

ComputerEdge™ Online — 07/05/13

This issue: Retail Tech, New Medical Apps, and More!



Consumer Product Trends for 2013; Retail Tech: Online and Physical Stores Fighting for Shoppers; Space Tech: To the ISS and Beyond; New Medical Apps; Medical Tech: Ingestible Sensors to Telemedicine; Green Energy Set Backs; More Battery Problems: Boeing to Apple Laptops; New Routers and an Arctic Circle Server Farm; Better Road Safety; Gaming Console Updates; Second Screen Gaming on Tablets; Video Game Updates: From E3 to China.

Table of Contents:

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

Digital Dave answers your tech questions.
Learning How to Use an Android Tablet; New Virus?; Windows 8 DVD vs. USB 2.0 or 3.0 Install.

[Retail Tech, New Medical Apps, and More Little Known High Tech Stories](#) by Marilyn K. Martin

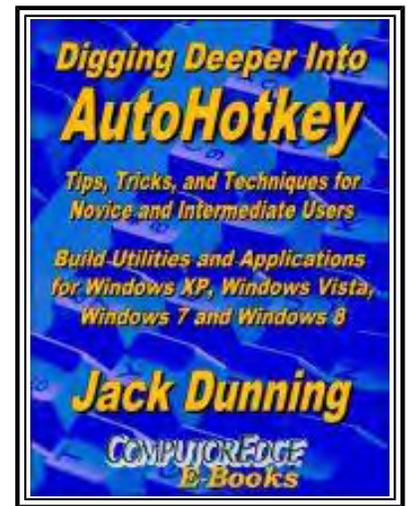
Retail Trends and Tech, Medical Apps, Space Tech, Gaming Updates and Battery Problems
Consumer Product Trends for 2013; Retail Tech: Online and Physical Stores Fighting for Shoppers; Space Tech: To the ISS and Beyond; New Medical Apps; Medical Tech: Ingestible Sensors to Telemedicine; Green Energy Set Backs; More Battery Problems: Boeing to Apple Laptops; New Routers and an Arctic Circle Server Farm; Better Road Safety; Gaming Console Updates; Second Screen Gaming on Tablets; Video Game Updates: From E3 to China.

[Guide to Free ComputerEdge AutoHotkey Apps](#) by Jack Dunning

A List of the Apps on the ComputerEdge Free Script Download Site and What They Do!
It's about time! With over twenty some AutoHotkey scripts posted on the ComputerEdge AutoHotkey Dropbox free download site, it time to document what they all do.

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

3D Printing
3D Printing; News of the Obvious; The Office Suite Wars; Say Good-Bye to AltaVista; Android



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PCs; Reset Safari.

(Click Banner)

[Worldwide News & Product Reviews](#) by Charles Carr

The latest in tech news and hot product reviews.
Data Centers Could Experience 30% More Failures as Temperatures Increase; Legalization of Rookits, Spyware, Ransomware and Trojans Suggested to Combat Piracy; What Really Happens on a Teen Girl's iPhone; MEElectronics Bluetooth Wireless Headphones with Headset Functionality; Newer Technology NuGreen LED Desk Lamp.

[Without Digital Music, Life Would Be an Error](#) by Matthew W. Beale
or, On the Evolution of Online Music Distribution

DEPARTMENTS:

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

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

"Patent Wars," "Word 2001 Replacement," "Just a Thought!" "Music Player," "QuikPlay"



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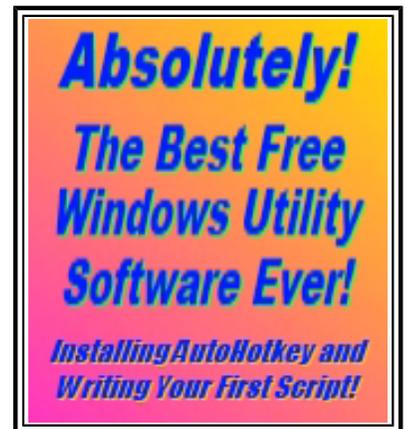
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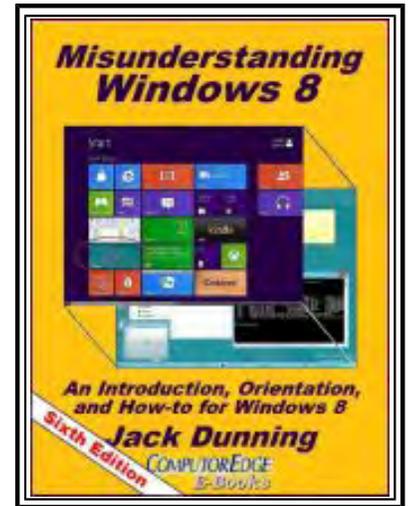
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[Return to Table of Contents](#)



Digital Dave

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

Learning How to Use an Android Tablet; New Virus?; Windows 8 DVD vs. USB 2.0 or 3.0 Install.

Dear Digital Dave,

You are always so good to help me and you are my "go to guy" for good advice and info.

I have a new Nexus 10 tablet and want to know how to use it to the fullest. E-mail, browsing, e-books are easy, but I want to know the full potential of use and how to access the many uses.

I bought the Nexus 10 Handbook, but it doesn't tell me much of anything I want to know/learn. Where do I go to learn about my new tablet?

*Phyllis
Tucson, AZ*

Dear Phyllis,

You say that "e-mail, browsing, e-book are easy." If you added streaming video such as Netflix and playing games, then you would be using your tablet the way most people do. The latest surveys show that only 20% of the tablet owners use them for business. And why should they? Tablet computers are made for sitting back on the sofa and looking up actors ("There's what's his name!") while watching television. Tablets are for doing those things that you like to do, not what you're forced to do. For the mandatory activities we have full blown computers which make us sit up straight while we do serious thinking. (Before anyone overreacts, I'm just kidding—mostly.)

I've found that the best way to discover what a tablet can do is go to an app store (play.google.com/store). There you will find thousand of apps (many of them free) which demonstrate what you can get out of your device. Read the reviews and try some of them out. That's one of the great things about tablets, there's lots of free stuff. Most apps operate in a similar manner making it easy to check them out for different purposes. Then you can decide what's right for you. If it looks like it's worth it (good reviews), you might even pay for an app.

Digital Dave

Dear Digital Dave,

I may have picked up a virus from Facebook or elsewhere on the Internet and I can not find it to get rid of it. Without warning, I am knocked out of my wireless router and Roadrunner. I either go into Windows Firewall and reestablish the connection or I restart my laptop.

I have friends that are using different wireless routers, IP connections, etc. and the only common variable is we all use Facebook. How do I find and delete whatever is causing this situation?

Thank you,

*Kent Hill
San Diego, California*

Dear Kent,

While your problem may very well be a virus, I would not immediately rule out other possibilities. Whenever our computers start acting up we immediately suspect that malware is causing the problem. The fact that you can reestablish the connection or restart your computer to get things going again may indicate that there are other issues. In particular, there could be an intermittent hardware problem.

When you lose your Wi-Fi connection all of your Internet service will go with it. It is not unusual for either routers or the Wi-Fi board in your computer to have problems. I would make sure that the drivers for the computer's Wi-Fi and the firmware for the router is up-to-date. Then whenever there is a problem I would check for other devices (computers, streaming devices, Internet phone) losing connection. If not, then it is probably not your router.

Since Wi-Fi is generally built into a laptop computer, you will need an alternative method to bypass any possible problem. You can pick up an inexpensive USB Wi-Fi adapter (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B00762YNMG/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=B00762YNMG&linkCode=as2&tag=comput0b9-20) to test the system. (You may want to disable the original Wi-Fi in the Device Manager.) With the new USB Wi-Fi you should be able to establish an alternative connection to the router. If it works without crashing, then you know the original hardware was the problem.

I'm not saying that the problem isn't a virus, but if running antivirus software (try various programs) doesn't find anything, then it could be because there is nothing to find. You can also try a System Restore to a point in time prior to when the problem started. I have seen cases where a drive needed to be reformatted with the operating system reinstalled to get rid of a particularly insidious bug, but those are pretty drastic steps to take. If you do that, be sure you backup everything and have a system installation disc in hand.

Digital Dave

Dear Digital Dave,

I am in the process of purchasing a new laptop. I will be purchasing a full version of windows 8.1 after it comes out. I will be formatting the laptop to get rid of all the junk software that I will never use and install what I want. I would like to know which is faster, installing Windows 8.1 from USB 2.0 or 3.0 or DVD? This will be the full version of Windows 8.1 Ultimate when it becomes available. I am sure I am not the only one who would like to know the answer to this question, because if in fact USB 2.0 or 3.0 is faster that is how I want to install all my software from here on out.

*Mr. Carroll Ware
San Diego, CA*

Dear Carroll,

You're right that there will be many people who will want to upgrade to Windows 8.1. Microsoft is bringing back the Start Button (it still will open the Modern Start Screen) and has added the capability to boot directly to the Desktop (both considered important by many Windows users). However, I'm not sure that reformatting the laptop drive first is the approach that I would take. Many laptop manufacturers add software features specific to the hardware in the machines they build. A reformat would wipe out those as well as the annoying bundled packages. I prefer to remove the bits I don't want, leaving the remainder in tack—although you can usually get the laptop specific features from the manufacturer's Web site.

I'm sure that there will be an upgrade path from Windows 8 to Windows 8.1 which will not be too complicated, but to use it you will probably need the old version installed. Reformatting may just complicate the process.

As for which medium you should use, DVD or USB, I would lean toward a DVD copy of the operating system. Speed is not the issue for me, because operating system installation is normally a one-time process and a few minutes one way or the other is not significant. A DVD drive is plenty fast enough (and is certainly in the hunt speed wise). Plus, I trust DVD discs more than a USB drive which may develop a crack in the connector joint and become nonfunctional. While discs may be prone to scratches and cracking, in my experience USBs can be a pain and unreliable for booting. If I didn't have a DVD drive, I would then use a USB drive.

I might make a backup of the operating system install on both media in case of a problem with one.

Digital Dave

[Return to Table of Contents](#)



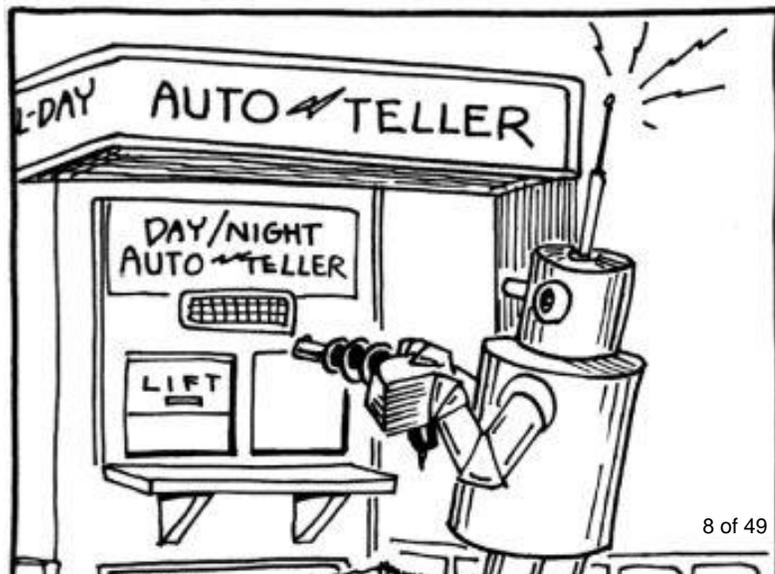
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Consumer Product Trends for 2013

In early 2013, Deloitte reported on new trends (www.deloitte.com/view/en_US/us/Industries/consumer-products/02d2ec7080b0b310VgnVCM1000003156f70aRCRD.htm) affecting consumer products, according to U. S. Consumer Products leader, Pat Conroy. The impact of technology and proliferation of data now empowers shoppers, with instantaneous information that influences buying decisions. Shifting demographics and changing consumer preferences are going against outdated business models. Non-traditional retail markets are increasing, such as warehouse clubs that attract affluent consumers with a "treasure hunt" atmosphere, as well as drawing in more budget-conscious shoppers.



USA Today reported in June 2013, that the Ford Motor Company was surprised by the spikes in specific options (www.usatoday.com/story/driveon/2013/06/22/ford-options/2445919/) ordered in localized markets. The demand for MyFord Touch Infotainment Systems in the San Francisco area may be a no-brainer, considering the proximity of Silicon Valley. But why do Philadelphia car shoppers want turbocharged engines? And why are moon roofs most popular in New York, instead of sunnier western locales? Seattle (Washington) tops the list for ordering parking assist systems, while Ford owners in Dallas (Texas) spike the demand for Ford's foot-activated tailgate opener.



Retail Tech: Online and Physical Stores Fighting for Shoppers

There is an on-going retail war (www.pressofatlanticcity.com/business/brick-and-mortar-retailers-try-new-tricks-to-get-shoppers/article_98d8136e-2635-11e2-9676-001a4bcf887a.html) between store shoppers and Internet shoppers, according to the *Press Of Atlantic City* in November 2012. As the 2012 Holiday Season approached, brick-and-mortar stores were doing

everything from vowing to match prices with online rivals, offering free layaway, to expanding their assortment of unique products. Some stores were also adding Wi-Fi and other digital enhancements to their retail outlets, and same-day-deliveries were beginning to heat up.

Futuristic News reported in Spring 2013 that now even store mannequins can track shoppers (futuristicnews.com/advance-in-retail-tracking-technology-mannequins-are-now-able-to-watch-and-analyze-you-with-cameras-from-kinect-built-in-their-eyes/). The mannequins have Kinect cameras built into their eyes, while other retail innovations to track "shopper behavior" are 3D motion and heat-tracking cameras placed in and over aisles. Stores' security cameras are increasingly being turned into shopper intelligence gathering devices, with the help of Intel processors and specialized software.

In March 2013, CNET reported on sophisticated technology (news.cnet.com/8301-1001_3-57573116-92/high-tech-software-for-retailers-discreetly-tracks-customers/) for business owners to understand their customers better. A San Francisco start-up called Prism Skylabs (www.prismskylabs.com/) has technology to help brick-and-mortar stores use "heatmaps" to show which items are stopping shoppers—and which ones aren't. Using existing security cameras, the "heatmaps" can help retailers make decisions about product placement and floor layout. The collected data is also anonymous, erasing actual people from the "heatmap" video.

Space Tech: To the ISS and Beyond

As announced by ExtremeTech in May 2013, the International Space Station has switched their computers from Windows to Linux (www.extremetech.com/extreme/155392-international-space-station-switches-from-windows-to-linux-for-improved-reliability/), for a "more stable and reliable" operating system. Specifically, dozens of laptops on the ISS will make the change to Debian 6 (www.debian.org/), for more in-house control. It will also immunize the ISS against any computer infections, as happened in 2008 when a Russian cosmonaut brought a laptop aboard with the W32.Gamma.AG worm.

In June 2013, Space.com reported that crowdfunding has raised \$1 Million for an Asteroid Miners' Telescope (www.space.com/21647-planetary-resources-space-telescope-crowdfunding.html). Planetary Resources (www.planetaryresources.com/) has soared past its seven-figure goal, and plans to deploy a publicly accessible space telescope by 2015.

Space.com also announced in June 2013 that anyone can now send a message to a distant planet called Gliese 526 (www.space.com/21601-alien-life-lone-signal-messages.html). A newly launched Web site called Lone Signal (www.lonesignal.com/) wants to help the public open a dialogue with other (possible) intelligent life forms. The outbound messages will reach Gliese 526 in about 18 years.

New Medical Apps

The Seattle Times ran a story in February 2013 that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have developed a new

disease detective app (seattletimes.com/html/business/technology/2020386740_apusmeddiseasedetectiveapp.html) for the public. The free iPad app is called Solve the Outbreak (itunes.apple.com/us/app/solve-the-outbreak/id592485067?mt=8), and lets users run through fictional disease outbreaks and make crucial decisions. The CDC developed the app in-house, to both educate the public about disease and promote an appreciation for public health work.

The Associated Press (through the *Denver Post*) in May 2013 reported that medical self-exams by smartphone (www.denverpost.com/technology/ci_23154960/paging-dr-smartphone-mobile-medical-exams-could-become) could soon become a reality. The idea behind adding some gadgets and apps onto a smartphone, isn't to self-diagnose but to change how people monitor their health. New devices could let users take photos of their eardrum or the back of their eye, as well as get an EKG and a sonogram, and even check blood sugar. The results could then be forwarded to a physician or medical monitoring service.

Also in May 2013, the Associated Press (through the *Denver Post*) ran a story on how a new app will let amputees program their own bionic hands (www.denverpost.com/technology/ci_23165605/app-lets-amputees-program-their-own-bionic-hands). A new prosthetic developed by the British firm Touch Bionics (www.touchbionics.com/) lets hand amputees adjust the grip on their own bionic hands with just a stylus and iPhone, instead of making lengthy trips to prosthetic centers for adjustments.

Medical Tech: Ingestible Sensors to Telemedicine

In May 2013, Steve Johnson's SiliconBeat in the *Mercury News* announced that Oracle has invested in a company that makes ingestible pills (www.siliconbeat.com/2013/05/03/oracle-invests-in-ingestible-sensors-firm/). Proteus (proteusdigitalhealth.com/) says the swallowed sensor will communicate with a wearable skin sensor, which can then automatically send the data to a physician or mobile application.

Futurity announced in April 2013 that pure gold nanoparticles, found in personal products and even drug delivery systems, are harmful to our health (www.futurity.org/health-medicine/are-those-tiny-gold-particles-bad-for-you/). Researchers at the Stony Brook University department of chemical and molecular engineering found that stromal cells were penetrated by the gold nanoparticles instantly, and accumulated in the cells with no obvious pathway for elimination. The presence of the gold nanoparticles can inhibit fat storage, slow wound healing and accelerate wrinkling, as well as interfere with genetic regulation, RNA expression, and inhibit the ability of cells to differentiate into mature adipocytes or fat cells.

As reported in *Bloomberg News* (through the *Denver Post*) in May 2013, Obamacare could open a new door (www.denverpost.com/technology/ci_23158251/malpractice-reform-you-could-see-everything-your-doctor) to medical technology for everything from reminding doctors to wash their hands between patients, to using video cameras to record all procedures. This would hopefully improve doctors' performance and enable them to be fully transparent about their work with their patients. At present, there are legal barriers to filming medicine, to avoid expensive medical malpractice lawsuits.

The Motley Fool ran a story in May 2013 that Telemedicine may finally be poised to disrupt health care (www.fool.com/investing/general/2013/05/09/1-slowly-unfolding-health-care-revolution-and-its.aspx). The technology has been around since the 1970s, but money and politics have kept it from being more widespread. The Veterans Health Administration operates a massive telemedicine program that monitors over 50,000 veterans with chronic conditions. "This VA program has reduced hospital stays by 25% and admissions by 19%, with patient satisfaction ratings at 87%."

Green Energy Set Backs

According to *The Week* (through Yahoo! News) in mid-June 2013, the plummeting cost of solar energy is still much more expensive (news.yahoo.com/3-biggest-obstacles-solar-energy-boom-084000993.html) than coal or natural gas. Despite a surge of optimism, game-changing technologies and new government policies, several challenges still stand between us and a true Solar Revolution. In addition to the cost, integrating new solar energy into existing energy grids is problematic. There's also the perennial bugaboo—trying to figure out how to better store solar energy. Solar batteries cost up to \$6,500 per

household, and the way thermal plants store heat in molten salt or packed rocks, may not be feasible for homes.

The Associated Press (through the *Denver Post*) in May 2013 revealed that new technology has re-energized (www.denverpost.com/technology/ci_23172454/new-technology-propels-old-energy-boom) an old energy source: fossil fuels. New imaging technologies let drillers find oil and gas trapped miles underground and undersea, with mobile oil rigs that can "walk" from one drill site to the next. And remote-controlled equipment can let engineers in one state drill for gas in another state. All this has put the US on track to become the world's largest producer of oil and gas in a few years, and oil imports have already fallen to a 17-year low.

More Battery Problems: Boeing to Apple Laptops

At the end of May 2013 the *Seattle Times* ran an article about how Boeing's electronics problems started around 2003, when cost-cutting measures shifted domestic electronic design and production, and even sub-contractor management, to global partners instead (seattletimes.com/html/business/technology/2021045270_boeingoutsourcingxml.html). Longtime industry analyst Richard Aboulafia was later proved right when he predicted "Without complete oversight of the subsystems, (Boeing) might be finding systems glitches (in the 787 Dreamliner) for years."

The Boeing Dreamliner was cleared to fly again by June 1, 2013. But according to *The Motley Fool*, only a few days into June 2013, Japanese pilots were reportedly not satisfied with the changes to the Boeing 787 batteries (www.fool.com/investing/general/2013/06/08/bad-news-for-boeing-the-dreamliners-battery-is-a-n.aspx). The pilots expressed concern that they won't receive appropriate in-flight warnings, while some scientists and battery experts also have safety concerns about Boeing's battery redesign.

By mid-June 2013, AirNation.net reported that problems with the B-787 (airnation.net/hangar/threads/b-787-engine-wont-start-black-eye-for-boeing-no-just-a-gray-one.4857/) in Japan continue. Sensor lights keep popping on, and in one incident a Dreamliner engine wouldn't start. In Japan, three instances of having to switch out a Boeing Dreamliner for another airplane occurred in just one week in June.

Also in mid-June 2013, Best Buy recalled (www.maclife.com/article/news/citing_fire_risk_best_buy_recalls_5100_thirdparty_macbook_pro_batteries) 5,100 third-party MacBook Pro batteries. Best Buy announced the recall after the Consumer Product Safety Commission reported 13 incidents in which the batteries had gone up in flames. The ATG lithium-ion batteries were sold between September 2008 and June 2012. (All owners of MacBook Pros need to check their batteries, since Best Buy wasn't the only supplier of ATG replacement batteries.)

New Routers and an Arctic Circle Server Farm

CNET (through *Silicon Valley*) in May 2013 rated the best and fastest new Wi-Fi routers (www.siliconvalley.com/personal-technology/ci_23232622/tech-test-drive-best-fastest-wi-fi-routers). 802.11ac are the newest and fastest routers, put out by TRENDnet (trendnet.com/products/products.asp?cat=41), Netgear (www.netgear.com/home/products/wirelessrouters/), and Asus (www.asus.com/Networking/Wireless_Routers_Products/).

In June 2013, Reuters (through *Silicon Valley*) reported that Cisco Systems (www.cisco.com/) just unveiled its new CRS-X router (www.siliconvalley.com/ci_23444007/cisco-new-routers-will-speed-up-networks-increase). The new router is the third in its CRS product series, which Cisco hopes to use to cash in on the ever-increasing demand for Internet service. Since the first CRS router debuted in 2004, Cisco claims a total of \$8 billion in revenue from their router series.

According to the Associated Press (through *Silicon Valley*) in June 2013, Facebook has started processing data through its first server farm outside the US (www.siliconvalley.com/ci_23444000/facebooks-first-foreign-server-farm-rests-arctic-circle). It is located in a 300,000 square foot facility in Sweden on the edge of the Arctic Circle. At present, Facebook servers only use about half of the facility, in order to gradually expand capacity to serve a large portion of Facebook's European users.

Better Road Safety

In May 2013, ConsumerReports ran a story on the newest electronic safety devices for cars (autos.yahoo.com/news/mobileye-560-adds-newest-electronic-safety-features-car-140000949.html). Companies like Mobileye (www.mobileye.com/en-us/) now offer electronic safety systems in new cars, from forward-collision warnings to lane-departure warnings. And now their Mobileye 560 is available as a separate device in automotive electronics and specialty stores.

The Mercury News (through *Silicon Valley*) reported in June 2013 about a new report that says hands-free systems in cars are actually more distracting (www.siliconvalley.com/latest-headlines/ci_23444192/voice-operated-dashboards-more-risky-than-standard-phone) than handheld phones. Using verbal commands in a vehicle to translate speech to text is more distracting than talking on smartphones, since the speech-to-text systems "create a significant cognitive distraction." The human brain is so engrossed in interacting with the communication system, that even with hands on the wheel and eyes on the road, the "driver's reaction time and ability to process what's happening is impaired."

Canadian drivers spend a lot of time driving in snow and ice. So now many Canadian vehicles come equipped with crash or skid avoidance systems (www.saaq.gouv.qc.ca/en/road_safety/vehicles/electro_stability_control/index.php). Called ESC (Electronic Stability Control), the system uses sensors to measure several factors ranging from the angle of the steering wheel to the vehicle trajectory. If a vehicle goes into a skid, the ESC system applies the brakes to one or more wheels, then increases or reduces engine power.

Gaming Console Updates

Microsoft's Xbox One has already been introduced, with controversies still raging about how the console is "always on," and questions about game ownership. In June 2013, *Forbes* ran an article about how Sony's just shown Playstation 4 may win the console wars (www.forbes.com/sites/insertcoin/2013/06/07/the-xbox-one-might-let-sonys-ps4-win-by-default/?partner=yahootix) by default, if they can avoid the Xbox controversies. Sony was glad to release information that their upcoming PS4 does not have to be "always on," and how it will play used games downloaded from the Internet. This reviewer predicts that PS4 could see a flood of unhappy Xboxers, especially since PS4's exclusive games are more numerous and generally of higher quality anyway.

By the end of the E3 (Electronic Entertainment Expo) video gaming conference in Los Angeles in June 2013, an Associated Press article (through YahooOMG!) rated all the upcoming game consoles (omg.yahoo.com/news/consoles-microsoft-nintendo-sony-203840378.html), most of which won't be available until later in the year. Nintendo's Wii U is already available, and has the high-definition graphics the Wii didn't, but it isn't selling well. The Xbox One comes with a Kinect controller for better motion and voice detection, but it's pricey. Sony finally showed what the Playstation4 actually looks like at E3, with a price tag that is \$100 cheaper than the Xbox One.

Late in June 2013, *BGR News* ran a story on Amazon's burst of pre-ordering (news.yahoo.com/playstation-4-xbox-one-preorders-amazon-topped-2-205532644.html) for both Xbox One and Playstation 4, due out this Fall. Not only has demand been extremely high for both consoles, but Amazon's gaming store had its biggest preorder week of all time. During E3, Amazon took preorders for both consoles that peaked at 2,500 preorders per minute. (Amazon also said that video games sold during E3 were nearly twice the sales that the site experienced on Black Friday 2012.)

Second Screen Gaming on Tablets

Besides the big consoles, mobile gaming is becoming more popular too, especially on non-dedicated tablet computers. *GamingArsenal* ran a story in April 2013 about the best tablets for gaming (gamingarsenal.com/04052013879/best-tablets-for-gaming-in-2013). The best display, hands-down, is Apple's iPad Retina (www.apple.com/ipad/overview) with incredible detail and the best color reproduction. Top of the list for other recommended gaming tablets are the Razer Edge Pro (www.razerzone.com/gaming-systems/razer-edge-pro), Google Nexus 10 (www.google.com/nexus/10), and Asus Nexus 7 (www.asus.com/ph/Tablets_Mobile/Nexus_7).

Video Game Updates: From E3 to China

With the Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3) in Los Angeles over, video game writers are assessing the new trends in gaming (omg.yahoo.com/news/companion-apps-open-worlds-5-trends-e3-133446016.html). Yahoo/OMG! ran a story in mid-June 2013 that (mobile) second-screens are becoming more popular for gaming, as mobile devices can now function as Command Stations or Drone Controls tied to games running on a monitor. Several new car racing games were introduced, as well as new virtual worlds, with even older franchises now adopting an open-world policy for the first time. The dividing line between single- and multiplayer games continues to blur, as new online titles don't differentiate between playing alone or in a group.

According to the *Motley Fool* in mid-June 2013, Activision Blizzard (www.activisionblizzard.com/), with their mega-hit "Call of Duty" franchise (www.activision.com/atvhub/home.do), seems to be the top gaming company (www.fool.com/investing/general/2013/06/15/the-gaming-company-everybody-is-gunning-for.aspx) all the others are gunning for. Activision set new records on sales and profitability in 2012, but may have to sacrifice some profit to keep their top standing in 2013. Their new "CoD: Ghosts" will be released in November 2013.

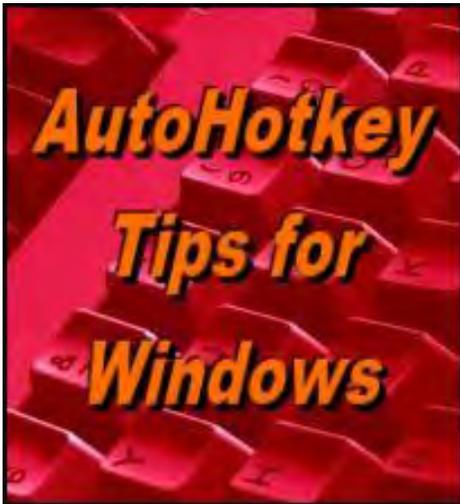
CNBC ran a story in early-June 2013 about the emergence of video gamers in China. While the US gaming market is twice as large, it's shrinking, with \$4 Billion less spent on gaming in the US in 2012 than in 2011. So China represents a huge opportunity for the US gaming industry, even as some of the biggest Chinese gaming firms are eyeing the US market. But China is a hard market to penetrate, since they've banned consoles for the past 13 years, which rules out "packaged sales" from the US. Gaming in China is done in online cafes, which presents enormous challenges to US game developers. Take-Two and Activision have partnered with Chinese gaming companies to get a toehold in the country.

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!

[Return to Table of Contents](#)



**Yet, One More
Reason to Use
AutoHotkey
Free Software!**

Guide to Free ComputerEdge AutoHotkey Apps

“A List of the Apps on the ComputerEdge Free Script Download Site and What They Do!” by Jack Dunning

It's about time! With over twenty some AutoHotkey scripts posted on the ComputerEdge AutoHotkey Dropbox free download site, it time to document what they all do.

If you've never heard of AutoHotkey and wonder what all the brouhaha is about, then here is a short "Introduction to AutoHotkey (www.computeredge.com/AutoHotkey/Introduction_AutoHotkey_Review_and_Guide_for_Beginners.html)" for newcomers.

AutoHotkey Script Roundup

One of the best ways to learn how to write scripts is to see how others do it. Whenever I give an example, I usually offer a practical use for the snippet. That way people not only learn how the code works, but they start to see how AutoHotkey will be useful to them. Over the course of the last nine months I've posted AutoHotkey scripts (free to download and use) which accomplish a variety of different tasks. Some are as simple as a one-liner which will make any window "always-on-top" while others (although not complicated) involve time calculations for the age of grandkids (or anyone) or a barebones music player. The following are a few of the practical uses found for download:

- Adding dates to any documents (*AddDate*)
- Instant correction of commonly misspelled English words (*AutoCorrect*)
- Quick backup of text (*BackupText* and *IncrementalSaveText*)
- Calculating ages (*GrandKids*)
- Opening hard to find or often used folders (*FolderOpen*)
- Setting up temporary hotkey combinations to add text to documents (*InstantHotkey*)
- Tailored Start pop-up windows and menus as a replacement for the missing Start Menu in Windows 8 or any other version of Windows (*LaunchWindow* and *QuickLinks*)
- A barebones Windows media player for music and video (*QuikPlay*)
- A reminder app that pops-up for appointments (*Reminder*)
- A voice app that reads text to you (*SayWhat*)
- An app for moving and sizing options for the last active window (*WindowMove*)

- And more!

I have posted these scripts at the *ComputerEdge* AutoHotkey Dropbox download site (www.dropbox.com/sh/4qu48lyqtixdg7t/QdMY1dNuy7). This is my first shot at documenting the purpose of the various scripts. Previously, anyone that went to the download site for the first time might be overwhelmed with the number of downloads with no clue (other than the filenames) as to their function. (Since I write a weekly column about AutoHotkey, it's a little ironic that poor documentation of my code is one of my weaknesses.) For that reason I'm creating this document (in various formats) which is my shot at quickly explaining the purpose of each posted script. I will endeavor to keep this document up-to-date on the download site under the name "_AutoHotkey_Script_Index" in various formats including TXT, PDF, EPUB and MOBI (for Amazon Kindle).

All of these scripts were written for educational purposes. I don't consider any of them truly complete and you are free to use any of them with or without giving me credit (or blame). While there are many scripts posted, there are even more of my examples which only appear in the individual columns (and of course the e-books currently available).

For files ending with the AHK extension (e.g. *AddDate.ahk*) to run, the main AutoHotkey program needs to be downloaded and installed (www.computoredge.com/misc/Installing_AutoHotkey_and_writing_your_first_script.html). The AHK files are scripts saved in text files and are safe for downloading and opening with any text editor. If you want to learn how to use AutoHotkey, you can use the AHK files as examples. All script development and most testing is done with AHK files. It is safe to download any of the files on this download page, but as a rule AHK files are safe since they only include text.

If warranted, either as a demonstration or a free app for non-AutoHotkey users, many of the AutoHotkey AHK files have been compiled into executable (EXE) files which will run on any Windows computer with or without AutoHotkey installed. This makes the scripts completely portable. As a rule it can be a bit tricky (and sometimes dangerous) to download and run EXE files. Since a double-click on a downloaded EXE file runs directly on any Windows computer, this is a common way for people with bad intentions to spread malware. However, I can assure you that I have written and compiled every one of these files and they are completely safe (99.9%) to download and run.

What I can't guarantee is that Dropbox will never be hacked, thus allowing dangerous EXE files to infect the site. (This is a potential problem for any download site anywhere.) While I think this type of security breach is extremely unlikely to happen (although stranger things have happened), the only way to be truly safe is to download the AHK file and compile it into an EXE file yourself. Or better yet, copy-and-paste the code from the articles I reference in this list directly into your new AHK scripts.

ComputerEdge AutoHotkey Scripts

- *AddDate.ahk* and *AddDate.exe* (August 10, 2012) "Enter the Current Date into Any Windows Program Automatically (webserver.computoredge.com/online.mvc?issue=3032&article=vista)"



AddDate is a demonstration script for adding dates to documents. When loaded, the script uses four different methods demonstrated with hotkey combinations:

- CTRL+WIN+F1 => The datetime stamp (i.e. 20130628103349)
- CTRL+WIN+F2 => The date using the FormatTime command (FormatTime, TimeString, %A_NOW %, MMMM d, yyyy)
- CTRL+WIN+F3 => The date using built in variables (%A_DDD%, %A_MMM% %A_D%, %A_YYYY%)
- CTRL+WIN+D => The MonthCal GUI pop-up calendar (Gui, Add, MonthCal, vDayPick)

- *Always_on_Top.ahk* and *Always_on_Top.exe* (March 8, 2013) "A Beginner's Tip for Always-on-top (webserver.computoredge.com/online.mvc?issue=3110&article=ahk)"

Always_on_Top is a one-line script which toggles any active window always-on-top with the hotkey combination CTRL+WIN+F8. The AHK file is not included because it is the one-line:

^#F8::WinSet, AlwaysOnTop, toggle, A

- **AutoCorrect.ahk** and **AutoCorrect.exe** (December 28, 2012) "Add AutoCorrection to Your Windows PC (webserver.computoredge.com/online.mvc?issue=3052&article=cover)"

This slightly modified **AutoCorrect.ahk** script is from the AutoHotkey Download Web site (www.autohotkey.com/download/AutoCorrect.ahk). It corrects many commonly misspelled English words instantly in any Windows program or Web editing page.

- **BackupText.ahk** (November 23, 2012) "Temporary Backup of New Text (webserver.computoredge.com/online.mvc?issue=3047&article=ahk)"

The **BackupText** script copies selected text to a text file in the user's Documents folder in a file named **SaveEdit.txt**. Each time the CTRL+ALT+B hotkey combination is used, all the text in the document or Web editing field is selected, copied to the Windows Clipboard, then saved to the **SaveEdit.txt** file. This is only for quick, temporary backup of current unsaved work. The old file is overwritten each time the routine is used. For incremental backup to text files see **IncrementalSaveText** below.

- **ChangeCase.ahk** and **ChangeCase.exe** (July 20, 2012) "Changing the Case of Text from Upper to Lower and Back Again (webserver.computoredge.com/online.mvc?issue=3029&article=vista)"

When loaded the **ChangeCase** script sets up hotkey combinations which change the case of selected text:

CTRL+U => Change selected text to all upper case (StringUpper)

CTRL+L => Change selected text to all lower case (StringLower)

CTRL+SHIFT+U => Change selected text to all words with an initial capitalized letter (StringUpper with the parameter T)

- **FolderOpen.ahk** (September 7, 2012) "An Easier Way to Open Hidden Folders, Such as Startup (webserver.computoredge.com/online.mvc?issue=3036&article=vista)"

When loaded **FolderOpen** sets up sample hotkey combinations for hard to find or often used folders and an example AutoHotkey Help window as follows:

CTRL+WIN+S => Open the Startup folder

CTRL+WIN+P => Open the Programs folder

CTRL+WIN+I => Open the My Pictures folder

CTRL+WIN+T => Open the SendTo folder

CTRL+F12 => Open a Help window for these options



- **GrandKids 5.ahk** and **GrandKids.ini** (March 8, 2013) "Remembering Your Grandchildren's Ages (webserver.computoredge.com/online.mvc?issue=3110&article=ahk)"

This particular script went through some evolution due to the problems caused by calculating dates and time spans. (In my defense, I saw a response in the AutoHotkey Forum, from someone who has many more years experience and much more expertise than I do, make a pretty basic date calculating mistake by trying to directly subtract date/time stamps.) **GrandKids** is an app which reads an INI data file with the birthdays of grandchildren (or anyone), calculates how old they are, then displays the information in a pop-up window.

Grand Kids -- Thursday, February 28, 2013		
Liam Patrick Smith	Friday, February 29, 2008	5 Years, 0 Months, 0 Days
Seamus Alan Smith	Monday, November 3, 2008	4 Years, 3 Months, 25 Days
Freyja Lynn Smith	Wednesday, October 7, 2009	3 Years, 4 Months, 21 Days
Eveline Elizabeth Smith	Saturday, December 31, 2011	1 Years, 2 Months, 0 Days
Lyla Emilia Jones	Tuesday, February 14, 2012	1 Years, 0 Months, 14 Days
Baby Girl Smith	Thursday, February 28, 2013	0 Years, 0 Months, 0 Days

The first two versions (GrandKids 5.ahk and GrandKids 6.ahk) launch the pop-up immediately when the GrandKids app is loaded. They require reloading from the System Tray to display again. The last version (GrandKids 7.ahk) uses the hotkey combination WIN+G to open the pop-up. The columns listed give the evolution of the script.

"Calculating Ages (webserver.computoredge.com/online.mvc?issue=3111&article=ahk)" (March 15, 2013) *Wait! What?*

"The Problem with Calculating Your Age (webserver.computoredge.com/online.mvc?issue=3112&article=ahk)" (March 22, 2013) *GrandKids 6.ahk*

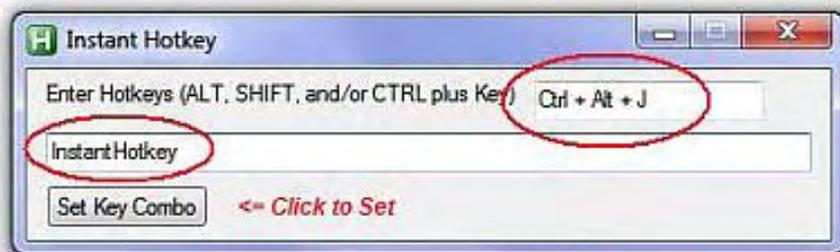
Formatting Controls on GUIs (webserver.computoredge.com/online.mvc?issue=3113&article=ahk)" (March 29, 2013) *GrandKids 7.ahk*"

These articles have been updated and included as one section of the e-book *Digging Deeper Into AutoHotkey* (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B00CTACUMK/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=B00CTACUMK&linkCode=as2&tag=comput0b9-20).

- *IncrementalSaveText.ahk* and *IncrementalSaveText.exe* (November 30, 2012) "Incremental Backup to Protect Your Computer Work (webserver.computoredge.com/online.mvc?issue=3048&article=ahk)"

The *IncrementalSaveText* AutoHotkey script saves the text from any window, including Web pages, by selecting the text, copying it to the Windows Clipboard, then saving it in a backup text file with the filename equal to the window title plus the current date and time in date/time format. The file is saved in the user's Documents/Backup folder. If the folder doesn't exist, it will be created. CTRL+WIN+ALT+B initiates the backup procedure once the script is loaded.

- *InstantHotkey.ahk*, *InstantHotkey.exe*, and *InstantHotkey.zip* (May 24, 2013) "The Inner Workings of the InstantHotkey AutoHotkey Scrip (webserver.computoredge.com/online.mvc?issue=3121&article=ahk)"



The *InstantHotkey* script quickly sets up hotkey combinations temporarily for adding repeated and/or long lines of text to any current Windows document or Web editing field. This is handy for those situations where you know that you will be using a particular term or set of terms a number of times. The window to set up the hotkey opens immediately when the script is

loaded. After the combination is set, it can be changed by right-clicking on the icon in the System Tray and selecting ShowHotkey. Hovering over the same icon will display the current hotkey combination setting.

If your security setting makes it difficult to download the EXE file, the same two files are also located in the *InstantHotkey.zip* file for easier downloading.

- **LaunchWindow.ahk** and **LaunchWindow.exe** (December 7, 2012) *Make Your Own Start Pop-up for Windows* (webserver.computoredge.com/online.mvc?issue=3049&article=ahk)



The *LaunchWindow* script is a demonstration of how AutoHotkey can be used to build a tailored Start pop-up menu window for any version of Windows—including Windows 8. *LaunchWindow* uses the hotkey combination CTRL+WIN+L to open the pop-up. To tailor the contents of *LaunchWindow* the AHK script needs to be modified.

- **Mute.ahk** and **Mute.exe** (March 15, 2013) *"Make the Caps Lock Key Productive"* (webserver.computoredge.com/online.mvc?issue=3111&article=ahk)

The *Mute* script is a sample script with one line of code which turns the CAPSLOCK key into an audio mute toggle button.

```
CapsLock:: SoundSet, +1, , mute
```

- **NoHotkey.ahk** and **NoHotkey.exe** (September 21, 2012) *"Disabling Annoying Windows Hotkeys"* (webserver.computoredge.com/online.mvc?issue=3038&article=vista)

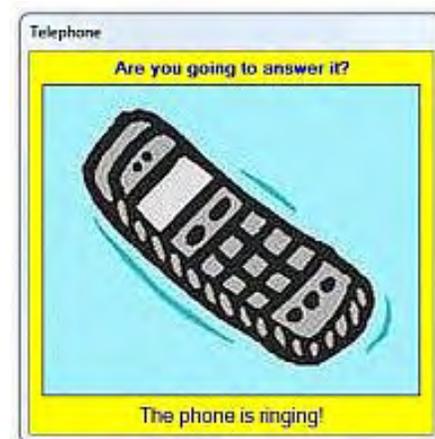
The *NoHotkey* script is a sample script with one line of code which disables the hotkey combination CTRL+A while displaying a message box. This prevents accidental selection of all text which can then be inadvertently wiped out with a single stroke of a key.

```
^a::MsgBox,4160,,Control+A Disabled
```

- **PathCheck.ahk** and **PathCheck.exe** (March 15, 2013) *"Where to Save INI Files"* (webserver.computoredge.com/online.mvc?issue=3111&article=ahk)

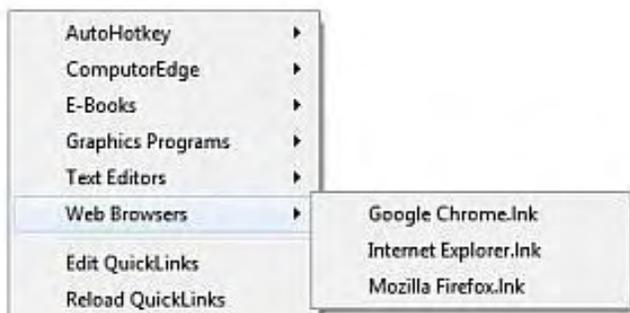
The *PathCheck* script is merely a message box which displays the paths represented by the AutoHotkey variables *A_UserName*, *A_MyDocuments*, and *A_AppData* respectively.

- **PhoneRing.zip** (June 28, 2013) *"Multimedia Greeting Card or Welcome Message"* (webserver.computoredge.com/online.mvc?issue=3126&article=ahk)



This is Ellen's script which combines a graphic file, an audio file, and the computer voice to display a multimedia message. The ZIP file includes, *PhoneRing.ahk*, *PhoneRing.exe* (which has the files, *Phone.jpg*, and *Windows Ringin.wav*, embedded). Activated with ALT+P, it is a demonstration of using a splash image with audio as a message, then compiling all the files into one executable package which not only runs on any Windows computer, but cleans up after itself.

- **QuickLinks.zip** (January 18, 2013) *A Free QuickLinks Windows Menu App* (webserver.computoredge.com/online.mvc?issue=3103&article=vista)



The *QuickLinks* script sets up a pop-up menu system with a special QuickLinks folder of your favorite shortcuts whether programs or Web pages. It may be a suitable replacement for the missing Start Menu in Windows 8, although I use it regularly in both Windows 7 and Windows Vista as a quick way to open working pages on the Web and a couple of programs. For the standard



version of *QuickLinks*, once loaded, the menu is accessed with the hotkey combination WIN+Z. In a modified version, *QuickLinks Tray*, the menu structure is added to the System Tray icon right-click menu. See "Adding Right-click Capability to the QuickLinks App

(webserver.computoredge.com/online.mvc?issue=3105&article=ahk)"

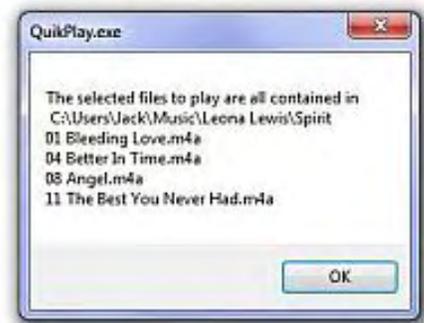
The *QuickLinks.zip* file now includes *QuickLinks.ahk*, *QuickLinks.exe*, *QuickLinks Tray.ahk*, and *QuickLinks Tray.exe*.

Explanations of the QuickLinks script are updated and included as one section of the e-book *Digging Deeper Into AutoHotkey* (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B00CTACUMK/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=B00CTACUMK&linkCode=as2&tag=comput0b9-20).

- QuikPlay.ahk and QuikPlay.exe (June 14, 2013) "A Free Quick and Dirty Windows App for Playing Music and Videos (webserver.computoredge.com/online.mvc?issue=3124&article=vista)"

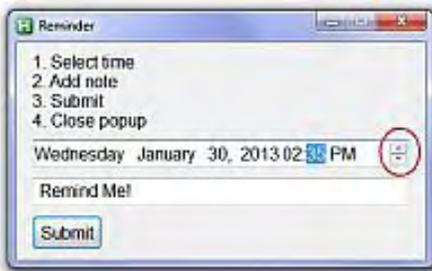
The *QuikPlay* script is a barebones Windows media player. It operates with either hotkey combinations or selections from the right-click menu from the System Tray icon (see Menu Items for QuikPlay Script Controls (webserver.computoredge.com/online.mvc?issue=3125&article=ahk)). Once *QuikPlay* is loaded these are the hotkey combinations and menu selections:

- WIN+ALT+P => "Pick What to Play"
- WIN+ALT+W => "What's Playing?"
- WIN+ALT+N => "Next"
- WIN+ALT+S => "Stop Play"



The *QuikPlay.zip* file was added for downloading convenience.

- Reminder.ahk and Reminder.exe (January 4, 2013) "A Cool Little Appointment Reminder for Windows (webserver.computoredge.com/online.mvc?issue=3101&article=ahk)"



The *Reminder* script has gone through many iterations and has many more to come—although I'm not sure when. I use it to tell me to take out the trash on the right day and other quick temporary reminders. It is called up with the hotkey combination CTRL+WIN+R plus the most recent version has a Set Reminder option in the System Tray icon right-click menu.

The various versions of the files (some compiled into EXE files) have been included for people who are reading the related articles. They are now combined in the *Reminder.zip* file. The following is a list of the articles in order in which they deal with the different versions of the Reminder script:

- "A Cool Little Appointment Reminder for Windows (webserver.computoredge.com/online.mvc?issue=3101&article=ahk)"
- "Lonely? Make Your Computer Talk to You! (webserver.computoredge.com/online.mvc?issue=3104&article=vista)"
- "A Talking Reminder for Windows (webserver.computoredge.com/online.mvc?issue=3104&article=ahk)"
- "Tweaking the Reminder and QuickLinks AutoHotkey Scripts (webserver.computoredge.com/online.mvc?issue=3105&article=ahk)"
- "Improving the Reminder App (webserver.computoredge.com/online.mvc?issue=3107&article=ahk)"
- "How to Make the Reminder App Last for Days (webserver.computoredge.com/online.mvc?issue=3108&article=ahk)"

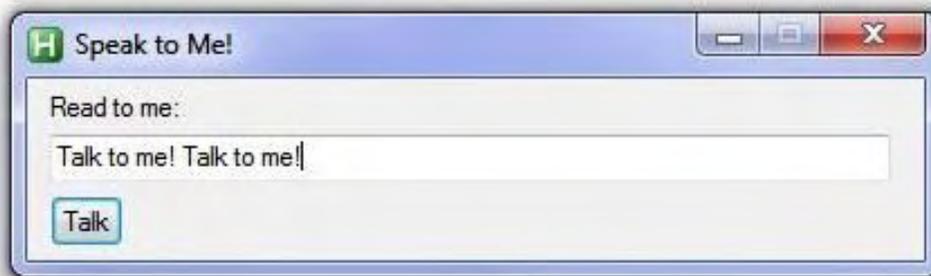
"Add a Toggle for the Speaking Feature to the Reminder App (webserver.computoredge.com/online.mvc?issue=3109&article=ahk)"

Explanations of the Reminder script are updated and reorganized as one section of the e-book *Digging Deeper Into AutoHotkey* (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B00CTACUMK/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=B00CTACUMK&linkCode=as2&tag=comput0b9-20). I encourage anyone to tailor the script for personal use—possibly adding a multiple reminder capability and a repetitive reminder feature. I plan to do that myself when the time is right.

- *SaveText.ahk* (November 16, 2012) "An AutoHotkey Tool for Collecting Data (webserver.computoredge.com/online.mvc?issue=3046&article=ahk)"

The *SaveText* script copies selected text to a Notepad editing window. If it isn't already open, the script launches Notepad. The CTRL+ALT+S hotkey combination is used to copy the selected text from other programs or Web pages.

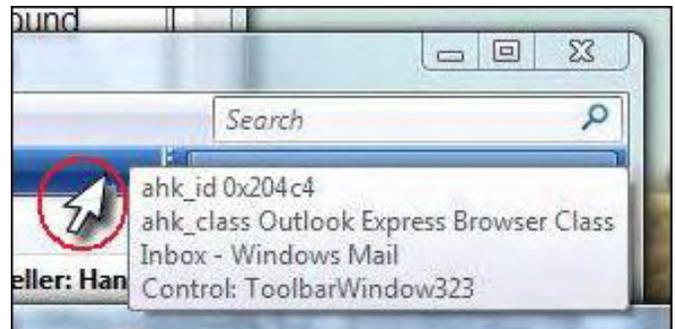
- *SayWhat.ahk* and *SayWhat.exe* (June 7, 2013) "An Easier Way to Get Your Computer to Talk to You (webserver.computoredge.com/online.mvc?issue=3123&article=ahk)"



This *SayWhat* script is a demonstration of how easy it is to use the text reading capability of Windows with AutoHotkey. Once the script is loaded a "Speak to Me!" window will open. Type in any text and click "Talk!" The default Windows voice reads the text out loud.

- *ToolTipTest.ahk* and *ToolTipTest.exe* (April 26, 2013) "How to Add ToolTip Labels (webserver.computoredge.com/online.mvc?issue=3117&article=ahk)"

Both the *ToolTipTest* and *ToolTipTest2* scripts are demonstrations of how to use Windows Tooltips to provide information. *ToolTipTest* is an example of using the Tooltip within an AutoHotkey window. *ToolTipTest2* provides AutoHotkey specific information on each window as the cursor hovers over it.



- *WindowList.ahk* (January 11, 2013) "Finding Lost Windows with AutoHotkey (webserver.computoredge.com/online.mvc?issue=3102&article=ahk)"



The idea for the *WindowList* script was inspired by a reader wanting to bring lost (off-screen) windows back in view. This script makes a dropdown menu of all the open windows (CTRL+WIN+L to activate after load). The list is filtered to avoid Windows system windows. When a window is selected from the menu, it is activated and positioned on top near the upper left-hand corner of the screen.



- WindowMove.ahk (December 14, 2012) "Snapping Windows (Part 1) (webserver.computoredge.com/online.mvc?issue=3051&article=ahk)" and (December 21, 2012) "Snapping Windows (Part 2) (webserver.computoredge.com/online.mvc?issue=3052&article=ahk)"

The *WindowMove* script is a demonstration app similar to Aero Snap. When the hotkey combination CTRL+WIN+M is activated, the script creates a dropdown list of moving and sizing options for the last active window. It only moves that last window activated. To move another window the menu must be closed, the new windows selected, the CTRL+WIN+M.

- WinToolTipToggle.ahk and WinToolTipToggle.exe (May 3, 2013) "Change the Windows Registry (webserver.computoredge.com/online.mvc?issue=3118&article=ahk)"

The *WinToolTipToggle* script is a demonstration of AutoHotkey changing a Windows Registry entry. In this case, the script toggles Windows Tooltips, the little labels that appear when you hover the mouse over a filename or icon. The option appears in a message window when the script is loaded.

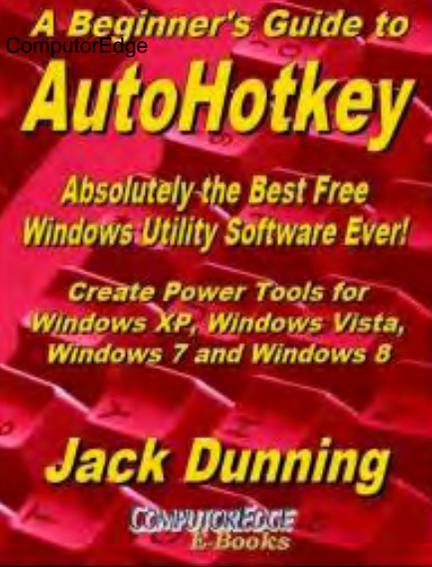
More AutoHotkey Script Snippets

The scripts posted on the Dropbox site are not all of the snippets I've published. Many only appear in the *ComputerEdge* AutoHotkey columns (webserver.computoredge.com/sitemap.mvc?feature=Columns&columnedcode=ahk&column=AutoHotkey%20Tips%20for%20Windows) and the e-books below.

* * *



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)).

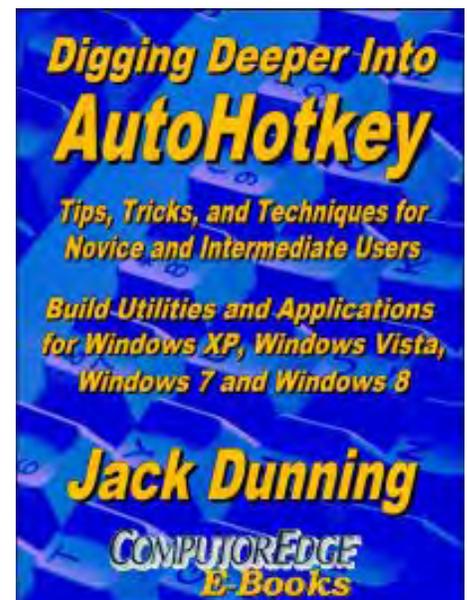
Building Power Tools for Windows XP, Windows Vista, Windows 7 and Windows 8, AutoHotkey is the most powerful, flexible, *free* Windows utility software available. Anyone can instantly add more of the functions that they want in all of their Windows programs, whether installed on their computer or while 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! (computoreedgebooks.com/A-Beginners-Guide-to-AutoHotkey-EPUB-format-iPad-Nook-etc-AUTOHOTKEY-1.htm)

* * *

Jack's latest 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?](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B00CTACUMK/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=B00CTACUMK&linkCode=as2&tag=comput0b9-20)



[ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=B00CTACUMK&linkCode=as2&tag=comput0b9-20](http://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?](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)). 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! (computoredgebooks.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.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.amazon.com/gp/product/B009SI3F52/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=B009SI3F52&linkCode=as2&tag=comput0b9-20).

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

Currently only at Amazon.com, *Jack's Favorite Free Windows Programs: What They Are, What They Do, and How to Get Started!* (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B008BLUZRS/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20).

Available from Amazon, *Misunderstanding Windows 8: An Introduction, Orientation, and How-to for Windows 8* (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B007RMCRH8/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20)! Also available at Barnes and Noble (www.barnesandnoble.com/w/misunderstanding-windows-8-jack-dunning/1109995715?ean=2940014229463) and ComputerEdge E-Books (www.computoredgebooks.com/Windows-Tips-and-Tricks_c4.htm?sourceCode=writer).

Available exclusively from Amazon, *Windows 7 Secrets Four-in-One E-Book Bundle* (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B00801M5GS/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20), *Getting Started with Windows 7: An Introduction, Orientation, and How-to for Using Windows 7* (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B007AL672M/?&tag=comput0b9-20), *Sticking with Windows XP—or Not? Why You Should or Why You Should Not Upgrade to Windows 7* (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B00758J4L6/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20), and *That Does Not Compute!* (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B0052MMUX6/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=comput0b9-20), brilliantly drawn cartoons by Jim Whiting for really stupid gags by Jack about computers and the people who use them.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)



Wally Wang's Apple Farm "3D Printing" by Wally Wang

3D Printing; News of the Obvious; The Office Suite Wars; Say Good-Bye to AltaVista; Android PCs; Reset Safari.

Wally Wang's Apple Farm

In the early days of the PC, mainframe and minicomputer users derided PCs as toys that lacked the power and features mainframe and minicomputers offered. Back then, the idea that people could ever use a PC for serious work was laughable as most "serious" computer users considered PCs as good for nothing but toys.

Plug in your favorite new technology in place of "PC" in the above paragraph and you can see that this same completely wrong mindset still manages to be paraded in public as a valid excuse today. One of the latest technologies that is creeping up in plain sight (which many people will simply ignore) is the 3D printer.

Instead of printing on paper, 3D printers create physical objects (thinkprogress.org/health/2013/05/23/2054281/promising-uses-3d-printing-medicine/). The simplest 3D printers can create plastic designs such as bowls, toys, or simple tools like a salad tossing fork. The more sophisticated 3D printers can create objects out of different materials such as wood, metal, or even living cells. Researchers have used 3D printers to create skin, kidneys, and prosthetic limbs (news.cnet.com/8301-17938_105-57591226-1/disabled-duck-gets-new-3d-printed-foot/) for both people and ducks.



Figure 1. A 3D printer created an artificial foot for a duck.

The cost of 3D printers will continue to drop while the capabilities will continue to improve. If you think 3D printers have no future, just wait a few years and see if your argument still makes sense. For years, the arguments that mainframe and minicomputers were superior to PCs were completely accurate. Then one day, they weren't.

Just three years ago, an army of critics argued that tablets had no purpose. Today, few people cling to that belief any more. Now this same army of critics believes that 3D printers are too expensive and too limited to be useful for the average person, and they're right—for now. By the time they realize that 3D printers have a variety of different uses, they'll have fallen behind the times once more while vocally complaining about something new all over again.

Microsoft even added 3D printing support (bits.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/06/26/microsoft-moves-to-simplify-3-d-printing/?partner=yahoofinance&_r=0) in Windows 8.1 because Microsoft can see that this technology will continue growing and needs to be supported by Windows PCs. When the largest software company in the world sees 3D printing support as important, you can bet that 3D printers will only become more powerful and more commonplace in the years to come.

Stratasys, makers of high-end 3D printers, recently acquired MakerBot (readwrite.com/2013/06/20/makerbot-merger-will-boost-desktop-3d-printing#awesm=-oa4xl4yt5JlbLl), the makers of low-end 3D printers. NASA is even experimenting with using 3D printers to create materials to build shelters on the moon (www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/innovations/wp/2013/06/27/get-ready-3d-printing-may-be-coming-to-a-planet-near-you/). Such technology will likely trickle down to the civilian world, which could lead to lower cost housing for millions of people on Earth.

Researchers have even created miniature batteries (www.boston.com/business/innovation/blogs/inside-the-hive/2013/06/28/harvard-researcher-used-printer-create-really-tiny-batteries/YAnRhFfWn4BzoZUp0Y9GOK/blog.html) using 3D printing technology. Such miniature batteries, the size of a single grain of sand, could power tiny medical devices, insect-sized robots, micro-cameras, and minuscule sensors.

For places that ban citizens from owning certain items like guns, 3D printers can make any such laws meaningless. It's already possible to create a working gun (www.forbes.com/sites/andygreenberg/2013/05/20/25-gun-created-with-cheap-3d-printer-fires-nine-shots-video/) from a 3D printer so if you're worried about the government taking away your guns, just use a 3D printer to make another one.

When 3D printers become more affordable and more powerful, expect a burst of creativity among artists, entrepreneurs, and everyday users taking advantage of the capabilities of 3D printers. The only people who won't take advantage of 3D printers will be those still grumbling that mainframes are better than PCs, tablets have no use in the real world, and physical keyboards are the only way to create anything useful on a computer—despite ample evidence to the contrary.

You can look for new opportunities in the coming 3D printer revolution, or you can ignore these advancements and loudly complain that dot-matrix and daisy wheel printers are all that anybody really needs. It's easy to become obsolete just by closing your eyes to something different. For everyone else, keep your eyes on 3D printers as their potential impact on the world could be more disruptive than the original PC. Just don't tell this to the grumpy old, tech-savvy guy who still thinks PCs are toys and mainframes will always be superior. He won't want to listen to anything new anyway—despite ample evidence to the contrary.

News of the Obvious

To reinvent itself, Research in Motion changed their name to Blackberry and released their new Blackberry 10 operating system. At the beginning of the year, everyone thought that Blackberry could recapture their former glory and become a major player in the smartphone market that they helped create and define.

To absolutely nobody's surprise except for the most delusional, Blackberry's latest efforts appear to have failed with sales and profits nose diving to a loss of \$84 million (www.latimes.com/business/la-fi-blackberry-earnings-20130629,0,3642560.story) last quarter.

Why anyone thought that Blackberry could storm back in the smartphone market with another me-too device that offered no dramatic improvements over iOS or Android is puzzling. Blackberry also announced that they're giving up on their Playbook tablet (blogs.wsj.com/canadarealtime/2013/06/28/in-another-surprise-rim-says-it-wont-migrate-playbook-to-bb10/), which they heavily promoted with the "Amateur Hour is Over" marketing slogan that insinuated that other tablets were obsolete because the Playbook was here.



Figure 2. When the Playbook first appeared, ads proclaimed that "Amateur Hour is Over."

The main reason the Playbook failed was because it wasn't ready in the first place. When the Playbook first arrived, it couldn't even use e-mail. For a mobile device, the lack of e-mail support is a huge glaring problem. Rather than rush a tablet to market like Blackberry did with the Playbook, they should have waited until it was ready to do something useful right out of the box. That might have meant waiting too long, but they took the risk of releasing something too soon and poor Playbook sales are the result.

Microsoft made the same mistake with their Surface tablets. Instead of offering a cellular option to access the Internet on the go, Microsoft chose to release Wi-Fi only tablets. Even worse, Microsoft didn't have any useful software to take advantage of the new tile user interface and won't even have a version of Microsoft Office optimized for the tile (www.zdnet.com/microsoft-metro-style-office-not-due-until-2014-7000017324/) interface until 2014. Why bother releasing a new user interface without any software that can demonstrate the new user interface's advantages?

Barnes & Noble is the latest casualty in the department of the obvious. After trying to compete with Amazon's Kindle Fire and Apple's iPad, Barnes & Noble is giving up (www.delawareonline.com/article/20130627/BUSINESS09/306270061/Barnes-Noble-s-tablet-exit-may-accelerate-Nook-media-spinoff) making the color Nook tablet. Instead, they plan to focus on the lower cost e-reader Nook tablets, which lack the ability to display interactive e-books that are the future.

Anyone surprised that the Nook is dead? How many people will be surprised to hear that Barnes & Noble is dealing with declining book sales, e-book sales that pale compared to Amazon, and a tablet strategy designed for the past? Why Microsoft invested \$300 million (articles.washingtonpost.com/2012-04-30/business/35452843_1_nook-device-microsoft-president-andy-lees-microsoft-and-barnes) in a dying company that's clinging to black and white e-readers as their future is another one of those questionable decisions that some executive made who will suffer none of the consequences or take any of the responsibility.

Dying companies like Blackberry and Barnes & Noble hasten their own demise through illogical decisions. When even a company like Microsoft continues making illogical decisions (the tile user interface of Windows 8, the confusion of Windows RT, Surface tablets that lack cellular connection, the creation and subsequent abandonment of Silverlight as a programming tool for Windows Phone 7 apps, their initial decision to make playing used games on the Xbox One difficult, etc.), you can't help but wonder how many illogical decisions Microsoft can continue to make before they start hurting financially. Keep watching Microsoft and we'll all find out for sure.

The Office Suite Wars

Everything is moving to the cloud. For software publishers, cloud-based software offers the chance to earn monthly or annual subscription fees instead of hoping people will constantly upgrade their software. Google has long offered Google Apps (www.google.com/intx/en/enterprise/apps/business) while Microsoft is pushing everyone to sign up for Microsoft Office 365 (office.microsoft.com/en-us/products/microsoft-office-365-for-home-or-for-business-office-online-FX101825692.aspx?WT%2Esrch=1&WT%2Emc%5Fid=PS%5Fgoogle%5FO365Shared%5Foffice%20365%5FText).

This fall, Apple plans to release both a new version of iWork for OS X along with iWork in the Cloud (www.apple.com/iwork-for-icloud/). What's noticeable about all of these competing cloud-based office suites is that they work on any computer using a modern browser like Firefox or Chrome.



Figure 3. iWork in the Cloud is coming this fall.

In the old days, people bought Windows PCs because they wanted to run Microsoft Office. Now with OS X and Linux users capable of using Microsoft Office 365, and Windows and Linux users capable of using iWork in the Cloud, there's little reason to remain loyal to any particular operating system any more. Rather than get Windows, Linux, or OS X because you need to run a particular office suite, just get the operating system that will be easiest to use and use a cloud-based office suite that will allow you to share your documents with others.

For businesses that sign up for Office 365, that means the most cost-effective solution would be to replace Windows with Linux, run the current Windows configurations as virtual machines if necessary, and tap into Office 365 through the browser. This will let you run any Windows programs you may still need with the security and low cost of using Linux. If the cost of switching to a Macintosh seems too high, then the free price of Linux makes the cost of upgrading to any version of Windows too high as well.

By using Office 365, everyone can still cling to the security of using Microsoft Office while sharing files. If you want a solution with more limited features, switch to Google Apps. If you don't like Office 365, try iWork in the Cloud.

Until Apple announces the pricing for iWork in the Cloud, nobody will know whether it will be a better deal than Office 365 or not. Whatever the case, cloud-based office suites will make the operating system you use irrelevant. For Microsoft, selling upgrades to Office every few years often boosted sales of the latest version of Windows. With Office 365, Google Apps, and iWork in the Cloud, there's little reason for anyone to care about upgrading their operating systems any more. For Microsoft, Office 365 threatens to reduce corporate dependence on Windows. With Google Apps and iWork in the Cloud, Office 365 has competition unlike the old days when practically everyone used Microsoft Office because there wasn't anything better. Cloud-based office suites are the future, just as long as you can rely on a dependable connection to the Internet.

Say Good-Bye to AltaVista

In the early days of the Internet, the most popular search engine was AltaVista along with a handful of competitors like Lycos, Hotbot, and InfoSeek. Although AltaVista dominated the search engine market, they fumbled away their early lead. Now AltaVista has finally admitted the obvious and shut itself down.

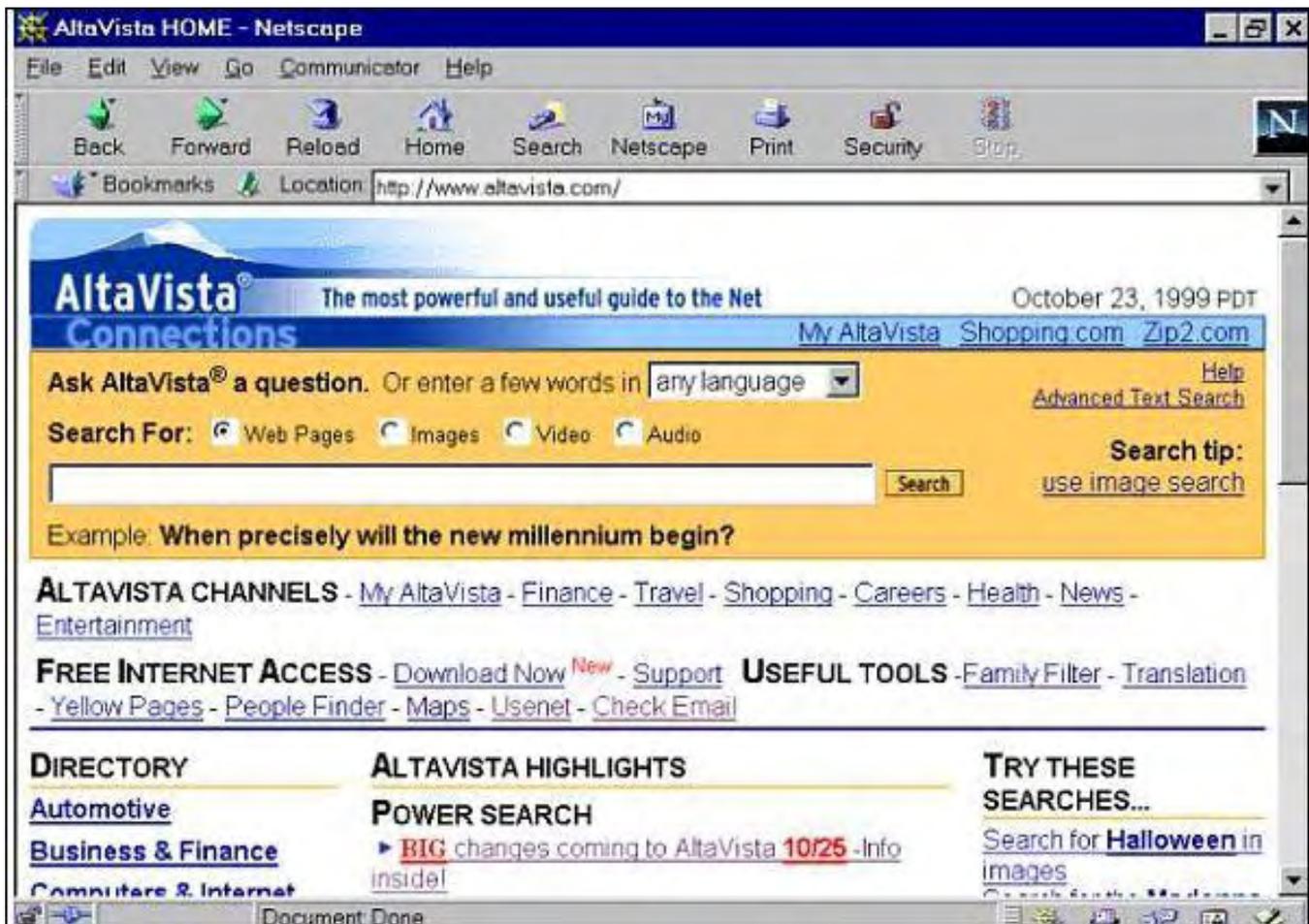


Figure 4. AltaVista used to be the search engine of choice.

How did AltaVista lose their dominant search engine lead? The same way every other leader loses its lead by not adapting to its customers and the changing market. There are probably some people out there who still love AltaVista and claim that since AltaVista was once the leader, it's impossible for them to ever lose their lead so everyone should just continue using AltaVista and not look at any alternatives.

Of course, AltaVista is no longer around but such evidence won't likely sway its most ardent supporters. At one time, Yahoo! was also the most dominant search engine, then Google took over. How long Google will retain their lead is anybody's guess, but if they fail to please their customers, there's a good chance another search engine, like Bing, could take over the lead.

With technology changing so fast, it's foolish to fall in love with any particular brand. Instead, it makes more sense just to use the best technology available at the time and constantly re-evaluate what's best for the future. Sometimes sticking with the leader is best and sometimes it isn't. As AltaVista found out the hard way, once a market leader loses its lead, it's difficult to recover before it's too late. Just ask Blackberry, Palm Computing, or Nokia what happened to their smartphone lead that they once held not so long ago.

Android PCs

After getting run over by the iPad while trying to peddle their Slate PC back in 2010, and flopping with webOS, Hewlett-Packard has created a new product (www.fool.com/investing/general/2013/06/29/hp-big-tablet-for-steve-heller.aspx) that could be crazy or amazingly practical.

Hewlett-Packard's latest 21.5-inch all-in-one computer will cost less than \$400 and run Android as its operating system. This gives users the ability to download and run the thousands of Android apps available while also costing Hewlett-Packard absolutely nothing to use, unlike purchasing a license fee to use Windows.



Figure 5. Hewlett-Packard's proposed 21.5-inch all-in-one Android PC.

If you think Hewlett-Packard is crazy for going with Android instead of Windows, then Acer may be just as crazy. Like Hewlett-Packard, Acer also plans to use Android (www.gmanetwork.com/news/story/314995/scitech/technology/new-acer-pc-to-run-on-google-android) in an all-in-one PC that should cost less than \$500.

By selling Android-powered PCs, manufacturers can sell PCs in volume and exploit the growing Android software library. The other alternative is to pay a licensing fee for Windows 8, which many people don't like, and hope that the Windows 8 app store can grow in the future.

Given the problems of Windows 8, Android PCs might actually be a bigger threat to Microsoft than anything Apple could produce. Combine Android apps with the ability to use Office 365 through cloud computing and you can have a low-cost PC, running an operating system that's easy to use with guaranteed Microsoft Office file compatibility through Office 365.

Why buy a Windows PC when you can buy an Android PC? That's the bet Hewlett-Packard and Acer are taking. If they're successful, expect to see more manufacturers pushing the more popular Android operating system instead of the less popular and more expensive Windows 8 operating system. Given a choice between Windows 8 and Android, many people could prefer Android for their next PC.

* * *

If Safari seems to run sluggishly, you may need to reset it. Click the Safari menu and choose Reset. Now you can select different options and reset Safari, which basically clears out any junk Safari stores in memory (such as memorizing passwords) so you can restart Safari as if running it for the first time.



Figure 6. Resetting options for Safari.

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

Wally is responsible for the following books:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Republican Fairy Tales (Children's Stories the 1% Tell About the Rest of Us) (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B006QSKM3A/ref=as_li_tf_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=B006QSKM3A)

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

The 15-Minute Movie Method (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B004TMD9K8/ref=as_li_tf_tl?ie=UTF8&tag=the15minmovme-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=B004TMD9K8)

Erotophobia (A novel) (www.amazon.com/gp/product/B009POEAJO/ref=as_li_qf_sp_asin_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=B009POEAJO&linkCode=as2&tag=the15minmovme-20)

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

[Return to Table of Contents](#)



Worldwide News & Product Reviews
“The latest in tech news and hot product reviews.” by Charles Carr

- 🌐 Don't say we didn't warn you.
- 🌐🌐 What is that store's return policy?
- 🌐🌐🌐 We've seen better; we've seen worse.
- 🌐🌐🌐🌐 You'll probably be happy you did.
- 🌐🌐🌐🌐🌐 What are you waiting for?

Data Centers Could Experience 30% More Failures as Temperatures Increase; Legalization of Rookits, Spyware, Ransomware and Trojans Suggested to Combat Piracy; What Really Happens on a Teen Girl's iPhone; MEElectronics Bluetooth Wireless Headphones with Headset Functionality; Newer Technology NuGreen LED Desk Lamp.

Data Centers Could Experience 30% More Failures as Temperatures Increase

According to Alan Beresford, Tech Director for EcoCooling Ltd. (www.ecocooling.org), many data center operators have been increasing the operating temperature in their data centers to reduce the massive costs of cooling and are running the risk of significantly more failures:



ASHRAE (the American Society of Heating and Refrigeration Engineers) is generally considered to set the standards globally for data center cooling. A few years ago it relaxed its recommended operating range for data servers from 20-25C (Celsius) to 18-27C (64.5 to 80.6 Fahrenheit).

"For decades," said Beresford, "data centres have operated at a 20-21C temperature. With the relaxation in the ASHRAE 2011 recommendation plus the pressure to cut costs...have begun to significantly increase the 'cold aisle' temperature.

"But many of them have not taken into account the study of server reliabilities detailed in the ASHRAE 2001 Thermal Guidelines for Data Processing Environments—which predicts that if the cold aisle

temperature is increased from 20C to 25C, the level of failures increases by a very significant 24%. Upping the temperature to 27.5C increases the failure rates by a massive 34 per cent.



Warns Beresford: "And if the air temperature going into the front of the servers is 27C it's going to be very hot coming out of the rear. For blade servers it can be a blistering 42C (107F) at the rear!"

"It's not just the servers that can fail," states Beresford, "at the rear of the servers are electric supply cables, power distribution units and communication cables. Most of these are simply not designed to work at such elevated temperatures and are liable to early mortality."

Interestingly, again according to ASHRAE's published figures, if the temperature is reduced to 17C – the server reliability is improved by 13 per cent compared to conventional 20C operations.

Legalization of Rookits, Spyware, Ransomware and Trojans Suggested to Combat Piracy

Thomas Günther of the anti-virus and -malware company EMISOFT (www.emsisoft.com), writes about an interesting —"scheme" feels like the right word—being debated right now as a possible deterrent to software piracy: seeding pirate sites with content infected with malware:

If it was up to the American Intellectual Property Commission, malware could soon be used to legally combat intellectual property theft. In their 84-page report the independent organization demands the usage of techniques that usually can be found in ransomware, spyware, rootkits and trojan horses. Amongst other things it shall be possible to lock whole computers and to photograph the owners using their very own Webcams.

The idea to use malware to stop piracy isn't new at all. One of the first computer viruses ever, Brain, was created to prevent software from being illegally copied. Almost 30 years later the Intellectual Property Commission wants to go a few steps further. In a detailed report they suggest to use different malware technologies to combat piracy. This scenario might become reality quite soon as the report will reach the American Congress, and this may result in new legislation based on this report.

The consequences of a potential legalization of malware are incalculable. Sony was once in the headlines back in 2005 when hackers abused security vulnerabilities in a Sony's rootkit which was originally designed to be used for copy protection. Every American citizen would be concerned by the prospect of installing malware automatically along with legitimate software. Security programs could of course detect that malware, however in most cases blocking copy-protection software renders the program it was designed to protect inoperable.

Even worse: If a third party gains general access to the malware, this would mean full access to all of the computers that it was

installed on, without the need to infect those computers themselves.

Christian Mairoll, CEO at Emsisoft: "There is no good malware at all. Piracy is indeed a problem that has to be solved. But legalized and widely spread malware would lead to even more problems with unforeseeable consequences. This is why we are completely against the approach of the IP Commission. Our users can rely on us that we will never whitelist malware of any kind or origin at all."

Detailed information: emsi.at/LegalMalware (*emsi.at/LegalMalware*)

What Really Happens on a Teen Girl's iPhone

The Huffington Post's Bianca Bosker recently wrote:

Fourteen-year-old Casey Schwartz has ditched more social networking services than most people her parents' age have joined. Like many of her friends, Casey has a tendency to embrace social media sites, then suddenly drop them.

Skype, Formspring, and WhatsApp have all felt the consequences of these flighty users. Casey still uses Snapchat, but less than she did last year. And in three months, she's joined, quit, and rejoined Twitter. She's collected banished apps into a folder on her phone labeled "Stuff Nobody Likes." And she's thought about deleting her Facebook account because she checks it so frequently.

"I'll wake up in the morning and go on Facebook just...because," Casey says. "It's not like I want to or I don't. I just go on it. I'm, like, forced to. I don't know why. I need to. Facebook takes up my whole life."

Inseparable from her iPhone, but apt to tire of the sites she uses it to access, Casey at once personifies why much of the technology world has become obsessed with capturing the attention of people her age, and why those efforts risk turning into expensive debacles. That teens' friendships and relationships will play out online is certain. But which site will host that social intrigue is constantly up for grabs.

Earlier this week, Yahoo became the latest tech giant to make a major play for younger users, agreeing to pay \$1.1 billion in cash to take ownership of Tumblr, the blogging site that has emerged as a popular and engaging platform with users under the age of 35. Yahoo has in its sights young people with disposable income, still-evolving spending habits and a willingness to devote virtually unlimited amounts of time to staring at a screen.

In short, Yahoo is trying to gain access to people like Casey. As social media experts have already suggested, and as a day with Casey makes clear, winning the attention of teenagers and maintaining it are two very different things. Yet seeking that attention is irresistible.

Casey's habits underscore a new reality for this networked generation: Social networks—and the gadgets they run on—aren't a distraction from real life, but a crucial extension of it.

Born in 1999, just a few years after the mass adoption of the World Wide Web, Casey belongs to the first true generation of digital natives, who have no memory of life before the Internet. The eighth-grader, who lives in the northern New Jersey town of Millburn, has always been attached to her gadgets. When she was only 18 months old, she received a toy computer that quickly became her favorite plaything. In second grade, she got her first cell phone ("it could hold two numbers, it was stupid," she says). Now, at 14, she's the proud owner of a white iPhone 4S, which she takes with her to school, carries as she wanders around her house, uses at the breakfast table, and keeps beside her pillow when she sleeps at night.

"I bring it everywhere. I have to be holding it," Casey says. "It's like OCD—I have to have it with me. And I check it a lot."

Casey only parts with her phone during the hours she's at school, when she leaves it in her locker. The rest of the time, she and seven friends keep up a running conversation over text messages.

Not having an iPhone can be social suicide, notes Casey. One of her friends found herself effectively exiled from their circle for

six months because her parents dawdled in upgrading her to an iPhone. Without it, she had no access to the iMessage group chat, where it seemed all their shared plans were being made.

"She wasn't in the group chat, so we stopped being friends with her," Casey says. "Not because we didn't like her, but we just weren't in contact with her."

Great story. Read it all at: www.huffingtonpost.com (www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/05/23/teen-iphone_n_3322095.html)

MEElectronics Bluetooth Wireless Headphones with Headset Functionality

Manufacturer: MEElectronics

Model: Air-Fi Venture AF52

Web site: www.meelec.com (www.meelec.com/ProductDetails.asp?ProductCode=HP-AF52-BK-MEE)

Price: \$119 list

When it comes to headphones, there are two basic types: In-ear and over-the-ear. In-ear has come a long way in the past dozen years or so but many people still prefer the unique comfort, sense of immersion, and noise rejection that only over-the-ear phones can deliver. Put me in that category.

MEElectronics' AF 52 Bluetooth headphones are some of the best I've ever used at almost any price. First off: comfort. The AF 52's have a great fit (at least on my head). Also, their lightweight design and soft ear pads make it so you hardly know you have them on.



Sound is also excellent from the deepest lows, thanks to the big 40 mm driver, to crisp, clear highs.

Of course, when it comes to Bluetooth (or any wireless technology) battery life becomes a prime consideration. I like the AF 52 because they are rechargeable. And they hold a charge for long enough that you can forget about them (at least for awhile). I was always able to get 14-18 on a charge. That's another great thing: Just charge them up using just about any standard USB plug using the included cable or any cable with a standard USB plug on one end and a USB mini plug on the other. Other headphones require you to practically buy stock in Duracell before feeling you're not getting screwed over. They can go through

high-quality alkalines FAST. Sure, you can use rechargeable batteries, but there's an added \$15-20.



The AF 52s also have a built-in microphone so you can take phone calls and perhaps other things depending on your phone or other device. Didn't do much with this so I can't say much about it. But to have sound this good *with* a mic included is pretty great.



Another cool bonus: The AF 52s fold up flat for storage—especially great for people who travel. They even include a travel pouch.

I love these headphones and think that you will too.



Review contributed by Roland Betrice

Specs (from the MEElectronics site):

Speaker specifications

Speaker driver: 40 mm

Frequency response: 20 Hz to 20 kHz

Impedance: 64 Ohms at 1K

Sensitivity: 103±3 dB at 1KHZ

Rated power: 20 mW

Maximum power: 50 mW

*Microphone specifications**Directivity: omnidirectional**S.P.L.: -58±2 dB**Frequency response: 10 Hz to 20 kHz**Bluetooth Specifications**Battery type: built-in 400mAh Lithium-polymer rechargeable battery**Charging connector type: mini-USB**Run time: up to 18 hours of talking or music playback time**Standby time: up to 250 hours**Charging time: 2 to 3 hours**What's in the box:**Venture AF52 Stereo Bluetooth headphones**USB charging cable**Stereo audio cable**Carrying pouch**User manual**Compatibility:**All Apple devices, Android, and Blackberry devices, Macs, Bluetooth enabled PCs, and any device with Bluetooth 2.1 or higher transmitter and the A2DP and headset profiles.*

Newer Technology NuGreen LED Desk Lamp

Product: NuGreen Lamp

Manufacturer: Newer Technology

Model: NGLL50CW

Web site: www.newertech.com (www.newertech.com/products/nwtledlamp.php)

Price: \$57.99

Adds focused, energy-efficient pure cool white light for a brighter workspace.



The NewerTech NuGreen Flexible Neck LED Desk Lamp is an excellent solution to any desktop dweller looking to make a switch from a conventional incandescent or florescent-style unit.

The lamp features 50 light emitting diodes (LEDs) to produce light the company calls similar to natural daylight. I'm not sure I agree; to me, the light looked a bit "naked" or "blue" but I got used to it very quickly.

I do, however, agree with the company that the NuGreen Lamp is perfect for dorm rooms, apartments, bedrooms—just about anywhere. The flexible gooseneck does an excellent job of shielding light from roommates or others co-inhabitants who are not interested in your latest scrapbooking project.

Perhaps best of all, the NuGreen Lamp uses just 3.6 watts of power. I didn't see any conversion info relative to "what it looks like" compared to an incandescent bulb, but I'd guess 40-60 watts, somewhere in there—not super bright but plenty bright for most purposes. And those LEDs last up to 45,000 hours, which is more than 20 times longer than conventional incandescents. Also, unlike most florescent bulbs, the LEDs contain no mercury so, you're welcome, municipal dump site.



The coup de grâce: the NuGreen Lamp is always cool to the touch so you don't have to worry that you left a hot lamp on while drying your undies. Of course, on the downside, you'll have to come up with some other way of drying your undies.

I use the lamp in my control booth when we're performing my original plays. Have never found a better solution. The gooseneck allows me to put light exactly where I need it and—at least as important—*doesn't* put light exactly where I *don't* want it.

Criticisms? Well, it would be great if the lamp had a dimmer knob of some sort or maybe allowed you to increase illumination incrementally with each touch of the red ring power indicator (which now is used to turn the lamp on and off).

All-in-all, a really elegant, solidly-built lamp that will sit on your desk and remain a smart energy choice for many years to come



Specs (from Newer Technology):

Material: Aluminum

Touch light ring color: Red

Color of light: Cool white

Color temperature: 4500K

LED size: .20 in (5mm)

Dimensions: Base - 5.625in (142.9mm); Flex arm - 12in (304.8mm); Light - 3.125in (79.4mm)

Brightness: 1600 - 2200 mcd

Luminous flux: 6.5 - 7.5 Lm

Maximum angle of flex arm: 120°

Number of LEDs: 50

Longevity: 45,000 hours

Power consumption: 3.6 watts

Operating voltage: 3.0 - 3.4 V

Power Adapter: External US/International UL Listed; Input - 100-240V AC 50-60Hz; Output - 17.5V

DC0.2 AMP

UL Certified: E304160

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Learn more at www.charlescarr.com.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)



Without Digital Music, Life Would Be an Error

Without Digital Music, Life Would Be an Error

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

The source material for the title of this column is from 19th century Germany (minus the "digital," of course), but its beautiful simplicity might apply to almost any place and time, finding meaning in that context. From phonograph cylinders to MP3s, the music itself is what always drives the technology. So with that in mind, I'd like to discuss some new releases of music that was important to me when I was younger (and remains so today, obviously).

"Le Sacre Du Printemps" Becomes A Centenarian



The Rite of Spring, arguably composer Igor Stravinsky's *pièce de résistance*, certainly his most recognizable, has been called a rather rapturous, riotous piece of music, one in fact greeted with a riot in a Parisian theatre on opening night, May 29, 1913. Although accounts vary, the evening itself has seemingly become the stuff of myth. Recent assessments of personal accounts and the media coverage from the period indicate that the initial disagreement that eventually became "a riot," was instigated by the dance—this was, after all, a ballet. Further, the riot myth seems to have been perpetuated by none other than Stravinsky himself. Why not? He was brilliant, and controversy sold, and sold well, even then.

By



notoriety or sheer beauty of the music itself (or both),

The Rite of Spring entered the popular culture, where it has remained, enhancing films, for instance, like "Henry and June," the first motion picture to receive an NC-17 rating. My introduction came courtesy Disney, however, seeing Fantasia as a kid on the big screen, and unconsciously falling in love with atonality, polyrhythms, (even the dodecaphonic, a wonderful word) and other essentially unorthodox musical ideas. Everything, from the simple and gorgeous opening bassoon melody on, remains amazing to me.

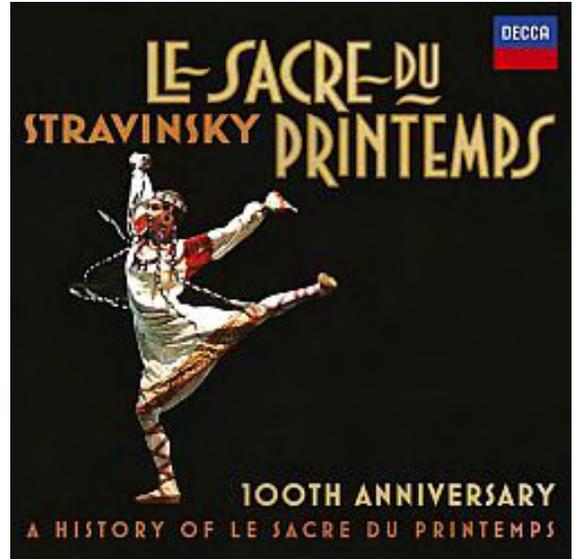


As the piece, sometimes called one of the most influential musical works of the 20th century, turned 100, it's become fondly remembered, analyzed, reworked, ad infinitum, and both Sony and Decca have released collections to



commemorate the event. Decca released both 4 and 20 CD box sets, each curated to contain the most significant performances their company has the rights to, along with the essay, "A Century of The Rite of Spring." One unique aspect to Decca's offering, contained in "A History," the smaller of the sets, is an entire disc of commentary, which for instance includes "Recollections of dancing in the first-night premiere on 29 May 1913 from Dame Marie Rambert."

The most critical performances, perhaps, are those conducted by Pierre Monteux (who conducted the symphony on opening night), and Stravinsky himself. The question for anyone interested in these releases is obviously the quality of the recording, and Sony seems to be the winner, although that's of course predominantly subjective, and both companies have gone out of their way to honor this music.



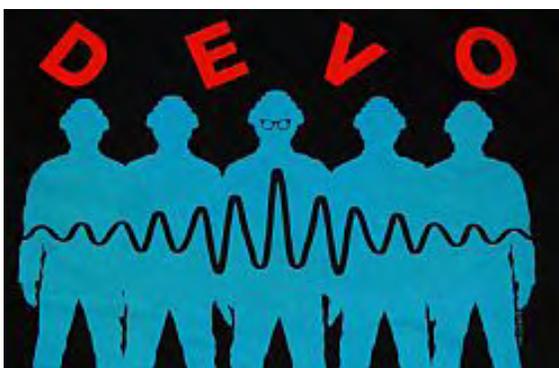
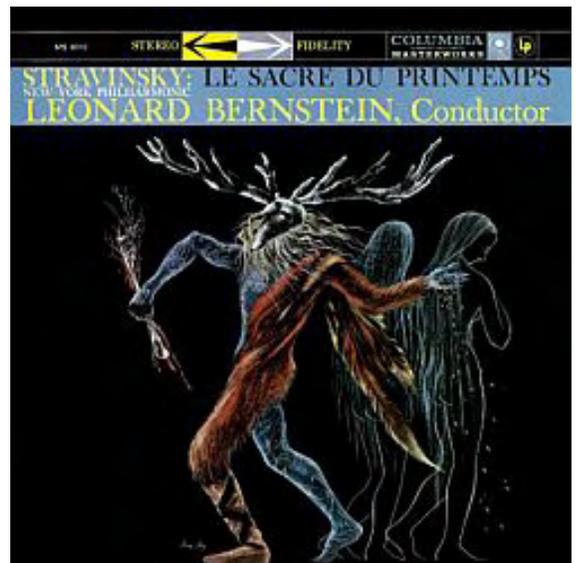
Decca's larger set is certainly ambitious, rather exhaustive (Salonen's thrown in there somewhere as an



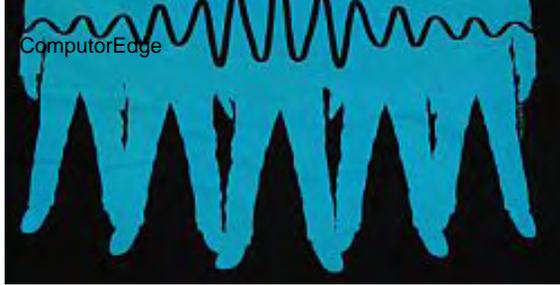
example of contemporary performance), and at approximately \$100, almost certainly for the most fervent among us. Sony, however, has managed to collect 10 excellent pieces, a nice multilingual booklet, keeping the price accessible (in physical and digital formats, it tends to range between \$20 and \$30). Sony also released a remastered performance of a landmark Bernstein recording. The packaging is also star, complete with the original cover from 1958, and some great photographs, including one of composer and conductor warmly greeting one another—a great gift or introduction.

Bernstein described The Rite of Spring as "only one of your everyday volcanic masterpieces," and "a miraculous new creation of such originality and power that still today it shocks and overwhelms us."

Speaking of shock, I'd be remiss if I didn't at least mention some other music that was seminal for me and my young, forming, and rather odd mind: Devo. From the culture's acceptance and indeed embrace of the trademark plastic hats, to the requisite dancing at almost any type of social gathering to smash hit "Whip It," this is one of the most genuinely strange musical acts to surreptitiously penetrate the mainstream courtesy the 1980s.



For anyone that actually listened to the first commercially available album and wondered from what bizarro multiverse Devo hailed, there's a new release for you: Devo Hardcore, Volumes I & II. Here's the real, unadulterated—meaning not Eno damaged/produced—strangeness of songs like Jocko Homo, in their original,



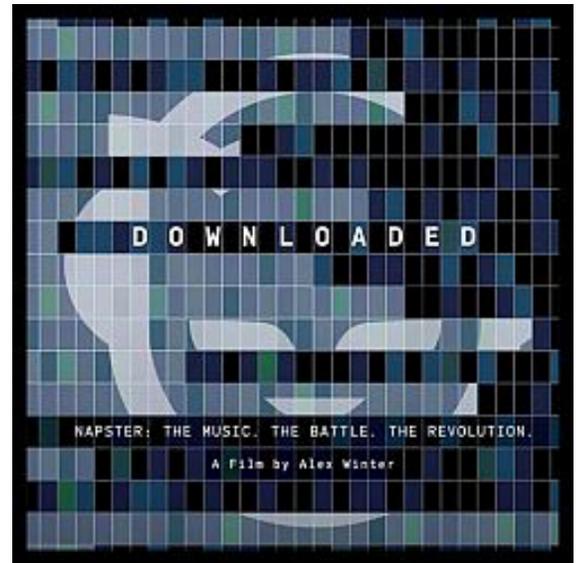
unfiltered state. The name Hardcore works both for the content and the intended audience. In the age of Bieber and American Idol (are they still around?), this unbridled eccentricity is a treat.

My musical choices for this column actually help to illustrate a great point, from my perspective at least—the state of the major labels and digital music. It was essentially impossible to obtain Stravinsky digital promo recordings mentioned above, all owned by some of the largest, traditional labels around. The independently released Devo works, however, showed up via e-mail the same day as my request, a nice segue into the next brief piece that recalls the story of Napster.

DOWNLOADED: The Documentary

Downloaded, which opened at this year's SXSW, and made its theatrical debut June 21st, was made available July 1st for purchase via, yep, download. The documentary follows the life of Napster—birth, death, attempted resurrection (that point's debatable). It features interviews with an assortment of musicians, such as Henry Rollins, industry insiders, and of course Shawn Fanning and Sean Parker (and other members of the Napster team).

There's of course no suspense, and this isn't a documentary on an obscure subject, but it does serve nonetheless to make (or at least remind the viewer) of some solid points, such as the social media perspective of the once wildly popular software. I always saw Napster, personally, as a great way to find live music or hopelessly esoteric tracks unavailable anywhere else. What struck me was that as I was downloading something like this, I'd suddenly get a note from someone in, say, Sweden, wanting to exchange a bit of banter about the music.



Back to the movie, it's certainly a period in tech and cultural history worth remembering, and Downloaded, which was 10 years in the making, does a good job of documenting it. It's available at iTunes, and for more information, stop by the official Facebook page (facebook.com/DownloadedDoc).



[Incidentally, if you'd like to hear and download some historic performances of Le Sacre Du Printemps for free, Archive.org remains a fantastic resource. A 1929 recording (archive.org/details/STRAVINSKYLEsacreDuPrintemps1929-NEWTRANSFER) of the piece as conducted by Stravinsky can be found online at Internet Archive, and another recorded in 1940 (archive.org/details/STRAVINSKYLEsacreDuPrintemps1940-NEWTRANSFER) is posted.]

My first published work focused on music, and related obsessions pushed me to become a DJ, Producer, and Music Director in college radio. With this column, I feel as though I'm sort of returning to something I love (although I've never left, really). I've been tracking the evolution of online music distribution since the days of Napster, and obsessively follow music releases across a range of genres. One of my music players (on each of my devices) is going from the time I wake up until the end of the day, lulling me to sleep (or what little I actually grab). "Without music, life would be an error." ~ Fred, the mad German

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

[Return to Table of Contents](#)



Editor's Letters: Tips and Thoughts from Readers

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

"Patent Wars," "Word 2001 Replacement," "Just a Thought!" "Music Player," "QuikPlay"

Patent Wars

[Regarding Jack Dunning's June 14 article (webserver.computoredge.com/online.mvc?issue=3124&article=cover), "Hi Tech Patent Wars":]

Thanks for a very complete and interesting article on the subject.

-Ron Cerrato, San Diego, CA

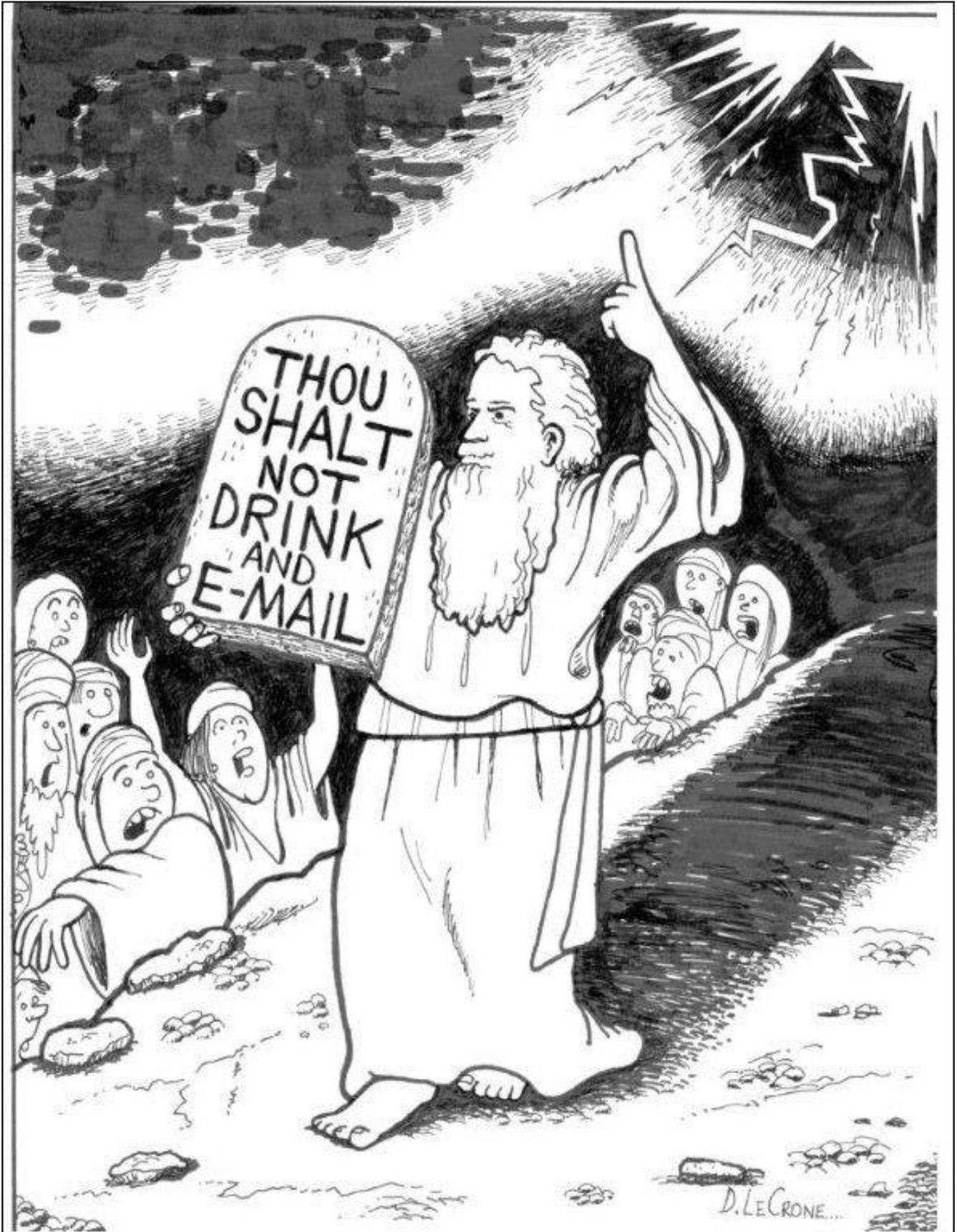
Word 2001 Replacement

[Regarding the June 21 Digital Dave column (webserver.computoredge.com/online.mvc?issue=3125&article=dave):]

Along with the suggestions you made, I recommend looking at Kingsoft's offering (www.kingsoftstore.com/). It's also free.

-Steve, Escondido, CA

Just a Thought!



-Douglas Hayden, www.geek-ceo.com

Music Player

[Regarding the June 14 A Free Quick and Dirty Windows App for Playing Music and Videos column (webserver.computoredge.com/online.mvc?issue=3124&article=vista):]

All Hot Key articles are too complicated for me.

-Vince Borengasser, Denver, CO

Vince, I can't blame you for feeling that way. AutoHotkey is not for everyone. The problem is that whenever software is made both flexible and powerful, there is always a certain amount of user friendliness lost. While I encourage people to learn how AutoHotkey can help them, I realize not everyone thinks the same way or wants the same things. There is nothing wrong with that. What's important is that you get your computer to do what you want it to do. It doesn't matter how you do it.

-Jack Dunning

QuikPlay

[Regarding the June 14 A Free Quick and Dirty Windows App for Playing Music and Videos column (webserver.computoredge.com/online.mvc?issue=3124&article=vista):]

It sure would be great if the four options (W, P, S, and N,) were in the right-click menu. One reason is that I don't have a Windows key, but perhaps more importantly, I'm the habit of right-clicking for options since it's less confusing to me than trying to remember numerous key combinations that change with every app.

-Ron Cerrato, San Diego, CA

Hi, Ron-

I added the options to the right-click menu of the icon in the System Tray. Now if someone right-clicks on that AutoHotkey icon, all the options are available. I replaced the files posted for download (www.dropbox.com/sh/4qu48lyqtixdg7t/QdMY1dNuy7).

I should just do some of these things. It is a good idea. There is no way anyone will remember all the hotkeys. I'll try to add key routines to the System Tray icon in any future samples.

Thanks,

-Jack, ComputerEdge

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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