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***Ballmer's Departure,  
Finding a Replacement,  
Other High Tech Stories***

***October 25, 2013***

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## Steve Ballmer's Departure from Microsoft, Finding a Replacement, and Other High Tech Stories



**CEO Steve Ballmer's Departure; Finding a Replacement CEO; Big Data and Cloud Developments; Venture Capital and Private Equity; Problems with Global E-Waste; High Tech for Wildlife; Kenya's Battle With Poachers Goes High Tech; Controversial Apps; Controversial Auto Apps: Ride-Sharing Versus Taxis; Parking Offended and Offenders.**

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# Digital Dave

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

*Windows 8 Games; Windows 8.1 Upgrade.*

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## Windows 8 Games

*Dear Digital Dave,*

*As always, I hope you can help. I purchased a new laptop (Toshiba Satellite C55-A) running Windows 8. My question is where are all the Default games that came with the older versions of Windows?*

*Dave Vail*

*King George, VA*

Dear Dave,

Windows 8 no longer includes the old free standard games that came with previous versions—at least not in the same way. The free games for Windows 8 run in the Modern interface which means they are available for all versions of Windows 8—even the RT tablets which won't run legacy Windows software from earlier versions. On the plus side, there are many more free games to choose from. The trick is finding the games.

Deceptively, there is a tile on the Start Screen called Games. It looks like a good place to start, but it's a Microsoft Xbox ploy. Everything found at this entrance is supposedly about Xbox (although these are not games that will run with Xbox). (Not that there is anything wrong with Xbox.) Plus, you cannot run "real" Xbox games in Windows 8. Just like the name Windows 8, Microsoft is using the name Xbox to mean a couple of different things. This area may be worth exploring, but if you're just looking for free games (Xbox or not), then there may be a better place to start.

To get access to free games for Windows 8, click the Windows Store tile on the Modern Start screen. It's a green tile with an icon of a shopping bag and the word Store (see Figure 1).

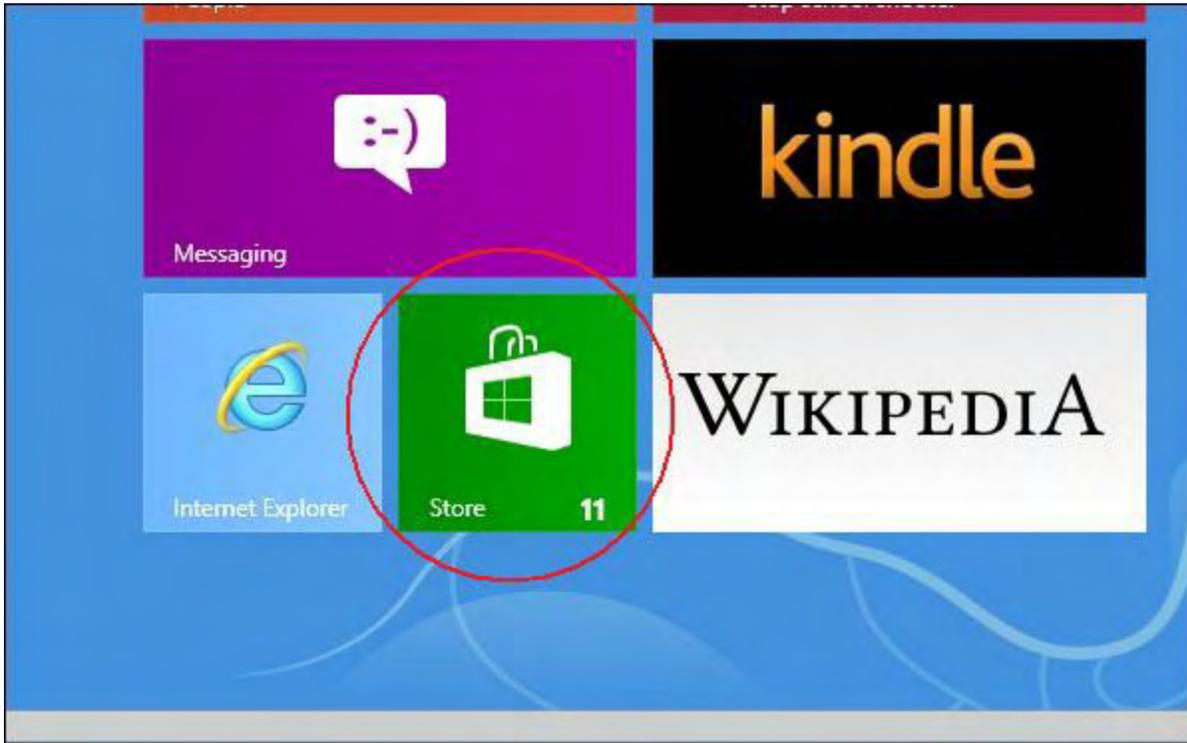


Figure 1. In Windows 8 the Windows Store is opened by clicking on the green Store icon in the Modern Start screen.

Scroll the screen to the left until you see the heading Games. From here you can select specific types of games and filter for Free games (see Figure 2).

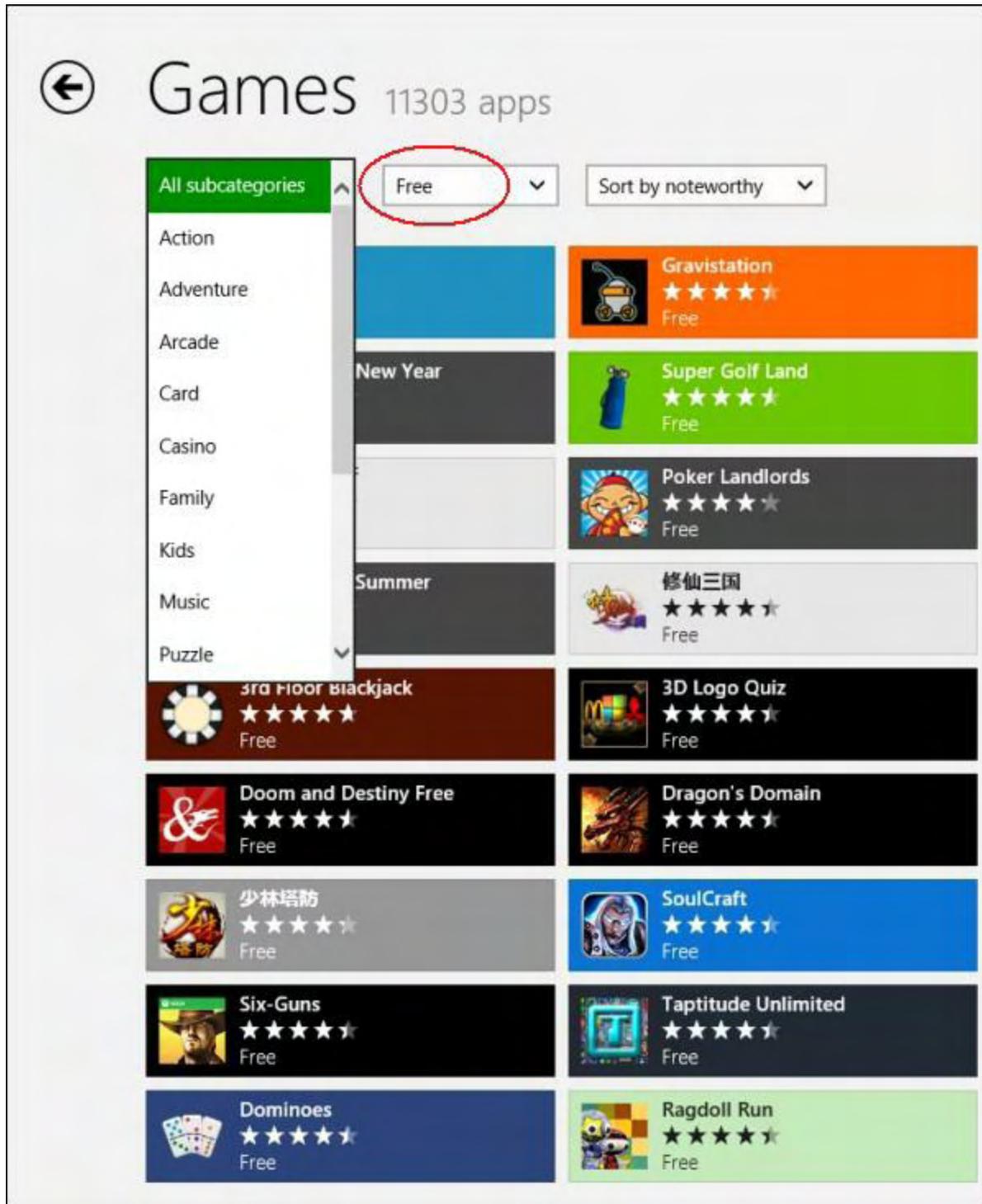


Figure 2. By selecting Free in the second drop-down menu, only the free games will be displayed in the Windows Store.

However, even this list may be too long to find the specific games you want. Use the WIN+W (⊞+W) to open a search of the free games section. Enter the game you want (e.g. minesweeper). Select the game you want and click install.

In the case of Minesweeper, the first one was pretty lame, but the one titled "Minesweeper Is Back" was good enough to while away an hour or two.

After the game is installed, its tile will appear at the far right end of the Modern Start screen (see Figure 3). Click the tile to launch the game. You can make a group of all the games for your convenience.

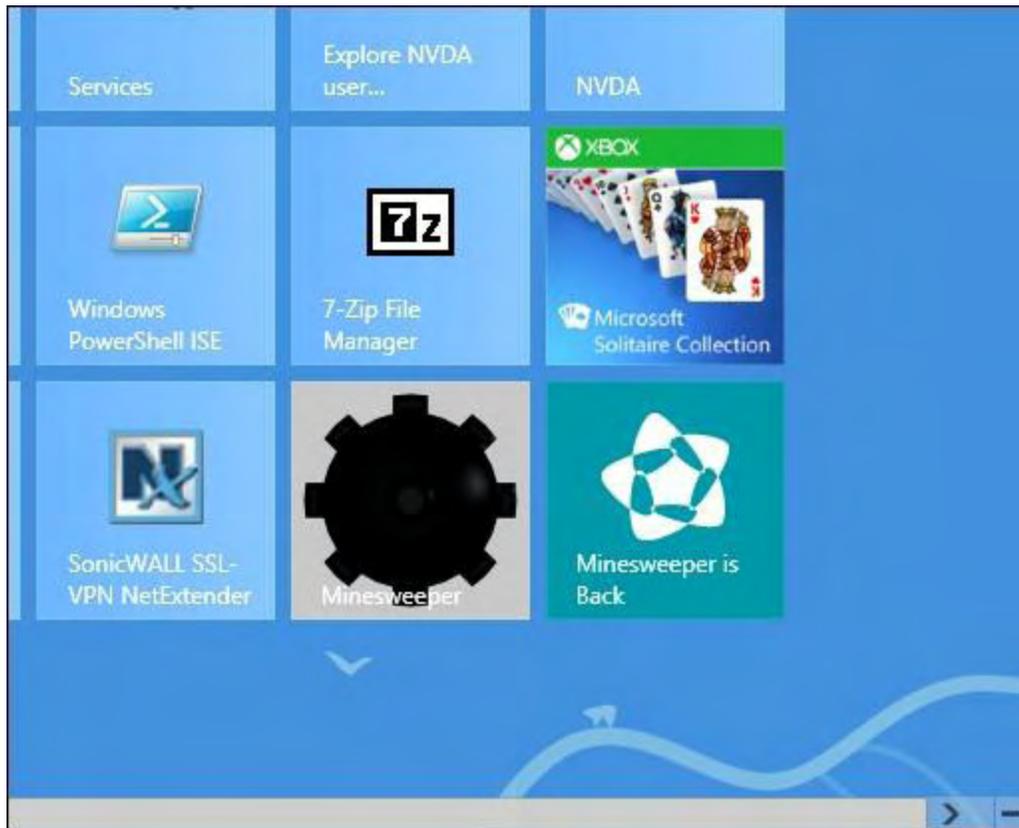


Figure 3. After installation find the games on the Modern Start screen.

Games are labeled Xbox and will also appear in the Xbox area, although they are not really Xbox games. Go figure.

Digital Dave

## Windows 8.1 Upgrade

### Observations about Upgrading to Windows 8.1

I often caution people not to be too quick when upgrading to a new version of software—at least until the bugs are worked out. If you're planning to upgrade your current version of Windows 8 Pro ("Real" Windows—as Jack Dunning calls it) to Windows 8.1 on your PC, then you are probably OK to go ahead. It seems that the worse that happens is the upgrade rolls back to Windows 8 when it can't install. You may be one of the lucky ones. I was. The same cannot be said for Windows 8 RT tablets (without "Real" Windows).

You may not want to be one of the first to install the Windows 8.1 RT tablet upgrade. It appears that many tablets are crashing without a recovery options. If you decide to risk it, make sure that you have a recovery flash drive for your tablet. Microsoft pulled down the upgrade for Windows RT from the Web site, but it has [since returned](#)—hopefully fixed. I'd might wait a month or so before trying to upgrade an RT tablet. By then the bugs may be worked out.

Be sure to do all the regular Windows 8 updates before downloading and installing the Windows 8.1 Upgrade. Skipping some updates may not be a problem, but it's better to be safe than sorry. Check for updates by searching for "updates" in Settings (⊞+W). Click "Windows Update" or "Check for updates."

To get your free Windows 8.1 Upgrade go to the Microsoft Store in the Modern Start screen, shown in Figure 1 in the reply to the letter above. The option will appear first in the line as shown in Figure 4. (The Windows 8.1 Upgrade will not appear in Window Update.)



Figure 4. The Windows 8.1 Upgrade is available in the Windows Store.

Once you start the download process, the installation is will to take a while. You can continue to use the computer while Windows 8.1 is downloading and installing, but eventually it will go into its rebooting mode. When that starts, you will need to patiently wait until it's finished with the install configuration.

When completed I was supposed to be sent a code by e-mail for some type of account validation. I never received it and continued without the code or a problem—so far. This code is for accessing your Microsoft online account from other devices in a two-step process. If you are only using the Windows 8.1 account on your computer, then there probably won't be a problem. (I can't figure out why Microsoft has problems sending e-mails. I know lost or delayed e-mails occurred to many people with the original installation of Windows 8.)

Make sure all your drivers are up-to-date before starting the upgrade—especially if you have an Nvidia video board. There have been some problems associated those as well as some AMD graphics.

Another problem has occurred on computers that had their User folder moved to another device. If any of these issues sound familiar, it deserves more investigation.

After installation, if you want to boot directly to the Desktop, then right-click on the Taskbar and select Properties to open the Taskbar and Navigation properties window. Select the Navigation tab and check "When I sign in or close all apps on a screen, go to the desktop instead of Start" and click Apply.

Clicking the new Start button in the lower left-hand corner does exactly the same thing as the Windows key (). However, a right-click on the button yields better results (see Figure 5). The menu that pops up is the Windows 8 +X menu which now includes Search and Power options.

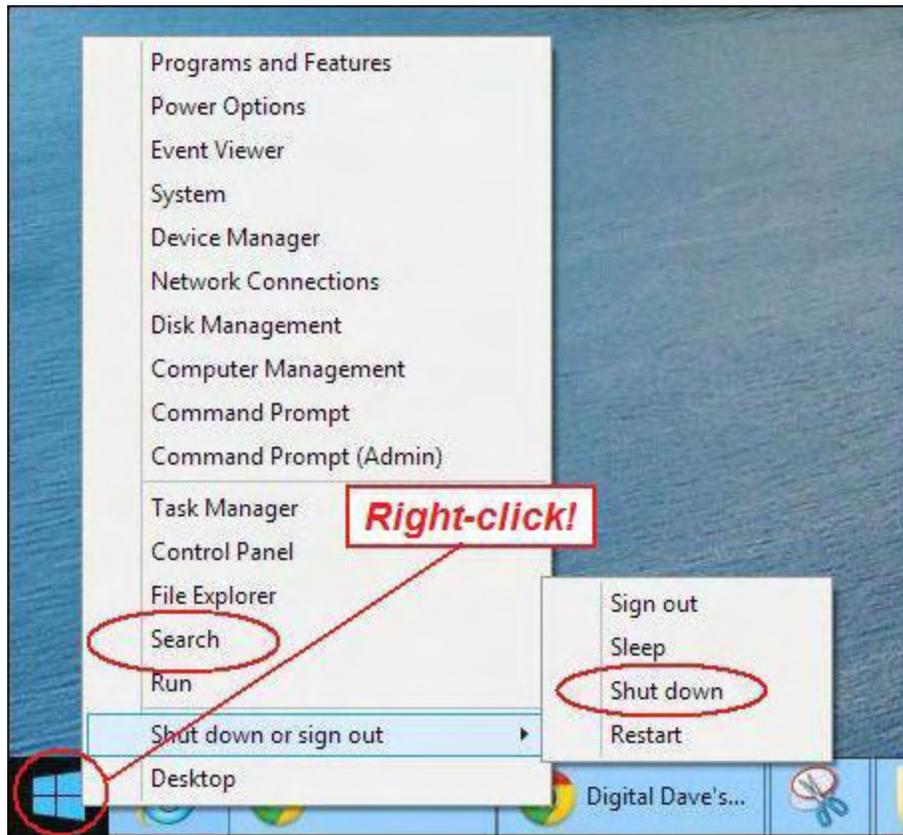


Figure 5. Right-click on the new Windows 8.1 Start Button and find some useful options.

While relatively minor changes, the boot to the Desktop option and the replaced Start button (although you still need to learn to right-click it) might make Windows 8 much easier for old Windows users.

Digital Dave



# Who Will Replace Balmer and More High Tech Stories

**“Microsoft Drama, Big Data on a Cloud, Venture Capital Slump, E-Waste, Wildlife Tech and More”** by Marilyn K. Martin

*CEO Steve Ballmer's Departure; Finding a Replacement CEO; Big Data and Cloud Developments; Venture Capital and Private Equity; Problems with Global E-Waste; High Tech for Wildlife; Kenya's Battle With Poachers Goes High Tech; Controversial Apps; Controversial Auto Apps: Ride-Sharing Versus Taxis; Parking Offended and Offenders.*

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## Microsoft Drama: CEO Steve Ballmer's Departure

In August 2013, the *Seattle Times* Brier Dudley reported that CEO Steve Ballmer's pending retirement from Microsoft might be a blessing-in-disguise for his renewed attempts to bring a [National Basketball Team to Seattle](#). Ballmer has also been spotted visiting the offices of Seattle's pro-football team, the Seahawks. Speculation is also whether he'll turn his considerable wealth (nearly \$17 Billion) into a charity foundation, like MS founder Bill Gates, or focus more on pro sports, like pushing to build a new basketball arena.



Microsoft finds the ideal candidate for its new CEO.

According to Good Morning America (through Yahoo!News) at the end of September 2013, Microsoft's departing CEO, Steve Ballmer, [spoke passionately](#) at his last employee meeting. He professed his love for Microsoft, telling employees "You work for the greatest company in the world." At the end of the meeting (video on The Verge) they played one of his favorite songs, *Dirty Dancing*'s "I Had The Time Of My Life."

## More Microsoft Drama: Finding a Replacement CEO

By the end of September 2013, the *Seattle Times* was reporting that Microsoft shares were up, due to reports that Ford CEO (and former CEO of Boeing Commercial Airplanes) Alan Mulally was now considered the [top contender](#) to succeed outgoing Steve Ballmer. But *Forbes* cautions that while Mulally is a proven leader, at 68 his talent is more about turning businesses around, than [entrepreneurial technology](#).

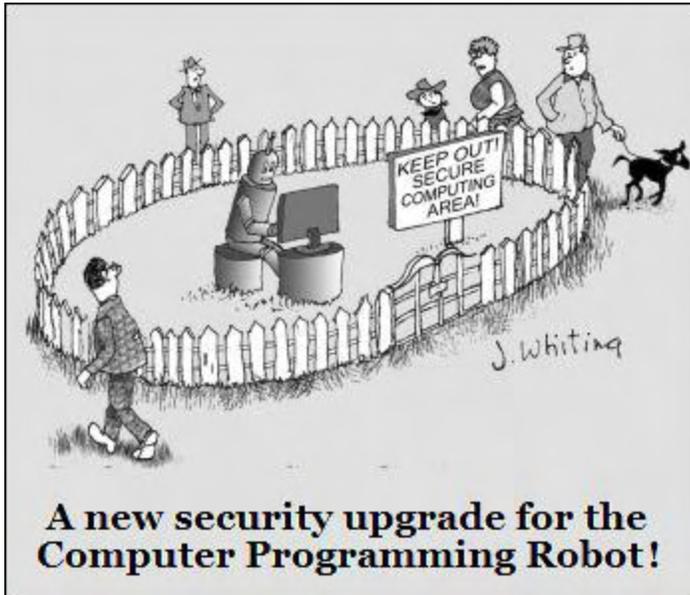
This article argues in favor of a "younger and more dynamic CEO with more of an entrepreneurial tech startup mentality." While some pundits recommend a new CEO from outside the company, the *Forbes* article suggests looking at both successful ex-MS employees (like Gabe Newell, CEO of Valve), as well as Microsoft's "inherited CEOs" from purchased companies (like Tony Bates, former CEO of MS-acquired Skype).

As reported by *Channelbuzz* in early October 2013, Microsoft investors holding a collective 5% of MS stock are reportedly pressuring founder Bill Gates to [resign his Chairmanship](#). Since Gates and board member John Thompson, (CEO, Virtual Instruments) are overseeing the MS CEO replacement search, the unhappy investors think that the new CEO will just be a Ballmer-clone. Since Ballmer took over in 2000, Microsoft's valuation has fallen from \$600 Billion to about \$277 Billion today, and Microsoft has fallen behind on mobility, tablets and operating systems.

## Big Data and Cloud Developments

In September 2013, BigCloudData announced that Rice University (Houston, Texas) has found a new way to handle the mountains of scientific [data piling up](#) at Rice's laboratories.

Computer networking researchers at Rice have designed a customized, energy-efficient optical network that can feed all that scientific Big Data to Rice's supercomputers. Called BOLD (Big Data and Optical Lightpaths-Driven Networked Systems Research Infrastructure), it is about to become a reality, thanks to a grant from the National Science Foundation. "Experiments produce mountains of data, and there is often no efficient way to process that data to make discoveries and solve problems," reports BOLD's principal strategist, T. S. Eugene Ng.



MIT's *Technology Review* reported in September 2013 that Mount Sinai Medical Center (Manhattan, New York) is adding a new "computing cluster" to supplement their \$3 Million supercomputer, in order to [crunch medical Big Data](#) on patients, and hopefully spit out Big Results to get patients healthier quicker—and help them stay that way. Mount Sinai is a medical school and hospital that treats half a million patients per year. It already has a biobank of patient DNA/plasma samples, as well as electronic medical records. The idea is to leverage medical Big Data with "predictive analytics" by running a version of Hadoop, or software

that spreads data across many computers, and can generate large amounts of quick-changing information.

According to the *Seattle Times* in October 2013, Amazon has won a monumental battle against IBM to keep their \$600 Million [CIA contract](#). Amazon provides cloud computing technology to the CIA through Amazon Web Services (AWS), winning that "marquee contract" in January 2013. IBM protested and got the General Accountability Office (GAO) to reopen the bidding, after which Amazon sued. A closed-door hearing in Washington DC Federal Claims Court ruled in Amazon's favor. Some pundits think the victory is what Amazon needs to quell criticism of its pioneer cloud services, since AWS is "sometimes dismissed as unable to handle the demands of running mission-critical operations and handling sensitive data."

## Venture Capital and Private Equity—When Will the Slump End?

It's been a bumpy few years for venture capital activity, with the bad US economy. *The Chicago Tribune* reported in April 2013 that US venture investment in Chicago has "shown [quarter-on-quarter declines](#) since the second quarter of 2012." In the first quarter of 2013, US based companies raised only \$6 Billion in 752 deals, compared to \$7 Billion in 800 deals in the

fourth quarter of 2012. Chicago was last out of 11 sub-regions tracked by Dow Jones [VentureSource](#), with the top sub-region being the expected San Francisco/Bay Area.

Also in April 2013, the *New York Times* announced that Silicon Valley venture capitalists were leaning toward the tried-and-true necessities of Life, investing in [food businesses](#). Some investors even harbor grand plans to transform the food industry, solving "sustainability" issues similar to their other portfolio investments in solar energy and electric cars.

*The San Jose Mercury News* (through *SiliconValley*) in April 2013, reported that venture capitalists have largely abandoned once-hot [investments in China](#) after disappointing Initial Public Offerings (IPOs). Venture investment in mainland China dropped 40% in 2012.

By July 2013, CBInsights reported that Second Quarter (Q2) results for venture investments were a [mixed bag](#). Funding levels were down 14% compared to 2012, and deal activity was also down. But VC-backed IPOs hit a five-quarter high at 22 in Q2, spurred mainly by healthcare companies.

*The Seattle Times* reported in October 2013 that venture investors are now [looking to Canada](#) for investment opportunities. Vancouver, British Columbia (Canada) has become a tech hot-spot, with "tech-friendly tax and immigration policies—and lots of software engineers who don't expect Silicon Valley salaries." Vancouver's [HootSuite](#) raised an astounding \$165 Million in August 2013 from venture capitalists who had backed Facebook and Twitter—which was twenty-times more than the average Northwest US start-up raised last year.

Will US venture investments get out of its slump anytime soon? In September 2013, VentureCapitalReport predicted that there will be "massive fundraising growth in 2014," based on a recent executive compensation survey of the private equity space, that points to [increasing confidence](#) in an improving economy. The survey revealed that senior executives' compensation in venture capital firms continued to rise in 2013 by 3%-7%, indicating a rebound in the private equity market.

## Problems with Global E-Waste

According to the *New York Times* in May 2013, poor people all over the world are burning, smashing and "cooking" thrown away electronics to recover small quantities of [copper, gold and silver](#)—all while breathing in toxic substances like cadmium, lead and mercury. In the US, federal prisoners were once tasked with processing e-waste. And we have yet to ratify the Basel Convention which is an international treaty that makes it illegal to export or traffic in toxic e-waste. Congress did introduce a 2011 "Responsible Electronics Recycling Act", but it was never put to a vote. In Europe and Japan, the e-waste burden was shifted to manufacturers, requiring them to accept any of their used products back for free, to be recycled.

According to the *Denver Post*, a new state law went into effect on July 1, 2013 that bans just throwing away [e-waste electronics](#), except for phones. Colorado residents now have to arrange for their electronics to be recycled, either by dropping them off at recyclers, or having them picked up. Some big retail outlets, like Best Buy and Staples, already offer this recycling service. In the US, only about 27% of e-waste is recycled, as of 2010 statistics. Some Colorado counties can opt-out of the ban, if they "lack the infrastructure to provide adequate recycling services to residents."

In August 2013, *IMT Green & Clean Journal* (through *Thomasnet News*) announced that Congress has revived their "Responsible Electronics Recycling Act (RERA)." Among other goals, the bill would prohibit the export of some electronics, if disposal in foreign countries would create health, environmental or national security risks. The bill has bipartisan support in Congress, and is also supported by both business (since RERA would create recycling jobs) and environmental groups. A recent study estimated that keeping more electronic recycling in the US could generate up to 42,000 American jobs. Twenty-three states (including Colorado, see above) already have laws to make producers responsible for e-waste of their products.

## High Tech for Wildlife

*The New York Times* reported in August 2013 that [counting-birds](#) has now gone high tech. Bird watchers/counters can now join [eBird](#), to download an app to enter bird counts while in the field, which sends the data to the Cornell (University) [Lab of Ornithology](#). This new approach to counting global populations of birds has yielded 300 "heat maps" that can display colorful densities of bird species moving across black maps.

In September 2013, the Associated Press (through *Newser*) announced that US officials have developed a new smartphone app to try and reduce the number of [whales struck and killed](#) by ships sailing in and out of San Francisco Bay. The Whale Spotter app identifies the photographed whale, and will eventually help create location-maps for various species designed by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and Coast Guard officials, which can then recommend different ship routes to avoid whale havens. Testing of the app has started.

## Kenya's Battle With Poachers Goes High Tech

Kenya's *Standardmedia* in August 2013 reported that wildlife poachers have gone high-tech, using guns fitted with silencers to kill large and endangered wildlife. Poachers are now targeting rhinos, since their horns are in more demand than elephant tusks (ivory). Kenyans blame lax laws, and hope a new Wildlife Bill in Parliament will raise the penalties against poachers. The Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) reported in January 2013 that they would be recruiting and training 1,000 [new game rangers](#), starting with 500 this past July 2013. Rhino and elephant populations in Kenya's many parks continue to decline at an alarming rate due to heavily armed poachers.

But [high tech satellite help](#) is on the horizon for Kenya's endangered wildlife, according to Medium.com in September 2013. The Zoological Society of London has teamed up with the Kenyan Wildlife Service to deploy satellite-linked, motion-triggered cameras to fight against poachers. The new cameras, developed by [Cambridge Consultants](#), will be deployed in remote areas of Tsavo National Park to start. If successful, the camera program can be expanded to Kenya's other 21 national parks, 28 national reserves, and 5 national sanctuaries. The weather-resistant cameras can be hidden anywhere, and can upload near-real-time images of wildlife and poachers through the Iridium satellite network. Besides assisting with poachers, the cameras system can also better track and monitor the wildlife.

## Controversial Apps

The Associated Press (through the *Seattle Times*), announced in September 2013 that Food and Drug Administration (FDA) officials will [begin regulating](#) some of the 17,000 new health and medical applications and gadgets that work with smartphones. Most of the flood of mobile medical/health apps will not be federally regulated. The FDA will focus on just a handful of apps that claim to turn smartphones into devices, like heart monitors or medical attachments. Many of these "attachments" can cost \$100 or more, and the FDA has so far only approved 75 of them. Sales data has yet to indicate if patients and doctors are embracing these complex apps and testing-tools, for tests usually conducted inside doctors' offices.

## Controversial Auto Apps: Ride-Sharing Versus Taxis

In June 2013, *Huffington Post* reported that the City of Los Angeles (California) had just sent strongly worded cease-and-desist letters to three [ride-sharing app companies](#). Travis Kalanick, founder of the app [Uber](#) said he had no plans to halt service in Los Angeles, a view shared by other ride-sharing mobile apps, like Lyft and Sidecar. All three ride-sharing companies claim authority to operate anywhere in California under an agreement with the state's Public Utilities Commission, which regulates limousines and hired cars. Los Angeles, however, claims the ride-sharing companies are "unlicensed commercial transportation services" without a "state charter party carrier permit."

Since starting up in big cities like New York and San Francisco, ride-sharing app companies have built up loyal users, but face stiff resistance from taxi cab companies, whom they frequently price cut. The three ride-share companies let people use their own cars and act as cabbies, and they can perform personal tasks—like picking up fast food and delivering it—that cabs can't or won't. Some cities try to keep the lucrative airport passenger crowd exclusively for the taxi companies. But Seattle's KIRO-TV in June 2013 ran an article about how [frustrated the taxi industry](#) is in their city. Taxi drivers are complaining to City Hall that "We used to work eight or nine hours. Now it's 12 to 13 hours." The Seattle City Council has commissioned a study to find out how many people are using the car-sharing services, before changing their regulations.

In September 2013, ride-share company Uber got some good press, when their Washington DC branch [offered free rides](#) to people stranded by the DC Navy Yard shooting. FullofKnowledge reported that Uber tweeted "All rides from Navy Yard area this afternoon are free." Uber had also offered free rides for three days when they first started up their service in Boston (Massachusetts).

By mid-September 2013, *TechCrunch* reported that the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) had [unanimously approved](#) new ride-sharing regulations for companies like Uber, Lyft and SideCar. The new regulations established a new category of business called a Transportation Network Company, and requires the ride-share companies to obtain a special license from CPUC. As well as conduct criminal background checks, establish a driver training program, and hold a commercial insurance policy with a minimum \$1 Million per-incident coverage.

## **More Controversial Auto Apps: Parking Offended and Offenders**

In June 2013, Yahoo!Homes ran a story on how wealthy Malibu (California) coastal homeowners are using [fake signs](#) to keep beach-goers away from Malibu's public beaches. The homeowners have used everything from orange cones and fake no-trespassing signs, to security guards and fake garage doors to keep the public from accessing the pristine beaches. So a couple writers got together to develop a new app called [MalibuBeaches](#) which shows users exactly where each public access point is along the 20 miles of the Malibu coast. A successful Kickstarter campaign in May 2013 kept the iPhone app [free all summer](#), and helped develop an Android app.

According to TrendHunter in July 2013, a new and free parking mobility app out of Texas, [ParkingMobility](#), has been developed to [let citizens report](#) on vehicles illegally parked in disabled parking spots. The app lets the reporting citizen use their smartphone to take three photos of the offending car (license plate, front window and full shot of the car in the disabled slot), and quickly processes a full report to submit to local parking authorities, in order to generate a parking ticket. Critics likened the app to "vigilante justice."

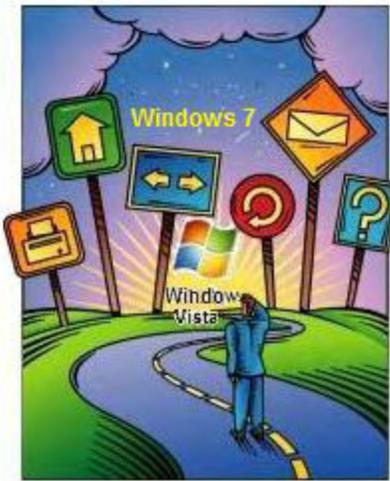
*The New York Times*, in September 2013, reported that the ParkingMobility app is still being tested, and the company is working to establish community volunteers to be trained and submit to background checks, before being allowed to issue reports that could generate [illegal-parking tickets](#).

A similar volunteer parking-reporter program, with no app, was started in Malibu, California, last summer to help enforce their 3-hour parking rules. And [SpotSquad](#) is a Canadian start-up to let citizens with smartphones send all kinds of parking violation photos directly to municipal patrol officers, so they can issue tickets.

*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](#) is an ongoing 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](#) is a collection of humor essays chronicling her adventures in her new home-state.*

Twelve months (July 2012 through June 2013) of Marilyn's [Little Known High Tech](#) series has been compiled into an almanac (with a complete index) available exclusively at Amazon. If you want a quick reference for the obscure or unusual in computers and the Internet over the last year, then [check it out](#).

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](#). 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!



## Windows Tips and Tricks

# Windows Tips and Tricks: Make the Desktop More Useful

### “Microsoft Offers a Free Utility for Adding Systems Information to Your Desktop Background” by Jack Dunning

*The BgInfo app included in Microsoft's Sysinternals can add Windows system information to your Desktop background. But that's not all it does!*

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With further exploration of the free set of utilities from Microsoft, [Windows Sysinternals](#), we come upon [BgInfo](#) a tool for tailoring the Desktop background screen with text and information. Initially, *BgInfo* looks like a simple tool for adding system information to the Desktop for easy access, but when looking a little deeper, greater possibilities come to mind.

In its default mode, when loaded *BgInfo* adds basic computer system information to the Desktop background image such as CPU type, operating system, hard drive data, etc. (see Figure 1). To update the screen on every boot, add the app (or a shortcut pointing to the app) to the Startup folder (*Run => Shell:Startup* to open the Startup folder). After logging on, the *BgInfo* window will briefly open to load the latest info. If you don't want the *BgInfo* window to open "use the command-line option */timer:0* to update the display without showing the dialog box.

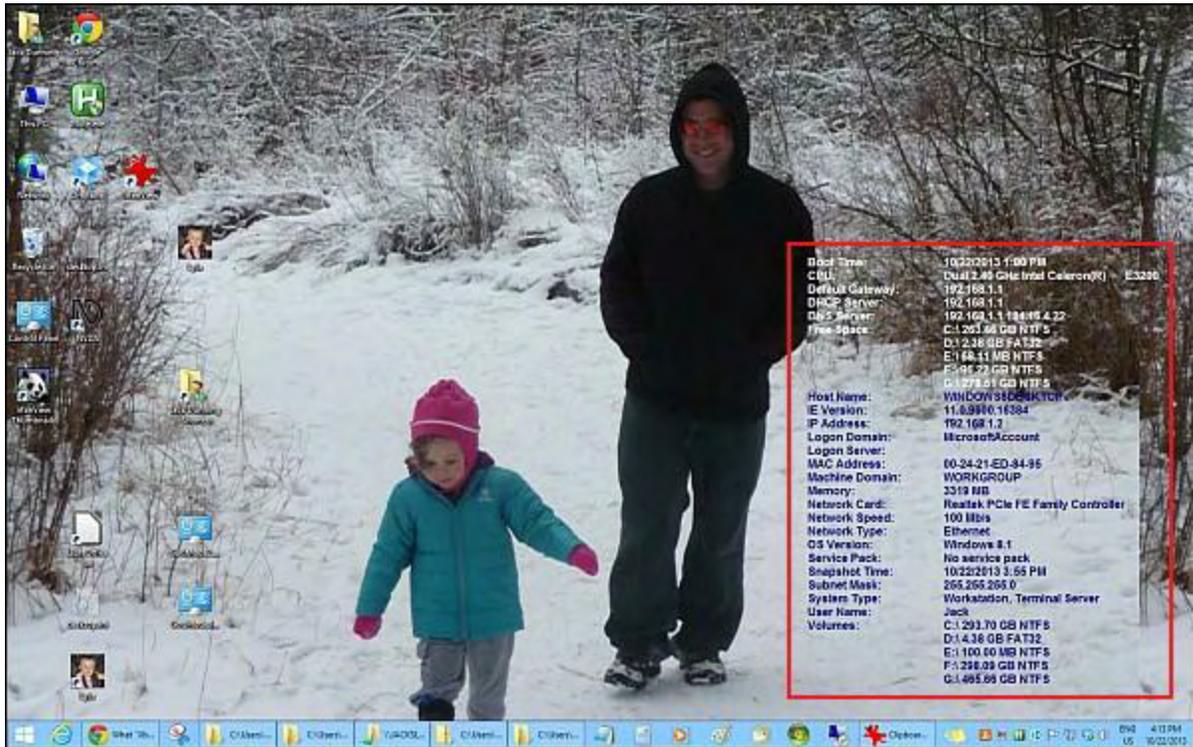


Figure 1. BgInfo adds details of the Windows computer to the Desktop background (highlighted in the red box).

*BgInfo* can also be run directly at anytime with a double-click or from the command prompt. Once loaded, there are a number of ways to tailor the information (see Figure 2). Note that the top items in the main window are in the color white while the lower items are in blue. This was set to match the background shown in Figure 1. If the colors were reversed, they would be almost unreadable on the current background image. When applying font styles, colors, and other background parameters, they only affect the selected items.

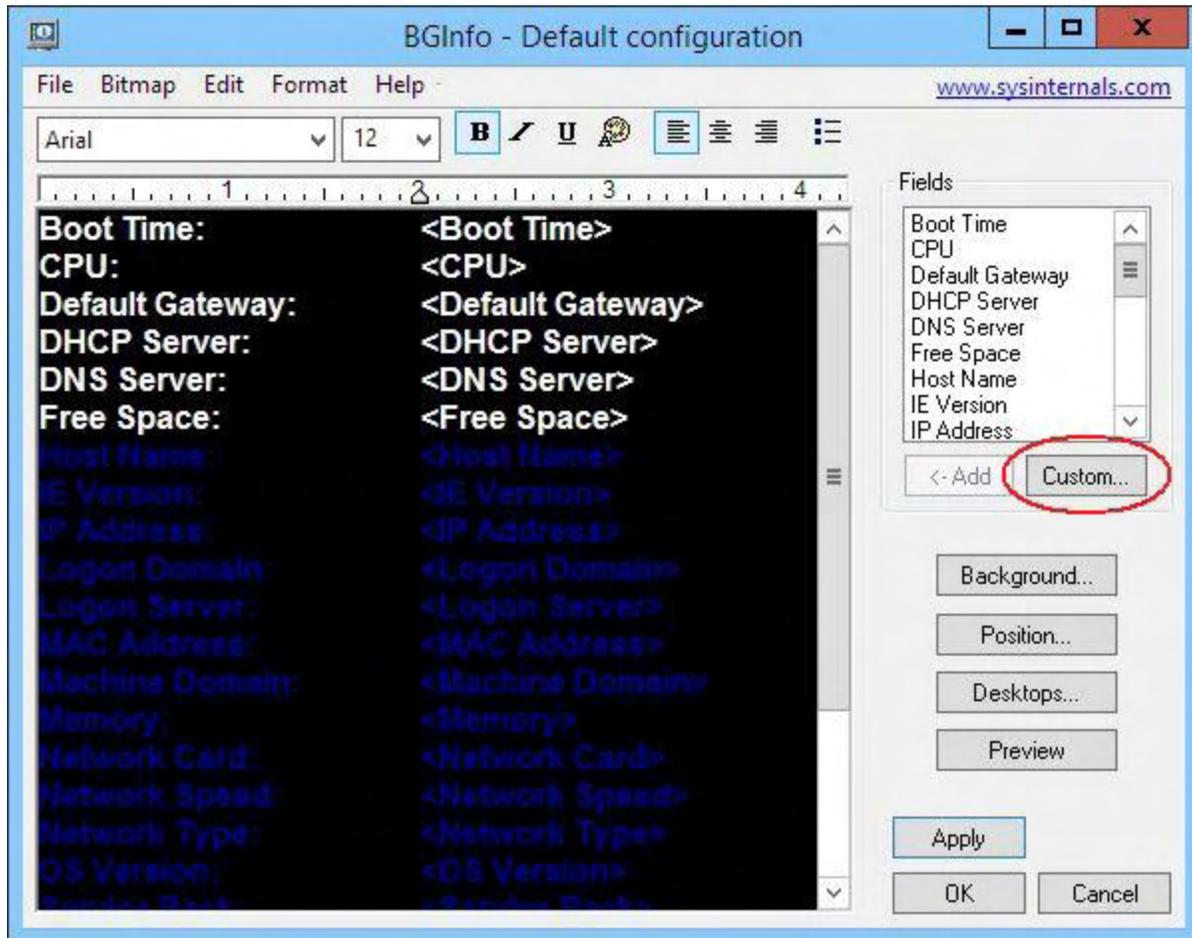


Figure 2. BgInfo has many standard options, plus the information may be custom data.

Items can be removed by selecting and deleting. They are added by selecting from the list on the right and clicking the "Add" button.

Of particular interest is the "Custom..." button which allows the addition of special text of your choice. When clicked the User Defined Fields window opens (see Figure 3 top). Click New and the Define New Field window opens (which is identical to the Modify Field window shown in Figure 3). As can be seen, there are a number of different options for adding new data.

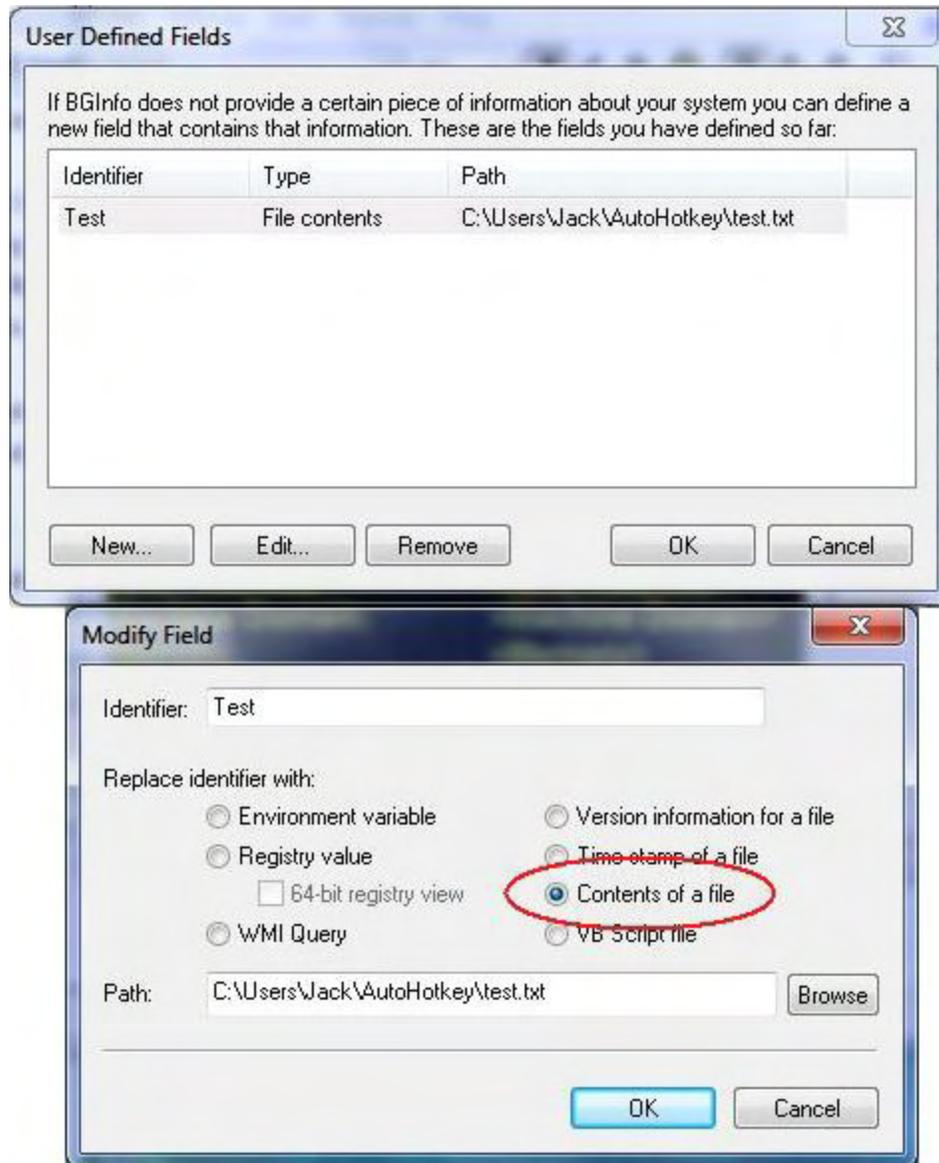


Figure 3. BgInfo has options for adding customized data through the User Defined Fields window (top) and the Modify Field window (bottom).

The "Contents of a file" radio button allows you to browse for a text file to display. This may even be a file generated by [AutoHotkey](#) or another scripting language on the fly. Also, note that *BgInfo* is capable of running VB (Visual Basic) scripts. If regular updates of the Desktop background are needed, this utility could be run from Windows Task Scheduler or an AutoHotkey script on a regular basis.

For example, suppose that you want a big clock in your Desktop background which updates every minute with the correct time. You could write a simple AutoHotkey script which saves the formatted time to a text file every minute with the AutoHotkey [SetTimer command](#), then runs *BgInfo* to update the time on the Desktop. You could use a massive font in *BgInfo* to make sure you never forget what time it is. It's not really all that hard to do. (Not sure what AutoHotkey is? See "[Introduction to AutoHotkey: A Review and Guide for Beginners.](#)")

In addition to text, images can also be inserted into *BgInfo* through the Edit menu at the top of the main window for displaying on top of the background. There are certainly many possibilities for how you can tailor your Desktop background—limited only by your imagination.

---

*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](http://www.computoredge.com). He can be reached at [ceeditor@computoredge.com](mailto: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.\*](#)

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 and Digging Deeper Into AutoHotkey.\*](#)

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?"\*](#)

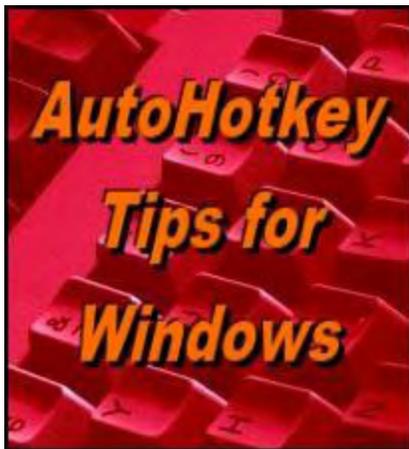
Currently only at Amazon.com, [\*Jack's Favorite Free Windows Programs: What They Are, What They Do, and How to Get Started!\*](#).

Available from Amazon, [\*Misunderstanding Windows 8: An Introduction, Orientation, and How-to for Windows 8!\*](#) Also available at [Barnes and Noble](#) and [ComputerEdge E-Books](#).

Available exclusively from Amazon, [\*Windows 7 Secrets Four-in-One E-Book Bundle, Getting Started with Windows 7: An Introduction, Orientation, and How-to for Using Windows 7,\*](#)

[\*Sticking with Windows XP—or Not? Why You Should or Why You Should Not Upgrade to Windows 7,\*](#)

and [\*That Does Not Compute!\*](#), brilliantly drawn cartoons by Jim Whiting for really stupid gags by Jack about computers and the people who use them.



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

## **Build Your Own AutoHotkey App Control Center**

**“A Basic Framework for Making It Easier to Work with Various AutoHotkey (and Other) Programs”** by Jack Dunning

*If you're getting System Tray clutter from too many AutoHotkey icons, then here is a way to get better control of your apps.*

*The new edition of **A Beginner's Guide to AutoHotkey** is now available from [Amazon](#) and at [ComputerEdge E-Books](#) (EPUB and PDF formats). This edition now includes two new chapters and an index to the commands included in the book with links to the command information on the [AutoHotkey\\_L](#) Web site. If you previously purchased the first edition from Amazon, you should be able to update to the current through your account. If you purchased the book through ComputerEdge E-Books and have used all of your previous downloads, then contact us at [ebooks@computoredge.com](mailto:ebooks@computoredge.com) with your name and/or invoice number and we will give you an additional download for the new edition. The e-book is also available at [Barnes and Noble for the Nook](#).*

*For a quick introduction to AutoHotkey, see "[Introduction to AutoHotkey: A Review and Guide for Beginners](#)."*

\* \* \*

## **Build Your Own AutoHotkey Control Panel**

If you use AutoHotkey apps very much, you may soon find that your apps are taking up way too much space in the Taskbar Notification area. Unless you change the icons, each app can't be distinguished without hovering over it. You could combine the apps into one big script, but that's not always practical, especially if you use a third-party app such as [ClipJump Windows Clipboard Manager](#). One solution is to build your own AutoHotkey control panel with the *Listview* command.

I put together a control panel script for myself that I cleverly call AutoHotkeyControl. I've posted the *AutoHotkeyControl.ahk* along with the images it uses in *AutoHotkeyControl.zip* at the *ComputerEdge* [AutoHotkey Dropbox download Web site](#), but I won't post a compiled (EXE) version because it's unlikely that anyone would want exactly the same control panel as mine. What I'm presenting here is a framework for making your own tailored AutoHotkey control panel.

## How AutoHotkeyControl Works

The AutoHotkeyControl app opens a small window which lists the AutoHotkey (or others) apps that I want to control using the AutoHotkey *ListView* command. There are only two columns: Active and AutoHotkey App (see Figure 1). Active tells me whether the app is running as a process. AutoHotkey App merely identifies the target AutoHotkey script. (The app does not need to be an AutoHotkey app or even an app. The row titled "Various Actions" is for different apps and actions contained in one or multiple apps.)



Figure 1. Right-click on a row and a tailored menu will pop-up with options. The red dot indicates that the app is currently not running. Note that many of the menu items are grayed out indicating that they are disabled.

With the example in Figure 1 selecting Start QuikPlay App launches the program *QuikPlay.exe*. The red dot changes to a green dot and the No becomes a Yes. When right-clicking on QuikPlay, the menu items are now all enabled and the last items is now Exit QuikPlay App (see Figure 2). Clicking on the last option again reverses the process.



Figure 2. After the app is loaded the green dot with the word Yes is displayed. With the app loaded, the QuikPlay options are now all activated.

What makes the *ListView* command particularly suited for this control panel is that the menu can vary according to which row is right-clicked (see Figure 3). This adds the ability to tailor each menu to only those items needed for the specific target app. Each process can be started, stopped, or controlled individually without the memorizing all the hotkey combinations or searching for the program file location.



Figure 3. The To Do List item offers a different right-click menu from the QuikPlay item shown in Figure 2.

One of my complaints about the ClipJump app was that it didn't have an easy way to start and stop it. I could have written a short script using the ClipJump command line function, but by adding it here, I have a quick way to start and stop ClipJump without taking extra steps. I may add items for selecting specific ClipJump channels.

This time we'll walk through the code needed to set up the first row in the AutoHotkeyControl panel—QuikPlay. I started with the code from the [ToDoList.ahk script](#) because it used some of the critical structure I needed. However, even though copying the old code was easier than starting from scratch, I ended up deleting most of it.

## How to Set Up an App Control

This first section deals primarily with the auto-execute portion of the AutoHotkeyControl app. It sets up the *ListView* window and adds the various right-click menus for each row. Remember that the auto-execute portion of a script is the code at the beginning of the script which is immediately executed when that script is loaded—stopping when either the Return command or a subroutine (label) is encountered.

The first part of the framework script uses the [ListView command](#) to create an AutoHotkey [GUI window](#) that acts as the control panel. The *GUI* is set to always-on-top and resizable:

```
Gui, default
Gui +AlwaysOnTop +Resize
Gui, Add, ListView, nosort r10 readonly vMyListView gMyListView , Active | AutoHotkey
```

The primary options of importance in the *ListView* line of code are *nosort* and *readonly*. Remember that by default the items added to a *ListView* are sorted by the first column. But in this script it's important that each item maintain its original row number. This number is used to determine which menu will be displayed with a right-click. The *nosort* option prevents the changing of row locations (and numbers) when they are added to the *ListView*.

Since there is no reason for the values of the first column to allow change by direct editing, the *readonly* option disables it.

## Setting Up the QuikPlay Menu

The [Menu command](#) is used to create a tailored right-click menu for the QuikPlay app:

```
Menu, QuikPlay, Add, Pick What to Play, PickPlay
Menu, QuikPlay, Add, What's Playing?, WhatPlay
Menu, QuikPlay, Add, Next, PlayNext
Menu, QuikPlay, Add, Stop Play, PlayStop
```

Each of these functions is handled by a hotkey combination in the QuikPlay app. However, if that same hotkey combination is used in a menu structure, then it must also exist in the same script as a hotkey label. Doing this would add a great deal of unnecessary complication. The easiest way to resolve the problem is to create a new label for each menu item which uses the [Send command](#) to issue the hotkey combination. This allows the control of the external app without any interaction between the two scripts:

```
PickPlay:
    Send, !#p
Return
```

```
WhatPlay:
```

```

Send, !#w
Return

PlayNext:
Send, !#n
Return

PlayStop:
Send, !#s
Return

```

These labels appear outside and after the auto-execute section of the script. Each label merely sends the appropriate hotkey combination to execute the desired QuikPlay action. QuikPlay runs as a separate independent process only reacting to the hotkey combinations.

This is not the end of the menu, but the last item depends upon whether QuikPlay is running or not. The existence of an active QuikPlay process will be determined before both the row is added to the *ListView* and the item is added to the QuikPlay menu. There is also a graphic image (red dot, green dot, or blue dot) which will be added at the same time. However, before adding any images can be added to a *ListView*, the list of those images must be created.

## Adding Images to ListView

While it is not necessary to use images to indicate whether an app is running or not, it is visually much easier to see the status if a color icon is displayed. Plus, this is an opportunity for me to show how images are used in *ListView*. The images must be available when each row is added to *ListView*, therefore the setup is done somewhere in the auto-execute section prior to the first *ListView* row requiring an icon is added.

Creating a list of images for *ListView* is a three step process. A list of a specific length is initialized with a variable name. *ListView* That newly created image list name is assigned to the *ListView*. Then, the images are added in order to the list:

```

ImageListID := IL_Create(3) ; Create an ImageList to hold three icons.
LV_SetImageList(ImageListID) ; Assign the above ImageList to the current ListView.
IL_Add(ImageListID, "RedDot.ico")
IL_Add(ImageListID, "GreenDot.ico")
IL_Add(ImageListID, "BlueDot.ico")

```

The [ListView IL\\_Create\(\) function](#) initializes the list name *ImageListID* which will contain the icons. This list is created with space for three images, but that is not fixed. If you add more images than specified, the list merely expands to a new level.

The *LV\_SetImageList()* function assigns the image list to the *ListView*. This is normally done before adding any rows to the *ListView*.

The `LV_Add()` function adds each image (which may be ICO, CUR, or ANI) to the image list in the order (with the corresponding index number, i.e. Icon1, Icon2, icon3,...) it occurs in the script. Embedded images from EXE, DLL, CPL, SCR, and other files that support icons can also be used by incrementing the index in a loop. See the [online documentation](#).

Once the image list is set up, an image can be added to each row by using the option `Icon1`, `Icon2`, or `Icon3` when the [LV\\_Add\(\) function](#) is used to add the row to the `ListView` (e.g. `LV_Add("Icon1","No","QuikPlay")` seen in the next section).

## Is the App Running or Not?

Before adding any given row to the `ListView`, we want to know whether the app is already running—or not. This can be done with the [Process command](#). There are two ways that the Process command is used in this script: determine if an app is running (`Exist`) and to exit an app (`Close`). In the following, `QuikPlay.exe` is checked to see if it's running:

```
Process, Exist, QuikPlay.exe
```

It's important to use compiled versions (EXE) of the AutoHotkey scripts since the AHK files will all appear as `AutoHotkey.exe` making distinguishing different AutoHotkey apps very difficult. If the program is found as a process (running), then value of `ErrorLevel` will be set to the process ID. If not, then `ErrorLevel` is zero. This value is saved to a variable for later use, then applied as the condition for the final setup:

```
QuikPlay := ErrorLevel

If ErrorLevel = 0
{
    LV_Add("Icon1","No","QuikPlay")
    Menu, QuikPlay, Disable, Pick What to Play
    Menu, QuikPlay, Disable, What's Playing?
    Menu, QuikPlay, Disable, Next
    Menu, QuikPlay, Disable, Stop Play
    Menu, QuikPlay, Add, Start QuikPlay App, StartStopQuikPlay
}
Else
{
    LV_Add("Icon2","Yes","QuikPlay")
    Menu, QuikPlay, Add, Exit QuikPlay App, StartStopQuikPlay
}
```

If `QuikPlay` is not running (`ErrorLevel = 0`), then the row is added with the red dot icon and "No" for Active (`LV_Add("Icon1","No","QuikPlay")`). Plus, all of the menu items previously setup to control `QuikPlay` are disabled. Lastly, the menu item to start `QuikPlay.exe` (Start `QuikPlay` App) with the label `StartStopQuikPlay` is added to the end of the right-click menu.

If *QuikPlay.exe* is found to exist as a process (*ErrorLevel* does not equal zero), then the row is added with the green dot icon and "Yes" for Active (*LV\_Add("Icon2","Yes","QuikPlay")*). Next, the menu item to stop *QuikPlay.exe* (Exit QuikPlay App) with the label *StartStopQuikPlay* is added to the end of the right-click menu.

The last pieces of the auto-execute section of the script are as follows:

```
LV_ModifyCol(1,"AutoHdr")
Menu, Tray, Add, Show AutoHotkey Control, ShowControl
WinGetPos,X1,Y1,W1,H1,Program Manager
X2 := W1-300
Gui, Show, x%x2% y50, AutoHotkey Control
Hotkey, ^!Y, ShowControl
Return
```

*Note: The code displayed here for the auto-execute portion of the AutoHotkeyControl script only shows that code which either applies to the entire script or to the QuikPlay portion of the script. For the other ListView rows (ClipJump, To Do List, and Various Actions) shown in the figures above there is additional code similar to that used for QuikPlay. See the AutoHotkeyControl.ahk file in AutoHotkeyControl.zip at the ComputerEdge [AutoHotkey Dropbox download Web site](#) for the specifics.*

The *Menu* command is added to the System Tray icon right-click menu for reopening the AutoHotkey Control window if it's been closed. The *WinGetPos* command (discussed in the previous [To Do List column](#)) is used to place the AutoHotkey Control window in the upper right-hand corner of the screen. The *Gui, Show* command activates the window. The *Hotkey* command is used to establish a hotkey combination (CTRL+ALT+Y or ^!Y) to reactivate the AutoHotkey Control window with the *ShowControl* label.

The *ShowControl* label for reactivating the window:

```
ShowControl:
Gui, Show,, AutoHotkey Control
Return
```

## How to Change the Right-Click Menu for Each ListView Row

The question is "How does AutoHotkey know which menu it should use for which row?" By using the built-in window event [GuiContextMenu](#), the clicked row is identified, then selecting the appropriate menu:

```
GuiContextMenu: ; Launched in response to a right-click or press of the Apps key.
If A_GuiControl <> MyListView ; Display the menu only for clicks inside the ListView.
Return
```

; Show the menu at the provided coordinates, A\_GuiX and A\_GuiY. These should be used  
; because they provide correct coordinates even if the user pressed the Apps key

```
If A_EventInfo = 1
  Menu, QuikPlay, Show , %A_GuiX%, %A_GuiY%
If A_EventInfo = 2
  Menu, Clipjump, Show , %A_GuiX%, %A_GuiY%
If A_EventInfo = 3
  Menu, ToDoList, Show , %A_GuiX%, %A_GuiY%
If A_EventInfo = 4
  Menu, Utilities, Show , %A_GuiX%, %A_GuiY%
Return
```

The *GuiContextMenu* label which triggers whenever there is a right-click inside a GUI window has what's needed to select the appropriate right-click menu. The built-in variable *A\_EventInfo* contains the row number clicked. This is the importance to maintaining the same row numbers for each item (no sorting). The *Menu, Show* command is used to display the appropriate right-click menu (*QuikPlay*). As can be seen the names of the other menus not discussed here are *Clipjump*, *ToDoList*, and *Utilities*.

## The Subroutine for Starting and Stopping an App

The *StartStopQuikPlay* label (subroutine) is a toggle that starts a process that's not running and stops a process which is:

StartStopQuikPlay:

```
If QuikPlay = 0
{
  Menu, QuikPlay, Enable, Pick What to Play
  Menu, QuikPlay, Enable, What's Playing?
  Menu, QuikPlay, Enable, Next
  Menu, QuikPlay, Enable, Stop Play
  Menu, QuikPlay, Rename, Start QuikPlay App,Exit QuikPlay App
  LV_Modify(1,"Icon2", "Yes")
  Run, C:\Users\%A_UserName%\AutoHotkey\QuikPlay.exe
  QuikPlay := 1
}
Else
{
  Menu, QuikPlay, Disable,Pick What to Play
  Menu, QuikPlay, Disable,What's Playing?
  Menu, QuikPlay, Disable,Next
  Menu, QuikPlay, Disable,Stop Play
  Menu, QuikPlay, Rename, Exit QuikPlay App, Start QuikPlay App
  LV_Modify(1,"Icon1", "No")
  Process, Close, QuikPlay.exe
  QuikPlay := 0
}
```

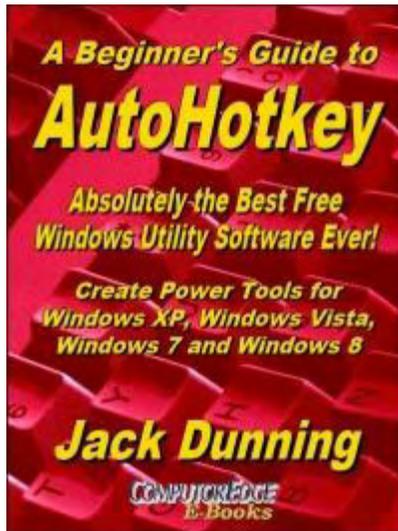
Return

This subroutine does not use the *Process* command to test for the running app. Instead it uses the value of *QuikPlay* which was originally set by *ErrorLevel* from the *Process* command test in the auto-execute section and is reset with each toggle. This is done because an error is caused if the *Menu*, *QuikPlay*, *Rename* command is used when it can't find the original name. This can happen if the process is closed (selecting Exit from the System Tray icons right-click menu) without using the AutoHotkeyControl app. With the current toggle above, worse case the Exit/Start menu item would need to be used twice to restart the app.

Note that all the menu items are either enabled or disabled as appropriate. The Start/Exit menu item name is changed as appropriate. The *LV\_Modify()* function resets the image (green dot/red dot) as appropriate and the Active text (Yes/No). Then the app is either launched with the *Run* command or exited with the *Process*, *Close* command.

Next time, we'll explore more features that can be added to AutoHotkeyControl. Especially, different techniques for adding more apps and subroutines to the Various Actions row.

\* \* \*



The new second edition with more chapters and an index to the AutoHotkey commands found in the book is available in e-book format from Amazon (and other formats—EPUB and PDF— at the ComputerEdgeBooks Web site linked below). 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](#) offers a gentle approach to learning AutoHotkey.

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.

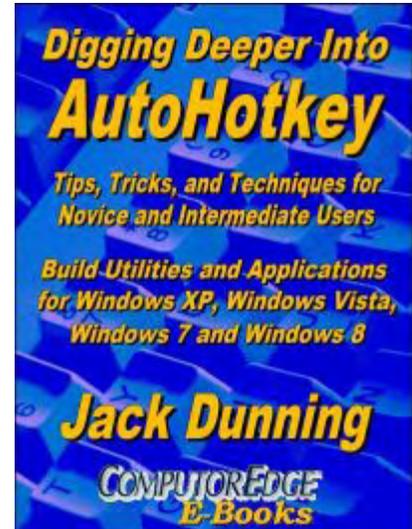
Based upon the series of articles in *ComputerEdge*, Jack takes you through his learning experience as he explores writing simple AutoHotkey scripts for adding repetitive text in any program or on the Web, running programs with special hotkeys or gadgets, manipulating the size and screen location of 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!](#)

[For a PDF version for printing on letter size paper for inclusion in a standard notebook of A Beginner's Guide to AutoHotkey click here!](#)

\* \* \*

Jack's latest AutoHotkey book which is comprised of updated, reorganized and indexed columns from *ComputerEdge* is now available at [Amazon for Kindle hardware](#) (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](#). However, if a person is reasonably computer literate, they could go directly to this book for ideas and techniques without the first book.



[For an EPUB \(iPad, NOOK, etc.\) version of Digging Deeper into AutoHotkey click here!](#)

[For a PDF version for printing on letter size paper for inclusion in a standard notebook of Digging Deeper into AutoHotkey click here!](#)

*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](http://www.computoredge.com). He can be reached at [ceeditor@computoredge.com](mailto:ceeditor@computoredge.com). Jack is now in the process of updating and compiling his hundreds of articles and columns into e-books. Currently available:*

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[\*Sticking with Windows XP—or Not? Why You Should or Why You Should Not Upgrade to Windows 7\*](#),

and [\*That Does Not Compute!\*](#), brilliantly drawn cartoons by Jim Whiting for really stupid gags by Jack about computers and the people who use them.



# Wally Wang's Apple Farm

“The New Apple Products” by Wally Wang

## Wally Wang's Apple Farm

*The New Apple Products; The Power of 64-Bit Processing; Tablet Share in America Reaches 35 Percent; The Dell Venue 8 Pro; T-Mobile Advantages; Create Tabs in the Finder.*

---

On October 22, Apple announced a handful of new products. First, there's the Mac Pro, which would be the [eighth most powerful](#) supercomputer back in 2003. Now you can get all that computing power in a Mac Pro for just \$2,999 (quad-core) or \$3,999 (6-core) if you're willing to wait until December.

Apple also announced new MacBook Pro laptops with the Retina display for a sharper display, faster graphics, and longer battery life. Missing from Apple's latest announcement was any word of updates for the Mac mini, which still only comes with 4GB of RAM (8GB is now standard). If you're in the market for a new Macintosh, skip the Mac mini for now and look at the iMac, MacBook Pro, or Mac Pro if you're in need of serious computing horsepower.

What makes these new Macs even more appealing is the software that Apple now gives you. First there's OS X 10.9 Mavericks, which can still run on any Macintosh built since 2007. Best of all, OS X 10.9 Mavericks is now free (earlier versions of OS X cost \$19.95). With OS X 10.9, you get a variety of additional features such as iBooks, tabs in the Finder, and better multiple monitor support that now displays pull-down menus on each monitor instead of just on your main monitor, which is what OS X 10.8 did.



Figure 1. OS X 10.9 Mavericks is a free upgrade.

If you buy a new Macintosh or iOS device, Apple now gives you their iWork office suite for free. The goal is to get more people to start using iWork and sharing documents created in iWork, which means less dependence on the Microsoft Office file format. Given a choice between paying for an office suite like Microsoft Office or just using a free one that comes with every new Macintosh, you can bet that many people will just be happy using iWork instead.

The combination of a free OS X upgrade and a free iWork office suite threatens Microsoft's cash cows of Windows and Office. Why pay to upgrade your PC from Windows 7 to Windows 8 and then buy Microsoft Office as well when the combined cost of both programs can often equal or surpass the cost of your PC?

Nobody was surprised when Apple announced the new iPad mini with a Retina display (\$399), or that they dropped the price of the old iPad mini to \$299 to compete with the smaller tablet

market. What did surprise most people was the new iPad Air, which only weighs 1 pound, which is the same weight as the first generation iPad mini. By making the iPad Air thinner and lighter, Apple has challenged other tablet manufacturers to offer similar features while still maintaining a profit. If you want the thinnest, lightest 9.7-inch tablet on the market, your only choice is an iPad Air.

Like the iPhone 5S, the new iPad Air and the iPad mini use a 64-bit processor, which makes apps run faster. In the future, all the newest and better apps will be 64-bit programs, which means if you want to keep up with the latest iPad apps, you'll eventually need to switch to a 64-bit iPad. Maybe not this year or even next year, but definitely in the next two years.



Figure 2. The new iPad Air is thinner and lighter than previous iPads.

With all of these new announcements, it's time to watch how other computer and tablet manufacturers will respond to Apple's latest announcements. Will they offer new innovations of their own, or will they simply be content to mimic Apple as much as possible while offering lower priced products that don't run quite as well? This holiday season looks promising for Apple. We'll have to see how other computer and tablet manufacturers fare this upcoming holiday season

## The Power of 64-Bit Processing

In the world of smartphones, the 64-bit processor in the iPhone 5S is more of a technical achievement that lays the foundation for the future. Beyond a noticeable increase in speed, the 64-bit processor shows how fast mobile processing world is catching up to desktop processors. Seeking Alpha displays a chart [comparing the speed](#) of different processors so you can see how the iPhone 5S compares.

Geekbench 3 Tests		
Platform	Single-Core Score	Multi-Core Score
<b>iPhone 5s</b> (Apple A7 – 2 cores)	<b>1393</b>	<b>2485</b>
iPhone 5 (Apple A6 – 2 cores)	723	1302
Samsung Galaxy S4 (Snapdragon 600 – 4 core)	667	1862
HTC One (Snapdragon 600 – 4 core)	591	1507
<b>Tablets</b>		
iPad 4 (A6x)	770	1407
Samsung Nexus 10 (Exynos 5250)	876	2090
Intel Valleyview B2 (Atom Z3770 – 4 cores)	962	3086
<b>Laptop/Desktop</b>		
MacBook Air (11-inch Mid 2013) Intel Core i5-4250U – 2 core	[laptopmag.com]	6809
Sony 11" SVP11216CGB Intel Core i5-4200U – 2 core	[laptopmag.com]	5055
Mac Mini (current) Intel Core i5-3210M @ 2.50 GHz – 2 core	2557	5198
Mac Pro 3,1 (2008) Intel Core 2 Duo E8400 @ 3.0 GHz – 2 core	1606	2654

Figure 3. Comparing the power of different processors.

According to this chart, the iPhone 5S processor is roughly one third the power of a low end MacBook Air, half the power of a low end Mac mini, and practically the same power as a 2008 Mac Pro. Wait another year and you can expect the processing power of the iPhone to get even faster and more powerful. One day an iPhone will be the equivalent of a mainframe computer of the past.

This rapid increase in processing power simply shows how fast mobile processors have come in a short amount of time. The original iPhone appeared in 2007 and already today's iPhone 5S compares favorably to a 2008 Mac Pro, which was designed to meet the needs of professionals.

With the power of a professional computer in your pocket, it's easy to imagine a day when you could do practically everything you need just on a mobile device alone. While some people will still need high-powered, dedicated tools like a graphics workstation to render video for creating digital effects or computer animation, most people will be able to use a mobile device for the most common computing needs.

What will happen when mobile devices get more powerful as 64-bit processors? It's easy to see that eventually the power of today's PCs will be available and surpassed by an iPhone or iPad of tomorrow.

## Tablet Share in America Reaches 35 Percent

According to a poll conducted by Pew Internet, [tablet ownership](#) in the United States has increased by 10 percent over last year. Of 7,000 people polled, 35 percent of them owned a tablet, which means the tablet market can still keep growing.

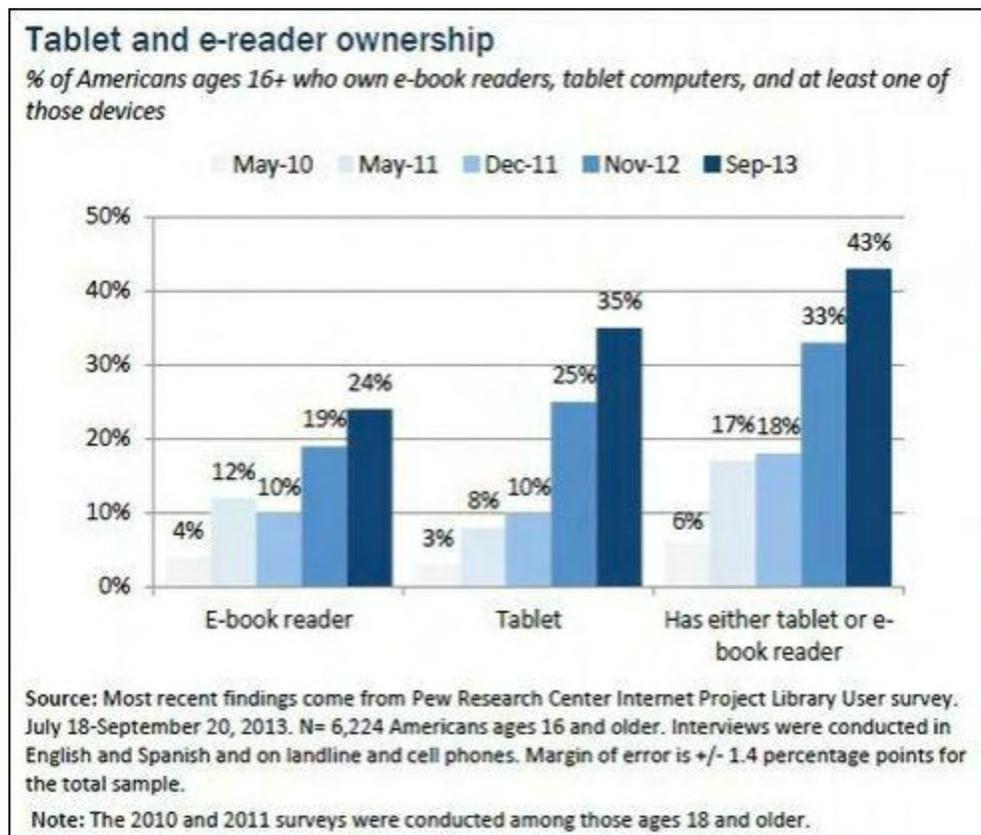


Figure 4. Tablet ownership continues increasing.

Not surprisingly, high-income homes earning \$75,000 or more doubled their tablet share. More people find tablets can do what they need so there's less need to buy another PC. As tablets continue growing in popularity and power, there will simply be fewer reasons for most people to buy a new PC as rapidly as they did in the past.

As tablets drop in price and increase in capability, the PC market will never return to their glory days of the past when PCs were the only option and Windows was the only operating system most people even knew about. One day your grandchildren will look at pictures of big beige boxes under each person's desk and wonder how people could possibly use such primitive computers back then. Then you can tell them that about how your ancient Windows PC was actually superior to their current tablets because you could replace parts in a Windows PC and run all your old software from back in the Windows 3.1 days, even though few people actually needed to run such ancient software. Your grandchildren can smirk at your short-sightedness while they go off and ignore early warning signs of changing technology in their own lives until it's too late.

## The Dell Venue 8 Pro

As long as you use actual logic and objectively evaluate products because of what they can do for you rather than harboring any prejudice towards a specific company, it doesn't matter what you buy and use. For those interested in a non-Apple or Android tablet, take a look at the [Dell Venue 8 Pro](#) for only \$299.

The price is low enough to be attractive and definitely undercuts Microsoft's own Surface Pro tablets. Instead of running the crippled Windows RT, the Dell Venue 8 Pro runs Windows 8.1. Although the \$299 price may be attractive, you'll likely need to buy the optional keyboard cover, which is practically a necessity to use older Windows programs not optimized for touchscreens.

If you're going to get a Windows 8.1 tablet, just keep in mind that the ability to run older Windows software might be appealing, but you'll need to use your tablet more as a laptop than a tablet for maximum productivity, which means getting the optional physical keyboard accessory.

Before buying a Windows 8.1 tablet, run your favorite Windows software on that tablet first if possible. Then you can see the limitations of running non-touchscreen optimized Windows programs on a touchscreen. If you're planning to use a Windows 8.1 tablet as a tablet instead of as a laptop, you'll have to decide if the limitations are worth the hassle.

If you're going to run mostly older Windows programs, then think of a Windows 8.1 tablet more as a super portable laptop replacement. If you want to run a Windows 8.1 more as a tablet, make sure it has the apps you need. Buy an iPad or Android tablet and chances are high that you can find an app that you need. Browse through the Windows 8 app store and you'll find far fewer choices. If you can't find the software you need, then it doesn't matter how much less you paid for your tablet if it can't do what you want.

For some people, a Windows 8.1 tablet can meet their needs better than rival tablets. For other people, an Android tablet or iPad can meet their needs better. What stopped me from buying a

Microsoft Surface tablet when they first came out was the poor implementation of the virtual keyboard that would pop up over an Excel spreadsheet cell that I wanted to edit. That basically made the virtual keyboard useless if I couldn't see what I was editing. It didn't matter that the Surface tablet came with a free copy of Microsoft Office if I couldn't edit an Excel spreadsheet using the virtual keyboard so I could use the Surface tablet as a tablet and not as a laptop using a separate keyboard.

Hopefully Microsoft fixed this problem with the virtual keyboard on Windows RT/8.1 so maybe the Dell Venue 8 Pro is worth looking at, but definitely test it in a store before buying one sight unseen.

With a low \$299 price, the Dell Venue 8 Pro is a Windows 8.1 tablet that might be an impulse item, but technical specifications mean nothing if the software doesn't work very well. You could probably run AutoCAD on a Dell Venue 8 Pro tablet, but it would likely run slowly and not respond well to touch gestures, so the advantage of running all Windows software really isn't an advantage at all if it makes the software practically unusable.

For now, the greatest advantage of Windows 8.1 tablets is that they make great lightweight Windows PC laptops. If you want a device to use solely as a tablet, test a Windows 8.1 tablet to see if it does everything you want. If not, you can always buy a device that's specifically designed to work as a tablet like an iPad.

## T-Mobile Advantages

At one time, the only way you could get an iPhone in America was by using AT&T, which had poor service practically everywhere in the country. When Verizon offered the iPhone, they stopped their subscriber defection rate. When Sprint offered the iPhone, they also stopped their subscriber defection rate. When T-Mobile offered the iPhone, they too stopped their subscriber defection rate.

Anyone detect a pattern here? Why do carriers lose subscribers by not offering the iPhone but retain and even gain subscribers when they do offer the iPhone? Most likely people prefer getting the iPhone because they want the convenience that the iPhone offers combined with its huge library of apps.

While Verizon and Sprint have been content to offer nearly identical services as AT&T, T-Mobile has gone further with a simple, low-cost monthly plan where you pay for your iPhone in installments and when you're done paying, your monthly bill goes down. In comparison, other carriers subsidize the cost of the iPhone but once you're done paying it off, your bill never goes down at all.

By switching from AT&T to T-Mobile, I'm paying less and getting more. AT&T only gave me 200MB of data a month plus 200 text messages. If I went over that limit, I had to pay an extra

\$15 for another 200MB of data along with paying for each additional text message over 200. T-Mobile gives me unlimited text messages and 500MB of data, all for a lower price than AT&T.

While T-Mobile's coverage isn't the greatest outside of major cities, AT&T's service kept dropping calls, making phone service practically unusable. If your area has poor T-Mobile coverage, you'll need to use a different carrier and likely pay more for that privilege too.

For overseas travelers, T-Mobile also offers free data and texting [international service](#), which is meant for business travelers and not for overseas exchange students planning to spend a year or two in another country. (International calls still cost 20 cents per minute.) With lower monthly rates, free text and data overseas service, and unlimited text messaging, T-Mobile is at least competitive on price and service (if you can get it).

In the United States, Verizon still offers the best overall service while AT&T is slowly catching up. Sprint and T-Mobile offer much smaller coverage but at least T-Mobile costs less than Sprint, so there's little reason to use Sprint unless T-Mobile service isn't good in your area.

Switching from AT&T to T-Mobile gave me more services for less money, so it only made sense. Coverage is just as good (or bad, depending on your point of view) as AT&T so I simply traded one mediocre carrier for another while paying less for the inconvenience. If you're going to pay for the same product, you might as well get more for your money.

Now that nearly every major carrier in America offers the iPhone, you can pick the carrier that offers the best coverage in your area, then look for the best price. For me, T-Mobile's higher data limit (500MB vs. AT&T's 200MB) and unlimited text messaging (vs. 200 for AT&T) made the difference. If you need to rely on making phone calls reliably, then you should probably look at Verizon first and then AT&T. Then look at T-Mobile and finally look at Sprint. Then again with smaller carriers also carrying the iPhone, you might get better coverage through a regional carrier instead.

Whichever carrier you choose, you can see that nearly all of them depend on the iPhone to attract and maintain subscribers. Despite all the criticism against the iPhone, the iPhone must be doing something right to consistently reverse subscriber defection rates at practically every carrier in the world.

\* \* \*

If you've been using most modern browsers, you know that they let you open multiple Web pages in separate tabs. Now the Finder in OS X 10.9 Mavericks lets you create tabs so you don't have to open multiple Finder windows to clutter your screen.

Just press Command+T and the Finder displays tabs. Now you can quickly view different

folders within a single Finder window.

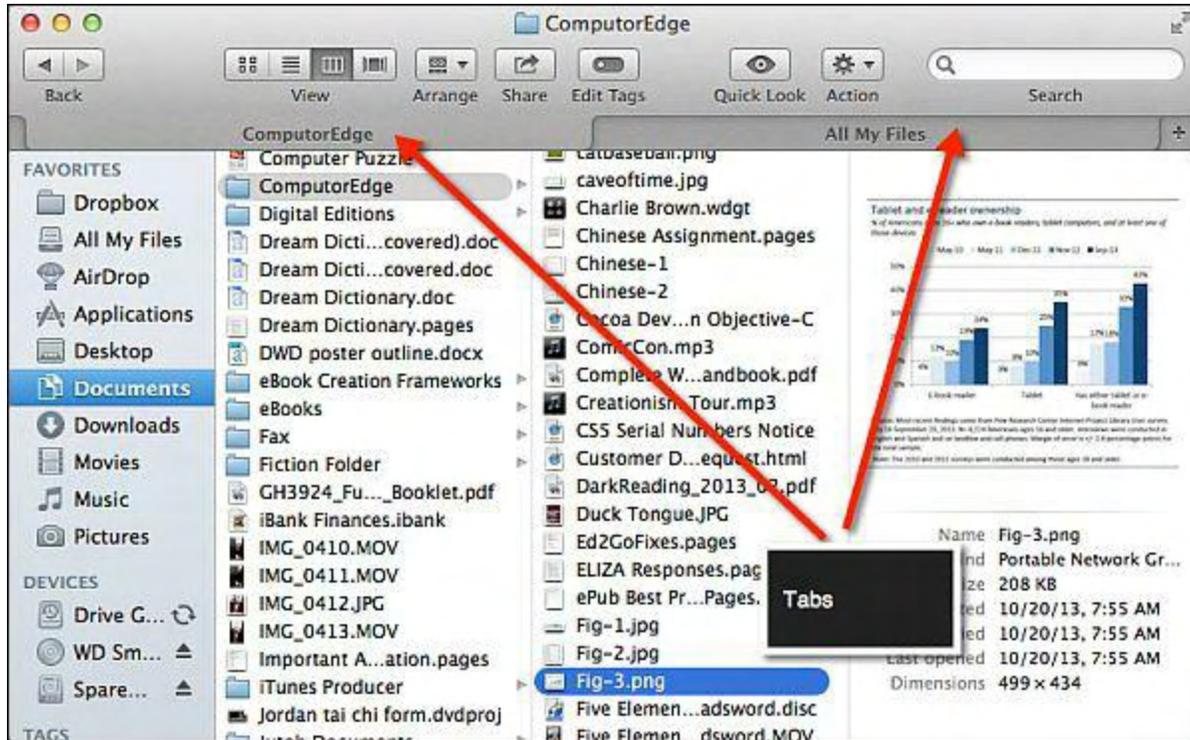


Figure 5. Tabs make it easy to view different folders.

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

*Wally is responsible for the following books:*

[Microsoft Office 2013 For Dummies](#)

[Beginning Programming for Dummies](#)

[Beginning Programming All-in-One Reference for Dummies](#)

[Breaking Into Acting for Dummies with Larry Garrison](#)

[Strategic Entrepreneurism with Jon and Gerald Fisher](#)

[How to Live with a Cat \(When You Really Don't Want To\)](#)

[The Secrets of the Wall Street Stock Traders](#)

[Mac Programming For Absolute Beginners](#)

[Republican Fairy Tales \(Children's Stories the 1% Tell About the Rest of Us\)](#)

[The Zen of Effortless Selling with Moe Abdou](#)

[The 15-Minute Movie Method](#)

[Erotophobia \(A novel\)](#)

[Math for the Zombie Apocalypse](#)

In his spare time, Wally likes blogging about movies and writing screenplays at his site "[The 15 Minute Movie Method](#)," finding interesting news stories about cats at his site "[Cat Daily News](#)," and providing the type of advice he wishes someone would have told him when he was much younger at his [personal Web site](#). Wally can be reached at [wally@computoredge.com](mailto:wally@computoredge.com).



# Worldwide News & Product Reviews

**“The latest in tech news and hot product reviews.”** by Charles Carr

*The Visual Evolution of Online Payments; Most Popular Superhero Halloween Costumes of 2013; The First Three Pioneers on The Oregon Trail; Malware Protection on Your Keychain.*

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## The Visual Evolution of Online Payments

The mobile payments company, [SwitchPlay](#), has created an infographic that beautifully represents the evolution of electronic payment technology from the first mention of the credit card in a novel published in 1887, the birth of ecommerce from the first online purchase, to the advancement of mobile payment technology. Trip Ochenski, a blogger at the small business social networking site [b4bconnect.com](#), writes:

Throughout history, methods of making payments have changed continually because of the natural inclinations of humans to innovate and develop pragmatic solutions through the use of available resources.

New forms of technology that enhance our efficiency and ease of accomplishing goals and creating value are balanced by our discarding of items that are no longer suitable to our goals. Historically, people's methods of handling payments have followed this course. Methods of exchanging value in the transfer of goods and services are continually changing in response to the fluid demands of the marketplace.

Nowadays, this innovation in the area of payment systems continues. For the same reasons that drove us to switch to gold as a replacement for grains as currency, we are now developing electronic forms of payment for worldwide exchanges of products and services. Much of this innovation is visible in the form of Visa and other joint ventures in the private sector as well as developments in mobile technology.

In terms of value to today's world, these payment methods are driving economic growth and offering benefits to us all with a dynamic payment network that brings buyers and sellers together. At the same time, transparency is increasing in the global economy. Consumers are empowered and protected by growing levels of security.

As the economy continues to improve thanks to this stimulation, the banking system is seeing

increased participation worldwide.

## The EVOLUTION of ELECTRONIC PAYMENTS



**40%** of small businesses now accept payments at the point of sale with a mobile card reader attached to a smartphone or tablet.



**16%** of small businesses have stated they plan to accept mobile payments by 2015.

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**1889** **THE FIRST CONCEPT OF CREDIT CARDS**  
Edward Bellamy in his utopian novel Looking Backward described the concept of using a card for purchases. Bellamy used the term "credit card" eleven times in his novel, although this referred to a card for spending a citizen's dividend rather than borrowing.

**1916** **ELECTRIC MONEY IS BORN**  
Electric money was born when the Federal Reserve first moved currency via telegraph.

**1940** **THE FIRST BANK CARD**  
Allen Baggins, a banker from Brooklyn, New York, introduced the first bankcard, named "Charge-it".

**1950** **IDC (DINERS CLUB INTERNATIONAL) IS CREATED**  
The first independent credit card company, the IDC, issued the "Diners Club" which would be the world's first universal payment card.

**1950** **AMERICAN EXPRESS EMERGES**  
American Express emerged into the credit card industry with its own product, a purple charge card for travel and entertainment expenses. A year later American Express introduced the first card made of plastic; previous cards were made of cardboard or celluloid.

**1960** **FIRST NETWORKED ATM**  
The first networked ATM was pioneered in the US, in Dallas, Texas, by Donald Blitch, who was a department head at an automated baggage-handling company called Dacolor.

**1974** **AUTOMATED CLEARING HOUSE (ACH) IS DEVELOPED**  
The ACH was developed to process large volumes of credit and debit transactions in batches. ACH credit transfers included direct deposit payroll and vendor payments.

**1974** **ELECTRONIC PAYMENTS ASSOCIATION (NACHA) IS ESTABLISHED**  
The Electronic Payments Association established uniform operating rules for the exchange of Automated Clearing House (ACH) payments among ACH associations.

**1978** **FIRST DEBIT CARD IS ISSUED**  
The First National Bank of Seattle issued the first debit card to business executives with large savings accounts.

**1979** **FIRST CREDIT CARD TERMINAL IS INTRODUCED**  
What improved upon the traditional manual imprint machine with the introduction of the "swipe", the first credit card terminal.

**1979** **ECOMMERCE IS BORN!**  
Michael Aldrich invented "online shopping" to enable online transaction processing between consumers and businesses, or between one business and another, a technique known later as e-commerce.

**1981** **FIRST B2B ELECTRONIC TRANSACTION ONLINE**  
Thomas Holidays, a UK-based travel operator, submitted the first ever B2B electronic transaction using newly developed online technology.

**1984** **THE FIRST ONLINE PURCHASE IS MADE**  
Mrs. Jane Snowball became the world's first recorded online shopper using a television and a controller to purchase groceries from Tesco.

**1986** **THE DISCOVER CARD IS INTRODUCED AT THE SUPER BOWL**  
The Discover Card, originally part of the Sears Corporation, was introduced through the "Sears of Discover" television commercial at Super Bowl IX.

**1987** **FIRST ELECTRONIC MERCHANT ACCOUNT**  
Savvy created the first electronic merchant account to let software developers and their software online.

**1994** **EMV IS INITIATED**  
At the time, many banks recognized the benefits of chip-based payment, but also realized that international standards for such payment were needed to help foster global interoperability. These EMV standards were created to fit that need.

**1995** **US NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION LIFTS RESTRICTIONS**  
The US National Science Foundation lifted its former strict prohibition of commercial enterprise on the internet, which cleared the way for e-commerce to thrive.

**1996** **GOOGLE CHECKOUT IS LAUNCHED**  
Google Checkout is an online payment processing service provided by Google aimed at simplifying the process of paying for online purchases.

**1997** **FIRST CONTACTLESS PAYMENT SYSTEM**  
ExxonMobil's Speedpass is the first contactless payment system, which allowed consumers to wave the Speedpass to pay at the pump.

**2000** **NFC BECOMES AN APPROVED ISO/IEC STANDARD**  
Near Field Communication (NFC) is an electromagnetic wireless technology that was designed to enable communications between two devices.

**2006** **PAYMENT CARDS SECURITY STANDARDS COUNCIL IS ESTABLISHED**  
The PCI Council formed a body of security standards known as the PCI DSS and these standards consist of requirements for businesses on payment card security.

**2007** **FIRST DIGITAL/ MOBILE WALLET**  
McAfee created the first mobile payments system and introduced the technology to emerging markets.

**2009** **FIRST DIGITAL CURRENCY**  
Bitcoin was the first digital currency designed around the idea of a new form of money that uses cryptography to control its creation and transactions, rather than relying on central authorities.

**2011** **STARBUCKS ACCEPTS MOBILE PAYMENTS NATIONWIDE**  
Starbucks decided to accept mobile payments as an opportunity to reach those who don't always carry cash and help build stronger relationships with customers. This led to many major retailers also adopting mobile payment technology.

**2012** **MOBILE PAYMENTS USAGE HITS \$163.1 BILLION!**

**SwitchPay™ Accept payment anywhere. Accept life where it meets you.**

# Most Popular Superhero Halloween Costumes of 2013

According to a press release from [wholesalehalloweencostumes.com](http://wholesalehalloweencostumes.com):



Hollywood loves a good superhero film. In the last year, we've seen Iron Man (and the rest of the Avengers), Superman and Wolverine on the big screen again. These movies aren't stopping here. Audiences are anticipating the sequels to The Amazing Spider-Man, The Avengers, and Captain America: The First Avenger. So it's a safe bet that donning one of the superhero's signature looks from any of these blockbusters will make you a hit this Halloween.

1. Iron Man
2. Captain America
3. Superman

4. Spider-Man
5. Wolverine

There's been a lot of testosterone in this list so far, but ladies, have no fear. The female superhero costumes are here!

1. American Dream (Captain America)
2. Wonder Woman
3. Female Ironman
4. Pink Power Ranger
5. Faora (Okay, she's not a superhero, but thanks to the Man of Steel, this villainous sidekick is too awesome to leave off the list!)

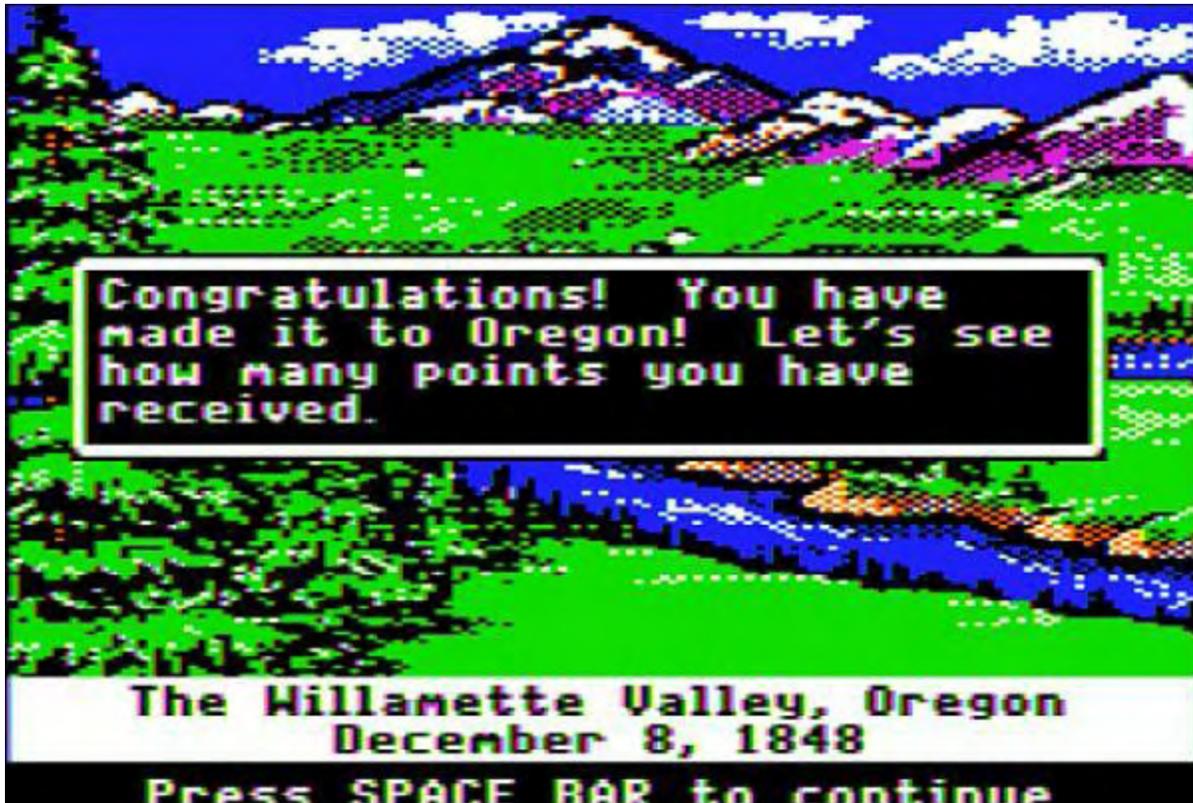
## The First Three Pioneers on The Oregon Trail

There's an excellent piece by Jessica Lussenhop over at [CityPages.com](http://CityPages.com) titled, "Oregon Trail: How Three Minnesotans Forged Its Path," that details the epic journey the creators themselves took to get their dream of what was originally a board game to tens-of-millions of computer screens:

Don Rawitsch rolled out a four-foot-long piece of white butcher paper on the living room floor of his Crystal apartment. He glanced at an open map of the United States frontier from the 1800s. Then he traced a squiggly line from the right side of the paper to the left.

By the time his roommates Bill Heinemann and Paul Dillenberger returned home, the line had become a series of squares leading across a map of the western U.S. Rawitsch was scratching

out words on a stack of cards. "Broken wagon wheel," said one. "Snakebite," said another.



Heinemann, Rawitsch, and Dillenberger were student teachers finishing their degrees at Carleton College and living together in the sparsely furnished apartment...Rawitsch, a lanky, bespectacled 21-year-old with hair well over his ears, was both a perfectionist and an idealist. He started dressing as historical figures in an attempt to win over his students, appearing in the classroom as explorer Meriwether Lewis.

By now he'd made it through to the western expansion unit, and he had in mind his boldest idea yet.

What he had so far was a board game tracing a path from Independence, Missouri, to the Willamette Valley in Oregon. The students would pretend to be pioneer families. Each player would start with a certain amount of money and buy oxen, clothes, and food. Students would advance with the roll of a die, along the way encountering various misfortunes: broken limbs, thieves, disease. In roughly 12 turns, the kids would simulate the 2,000-mile journey that thousands of pioneers made to the West Coast in the 19th century.

He called it "Oregon Trail."

Forty years and ten iterations later, the Oregon Trail has sold over 65 million copies worldwide, becoming the most widely distributed educational game of all time. Market research done in 2006 found that almost 45 percent of parents with young children knew Oregon Trail, despite the fact that it largely disappeared from the market in the late '90s.

A recent frenzy of nostalgia over the game has yielded everything from popular T-shirts ("You have died of dysentery") to band tour promotions ("Fall Out Boy Trail") to humorous references on popular Web sites ("Digg has broken an axle").

"It's hard to think of another game that endured for so long and yet has still been so successful," says Jon-Paul Dyson, director of the International Center for the History of Electronic Games at the Strong. "For generations of computer users, it was their introduction to gaming, and to computer use itself."

After passing through a few different hands, the brand is now owned by the Learning Company, a division of Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. In 2008, an iPhone app based on the game was created. It has been downloaded about 2.9 million times...

Dillenberger and Heinemann had each taken a few computer-programming classes at Carleton, and began volleying ideas back and forth for how to digitize the board game. Instead of rolling dice, players could select one of three speeds for their ox to travel at. Instead of drawing cards, the program would select misfortunes—a lost ox, an ambush, a deathly illness. A couple of simple formulas dictated the weather based on the time of year...

For the next two weeks, Dillenberger and Heinemann spent each night wedged into a tiny computer office—a former janitor's closet at Bryant Junior High School—tapping code into a teletype machine. The teletype was a screen-less, electromechanical typewriter connected via telephone to a mainframe computer that could issue prompts, receive commands, and run primitive programs.

The men had no idea that the three of them were about to invent the most successful educational video game in history.

Read the entire fascinating story at [www.citypages.com](http://www.citypages.com).

## Malware Protection on Your Keychain

Product: EMSI Emergency Kit 4.0

Manufacturer: Emsisoft

Web site: [www.emsisoft.com](http://www.emsisoft.com)

Annual license fees:

Up to 250 PCs per year: \$99

Up to 500 PCs per year: \$169

Up to 1000 PCs per year: \$289

Up to 2000 PCs per year: \$499

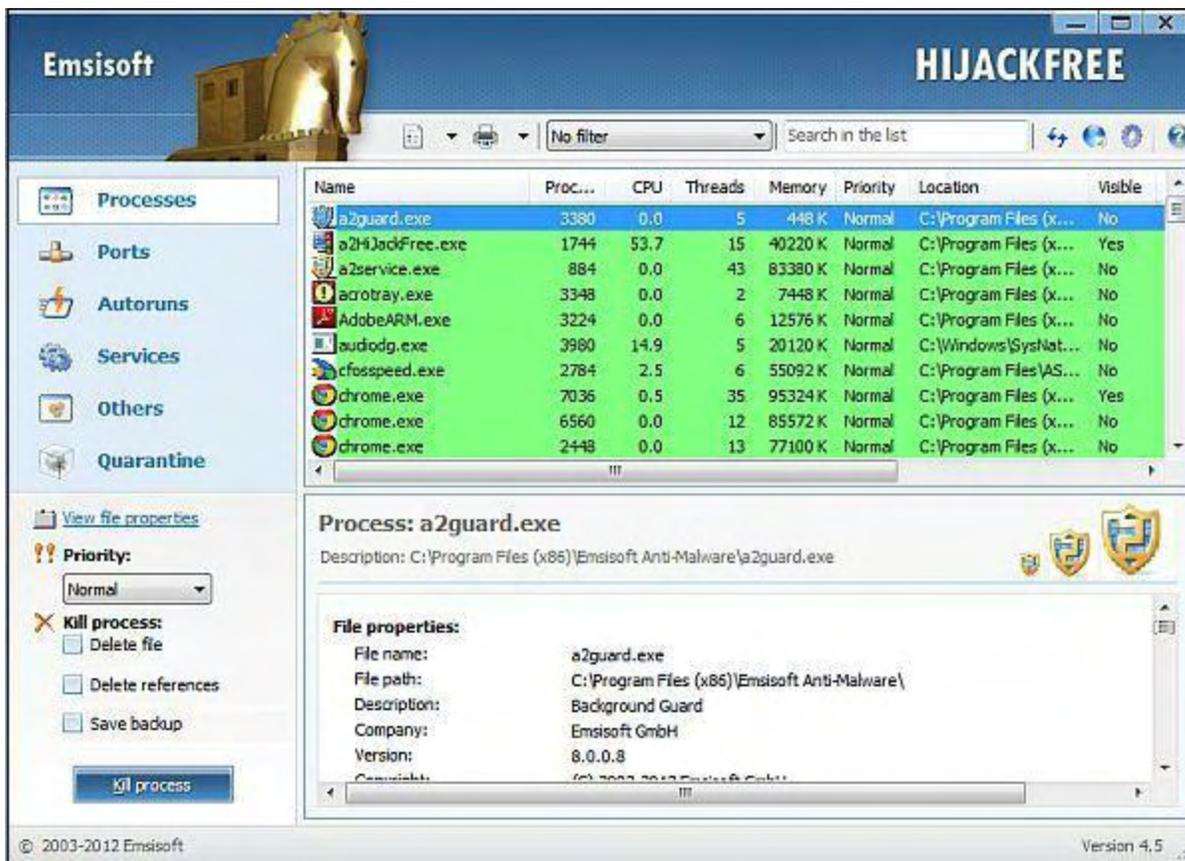
Up to 4000 PCs per year: \$ 859

Licenses for additional machines available on request

Emsisoft has recently released what they call the Emsisoft Emergency Kit—a complete

portable anti-malware solution on super-tough 16GB USB flash drive. The tool is designed principally for professional users but I could see anyone responsible for a bunch of family or friend computers finding it useful as well.

The Emsisoft Emergency Kit is a scanning and repair tool tucked onto a 16GB flash drive. They only need a tiny fraction of that space for the software; the rest—more than 15GB—is left for you to backup important data, logs, and, of course, your entire Bruce Springsteen collection to listen to while you work on a Boss non-believer's machine.



It truly *is* a portable solution. *Everything* runs from the stick, and you're allowed to make as many copies as you need.

The Emsisoft Emergency Kit can be run right off the flash drive without any prior installation and includes a full version of the company's Anti-Malware software with more than 10 million signatures to root out spyware, worms, adware, viruses, trojans, dialers, keyloggers, and other malicious programs.

## EMSIOSOFT "TO GO": THE NEW LOOK OF EMSISOFT EMERGENCY KIT *for business users*

Neat hook to attach it to your key ring easily.

Very compact design (only 5mm thick!) that fits into even really hard to access hardware designs with ease.

Engraved reminder of where to submit new malicious files or get malware removal assistance from Emsisoft support, if needed.

No cap that goes missing, no rotating stuff that breaks – just plug it in and start cleaning, right away!

16 GB USB stick pre-compiled with 4 valuable malware removal tools, that have been constantly improved at cleaning computers since 2010.

Solid case to protect your data while you are on-the-go. Use more than 15 GB of free space for your own stuff!

Ready when you are, with over 10 million signatures for sophisticated detection, automatic updates and a malware removal guarantee for hard to remove infections.

[www.emsisoft.com](http://www.emsisoft.com)

You can scan using either Emsisoft's scanner graphical interface or go the power-user route using the Commandline Scanner.

Got an especially virulent varmint? The annual license gives you access to Emsisoft's custom malware removal and you can keep signatures up to date with a single click of the mouse.



Another tool, Hijackfree, oversees pretty much everything happening on the machine: active processes, drivers, autoruns, open ports, services, hosts file entries, and provides unprecedented manual control over the removal process.

Finally, Emsisoft Blitzblank is for the person who must deal with infections on a routine basis, allowing them to deal with the most pernicious threats: ones which can only be dealt with before Windows even boots.

Re: the hardware itself, the 16 GB USB flash drive is extremely tough, all-metal construction. Flash drives routinely get beat all to heck on my keychain but I don't see that happening with this drive.

Emsisoft is certainly doing something right. In just the last few years they've won a wall full of awards including ones from Softpedia, comss.tv, virusbtn.com, AV-comparatives.org, MRG-Effitas, MajorGeeks, and Gizmo's Best.

The combination of complete portability and EMSI's award-winning PC protection is the perfect solution for any IT person, computer tech, or personal user responsible for the health of several computers.



Review contributed by Ralph Dehenny

### *System requirements:*

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*Version 4.0.0.13*

*Windows XP, Vista, 7, 8, 8.1 or Windows Server 2003, 2008, 2012 (latest service packs required)*

*From Vista and Server 2008 onwards, all features are fully functional on x64 systems.*

*Minimum of 1 GB RAM for best performance.*

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*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](http://www.charlescarr.com).



## Editor's Letters: Tips and Thoughts from Readers

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

*"StripReturns in Notepad," "Windows 8 Pro Best Ever with Stardock," "CR/LF with Word Special Character Search & Rep," "Restoring an Outlook Folder"*

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### StripReturns in Notepad

[Regarding the October 4 [Fixing Broken Word Wraps column](#):]

I noticed that if I type several short words, each followed by "enter", and then use the program, it does remove the line feeds, but it also adds a space character to each word. I guess it makes the assumption that when an enter action is removed you want to replace it with a space.

-Ron Cerrato, San Diego, CA

*That's correct, Ron. In most situations where paragraphs have additional returns, they have replaced spaces. If the space isn't added when the return is removed, the words would become conjoined.*

-Jack

### Windows 8 Pro Best Ever with Stardock

[Regarding Jack Dunning's October 4 [article](#), "Will Windows 8.1 and the Surface 2 Tablet Give Momentum to Microsoft":]

I was struggling with Windows 8 since it had no Start Menu and even tried a free one which helped, but wasn't as good as Windows 7. Stardock's Start8 and ModernMix programs changed all that. Now I can enjoy the improvements over Windows 7 without being forced to be a beta tester for Microsoft's attempt at tablets that run "apps." If I ever get the urge to give an app another try, I can simply launch it from the Start8 menu and use it in a window.

-Ron Cerrato, San Diego, CA

## CR/LF with Word Special Character Search & Rep

[Regarding the October 4 [Digital Dave column](#):]

While I appreciate your answer, for non programmers, it can be done with Word that most users already have. Copy & paste the text to Word. Press <Ctrl>+<Shift>+8—the \* key to see the paragraph marks. See the backwards P for most line endings on a PC for CR/LF but a little L shaped downward symbol for those Unix LF ones? Press <Ctrl>+H for the replace window, press More>> see the special symbols menu button at the bottom. The regex \n is ^p in Word, etc [see this link](#).

I've been using Cygwin Unix2dos but I'm old school command line on my work PC and prefer a Mac at home. Keep up the good work—we love you Digital Dave! :-)

-Darrell, San Diego, CA

## Restoring an Outlook Folder

[Regarding the October 11 [Digital Dave column](#):]

Assuming the user has a PST file, he can open it (file/open?) from within Outlook Express. Then copy the folder he lost back to the original Inbox layout.

-Rich Ernst, San Diego, CA

Hi Digital Dave,

I use an old XP Pro system for Outlook Express (OE) e-mail. I don't think Microsoft ever provided the Outlook PST backup/archive feature for OE. Consequently I have relied on my weekly system backups to repair/replace OE mailboxes. Though I have never had a mailbox file just disappear, it is easy to inadvertently drag a mailbox into another folder. I suggest checking for the missing mailbox possibly being in a new location.

If the missing folder/file is nowhere to be found, simply copy the flash drive's backup OE folder/file and paste it in the System's OE mailbox directory. Then on opening OE the missing mailbox will show up in its proper place containing all e-mails present at last backup date.

Hope this helps.

-Don Rader, Poway, CA

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