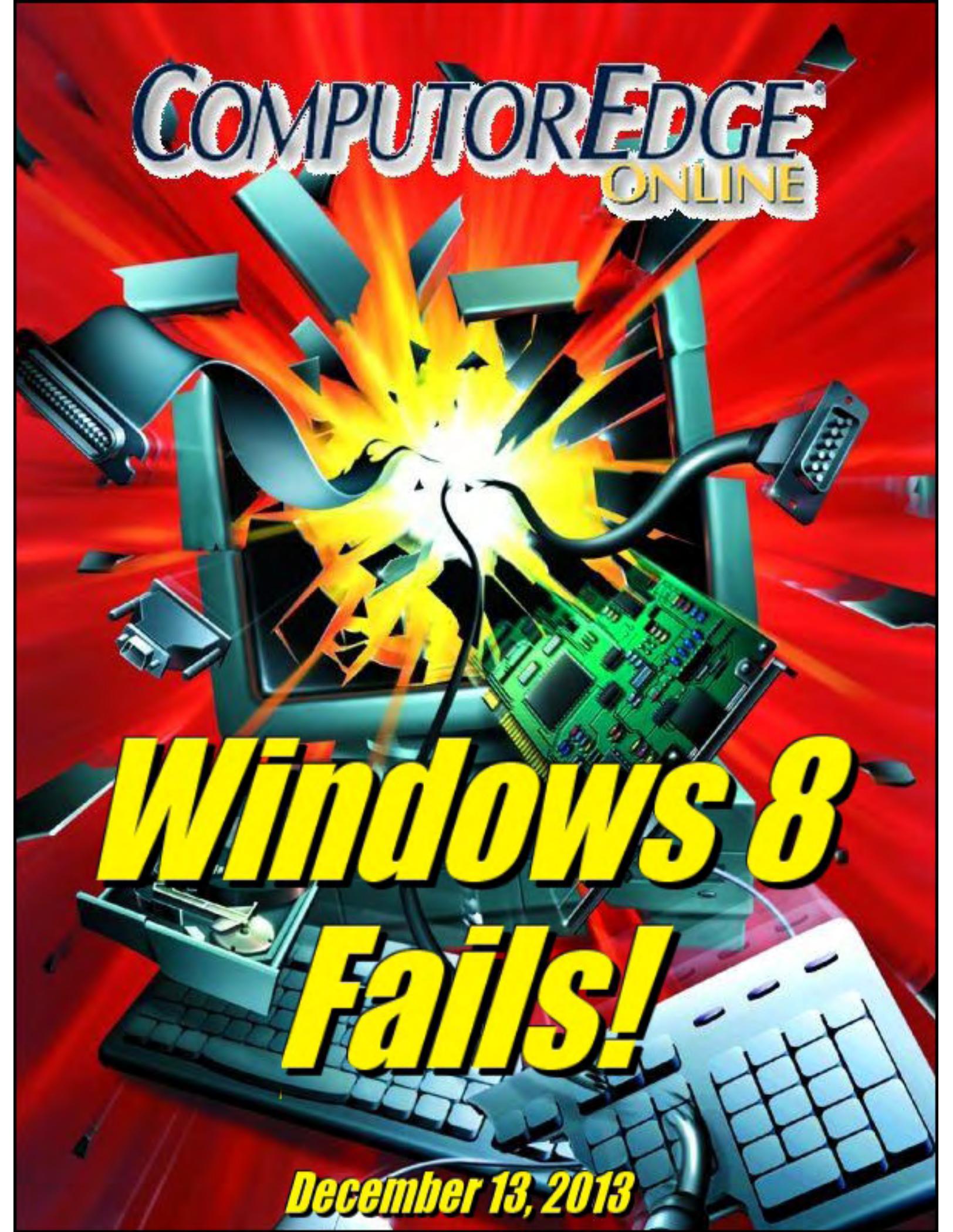


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***Windows 8***  
***Fails!***

***December 13, 2013***

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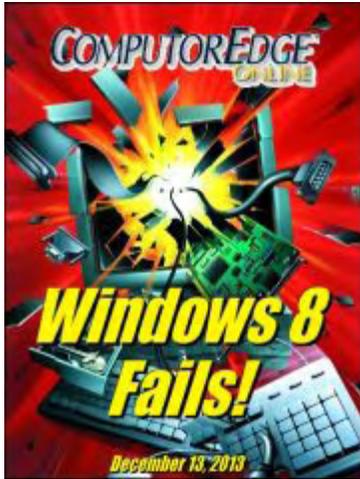
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# Digital Dave

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

*Annoying Pop-ups in Windows 7; Copy a Word Document to Outlook; Make Windows 7 Work Like XP.*

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## Annoying Pop-ups in Windows 7

*Dear Digital Dave,*

*My four year old HP desktop recently contracted pop-ups allegedly from Microsoft saying that my Windows 7 OS was invalid. MS says since it's an OEM it's between me and HP. HP says I'm out of warranty and wants \$100 to fix an alleged virus. I can buy a new copy of Window 7 on eBay for \$75. I think the issue arose from replacing a crashed HDD. Except for the pop-ups the computer works fine.*

*What do you recommend?*

*Steve*

*San Diego, CA*

Dear Steve,

From your letter it's difficult to determine whether it's a Windows activation problem or something else. Since the computer works anyway, I'm guessing it's something else.

I'm not sure how buying a new copy of Windows 7 will help. If your computer works fine with the exception of the occasional pop-up, then Windows 7 is not likely to be the problem.

I would want to know when the pop-ups occur. Is it only when you boot the computer, or do they occur randomly while you're on the computer? Is it when you're connected to the Internet? If they happen at odd times, then it could be a virus.

If HP is right and it is a virus, then you should be able to deal with it yourself. However, it sounds like HP just wants to charge you \$100 without really knowing what's really going on.

I would want to know exactly what the pop-up window says. Doing a Web search on the actual wording can often lead to solutions. At a minimum it should help you figure out whether it is a malware problem or Windows problem.

If it is a virus, I would try different malware removal programs. They don't all detect the same problems and no one program detects everything. If nothing seems to work, then you may need to do a clean install of the operating system.

I would want to determine the source of the problem before deciding to just live with it. But if you can't nail it down—and it's not really causing any problems—then I would coexist with the pop-ups rather than paying people to go on fishing exhibitions.

Digital Dave

---

## Copy a Word Document to Outlook

*Dear Digital Dave,*

*I've used the copy function on a Word document, then tried to paste it into Outlook to send out in Outlook format. I can't paste it into the Outlook page because "paste" isn't a highlighted choice. Is there another way to it?*

*Thanks,*

*Mike*

*San Diego, CA*

Dear Mike,

There are alternative methods for copying and pasting, but they could have the same problem. When you copy selected text (from a menu or with CTRL+C), it is placed in the Clipboard for later use by pasting (from a menu or with CTRL+V) into another document. However, if for some reason the copy function does not place anything in the Clipboard, there will be no paste option available in most edit menus.

I've seen times when the Copy and/or Paste does not appear in the menu, yet the control key combinations (CTRL+C and CTRL+V) will work.

I'm assuming that you can copy-and-paste from other programs such as Notepad into Outlook. If so, the problem is most likely in Word itself. While I don't have Word, I understand that there are Office diagnostics within Word which may fix the problem.

Digital Dave

---

## Make Windows 7 Work Like XP

*Dear Digital Dave,*

*Maybe it's just me but where Windows XP seemed intuitive, Windows 7 seems to hide things. In particular, when a window is minimized in XP it is easily located and refreshed by a simple click of the icon at the bottom bar. When a window in Win 7 is minimized, it disappears from the face of the earth. So, where does MS in its wisdom hide it?*

*Joel*

*San Diego, CA*

Dear Joel,

Intuition is experience based which means the things we already know always seem intuitive. People say that the Mac is intuitive (and maybe it is more intuitive for people who know nothing about computers), but Windows users are often frustrated the first time they use a Mac.

Windows 7 is intuitive for XP users only when it operates the same way—which most of the time it does. In Windows 7, the quick launch buttons and task buttons have been combined into one to save space on the Taskbar. By default, they do not maximize and minimize when you click them. But you can set them to behave in the same fashion as XP. Right-click on an empty area of the Taskbar and select Properties from the menu. The Taskbar and Start Menu Properties window will open (see Figure 1).

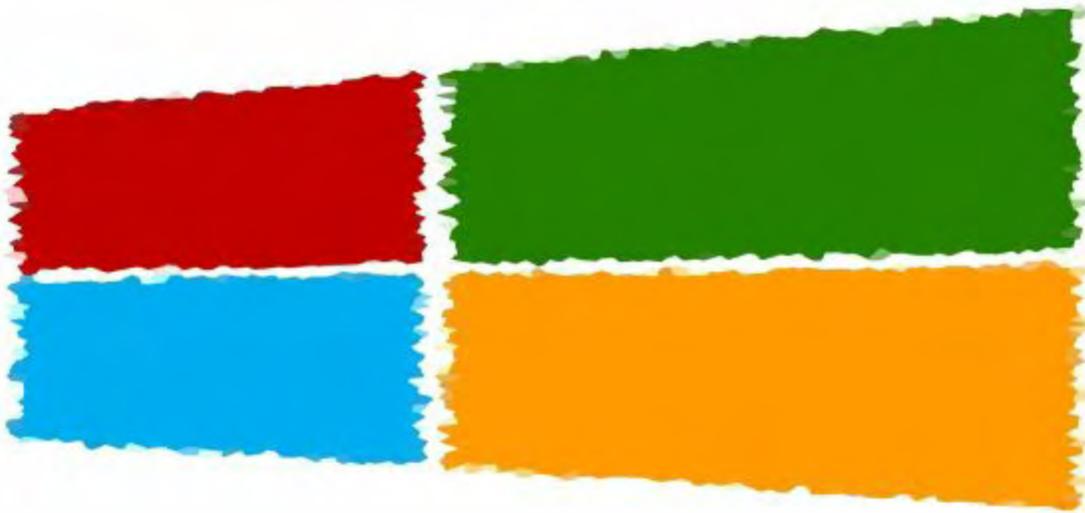


Figure 1. The Taskbar and Start Menu Properties window.

Select "Never combine" from the dropdown menu next to Taskbar buttons in the Taskbar tab. Click Apply. The task buttons will now behave in the same way they do in Windows XP, minimizing and maximizing with a single click. If you want to launch another instance of a program already running, right-click and select the program name.

Digital Dave

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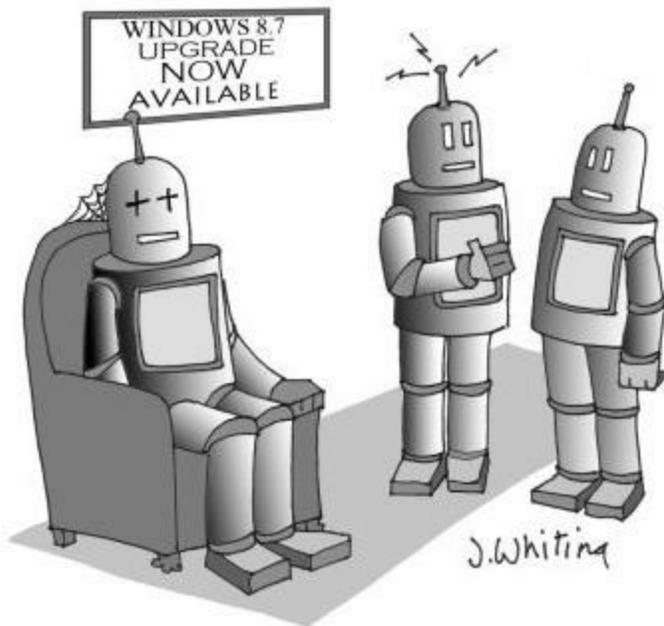
## Windows 8 Fails

**“Users Are Opting for Windows 7”** by Jack Dunning

*Microsoft's two operating systems in one approach to Windows 8 is floundering. Users aren't buying it. Windows 7 is likely the next enduring Windows XP.*

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Windows 8 has failed. Not for technical reasons (it's a good product), but in the market place. The concept of combining a tablet operating system with a desktop/laptop operating system has not been accepted by computer users. Even Windows 8.1 has not changed many minds. The problem is that you only get one shot at a first impression. It was a big gamble for Microsoft, but it has lost the battle for the mind. Windows 8 has done very poorly among current Windows users and Microsoft needs to face up to reality. Fortunately for Microsoft, its market position is so strong in the desktop and laptop markets that there is still time to recover.



“Robbie has powered down to wait for Windows 9.”

With all the stumbling by Microsoft over the past number of years it was difficult to take Windows 8 too seriously. Some people saw it as desperate stab at getting a piece of the tablet market—which it is. The new Modern UI (User Interface) with colored tiles designed for touchscreens has been slapped onto Windows 7 and called Windows 8. Microsoft recognized many of the problems after the first release (no Start menu) and attempted to compensate in Windows 8.1. But it looks like too little too late for most people.

As a Windows user, I've attempted to maintain a balanced view of Microsoft's latest. With full release to the market last October and now, one year later, Windows

8.1 available for upgrade, progress has been slow for Microsoft. Many people are sticking with Windows 7 rather than engaging a new learning curve and now it looks like the multitude of Windows XP users are opting for Windows 7 rather than dealing with Windows 8. If in the long run Windows 8 fails to capture much market share, it won't be for the lack of effort on the part of Microsoft and hardware manufacturers. There have been plenty of cheerleaders on Microsoft's side and just as many detractors. Ultimately, I don't know how Windows 8 will do in either the PC or tablet market, although it's definitely not taking the world by storm in either. In the end, I suspect that Windows 8 will be relegated to an alternative tablet operating system which can provide desktop power through Windows 8 Pro.

## A look at the Numbers

Looking at the current market share according to [NetMarketShare](#) as of November 2013, the trends appear obvious (see Figure 1). The installations of Windows 7 were remaining relatively flat for most of the year while Windows XP slowly declined. Then in the summer, Windows XP users started to trade in at a greater rate.



Figure 1. Market share of desktop/laptop operating systems from NetMarketShare.com

While there was a slight jump in the number of Windows 8 users, many of those upgrading from XP opted for Windows 7 rather than go with Windows 8. Even Windows 8.1 hasn't shown any bump since October. Starting in October, XP users are sitting pat, Windows 7 continues to grow, and Windows 8 has slipped. The biggest jump is in the other category—which may be mostly Linux machines. Windows 8 is not showing any of the signs of a winner.

What does all this mean? Windows users are not accepting nor buying the two operating systems in one concept for their desktop/laptop computers. Nor do they [care about touch screens](#) for their desktop/laptop computers. While the operating system may work well for those who care to learn it, the Windows 8 dual identity concept has failed in the marketplace for desktop/laptop computers. The quicker Microsoft comes to grip with this fact the better

decisions it can make.

*I want to emphasize that I'm not telling anyone to avoid Windows 8. It has many performance enhancements over Windows 7. But you do need to learn a slightly new way of doing things when you venture into the Windows 8 world.*

My recommendation for Microsoft is to get a new version of Windows 7 out which incorporates many of the good things in Windows 8 (speed and performance). But they should drop the idea that a desktop should act like a tablet. It's not working! Maybe they could call it something like Windows 9.

There is no need to drop Windows 8. In the Windows 8 Pro version, which runs real Windows programs, Microsoft has an über-tablet operating system for those people who want the convenience of a tablet and the usefulness of Windows programs. But they should stop trying to foist Windows 8 on everyone. Why should Microsoft care whether you use Windows 7 or Windows 8? They get paid either way. But if they want to protect their share of the desktop market, then they better get to work on Windows 9 (i.e. super Windows 7).

## **Windows 8 Not Making a Dent in the Tablet Market**

When reviewing the mobile market which includes both smartphones and tablets, Microsoft doesn't even show up. See Figure 2, from [NetMarketShare.com](http://NetMarketShare.com). Few people even think of Windows 8 when buying mobile devices.

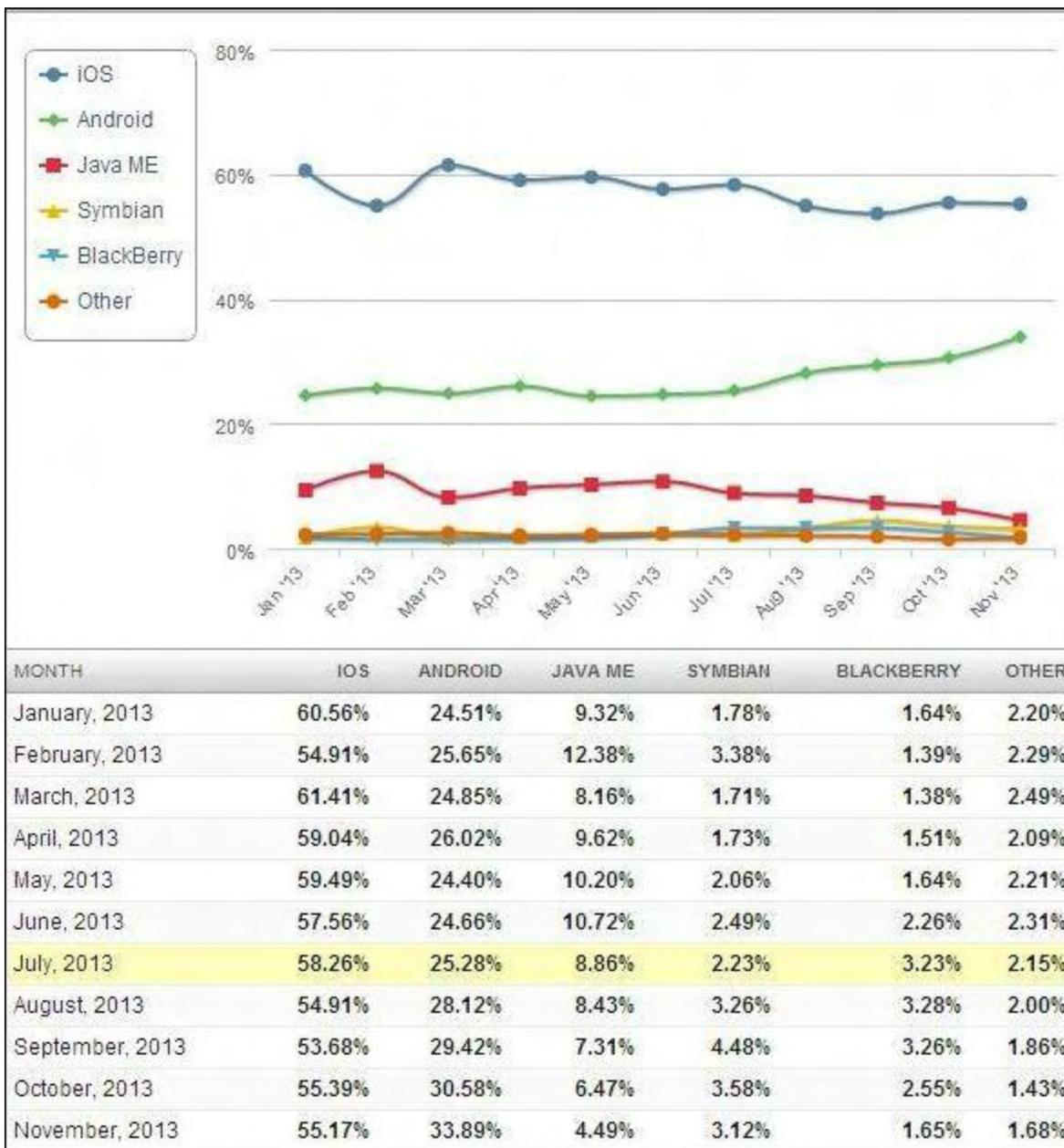


Figure 2. Windows 8 is such a small portion of the Mobile market that it belongs in the Other category.

The concern for Microsoft is whether the tablet computer (as some predict) will take over the desktop operating system market. If that happens, then the entire Windows line is in jeopardy. There is no indication that many people will opt for Windows on their tablet. [Forecasts for 2014](#) predict that sales of tablets will match those of desktops/laptops. See Figure 3. This certainly looks like a threat.

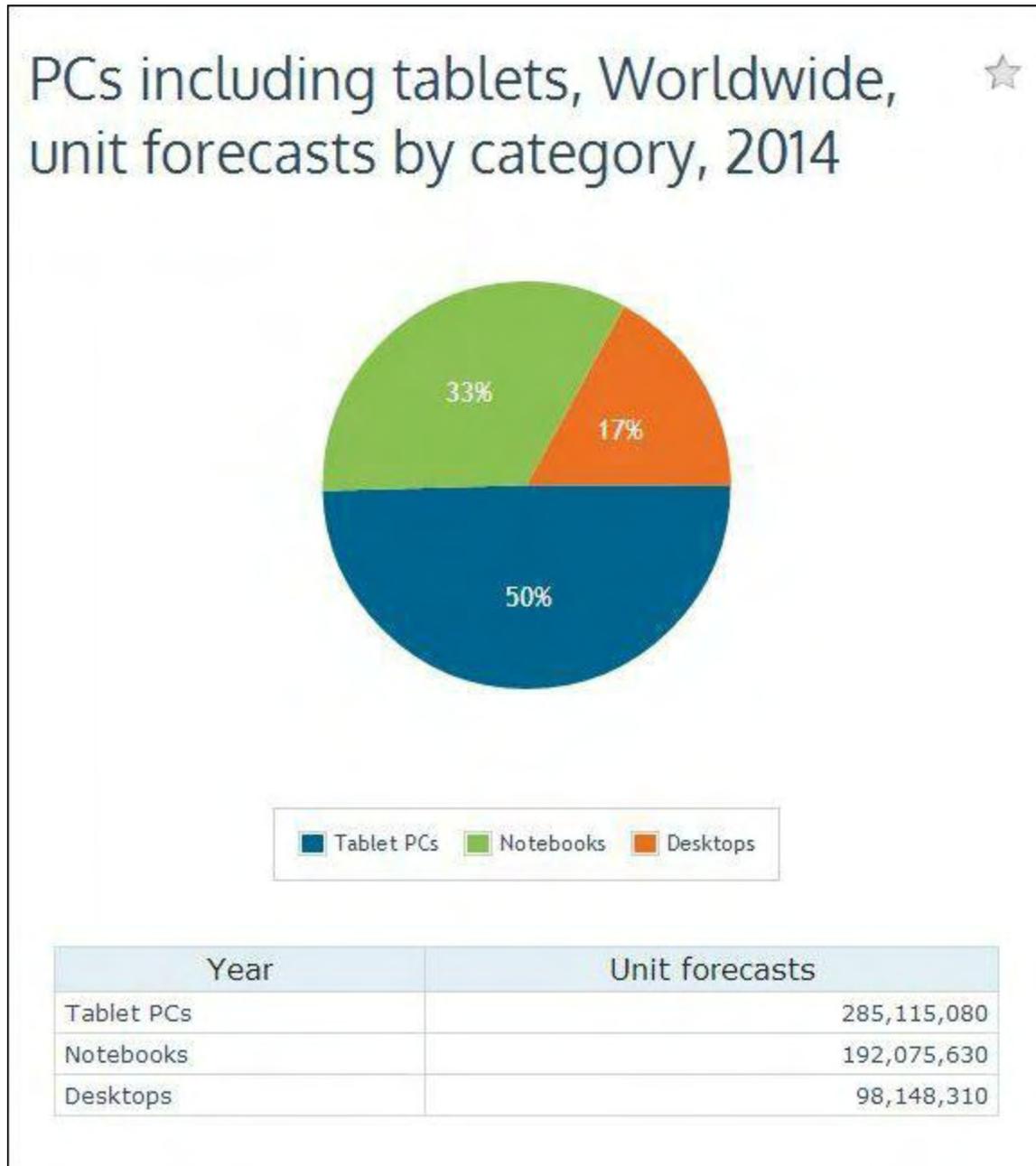


Figure 3. In 2014, sales (number of units) of tablet computers could match those of desktops and notebooks combined.

My contention is that tablet computers and desktop/laptop computers have a small overlap in the marketplace. Although you can do everything on a desktop that you can do on a tablet, the reverse is not true (without elaborate gymnastics). The two products serve entirely different purposes for most people. If all you want to do is browse the Internet, send e-mail, read e-books and play games, then the tablet is more than enough. However, for a variety of reasons (mostly physical and ergonomic), the tablet is not going to replace the desktop for a vast ocean of applications. Most likely people will own a tablet (or two) along with their desktop or laptop.

This position is reinforced by [forecasts of global shipments](#) of tablets, laptops, and desktops

(see Figure 4). While there has been a decline in PC sales, it in no way matches the growth of the tablet market. In fact, in spite of a slowdown in PC sales, the projections continue to show healthy numbers of PCs being sold. When that number is added to the number of computers already in use, it dwarfs the number of tablet computers in use. Remember, PCs are a mature market while (for now) tablets are still in the rapid growth phase.

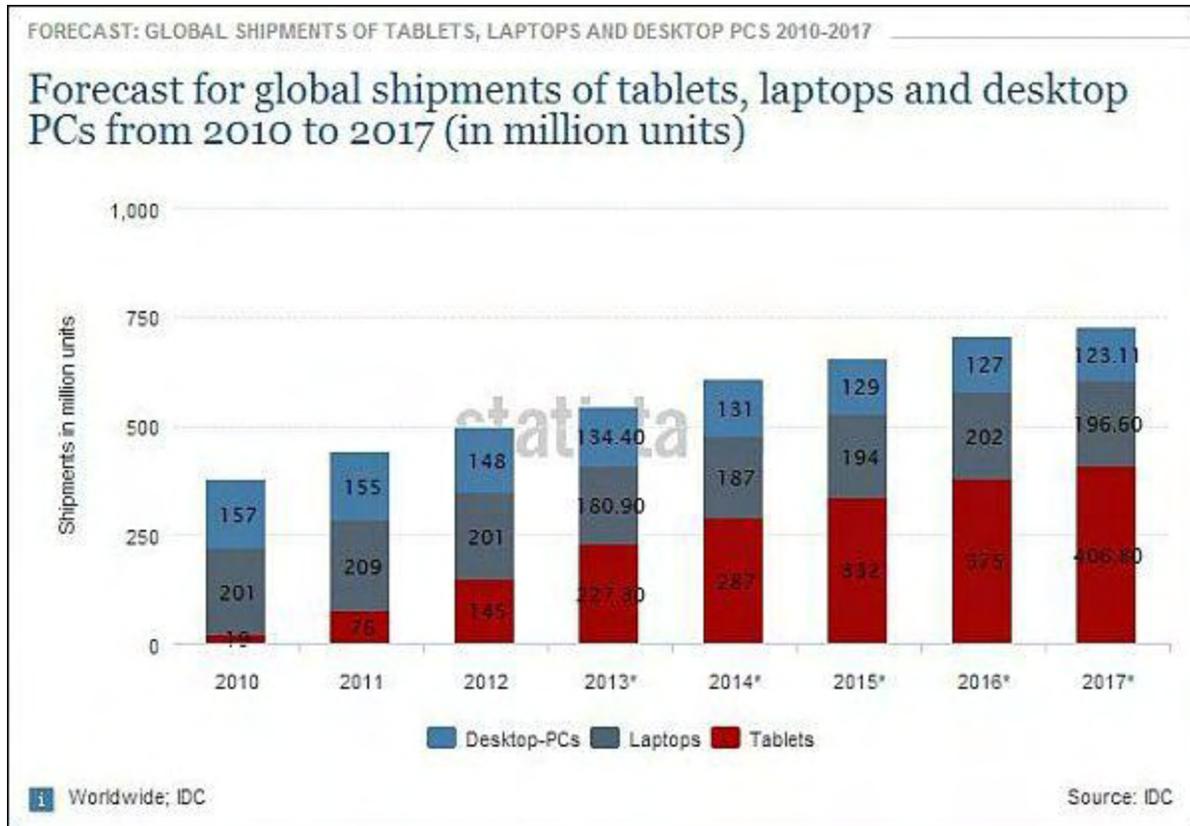


Figure 4. While tablet sales are projected to grow, PC sales are expected to continue to slow.

Time will tell whether the tablet computer will vanquish the PC, but I don't see very many people turning in their desktop or laptop because they bought a tablet.

## Should You Get Windows 8?

I've used Windows 8 for quite a while and I like it. If I had never developed any habits on earlier versions of Windows, I would probably love it. Windows 8.1 is certainly an improvement over the original Windows 8.

Since I don't yet have Windows 8 installed on a tablet, I'm a little hampered in my ability to evaluate it as a tablet operating system. However, since I do use both an iPad and an Android tablet, it is easy for me to understand how the new Start screen (Modern UI) would work on a tablet, even though I'm using a mouse and keyboard. So far, Windows 8 doesn't seem like it would be much different from using any other tablet with an intuitive touchscreen.

Yet, if you're using a desktop or laptop computer and have no experience with tablets, then the new Start screen might seem anything but intuitive. Intuition is experienced based, so the more something new deviates for what we know (traditional Windows) the less intuitive it will seem. Throwing a Windows user in front of Windows 8 with the Modern User Interface with no instruction at all is a fool's errand. Merely telling someone that hitting the Microsoft logo key (  )—and now the Windows 8.1 Start button—will bring them back to the Start screen goes a long way toward helping them navigate Windows 8.

I understand why people are sticking with and opting for Windows 7. There are few compelling reasons to upgrade to Windows 8. But, unlike the situation with Windows Vista, I wouldn't avoid buying a computer just because it has Windows 8 installed—although you will need to spend some time learning the Modern Start interface. But people are avoiding Windows 8 in spite of any of its strengths. My guess is that Windows 7 is the next XP with users hanging on to it into the next decade. That is unless Microsoft comes out with a Windows 9 that works like Windows 7—only better.

## **Why Windows 8 on a Tablet?**

The number one reason for putting Windows 8 on a new tablet computer is that only Apple, with their proprietary iOS, can build and sell iPads. If other hardware manufacturers don't find an alternative, then they are forever frozen out of the lucrative tablet market. For the past couple of years they have continually introduced Android tablets with some success. It's natural for them to look to Microsoft since the majority of the PCs they build already run Windows. The problem is whether or not Windows 8 can offer any competitive advantage over Apple's iPad or the Android tablets. If not, then it is yet another expensive exercise in futility. Are there any advantages to Windows 8?

I can see two possibilities. The first is the ability to run "real" Windows programs on a tablet computer with Windows 8 Pro. In its current configuration, Windows programs are installed to the Windows Pro 8 Desktop mode, which is essentially Windows 7 without the Start Menu—now replaced with the Windows 8 Start screen, or Modern UI. (A Start button returns in Windows 8.1.) That means Windows 8 tablet computers should be able to do everything that you currently do with your desktop or laptop computer. The bulk of the huge Windows software base would be available to any tablet computer running Windows 8 Pro in the Desktop mode.

There's the rub. Will tablets get the full Windows 8 installation or a stripped down version which only includes the Modern UI—tablet apps only? There are two versions of Windows 8 depending upon the hardware. The first is the full installation, which includes the Desktop mode and the ability to load compatible Windows programs. The second is a reduced Modern UI only version called Windows 8 RT without the Windows Desktop mode enabled. Only apps developed specifically for the touch interface are available. Very few manufacturers are excited about this version, since it would offer little—if any—advantage over the iPad and

costs more than Android.

Microsoft offers the full version (Windows Desktop enabled) for x86/x64-based Windows 8 tablets (Microsoft 8 Pro), but the ARM reduced instruction set processors get the reduced Modern UI only version (Windows 8 RT).

The jury is still out on how well traditional Windows programs will respond in the touch environment of the tablet. Most Windows programs are designed for the mouse and keyboard. Using these traditional Windows apps on a tablet without a mouse and keyboard could be difficult, especially for people with fat fingers.

The second reason that Windows 8 may have an advantage on a tablet is that the Windows Runtime environment used by the Modern UI is compatible with a number of common programming environments including C++, C#, VB.NET, plus HTML5 and JavaScript. This means that many apps already developed in these languages could be ported to the Modern UI either directly or with modification. I have no idea what the complications would be, but if there are not too many hurdles, then many applications can quickly appear for the Windows 8 tablets. If Windows 8 is ever accepted by the market, the relevant Apple app gap might be closed a little.

## The Windows 8 Modern UI Learning Curve

Right now there is an element of shock when a Windows user encounters the new Windows 8 Start screen. Many people speculated (and the last year seems to prove it) that this alone will prevent many Windows users from buying the new operating system. They won't want to change. It was hard enough moving from Windows XP to Windows 7. Now we are presented with a totally unfamiliar look—with no instructions on how to get back to our comfort zone.

### Microsoft's Best Shot

Microsoft should hedge its bets by splitting apart the PC and tablet market. There is no need to dump Windows 8, but it should be recognized for what it is, a tablet operating system. It could even find a reasonable amount of success for high-end tablets which run "real" Windows programs with Windows 8 Pro.

On the PC side, Microsoft should take the best of Windows 8 and upgrade Windows 7 to Windows 9, the natural success it deserves. It would make Windows 7 users happy and give Windows XP users a reason to upgrade.

---

*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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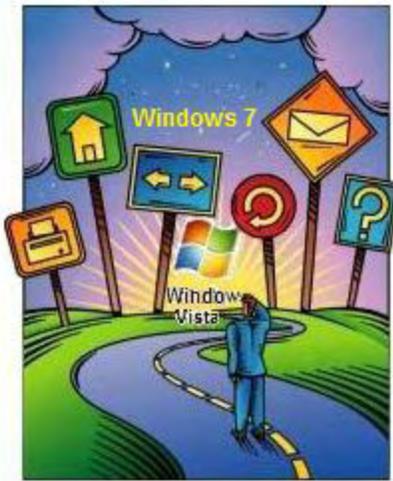
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# Windows Tips and Tricks

## Windows Tips and Tricks: Whois that Web Site?

**“Sysinternals Whois for Finding  
Out Who's behind a Web Site”**

by Jack Dunning

*There have been many Whois programs for getting information over a network and the Internet.  
Microsoft Sysinternals has its own Whois tool.*

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I received some Spam the other day claiming to be from Microsoft (see Figure 1). I immediately knew it was Spam because I don't have that kind of a relationship with Microsoft. I checked the link by hovering over it and confirmed that it was from some questionable (probably nefarious) outfit by the name *3seasonsplace.com*.

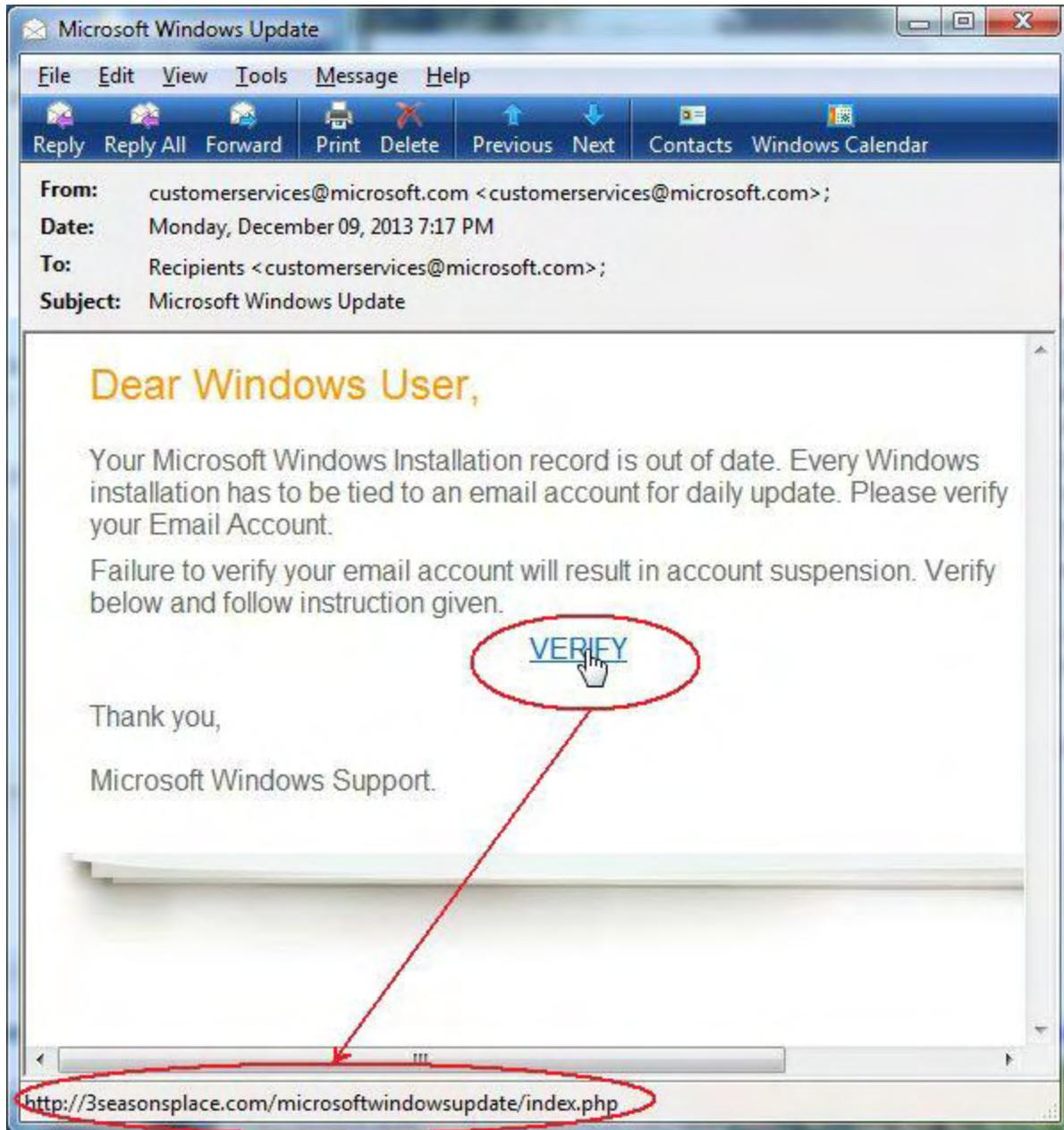


Figure 1. Hovering over a link in Spam should reveal the real perpetrator.

Since I was curious, I used the [Whois](#) utility from Microsoft's [Sysinternals](#). Whois, a tool which runs from the Command Prompt, looks up information on a Web address based upon the URL name or IP address. For example, if you plug in:

```
whois www.youtube.com
```

you will find that YouTube is owned by Google. This information includes phone numbers, e-mail addresses, and regular addresses.

I used Whois to check on the Spammer, only to find that they are hidden behind a company called Contact Privacy (see Figure 2). It's not that I wanted to contact *3seasonsplace.com*. I

was just curious about which country the Spam came from.

```

Administrator: C:\Windows\system32\cmd.exe

C:\Users\Jack\Downloads\WhoI>whois 3seasonsplace.com

Whois v1.11 - Domain information lookup utility
Sysinternals - www.sysinternals.com
Copyright (C) 2005-2012 Mark Russinovich

Connecting to COM.whois-servers.net...
Connecting to whois.tucows.com...

Domain ID:
Registrar WHOIS Server: whois.tucows.com
Registrar URL: http://tucowsdomains.com
Updated Date: 2013-02-08 07:31:48
Creation Date: 2008-02-11 08:46:44
Registrar Registration Expiration Date: 2014-02-11 08:46:44
Registrar: TUCOWS, INC.
Registrar IANA ID: 69
Registrar Abuse Contact Email:
Registrar Abuse Contact Phone:
Reseller: Netway Communication Co., Ltd.
Reseller: domreg@siamdomain.com
Reseller: 66-2-912-2558-64
Reseller: http://www.siamdomain.com
Domain Status: ok
Registry Registrant ID:
Registrant Name: Contact Privacy Inc. Customer 0116673976
Registrant Organization: Contact Privacy Inc. Customer 0116673976
Registrant Street: 96 Mowat Ave
Registrant City: Toronto
Registrant State/Province: ON
Registrant Postal Code: M6K 3M1
Registrant Country: CA
Registrant Phone: +1.4165385457
Registrant Phone Ext:
Registrant Fax:
Registrant Fax Ext:
Registrant Email: 3seasonsplace.com@contactprivacy.com
Registry Admin ID:
Admin Name: Contact Privacy Inc. Customer 0116673976
Admin Organization: Contact Privacy Inc. Customer 0116673976
Admin Street: 96 Mowat Ave
Admin City: Toronto
Admin State/Province: ON
Admin Postal Code: M6K 3M1
Admin Country: CA
Admin Phone: +1.4165385457
Admin Phone Ext:
Admin Fax:
Admin Fax Ext:
Admin Email: 3seasonsplace.com@contactprivacy.com
Registry Tech ID:
Tech Name: Contact Privacy Inc. Customer 0116673976
Tech Organization: Contact Privacy Inc. Customer 0116673976
Tech Street: 96 Mowat Ave
Tech City: Toronto
Tech State/Province: ON
Tech Postal Code: M6K 3M1
Tech Country: CA
Tech Phone: +1.4165385457

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Figure 2. Many Web sites, especially Spammer, hide behind companies such as Contact Privacy.

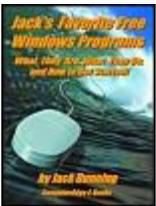
There are legitimate reasons for wanting to keep your Web site domain name registration information private. Many people are operating personal sites and don't want to share the

registration data with the world. But if someone is operating as a business, then openness can be helpful—especially if a new customer needs another way to contact you. I have no doubt that *3seasonsplace.com* is hiding so their targets won't start spamming them. (It's so annoying!)

I did look at the source code of the e-mail and entered the URLs into Whois for the servers delivering the message. They were all located in the United States.

There is nothing new about the Whois type of utility tool. It's been around in various forms on computers for a long time. If you're just curious about who is behind various Web sites, then Whois is the tool for you.

\* \* \*



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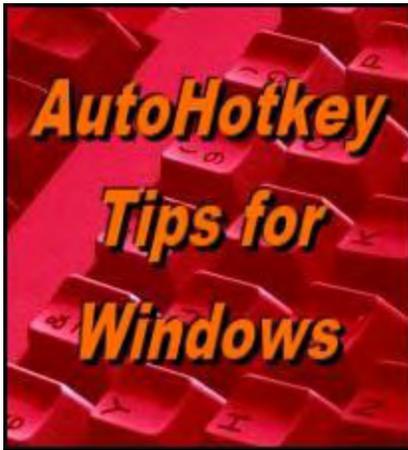
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and [\*That Does Not Compute!\*](#), brilliantly drawn cartoons by Jim Whiting for really stupid gags by Jack about computers and the people who use them.



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

# Building a Recipe Book with AutoHotkey, Part III

“Time to Edit and Write the RecipeTree Data to a File” by Jack Dunning

*The next step in writing the RecipeTree app is editing data in the window and saving it to a CSV file.*

*If you're not yet into AutoHotkey, the material in this column may seem a little complicated. However, there are thousands of simple things that you can do on your Windows computer with AutoHotkey which will make your life so much better—and they're easy to do. For a quick look, check out this page: [Introduction to AutoHotkey: A Review and Guide for Beginners](#).*

\* \* \*

Last time we added the capability to [read data into the RecipeTree app](#) from a CSV (Comma Separated Values) file. That's fine if we want to do all the recipe editing in the CSV file, but now it's time to first edit the data in the RecipeTree window, then save it to the data file.

## Edit Data in the RecipeTree App

There are two fields available for editing in the RecipeTree window: the branches of the *TreeView* and the more free form *Edit* box on the right. As discussed last week, adding the `-ReadOnly` option to the [Gui, Add, TreeView command](#) enables editing of the names in the branches. All that's required is either a slow click in the name field or pressing F2 to enter the edit mode (see Figure 1).

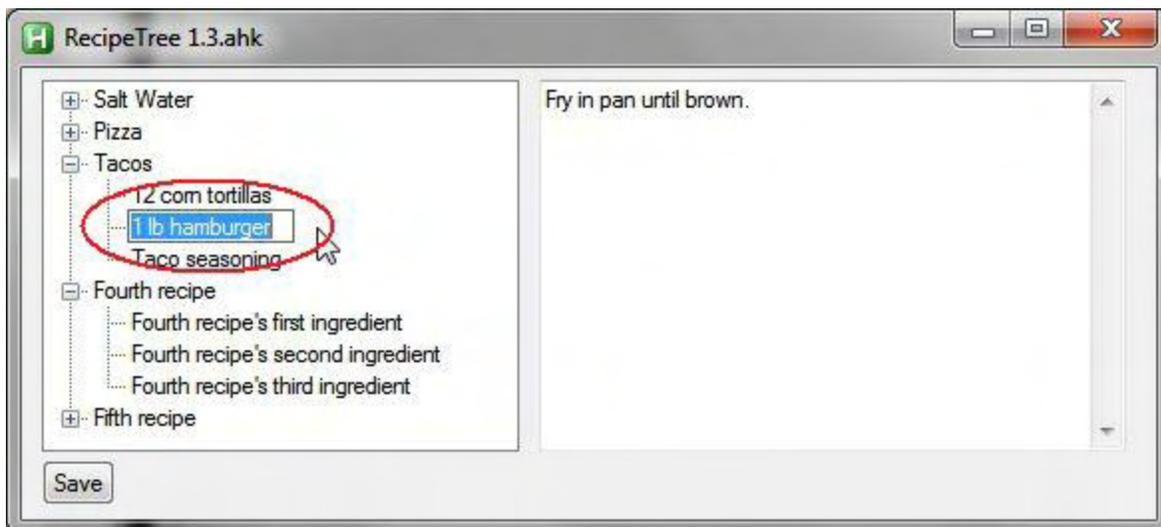


Figure 1. With the `-ReadOnly` option a slow click of a branch name (or F2) enters the editing mode of TreeView.

Any changes made in the *TreeView* branches will automatically update the value of the built-in text variable captured with *TV\_GetText(OutputVar, ItemID)*. No *Gui, Submit* command is required. This is not the case with the *Edit* field on the right which requires a *gLabel* including *Gui, Submit* to update the *vVariable*.

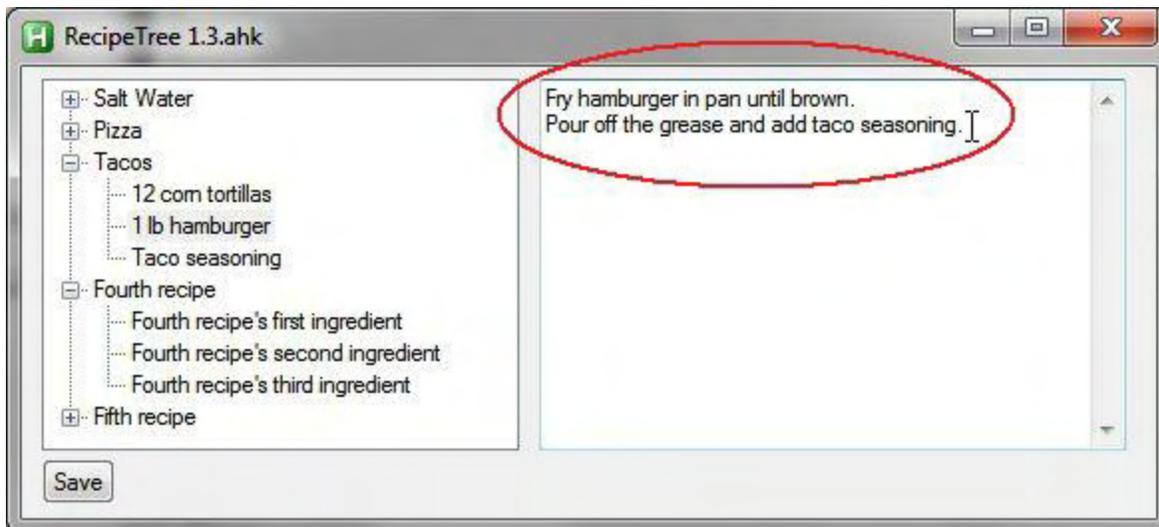


Figure 2. The edit field on the right is already in the edit mode, but special code is required to capture changes.

When there is a left-click in the *Edit* field, it is by default in the edit mode (see Figure 2). Any changes immediately display, but they are not saved to the variable *MyEdit* until the *Gui, Submit* command is used. The label (subroutine) *MyEdit* is added to the *Gui, Add, Edit* command:

```
Gui, Add, Edit, ys vMyEdit gMyEdit w300 h400
```

then the subroutine *MyEdit*: is added to the script:

```
MyEdit:
  Gui, Submit, NoHide
  Text := TV_GetSelection() . "text"
  %Text% := MyEdit
Return
```

This snippet of code is activated whenever any changes are made in the *Edit* field associated with the selected *TreeView* branch. The *Gui, Submit* command saves changes in the variable *MyEdit*. Then, the text variable we previously created to link the text with the selected *TreeView* branch with the text data (*ItemID* plus the word "text") is identified with the *TV\_GetSelection()* function (*Text := TV\_GetSelection() . "text"*). Next the new value of *MyEdit* is saved to the text variable (*%Text% := MyEdit*). This keeps all edit data variable up-to-date regardless of the *TreeView* branch selected.

Tip: If you want to protect the *Edit* field from accidental changes, then add:

```
GuiControl, +ReadOnly, MyEdit
```

to the script. This will prevent changes to the *Edit* field until a *GuiControl*, *-ReadOnly*, *MyEdit* is issued—possibly with an editing button.

## Saving the Edited Data

At this point the edits are being stored in the variables in the RecipeTree app, but if the window is closed all the changes will be lost. What's needed now is a way to save all of the new data to the CSV data file.

My thought is to save the entire tree structure starting at the top and through all of the branches until reaching the bottom. The recipe codes (*R1*, *R2*, etc.) and ingredient codes (*C1*, *C2*, etc.) will be rewritten to conform with the current configuration as shown in the above figures. That way when the app is reloaded any changes, additions, or deletions, plus the order will be embedded in the data file. Fortunately, the AutoHotkey documentation for *TreeView* gives an example for looping through all of the branches:

```
ItemID = 0 ; Causes the loop's first iteration to start the search at the top of the
Loop
{
    ItemID := TV_GetNext(ItemID, "Full")
    if not ItemID ; No more items in tree.
        break
    TV_GetText(ItemText, ItemID)
    MsgBox The next Item is %ItemID%, whose text is "%ItemText%".
}
```

By using the *"Full"* option in the *TV\_GetNext(ItemID, "Full")* function, AutoHotkey is told to find the next branch regardless of the level (parent or child). Each branch is incremented in the order they appear. Without the *"Full"* option, the code would be more complicated.

When *ItemID* is 0, the top level of the *TreeView* is used. If the *TV\_GetNext()* function returns 0, then the bottom of the tree has been reached and the *break* command is used to exit the loop. This particular snippet of code uses a *MsgBox* to display the *ItemID* and text in each branch.

This technique is used to write an *UpdateFile()* function for saving the *TreeView* data as a CSV file:

```
UpdateFile()
{
    FileDelete, RecipeTree.csv
    R = 1
    ItemID = 0 ; Causes the loop's first iteration to start the search at the top of
    Loop
    {
        ItemID := TV_GetNext(ItemID, "Full")
        if not ItemID ; No more items in tree.
```

```

        break
    TV_GetText(ItemText, ItemID)
    If TV_GetParent(ItemID) = 0
    {
        ParentCode := "R" . R
        ChildCode := 0
        R += 1
        C = 1
    }
    Else
    {
        ChildCode := "C" . C
        C += 1
    }
    TextValue := %ItemID%text
    StringReplace, TextValue, TextValue, ", ", All
    StringReplace, TextValue, TextValue, `n, |, All
    FileAppend, "%ParentCode%"`, "%ChildCode%"`, "%ItemText%"`, "%TextValue%" `n, Reci
}
}

```

The first step is to delete the old file using the [FileDelete command](#). Otherwise, the current tree structure would be merely added to the old file with the old data. If you want to keep the old file for backup, then use the [FileMove command](#) to rename the old file rather than deleting it.

```
FileMove, RecipeTree.csv, RecipeTree.bak
```

This will at least minimize data loss if something goes wrong.

The variable *R* is set to 1 to keep track of the recipe numbers. This will be used to assign and save the values ("R1", "R2", etc.) for tying the ingredients to the recipe as discussed last week. The variable *C* is set (and reset) to 1 each time a new recipe is encountered to track the ingredients in a recipe. Each *R* and *C* will be incremented by 1 as each recipe and/or ingredient is saved to the file. By assigning these values during the save process, the numbers will be continuous even if there have been deletions or additions. This accounting may not be necessary, but at this point it seems easier than saving the values found in the RecipeTree GUI window. (I'll better know the answer to this question later when we get to the point of adding new branches, deleting old branches, or changing the order of branches.)

The next few lines are identical to those copied from the example at the AutoHotkey Web site until the *If TV\_GetParent(ItemID) = 0* conditional is encountered. The *TV\_GetParent()* function is used to identify whether the branch is a recipe or an ingredient. A recipe will return the value 0 for *TV\_GetParent(ItemID)* since it has no parent. In this case *ParentCode* is set to the recipe number (*ParentCode := "R" . R*) and *ChildCode* is set to 0, which designates a recipe branch when the data file is read. The recipe number is then incremented by 1 (*R += 1*) to be ready for when the next recipe branch is encountered and the ingredient code is set (or reset) to 1.

If *TV\_GetParent(ItemID)* does not equal 0, then it is an ingredient associated with the previous recipe branch. The *ChildCode* is set to the current ingredient number (*ChildCode := "C" . C*), then *C* is incremented by 1 (*C += 1*) to get ready for the next ingredient. Both *ParentCode* and *ChildCode* are saved to the file identifying the recipe and/or ingredient within the recipe.

The variable *TextValue* is used to store the value of the *Edit* field by recreating the name of the variable previously created in the RecipeTree window to store the text from the *MyEdit* field (*%ItemID%text*). Remember, the variable name comprised of the *ItemID* (e.g. 7890986) and the word "text" was actually generated on the fly when the branch is added to the GUI window (i.e. "7890986text"). This technique captures the value for that variable's name.

## Saving Edit Field Data in a CSV File

Since CSV files are delimited with double quotes, comma and new lines characters, there are a few issues which must be considered when saving the data to a file. Otherwise, there could be errors when reloading the data which might cause the script not to function properly.

First, most data found between the two double quotes will be saved with no problems. The first quote mark tells the program reading the data to keep going until it reaches the second quote mark. If a double quote has been added during the editing process, then, while it will save the data to the file okay, it will later act as the second quote when read back in from the file. This will cause data to be truncated at that quote. To prevent this problem in AutoHotkey each double quote must be preceded by another double quote ("""). Then when the file is read, it will appear normally as a lone double quote without losing data. This is accomplished by adding the line:

```
StringReplace, TextValue, TextValue, ", """, All
```

which replaces all double quotes within the text variable with two double quotes.

The second issue is the adding of new lines (line feeds) in the same edit field for spacing paragraphs and lists. Since a CSV file sees a new line as the end of the data row, any that appear in the text variable will cause a problem when the data is reloaded. To fixed this problem the new line character (`\n`) is replaced with the vertical line (*StringReplace, TextValue, TextValue, \n, |, All*). It doesn't have to be the vertical line. Any other character will do as long as it is not commonly used in text. When the data is reloaded from the file in the *RecipeTree.ahk* script the vertical line is then replaced with a new line:

```
StringReplace, RowData4, RowData4, |, \n, All
```

This allows the free use of the ENTER key while editing text in the *MyEdit* field.

The last issue is when using the [FileAppend command](#) to add the data to the file, the delimiting comma used in the CSV file must be escaped with the tick mark (') to prevent AutoHotkey

from reading it as part of the *FileAppend* command:

```
FileAppend, "%ParentCode%"`, "%ChildCode%"`, "%ItemText%"`, "%TextValue%" `n, RecipeTree.
```

This appears to do the job when a Save button is added to the GUI:

```
Gui, Add, Button, xm gSave, Save
```

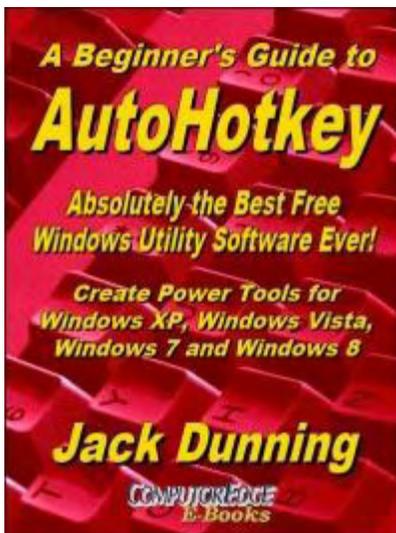
with a label *gSave* which calls the *UpdateFile()* function:

```
Save:
    UpdateFile()
Return
```

These changes have been incorporated into the *RecipeTree 1.3.ahk* found at the *ComputerEdge* [AutoHotkey Dropbox download Web site](#). Feel free to play with this script. Let me know if you run into any particular problems.

Next time, I plan to look into the problem of adding more recipes and ingredients while using the *RecipeTree* app.

\* \* \*



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.

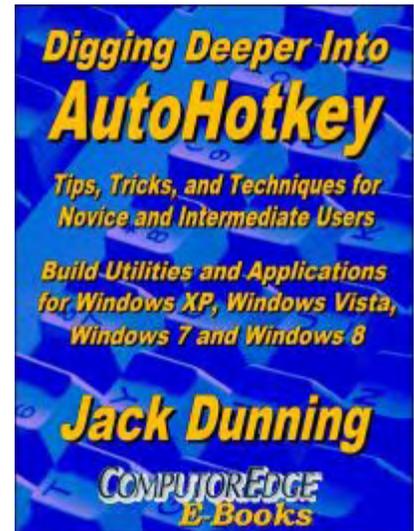
Based upon the series of articles in *ComputerEdge*, Jack takes you through his learning experience as he explores writing simple AutoHotkey scripts for adding repetitive text in any program or on the Web, running programs with special hotkeys or gadgets, manipulating the size and screen location of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

“Social Impact vs. Technology” by Wally Wang

## Wally Wang's Apple Farm

*Social Impact vs. Technology; Learn to Code; Barnes & Noble Fading Fast; Custom Shopping Experience with iBeacon; The iPhone Takes Over the Japanese Market; Displaying Files in Cover Flow.*

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Many people think that as technology advances, the world eagerly embrace the changes so they can find ways to enhance their lives with the new opportunities that technology offers them. Read most history books and you'd think that every new technological advance came with welcome arms from the adoring public. Then just think of the vicious and vocal reaction so many people had towards the iPad as a tablet computer, and you realize that every technological advance has often been vehemently opposed by a sizable number of people.

Technology matters less than the social impact it has on the people around them. Alexander Bain first invented the [fax machine](#) in 1846. Despite the obvious advantages of transmitting letters quickly and accurately over long distances, it took over a century for fax machines to grow in popularity.

Metal shipping containers have revolutionized trade because it's easy to load a shipping container with goods, lock it up, and transfer it easily from truck to ship and back on to a truck or train again. Before shipping containers, people had to waste time loading individual boxes and items on to a ship and then unloading them again. Yet when shipping containers first appeared, longshoremen fought against them because the use of shipping containers threatened to reduce the number of workers needed to load and unload a ship.

Nowadays we see technology like driverless cars and drones capable of delivering packages that you order from Amazon. While the technology may be remarkable, the social impact behind them is far more important.

Having drones deliver a package to your door in 30 minutes after you order it from Amazon might seem remarkable, and if it works, then it will be amazing. Now consider the multitude of problems delivery drones will have to face from people deliberately knocking down the drones to steal the packages to people using drone technology to deliver bombs. Despite the technology, suddenly the social impact of drones doesn't look so promising. Will we see

delivery drones in our lifetime? Maybe not to our homes where fleets of drones can cause havoc with flight patterns and unruly neighbors, but we likely will see drones delivering shipments to and from warehouses where their takeoffs and landings can be carefully monitored and controlled.

Delivery drones to homes can work, but the social impact is far more important than the technology behind drone delivery. How many people will want to steal a delivery drone just for the parts? If people easily steal shopping carts from supermarkets, it's not much of a leap of logic to assume some people will also steal delivery drones if they get a chance.

The rise of tablets and e-readers didn't just legitimize the e-book industry, but also gave a huge boost to romance novels. In the past, reading a romance novel in public meant hiding the lurid covers of half naked men and woman holding each other in erotic poses. Nowadays, reading a romance novel on a tablet is far less embarrassing because nobody can tell what you're reading. That fact alone has boosted the romance novel genre so more people can read romance novels more often wherever they want.

With any technology, the social impact is far more interesting and important than the actual technology. That's why so many people missed the opportunity of the iPad by focusing on the technology and not its impact on ordinary people. The lack of USB ports, memory card slots, and built-in physical keyboards seemed like a drawback until you realize that the ability to take a computer with you created all sorts of other advantages.

Tablets are far easier to carry and use on the move than a laptop that requires a flat surface to rest on, time to boot up, and stamina to carry around. Yet by focusing solely on the technology behind the iPad, so many critics missed the social impact of tablets.

Given a choice between using a PC with a physical keyboard as a cash register or a smaller and less expensive iPad, can you see why so many stores and restaurants now use iPads to take orders? A waiter could lug around a laptop, plop it on a table, and let customers type their orders through the physical keyboard that so many people feel is crucial to using any computer. Or that same waiter could hand an iPad to someone so they can easily tap their choices on the screen and pass the tablet to the next person.

There's a reason why Microsoft's Surface tablets aren't selling as well as the iPad because Microsoft designed and marketed the Surface tablets as a portable work device. Want to know how many people decorate their homes to look like office cubicles from work? Zero, because most people don't want to be reminded of work, so Microsoft's pitch for the Surface tablet, focusing on the technology behind it (Microsoft Office! A built-in kickstand! A USB port!) would be like Ikea trying to sell furniture to make your home look like an office cubicle.

An office cubicle in your home might make you more efficient to help you get work done, or it might turn you away from any vendor trying to sell you anything that will turn your home into the sterility and drabness of an office cubicle.

People never buy technology; they buy the impact that technology will have on their lives. A sports car will get you from point A to point B just like a Smart Car will do, but some people want a sports car for the power and appearance, even if they never drive the sports car over 80 miles per hour. If people really wanted to buy car technology, they would flock to Teslas and other advanced automobiles rather than the less technologically advanced cars on the market.

When people argue that you can buy a Windows PC cheaper than a Macintosh with comparable technology, they're right, but they're missing the social impact. With a Macintosh, you can take it out of the box and start using it right away. With a Windows PC, you have to wade through the pre-installed bloatware that immediately slows down your computer and clutters your hard disk.

To use a Windows PC safely, you need to install antivirus software. If you know where to look, you can get such software for free, but many people will be tricked into buying the trial versions of antivirus software pre-installed on their PCs. Then they have to spend time updating their antivirus software periodically. All of this extra activity degrades from the experience of actually using a computer. Some people enjoy spending extra time maintaining a computer, but most people don't, and that's an impact that steers many people away from a Windows PC and towards a Macintosh or a much simpler tablet instead.

If all you want to buy is technology, then you can spend your time happily researching the car that includes the most advanced carburetor and radiator hoses on the market. Or you can buy the car that looks the best and feels most comfortable to you. Guess how most people choose to buy a car? By focusing solely on the technology behind it or by focusing on how that product will make them happier while solving a need?

Now if people choose cars less on technology and more on how it makes them feel and how it meets their basic needs, can you guess how most people are going to shop for computers? Rather than hassle with the complexities of an ordinary computer, most people find it easier to use tablets instead.

The decline of the PC has less to do with technology and more to do with the positive social impact tablets and smartphones offer compared to the largely negative experience most people have wrestling with a regular computer. Tablets are simply easier to use than PCs, so is it any wonder that PC sales keep dropping while tablet and smartphone sales keep rising? More importantly, does anyone think that sales of regular computers will ever magically return to their once dominant position again?

## Learn to Code

Computer programming is a skill that anyone can learn. While some people may not want to learn much about computer programming, it's still an important skill to know so you become

more familiar with the way computers work. That way you won't be awed by giant, fake computers at state fairs that claim to predict your future.

In many countries, they start teaching children how to program in elementary school while in America, many kids never learn to program at all. To fix this problem, code.org offers free [programming tutorials](#) specially designed for children.

The screenshot displays the Code.org homepage. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the Code.org logo (C O D E) on the left and social media icons (Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, YouTube) and a 'Sign In' button on the right. Below the navigation bar are links for 'LEARN', 'TEACH', 'PROMOTE', and 'HOW TO HELP'. A prominent orange banner reads 'THE HOUR OF CODE IS COMING!' with a sub-link 'Recruit your school to learn computer science'. Below this are three buttons: 'Learn an Hour of Code', 'Beyond One Hour', and 'Find Local Schools + Camps'. The main content area features a section titled 'Tutorials for beginners' with a sub-link 'Educator Notes'. The featured tutorial is 'Write your first computer program' by Code.org. It includes a video thumbnail showing Mark Zuckerberg and an Angry Birds game interface. The text describes the tutorial as a game-like, self-directed lesson using drag-and-drop programming blocks. It lists the age range as 6-106, mentions it's available in 20 languages, and states that 342,600 participants have completed it. A 'Go' button is located at the bottom right of the tutorial card. Below the featured tutorial are more navigation dots and a section titled 'Tutorials that teach JavaScript' with a sub-link 'An introduction to'.

Figure 1. Code.org provides plenty of introductory tutorials to help kids learn programming.

The idea behind this site is to teach the basics of programming in one hour. The introductory lesson uses a simplified visual programming style where students can connect blocks together that represent commands. One game lets you program an Angry Bird to stomp on a pig. Another game lets you direct a zombie to find a brain to eat.

When you finish the first hour long lesson, you'll receive a certificate acknowledging your effort. By gently introducing programming to children, kids can decide if they want to learn more or not.

Exposing kids to programming can only give them more options later in life. The better

everyone understands technology, the more likely they'll actually apply technology correctly to enhance their lives rather than confuse and complicate it.

## Barnes & Noble Fading Fast

The Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) recently launched an investigation into Barnes & Noble's [accounting practices](#). While the facts aren't out yet, the state of the company doesn't look good.

Revenue at the company's retail bookstores and Web site were down 7.5% year over year in the quarter as same-store sales fell 4.9%. In its college textbook market, sales fell 4.6% and same-store sales in this segment fell by 3.6%.

The company's Nook tablet is barely limping along, facing competition from Amazon's Kindle and Apple's iPad along with the numerous Android tablets on the market. With declining printed book sales and e-reader sales, what can save Barnes & Noble?

Probably nothing. Blockbuster Video recently closed most of their stores because the cost of retail space killed their profits when competitors like Redbox and Netflix had no such retail expense. If Borders Books couldn't survive, you can already see the future of Barnes & Noble.

Amazon morphed themselves from an online book seller to an online seller. Barnes & Noble is still stuck trying to sell printed books online, and their selection is still weaker than Amazon's.

Amazon keeps improving and selling more Kindle tablets. Barnes & Noble is struggling to sell Nook tablets and keep improving them. Barnes & Noble used to have a near monopoly on college textbooks. With textbooks costing too much, that market is slowly dying for them as well.

As much as some people love printed books, they're just getting too expensive to print, ship, and store. Now combine declining sales of printed books and you can see the twin problems of rising costs and declining sales that would kill any company.

Expect Barnes & Noble to die soon. Maybe someone will buy the Nook tablet division, but why? If you're buying Nook e-books, be ready for a day when the Nook could disappear for good.

You can't go wrong with an Amazon Kindle tablet and your second best option is to read e-books using the iBooks program on either the iPad or on a Macintosh. Apple's iBookstore is only growing while Barnes & Noble's Nook bookstore will likely go down in flames with the rest of the company. You can keep reading your Nook e-books by downloading the Nook software for the iOS, Android, Windows, or OS X, but look for alternatives to the Nook now.



and low cost of implementing iBeacon, you can expect iBeacon to become popular in other stores and public places.

That will simply make iOS devices more attractive for customers while other mobile operating system users (Android and Windows Phone) will have to rely on third-party apps to maintain compatibility with iBeacon. The only possibility for rapid adoption of alternative technology would be to create an iBeacon open source solution, which will take time to develop and implement. With iBeacon's head start, any alternative technology will already be far behind that switching to it could be more trouble than it's worth.

The next time you walk into a retail store, expect iBeacon to offer you deals on certain items as you walk by them. If you don't have an iBeacon compatible device (such as a Windows Phone), you'll miss out on opportunities that other people are enjoying. That alone will likely drive more people to iOS devices (especially to older iPhones that are essentially free with a two-year contract).

Although Android may dominate the mobile operating system market, iOS will likely dominate the headlines by pushing interesting technology like iBeacon. Of course, iBeacon could fail, but at least it will be an interesting failure that will pave the way for better alternatives in the near future.

## The iPhone Takes Over the Japanese Market

According to various reports, the iPhone has well over half of the [smartphone market](#) in Japan. *The Japanese Daily Press* remarked that "The iPhone still is about the only phone in Japan which is [sold unmodified](#)... tinkered devices usually come out too heavy on features, too complicated, and are big battery drainers."

Steve Jobs once said that Japanese manufacturers didn't recognize the importance of software technology. Most executives at Japanese consumer electronics manufacturers were hardware engineers, so they don't get the importance of software or how software business works.

By focusing too much on hardware, Japanese companies missed the appeal of the iPhone. Sound familiar?

When you fall in love with technology for its own sake rather than for what it can do, it's easy to dismiss anything that doesn't cram in the most technology possible regardless of whether it actually does anything useful.

When examining any type of technology, just ask yourself if it solves at least one major problem that current technology can't solve. A bicycle may be less advanced than a car, but a bicycle is certainly easier to ride in a forest where roads are non-existent.

As the iPhone takes over the Japanese market, we can watch to see how the iPhone fares in

China when China Mobile, China's largest carrier with seven times the number of subscribers as Verizon, starts offering the iPhone.

For a phone that Steve Ballmer, Microsoft's CEO, once dismissed, the iPhone is selling worldwide quite well. "There's no chance that the iPhone is going to get any significant market share. No chance," said Ballmer in a [2007 interview](#). With the iPhone dominating the Japanese market and soon to take on the Chinese market, it's a safe bet that Steve Ballmer's quote about the iPhone would be more appropriate to describe Microsoft's own smartphone platform instead.

\* \* \*

When you open a Finder window, you can view your files in one of four ways: as icons, in a list, in columns, or in Cover Flow. You could switch different views by clicking the View menu, but it's easier just to press Command+1 for icons, Command+2 for a list, Command+3 for columns, and Command+4 for Cover Flow.

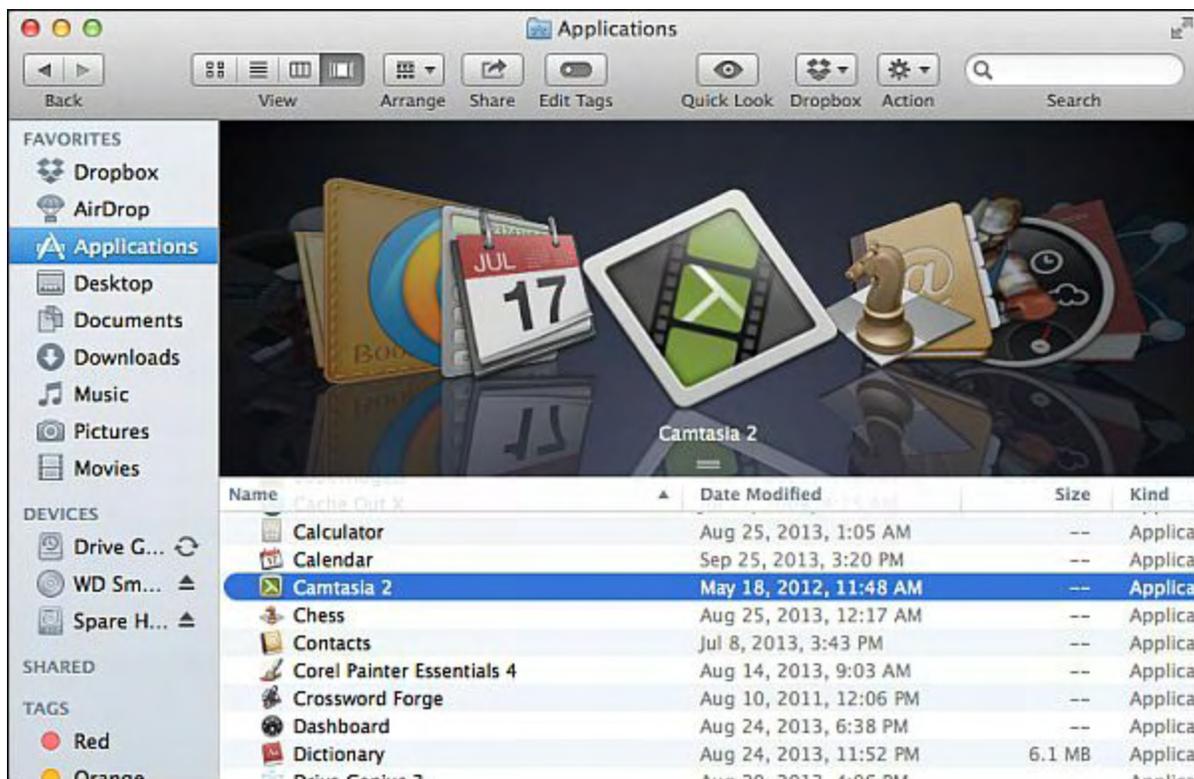


Figure 3. Displaying files in Cover Flow.

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*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 \(Children's Stories the 1% Tell About the Rest of Us\)](#)

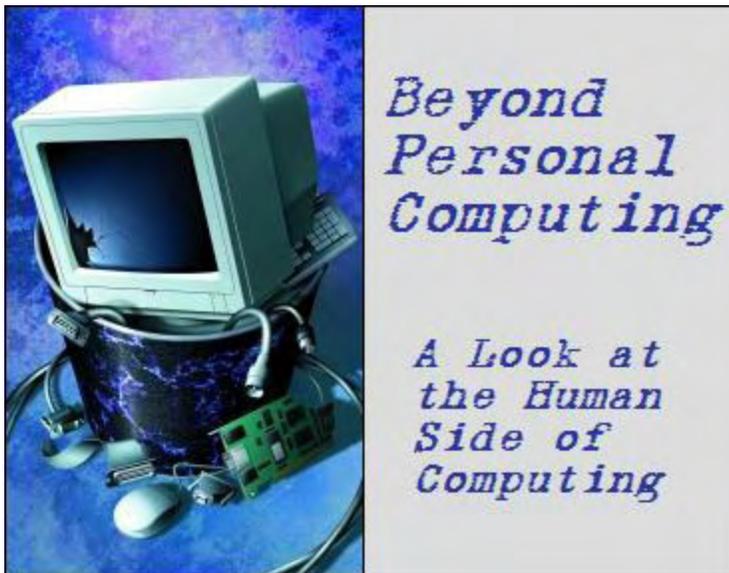
[The Zen of Effortless Selling with Moe Abdou](#)

[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](#)," giving advice to authors who want to self-publish e-books at his site "[The Electronic Author](#)," 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).



## Beyond Personal Computing

“The Future of Downloads!” by Marilyn K. Martin

*Amusing anecdotes about downloads.*

Never mind the confused souls who handed discs to clerks in Computer Stores, and asked them to please download the Internet for them. All of it. And never mind that some of us have invented a new game called "Putting 'Best Free Download' Into Our Browser Just To See What Pops Up." (An amazing amount of sites called best-freedownloads.com, bestfreewaredownload.com, bestdownloadsfree.com and 100-downloads.com, that's what.)



“It turns out that they don’t admit robots to the opera!”

There's always been something a little magical about "downloads" from the Internet. It's like an instant gift: no wrapping, no ribbon, no parcel-packaging, no long waits at the Post Office behind strange little people who want to see *all* the stamp selections before making a stamp purchase. No hassle waiting for a "delivery" that's been rescheduled four times, and finally arrives as a touchdown pass to your third-floor back door from a surly guy in a shorts/shirt uniform who hates the world since his bum-tendons ended his budding NFL career.

No Siree! You find something online you want, from software to photos to an article or e-book, just click on that magical "Download" button. Then your first surprise

arrives: you are required to pay (although the site will gladly accept any American Dollar cards, PayPal or Bitcoins). Or you first need to take a short survey on how often you feed stray dogs, have mistaken someone with a flashlight for someone with a gun, or other "topically

cultural" subjects someone in Asia needs to know. And when payment is accepted (or tasks completed), those DIY plans for your \$17 Billion Dream House (or fake-naked photo of your favorite movie star) is yours, yours, yours forever!

Have you ever wondered idly what "magical downloads" of the Future [might entail](#)? Well, those slacker sages at *Cracked Magazine* have, which inspired me to go off into new and uncharted speculative jungles about what Future Downloads we might someday be offered.

## Public Downloads Headed Our Way

- 1) Free public toilets that take credit cards to unlock the, um, necessity-paper in each stall.
- 2) Or download that public toilet's free app for Extra Flush, Plunger Required, Deodorizer, Extra-Strong Ceiling Spray Deodorizer. Or Biometric Mixup of your face so no one knows who broke that one toilet trying to flush handcuffs or pirated CDs.
- 3) Pastry or candy shops where you have to download your Insulin Pass before being allowed to make purchases.
- 4) Awakening in Intensive Care with a nurse/avatar asking if you have a credit card to upgrade to medical monitoring equipment into Large Numbers or Neon Glow, with options like New Patient Refresh, Insurance Against Power Interruption, or Auto-Dial Undertaker of your Choice after a 10 minute flat-Line.
- 5) "Perception Upgrades" to your Google Glass or Brain Implant: such as Music Suited to Scenery, Sensation of Popularity, to Fury Displacement with Mock Fistfight Against Offending Other.

## Grocery Store Downloads of the Future

- 1) You input your shopping list for a grocery store, then download exact aisle locations for each item, and price per item (with, without and thinking-about-it membership). Including if the item is presently discounted on their Old But Not Growing Things clearance rack. (Extra for Self-CheckOut Product Codes, Job Application and Options when store-has-run-out-of-bags.)
- 2) The option to download a Store CheckOut app for Checker Personality (Perky, Brainy, Chatty or Silent Automaton).
- 3) Or to change the drone-voice at Self-CheckOut to Military Masculine, Giggly Polite or Jokester ("Have you heard the one about the banana and ...?").

## Downloading **Worthwhile "Upgrades"**

- 1) More Skilled and Courteous Drivers Around You, with choices for Slow Down, Speed Up or Pull Off Road Until All Middle-finger Lunkheads Zoom Past.
- 2) Special/Extra videogame levels like After Armageddon, Punishing All Chronic Winners, and Rounding up Your Body Parts.
- 3) The Take-Off-Thirty-Years Magical Mirror app, which projects from your smartphone screen with a Wrinkle Meter (some, for character only, none, or everything gone but nose, eyes and mouth).

## Downloads for the **Kitchen Appliances of the Future**

Refrigerators and stoves are being computerized to the point that you can almost tell them telepathically when to turn on or open the door. But for most of us poor folks in apartments, meal preparation relies on smaller appliances that could use some downloadable upgrades. Especially for times like Running Late, Starving, or When Movie Popcorn, Zucchini Hors d'oeuvres or Backpack Crackers Aren't A Filling Meal.

So we mainly want downloads for Faster Cook-Time or More Food Into Smaller Space. Ten Second Fire-and-Fling Mode for your toaster as you catch the launch while running out the door, late to work. Nuke-It mode for your microwave, when you are starving or getting hungrier watching your bubbling food going around and around on that glass plate inside. You want Napalm Mode for six toaster-pastries at one time crammed into your Bagel-Ready toaster. And maybe Child/Foreign Help/Crazy Cousin "Safety Mode" so the microwave won't turn on if a live animal, unpunctured food or a living body part is inserted.

## More Complete Reviews of Everything, on Demand

Downloading 'Collected and Complete Global Reviews' before you go out the door or make a phone call to a restaurant would be nice. Sample Reviews for "Party Pizza Parlor":

- 53% thought price reasonable, affordable.
- 71% thought experience worth the trip or worth the phone call.
- 3% thought the pepperoni was too chewy.
- 16% thought the vegetables were beyond day-old.
- 7% asked for light, heavy, swirled or dabbled tomato sauce—and didn't get it.

- 21% found the store's flashing lights around the menu annoying, distracting or bad enough to order-ahead next time.
- 1.5% found the napkins dirty, too creased or in too-short supply.
- 9% didn't like the absence of commercial arcade games.
- 26% thought the animatronic pizza slice should learn a new dance routine to better music.
- 31% thought the bathroom looked like a six-year-old had cleaned it.
- 4% thought the employees should upgrade to better uniforms.
- 63% want more "Just Picking Up!" parking spaces out front, with license plate photos taken if driver heads to stores on either side of PPP.
- .03% found an unknown tooth, used band-aid or dirty fingernail on their pizza.

## Movie Downloads of the Future

TV services and content-providers are already grappling with "live streaming" and "content on demand." But just wait until we can download options like these!

- 1) Paying to download movies with "Alternate actors/replacements" in Good, Better, Best or Lifelike Animation CGI quality.
- 2) Paying to download movies with "Hilarious dialogue options" like:
  - A) English dialogue as a third language.
  - B) English dialogue as rewritten by a third grader.
  - C) English dialogue presented as rhyming Rap.
  - D) English dialogue presented as Haiku poetry.
  - E) "Best Guess" dialogue in mostly English, and every sixth word foreign. ("And for my most precious...Shingletong!")
- 3) Paying to download movies with "Additional desired sequences," such as:
  - A) "Impossible Car Chase" in a 1, 3 or 7 minute sequence.
  - B) "Impossible Sex Scene" in a 1, 3 or 7 minute sequence.
  - C) "Impossible Horror Scene" in No-gore, Lit-gore, Just-blood gore or Exploding-body gore.
  - D) "Impossible Martial Arts Scene" in Normal, Fast, Blur or Never Saw The Nunchucks.
- 4) Paying to download movies with "Rearranged scenes to enhance the storyline":
  - A) First scene Set-Up, long and meandering-middle, Resolution in very last scene.
  - B) Resolution at beginning, rest of movie in flash-back.

- C) 'Best Guess' what first half of movie is about - or choose "Independent Movie Model."
- 5) Paying to download movies with "Substitute weaponry":
- A) Knives turned into handguns; small extra charge for changing impact wounds from slice to bullet-hole.
  - B) "Nuclear option" upgrades from handguns to orbital satellites. (No refunds for shortened, everyone's-dead storyline.)
  - C) "Surprise weapons" from lipstick-shooter to exploding-brass-knuckles.
- 6) Paying to download "Once-cut scenes":
- A) Verified "found footage" from original rough-cut movie.
  - B) Verified "found footage" from director's nephew's basement. (May have random spliced-in shots from cartoons, family travel movies or high school prom.)
  - C) Verified "blooper party scenes" from star's End-of-movie Parody Party.
  - D) Unverified "sex/gore/mangled dialogue/costumed-character re-enactment" scenes from rabid fan site.
- 7) Paying to download "Cavalcade of Alternate Endings":
- A) Action Choices: from Submarine-into-Sunset, to Race Vehicle Impacts Mountain.
  - B) Survivors: All, Limited, Your Choice, Zombified, Villain Dies, Villain Survives.
  - C) Romance: Ending with Kissing Scene, Embrace (clothing or naked, vertical or horizontal), or Tearful Good-Bye.
  - D) Happiness Factor: Ever After, Only 'til the Song Ends, Mushroom-Cloud on horizon, flat-out Dystopian.
  - E) Allow advertisements and get free 3-hour Different Endings Mash-up.

## **As We Take Our Tablets Everywhere...**

Life has changed now that we take our slate computers everywhere with us. We even watch TV and movies in our home with tablets on our lap. While great to surf the Internet during commercials, it also allows us to occasionally interact with TV shows while they run. (#WillThisCharacterSurvive?) So I predict that soon there will be even more downloads to allow more "viewer choice, interaction or opinion":

- 1) Paying to download "Story Highlights" marked by minutes (buzzer-alert extra) so you can look up from your video game and catch the highlights: Explosion at :36; Kiss at :47; Car Chase at :56; Kiss Leading to Sex at :69; Best Car Chase or Fight Scene of Movie at 1:34; Tears and Apologies at 1:43; Endearing Character's Death at 1:44; Villain Dying Painfully at 1:56.
- 2) Paying to download "Comment section," so you too can get on AnonATroll, and upload your opinions during the show: "Did the commercial cut in too soon, or did that blood-spray on the camera lens mean the chainsaw really did cut off Robby-Zombie's head?" or "How do I

buy stock in movie-blood companies?"

3) Paying to download "Personal options of desperation" during Family Movie nights, if Mom rents that penguins-walking-in-a frozen-wasteland docu-drama again, or you can't take another viewing of Barbie On The Pink Asteroid. A satisfying option for Dad and Junior might be watching the Independent film, "Whales Devouring Penguins In the Wild" or "Exploding Doll Heads - The Class Project" on their tablet computers.

4) Or maybe content-providers will get around to offering "LearnAFact Alternates" as free downloads for the Family Movie Night losing voters. Mom can manage to sit through "Deadly Molecular Explosion Race" Dad and Junior chose, if she can read "Making Merry with Molecules - recipes included," or "The Role of Blood in Reproductive Biology - photos optional."

## **Download Info We Want Before Going to the Mall**

Brick and mortar stores have tons of maybe-helpful apps, mainly maps and prices. But surveillance cameras are everywhere today, and why do Security and Law Enforcement keep all the public, non-criminal fun info to themselves?

Why can't we go to the "Mondo Mall" Web site before we head to the car, and open up the "Employees Working Today" option. By paying with random left-over amounts on Gift Cards, we can download the information we really want to know:

"Is that hunky guy with the crooked smile working in Ranger Round-up Saddles today?" Or "Is the security guard with the mean eyes and Kill 'Em All! tattoo working on the first floor today?" Or "Is that girl with the black hair, eyes, fingernails and demon tattoo working in BatsRUs today?" Or "Did OrangeSqueeze clean their frothy-frosty machine this morning?"

## **Sneaky-secret Downloads after Purchasing Products**

And when it comes to buying something with Partial Assembly Required, why can't we go to a "Store Secrets!" Web site that offers Important Product Info. Pay with your birthday Bitcoins, and learn that:

A) If your enclosed instructions ended in HXA, download a list of what parts are probably missing.

B) If you don't have a Swedish Rotating Drill3D, download what tools you can use as a substitute.

C) If your sales help at "Kitchen Redistributables" was named Eddie or Edie, download the truth about where that electric meat slicer you just purchased was used last.

D) If you ordered a product 3-6 days before the Flood Of The Century in your store's closest warehouse state, download animation of what your parcel will probably look like upon arrival. As well as what parts are salvageable in the event of total-stock-destruction, or a pending corporate bankruptcy with no allowance for refunds.

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*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 on-going series of novellas, about a wise-cracking team of ghost investigators who occasionally turn into alien-monster hunters. [Culture Crash! A California Yankee Transplanted to Texas](#) 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!



**Without  
Digital Music,  
Life Would  
Be an Error**

## Without Digital Music, Life Would Be an Error

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

*Winamp RIP?; Superstitious?; and The Salesman's Frightful Laughter.*

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### Winamp RIP?



The storied and once ubiquitous Winamp music player could soon be no more, pushing up the e-daisies, et al. AOL, who acquired parent company Nullsoft in 1999, made the announcement on November 20.

"Winamp.com and associated Web services will no longer be available past December 20, 2013. Additionally, Winamp Media players will no longer be available for

download. Please download the latest version before that date," said a statement posted at the Winamp site.

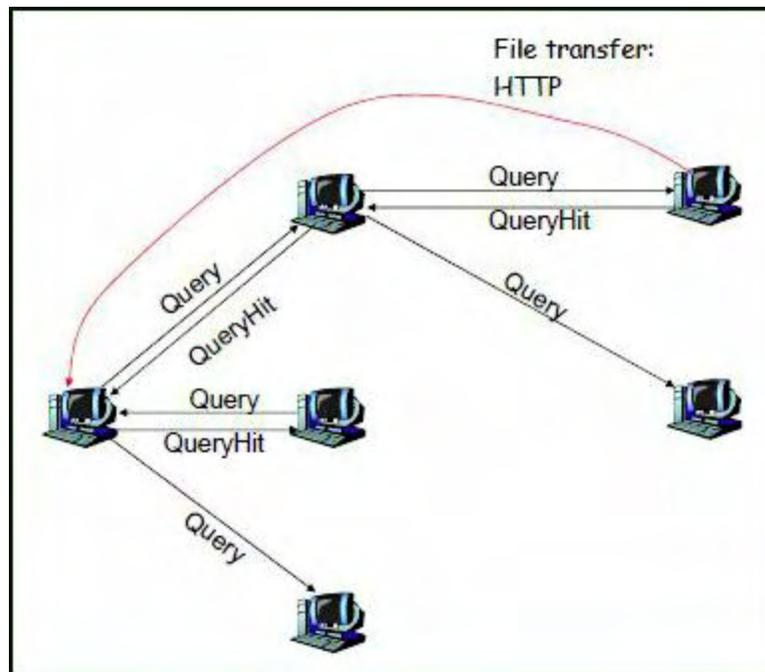
There have been reports regarding a sort of stay of execution, including a Microsoft acquisition, something that would seem particularly amusing considering the fact that the Nullsoft name is a parody or mildly mocking reference to, that's right. But there's always the possibility of mild to great exaggeration, either way, in the case of such rumors.

I must say, whether Winamp lives or dies here, I liked the attitude and disposition of the company—specifically its creator, Justin Frankel—from the first time I read something about it. Winamp's sort of motto: "it really whips the llama's ass!" (and *Rolling Stone* at one time called Frankel "The World's Most Dangerous Geek.").



After Nullsoft joined AOL, Frankel and others released the Gnutella peer-to-peer file-sharing application, essentially as the Time Warner merger was materializing, and with the latter company's aggressive stance with regard to Napster, this clearly posed a problem (and certainly seized my attention, and I of course wasn't alone).

Although AOL (technically AOL Time Warner) ordered Gnutella removed from its Web site, it had already been downloaded extensively, and the source code was released under the GNU General Public License (a thousand gnutellas bloomed, so to speak—Limewire, Morpheus, et al.—without Frankel's additional assistance, but he did continue to irritate AOL with his creations, discussion of which would make a wonderful column). AOL shuttered Nullsoft's SF office in 2003, and Frankel resigned in 2004.



But the development of Winamp has obviously continued, and the final version, 5.66, was released November 20. AOL also recently shut down Spinner—a company that had shared Nullsoft's SF office—and other music-related sites, referring them to AOL Radio (their most recent blog post is from August).

So I suppose that the Winamp decision shouldn't come as a shock, but resistance, resilience, and so forth, are good ideas to keep in mind. There is a petition (of course!) at [savewinamp.com](http://savewinamp.com), asking AOL to release the Winamp source code, obviously in order to give it life as an open source project.



At press time, there hadn't been any (announced) progress on neither the Microsoft acquisition front nor the idea to make Winamp open source. One way or another, very simply stated, we'll know in a week.

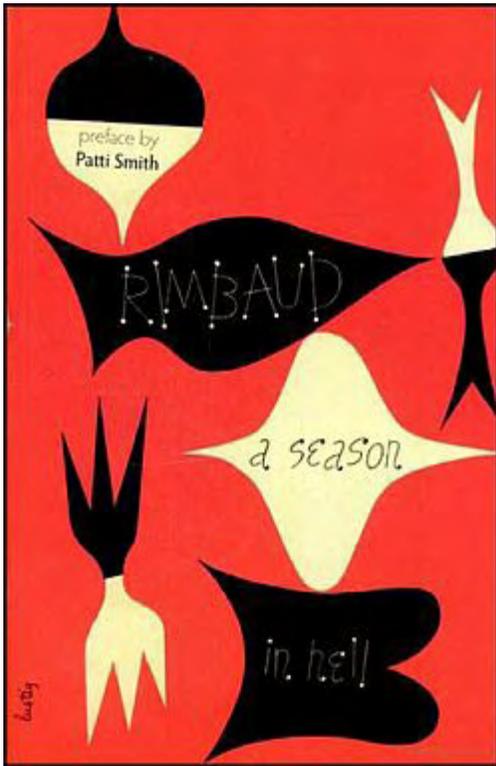
## Superstitious?

For now, happy Friday the 13th, incidentally. Did the Vatican and co. sack the Knights Templar on a Friday that fell on the 13th day of a month? There are numerous origin stories, and alternatives, too. The Greeks are said to be less than fond of Tuesday the 13th (beware of black cats, too, although that may also depend on what part of the world you're in or come from). All I can say for sure is that my Mom was born on a Friday the 13th (with a full Moon, too!), so great luck it is, from my family's perspective at least.

Also, I've been missing for a rather extended period, so this day marks my return. Judge for yourself what end of the luck spectrum such an event represents.

But just when you thought I was gone—and that you'd gotten off easy, being forced to read such a relatively succinct piece—it's time to announce that I'll be back next week with a last-minute gift guide, perhaps a reaction to my column from last year that seemed a little too intertwined with much of the Black Friday and Cyber Monday/Week/whatever events.

## The Salesman's Frightful Laughter



I've always known people who shop as close to the holidays as possible, and for you, dear reader, I tear out a few hideous pages from my notebook of one of the damned (damned, and doomed to wander online looking for digital music-related bargains to report on, that is)—to liberally borrow/steal from Rimbaud's "A Season In Hell." Actually, my avoidance of Black Friday, et al., is a conscious attempt to abstain from such language and mind set. I've never been a good shopper, but perhaps I can assist and help to minimize the process so you can focus on the intangibles that matter most.

Incidentally,



singer/songwriter/poet/et al., Patti Smith published an introduction to the latest edition of "A Season In Hell," translated by Louise Varese, seen by many, this writer included, as being responsible for the definitive English edition. D'OH. That'll have to wait for my future literary column, and its subsequent gift guide. In the meantime, it's music, and from cool gadgetry, to (for instance) a gorgeous new volume of [Vivaldi's Cello Concertos](#) performed by Sol Gabetta, I've got you covered. Until then, Santé!

---

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

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



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

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

*"Dictionary.ahk vs. Dictionary.exe," "Slider App vs. Windows Power Options," "Washing Machine vs. MacKeeper"*

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### Dictionary.ahk vs. Dictionary.exe

[Regarding Jack Dunning's July 12 [article](#), "Five Cool Little Windows Apps":]

Hello! I just thought you would like to know that *Dictionary.exe* runs just fine, but *Dictionary.ahk* is throwing a bunch of errors starting in Line #20. I'm using *Dictionary.exe* for now with no problems.

-Curt Faulk, Phoenix, AZ

*Curt, I'm wondering if you are using AutoHotkey\_L, the current download at AutoHotkey.com. The dictionary.ahk file works fine for me, but there could be something else going on. The compiled version (EXE) is not likely to work if the script (AHK) doesn't work.*

-Jack Dunning, ComputerEdge

### Slider App vs. Windows Power Options

[Regarding the November 29 [Editors Letters: Tips and Thoughts from Readers column](#).:]

The Windows Power Option (in Vista through Windows 8) includes a slider that adjusts the brightness continuously (there is no "apply" button"). Perhaps the AutoHotkey app is needed for XP. Also, I'm not sure an app can solve the problem of a missing driver. If the Windows slider didn't work, I would guess the slider app would have the same problem.

-Ron Cerrato, San Diego, CA

### Washing Machine vs. MacKeeper

[Regarding the November 22 [Wally Wang's Apple Farm column](#):]

My sister used MacKeeper to fix a bunch of things on her iMac that the speedtest.net Internet speed site recommended. Apparently it fixes all sorts of things/misconfigurations(?) on the system, and it *did* improve her Internet speeds dramatically.

I don't know all that it does, but it sounds similar to Washing Machine you wrote about in this week's article.

Perhaps a comparison of the two programs would be helpful for a future article?

-Rich Ernst, San Diego, CA

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*ComputerEdge always wants to hear from you, our readers. If you have specific comments about one of our articles, please click the "Tell us what you think about this article!" link at the top or bottom of the specific article/column at [ComputerEdge.com](#). Your comments will be attached to the column and may appear at a later time in the "Editor's Letters" section. If you want to submit a short "ComputerQuick Review", or yell at us, please e-mail us at [ceeditor@computoredge.com](mailto:ceeditor@computoredge.com). If you would like to review our recent e-books, please visit [ComputerEdge E-Books](#).*

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