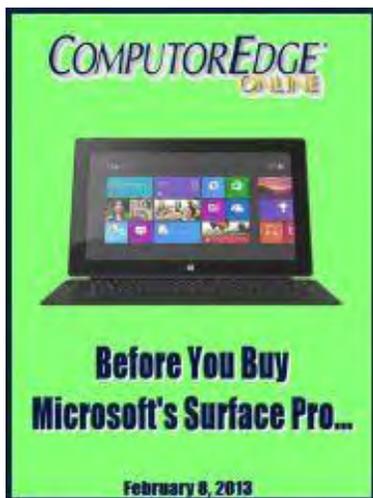


ComputerEdge™ Online — 02/08/13



This issue: Before You Buy Microsoft's Surface Pro Tablet Computer...

The New Surface with Windows 8 Pro Runs Windows 7 Programs, but Is It the Tablet for You?

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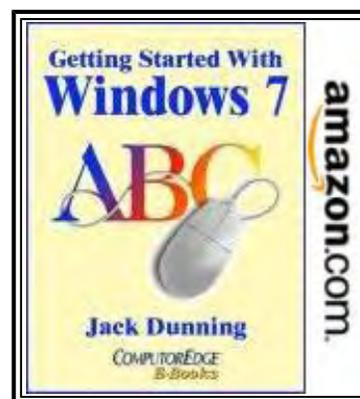
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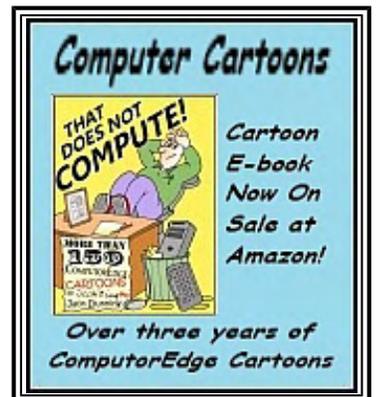
Computer and Internet tips, plus comments on the articles and columns. "Touchscreens Are Already Here," "Windows 8 and Free Stuff," "QuickLinks for Windows, FinderPop for Mac," "What's in a Name?"



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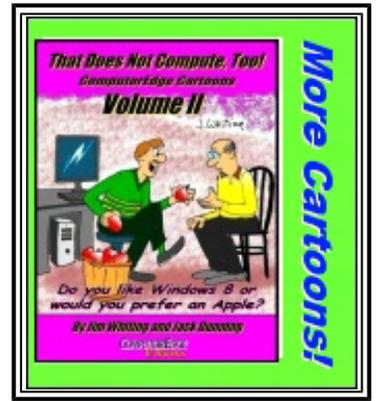
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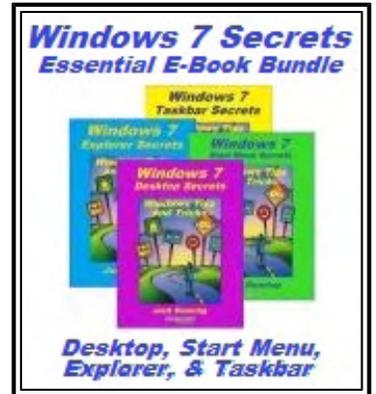
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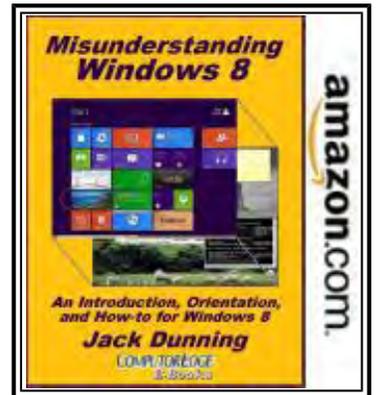
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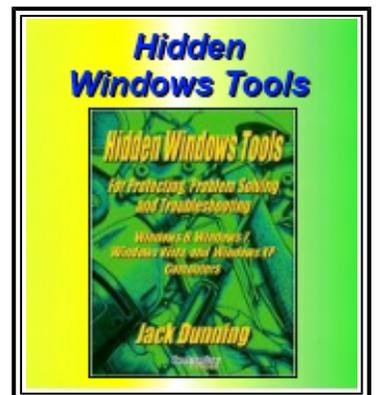
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Digital Dave

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

Near-Field Magnetic Resonance Power Supply; Flash Player on the Nexus 10; Music File Transfer from Windows to Mac.

Dear Digital Dave,

After I read your article on Apple's patent for a wireless "near-field magnetic resonance power supply" a question came up. The article stated that the magnetic field would surround the local computer, supplying various devices (keyboard, mouse, etc.) with continual power, for a distance of approximately three feet. Question is, although magnetic resonance has been used safely in the medical field for many years, what would the constant bombardment of a magnetic field do to the human body, over extended periods of time? Any health issues there or has this been proven safe?

Thank you,

*Jerry Michael Hughes
San Diego, CA*

Dear Jerry,

I don't remember ever writing about near-field magnetic resonance, but that won't stop me from answering your question.

Near-field magnetic resonance power supply is based upon the same induction principles as an electric transformer. The difference is that the transmitting coil is tuned to the same frequency as the receiving coil which only needs to be in the same proximity to transfer power. In the near-field (within one diameter of the coil), the transmitting coil sets up a highly efficient magnetic field which when there is no receiving device returns its energy back to the coil in each cycle as the magnetic field collapses. When the other coil moves within range, the magnetic field induces a current in it which can be used to either run the device or charge its battery. The power transfer rate continues outside of the one diameter distance, but the efficiency drops off rapidly. This technology is used for charging today's electric toothbrushes.

The advantage to these near-field power supplies are: the device does not need a plug or connector which means they can be sealed; and, if within the range of the power source, the device (a wireless mouse?) does not need a battery. On the downside, the range is very limited depending upon the physical size of the power source (a two foot diameter source delivers 45% efficiency at about seven feet) and while multiple devices could use the same source, each needs to be tuned to the source.

Since by design there is very little electromagnetic radiation generated (such as radio waves and those generated by other transmitting types of devices), it is called non-radiative, although there is always some level of radiation. The primary field generated is magnetic. Magnetic fields have been shown to be weakly interactive with biological organisms—people and animals—and are generally regarded to be safe. You get much more radiation from your cell phone than you will from a resonant inductive coupling (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Resonant_inductive_coupling) device.

Digital Dave

Dear Digital Dave,

I have a new Nexus 10 and want to stream videos with my Amazon Prime account, but I need Flash Player to do so. How can I load Flash Player on my new Nexus? My attempts have been useless. Hope you can help me as you have done in the past.

Thanks again,

*Phyllis
Tucson, AZ*

Dear Phyllis,

Starting with mobile devices, Adobe apparently has decided to throw in the towel on Flash Player in favor of HTML5. Their own statement in "Adobe to More Aggressively Contribute to HTML5 (blogs.adobe.com/conversations/2011/11/flash-focus.html)" says as much. That leaves many Web sites and developers hanging—at least for now. Playing videos on tablets is a bit of a mess. Regardless of which one you own, it can be hit or miss. However, the community has come to the rescue and put out a Flash Player which should run on your Nexus.

Since I don't own a Nexus, I haven't done it myself, but there a number of sites which offer help:

How to install Adobe Flash player on Nexus 4 and Nexus 10? (flash-video-player.blogspot.com/2012/12/how-to-install-abode-flash-player-on.html)

How to Install Adobe Flash Player 11.1 on Nexus 4, Nexus 10 or Any Other Android Device [GUIDE] (www.ibtimes.co.uk/articles/402338/20121107/install-adobe-flash-player-nexus4-nexus10-android.htm)

How To Install Flash Player for Nexus 4 and Nexus 10 (www.androidegis.com/how-to/how-to-install-flash-player-for-nexus-4-and-nexus-10/)

Hopefully, one of these Web pages will give you the details that you need.

Digital Dave

Dear Digital Dave,

I have my entire classical music collection (17GB) stored in iTunes on a PC. I'd like to copy or move it to my new MacPro. Any suggestions on how it can be done? I've heard there is a one-time only opportunity to do it in coordination with Apple.

Thanks,

Dave Stang

Dear Dave,

You're right to be cautious about how you try to move your iTunes collection. The way iTunes tracks and maintains everything behind the scenes can make it confusing. You have a number of options.

First, if you want to move more than just your music collection then you may want to use Windows Migration Assistant (support.apple.com/kb/HT4796) designed specifically for making your new Mac your primary computer.

If you only want to move your music then you may want to consult "Moving your iTunes Media folder (support.apple.com/kb/HT1364)." There is a lot of information on various topics within Apple's "How to move your music to a new computer (support.apple.com/kb/ht4527?viewlocale=de_de)" Web pages.

If those articles are not clear enough, you might try "Move an iTunes library from a Windows PC to a Mac (www.macworld.com/article/1146958/move_itunes_windows_mac.html) from Macworld.

Digital Dave

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Is the Surface with Windows 8 Pro Tablet Right for You?

“What you need to know before you buy Microsoft's Surface Pro tablet with "real" Windows.” by Jack Dunning

The Surface RT tablet (without "real" Windows) has caused a great deal of confusion for tablet buyers. Even though it looks the same, the Surface Pro (with "real" Windows) is not the same device. Make an informed decision on what you should, or should not, buy.

On the eve of the release of its Surface with Windows 8 Pro tablet computer, Microsoft has to dig out of a hole. That's unfortunate since, based upon reviews by those who have seen and used the new Surface Pro, it is a well-built machine that performs. What makes it doubly bad is that the mistakes made by Microsoft were completely avoidable.

The confusion caused by the introduction of the Windows RT tablet in October 2012 has damaged both Microsoft's reputation and the Windows brand. It is estimated that the RT tablet has done poorly (www.pcworld.com/article/2018827/microsoft-surface-sales-not-expected-to-top-600-000-this-quarter.html) in sales. And to make matters worse there has been a very high return rate. This return rate is said to be related to the confusion over the new Modern interface, but I suspect that many people felt ripped off when they realized it didn't include "real" Windows.

This hurts the prospects for the Surface Pro even though it is a "real" Windows tablet which does run Windows 7 software. Many people may avoid the Pro version thinking it's the same as the RT. They look identical.



Figure 1. The Surface with Windows RT tablet and the Surface with Windows 8 Pro are identical in appearance. The problem is that the Surface RT is not "real" Windows.

Microsoft made two fundamental errors when introducing the Surface RT. The first was putting the Windows name on it at all. It is not a Windows computer in any way except for a fake Desktop to run the tablet version of Microsoft Office and Internet Explorer. The RT is just another tablet computer. I'm not saying it isn't a good tablet computer. It is comparable to any of the other tablets, including the iPad. However, there are none of the advantages which you would expect with a "Windows" computer.



"We've changed the name of the Windows RT tablet to the Microsoft Surface with Windows . . . NOT!"

This is a shame since the Surface Pro does offer all of the advantages of a Windows computer because it is one. The confusion between the two tablets was avoidable. All Microsoft needed to do was name the Surface RT something different—anything else—maybe, the Modern tablet. (I was thinking that a good name for the RT would be Surface with Windows...NOT!)

The second mistake was releasing the "NOT" version of the Surface before the Pro version. There is only one shot at a first impression and it hasn't been good for the Surface RT. This has damaged the Surface name which adds more stumbling blocks to the prospects of a "real" Windows tablet. The "NOT" Windows Surface should have been released after the Pro—even if it meant delaying it until later in 2013. It's too late now.

In spite of the confusion, it's time to look at the Surface Pro for its own merits and determine if it is the right tablet to buy.

Is the Microsoft Surface with Windows 8 Pro Right for You?

The major difference between the Microsoft Surface with Windows 8 Pro and all of the other tablets on the market

is that it's a full Windows computer. It's more like an ultra-light laptop than another tablet computer. Without the keyboard the Surface Pro is a tablet, although at two pounds it's slightly heavier than most others. The fact that it will run Windows 7 software is the key selling point. Without that, the Surface (as seen with the RT version) is just another tablet. This "real" Windows compatibility may be just what you need and could make the Pro a success.

The advantage that the Surface Pro has over a laptop is that it is much lighter than most. There are ultra-books at 2.5 lbs, but even the lightest laptops tend to be at least 2.9 lbs. A fair comparison might be the MacBook Air which weighs about the same as the Surface Pro with the keyboard attached and offers full Mac computing power. The MacBook Air has a larger screen, but then it's not a tablet—nor does it have a microSDXC card slot which can be used to add more storage.



Figure 2. The two pound (without keyboard) Microsoft Surface Pro includes front and rear facing cameras and a ten point multi-touch 10.6" display

The Modern tablet interface is integral to both versions of the Surface and comes with the many free apps available from the Microsoft Store, as discussed in "Windows 8 and Free Stuff." The Apple iPad tablet offers many more apps, but then it doesn't give you the full Apple OS X computing power of the Mac.

If you need full Windows and ultra-portability and/or one-handed tablet computing, then the Surface Pro might be right for you. However, there are a few other factors to consider.

Where Did All the Storage Go?

One of the most common complaints about the Surface Pro is the disappearing storage space. While the Surface Pro has four gigs of RAM for running the computer, the storage comes in the form of a solid state drive—available in both 64GB and 128GB models. If you own the 64GB model, you will only have 23GB available for programs and data. The remainder is used by Windows 8 and the recovery partition. Although understandable, this is a shockingly low number. This may be good enough for a tablet only computer used mostly for browsing the Web, reading or playing games, but when adding Windows 7 software, data files, images, music and video, you could quickly run out of space.

There are alternatives for adding more storage capacity to the Surface Pro. Microsoft "Surface Pro has a USB 3.0 port for connectivity with almost limitless storage options, including external hard drives (www.amazon.com/s/?_encoding=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&field-keywords=external%20hard%20drives&linkCode=ur2&rh=%3A172282%2Ck%3Aexternal%20hard%20drives&>tag=comput0b9-20&url=search-alias%3Delectronics) and USB flash drives (www.amazon.com/USB-Flash-Drives-Storage-Add-Ons/b/)

_encoding=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&linkCode=ur2&node=3151491&tag=comput0b9-20). Surface also comes pre-loaded with SkyDrive, allowing you to store up to 7GB of content in the cloud for free." Plus, the Surface Pro comes with a microSDXC card slot (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B009QZH6JS/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=B009QZH6JS&linkCode=as2&tag=comput0b9-20) which will allow an additional 64GB of storage.



Figure 3. The Surface Pro includes one USB 3.0 port which can be used for an external hard drive, USB flash drive, a mouse, or another USB device.

The Surface Pro includes Microsoft's Internet Cloud SkyDrive which gives you an additional 7GB of free storage. The problem with that is you need an Internet connection whenever you want to access it. SkyDrive and other Cloud storage systems don't influence my buying decisions. There are too many other free Cloud systems available. I use Dropbox (db.tt/rRn27Ury) extensively, but to be fair, even though Dropbox does store files in the Internet Cloud, it uses an equal amount of space on each connected computer. I use Dropbox for moving and sharing files. I don't care about the storage except as backup.

Another recommendation is to create a bootable USB flash drive backup, then delete the recovery partition—about 8GB of disk space. (In Windows 8, this can be done through the Recovery Center discussed in Chapter Thirteen of *Hidden Windows Tools for Protecting, Problem Solving and Troubleshooting Windows 8, 7, Vista, and XP Computers* (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B00B8Z2ASG/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=B00B8Z2ASG&linkCode=as2&tag=comput0b9-20). "You can create a Repair Disc through "Create a recovery drive" which can be found through a Settings search (⊞+W), or enter "recovery" into the Control Panel search field. (⊞+X to open the quick menu and select Control Panel.) Recovery can also be found in the Windows 8 Action Center." Start the "Create a recovery drive" tool and it gives the option to copy the recovery partition to a USB key and then remove it from the hard disk, freeing up the space it occupies.

My recommendation is spend the extra \$100 for the 128GB model and almost quadruple the available space to about 83GB. You're already spending \$899 for the 64GB model. If you can afford the extra dollars to get that much more storage it will make your computing life less convoluted.

The Surface Pen Pro

The small screen size makes a stylus or pen a necessity when working with the Windows Desktop on touchscreen. Unlike the large tiles of the Modern interface, the small links of the Desktop just don't operate well with fat fingers. The Windows Desktop was not designed for touchscreen. The Surface Pro includes a fine point

stylus (see Figure 4).



Figure 4. Surface Pro pen input and pen (included with purchase).

From CNET Reviews (reviews.cnet.com/microsoft-surface-pro/), "The Surface Pro supports pressure-sensitive styli, and Microsoft has its own Surface Pen Pro that magnetically attaches to the power connector to hold it in place on the go. Writing and sketching felt natural, and palm-rejection technology activates the moment the Surface Pro senses the stylus approaching the screen." The pen is not the rounded nub found on most touch pens used with tablets. The fine point makes it more accurate and natural to use on the Windows Desktop links, menus and buttons.

Surface Pro Features

I don't see much point in getting a Surface Pro without the optional keyboard/cover. The Windows 7 software usually needs a keyboard. There are two options: the Touch Keyboard (touch pressure sensitive at \$119) and the Type Keyboard (mechanical action at \$129). Having tried both, I would go for the Type Keyboard and its positive action.



Figure 5. The Surface tablet includes a Micro SD slot for expanding storage capacity and a kickstand to hold it up on a table.

Many of the other features may seem trivial depending upon how you use your computer or tablet. I wouldn't be

taking many pictures with a rear-facing camera although I might use the front-facing camera for Skyping. Primary features include:

- The Nvidia Tegra 3 processor, a dual-core Intel Core i5 processor with integrated graphics, and 4GB of RAM. That's a full-powered computer.
- 10.6" ClearType Full HD display, 1920x1080 pixels, 16:9 (widescreen), 10-point multi-touch.
- Two 720p HD LifeCams, front- and rear-facing with TruColor, microphone, and stereo speakers.
- Full-size USB 3.0, microSDXC card slot, headset jack, mini display port, cover port (for a keyboard).
- Wi-Fi (802.11a/b/g/n), Bluetooth 4.0 Low Energy technology.
- Ambient light sensor, accelerometer, gyroscope, compass.

With the more powerful processor and cooling fans, the Surface takes a hit in battery life (about four or five hours which is low for a tablet, but not for a laptop). However, unless you're talking about smartphones which are turned on all of the time, I don't see battery life as much of an issue. I have laptops and tablets and have almost never had a problem with the battery running down. If I'm traveling, I make sure it is charged before I go. Otherwise, I just plug it in when it runs low.

Would I Buy a Surface with Windows 8 Pro?

The ultimate question when giving advice is, "Would I buy one myself?" I would *not* buy the Surface RT (with Windows...not!) because I don't need another tablet, but, yes, I would buy the Surface Pro—with a couple of reservations.

I like the idea of having a computer that will do everything that I do now on all of my computers (except the iPad and Kindle Fire). Of course I've been using Windows 8 on a desktop PC for quite a while now and have grown quite accustomed to it. I've added my QuickLinks utility app to substitute for the Start Menu—which "went missing" in the Windows 8 PC. I'm not intimidated by the new Modern interface, although I have to say that it hasn't added much to my computer experience—at least not so far. The problem is I don't *need* a new computer.

I'm a little concerned about the small screen size on the Surface tablet. I do a certain amount of graphics work which requires an accurate touch. The larger the screen the better. Even my laptop has a 17" screen. Possibly the fine point on the Surface Pen would do the job, but I would need to try it out myself. Even testing it with Microsoft Paint would tell me what I need to know. I could always connect the Surface Pro to an external monitor, but that seems to defeat the purpose of buying a tablet computer.

I may be overly concerned about the screen size. From CNET Reviews (reviews.cnet.com/microsoft-surface-pro/), "The 1080p IPS 10.6-inch display is one of the best I've ever seen on a small Windows computer. Even better, capacitive multi-touch felt buttery-smooth. That's the magic that made the iPhone and iPad so fun to use, and the Surface Pro, in painting programs and a few other apps I tried, felt comfortable to navigate."

If I bought a Surface Pro, I would follow my own recommendation of 128GB with the Type Keyboard at a total of \$1128. Anything else would just be silly. I would probably get an external USB hard drive (www.amazon.com/s/?_encoding=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&field-keywords=external%20hard%20drives&linkCode=ur2&rh=%3A172282%2Ck%3Aexternal%20hard%20drives&tag=comput0b9-20&url=search-alias%3Delectronics) and a Bluetooth mouse (). Both of which will add to the weight I need to lug around.

If the Surface Pro sells, it's because it runs Windows programs. People haven't bought the Surface RT because it's only a tablet computer. Slow RT sales are not indicative of the interest in the Surface Pro. However, when you factor in the confusion and disappointment which has come from the launching of the Surface RT (with Windows... not!) last October, it certainly hasn't helped the future of the Surface Pro. The Surface RT is just another tablet while the Surface Pro is a full Windows computer.

* * *

For more information about Windows 8, see Jack's e-book, *Misunderstanding Windows 8 (Sixth Edition, February 2013)*, available at Amazon (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B007RMCRH8/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=B007RMCRH8&linkCode=as2&tag=comput0b9-20), Barnes and Noble (www.barnesandnoble.com/w/misunderstanding-windows-8-jack-dunning/1112318379?ean=2940014229463), and ComputerEdge E-Books (www.computoredgebooks.com/Windows-Tips-and-Tricks_c4.htm).

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:

Just Released! *Hidden Windows Tools for Protecting, Problem Solving and Troubleshooting Windows 8, Windows 7, Windows Vista, and Windows XP Computers* (www.amazon.com/Windows-Protecting-Troubleshooting-Computers-ebook/dp/B00B8Z2ASG/ref=ntt_at_ep_dpt_9).

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).

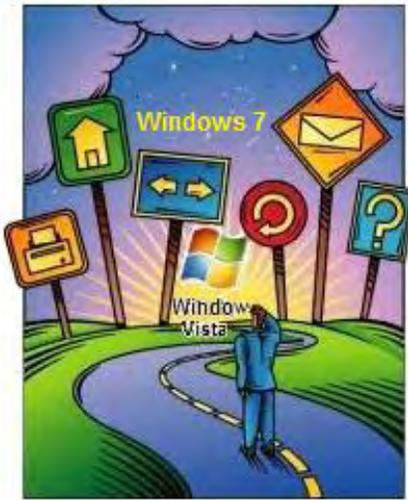
Our second compilation of stupid *ComputerEdge* cartoons from 2011 and 2012 is now available at Amazon! *That Does Not Compute, Too! ComputerEdge Cartoons, Volume II: "Do You Like Windows 8 or Would You Prefer an Apple?"* (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B009JY65QQ/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=B009JY65QQ&linkCode=as2&tag=comput0b9-20)

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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Windows Tips and Tricks

Windows Tips and Tricks: Free Scratchpad App

“Scratchpad is a simple, quick, free app that makes it easy to take notes.” by Jack Dunning

While you could save notes to an open Notepad window, Scratchpad has the advantage of popping up and disappearing quickly at the stroke of a key combination.

This time we look at another free Windows app called Scratchpad (www.desiquintans.com/scratchpad) by Desi Quintans (www.desiquintans.com/) (see Figure 1). I found the app on the AutoHotkey Web site (www.autohotkey.com/board/topic/86834-scratchpad-snippets-and-notes-for-programmers-and-students/) and highlight it because it's another free app that you can run without AutoHotkey or any other installed program. Scratchpad is a quick tool for taking notes while working on your computer or browsing the Web. It pops up with WIN+S (⊞+S) and hides with either WIN+S or Escape.



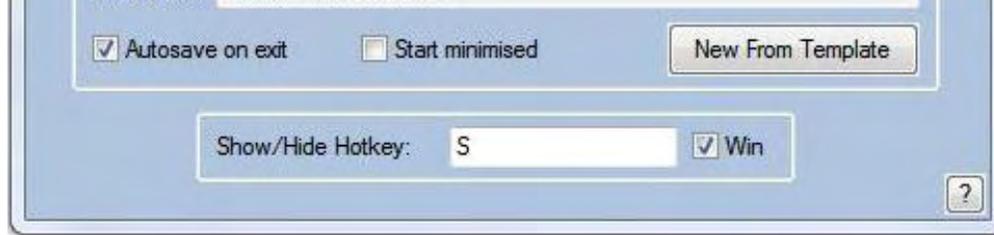


Figure 1. The Scratchpad app allows you to take notes in a separate pop-up window which can be saved to a time/date labeled text file.

Scratchpad is a quick-and-dirty solution for anyone who needs this type of tool. It could be especially useful for students collecting notes and references from e-books or Web sources. You don't need to know anything about AutoHotkey to use this app since after downloading and extracting the EXE file from the ZIP file, a double-click will load it on any Windows computer. A pencil and paper icon is placed in the Windows System Tray on the right side of the Taskbar. Right-click on the icon to exit the app, plus use the Show/Hide as an alternative to the +S hotkey combination (see Figure 2). The hotkey can be changed to any other letter, however unchecking the Win box appears to disable hotkey completely.

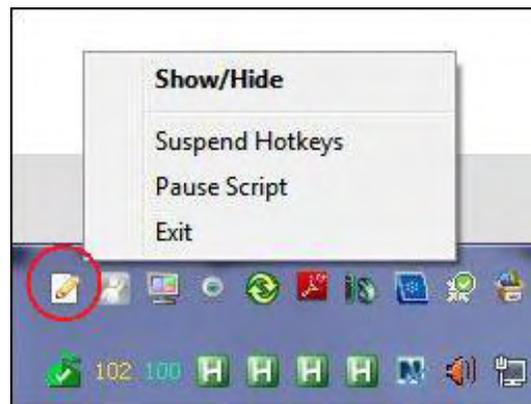


Figure 2. Right-click on the Scratchpad icon in the System Tray to Exit or Show/Hide the Scratchpad.

The Scratchpad stays always-on-top when active allowing you to move around other windows without losing sight of it. Click the question mark (?) in the lower right-hand corner to see Help.

If you have a little knowledge of AutoHotkey, the source script (AHK) is included in the downloaded ZIP file. It is not a complicated script for AutoHotkey programmers with a little experience. I've included the *Scratchpad.ahk* script in this week's AutoHotkey column because it uses some interesting techniques and there are simple additions which can add a good bit of value to the app.

Note: If you're concerned about downloading and running an EXE file, the source code is included in an AHK file (which is text only) in the same ZIP folder. You can compile the AHK file yourself with AutoHotkey bypassing any EXE file that may worry you. See "Installing AutoHotkey and Writing Your First Script (www.computoredge.com/misc/Installing_AutoHotkey_and_writing_your_first_script.html)."

Add Instant Paste to Scratchpad

When extracting quotes from other digital sources such as e-books and Web pages, the always-on-top feature of Scratchpad makes it easy to copy-and-paste quotations. However, there is an AutoHotkey technique which will automatically move highlighted text into another window with a hotkey combination (see Figure 3). It does the copy-and-paste operation for you. It is only a few lines of code which can easily be added to the *Scratchpad.ahk* script or reside in a separate AutoHotkey script.

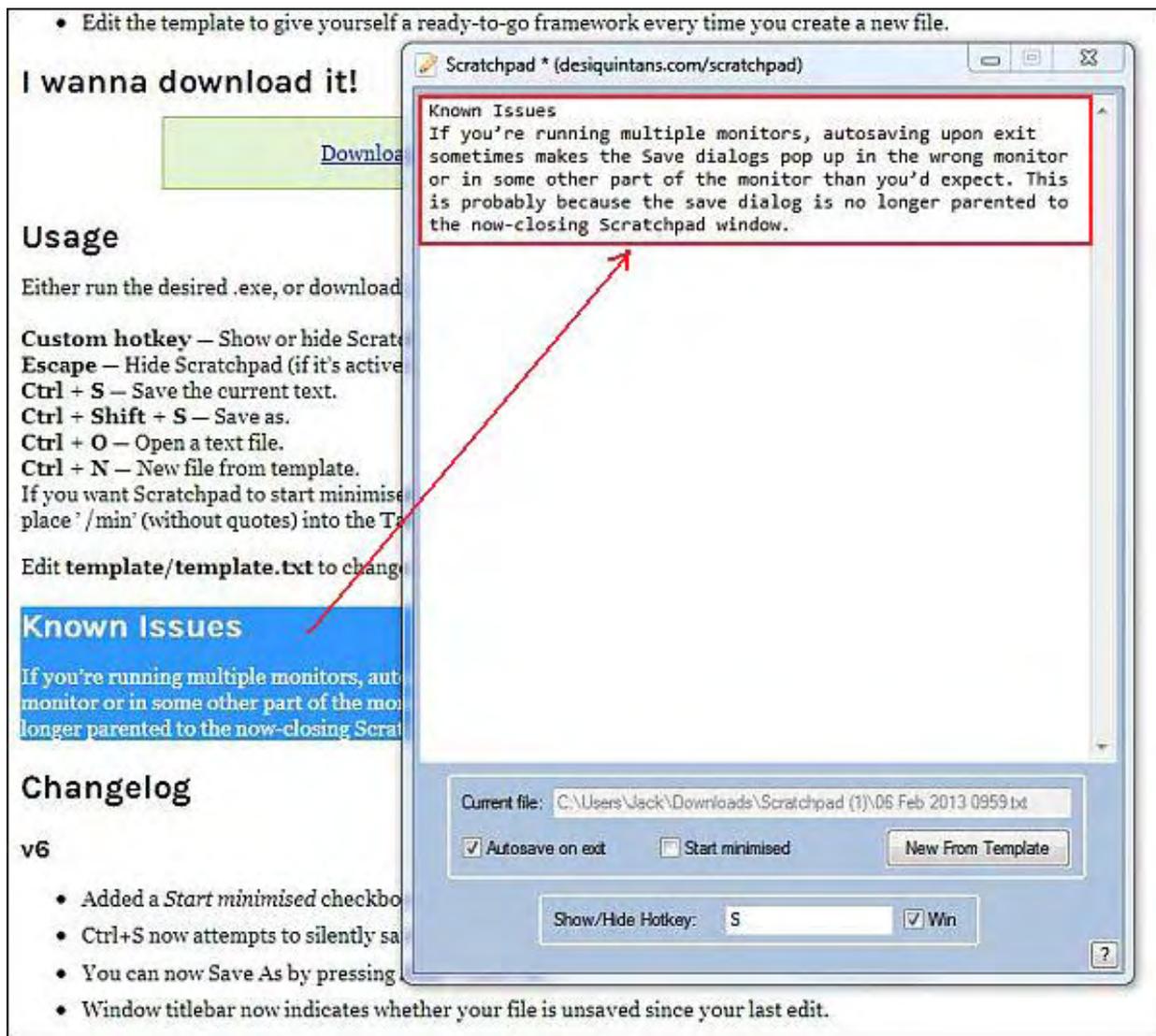


Figure 3. It's possible to add a code to the Scratchpad script which automatically copies selected text for any source to the Scratchpad editing field.

If you're interested in this technique, I address it in this week's AutoHotkey column. If you're interested in learning more about AutoHotkey check out our starter Web page "Installing AutoHotkey and Writing Your First Script (www.computoredge.com/misc/Installing_AutoHotkey_and_writing_your_first_script.html)."

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:

Just Released! *Hidden Windows Tools for Protecting, Problem Solving and Troubleshooting Windows 8, Windows 7, Windows Vista, and Windows XP Computers* (www.amazon.com/Windows-Protecting-Troubleshooting-Computers-ebook/dp/B00B8Z2ASG/ref=ntt_at_ep_dpt_9).

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*

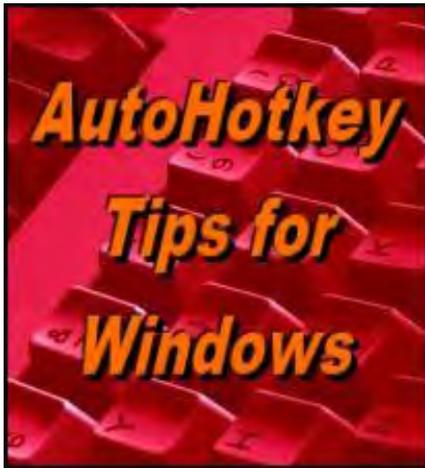
Apple?" (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B009JY65QQ/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=B009JY65QQ&linkCode=as2&tag=comput0b9-20)

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!**

[AutoHotkey Tips for Windows: Instant Paste in Scratchpad and Using INI Files](#)

“Using an AutoHotkey Instant Paste Techniques and Saving AutoHotkey App Values in an INI File.” by Jack Dunning

How to copy quotes into Scratchpad without changing windows, plus how to use an INI file to save key parameters and variables in AutoHotkey scripts.

Note: The discussions in this column assume a certain level of understanding of AutoHotkey scripts. While AutoHotkey is a powerful utility which can get complex, there many useful and easy things that a novice can do. If you are new to AutoHotkey, then it may be best to start with simple tasks such as those outlined by the articles linked at the bottom of the ComputerEdge Web page "Installing AutoHotkey and Writing Your First Script (www.computoredge.com/misc/Installing_AutoHotkey_and_writing_your_first_script.html)."

* * *

This week the AutoHotkey column serves a dual purpose. First the code to add an instant paste feature to the Scratchpad app, highlighted in Windows Tips and Tricks, is discussed. Second the same Scratchpad app code is examined to show how it uses an INI file to save setup parameters for use from one session to the next.

Add Instant Paste to Scratchpad

As I mentioned in the Windows Tips and Tricks column a good feature to add to the Scratchpad app would be an instant paste that automates copy-and-paste from any other source to the Scratchpad editing window (see Figure 1). To instant paste, you merely highlight the desired text, then hit the hotkey combination. The text is copied to Scratchpad at the location of the cursor.

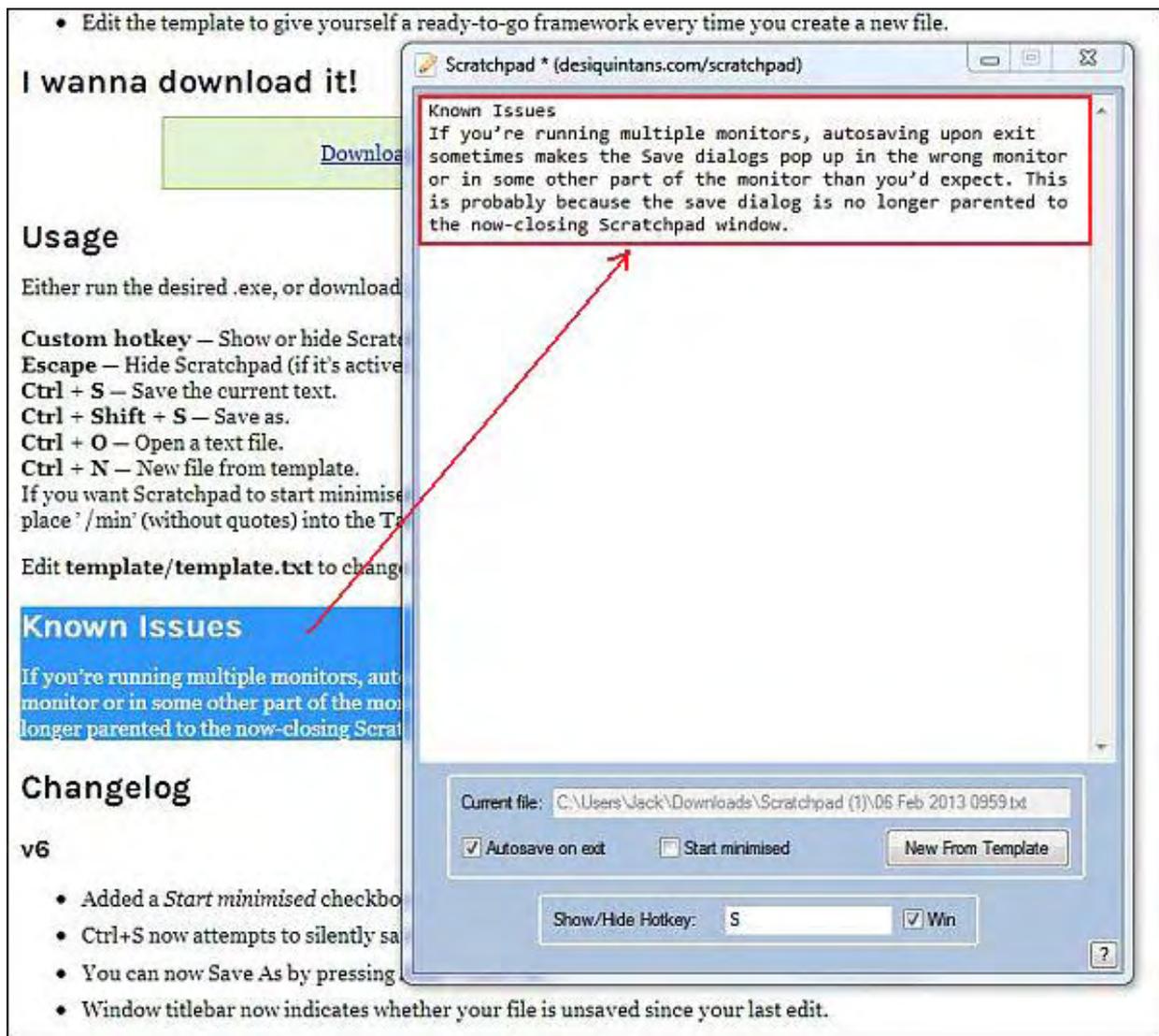


Figure 1. It's possible to add a code to the Scratchpad script which automatically copies select text for any source to the Scratchpad editing field.

A similar technique for copying from a source to Notepad was discussed in an earlier AutoHotkey column. However, the command used in that script (SEND) would not work in this case since Scratchpad uses an edit field within an AutoHotkey control rather than a regular window or program. In this case adding code similar to the following to either the Scratchpad script or a new separate AutoHotkey script would do the trick:

```
^#J::
Send, ^c
ControlSend, Edit2, ^v`n`n, Scratchpad
Return
```

The first line establishes the hotkey combination CTRL++J (^#J before the double colon ::). This can be any combination that works for you without interfering with other hotkeys in Windows and other programs. I use more than one function type key, such as CTRL, ALT, WIN, and SHIFT, with a letter in the hotkey combination because they are in close proximity (easy to reach with one hand) while making it less likely that the combination will interfere with other hotkeys.

The second line of code (Send, ^c) uses the SEND command (www.autohotkey.com/docs/commands/Send.htm) to copy (CTRL+C) the selected text. If no text is selected, the current Clipboard contents are used.

The third line of code (ControlSend, Edit2, ^v`n`n, Scratchpad) uses the ControlSend command (www.autohotkey.com/docs/commands/ControlSend.htm).

<com/docs/commands/ControlSend.htm>) to paste (^V) the Clipboard contents into the edit field (Edit2) in the Scratchpad window. The two "n" characters are new lines added at the end of each new paste.

The RETURN command ends the routine.

I've found this technique particularly easy and useful for collecting multiple quotes and information in one place from a variety of sources.

Saving AutoHotkey Script Setup Information

A problem with AutoHotkey scripts is that they run in memory which is temporary. If you close the app or shut down the computer, anything in memory is lost unless it is first saved to the hard drive or other permanent storage. There are a number of ways to save data in AutoHotkey. Two of them are employed in the Scratchpad app. The first is when the text put in the Scratchpad is saved to a date/time labeled text file or any name you like when you use Save As (CTRL+SHIFT+S). The second is the saving of parameters to be used from session to session in an INI configuration file.

The INI file goes back to the days of MS-DOS when they were used for "initialization" of the system and various programs. They contained data required for setup and configuration of the computer operating system. The INI file uses a simple basic format. In the Scratchpad folder there is a file called *ScratchpadData.ini*. (The file is created the first time Scratchpad is loaded.) See Figure 2.

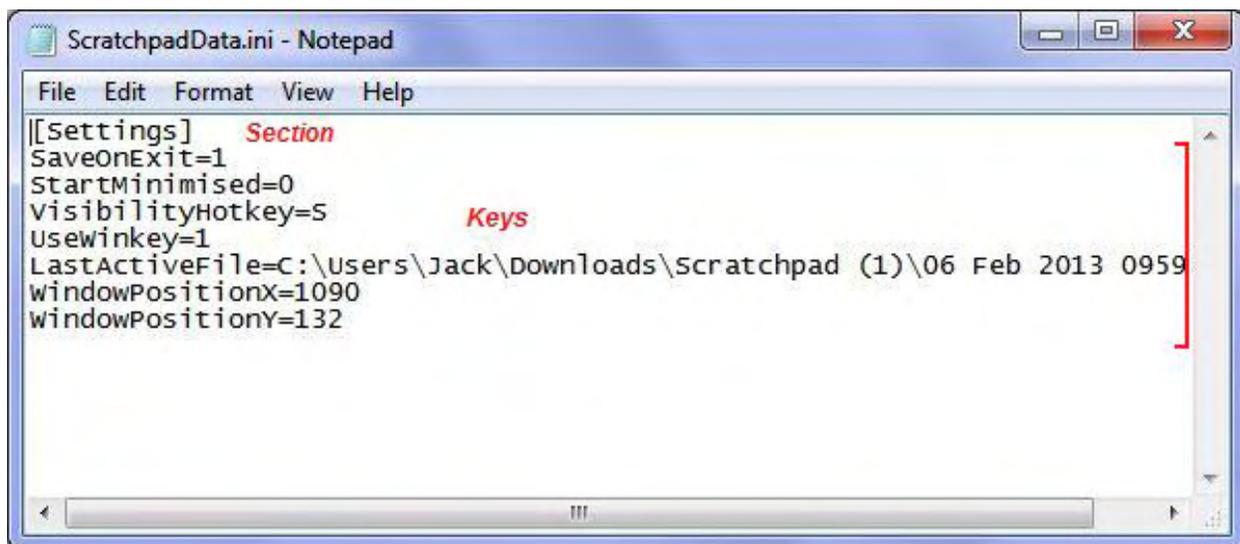


Figure 2. The ScratchpadData.ini file shows one section [Settings] and seven keys which equate to variables in the script.

An INI file has two parts: sections and keys. The sections are enclosed in square brackets ([...]) and use a label as a name. There may be any number of sections in an INI file as long as there are no duplicate labels. The keys are listed below the section and are set to values with the equals sign (=). AutoHotkey includes INI commands (*IniRead* (www.autohotkey.com/docs/commands/IniRead.htm), *IniWrite* (www.autohotkey.com/docs/commands/IniWrite.htm), and *IniDelete* (www.autohotkey.com/docs/commands/IniDelete.htm)) specifically for reading and writing INI files. The beauty of the INI file system is that it is easy to use without involved data parsing within the file.

Within *Scratchpad.ahk* there are two labels (routines) which work with the INI file: *WriteToIni* and *ReadFromIni*. *WriteToIni* creates and updates the file *ScratchpadData.ini*:

WriteToIni:

```

IfExist, ScratchpadData.ini
    FileDelete, ScratchpadData.ini
IniWrite, %SaveOnExit%, ScratchpadData.ini, Settings, SaveOnExit
IniWrite, %StartMinimised%, ScratchpadData.ini, Settings, StartMinimised
IniWrite, %VisibilityHotkey%, ScratchpadData.ini, Settings, VisibilityHotkey

```

```

IniWrite, %UseWinkey%, ScratchpadData.ini, Settings, UseWinkey
IniWrite, %LastActiveFile%, ScratchpadData.ini, Settings, LastActiveFile

WinGetPos, WinX, WinY,,,Scratchpad (desiquintans.com/scratchpad)
IniWrite, %WinX%, ScratchpadData.ini, Settings, WindowPositionX
IniWrite, %WinY%, ScratchpadData.ini, Settings, WindowPositionY
return

```

The IniWrite command saves the value of a variable (%SaveOnExit%) to the INI file (*ScratchpadData.ini*) in the section (Settings—the brackets are not used here) to the key (SaveOnExit).

Note in the above routine that if the file already exists (IfExist, ScratchpadData.ini), it is deleted (FileDelete, ScratchpadData.ini). This gives a clean start, but it isn't necessary since the first time IniWrite is executed it will create the file and on subsequent uses of the IniWrite command the same keys will be updated as long as the section and key name remain the same. This allows you update key values on the fly without rewriting the entire file.

To save the last position of Scratchpad, the WinGetPos command (www.autohotkey.com/docs/commands/WinGetPos.htm) (WinGetPos, WinX, WinY,,,Scratchpad (desiquintans.com/scratchpad)) is used prior to writing the Scratchpad screen coordinates to the INI file.

The ReadFromIni label (routine) uses the IniRead command to recall the values of the previous IniWrite commands:

```

ReadFromIni:
    IfExist, ScratchpadData.ini
    {
        IniRead, newSaveOnExit, ScratchpadData.ini, Settings, SaveOnExit
        IniRead, newStartMinimised, ScratchpadData.
ini, Settings, StartMinimised
        IniRead, newVisibilityHotkey, ScratchpadData.
ini, Settings, VisibilityHotkey
        IniRead, newUseWinkey, ScratchpadData.ini, Settings, UseWinkey
        IniRead, LastActiveFile, ScratchpadData.ini, Settings, LastActiveFile
        IniRead, WinX, ScratchpadData.ini, Settings, WindowPositionX
        IniRead, WinY, ScratchpadData.ini, Settings, WindowPositionY

        GuiControl,, SaveOnExit, %newSaveOnExit%
        GuiControl,, StartMinimised, %newStartMinimised%
        GuiControl,, VisibilityHotkey, %newVisibilityHotkey%
        GuiControl,, UseWinkey, %newUseWinkey%
        GuiControl,, History, %LastActiveFile%

        WinMove, WinX, WinY
    }
return

```

Note that this routine checks for the existence of the file before reading to prevent using anything but default parameters established in the app.

The format of the IniRead command is similar to the IniWrite command except that the value to be written is replaced with a variable to store the read value. The IniRead command saves the key value to a variable (newSaveOnExit) from the INI file (ScratchpadData.ini) in the section (Settings—the brackets are not used here) of the key (SaveOnExit).

In the second section the GuiControl command (www.autohotkey.com/docs/commands/GuiControl.htm) is used to set the Scratchpad window values, hotkey, and reposition the window.

Using INI Files with the Reminder App

The INI commands in AutoHotkey could be a partial solution to the Reminder app problem discussed last week where the reminder sitting in memory only works while the computer remains on. An INI file could be set up to hold the values of the reminder and reset it when the computer comes back on. This would work great if there is only one reminder, but if you want to set multiple reminders, then using an INI file is more problematic. In that case I would lean toward a CSV (Comma Separated Values) file where each line of data would be a reminder. This would most likely require the implementation of a variable array concept to hold an unknown number of reminders for both reading and writing the CSV file.

Next week, I'll look at using an INI file to make the reminder persistent beyond rebooting the computer.

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:

Just Released! *Hidden Windows Tools for Protecting, Problem Solving and Troubleshooting Windows 8, Windows 7, Windows Vista, and Windows XP Computers* (www.amazon.com/Windows-Protecting-Troubleshooting-Computers-ebook/dp/B00B8Z2ASG/ref=ntt_at_ep_dpt_9).

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).

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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

“Introducing New Hardware” by Wally Wang

Introducing New Hardware; The Medical Community Prefers iPads and iPhones; T-Mobile May Get the iPhone; The Versatility of InDesign; Announce the Time.

Wally Wang's Apple Farm

Back in 1984 when Apple introduced the Macintosh, they didn't just show the world a new computer and hope that everyone would figure out a way to use it creatively. Instead, they released the Macintosh and demonstrated two programs that took advantage of the hardware features including the mouse and graphics.

First, Apple introduced MacWrite, the first word processor that could actually show different fonts on the screen. While its actual word processing features lagged behind other word processors on MS-DOS, MacWrite clearly showed the advantages of a graphically oriented operating system. Anyone could easily see the difference between viewing your actual fonts on the screen compared to typing cryptic code in an MS-DOS word processor to define different fonts.

The second program Apple introduced was MacPaint (www.youtube.com/watch?v=SF2geZAUBIM), which let you create drawings that you could easily erase and move on the screen using the then-revolutionary pointing device known as a mouse. If seeing actual fonts on the screen seemed out of the future, then drawing on the screen seemed like science fiction.

The combination of MacWrite and MacPaint made the advantages of the Macintosh easy for anyone to see and hard for anyone to argue against. By introducing software to show off the capabilities of hardware, Apple made the advantages of the Macintosh clear for everyone to see. What killed sales of the early Macintosh was the high price, but MacWrite and MacPaint spurred Microsoft to create Windows as a result.

Later when Apple introduced the iPad, they also introduced touch-capable versions of their iWork suite consisting of Pages, Numbers, and Keynote. Although these iOS versions of iWork didn't come free with the iPad, they still demonstrated how easy and intuitive the touchscreen could be to create everything from documents and spreadsheets to presentations.

Now look at how other companies introduce new hardware. Research in Motion (which recently changed their name to Blackberry) just introduced their new Blackberry 10 operating system along with new Blackberry phones that will run that operating system. What Blackberry didn't introduce was a clear reason to use their new phones over the iPhone or Android phones.

The one main advantage Blackberry 10 offers is the ability to separate your personal information from your work information on a single phone. While nice, it hardly shows off the advantages of Blackberry 10 in any unique way that rivals can't match. Without any visually clear cut advantage, expect Blackberry to limp along in the shadow of the iPhone and Android phones.

Blackberry even wasted a multi-million dollar Super Bowl commercial (news.cnet.com/8301-17852_3-57567371-71/that-cant-have-been-blackberrys-super-bowl-ad-can-it/) that focused on what the new Blackberry can't do rather than what it can do. Blackberry's commercial never once gave anyone a reason to see the unique features of a Blackberry, which means nobody will have a reason to consider a Blackberry.

Microsoft made the same mistake when they introduced Windows 8 and their Surface tablets running Windows RT. Both Windows 8 and Windows RT offer the tile interface first offered by Windows Phone 7. While flicking through tiles that update themselves is an interesting idea, it's just another user interface much like the original Macintosh screen was a different user interface from the then-familiar command line of MS-DOS. People didn't like the Macintosh because it was different, but because it allowed them to see fonts or draw pictures, which were impossible with the old way of computer interfaces. In looking at the tile interface, the big question is what advantage does this offer?

On Windows 8, the tile interface just replaces the traditional Start menu. It's nice to see live stock quotes or the number of e-mails you've received, but it hardly takes your breath away like MacPaint wowed computer users stuck with command line interfaces. Without a clear cut advantage to showcase the advantage of the tile interface, most people just look at it in confusion and have no idea why they might want to use it.

Windows RT on the Surface tablet fares even worse. The main feature of Windows RT is the tile interface, yet the big advantage of Windows RT and the Surface tablet is that it runs Microsoft Office in the desktop mode, which has nothing to do with the tile interface. This would be like Apple introducing the iPad and demonstrating that the major advantage of the iPad is that it uses a command line interface like MS-DOS. If your major advantage is going backwards, then you don't really have any compelling reason for people to use it at all. This likely explains the tepid reaction to the Surface tablet and Windows RT in particular.

Most companies bombard users with technical specifications and expect details like "267 PPI" to get average consumers excited. Technical details don't matter because even a Lamborghini would be useless compared to a bicycle if you don't have any gasoline.

Until Blackberry, Microsoft, and other companies demonstrate reasons for how their latest hardware can help you perform tasks in ways that you might not have been able to do them before, nobody but tech-savvy people will care about the latest technology. The Macintosh really took off when desktop publishing became popular. Sales of Windows took off when people wanted Windows to run Excel. Until Blackberry comes up with unique software to showcase Blackberry 10, few people will see a reason to get a Blackberry phone.

Likewise, until Microsoft demonstrates a clear reason to use the tile interface of Windows 8 and Windows RT, there's no reason for people to use it. Just because something is new or different doesn't make it better. Nobody gets excited about minor, incremental improvements to technology. People do get excited with major changes in technology such as the switch from command line interfaces of MS-DOS to graphically oriented interfaces like the Macintosh and Windows that offer them new features.

Computers are no longer the domain of just tech-savvy hobbyists. Nowadays, if technology doesn't appeal to the average person, it likely won't sell many units. The next time Apple introduces a revolutionary new product such as a wearable computer or a television, watch to see how Apple focuses less on technical details and more on how the average person can do something unique and useful with it. Until other companies can do the same, their products will likely flounder in the market despite any technical features it may offer.

The Medical Community Prefers iPads and iPhones

A new survey by Manhattan Research claims that 75 percent (www.eweek.com/c/a/Health-Care-IT/75-Percent-of-Physicians-Prefer-Apple-iPad-iPhone-Survey-494578/) of physicians use the iPad or iPhone as part of their work. "Obviously, it speaks to the popularity of Apple among physicians," said James Avallone, senior digital health care analyst for Manhattan Research. "They clearly are moving toward these devices and this operating system overall."

As more doctors use iOS devices, more companies will support iOS devices for electronic health records. Just like everyone once standardized on Windows PCs, so you can expect doctors and other medical facilities to standardize on iOS.

"We certainly see a splitting of activities to a certain degree between the iPhone and the iPad," Avallone said. "The larger screen of the iPad as well as its ability to perform some complex activities makes it a device that's going to have different activities being used."

With the iPad, doctors can view medical records and show X-rays to patients without carrying around reams of paper or folders. With the light weight and smaller size of the iPad mini that can fit in most physician's coat pockets, expect to see more iPad minis in hospitals as well.

What makes the iPad hard to catch is the number of free medical apps (www.poppive.com/2012/06/top-10-free-ipad-medical-apps-for.html) available. Since most developers create apps for iOS first and then port them to Android if successful, that means the iPad's library of medical apps will keep growing. The more medical apps available, the stronger the iPad's position will grow in the medical community.



Figure 1. The iPad has proven its versatility in the medical community.

Mobile computing has taken over. Smartphones are often used as personal devices while tablets are more often used to interact with others, such as restaurants that use iPads as menus. As the world continues moving towards mobile computing, anyone without a smartphone and a tablet will look as antiquated and out of touch as someone who doesn't have a desktop or laptop computer.

T-Mobile May Get the iPhone

For the longest time in the United States, you could only get an iPhone if you chose AT&T. For many people, that meant either suffering with AT&T or choosing an Android phone instead.

Then Verizon got the iPhone and sales took off. Sprint became the third major carrier to offer the iPhone, and the iPhone helped slow down the number of people defecting from Sprint and choosing another carrier instead.

Now this April, T-Mobile looks like they're be adding the iPhone (www.autoomobile.com/news/tmobile-iphone-5-release-date-signs/10013050/) as well. Like Sprint, T-Mobile has been steadily losing customers and needs the iPhone to keep from losing any more subscribers.

Verizon, Sprint, and T-Mobile have been selling Android phones as soon as they were available, yet they still can't keep subscribers unless they too offer the iPhone. While many people can find valid reasons for using Android, many more people just want an iPhone because of its rich app selection and ease of use.

Strangely in Asia, many people are choosing alternative smartphones (gadgets.ndtv.com/mobiles/news/iphone-losing-its-charm-in-singapore-hong-kong-report-323133) rather than the iPhone. One reason given is that Asians prefer the larger screen of Android smartphones. An even stranger reason is that Asians are looking to Android phones so they can be "cool," which is exactly the same criticism anti-Apple critics use to disparage the iPhone.

"iPhones are like Louis Vuitton handbags," said marketing manager Narisara Konglua in Bangkok, who uses a Galaxy SIII. "It's become so commonplace to see people with iPads and iPhones so you lose your cool edge having one."

If your only reason to buy a product is so you can look "cool," you should stop looking to products to bolster your self-esteem and learn to accept yourself regardless of what you own. Then you can decide what you want and need regardless of which company makes that particular product.

Of course, this goes directly against most advertising you see, so if you can resist the lure of deceptive marketing, you might actually find happiness regardless of which company makes your favorite smartphone or tablet.

The Versatility of InDesign

Adobe's InDesign is a powerful desktop publishing program used to create magazines and books. As the print industry implodes and the magazine and book publishers stand around and cling to their delusions of relevance, you might think that InDesign has no purpose any more, but you'd be wrong.

Rather than send and deliver printed materials, many people just send and deliver PDF files instead. With the Macintosh, you can create a PDF file through the Print command, but such PDF files are static, which means that text and pictures appear frozen like a printed magazine. While this may be fine for most uses, you may be interested in InDesign's ability to create interactive PDF files.

First, InDesign lets you create blank fields where people can type information such as their name and e-mail address. Then you can export your InDesign document as an interactive PDF (tv.adobe.com/watch/visual-design-cs6/reviewing-the-new-forms-tools/?go=13249) file so people can type text directly in that field, click on check boxes or radio buttons, and click on buttons to perform some action such as sending the completed PDF file as an attachment by e-mail. By using InDesign for creating interactive PDF files, people no longer need to print out the PDF file and fill in the information by hand; they can type and store information directly in the PDF file itself.

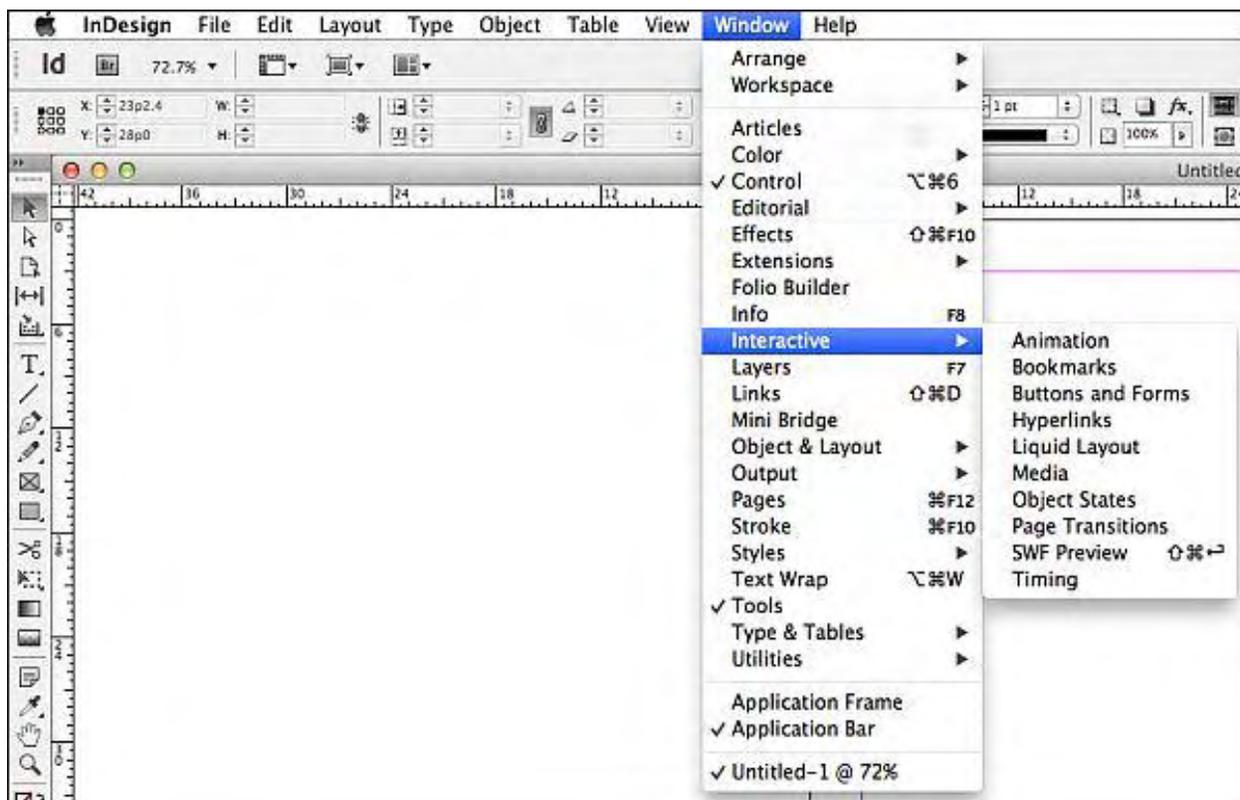


Figure 2. InDesign can add interactivity to a PDF file.

InDesign also supports the latest ePub 3 standard that adds support for audio and video. Now you can create e-books that can play audio or video files. The drawback is that people need a device that supports the ePub 3 standard to see these multimedia features so you can be ready when more devices and programs support the ePub 3 standard.

Rather than wait for the ePub 3 standard to catch on, InDesign also lets you export audio and video files so they can play directly from a PDF file as well. Since more people can view PDF files, creating such fancy interactive PDF files with audio and video can make your PDF files stand out.

For those who want to move beyond print publishing and interactive PDF files, you can use Adobe's Digital Publishing Suite (www.adobe.com/products/digital-publishing-suite-single.html) to create iPad apps. Such apps

won't be as versatile as Keynote or Angry Birds. Instead, InDesign iPad apps will more closely resemble printed materials, such as interactive brochures, magazines, or books that you can sell as apps.

If you're printing a magazine once a month like the San Diego Zoo's *ZOONOOZ* magazine, you can also turn your InDesign files into Newsstand apps (www.adobe.com/devnet/digitalpublishingsuite/articles/adding-digital-publishing-suite-apps-to-apple-newsstand.html). Newsstand is a special app on iOS designed to display digital magazines.

These digital magazines can be free or subscription-based. By organizing digital magazines in the Newsstand app, Apple hopes to create a whole new digital magazine platform for iOS users to access and enjoy.

In case you want to create Android apps as well, you can look at Mag+ (www.magplus.com), a third-party solution that lets you turn your InDesign files into apps for iOS and Android. Now you can create cross-platform apps from a single InDesign file.

The image shows a promotional banner for Mag+. On the right, a man in a red shirt sits on a brick wall, looking at a tablet. On the left, text reads "Start creating smartphone and tablet apps today". Below this is a list of features: "No coding required - create it yourself or let us do it for you", "Publish to iPad, iPhone, Kindle Fire & Android Devices", "Works with Adobe InDesign CS4 - CS6", "Instantly preview on any device", and "No per-download costs". A green button says "Download for free" with the subtext "All the tools you need - pay only when you're ready to launch". Below the button are logos for "Publish on:" followed by Apple, Android, and Amazon. Below the banner is a carousel titled "Great apps created with Mag+" showing five digital magazine covers: "MAD", "IP", "ONE DIRECTION", "GAME", and "TNW".

Figure 3. Mag+ has been used by various magazines to create digital versions from InDesign.

InDesign is a professional tool, so it's something organizations can easily afford, but may be out of reach for individuals who just want to explore the world of digital publishing. If you want to move beyond the dying world of print and into the future of interactive publications such as PDF files, iPad apps, or iOS Newsstand digital magazines, InDesign is part of that future. Despite its hefty price tag, investing in InDesign could be the best investment you could make as an app or digital publication specialist.

Print may be dying, but digital publication will only grow, and that means anyone with InDesign skills and knowledge will likely be in high demand for the future. Take a class on InDesign or just read a book like *Adobe InDesign CS6 Classroom in a Book* (www.amazon.com/gp/product/0321822498/ref=as_li_tf_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=0321822498&linkCode=as2&tag=the15minmovme-20) to learn the basics of InDesign. Then experiment with creating interactive PDF files, ePub files, and iOS apps until you feel comfortable creating the future of digital publishing on your computer with InDesign.

* * *

If you work on your Macintosh for long periods of time, you may want to force yourself to take a break. To help remind you of the time, you can make your Macintosh announce the time at specific intervals such as every hour,

half hour, or quarter hour.

Just click the Apple menu and choose System Preferences. When a System Preferences window appears, click the Date & Time icon to open the Date & Time window. From this window, click the Clock tab and select the "Announce the time" check box. Now you can click on the pop-up menu nearby to define when you want your Macintosh to announce the time. You can also specify a different computerized voice so your Macintosh will speak to you in a male or female synthesized voice.

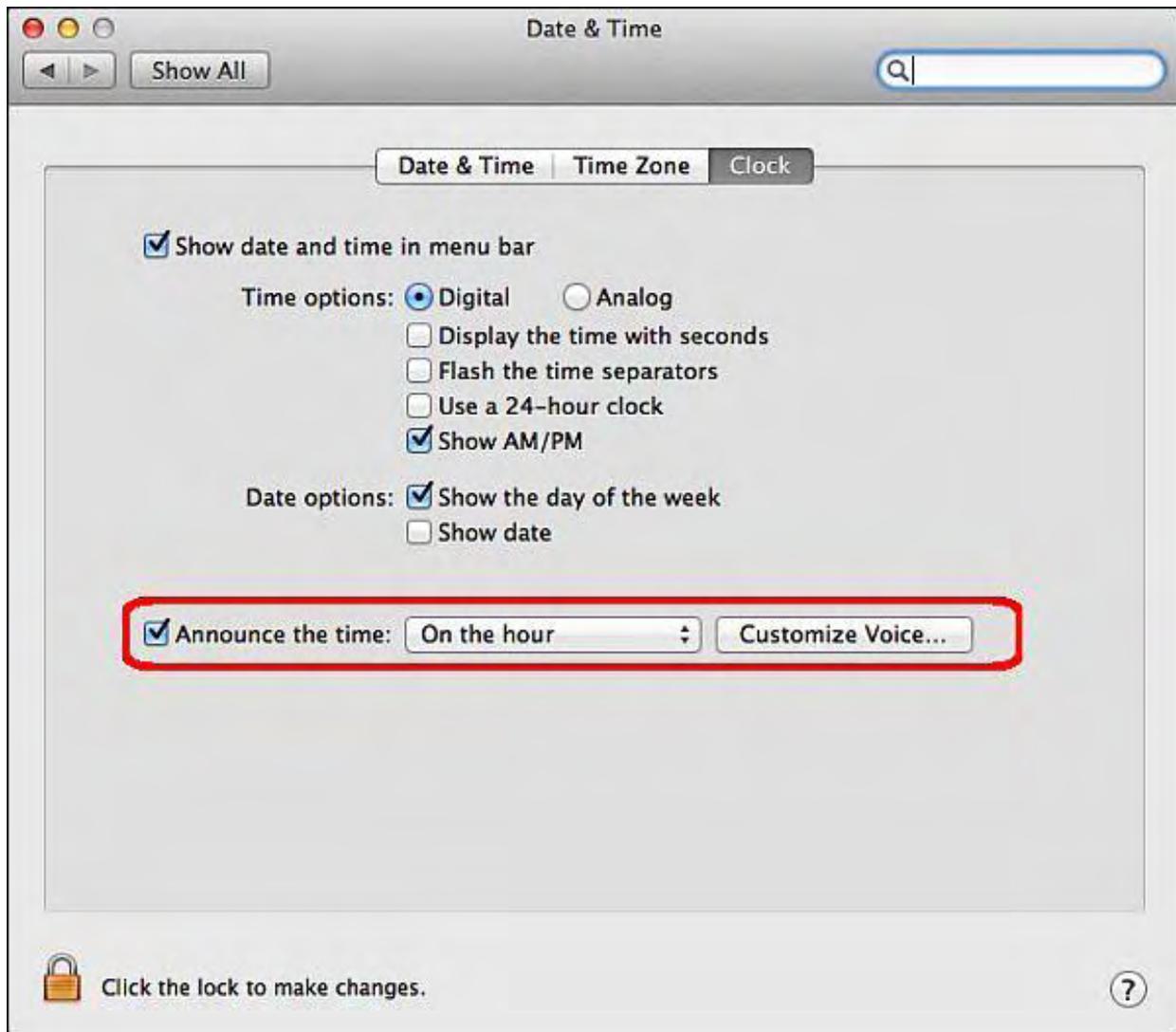


Figure 4. Turning on your Macintosh computer's feature for announcing the time out loud.

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

Wally is responsible for the following books:

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

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

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

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

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](#)

“Shocking Misadventures with Electricity and Batteries” by Marilyn K. Martin

Amusing anecdotes about electricity and batteries.

Early Man's first contact with electricity was probably through lightning. It was powerful and random, but feared and deadly. Sort of like the Clinton Power Couple of the prehistoric age. Most ancient societies associated lightning with powerful gods, especially since lightning was also associated with all-important rain. Chaac was the Mayan lightning god that manifested fourfold in the cardinal directions. (That's North-South-East-West, not Liberal-Conservative-Independent-Hacker).

To the Ancient Greeks, supreme god Zeus was the god of the sky and thunder, and was often portrayed with a thunderbolt in one hand. (Considering how many half-god children randy Zeus helped create, it's probably good he had a little extra zing in his...step.)

The first survivable electric-shock was probably from electric fish, which the Ancient Egyptians called the "Thunderers of the Nile." Patients with gout or headaches were advised to touch an electric fish, in hopes the jolt would cure them. Even if they weren't cured, it's possible they created a new Fashion Statement with springy hair and a permanently wide-eyed look of surprise.

The Arab word for lightning-power-from-a-fish was "raad," which is probably where we got the later terms for everything from "radiation" to "radio." (One offshoot of the Occupy movement is a few dozen people said to have once worked in a power plant, who now call themselves the Radiance Radicals. Their nightly glow, singed eyebrows and curls of smoke from their ears when they get angry are dead giveaways. Although they now have a case before the Supreme Court for "arrest-by-profiling.")

Tiny Important Bits

Two atoms were walking down the street and one says to the other, "Wait! We have to backtrack. I lost an electron somewhere." The second atom responded, "Really? Are you sure?" The first atom nodded, "Yes. I'm positive."

One photon to another: "I'm sick and tired of your interference!"

A neutron walks into a bar. He asks the bartender, "How much for a beer?" The bartender smiles warmly. "For you? No charge..."

Then Along Came Batteries...

Electric batteries also have an interesting history, starting with archaeologists discovering Ancient Roman pots meant to produce light, which debunkers insist were really just sealed offering jars of petrified Thunder Fish. Alessandro Volta's voltaic pile battery (www.universetoday.com/82402/who-discovered-electricity/) in 1800 was the first to use positive and negative connectors to drive an electrical charge. Michael Faraday created the world's first crude power generator in 1831, which enabled Thomas Edison to create the light bulb. And Tesla's revolutionary

developments in electromagnetism produced competing patents with Marconi for the invention of the radio.

Batteries and Relationships

Q: What is the difference between a battery and a woman?

A: The battery has a positive side.

Q: What is the difference between a battery and a man?

A: A battery lasts longer.

Then there was a couple who made love for 20 years in total darkness, at the husband's insistence. Finally the wife thought the darkness thing was silly, and wanted to shine some light on the situation. During their next passionate moment, she flipped on the light. She looked down to see her husband holding a battery-operated pleasure device. "You impotent bastard!" she screamed at him. "How could you be lying to me all these years? Explain yourself!" The husband looked her straight in the eye and said, "I'll explain the toy, if you can explain the kids."

Lithium Batteries—Big Danger in Small Packages

Around 2005, lithium-ion batteries in laptop computers were bursting into flames (computer.howstuffworks.com/dell-battery-fire.htm). By October 2006, four computer companies had announced embarrassingly large recalls of the Sony batteries in their laptops.

By 2011, there were random reports of iPhone4s suddenly emitting sparks or smoke (www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-2068638/Ayla-Motas-iPhone-explodes-Device-emits-smoke-sparks-charging.html)—or bursting into flames. Again, rechargeable lithium ion batteries were blamed, with the suggestion that fake or counterfeit batteries may be to blame.

2013 was barely underway when the *Wall Street Journal* was reporting that new shipping standards (www.newser.com/story/160126/hidden-danger-aboard-planes-lithium-batteries.html) for lithium batteries may not be stringent enough. Lithium batteries have a scary tendency to "spontaneously ignite" if damaged or overheated, especially if lumped together in cargo planes. They cited a couple crashes and 24 "combustion incidents" on U.S. cargo planes in just the past three years.

Mr. Sparky—Your Friendly Electrician

Electrician t-shirt: "Don't Mess With An Electrician. It MEGAHERTZ!"

Q: What is the definition of a shock absorber?

A: A careless electrician.

Q: What do you call a carpenter working in an electrical panel?

A: Dead

Q: How do you know if an electrician is working with AC or DC power?

A: If it's AC, his teeth chatter when he grabs the conductors. If it's DC, his teeth just clamp together.

An electrician finished repairing some faulty wiring in an attorney's home, and handed him the bill. "Four hundred dollars? For an hour's work?" sputtered the attorney. "That's ridiculous! Why, I'm a lawyer and I don't charge that much per hour!" The electrician nodded. "I know. When I was an attorney, I didn't either."

Q: How do you know when a union electrician is dead?

A: The donut rolls out of his hand.

Q: What's grey, crispy and hangs from the ceiling?

A: An amateur electrician.

Old Electricians never die. They just do it until it Hertz.

Crimes of Power

There was an electrician who was caught putting sea water in his company batteries. He was arrested for a salt-in-battery. Even though the "charge" wouldn't hold up, he is still sitting in a cell serving two "current" sentences.

A man gifted his mother-in-law with an electric toothbrush. Next year he gave her an electric blanket. The year after that he gave her an electric carving knife. When his wife asked what all this was leading up to, the husband replied "A new chair."

Do-it-Yourself Battery Charging

A husband went out one morning to discover that he'd left his lights on in his old VW Beetle, and the battery was dead. In a hurry to get to work, and since the VW had the sticker/permit to his company's parking lot, he asked his wife to get in their second car, an oversized gas guzzler. He hurriedly explained that the VW had an automatic transmission, so it needed to be pushed to at least 30 mph for it to start. The wife nodded and took off in the gas guzzler. Thoroughly puzzled, the man sat in his dead VW by the curb, wondering where his wife had driven off to. Suddenly he looked in his rear-view mirror, and saw his wife in the gas guzzler roaring toward him at 40 mph.

Little Sparks

Red wire: "Why are you so sad?"

Black wire: "I've been grounded."

Five year-old to his mother: "Can I sleep with my new jumper cables under my pillow?"

Mother: "OK. Just don't start anything."

Did you hear about the lady who gave her niece a book for her birthday? The child went crazy trying to find where to put the batteries.

Scientists have developed a firefly that is 10,000 times brighter than a wild firefly. The only problem is that the firefly gets a little grumpy being wired to a five-pound battery for hours at a time.

Q: Hey Billy, where are you going with that sack of burned out light bulbs?

A: I'm gonna build a dark room.

Another Blonde Joke

Q: How does a blonde change a light bulb?

A: She says, "Daddy, I need a new apartment."

Electrical Engineers and Power Supply Designers

To survive as a power supply designer, you need just two things: A solid technical foundation, and self-CPR training.

Scientists have found a way to inject Bat genes into engineering students. They ended up with engineers who *like* to be kept in the dark.

A new technician was put to work on a battery production line test station. "Just plug in the connector and read the voltage," the supervisor instructed. "If the voltage reads between 3 and 4 volts, it passes. If not, it fails, and you put it in the Fail bin." After a few shifts, the technician went to his supervisor and said, "I quit. If I have to be a Decision Maker, I want more money."

Q: What's the best gift you can give an electrical engineer for his birthday?

A: Shorts.

An engineer rushed up to his chief engineer, "I've got a big problem with that power supply circuit you sent me to work on." The chief engineer responded calmly, "Alright, let's trouble-shoot here. Is it oscillating?" The engineer shook his head, "No, it's stable." "And the efficiency?" The engineer shrugged, "About 87%". "Is there ringing on

the gate?" probed the chief engineer, "Or any noise and ripple?" The engineer kept shaking his head. "Everything is within spec." "Well, then," frowned the chief engineer, "What's the problem?" "The dang thing is on fire, Sir!" said the engineer as billows of smoke were suddenly seen behind him.

Tags on Equipment in an Electrical Engineering Lab

Danger! High Impedance.

Warning! This device contains pure matter. This is known by the State of California to cause warpage of Space and Time.

Danger! Operate only while wearing a lead apron.

Please Note! You can borrow this spectrum analyzer as long as it is returned within 24 hours. And please tell the chief lab assistant if you start itching, or have trouble focusing your eyes while in the 100MHz to 2GHz range.

Power Failures

A lady took her CD player to be repaired. The repairman checked it out and said, "I'm afraid you have a short circuit." The lady responded, "So? I don't care how much it costs—lengthen it!"

A guy took his older car to a mechanic for a diagnostic. The mechanic checked everything out, and told the guy "Basically, your battery needs a new car."

The space shuttle pilot and co-pilot were sitting atop a rocket in Florida waiting for a launch. Over the headphones, they are told there is going to be a ten-minute delay. The pilot groaned and swore. The co-pilot looked over, "Hey, it's no big deal. This happens all the time." The pilot pointed. "No, this is worse. Look at the monitor. They're bringing in jumper cables."

Lively Repairs

A customer walked into a computer repair store in the 1990s, with a new but now dead laptop. The customer supplied additional details that there was a "sloshing" sound heard within the machine. The client insisted he'd done nothing wrong to invalidate his warranty, so the repair tech sighed and filled out a repair order. He took it back to his workbench and started to work on the sloshing, dead laptop. He got it to start-up, then there was an error message and a crackling noise.

There was also a strange and sharp odor, like ammonia. He turned everything off and removed the battery, which was mysteriously soaked in a liquid with a rainbow-hued sheen. The repair tech then turned everything off, tilted the laptop and drained out the mystery liquid which had caused a reaction with the plastic battery casing. Then he took everything apart. The hard disc was rusted, and the motherboard had barbecued chips. He called over co-workers to take a sniff, and see if they could corroborate what he suspected. Then he called up the customer: "Do you have a cat?"

The customer said No, but he did have a bunny who had been sitting on the powerbook the day before. The repair tech checked the warranty, which surprisingly had no provision for "failure due to rabbit urine." The ruined laptop was therefore chucked, and the customer upgraded to a stronger laptop. Checking with the customer through a follow-up call a week later, the repair tech asked the customer if he was happy with his new laptop. And, by the way, how was his rabbit? "Delicious," the customer replied.

The Borg as Elastomeric Insulators

Their motto is "Resistance is Butyl!"

(Many of these jokes and anecdotes are available at multiple Internet sites. Special thanks to Powerstream.com (*Powerstream.com*) and Mark W. Lund, Inorganicventures.com (*Inorganicventures.com*), Funnydb.net (*Funnydb.net*), and Megavolt.co.il (*Megavolt.co.il*.)

Marilyn is a freelance writer and humorist, with a special interest (besides computers and technology) in Science Fiction. She has had short stories appear in the following 2011-2012 publications: *Deadman's Tome* (www.demonictome.com/) online magazine; *Strange Valentines* anthology; *Cosmic Crime* anthology; *PerihelionSF* online magazine; and *The Fifth Dimension* online magazine. She has also sold a short story to appear in the March 2013 anthology, *Universe Horribilis*. She is also writing a Young Adult SF series, *Chronicles of Mathias* (www.amazon.com/gp/product/1598249002/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=1598249002&linkCode=as2&tag=comput0b9-20), and

contributes weekly articles or humor columns to *ComputerEdge*. ComputerEdge E-Books has converted many of Marilyn's computer humor columns into four e-books. Now available in a four-book Kindle bundle from Amazon.com *The Best Computer and Internet Humor, Anecdotes, and Jokes Found on the Web* (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B00ACVX2PC/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=B00ACVX2PC&linkCode=as2&tag=comput0b9-20).

Marilyn's collection of the funniest stories about our computing machines and how we use them at home, the office, and in cyber space. Save 25% off the individual book price!

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Editor's Letters: Tips and Thoughts from Readers

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

"Touchscreens Are Already Here," "Windows 8 and Free Stuff," "QuickLinks for Windows, FinderPop for Mac," "What's in a Name?"

Touchscreens Are Already Here

[Regarding Jack Dunning's January 25 article, "Will the Touchscreen Help the PC?":]

I have several cop based Toughbooks with the touchscreen option. I also had an original Compaq Concerto touchscreen.

My only issue is that many cops tend to "go fishing" using the laptop to run the license plates around them while driving the squad car at highway speeds. Warehouse people and A&P mechanics have also been using them. The FAA paperwork on aircraft repairs used to burn up more time than it took to make the repair!

I'm looking at the latest LCARS (Star Trek) interface for Windows and Android to see if it has more functionality under Windows and Android. CBS Studios is the only impediment to using LCARS and the PADD...

-Art Blackwell, Evergreen, CO

Windows 8 and Free Stuff

[Regarding the January 25 Editors Letters: Tips and Thoughts from Readers column:]

Paul Anthony: Am running XP & Office '97 SP3. It does what I want. Why would I upgrade? Quit complaining. Keep what works or what you are friendly with.

-William Tiep, Toledo, OH

QuickLinks for Windows, FinderPop for Mac

[Regarding the January 18 A Free QuickLinks Windows App from Jack's column:]

Kudos to Jack for his cool QuickLinks utility.

Macintosh readers can gain the same functionalities and more at the same affordable price (free!) by downloading and installing FinderPop (www.finderpop.com) which is reviewed in my August 27, 2010 column.

FinderPop is written by Turly O'Connor, who has worked for Apple and has actively maintained FinderPop all the way back to the days of Mac OS 8. The current version, 2.4.6, supports Tiger, Leopard, Snow Leopard, Lion, and Mountain Lion.

Turly also maintains a tech support forum (www.fnarr.net/fp) where he and other users respond to questions and requests for help. His responses often are quite humorous in addition to being helpful.

-Barry Fass-Holmes, San Diego, CA

What's in a Name?

[Regarding the January 18 A Free QuickLinks Windows App from Jack column:]

Jack,

In your article on QuickLinks you refer to "Windows File Explorer"; my OS is Windows 7, and I can't find that program anywhere by any means. Are you perhaps simply adding the word "File" to Windows Explorer or is there such a program that I am missing for some reason?

Thank you,

-Richard Hardy

You're right, Richard. Windows Explorer is one and the same as Windows File Explorer. Microsoft changed the name to File Explorer in Windows 8 which added to the confusion already caused by Internet Explorer which many people call just Explorer. The issue is that the AutoHotkey apps work in all versions of Windows whether called Windows Explorer or File Explorer. I've added a note of clarification to the column.

Thanks,

-Jack Dunning

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 \(www.computoredgebooks.com/\)](http://www.computoredgebooks.com/).

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