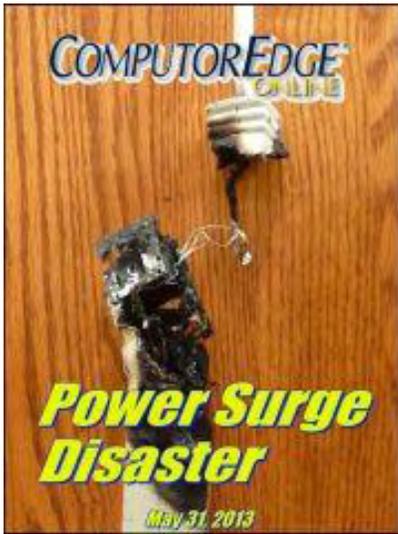


ComputerEdge™ Online — 05/31/13



This issue: Power Surge Disaster

While they are rare, power surges can damage your computer equipment.

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DEPARTMENTS:

A vertical banner with a pink-to-yellow gradient background. At the top, it says 'COMPUTEREDGE E-Books'. Below that, it reads 'See All of our ComputerEdge Kindle E-Books at Amazon'. A bulleted list includes: Windows, OpenOffice, AutoHotkey, Cartoons, and Humor. At the bottom is the 'amazon.com' logo.

(Click Banner)

A white banner with a black border. The text 'redIT.' is in large, bold, black letters, with 'intelligent outcomes' in smaller blue text below it. A horizontal bar with segments of pink, orange, blue, green, and purple is positioned below the text. At the bottom left is a red square with a white plus sign. To the right of the plus sign, the text reads: '888-redIT-411', 'info@redIT.com', and 'www.redIT.com'.

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

ComputerEdge Staff

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

"Apple Losing Employees," "50 Pound Jobsian Monkeys," "Response to the Ed Price/Wally Wang Discussion"



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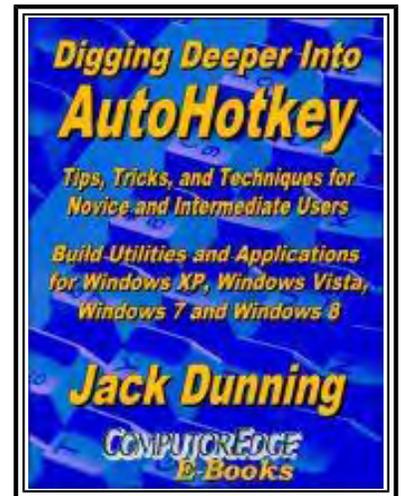
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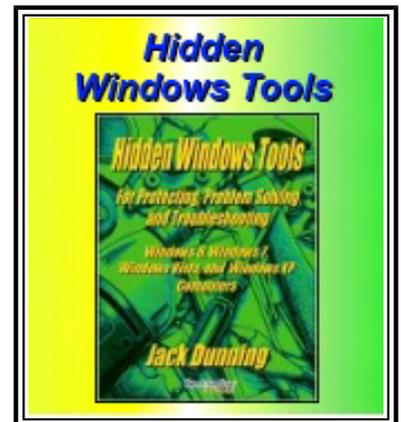
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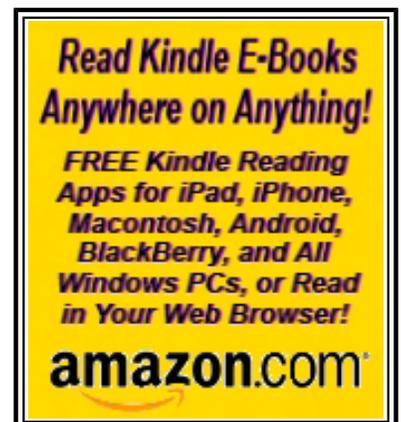
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Digital Dave

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

Missing Windows XP Pro System Disc; A Trick for Instantly Viewing Your Favorite Screensaver.

Dear Digital Dave,

Where can I download a startup disc for Windows XP Pro? I cannot access my system because I lost mine. I seem to have lost necessary DLL files.

You have helped me so many times I hope you can help me now.

CAS
El Cajon, CA

Dear CAS,

This could be a tough one although you have a number of options. There are Web sites which offer downloads of Windows XP, but technically they are not authorized by Microsoft to do so. Some have been forced to remove the download. I would hesitate to use any of these sites since some are known to cause (or allow) infections.

Microsoft does have a Web page (www.microsoft.com/en-us/download/details.aspx?id=1000) for downloading, "Windows XP Professional with Service Pack 2 Utility: Setup Disks for Floppy Boot Install" which might do the job, but I can't be sure.

Microsoft also has a support page (support.microsoft.com/kb/326246) which offers information on "How to replace Microsoft software or hardware, order service packs, and replace product manuals." But I have no idea if you would be able to get cooperation from Microsoft. They are not famous for their customer service and are not excited about being forced to continue to support Windows XP.

I would look for a neighbor or friend who may have a copy of Windows XP lying around. There has to be millions of them. All you need is enough access to repair your installation.

Since you already own Windows XP with an activation key, a strong argument could be made that you can legally use a downloaded copy to get your system going again. I have no doubt that there are BitTorrents available for the ISO file.

Perhaps another XP user has some ideas on how to get a new startup disc. Worst case, you can still buy a copy of Windows XP Professional for about \$50, but that seems a little ridiculous.

Digital Dave

Digital Dave's Tip

The Windows screensaver feature found by right-clicking on the Desktop and selecting Personalize (or Properties in Windows XP) allows you to set one screensaver for when your computer sits idle a designated amount of time. Normally, you can either start a preview of the screensaver from the setup screen or wait until your computer starts it automatically after the designated time lapse.

However, if you just want to temporarily hide the view of your screen from nosy people who happen to be walking by, you don't need to wait to activate your screensaver. Plus, you can quickly start a photo slideshow without the requisite delay. You're not limited to activating only the screensaver set as your default in the Desktop Personalization window. You choose which ones you want available. One might be the slideshow. Another could be the 3D text screensaver set to "Be back in 15!" You choose—instantly loading the screensaver you want at the time.

The first step is to find the real filenames of the screensavers. The name you see in the Personalization window probably is not the same as the name of the actual file. To uncover these filenames, open Windows Explorer (⊞+E) and navigate to C:\Windows\System32. Use the search feature to find the screensaver files by entering "*.scr" (without the quotes) (see Figure 1). SCR is the extension for screensaver files.

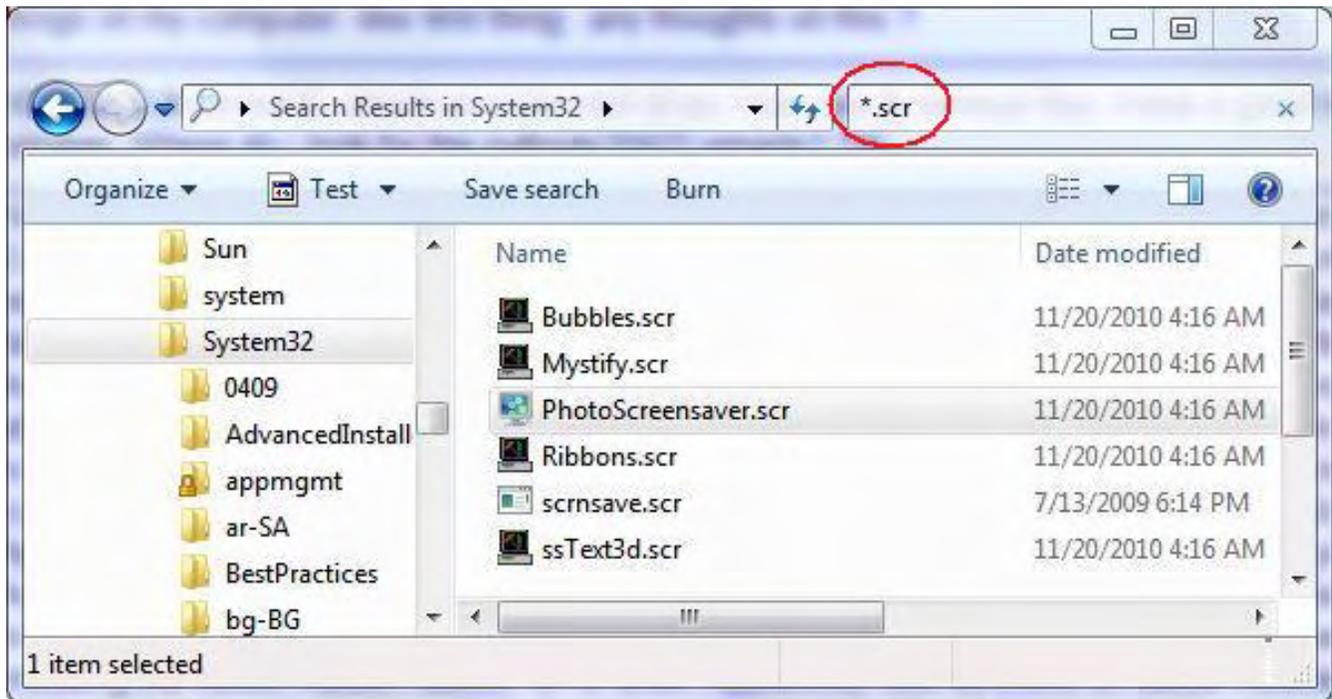


Figure 1. A search of the folder displays the screensaver files.

Locate the file which most closely looks like the one you want. In this case, "PhotoScreensaver" is for the slideshow while "ssText3d" is for the text message screen. These names will vary depending upon which version of Windows you're using. Copy the filename in the rename mode that looks right to you.

Next, on the Desktop right-click and select New => Shortcut. Enter the path or Browse (see Figure 2) for the path to the location of the SCR file. You can add "C:\Windows\System32" (without the quotes) to the beginning of the filename that you paste or type into the field.



Figure 2. If you know the name of the file, you can browse for it in the C:\Windows\System32 folder.

Enter a new name for the shortcut or just click finish to accept the default.

At this point a double-click on the icon will load the screensaver. It will respond to any settings you made in the Personalization window—even if it's not the active screensaver. For example, suppose Bubble.scr is your default screensaver. If you created a shortcut for the 3D text screensaver, then set the text to "What's up?" in the Personalization window (without setting it as the new screensaver), then those words in 3D will be loaded by the shortcut.

The problem with double-clicking to load a screensaver is that a slight movement of the mouse can cause the screensaver to disappear. To resolve the problem and make the screensaver more accessible, add a hotkey to the shortcut's Properties.

Right-click on the shortcut and select Properties from the menu. Select the Shortcut key field and hold down the key combination you want to use to initiate the screensaver (see Figure 3). If you just hit a letter or number, Ctrl+Alt will automatically be added. The other key which can be added is Shift. Click Apply and the new hotkey will be activated. Anytime you use the combination, that particular screensaver will immediately activate.

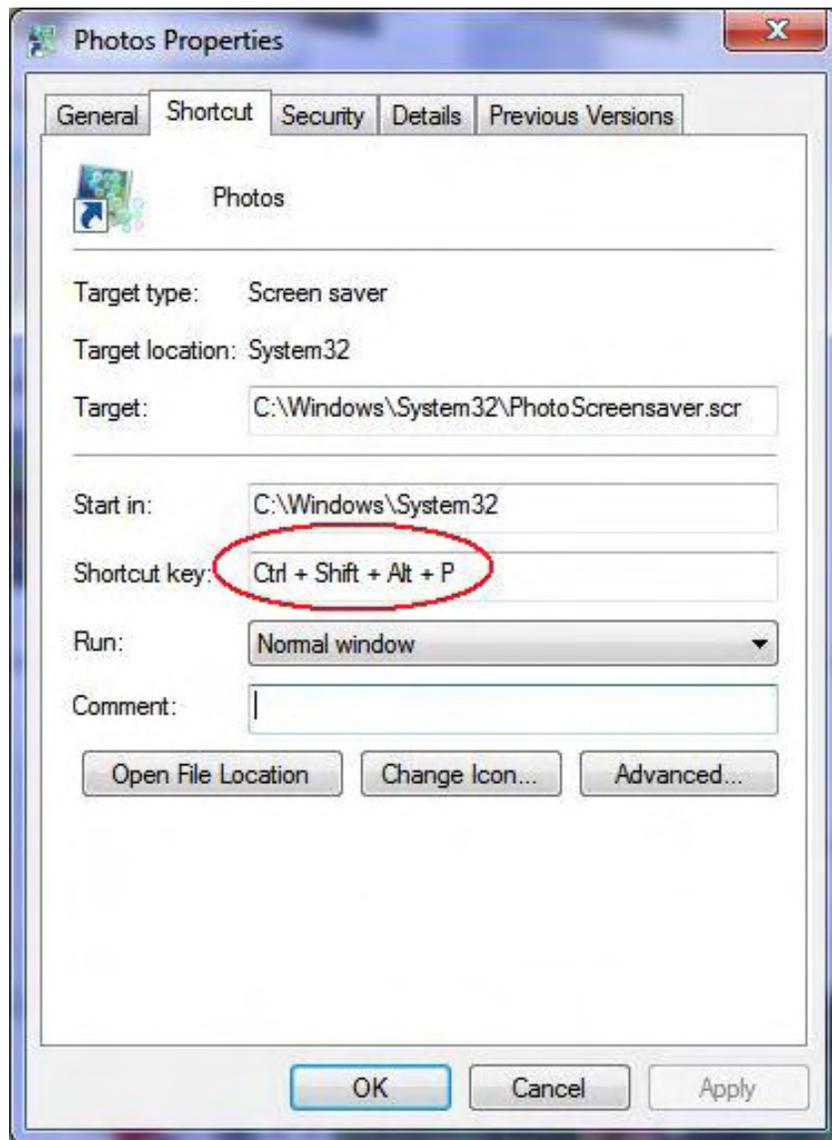


Figure 3. Hotkey combinations can be added to any shortcut.

Now you can create a shortcut for each screensaver you want to use. By adding hotkeys, you can call up your preferred screensaver in an instant.

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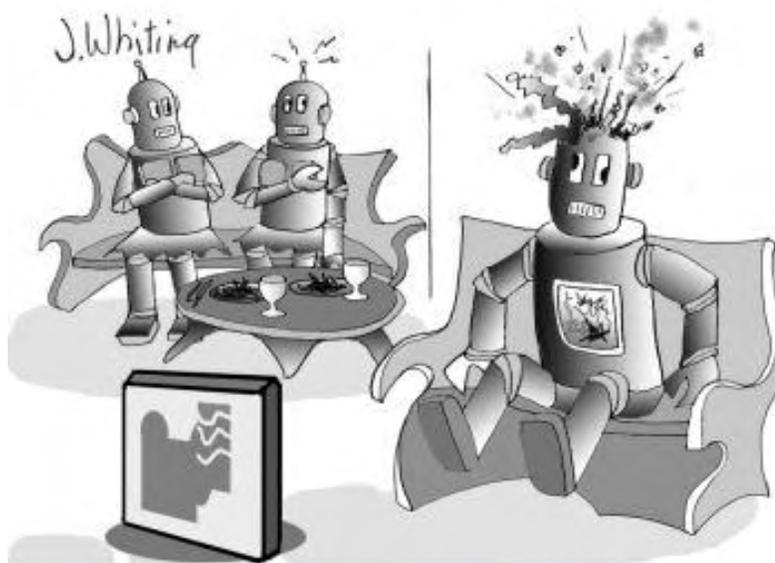


Protecting Against Power Surges

“A Real-life Story of Power Protection Failure” by Jack Dunning

"If you're unlucky enough to experience an outage similar to the one I was in last week, then you will want to be prepared."

Every once in awhile something occurs which reminds us that bad things can and do happen. In this case, I'm talking about the power surges that come from public utilities. While these may be rare events, they do occur and can cause a great deal of damage. Many people may go years without even a flicker in their house electricity. Even if there is a power outage in your area, the power is usually restored—maybe hours later—without incident. However, if you're unlucky enough to experience an outage similar to the one I was in last week, then you will want to be prepared. The loss of computer data may be minor compared to potential electrical damage to your equipment.



"Not a power surge...it was the politicians on television."

Like most people, when I experienced electrical blackouts in the past, the only problem was the total loss of lights, Internet, television and all the other benefits of modern life. Although inconvenient, it was tolerable for a short period of time. However, in spite of warnings to the contrary, I became complacent about the possible problems when the lights come back on. After all, I had protection for all of my equipment and had never seen a problem when the power was restored. The events of last week show just how wrong I was and the mistakes that I made. Hopefully, others can learn from my experience.

The Power Goes Out

In the area where I live a tree fell and knocked out the power. People in the neighborhood heard a loud pop (it sounded like something in the

house) which may have been a power meter at one of the nearby houses arching. Power was out in most of the surrounding neighborhoods, although not at my daughter's house which is about half a mile away. We knew it would be a number of hours before getting back in business, so we went about the locating flashlights and battery powered candles. I wasn't too worried about equipment because I had taken precautions with well-rated surge protectors. I took my laptop over to my daughter's house to continue working.

One thing I didn't do (which I often hear recommended) was unplug all my major equipment. Even better and easier would have been to turn off all of the circuit breakers at the main panel. I had never seen a problem when the power came back and I certainly wasn't prepared for what happened this time. While I've heard about the possibility of power surges causing damage this was the first time in my life that I witnessed it.

The Power Surge

Just as I was returning home neighbors were coming out of their homes with stories of circuits popping and sparks flying. The restoration of electricity was not going according to the power company's plan. Some were reporting damage to appliances. I entered my house to investigate the situation.

At first, with the exception of a few circuits knocked out at the main board, I didn't see anything unusual. As I went out to the breaker board in the garage to reset circuits and back to check the results, I started to smell electrical burning. I then noticed smoke. It originated in my computer room. While there was currently no fire, there certainly had been one. I looked under the desk and saw a damaged power bar and some charred carpet (see Figure 1). The power bar must have exploded from the electrical surge. Fortunately, any fire quickly went out on its own. There was a light ash covering everything.



Figure 1. The power bar after the electrical surge.

Although the power bar was melted, I later found that there was no damage to any of the computer equipment. This was probably due to the "real" surge protector that was plugged into the power bar. I had used the power bar as an extension cord for the "real" surge protector not realizing that the surge protector might have actually contributed to the dangerous situation. I probably would have been better off using a high capacity power cord to extend the reach. As it was, by redirecting the electrical surge to ground (through the power bar), the surge protector may have contributed to the meltdown of the power bar. The safest thing for me to do would have been to either unplug everything at the wall or pop the circuit breakers in the garage. (Later that night when the power went out again for a couple of hours. I

unplugged all the sensitive equipment.)

This electrical surge was certainly an unusual occurrence. I can't help but feel that there was some procedural error made by the power company. However, it shows that you may be at more risk than you know from unpredictable events—including human error. Another power strip (same brand) in the living room was shorted out—without exploding. It was only plugged in to access a receptacle behind a bookcase. There was nothing significant connected into it, yet it was disabled by the power surge. One neighbor lost their dish washer. Another had a toaster die. Yet, for another neighbor his computer power supply failed. It was plugged into a "surge protector" similar to the power bar I used. Many GFI (Ground Fault Interrupter) receptacles were ruined, including one of mine. (Home Depot ran out of GFI receptacles the next day.)

Power Surge Protection

It's important to note that most power strips offer very little protection. There are many that have a reasonable amount of protection, while other so-called surge protectors offer almost none. There is no surge protector that will guard against lightning strikes. If you're concerned about a brewing electrical storm, you need to unplug all wires and cables from the computer (and move it away from walls that may have wires, pipes, and/or cables inside them). Lightning has little regard for any type of surge protectors.

The purpose of a surge protector is to guard against electrical power spikes that could be harmful to electronic equipment. They work as a circuit breaker and/or redirect power spikes to ground (the third prong on the power plug). How well they work depends upon how robust they are designed. There is some correlation between the price and quality—although price alone is not a reliable indicator.

There are three primary specifications for surge protectors.

- Clamping voltage
- Energy absorption
- Response time

The problem I've found is that when you're looking at off-the-shelf devices, it is rare to find all of these specs on the packaging.

Clamping voltage is the voltage level at which the protection will start to kick in. The lower the better. Your notebook power supply will be getting from 120 volts AC (US) to 240 volts AC (Europe). The protection level should be 400 volts or less.

Energy absorption is how much electrical energy will be redirected to the ground before the device fails. The higher the better. This is probably the most important rating. While 200 to 400 Joules is said to be the minimum acceptable, I've seen low-cost protectors with a ratings of over 2,000 Joules. Sadly, this rating is often omitted from the packaging—especially if it's in the 200 to 400 Joules range.

Response time is how quickly the protection kicks in. The shorter the better, since your equipment could get fried in the meantime. Look for less than one nanosecond—if you can find it listed at all.

It's good to have a protection indicator light to tell you if your protection is still functioning. When the protection is burned out, the device will continue to deliver power although offering no safety.

The other thing to consider is that the surge protector will not protect you from the other devices you plug into it. So, if you have a creaky old room fan plugged into the protector with your computer, there will be no protection from any spikes the fan may cause.

Some people say that the laptop power supply will protect against power spikes. To some degree this is

true. Since transformers are used to convert the AC (alternating current) to the DC (direct current) that is used by the computer, there is some level of power variation that will be absorbed by the power supply. This may not be enough for large power spikes, plus the supply may be damaged. Even if the part you save is the power supply itself, it's worth the price of a surge protector.

As with the case of the neighbor who lost their computer power supply, that supply may have protected the rest of the electronics, but we won't know for sure until the new supply arrives.

Surge protectors are available almost everywhere. Just make sure that at least the energy absorption is listed on the packaging. The surge protector I use is a Prime Multimedia Surge Protectors similar to the one pictured in Figure 2. I bought it at Costco a few years ago noting the Joules rating at the time.





Figure 2. Look for the Joules rating on any surge protector.

The specifications for the Prime surge protector is as follows:

- Joules: 2160
- Voltage Protection Rating (VPR): 400V
- Response Time: < 1 Nanosecond
- Electrical Rating: 15A / 120V / 1800W
- Protected LED Indicator: Yes
- Grounded LED Indicator: Yes

Compare this to the melted Belkin F5C047v360 with a surge energy rating of only 312 Joules.

I can't say whether the Belkin power bar melted down just due to the initial surge, or if the surge protection in the Prime contributed to the problem by redirecting the energy back through the Belkin. I suspect that it's both. The Prime was designed to plug directly into the wall. Unfortunately, I didn't have room for a direct plug-in—thus I added the power bar. It seemed to make sense at the time. It now looks like a better solution would be to either replace the power bar with get a heavy duty power cord or buy a new "real" surge protector which will fit into the socket location. The mistake is thinking that adding a low-end power bar with low-end protection will add more protection. Not only will it not help, but it can make the situation more dangerous—if not to your equipment, then to your house.

Ultimately, the best protection against a power surge when returning from a blackout is to completely disconnect all power cords from the wall and/or pop the circuit breakers at the panel. This may seem like a hassle at the time (and most people won't do it), but it may save your toaster, computer, dishwasher, television, or your home.

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/gp/product/B00B8Z2ASG/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=B00B8Z2ASG&linkCode=as2&tag=comput0b9-20).

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.computoredge.com).

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

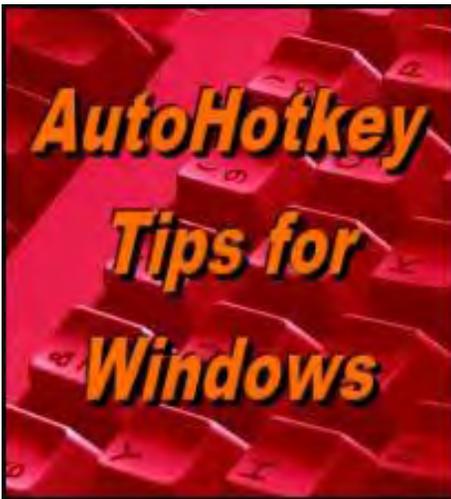
Our second compilation of stupid *ComputerEdge* cartoons from 2011 and 2012 is now available at Amazon! *That Does Not Compute, Too! ComputerEdge Cartoons, Volume II: "Do You Like Windows 8 or Would You Prefer an Apple?"* (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B009JY65QQ/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=B009JY65QQ&linkCode=as2&tag=comput0b9-20)

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!**

Protection Against Rogue Windows Hotkeys

“How to Block Dangerous
Unwanted Windows
Hotkeys” by Jack Dunning

Windows hotkeys that you didn't know existed can cause you to lose data—and you may not even know why! Plus, a question about how to remove returns from text.

Brian Kammer posed the following AutoHotkey question:

Hi, I am a novice, but have figured out how to use StringReplace to alter spaces after punctuation. I frequently have to copy and paste text from PDF files which results in excess returns. How can I clean out the returns?

Hi Brian,

Use the StringReplace command to remove double carriage return+line feed (``r`n`) by replacing them with single sets.

```
StringReplace, clipboard, clipboard, `r`n`r`n,`r`n , All
```

In some cases there may be even more returns in the document. It is often necessary to put the command in a loop until you get them all.

Similar examples can be found in this past Tips column which is also included as Chapter Six of *A Beginner's Guide to AutoHotkey* (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B009SI3F52/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=B009SI3F52&linkCode=as2&tag=comput0b9-20). This will show you how to put it into a loop to get them all.

Depending upon how the source document is formatted, it is possible that a return is composed of only one of the characters used here. If you find that the script is not working on some documents, then you may need to search for each character on its own. Also, I've seen some sources which will have a space between the two returns. This is usually easy to determine, but aggravating.

Blocking Unwanted Windows Hotkeys Which Can Cause Data Loss

There are certain hotkeys built into programs and Windows that you want to block—if only at specific times. For example, while typing into a Blog page or other type of Web data input field, if you accidentally hit CTRL+W when you're looking for SHIFT+W, the Web windows or browser tab will instantly close—in most cases dumping any work you've added to the page. (ALT+F4 also closes windows in many applications without warning. This is true for both CTRL+W and ALT+F4 in Google Chrome, Firefox, and Internet Explorer. I haven't checked the others.) This is more than merely annoying—it's a dangerous risk of data loss. While it's easy enough to disable these hotkey combinations in AutoHotkey, there are some programs where it's useful to still have them available. (In some applications, CTRL+W is actually the write command which saves data.)

The #IfWinActive (www.autohotkey.com/docs/commands/_IfWinActive.htm) command allows selective blocking of hotkeys when only the offending application is open. To use #IfWinActive you need to know the title or class of the application. The easiest way to find this information is with AutoIt Window Spy which is included with the AutoHotkey installation. (You can open Window Spy by right-clicking on the AutoHotkey icon in the System Tray for any running AHK script and selecting Window Spy.) Once running, Window Spy will display information about the active window (see Figure 1).

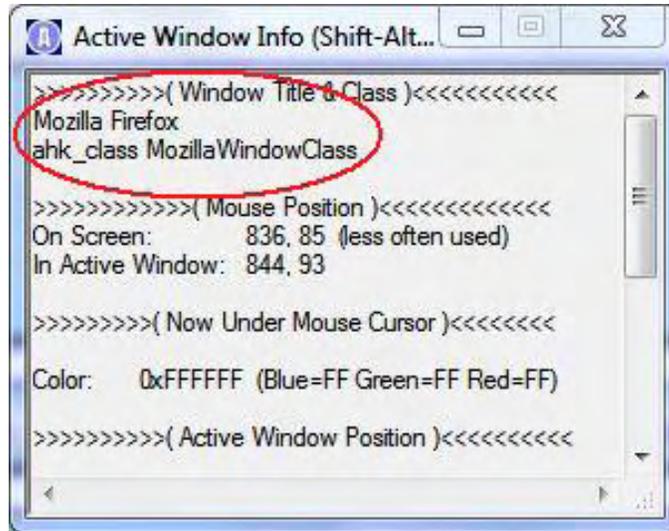


Figure 1. Window Spy displays the title and class of the active window—in this case Mozilla Firefox.

While either the title or class can be used with the #IfWinActive, I use the class because it is less susceptible to ambiguity.

It's important to note that #IfWinActive is a status type of command which executes immediately when the AutoHotkey script is loaded. It affects every hotkey that follows it until another #IfWinActive is encountered, but cannot be used to change settings and conditions again after the script is running. If you need an action type conditional which can react while the script is running, then IfWinActive (www.autohotkey.com/docs/commands/IfWinActive.htm) (without the #) is required.

Blocking CTRL+W and ALT+F4 in Google Chrome and Firefox Only

The following AutoHotkey script is designed to block the use of CTRL+W and ALT+F4 whenever Chrome or Firefox is the active window:

```
#IfWinActive ahk_class Chrome_WidgetWin_1
^W::MsgBox Oops! You pressed CTRL+W
!F4::MsgBox Oops! You pressed ALT+F4
#IfWinActive ahk_class MozillaWindowClass
^W::MsgBox Oops! You pressed CTRL+W
!F4::MsgBox Oops! You pressed ALT+F4
#IfWinActive
```

There are three uses of #IfWinActive in this script. The first line activates (in this case deactivates) hotkey combinations for Google Chrome. There is no limit on the number of hotkey combinations which may follow the #IfWinActive command. They will all be active (in this case blocked) whenever a Google Chrome window is active.

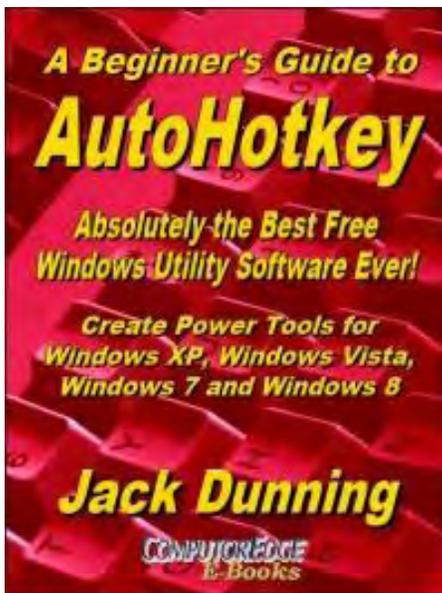
In the following two lines which start with the offending hotkey combinations (^W and !F4), I could have left the command space after the double colon (::) blank, but I found that it caused some unusual behavior in relation to other features of my main script. Instead I added a MsgBox which told me which keys I hit in error.

Instant Update: *I don't mean to freak out but I just noticed—quite by accident—that CTRL+F4 can be just as damaging. ("CTRL+F4: Closes the current Multiple Document Interface (MDI) window.") In effect, CTRL+F4 is the same as ALT+F4 except it will instantly close all of the tabs in your Web browser—depending upon which browser you're using. It's inconsistent, but dangerous. I've since added lines of code to block CTRL+F4 as well.*

The second usage of #IfWinActive starts the Mozilla Firefox list of hotkey combinations. The last #IfWinActive marks the end of the conditional hotkeys. It would be easy enough to add a set for Internet Explorer, but I didn't bother because I almost never use it.

Depending upon how much you're trying to do with your AutoHotkey script, the location of this code may be important. For some reason, if I placed the snippet at the beginning of the script, it caused an error in the QuickLinks routine—which I had added at an earlier time with the #Include command. These specific hotkey blocks work fine if placed at the end of the script.

* * *



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.

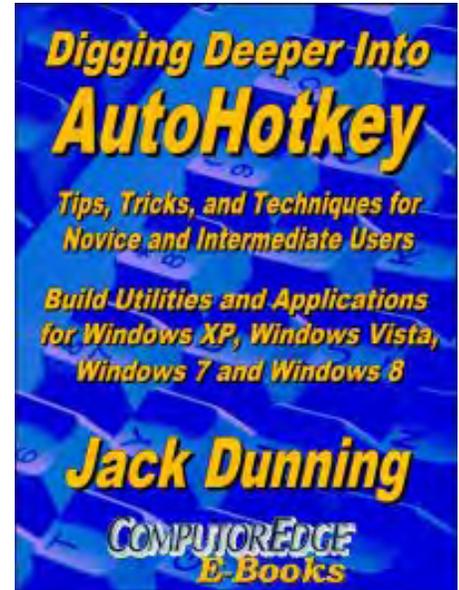
Based upon the series of articles in *ComputerEdge*, Jack takes you through his learning experience as he explores writing simple AutoHotkey scripts for adding repetitive text in any program or on the Web, running programs with special hotkeys or gadgets, manipulating the size and screen location of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

For an EPUB (iPad, NOOK, etc.) version of *A Beginner's Guide to AutoHotkey* click here! (computoredgebooks.com/A-Beginners-Guide-to-AutoHotkey-EPUB-format-iPad-Nook-etc-

AUTOHOTKEY-1.htm)

* * *

My new AutoHotkey book which is comprised of updated, reorganized and indexed columns from the last six months is now available at Amazon for Kindle hardware (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B00CTACUMK/ref=as_li_ss_tl?



ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=B00CTACUMK&linkCode=as2&tag=comput0b9-20) (or free software) users. Since the columns were not all written in a linear fashion, the book has been reorganized and broken up into parts by topic. The book is not for the complete beginner since it builds on the information in *A Beginner's Guide to AutoHotkey* (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B009SI3F52/ref=as_li_ss_tl?

ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=B009SI3F52&linkCode=as2&tag=comput0b9-20). However, if a person is reasonably computer literate, they could go directly to this book for ideas and techniques without the first book.

If you've been following along with my AutoHotkey columns, then there is little new information in the book (although I have added more clarification for techniques I felt were either confusing or wrong). The only reason I can see to buy it would be as a handy reference. The AutoHotkey commands used are included in a special index to the chapters in which they appear. Even I can't remember everything I wrote.

For an EPUB (iPad, NOOK, etc.) version of Digging Deeper into AutoHotkey click here! (computoregedgebooks.com/Digging-Deeper-into-AutoHotkey-EPUB-format-iPad-Nook-etc-AUTOHOTKEY-2.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.computoregde.com. He can be reached at ceeditor@computoregde.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/gp/product/B00B8Z2ASG/ref=as_li_ss_tl?

ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=B00B8Z2ASG&linkCode=as2&tag=comput0b9-20).

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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Wally Wang's Apple Farm

“The State of Computers in China” by Wally Wang

The State of Computers in China; 3D Printers in Space; The University of Illinois Turns the iPhone into a Biosensor; Luxury iPads.

Wally Wang's Apple Farm

The State of Computers in China

Right now I'm doing what Bill Gates said was impossible, which is to create a document on an iPad. I'm sitting on a bus in Foshan, China as I write on the iPad using the virtual keyboard and a word processor called Textilus. There are several reasons I prefer the virtual keyboard over any physical keyboard. First, a physical keyboard adds weight and bulk, which is just one more item to lug around. Second, a physical keyboard is actually less flexible when it comes to writing characters in a foreign language. A physical keyboard is usually geared for a specific language, which makes typing foreign characters clumsy at best. A virtual keyboard lets you switch to foreign keyboards at the touch of a button. For Chinese in particular, the virtual keyboard lets you draw Chinese characters with your finger, which is impossible to do with a physical keyboard. While Bill Gates insists that physical keyboards are absolutely necessary for typing, he's completely overlooking the versatility that virtual keyboards offer, especially in today's global economy that requires communication in multiple languages.



Figure 1. The iPad's virtual keyboard makes it easy to type in multiple languages.

For a majority of users who only need to type in one language, a physical keyboard may be fine. However from a manufacturer's point of view, supporting multiple languages by manufacturing and storing multiple types of physical keyboards is a nightmare. The iPad's virtual keyboard can quickly shift from Russian and Greek to German and Vietnamese. Manufacturing and storing physical keyboards for so many languages can be impractical, and how many users want to lug around two or more different physical keyboards when they need to type in multiple languages?

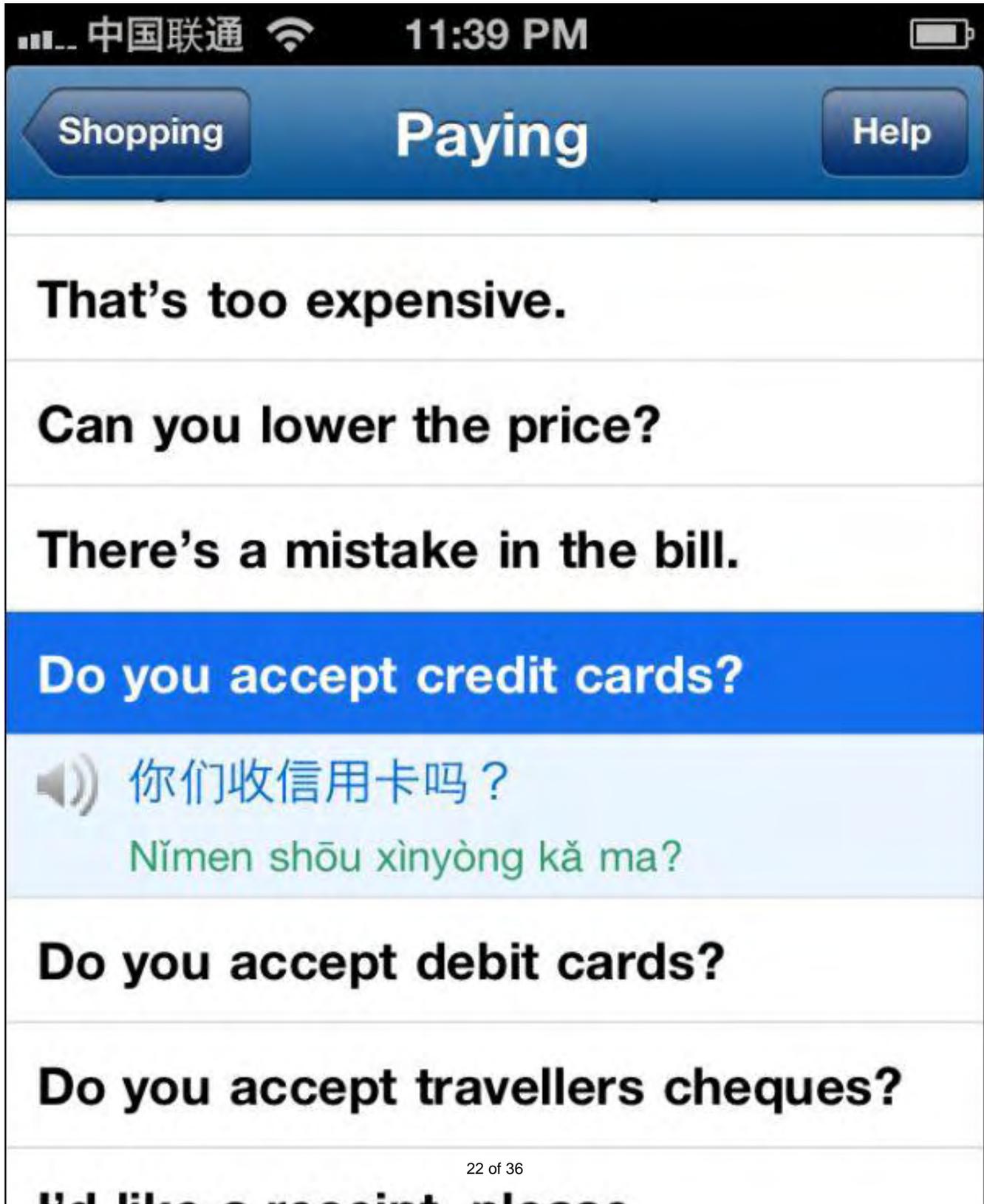
I'm using the Textilus word processor on the iPad because it allows rapid cursor movement through both cursor keys embedded on the virtual keyboard (which other iPad word processors lack such as Apple's own Pages word processor) and through a virtual trackpad that lets you move the cursor in any direction with just one finger. While other iPad word processors let you type easily, they make editing text far clumsier because you have to press your finger on text to move the cursor around.

Although some people claim that mobile computing devices like the iPad are completely useless because they prefer the larger monitors of a desktop computer, such large monitors are completely useless if you can't easily take it with you. Anyone want to lug around a PC and a monitor along with their own electricity supply so they can use a computer in places like a bus, an airplane, or a ferry because they believe a large monitor and a physical keyboard and mouse are absolutely necessary for using a computer?

Although China (like most parts of the world) uses different electrical outlets and standards, most modern devices can adapt to different voltages from around the world. Every Apple product can adapt to different electricity so all you need is a special travel adapter (not an electricity converter) so your plug can work with the local electrical outlets. Such an adapter costs only \$20 to \$30 depending on where you buy it, so

you can avoid Apple's own travel adapter kit that costs \$39.95.

The small size and portability of the iPad also makes it handy for running translation apps and guidebooks that let you choose a common English phrase so the app can display the Chinese characters on the screen while also playing audio of the Chinese phrase to make it easy to communicate with others. A traditional paper language guidebook can't play audio and its bulk makes it clumsy to carry with you at all times, especially if you also want to carry a physical camera, a book, a music player, and a map, which the iPad can easily replace. Rather than carry multiple items, the iPad lets you carry a single item instead. Anyone still want to argue that an iPad is useless because a desktop PC with a large monitor is all that anyone really needs?



I'd like a receipt, please.

Terms of Use

Figure 2. An electronic phrase book on a mobile device makes communicating in other languages easier.

Clinging to ancient technology can actually slow down progress in adapting newer technology. While America led the world with excellent telephone service that required physical cable networks, countries like China had primitive telephone networks that rarely extended beyond large cities. Creating the physical infrastructure to support wired telephone lines is expensive and time consuming, so when mobile phones and cellular networks arrived, America slowly adopted this newer technology while China eagerly embraced it. The end result is that even in rural areas, China has excellent cellular coverage everywhere since almost everyone now owns a mobile phone. In comparison, there are still many dead spots in American cities where cellular coverage is weak or even non-existent. Go to rural areas in many parts of America and you'll likely never receive any type of a cellular signal at all. Go anywhere in China, even in the middle of a field on a farm and you can receive a strong and reliable cellular signal from one of China's cellular carriers such as China Unicom or China Mobile.

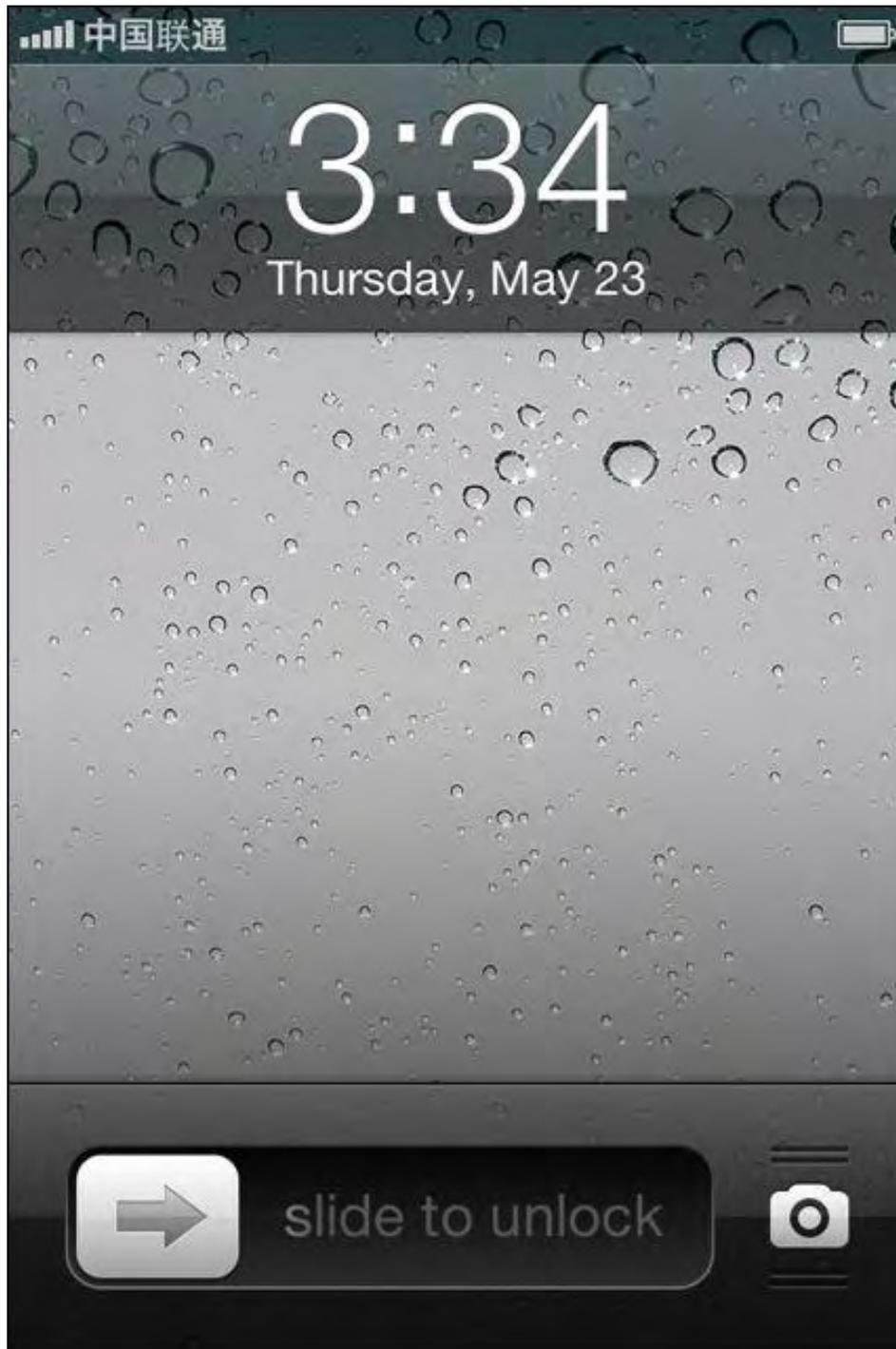


Figure 3. Everywhere in China you can receive a strong and reliable cellular signal.

For a country where telephone service had previously been spotty and inconsistent, cellular networks have revolutionized the country where even the poorest people own a mobile phone for making phone calls and accessing the Internet. Although a desktop PC with a large monitor may be easier to see, few people own a PC because they take up space, require electricity, and can't access the Internet because most of China still lacks the wired infrastructure to support cable Internet access. For most people in China, their mobile phone represents the easiest way to access the Internet while requiring less space and electricity to run as well.



Figure 4. Even in small villages, you can sign up for cellular service in China.

The average Chinese person seems to own an Android phone while the wealthier people, such as the police, seem to favor the iPhone. Most likely this is due to the cost of a mobile phone since Chinese cellular carriers don't subsidize the cost of a phone so an iPhone is prohibitively expensive for the average person. In America, such cost differences between the iPhone and Android phones is non-existent since you can get an older iPhone for almost nothing as long as you sign up for a two year contract.

In America, most hotels offer free Wi-Fi access, but in China, only the better hotels offer Internet access through a wired connection. To overcome this problem, you can either get free Wi-Fi connections at American restaurants like KFC or McDonald's, or just bring an inexpensive Wi-Fi router to plug into the wired Internet access available at the hotel and create your own personal Wi-Fi hotspot for your iPad or other mobile device.

Curiously, Internet access is fairly free. Anyone can access sites such as CNN, the BBC News, and Yahoo! However, China does block access to YouTube, although not a video sharing rival site like Vimeo. China also blocks any attempt to search for information on the prohibited group known as Falun Gong. Yet strangely, searching for encryption software and encryption information is allowed even though such encryption software can be used to hide information from the Chinese government.



Figure 5. Access to encryption software is freely available in China.

Although most encryption information is written in English, many Chinese study English at the university level for two or three years, and many children start learning English as early as kindergarten and the first grade. In comparison, most American children never learn a foreign language at all, which tells you the short sightedness of the American education system. With knowledge of English, many Chinese can access much of the information stored on the Internet, yet few Americans can access equally valuable information written in other languages, which puts most Americans at a huge disadvantage when dealing with international affairs.

America still leads in computer innovation, but that lead certainly won't last when far too many Americans choose to avoid studying science, math, or computer programming. When a large majority of Americans can't understand basic science, you can bet that America's future technological lead can't last forever. When many Americans can't even think logically in their own language, you can see that the future will likely belong only to the truly educated, and that won't be anyone who can't create a rational argument using facts. If you don't like this idea, then you can support Bill Gates and claim that this entire column can't possibly exist because creating documents on the iPad is completely impossible.

3D Printers in Space

One of the latest technological advances that will change the world, despite many people's insistence that change can't possibly happen in their lifetime, is 3D printing. The idea is that instead of taking a chunk of material and cutting away the excess, you create what you want by physically creating objects one layer at a time. Such an approach takes less material while avoiding any waste. Most importantly, it lets you create different types of objects.

For the space station, NASA wants a 3D printer for creating tools and spare parts (news.yahoo.com/3d-

[printer-launching-spacestation-2014-215719508.htm](#)) that may be necessary to repair broken items. Without 3D printers, the space station would have to stockpile every possible tool and spare part that might be necessary, which would be impractical. With a 3D printer, astronauts could simply print or manufacture the spare parts they need along with the tools they need.

Even more exotic is that NASA wants to use 3D printers to create food for astronauts traveling on long missions, such as the estimated 500 day time interval needed to travel from Earth to Mars. By creating tools, spare parts, and even food, 3D printers promise to revolutionize the future. When 3D printers start arriving, you can expect people to insist that 3D printers are absolutely useless, but by ignoring such critics who dislike anything new, you can focus on your own future while preparing yourself for the world of 3D printing.

The University of Illinois Turns the iPhone into a Biosensor

Researchers at the University of Illinois recently developed an iPhone app ([news.illinois.edu/news/13/0523iphone_biosensor_BrianCunningham.html](#)) and physical components that can use the iPhone's camera to detect toxins, bacteria, and viruses for medical diagnostics and food safety. By using the iPhone's GPS data, people in the field can even track the spread of pathogens.

The entire test takes a few minutes where the app walks the user through the various steps. Researchers claim that "Although the cradle holds only about \$200 of optical components, it performs as accurately as a large \$50,000 spectrophotometer in the laboratory. So now, the device is not only portable, but also affordable for fieldwork in developing nations."

By putting the power of computing in a mobile device, you can see the advantage of smartphones and the iPhone in particular. Yet despite such evidence as this, some people still (illogically) insist that mobile computing has no future. Perhaps these people will change their minds when an iPhone helps diagnose their own medical conditions accurately and inexpensively sometime in the near future.

Luxury iPads

If you happen to be staying in Dubai, you might want to stay at the Burj Al Arab luxury hotel where rooms start at \$1,525 a night. As part of the luxury service, the hotel will let you use a 24-karat gold plated iPad ([www.latimes.com/travel/deals/la-trb-24karat-ipad-for-guests-at-the-burj-al-arab-hotel-20130522,0,3420970.story](#)). If you happen to like the gold plated iPad, you can buy your own for just \$10,200.



Figure 6. Dubai guests get free use of a gold iPad.

While most people aren't going to buy, let alone use a gold plated iPad, it does show that even the most outrageously priced items can find a buyer somewhere. If given a choice, would you rather torture yourself with a mediocre tablet or use a gold plated iPad? The next time you think Apple charges too much for their products, compare the price of a normal iPad to the \$10,200 gold plated one and you'll see that a regular iPad isn't that expensive after all.

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

Wally is responsible for the following books:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

“Logos: Disaster by Design?” by Marilyn K. Martin

The good, bad, and ugly of logos.

Graphic Design is a college subject these days. Every new product or service, whether a start-up or just a Kickstarter project at your kitchen table, needs a snazzy logo. And today, logos are serious business. No longer can you just hand a doodle on a cocktail napkin to your friend, the Graphic Artist, to whip out a new logo. Not even! Today, logos are serious business, since they have to succinctly represent your company, as well as being both scalable and—somehow—able to solve core business problems.

They are part of brand management, or the analysis and strategy to position a product in the marketplace with the best look, price and packaging. A logo must work especially well for a company's target public sub-population, to maximize the consumers' positive experience and relationship with that product/brand. And if fans don't like the redesign of an old logo, they will let you know about it—all over the Internet.

Let's Start with the Company Name—or Not

Companies can ask a lot of graphic designers and brand managers, especially smaller companies with family names. According to Oddee (www.oddee.com/item_87845.aspx) the following are real companies. Where do you start to design a suitable logo, with names like these?

- Boring Business Systems
- WTF Group in Toronto
- Coming Computer
- Fuk Mi Sushi & Seafood Buffet
- Cocks Shop
- Mammoth Erection Scaffolding
- Virus Woman Computer Protection Services
- Booze Plumbing and Heating

When Graphic Designers Want to Cry

(Lyrics to "Make The Logo Bigger!")

I don't want to tell you your job
 But smaller is never better in business
 You know what you've got to do
 That little logo's gotta grow...

(Chorus)

Make the logo as big as you can!
 That logo is just too small!
 So expand and stretch and blow it up!
 Make it bigger and bigger and *big!*

Logos for Terrorists

If you've ever wondered what kind of logos (and brand identities) terrorist groups use, Ironicans (www.ironicans.com/2007/07/terrorist_organization_logos.html) did the research for us, of past and current terrorist logos (per Wikipedia). Guys in ski masks holding automatic weapons in front of a banner is so old hat. So here are various terrorist logos grouped by "dominant design elements."

1) Stars or Stars and Circles: With dominant colors of red, yellow and white, the terrorist group's name is missing or abbreviated. Probably saves on banner production costs, and the sub-text of a "star" representing an explosion is clear enough. I'm sure everyone in Europe/Asia must know by now that a Red Banner/Red Star means run the other direction. Fast.

2) Automatic Gun, with or without a bullet clip the size of a man's shoe: These gun-focused designs are framed in circles or triangles, which allow some writing for mottos, I guess. Hezbollah's green-fist-with-a-gun over the globe is pretty creepy. But my favorite is the logo for "Popular Resistance Committees." Makes it sound almost...suburban, like a coalition of the Teamsters, PTA, Survivalists and NRA.

3) Crossed Automatic Guns: Sometimes you just see the gun barrels crossed under fists and the unfortunate outline of Israel. Words like "battalions" and "brigades" are associated with these past/current logos, the crossed-guns indicating that this is a Movement With Lotsa Others, not just one angry guy with PaintBox.

4) Crossed Blade Weapons, and Skulls-with-Crossed-Bones: These seem to be popular in some terrorist logos. And educational. I never knew there was a terrorist group called "Jihad in Sweden." Maybe the swords convey the idea of "ancient warriors" or "ancient ideals." And the skull-and-crossbones motif seems to both threaten and bluff, that killing and dying for "the cause" is somehow justified in minds cluttered with propaganda and bad drugs.

5) In the everything-else Other category: Animals with multiple heads are strangely represented. (Reference: hallucinogenics.) As well as trees, a crown with a halo, a bomb next to a cross, and the Weather Underground's black-on-red rainbow with a thunderbolt through it. Hard to think these terrorist designers were sober and not high when they designed these. But then terrorism is thought by some to be an immaturity problem, so maybe they never learned to play nice in the sandbox, and trees and rainbows were their only friends.

When Established Companies Do a Logo Redesign

The Good:

In 2005, the USA Network retired their letters-and-flag logo, and replaced it with a simple blue/white redesign of "USA" where the middle "S" is just an outline bookended by the different colored "U" and lower case "a". They also added a clever new tagline: "Characters Welcome." Most everyone liked it.

The Bad:

The logo for cable's Comedy Central was redesigned in 2011, to get away from the stodgy globe-with-

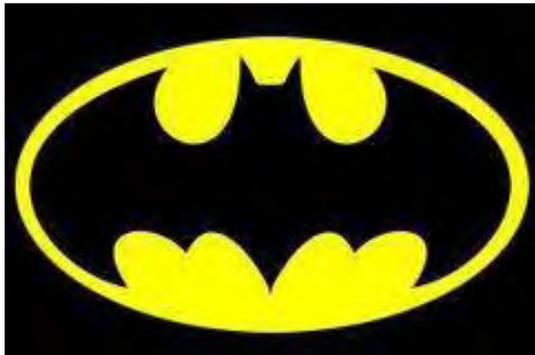
buildings logo. According to "thelab" designers, Alicia Johnson and Hal Wolverton, the original assignment from Comedy Central was to solve some core business challenges. Namely that the channel had great shows being reshown that weren't being attributed to the network, and they needed to attract more young viewers. The designers started with the network's digital presence, which was a comedy-brand that needed to be scaled to transfer to other mediums and electronic devices.

It didn't take them long to work a small 'c' inside a larger, backwards 'C', that could be a shadow logo on all of Comedy Central's products, especially to "brand" their shows uploaded to YouTube. But the minimalist, slick new logo upset fans. They called it boring, comparing it to a computer Power On button or copyright symbol...amid other "C" word references.

The Ugly:

Armed with real examples, *Cracked Magazine's* Slacker Sages offered a March 2013 tutorial (www.cracked.com/funny-2665-company-logos/) in what *not* to include in your company logo:

- 1) Avoid symbols that look, at first glance, like the Nazi's swastika or SS emblems, or interlocking KKKs.
- 2) Get several male opinions before going with a logo that first strikes guys as a naked woman.
- 3) Use spacers—anything!—to avoid logos/titles that even hint at child porn—like KIDSEXCHANGE.
- 4) *Cracked's* tutorial also recommends that all graphic designers take a good anatomy class before designing company logos, since you don't want red-faced company officials and laughing customers pointing out your "anatomically correct" logo/name errors after the fact.



5) Also brush up on your psychology-of-multistability, or how a clever design can say different things to different people. (Remember the oval logo for the first Batman movie? Some people saw a bat with wings spread. Other people wondered what gold teeth had to do with a superhero movie.)

6) Use Very Clear letters and spacing. You don't want MEGAFLOCKS misread as MEGAF**CKS to the wrong people. Namely, prospective customers.

7) Don't get too cute with symbolic-designs. Like the ad for a "Hospital For Special Surgery" whose logo shows half a stick-figure with one leg and three arms. Not the kind of "Special Surgery" most people want.

Joke Logos, or Repurposing Real Logos

Some clever people with too much time on their hands have taken popular and iconic company logos and rewritten the text, such as found on Jubed (www.jubed.com/jokes/view/New-company-logos). Best Buy becomes Please Buy, Nokia - Disconnecting People, Fiasco Systems, Crisisler and DELL with all the letters falling down.

Another site boasts that it puts the "Truth" in professional football team logos (www.grantland.com/story/_/id/8345525/honest-logos-patriots-cowboys-giants-rest-nfl), at least as of September 2012. How about the Oakland Raiders helmet with the logo "False Starts," or the Kansas City Chiefs with a "Thirdand8" on their helmet? The rest are even more rude—and hilarious.

Another site with even ruder "repurposed logos" about professional football teams can be found at PackerPalace (www.packerpalace.com/logos.html). Minnetonka ViceKings, Detroit Kitty Litter, Washington DeadSkins, and Deep Spaced Niners are just a sample

After British Petroleum's oil rig sprang a leak in the Gulf of Mexico in 2010, "rebranding" BP's sunny green, yellow and white logo became almost a global pastime, with Greenpeace even offering a UK Competition. TwistedSifter (twistedSifter.com/2010/05/funny-creative-bp-logos-competition/) posted the funniest and most creative of the BP logo redesigns.

When Logos Go Viral

Such as the many parodies of the famous Ichthys Symbol, or the outline of a fish. It was originally called the "Jesus Fish," or referred to Christianity as the "Fishers for men's souls." According to Wikipedia, early parodies showed the fish with feet and DARWIN or I EVOLVED written inside the fish.

Non-religious parodies of the Ichthys Symbol have TREK written inside (for Star Trek), or claws and wings with CTHULHU written inside (for Lovecraft's stories). Other parodies are a "Viking Fish" with a shield and horned helmet, or a "Yoda Fish" (Star Wars) with top tail sections on both ends of the body. The simple logo design has today been combined with tons of non-religious icons from popular culture.

(Special thanks to motionographer.com (motionographer.com), logos.wikia.com (logos.wikia.com), wikipedia.org (wikipedia.org), logosdatabase.com (logosdatabase.com), justcreative.com (justcreative.com), creativetechs.com (creativetechs.com), and logoforlife.com (logoforlife.com).

Marilyn is a freelance writer and humorist, with a special interest (besides computers and technology) in Science Fiction. Besides short stories published in various magazines, she also has some new e-books available on Amazon Kindle: *Hunting Monster Aliens* (www.amazon.com/s/?_encoding=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&field-keywords=Hunting%20Monster%20Aliens%20martin&linkCode=ur2&rh=n%3A133140011%2Ck%3AHunting%20Monster%20Aliens%20martin&tag=comput0b9-20&url=search-alias%3Ddigital-text) is an on-going series of novellas, about a wise-cracking team of ghost investigators who occasionally turn into alien-monster hunters. *Culture Crash! A California Yankee Transplanted to Texas* (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B00CKXF8GQ/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=B00CKXF8GQ&linkCode=as2&tag=comput0b9-20) is a collection of humor essays chronicling her adventures in her new home-state.

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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 The logo for "Editor's Letters" features the words "EDITOR'S" and "LETTERS" in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. The text is set against a dark blue background with a subtle gradient and a slight drop shadow, giving it a three-dimensional appearance.

Editor's Letters: Tips and Thoughts from Readers

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

"Apple Losing Employees," "50 Pound Jobsian Monkeys,"
"Response to the Ed Price/Wally Wang Discussion"

Apple Losing Employees

[Regarding Marilyn K. Martin's May 10 article, "Robotic Surgery, No TV at Home and More!":]

My son just left Apple in Cupertino in April to work as a senior software programmer with MobileIron, where he can pursue his passion of just programming. He is four weeks from getting his MS degree in Computer Sciences-Mathematics and is making more money with MobileIron. Some of his siblings and relatives couldn't understand why he would leave Apple, but I suspect that they were for similar reasons mentioned in Yahoo! Finance.

Thank you for a great article overall.

-Susan McClure, San Diego, CA

Thanks for your comment, Susan. I'm glad your son has moved on to a better job. No one's sure what is really going on at Apple, but the employee exodus continues. And the stock market indicates less and less trust in Apple's new leadership. I guess we'll all be surprised if/when Apple comes up with the next must-have gadget in 2013.

-Marilyn, Texas

50 Pound Jobsian Monkeys

[Regarding the May 10 Editors Letters: Tips and Thoughts from Readers column:]

This is just another conversation between pots and kettles.

Response to the Ed Price/Wally Wang Discussion

[Regarding the May 10 Editors Letters: Tips and Thoughts from Readers column:]

In response to the dialogue between Wally Wang and Ed Price in the 5/10/13 Editor's Letters column, I have to say the following to Wally:

Yes, you are snarky. I didn't mind it in the beginning (I've been reading *ComputerEdge* for a long time) and actually learned a lot about Windows from reading your rants against it. But it is getting harder to work around your snarkiness. I think Ed Price hit the nail on the head and I'm glad he stepped forward. Your response to him was snarky, too. Or (since I am old), what we used to call "childish." It is good to be factual in your writing; I respect you for that. But you must always remember that your reader can simply turn the page to turn you off. That defeats the whole purpose of providing well-written, factual information.

-Carol Elkins, Pueblo, CO

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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