007AL672M&linkCode=as2&tag=comput0b9-20) and other Windows 7

Secrets books (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B00801M5GS/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=B00801M5GS&linkCode=as2&tag=comput0b9-20), provides an objective appraisal of Windows 8 while comparing it to Windows 7.

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).

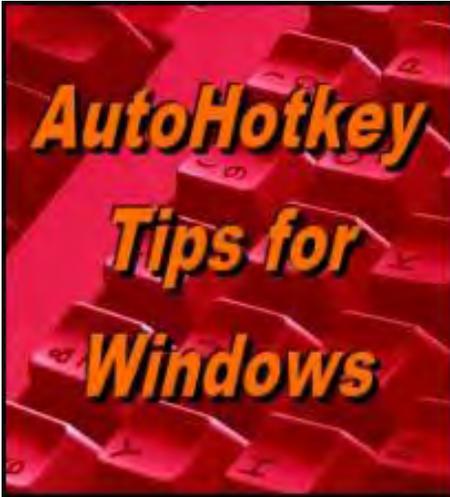
Our second compilation of stupid *ComputerEdge* cartoons from 2011 and 2012 is now available at Amazon! *That Does Not Compute, Too! ComputerEdge Cartoons, Volume II: "Do You Like Windows 8 or Would You Prefer an Apple?"* (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B009JY65QQ/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=B009JY65QQ&linkCode=as2&tag=comput0b9-20)

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.

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Yet, One More Reason to Use AutoHotkey Free Software!

[How to Collect Web Page Text, Web Addresses, and Other Info for Research in One Pot](#)

“An AutoHotkey Tool for Collecting Data. Yet, One More Reason to Use AutoHotkey Free Software!” by Jack Dunning

This tool for collecting text from Web pages, e-books, documents or any other source is helpful to reporters, students, business people, researchers, or anyone else who needs to work from multiple sources.

If you have a reason to collect text from Web pages, e-books, documents or any other source which allows copying (CTRL+C), then you may want to collect all these bits of information in one place without the continual jumping between two windows (select, copy with CTRL+C, move to collection window, paste with CTRL+V, then return to source and do it all over again). The AutoHotkey routine below takes most of the work out of collecting quotes, references, URLs of Web sites, or any other text-based information. This is helpful to reporters, students, business people, researchers, or anyone else who needs to work from multiple sources. I've called the snippet of AutoHotkey code *SendText.ahk*.

What the SendText AutoHotkey Routine Does

Imagine that you are surfing the Web looking for interesting information. You come upon the Wikipedia page for Universal Serial Bus (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Universal_Serial_Bus). You see information that you want to save in a text file. You select the desire text (see Figure 1).

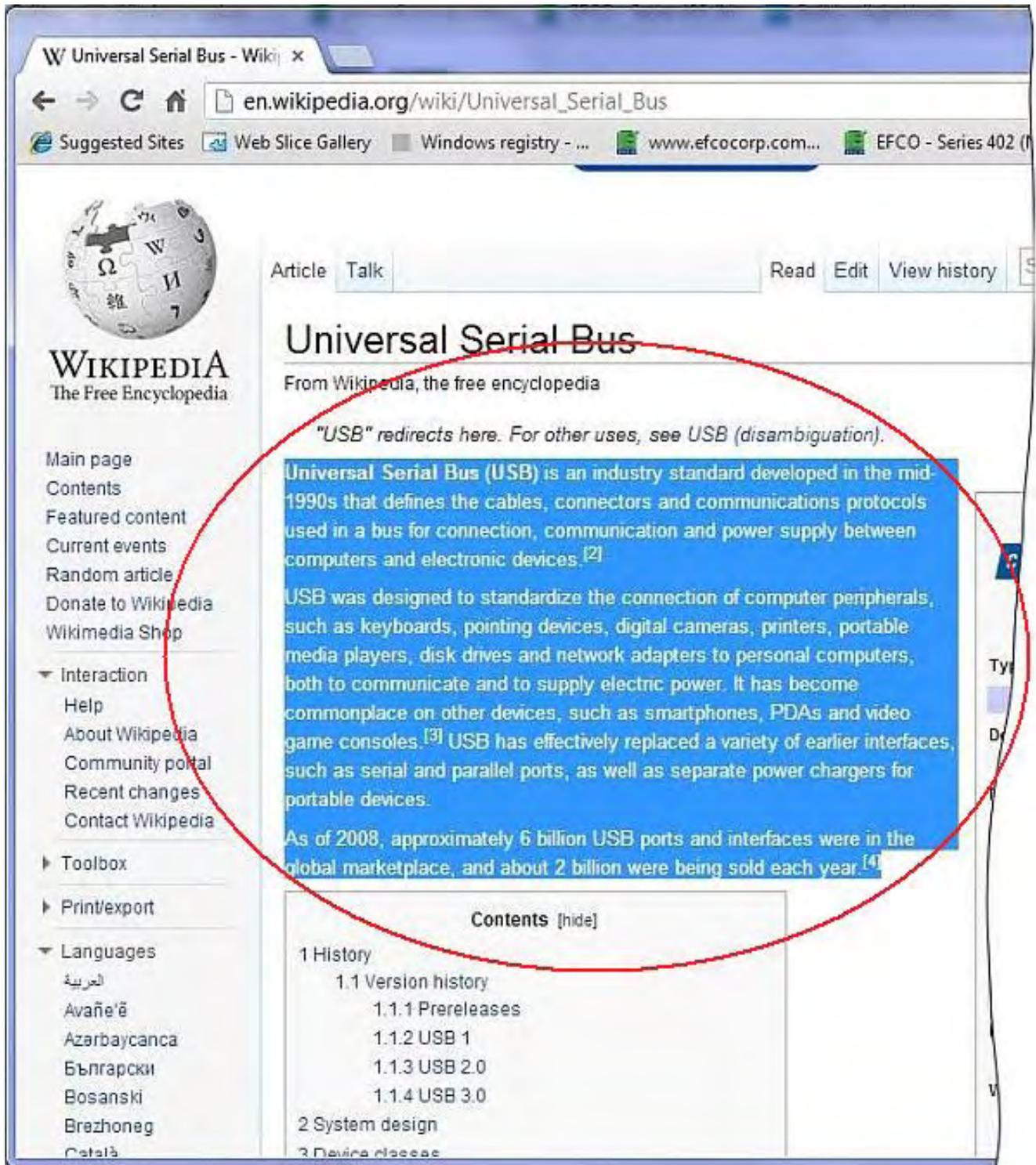


Figure 1. Text is selected from a Web page for sending to a new Notepad file.

Next you press the hotkey combination CTRL+ALT+S. A new Notepad window is opened and the text is added (see Figure 2).

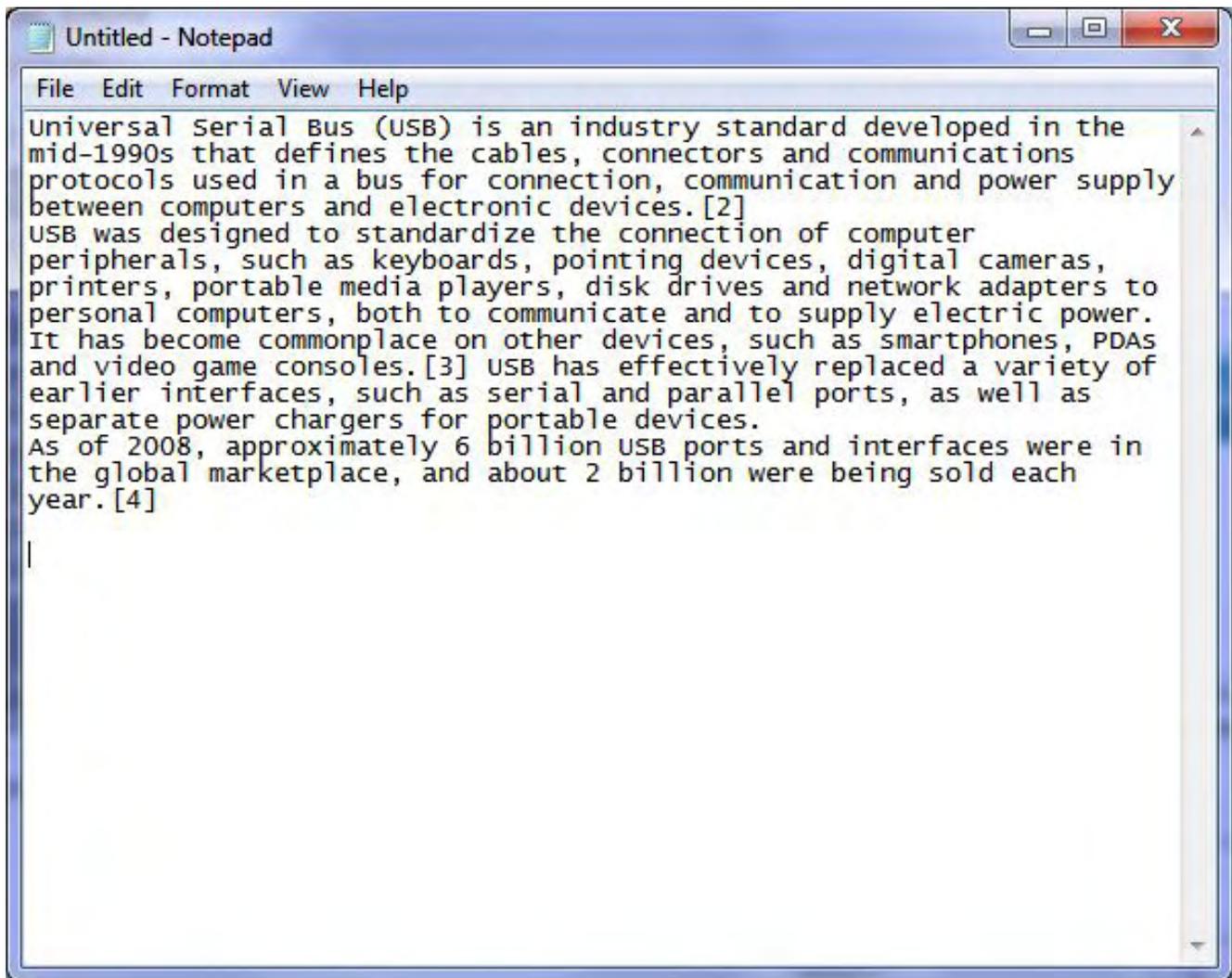


Figure 2. Notepad is loaded and the selected text is added to the open window.

Of course you also want to save the URL (Web address) for the text you have added to Notepad. You return to the Web browser window and highlight the URL in the address field (see Figure 3).

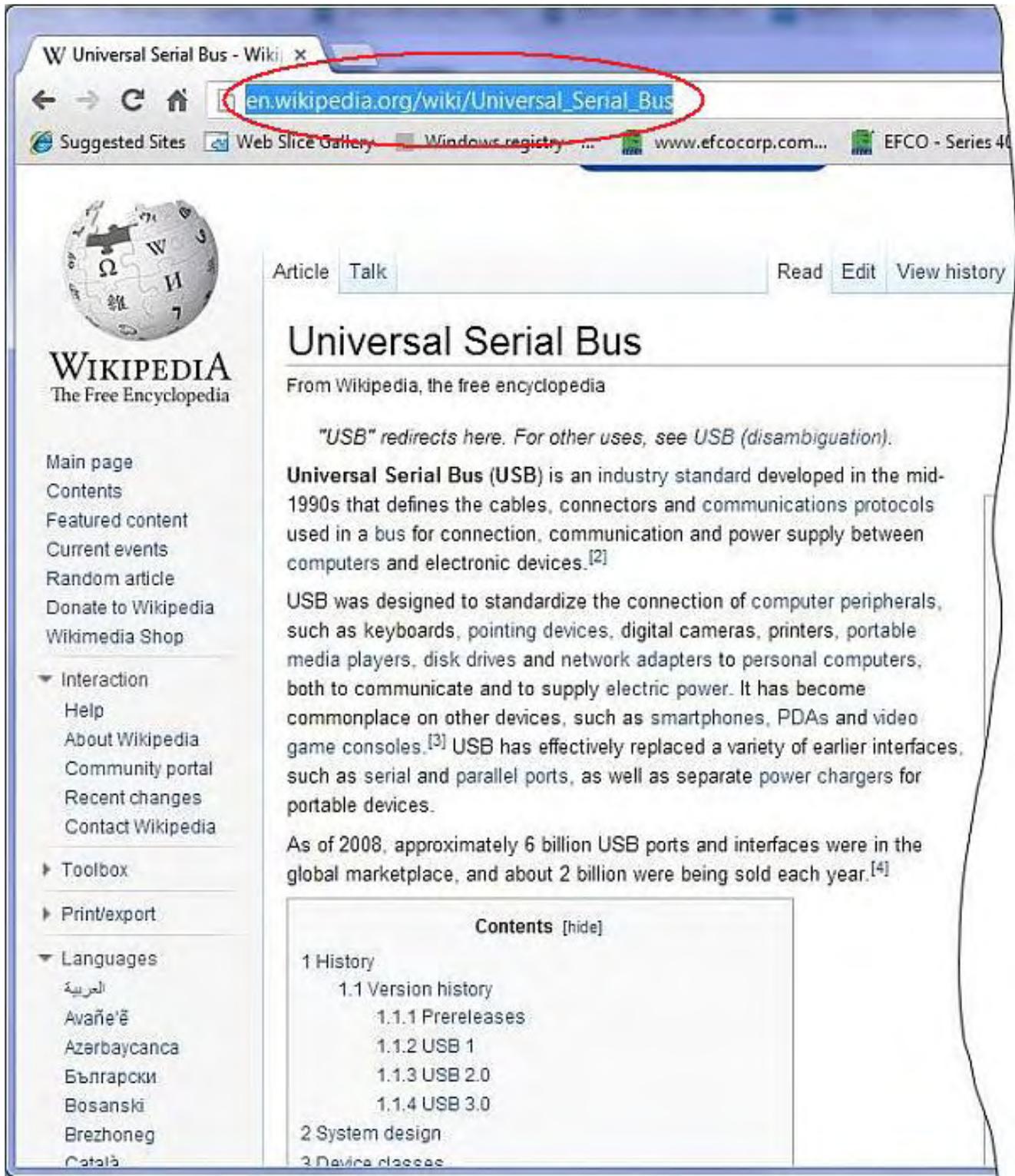


Figure 3. The URL for the previously sent text is selected for adding to the open Notepad window.

Now, using the same hotkey combination (CTRL+ALT+S), the URL is added to the original Notepad window (see Figure 4).

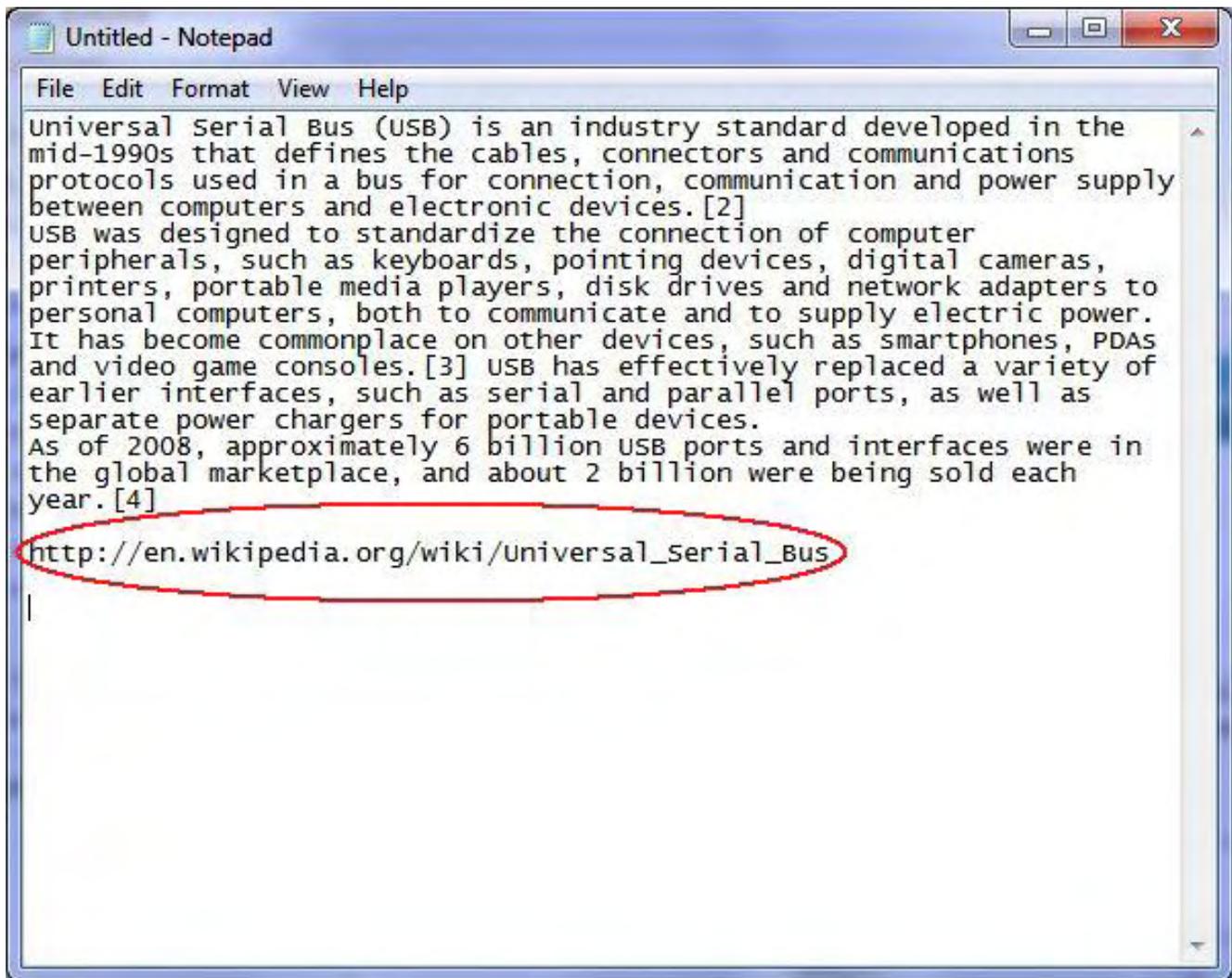


Figure 4. The selected URL is added to the original Untitled Notepad window.

This can be done over and over again, adding more text to the same Notepad window while moving from one Web page (or any other document) to another. This process will continue until you save the Notepad text with a new file name. Notepad is merely acting as a collection box for your research.

The SaveText Routine

The *SaveText.ahk* routine is a little more involved than earlier AutoHotkey examples, but once you understand the purpose of each line of code, it becomes clear. After copying the selected text to the Windows Clipboard, the routine looks for an open Untitled Notepad window. If it finds one, it activates the window and pastes the text into it. If an Untitled Notepad is not found, the routine Runs Notepad to create one, then adds the Clipboard text to the new window (see Figure 5).

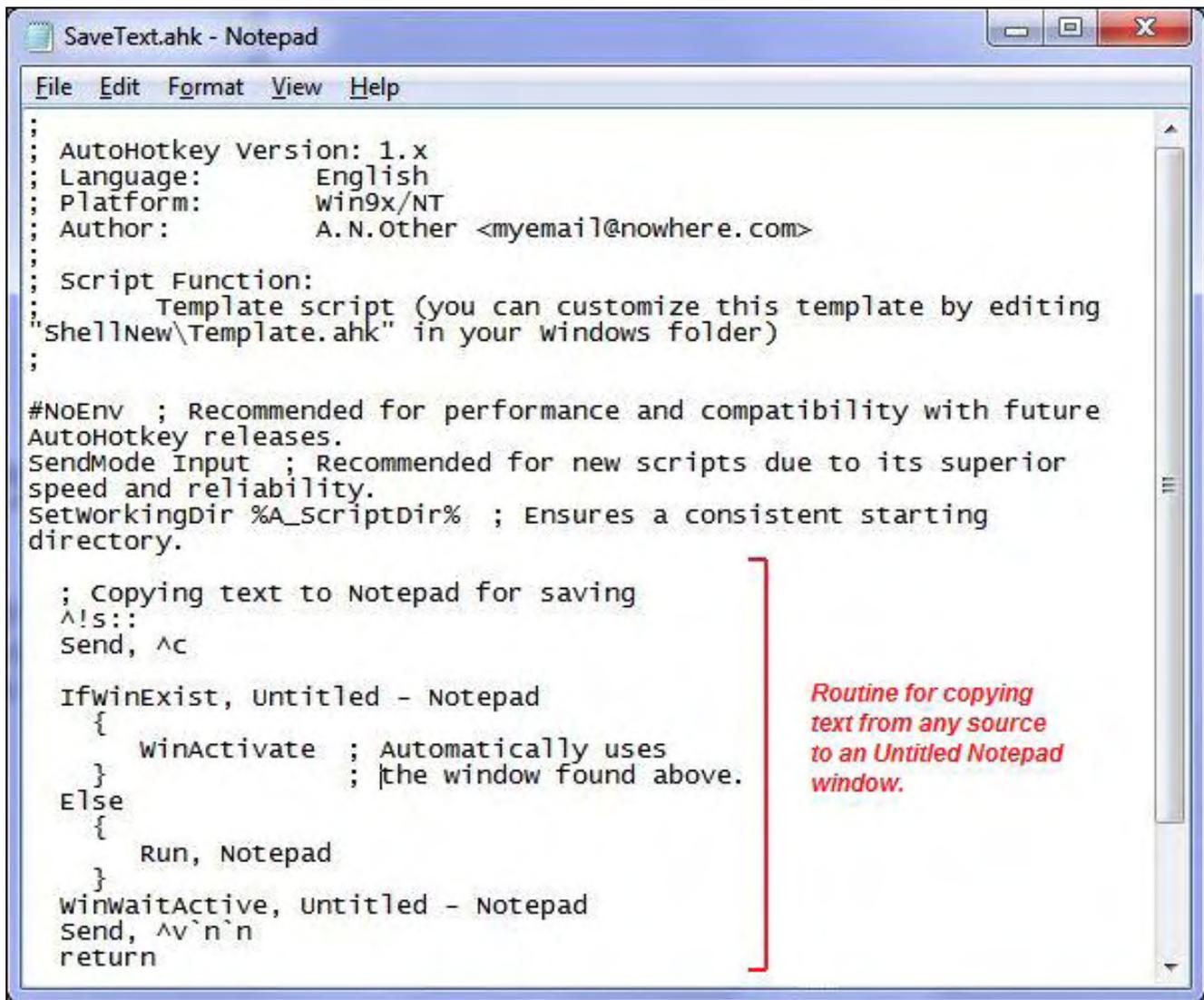


Figure 5. The code for the SaveText routine check for an open Untitled Notepad window.

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.

To use this routine, copy and paste the following code into one of your AutoHotkey scripts or a newly created script:

```

; Copying text to Notepad for saving
^!s::
Send, ^c
IfWinExist, Untitled - Notepad
{
    WinActivate ; Automatically uses the window found above.
}
Else
{
    Run, Notepad
}
WinWaitActive, Untitled - Notepad
Send, ^v`n`n
return
    
```

Note: If you already had this AutoHotkey routine running, you could copy it to a new Notepad file by selecting it, using the hotkey combination CTRL+ALT+S, then saving the file as SaveText.ahk, although it would not contain the usual boilerplate shown in the top portion of Figure 5.

How it Works

Remember that any text following a semicolon (;) is merely a comment for clarity and is not seen or executed by the AutoHotkey program. This is the case for the first line of the code in the routine.

The first line of executable code (^!s::) designates CTRL+ALT+S as the hotkey combination used to activate the routine. See the Hotkeys list (www.autohotkey.com/docs/Hotkeys.htm) for the symbols used by various keyboard keys. The double colon marks the end of the hotkey sequence and the beginning of the routine.

The second line (Send, ^c) uses the Send command (www.autohotkey.com/docs/commands/Send.htm) to copy the selected text to the Windows Clipboard. If no text is selected, whatever was last saved in the Clipboard will be used.

The third line (IfWinExist, Untitled - Notepad) uses the IfWinExist command (www.autohotkey.com/docs/commands/IfWinExist.htm) to check for an open window with an "Untitled - Notepad" title. The title "Untitled - Notepad" is given to all new instances of Notepad where a file has not been designated. If there is more than one such Notepad window open, AutoHotkey will use the last one activated. If you save the Notepad window with a new file name, this routine will no longer find the window (different name) and open a new window with Notepad.

Since there is only one line in both portions of the If/Else, I could have omitted the sets of curly brackets ({}). However, I have put them in for consistency while leaving the option to add more lines of code to either section.

If *IfWinExist* is true (an open "Untitled - Notepad" is found), then the window activates with the WinActivate command (www.autohotkey.com/docs/commands/WinActivate.htm). If *IfWinExist* is false, (no open "Untitled - Notepad" is found), then the Run command (www.autohotkey.com/docs/commands/Run.htm) (Run, Notepad) opens a new Notepad window.

After the If/Else conditional, the routine waits until the Notepad window is active (WinWaitActive, Untitled - Notepad). This waiting is necessary to ensure that the paste operation is not executed before the window is available. Otherwise, the text may never be entered into Notepad.

The last line of code before the Return—which marks the end of the routine—uses the Send command (Send, ^v`n`n) to paste the Clipboard text into the Notepad window. Note the two special characters (`n`n) at the end of the line. These are AutoHotkey escape characters (www.autohotkey.com/docs/commands/_EscapeChar.htm) used to add two carriage returns to the end of the text. This way there will be a blank line between every new text selection sent to the Notepad window.

With modifications this same procedure can be used with other applications such as Wordpad, Paint, and your word processor. In many of those programs, if supported, you can send selected images as well as text to the open window.

Another option is to add a specific file name to the routine, rather than Untitled. This will allow you to save the file every time you paste new selections by adding a **Send, ^S** line of code (for save) right after the **Send, ^V** line of code. Add a **Send, ^{End}** line before the **Send, ^V** line of code to ensure that the cursor jumps to the end of the file.

If you don't want the Notepad window to pop up every time you select and send text, then use the ControlSend command (www.autohotkey.com/docs/commands/ControlSend.htm):

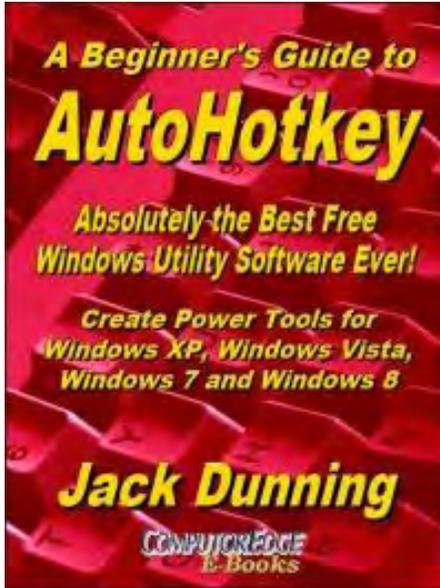
```
^!s::ControlSend, , ^V, Untitled - Notepad
```

In this case you don't need or want to activate the Notepad window as long as it is the last "Untitled - Notepad" you activated. The

WinActivate and WinWaitActive commands should be removed and the IfWinNotExist command can be used for the Run without an Else.

Next time we take a look at AutoIt3 Window Spy for identifying the names and titles of programs and windows which are use in AutoHotkey to run those programs and activate their windows. Plus, an instant backup routine for Web editing and other programs without automatic backup. Protects against power outages.

* * *



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](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))

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.

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Wally Wang's Apple Farm

“The Decline of Dedicated Gaming Consoles” by Wally Wang

The Decline of Dedicated Gaming Consoles; The Deceptive USB Port; Taking Pictures with the iPhone Camera; Make a Mobile App with LiveCode; Doctors and Mobile Computing; Adobe Photoshop Elements 11; Enlarge Text on Your iPad.

Wally Wang's Apple Farm

Microsoft invested billions to develop their Xbox game console. After years of fighting against Sony and Nintendo, Microsoft has finally turned the Xbox into the best-selling game console in the world—just in time for the dedicated gaming console market to start dropping (news.cnet.com/8301-10805_3-57547692-75/xbox-360-shines-bright-in-otherwise-dismal-game-market/).

The problem facing the dedicated gaming console market is the same problem facing the PC market, the dedicated digital camera market, and the dedicated MP3 player market. With mobile devices, you now have alternatives to buying separate, dedicated devices.

Of course, no one is going to claim that a smartphone or tablet offers superior games than a dedicated gaming console, but when you want to play a game and you're not at home, it's easy to pull out a smartphone or tablet and start playing. If you're waiting at an airport or doctor's office, you could have the best dedicated gaming console in the world and it won't do you any good if you're not home to play it.

Another factor working against game consoles is the time and expense needed to create an Xbox or Playstation game. Most video game companies invest millions of dollars developing realistic graphics for a typical Xbox or Nintendo game. Just to develop games, you may need to buy a developer kit, which may cost \$2,000 or more. The development tools for creating an iOS or Android app are free.

Beyond the time needed to develop a game console video game and the expense needed to get started, there's also the shrinking market (www.cnn.com/2012/11/09/tech/gaming-gadgets/console-gaming-dead/), the growing mobile game and social media game market, and the lack of creativity among video games for dedicated consoles.

Dedicated game consoles, just like PCs, aren't going away, but they're losing their dominance as the only gaming device available. At one time, the only way to play video games was to visit a local arcade. When game consoles arrived, arcades withered away.

Now as mobile computing devices grow in popularity, dedicated video game consoles are fading away. Perhaps sometime in the future, you can tell your grandkids about video game arcades and video game consoles in the same breath, and wait for your grandchildren's incredulous reactions when you tell them how you used to play video games back when you were their age.

If you really want to shock your grandchildren, tell them about the old days when you used to read printed magazines dedicated to video games. The combination of video game consoles and printed magazines represent two industries unlikely to thrive in the future, so it's no surprise that video game magazines plummeted (www.cinemablend.com/games/It-Official-Printed-Game-Magazines-Dying-39636.html) in popularity first, much like a canary dying in a coal mine.

The Deceptive USB Port

When Microsoft revealed their Surface tablet, they made a point of emphasizing that it came with a built-in USB port so you could hook up peripherals to your tablet. The iPad, on the other hand, lacks a built-in USB port although you can buy a separate adapter designed for plugging a camera's USB cable into the iPad.

This USB port reflects the different philosophies between Apple and Microsoft. Apple believes in providing an optimal experience even if it may limit your options, so they omit the USB port from the iPad. Microsoft, on the other hand, believes in giving you the freedom to plug in cameras, printers, or Flash drives into a Surface tablet. What Microsoft doesn't tell you is that having a USB port and getting a plugged in device to work with the Surface tablet is not always the same thing.

The problem is that when you plug any device into a USB port, you need the proper drivers for that device. Without the proper drivers, you can plug a USB device into the USB port of a Surface tablet, but it may not even work (www.infoworld.com/t/microsoft-windows/the-scramble-write-windows-rt-drivers-206307).

So if you're one of those who cheered at the prospect of a USB port on the Surface tablet, you may need to mute or withhold your cheering until you find out if your printer, scanner, or other device actually works with your Surface tablet. Having a USB port may be nice, but if you can't use it, you might as well not even have a USB port in the first place.

Taking Pictures with the iPhone Camera

In the early days, digital cameras captured grainy pictures. As they gradually improved (much to the dismay of Kodak, which thought that film would last forever), smartphones started offering digital cameras too. Eventually, the higher resolutions in smartphone cameras captured sharp enough images that buying a separate digital camera didn't make any sense any more. While dedicated digital cameras can still be more flexible than smartphone cameras, dedicated digital cameras are often unnecessary for the average person, who finds the simplicity of smartphone cameras more convenient.

While most professional photographers lug around Nikon or Canon digital cameras, Ben Lowly, uses the digital camera in an iPhone 4S along with two photo editing apps Hipstamatic (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%252Fhipstamatic%252Fid342115564%253Fmt%253D8%2526uo%253D4%2526partnerId%253D30) and Snapseed (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%252Fsnapseed%252Fid439438619%253Fmt%253D8%2526uo%253D4%2526partnerId%253D30). By just using an iPhone 4S, Ben has managed to capture images (www.benlowly.com) from around the world. More importantly, one of Ben's images has even appeared on the cover (www.tuaw.com/2012/11/06/time-magazine-cover-shot-with-iphone/) of *Time Magazine*.



Figure 1. Time Magazine's cover displays an image captured by the iPhone 4S camera.

At one time, critics dismissed digital cameras as useless "toys" compared to film cameras. Then those same critics later denounced smartphone cameras as "toys" compared to dedicated digital cameras. Now as Ben Lowly has shown, smartphone cameras can capture high quality images just as well as dedicated digital cameras.

By dismissing the latest technology as useless, critics constantly make the mistake of missing the next trend. When they get overwhelmed by that trend and wind up looking foolish as a result, they apply selective amnesia to their memories and rush out to attack the next wave of technology that will prove them wrong all over again. You can often spot the next trend by the amount of irrational criticism people pile on it. When you see so much criticism directed at any type of technology, you'll know which technology to follow next.

Make a Mobile App with LiveCode

Traditional PC sales keep dropping because more people are buying mobile devices like smartphones and tablets. As a developer, that means the hot market is now the mobile computing market.

If you want to start developing mobile apps, you can start learning Objective-C to program iOS devices and Java to program Android devices. Now if you create an iOS app in Objective-C, you'll have the fun job of translating your Objective-C code into Java to run under Android. If you start off with an Android app, you can have the fun job of translating your Java code into Objective-C code to run under iOS.

Instead of wrestling with two different programming languages that appear more cryptic than ancient hieroglyphics, a better choice might be LiveCode, which mimics the English-like syntax of the original HyperCard programming language dubbed HyperTalk (www.amazon.com/gp/product/0201176327/ref=as_li_qf_sp_asin_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=0201176327&linkCode=as2&tag=the15minmovme-20).

One reason why HyperCard proved so popular in the early days of the Macintosh was because it allowed non-programmers to create programs quickly and easily. When Apple stopped developing HyperCard, a Scottish company developed a HyperCard clone called LiveCode.

You can actually take old HyperCard stacks and run them in LiveCode to convert them into Windows, Linux, or Mac OS X programs. However, it's probably more likely that you'll use LiveCode to create your own programs. In the past, LiveCode focused on the major operating systems, but now LiveCode offers support for both iOS and Android as well.

That means you can write a mobile app in LiveCode, compile it for both iOS and Android, and start selling the same app in two different markets in less time than it would take to create your program in Java or Objective-C for just one platform (Android or iOS).

To learn more about creating mobile apps, visit LiveCode's site and download one of their free e-books (www.runrev.com/Get-Started/). One e-book explains how to develop a gaming app while the second free e-book explains the general principles for creating any type of app. By reading both e-books, you can get a general idea how to turn your ideas into an actual mobile app that you can give away or sell.

In case you don't think you can learn programming, you might like to know about John Patten, the Director of Technology & Information Systems for the Sylvan Union School District in Modesto, California. John helped run an after school computer coding club with middle school students and a few 5th graders. The 25 students met once a week for five weeks, using LiveCode as their programming tool, and loved it. Some of the resources John's students used included One Button & One Field (www.onebuttononefield.com), a blog dedicated to teaching the basics of LiveCode programming, and YouTube tutorials (www.youtube.com/watch?v=mkDSaa7YotM&feature=youtu.be) explaining various LiveCode programming concepts.

Despite the illogical insistence of some who want to believe that mobile computing isn't really stealing sales away from the traditional PC market, the rest of us can already see that mobile computing is the future. If you want to profit from this trend, start developing your own apps with LiveCode or your own favorite programming tool today.

Doctors and Mobile Computing

The big advantage of mobile computing is that it brings the power of the computer to wherever you happen to be. When the iPad first appeared, doctors readily embraced the idea of carrying around a portable computer to read and store medical records along with medical textbooks. Now with the smaller, lighter iPad mini, doctors are even more excited (www.computerworld.com/s/article/9233431/Doctors_prescribe_iPad_Mini_a_perfect_lab_coat_fit) about a smaller device that's just as capable as the original iPad.

According to a poll by medical app developer Epocrates, fifty physicians surveyed said that the iPad Mini will be easier to carry between exam rooms and on hospital rounds because it fits into the pockets of their lab coats. QuantiaMD surveyed 3,798 physicians and found that accessing electronic medical records (EMR) is the number one way physicians want to use mobile technology.

Physicians tended to purchase mobile devices for their private practice with 59 percent using an iPhone; 28 percent using an iPad; 21 percent using an Android smartphone; 3 percent using an Android tablet; and 11 percent using a Blackberry device. Among tablet users, the iPad clearly dominated with just a handful of physicians using an Android tablet. The next time you see a doctor, chances are good you'll get help through a mobile computing device.

One problem with hospitals is that they often have to treat people who speak languages other than English. To help bridge the language barrier, doctors and patients can use an iPhone/iPad app called Universal Doctor Speaker (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%252Funiversal-doctor-speaker-full%252Fid389202856%253Fmt%253D8%2526uo%253D4%2526partnerId%253D30). The app displays common sentences used in a medical setting such as "Stick out your tongue" or "Do you have the following symptoms?"



Figure 2. The Universal Doctor Speaker helps doctors communicate with patients in their native language.

Just define the two languages to use such as English and Arabic, then both the doctor and patient can tap their questions and answers to hear the app speak the phrase in the other person's language. Such an app would be possible on a desktop or laptop computer, but much clumsier and less convenient to use.

If doctors can find a use for mobile computing devices such as the iPad and iPhone, it's likely people in other industries can find practical uses for similar mobile apps as well, just as long as they're willing to open their minds, exercise their imagination, and accept the fact that the computing world is changing whether they like it or not.

Adobe Photoshop Elements 11

If you import pictures into iPhoto, you can do some basic editing to make your pictures look better. However, if you want to do more detailed editing but don't want the complexity and cost of a professional graphics editor like Adobe Photoshop, just go for the less expensive and simpler Photoshop Elements 11 (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B0093FROMA/ref=as_li_qf_sp_asin_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=B0093FROMA&linkCode=as2&tag=the15minmovme-20) instead.

To help beginners, Photoshop Elements 11 offers three different user interfaces dubbed Quick, Guided, and Expert. The Quick user interface provides a shorter list of commands that displays thumbnail images so you can see how a particular command will affect your picture. For absolute beginners or people who just want to modify their pictures in a hurry, the Quick interface shields you from the complexity of editing graphics.

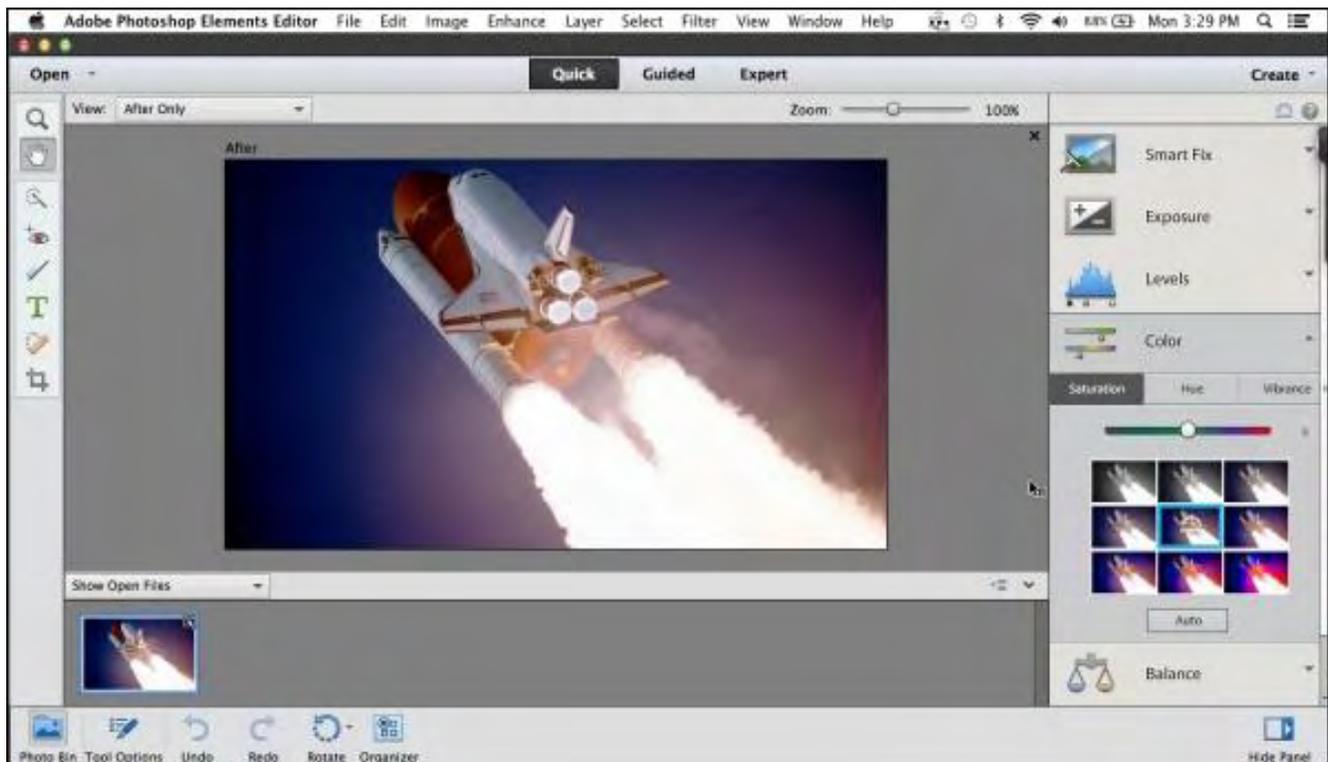


Figure 3. The Quick user interface hides most commands from view.

The Guided user interface displays more options but still makes it easy to modify an image without knowing much about graphics editing. Just choose various options and see how they affect your image.

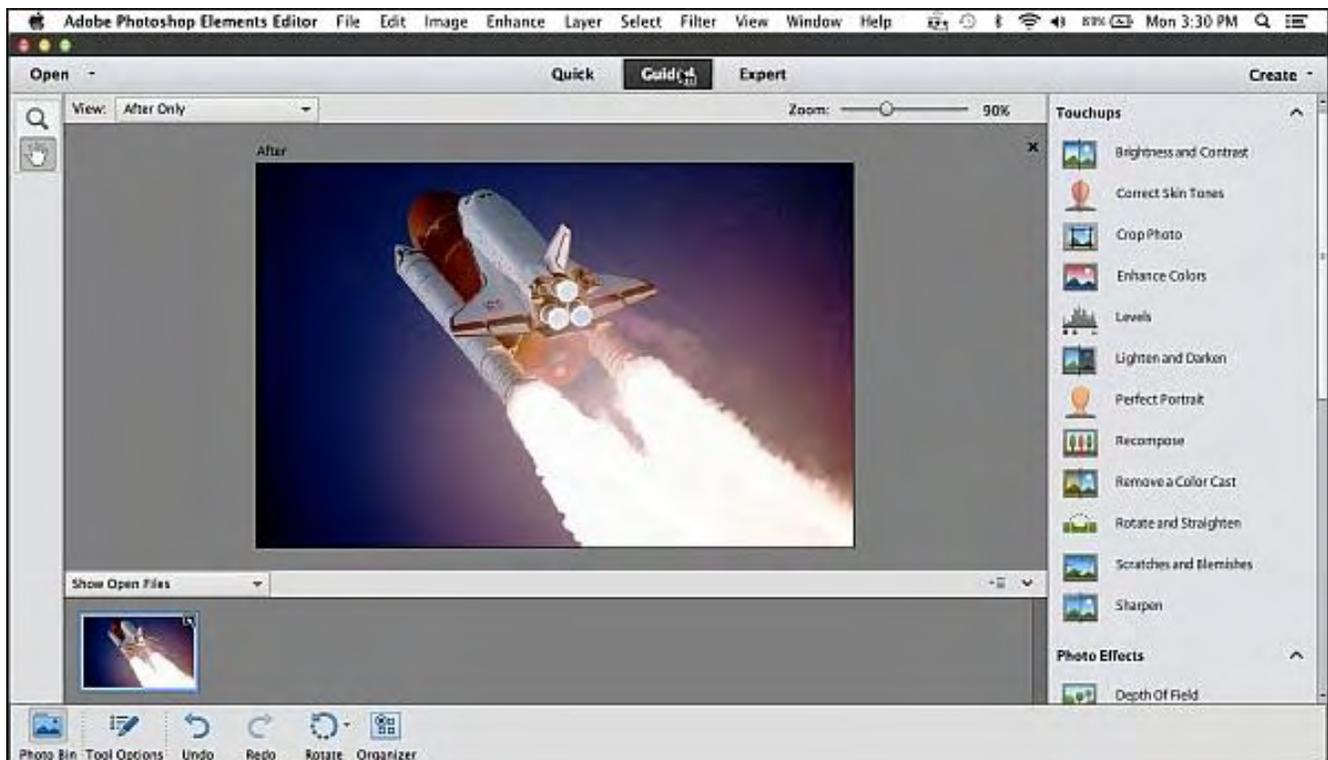


Figure 4. The Guided user interface simplifies most commands.

If you're familiar with Photoshop, then you'll be completely familiar with the Expert user interface that displays multiple icons in a toolbox on the left side of the window. This Expert mode assumes you know what these tools are and how to use them, so you have access to everything you need just as long as you know which ones to use and why.



Figure 5. The Expert user interface mimics the traditional Photoshop user interface.

Many people like capturing pictures and editing them to improve their appearance. While you can do that in Photoshop Elements 11, you can also go another route and turn existing pictures into works of art using filters. A filter gives you different ways to alter an image such as making it appear as if drawn in charcoal or as a watercolor painting.



Figure 6. Filters let you quickly modify pictures to create unique visual effects.

Another way Photoshop Elements 11 can modify your pictures is through a feature called tilt-shift. This lets you choose to focus on certain parts of your picture while blurring out other parts. When used on certain images, this tilt-shift feature can make pictures of a city look as if they were miniature toys.



Figure 7. The tilt-shift feature lets you blur selective parts of a picture.

While Photoshop Elements 11 has always provided ways to modify your pictures, the latest version adds more ways to create unique visual effects than ever before. If you want to do more than just touch up a picture, but want to turn pictures into creative works of art, then you'll find the latest features of Photoshop Elements 11 intriguing. With little graphics art training, anyone can use Photoshop Elements 11 to transform ordinary digital photographs into something special.

For anyone who wants to go beyond the basic picture editing features of iPhoto, Adobe's Photoshop Elements 11 can make picture editing fun. In fact, you might have just as much fun modifying your pictures as you did taking them in the first place.

* * *

ZDNet reported that many people with vision problems had trouble finding reading material. In the past, you had to rely on special large print books, but that left out many other types of books along with newspapers and magazines. However, by reading books and magazines on an iPad, anyone can easily enlarge the text (www.zdnet.com/ipad-bringing-the-joy-of-reading-back-to-those-with-vision-problems-700007145/) to a comfortable size, allowing them to read anything that they can store on their iPad.

"Reading is a simple pleasure that we often take for granted until vision loss makes it difficult," said Daniel Roth, M.D., an associate clinical professor at Robert Wood Johnson School of Medicine. "Our findings show that at a relatively low-cost, digital tablets can improve the lives of people with vision loss and help them reconnect with the larger world."

Since many people now get their news from the Internet rather than printed newspapers and magazines, you can enlarge Web pages within Safari using a trackpad. Just place two fingers close together and spread them apart to enlarge anything displayed in Safari. Now you can comfortably read your favorite news sites on your Macintosh.

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

Wally is responsible for the following books:

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

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)

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)

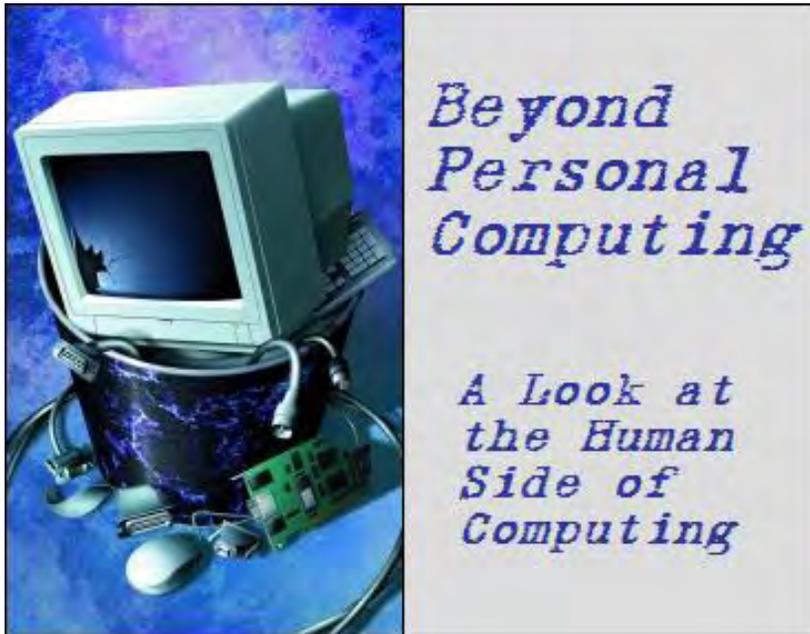
The Zen of Effortless Selling with Moe Abdou (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B006PUFPGI/ref=as_li_tf_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=B006PUFPGI)

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/B009POEAJO/ref=as_li_qf_sp_asin_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=B009POEAJO&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.

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Beyond Personal Computing

“Laptops and Their Issues: Flames and Infertility, Rugged or Roll-ups” by Marilyn K. Martin

Amusing anecdotes about laptops and their issues.

Laptops (or notebooks) became commercially available in 1975, and were initially considered a niche market for sales reps, the military and international criminals as a "portable computer." When the technology improved and the weight came down, the general public starting buying gazillions of laptops so they could work or play games practically anywhere.

Laptops today are like being a middle child: the older siblings are smarter and more driven (think supercomputers and PCs), and the younger siblings are cuter and more sociable (think tablets and smartphones). So the middle child laptop has become the "usable but ugly duckling" that everyone expects to have the same capabilities of desktops to smartphones.

Danger! Danger! Danger!

Almost from the beginning laptops seemed to have their own unique set of problems. In 2006 and 2007, laptops' lithium batteries had developed an alarming tendency to overheat—and catch fire. Many recalls and battery improvements later, researchers at Cambridge University reported in 2010 (www.telegraph.co.uk/technology/news/7736423/Cambridge-scientists-solve-mystery-of-flammable-laptop-batteries.html) that the culprit was really dendrites forming on the battery's carbon anodes. The team planned to go on to learn how dendrites formed and could be stopped, using nuclear magnetic resonance spectroscopy to trace dendrite-formation. Thanks for clearing that up, guys.

Security is tight on airlines and no one dares breathe the words "terrorist" or "bomb" on a flight without three plainclothes Marshals gang-tackling you so you crash into the beverage cart, and chip a tooth on a soda can. But if you are stuck on a long flight next to an utterly obnoxious person who won't be quiet or leave you alone, you can use this terrorism-anxiety to your benefit. Take out your laptop, boot it, and place it on your tray in such a position for the obnoxious neighbor to see. Then open up this site (www.thecleverest.com/countdown.swf) and stare upward. It just may shut the neighbor up. And you just may get arrested. (So better to use that Web site around the workplace, just for laughs.)

Laptops as Health Hazards

According to Wikipedia, you should never actually put a laptop on your, um, lap, without risking all sorts of strange and scary health problems. The heat generated by the laptop can cause skin discoloration on thighs called "toasted skin syndrome." And the heat can also affect male sperm count, called "toasted testicles," and cause male infertility.

Q: *What's the difference between a blonde and Windows 95?*

A: *The blonde operates on more laptops...*

Keeping Laptops Cool

I've already mentioned the unfortunate problem with laptops bursting into flames due to faulty batteries. So keeping laptops cool is not just an "I can wait 'til next month to fix it" problem. It's a "mandatory to fix now!" problem. And some people get rather creative (www.9aha.com/images-171350.shtml) when it comes to heavy-duty cooling.

Rugged Laptops—the Superheros of the Computer World

"Rugged" has evolved to mean computer hardware that is so tough it can work in any Earthly environment or under any conditions. Think combat zones, oil field scouting, disasters, catastrophes, trekking up a volcano about to erupt, or skittering it along a Mid-East dirt road to see if any IEDs explode. The Rugged laptop design is favored for its compact but powerful mobile computing, and its "I Am An Important Person Doing Important Work" fashion statement.

"Rugged" laptops are typically advertised as being able to work in extreme shocks and vibrations, extreme temperature ranges, amid blowing sand, dust, salt and fog, and even being capable of surviving drops over a meter. Other terms used to describe these ultimate-laptops are sunlight-readable displays, water-resistant keyboards, GPS receivers and antenna, and vehicle-mounting capabilities. And don't forget the 160GB removable solid state disk drive. All these "tough-stuff" laptops can lock up like a briefcase, with casings like "sealed die-cast magnesium alloy," that could surely survive a Terminator or Zombie Apocalypse.

And if you see the term "rugged convertible laptop" it means the screen can unhook to go from laptop to tablet and back again. If you want something even more extreme, you can look for Ultra-Rugged designs, usually attached to terms like "tactical," "made to military standards," and "waiver required for mediation if product accidentally diverts in-flight missiles."

Lost in Laptop Space

Especially when orbiting 17,500 miles above Earth, astronauts need their laptop computers (www.spaceref.com/news/viewnews.html?id=213). The first laptop flown into space was a Mac Portable in 1991. By the year 2000, an IBM ThinkPad 760XD was NASA's laptop of choice, referred to as a PGSC (Payload and General Support Computer). NASA also referred to it as COTS (Commercial Off The Shelf), although in reality the laptop was tested, modified, redesigned and tested again. Meaning it had been leapfrogged by better technology before it actually got into space, but it was very safe and reliable in a non-Earth environment. The major modifications dealt with adjustments for limited power and micro-gravity. Think power-adapters, additional fans and velcro.

Newest Laptop Concepts

In March 2012, Design Buzz (www.designbuzz.com/15-most-unusually-interesting-laptop-concepts/) , profiled the "Most Unusually Interesting Laptop Concepts" (must be a COTS title). A South Korean designer has created a "B-Membrane" laptop, which looks like a plastic stand on a circular base. This computer has a keyboard which appears on the base, and a projection feature that doubles as monitor and mood-lighting.

The laptop-in-a-roll gets a lot of press but is still in the design phase, with a flexible monitor and keyboard that can be rolled up into a tube or scroll. Samsung is working on an OLED display which is 40% transparent. Another designer is working on a "Moonlight" laptop with a dual curved, flowing display. Other

new concepts are a recyclable cardboard laptop, a "cozier" natural comfort design, and a piecemeal EvoBook with adjustable screen and keyboard positioning.

Also getting commercially closer is wireless laptop charging, also called inductive charging. Intel is working on a hybrid of this with a chipset for Wireless Charging Technology (www.ubergizmo.com/2012/08/wireless-charging-via-your-laptop-is-now-one-step-closer-to-becoming-a-reality/). The idea being to place your cell phone next to your laptop, and the phone will recharge—no cables required. China, however, already produces (www.alibaba.com/product-gs/630493889/24000mah_wireless_laptop_charger.html?s=p) a wireless charger strictly for laptops.

(Many of these anecdotes and jokes are available at multiple online sites. But special thanks to wikipedia.org (wikipedia.org), and jokes.com (jokes.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).

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EDITOR'S LETTERS

Editor's Letters: Tips and Thoughts from Readers

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

"Removing Unwanted Programs," "Spam No More," "Free Media Center with Windows 8 Upgrade"

Removing Unwanted Programs

[Regarding the November 2 Digital Dave column:]

I often use RevoUninstaller (www.revouninstaller.com/revo_uninstaller_free_download.html).

This is an Add/Remove Programs on steroids. I can find programs that Add/Remove will not. It offers three levels. Safe just uses the Add/Remove or the program's uninstaller, if available. Moderate which digs deeper in the registry. And Full digs very deep.

After running the desired depth, it displays the items to be removed in a highlighted list, tree format so you can review the choices. Safe I just run and rarely get errors. Moderate should definitely be reviewed because it may advise removing something needed by another program. Full needs a careful review and may often advise removal of a critical entry.

It does provide the option to back up before cleaning. I highly suggest you do this. Then should something need to be removed, it is very easy to restore all or just the specific entry, assuming you can determine the exact culprit.

This is a powerful program and worth a try. It is a free download and an integral part of my tool kit.

Good luck,

-Paula Barefoot, Fresno, CA

Dave, thank you for such a quick and informative reply. You amaze me. Anyway, now the monkey is on my back to do what you have recommended. Thanks again,

-Gabby DeDonato, San Clemente, CA

Spam No More

[Regarding the October 19 Digital Dave column:]

Hi Dave,

I have included many of the addresses from this spammer in my filtered mail so when I get them in the future, they are automatically deleted. Success! Haven't gotten one e-mail from them since. Thank you very much for the help. It's much appreciated. Have a great day.

-Jerry

Free Media Center with Windows 8 Upgrade

[Regarding the October 26 ComputerQuick Update: Windows 8 Pro Purchase Summary column:]

I'm confused by this statement "including free Media Center." I could not find any statement at windows.com that mentioned Media Center being included on the \$40 download of Win 8 Pro, but not included on the \$70 DVD.

Also, VLC is a media player and may substitute for Windows Media Player, but I suspect it may not substitute for some features provided by Media Center, such as the ability to work with an external cable card box.

-Ron Cerrato, San Diego, CA

Free Media Center (windows.microsoft.com/en-US/windows-8/feature-packs) for Windows 8 from Microsoft until January 31, 2013.

-Jack Dunning

Yes, it looks like Media Center can be added to Windows 8 Pro for free for a limited time. But it appears that it should work no matter how you get Windows 8 Pro, whether the \$70 DVD or \$40 ISO file, since it is merely a product key to unlock the Media Center functionality. As a side note, I should mention that I gave them my "valid e-mail address" a few days ago and the e-mail they promised to send within 24 hours has yet to arrive. I wonder if anyone has received the e-mail response with the product key.

-Ron Cerrato, 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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