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Seminars on the Web

Called Webinars, online seminars are gaining in popularity.

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Digital Dave

"Digital Dave answers your tech questions." by *Digital Dave*

Deleted iCloud File; A Great Tip for Moving or Copying Windows Files.

Deleted iCloud File

Dear Digital Dave,

I have iCloud on my iPhone, iPad and computer. How can I retrieve a document, contact or calendar event if I accidentally delete it?

Thank you your help many times in the past.

Jim White
Spokane, WA

Dear Jim,

While I do have access to iCloud I don't actually use it, so someone else may have a better answer. As I understand it, unlike many other Cloud services such as Dropbox (see Figure 1), iCloud does not automatically save previous versions of files. It depends upon Time Machine on a Mac to keep earlier versions of files. If your computer is not a Mac, I'm not sure what you can do, if anything.

My investigations indicate that mobile files are kept on the Mac in the "~/Library/Mobile Documents" folder. This is a hidden folder, so you need to set the system to show hidden folders.

Often Apple makes things so user friendly that it's difficult to deal with an unusual situation. This may be the case with deleting iCloud files. If I'm wrong I would certainly like to be enlightened, but this is why I prefer to use a more universal service such as Dropbox or Google Drive which will work with virtually any type of computer or mobile device—plus it's easy to recover files inadvertently deleted.
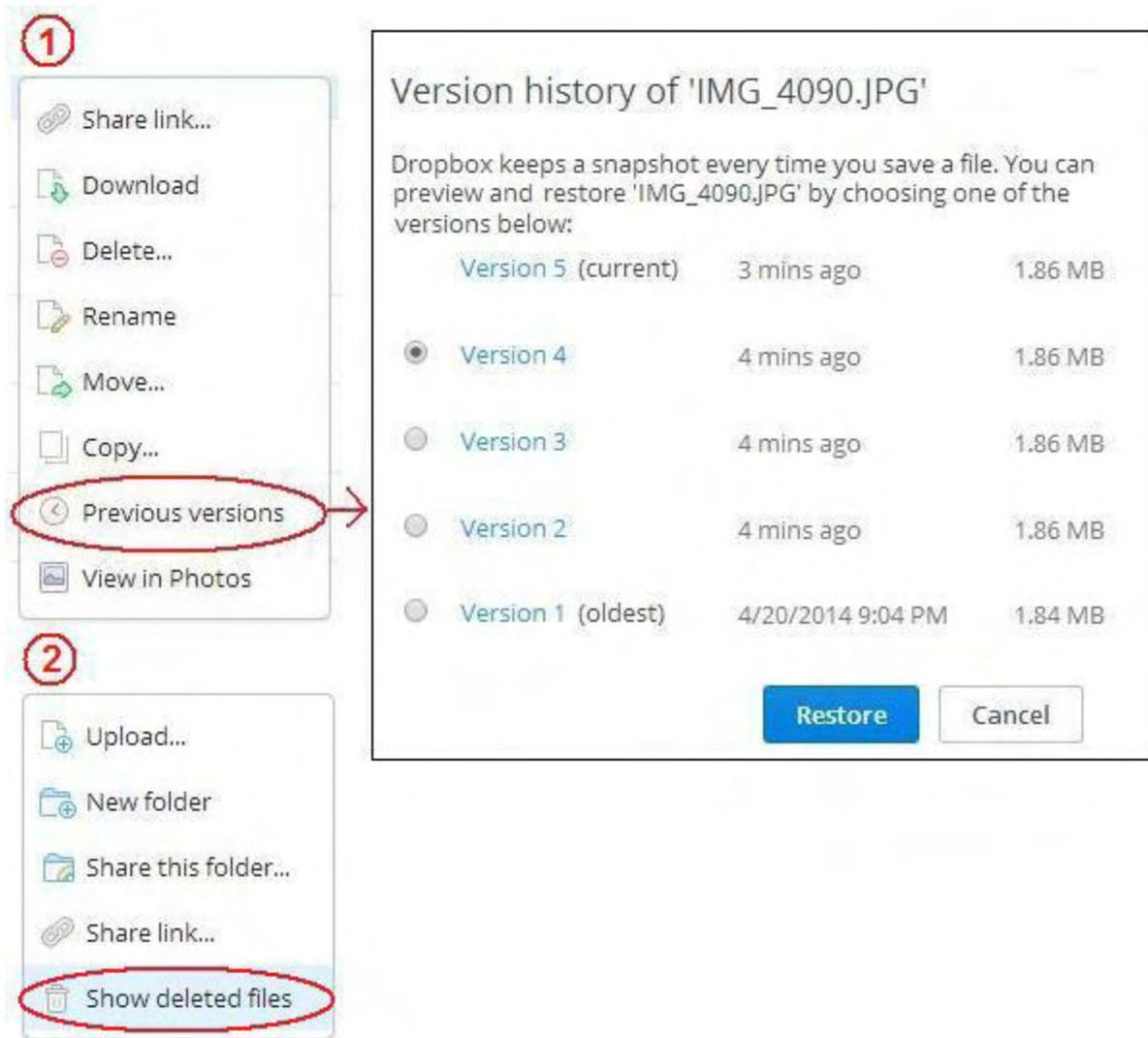
Figure 1. (1) Earlier versions of files can be found at the Dropbox site for up to 30 days by right-clicking on the file name and selecting "Previous versions." (2) If a file is inadvertently deleted, it can be recovered by right-clicking on the folder at the Dropbox site and selecting "Show deleted files."

While it is still shocking to suddenly delete a file in Dropbox, it's relatively easy to recover the file at the Web site.

Digital Dave

A Great Tip for Moving or Copying Windows Files

Many people are aware of the various keys which can modify the Move/Copy operation when dragging (left-click and hold) a file or folder from one location to another. If the file or folder is on the same drive and you do nothing, then dragging will move the file or folder. If you hold down the CTRL key while dragging, a copy of the file or folder is made at the new location. If

you hold down CTRL+SHIFT while dragging the icon/filename, then a shortcut will be created in the target folder.
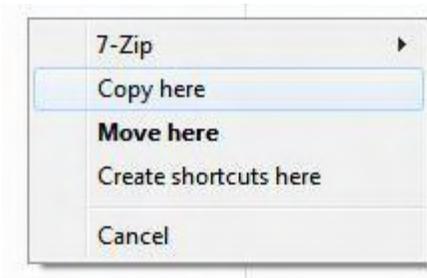
While these modifiers make it simpler to do each task, it's not always easy to remember which does what. If you want the same choices, but prefer to select them from a dropdown context menu, then use a right-click drag rather than a left-click drag. When you release the right-click button after dragging a file/folder name to a new location, an options menu pops open (see image at left). Choose Copy, Move, or Create shortcuts.

The beauty of this right-click drag technique is you don't need to make your final decision until you actually reach the destination. Since left-click drag immediately executes, how many times have you moved a file instead of copying it? Or, how often have you accidentally dragged a file to the wrong folder? The right-click allows you to reconsider your actions. Worst case you can always Cancel the move.

You can also simply use the standard CTRL+X (to move), CTRL+C (to copy) and CTRL+V (to paste) with selected files or folders to copy them to a new location, but these don't offer creation of shortcuts. (The regular right-click context menu does offer shortcut creation, but then you still need to move it to the proper location.) While using hotkeys may be a little more tedious than the right-click drag, you don't need to drag anything or open multiple Windows Explorer windows.

Digital Dave

Webinars for Your Business and Hobbies

"An Extended Form of Online Meeting Places, Webinars Offer Low Cost Training Solutions" by Jack Dunning

It's expensive to travel across the country to give and attend seminars. With webinars the travel costs are eliminated. Here's what you should know.

In the past couple of weeks I've met different people who regularly set up webinars for their business. A webinar is a Web based seminar which occurs live. The attendees log into the webinar over the Internet at the appointed time and the instructor shares a computer screen with them while providing the audio explanation. The shared screen might be a PowerPoint presentation, a live computer desktop, or any other appropriate computer screen. Normally, attendees can't see the seminar leader—although some webinar services do allow an inset view of the facilitator. The audio is available over the computer speakers or headphones, plus there is an option to call in on a telephone for the sound.

Webinars are gaining in popularity for companies that have a reason to hold training, which includes almost all businesses. They save travel time and expense for both the trainers and the attendees. The primary requirement is an Internet based service which can connect multiple computers over the Web. That's why you see companies such as GoToMeeting targeting the market. One company is even providing a service which takes advantage of Google Hangouts.

Almost all my communication is through *ComputorEdge* columns and e-books, but I can see the advantage to doing webinars myself on beginning AutoHotkey or Windows tips. I know that different people learn in different ways. Not everyone can pick up a book or read a Web page to get all they need on a topic. Some people must see and experience something before it

starts to sink in. Plus, webinars might help to promote my e-books.

An Inside Look at Webinars

I spent time discussing webinars with Scott who owns a specialized software company. He uses webinars to help his clients learn certain aspect of his software. It gives him an opportunity to address FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions) for multiple people rather than one-on-one. The service he's using right now is GoToWebinar (part of the GoTo group) for which he pays a special introductory rate of $10 per month. (I wonder if he will still like it when it goes to $99 per month.) What follows is part of the conversation we had about his experience with GoToWebinar:

What's good about GoToWebinar?

"At $10 per month the GoTo product is worth it because it handles a lot of the leg work for inviting and keeping track of attendees. We'll see how much it is when my promo runs out."

One of the major benefits to webinar services is that they handle the e-mail invitations, reminders, and sign-ups (see Figure 1) for the webinars. That leaves the webinar provider to concentrate on preparing the presentation. If someone had to do all the contacting of prospects, follow-up and tracking, it could be pretty time consuming. (I checked out the rates for the maximum 100 attendees Scott has in his plan and it appears that his rate will jump to $99 per month after the introductory offer is over.)

Uncover the Stock Length Material Tab in Framing System Parts

Tue, May 13, 2014 11:00 AM - 11:30 AM PDT

Take a close look at the power and features in the Stock Length tab of the Framing System Parts window. This is one of the key parts of the WinBidPro software. Most of the parts that show up in your reports comes from this tab.

Unlock the real power of WinBidPro by understanding this part of the program.

* First Name

* Last Name

* Email Address ?

* Indicates a required field

ⓘ By clicking this button you submit your information to the webinar organizer, who will use it to communicate with you regarding this event and their other services.

Register

Figure 1. One of Scott's webinar sign-up pages.

You generally need to sign-up in advance for a webinar. Searching the Internet for active webinars occurring right now won't be productive—although you can find previously recorded webinars. You need to find them through sponsoring Web sites well before they occur. Trying to match students with a topic takes time. That's why some of the most important services provided by webinar companies are e-mailing to prospects (usually from address lists that you provide), signing up attendees, sending reminder e-mails, and doing follow up surveys.

How is attendance at your Webinars?

"I get a decent number of signups, but the average attendance is probably 45-50% of the signups."

It makes sense that people will sign up with the intention of attending, but at the appointed hour other things come up—especially if it's a free Webinar. Unless someone pays to attend a Webinar, any commitment will depend upon the motivation of the attendee.

Can attendees talk to you or is it just text messages similar to computer chat?

"They can talk if I give them the ability. They can also either phone in for audio or use their computer. It's a good option, because our customers wouldn't be able to troubleshoot mic and

speaker problems. I can mute all or certain attendees as a presenter."

But attendees won't hear audio from other attendees will they?

"They will if I un-mute the attendee that wants to talk. The important thing is I have control over it. There are too many interruptions and distractions if everyone's mic is open."

So people could add to the Webinar ad hoc if you unmute them?

"I did that once with about 15 attendees and I heard cell phones ringing, coughing, talking, shuffling paper, you name it."

It's good that you can let some people ask questions. Will others hear the questions?

"Yes. There is a 'raise hand' tool where they can raise their hand and I can unmute their mic for input or a question. There is also a text Chat feature for me to chat with all or some, and they can type questions and I can answer either directly or so that all can see."

I understand that the text messages can get distracting while giving a Webinar.

"Yeah, I don't pay attention to the control panel much (see Figure 2) when I am giving the Webinar. Mine is so short, that I just tell everyone that I am going to cover the topic, then open up for questions at the end."
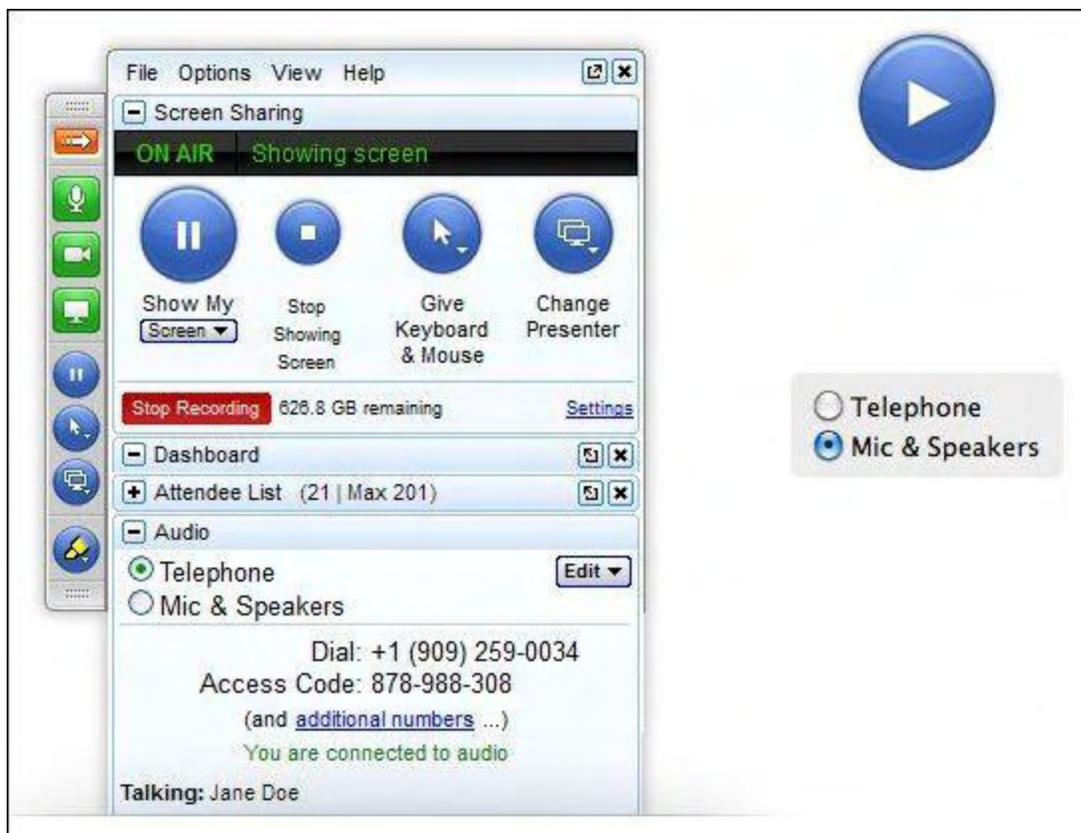
Figure 2. The GoToWebinar Control Panel.

It's been reported by professional seminar facilitators that Webinars force them to be more structured. There is very little feedback from the attendees. In a face-to-face seminar, the mood can be gauged by non-verbals and other reactions from the attendees. This allows for quick adjustments to deal with the dynamics. A Webinar leader is isolated from the students. It's much more difficult to react to a group losing interest or getting confused when you can't see the people or you're just responding to text chat.

What else do you like about the Webinar service?

"GoToMeeting will send a survey after the Webinar and collect the data as well. I also record them and upload the video to the GoToWebinar site, but each one has only been viewed a couple of times. The recording saves as a WMV file on my computer by default."

Many of the Webinar services do record the session for later posting. If you're planning to create training videos, then this could be a good systematic way to get it done.

Webinar Services

If you're considering doing webinars yourself, then check the various services carefully for those features that you need. They are not all the same. As I perused many of the so-called webinar services, I saw that often they were meeting services geared toward interaction within small groups of people. Certainly these meeting services can serve as a webinar provider, but they were not designed for that function and may not have many of the features mentioned by Scott.

Scott uses [GoToWebinar](#) because it seemed to have the most services that he knows he needs. As I checked around the Web, it was one of the most recommended webinar services. In fact both Scott and one other person I talked to had recently switched to GoToWebinar. It has a $49/month rate for up to 25 attendees, plus there is a 30-day free trial. The plan Scott uses allows up to 100 attendees, includes GoToMeeting and has a regular rate of $99/month.

Another often recommended service is [Webinars OnAir](#). It uses Google+ Hangouts On Air as its engine and has had some pretty good reviews. It's generally less expensive than other Webinar services, but on the downside attendees must sign up for a Google+ account. (Yet another piece of Google's master plan to rule the world.)

Free Webinars

Most of the webinar services have some type of free offer—often a free trial. Some free webinar services may include ads. Still other free services may limit the number of attendees— say five to 25—or the number webinars per month. If you're new to webinars, then I would

definitely suggest taking advantage of free trials. This may be the best way to find out which features you really need.

If you don't mind ads, then you can get free Webinar hosting for up to 200 attendees through AnyMeeting. This service also includes the capability to sell tickets through PayPal. Even the paid version, with no ads, seems reasonable at $18/month for up to 25 attendees. However, one comment from a user stated, "AnyMeeting was great in theory, but it ruined several of my webinars when it just stopped working midway through...thumbs down to AnyMeeting." Sometimes it's true that you get what you pay for. My guess is that this is a risk for any webinar service. One of the worst things that can happen is to experience a webinar crash. Even though it may not be your fault, your reputation will take a hit.

OnWebinar offers unlimited free Webinars. I haven't had time to explore it, but it seems (since it is free) it may be worth a shot. Another such free service is FreeScreenSharing. You might ask how companies can afford to offer the service free. My answer is that unless they have an anonymous benefactor, they can't. I don't know how they do it, but they will either find a source of revenue, start charging for the service, or go out of business.

Fuze is free for up to 25 participants. For up to 125 participants it's $8/month. MeetingBurner is free for up to five people. For more alternatives, see "10 Free Web Conferencing Tools."

There are some people who are using Google+ Hangouts On Air as a free webinar service. Even though I have a Google+ account, I haven't played with it very much. (Maybe it will be a subject of a future article if I can figure out how it works.) Here is one article which shows "How Google Is Forever Changing The Webinar." It could be that Google will do to webinars what it's has done in so many other areas—create free or cheap alternatives. The platform is certainly good enough for Webinars OnAir to use it as its backbone.

Right now there are a multitude of webinar companies. GoToWebinar is one of the few that seems to be breaking out of the pack. However, Google+ Hangouts On Air with its free services may start getting much more attention.

Jack is the publisher of ComputorEdge Magazine. He's been with the magazine since first issue on May 16, 1983. Back then, it was called The Byte Buyer. His Web site is www.computoredge.com. He can be reached at ceeditor@computoredge.com. Jack is now in the process of updating and compiling his hundreds of articles and columns into e-books. Currently available:

Hidden Windows Tools for Protecting, Problem Solving and Troubleshooting Windows 8, Windows 7, Windows Vista, and Windows XP Computers.

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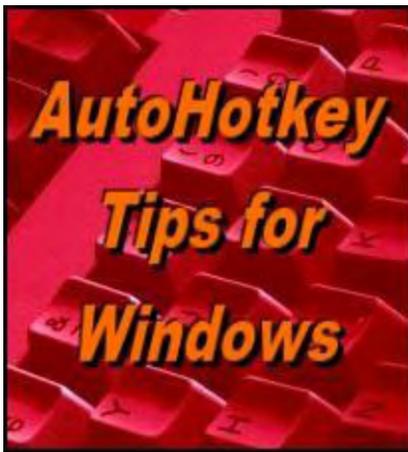
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and *That Does Not Compute!*, brilliantly drawn cartoons by Jim Whiting for really stupid gags by Jack about computers and the people who use them.

Recover Lost Dropbox Files

"It's Easy to Delete Files in Dropbox. Here's How to Fix It!" by Jack Dunning

Although this Dropbox tip is not AutoHotkey related, it prepares us for next week's sharing AutoHotkey files with Dropbox technique.

Sharing files has a built-in problem that's existed since the computer was first invented—data loss. While technology has made great strides in most areas, the difficulties in sharing data files have never been completely resolved. The problem is that if someone else saves an altered file at approximately the same time as you, there is a decent chance that someone is going to lose their changes.

I recently talked with someone who was confused about the continual loss of data when sharing a file over [Dropbox](#). The plan was to share the same data file so that two (or more) people could use the file at the same time. For the most part, it seemed to work, but every once in a while changes would disappear into the Cyber Bermuda Triangle. There was a fundamental misunderstanding of how Dropbox works. For that matter, there was a misunderstanding of what's required to share data files anywhere. The vulnerabilities of Dropbox are just as real for network server drives and thumbdrives.

Dropbox merely makes sure that the files stored on the Web and each member computer are the same. It doesn't care which computer makes a change. The second the file is saved in the Dropbox folder, the syncing process starts by copying the file to the Web. Next, the file is copied to all the other Dropbox devices in the account. For example, I have an AutoHotkey app I call To Do List which uses a small text file to keep track of things I need to do. But, since I use a number of different computers, it would be redundant to keep different to-do lists on each computer. I wanted changes I made in one to-do list to appear on all the to-do lists. I decided to use Dropbox for sharing my data file *ToDoList.txt*.

I figured out how to make the To Do List app update the To Do List window when the Dropbox file had changed, but this didn't solve the basic problem. The Dropbox process shown in Figure 1 takes a few seconds. "Take out the trash" is added to a To Do List window on one computer. Dropbox senses the change in the data file *ToDoList.txt* and copies it to the Web. Dropbox then copies the data to each of the other computers. This takes a few seconds. Then, the other To Do List window notices that the file has changed and updates. Everything works fine if there is no other activity while the process is being completed. But if I add a task

on the other computer before the file gets updated in the app, then it turns to garbage. Both computers are trying to update Dropbox at the same time.
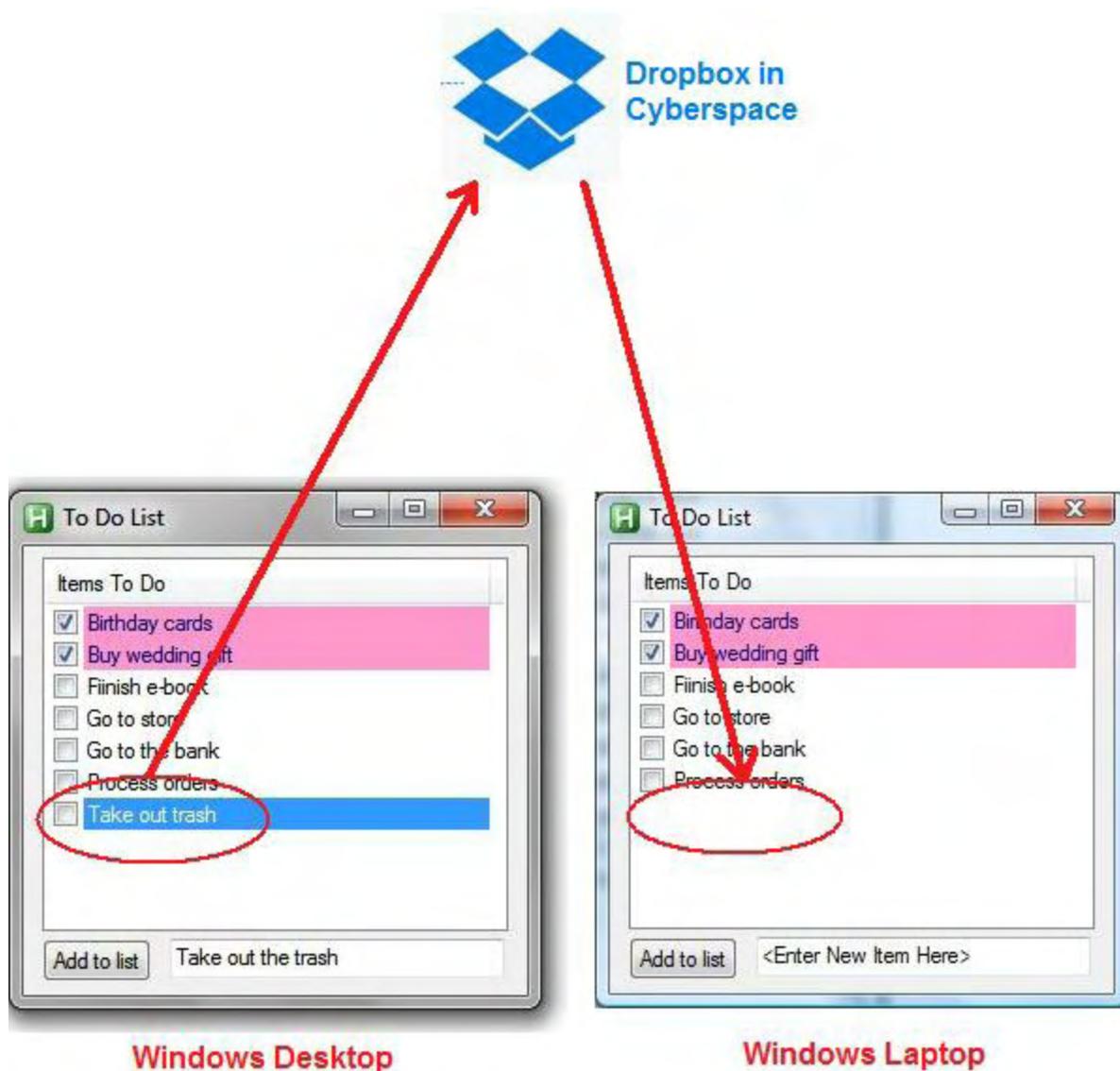

Figure 1. When a file is updated (saved) in the Dropbox folder, Dropbox automatically sends it to the primarily folder on the Web. Once the Web Dropbox is update with the latest file, all the other Dropbox devices are updated. During this time data may be lost if more than one computer or device updates the same file.

If two people are working on the same file, then the last person to update (or save) the file will win the data war. Computer one knows nothing of any changes made by computer two and vice versa. The only way that two computers can access the same data file without this data loss risk is to implement file locking. That way the first person who uses the file will lock out all others until they are done. But this is pretty inconvenient if you want more than one person working at a time. People might be left sitting twiddling their thumbs. To solve this problem, a more refined technique called record locking was developed for database files. With record locking a specific row of data is frozen while it is edited by one of the online computers. Other computers are able to read the record, but they cannot edit it until released by the computer

that locked it in the first place. This way many people can work with the same database without tromping all over each other. However, outside of database programs and other software which lock files while editing, this solution is not commonly implemented because it's complicated and can cause other problems.

Dropbox has no file locking. Anyone with access can make files changes and Dropbox will attempt to distribute them to all connected devices. Dropbox should not be used for simultaneous editing of data files. In fact, unless there is some type of file or record locking implemented, there should never be simultaneous editing of a file. That includes files copied to thumb drives, files on network drives, and files on remote services. What is required is human control, "I told you not to make any changes to that file! Just note the changes and I'll make them myself."

Dropbox does have other features which help if you happen to get into a conflict between files. First, if a file is changed at the same time on more than one computer, Dropbox will save one of them in a special conflicted file (see Figure 2). (It sounds like an emotional problem.) If it is the file you want, then you can restore it from the Dropbox Web site. Or, you can keep the current version. In some cases, you may be stuck with trying to combine the two conflicting files (not a trivial problem). I found that the total elapsed time before the Dropbox update circuit was completed was often about ten seconds. If I did anything with the file before the dust settled, I ended up with unresolved conflicting files.

ToDoList (Jack-Win-7-Desk's conflicted...4-04-27).txt	document	4/27/2014 1:29 PM
ToDoList (Jack-Win-7-Desk's conflicted...4-04-30).txt	document	1 hr ago

Figure 2. The ToDoList.txt file was involved in an accident where two changed files collided. Dropbox recognizes that a file was changed before it could be updated. One file is used while the other is saved with a new name as shown with the work "conflicted" in the filename. You can restore the conflicted file, stick with the latest or restore another version found in "Previous versions."

The third option is to restore a file from the Dropbox "Previous versions" feature which keeps old versions of a file for up to 30 days. Right-click on the filename and select "Previous versions" from the pop-up menu. A list of all the previous versions will appear (see Figure 3).
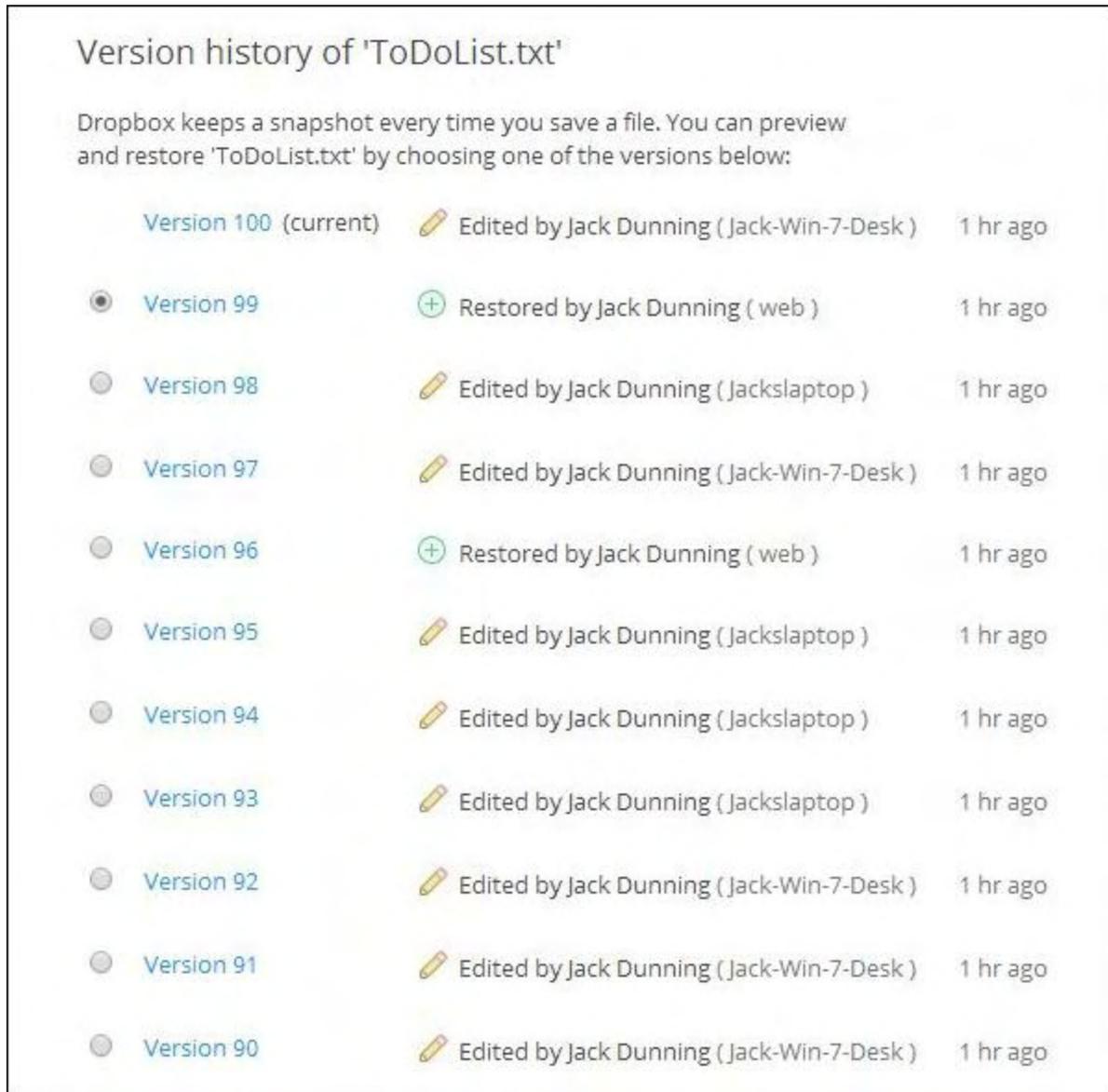
Version history of 'ToDoList.txt'

Dropbox keeps a snapshot every time you save a file. You can preview and restore 'ToDoList.txt' by choosing one of the versions below:

	Version		Action	Time
	Version 100 (current)	✎	Edited by Jack Dunning (Jack-Win-7-Desk)	1 hr ago
◉	Version 99	⊕	Restored by Jack Dunning (web)	1 hr ago
○	Version 98	✎	Edited by Jack Dunning (Jackslaptop)	1 hr ago
○	Version 97	✎	Edited by Jack Dunning (Jack-Win-7-Desk)	1 hr ago
○	Version 96	⊕	Restored by Jack Dunning (web)	1 hr ago
○	Version 95	✎	Edited by Jack Dunning (Jackslaptop)	1 hr ago
○	Version 94	✎	Edited by Jack Dunning (Jackslaptop)	1 hr ago
○	Version 93	✎	Edited by Jack Dunning (Jackslaptop)	1 hr ago
○	Version 92	✎	Edited by Jack Dunning (Jack-Win-7-Desk)	1 hr ago
○	Version 91	✎	Edited by Jack Dunning (Jack-Win-7-Desk)	1 hr ago
○	Version 90	✎	Edited by Jack Dunning (Jack-Win-7-Desk)	1 hr ago

Figure 3. Dropbox maintains copies of previous versions of files for up to 30 days.

The files may be examined by clicking on the link. In some cases, it may require downloading the file to open it. Select the file you want to make the new current version and click Restore at the bottom of the page. All the computers will be updated with the older version.

While this illustration of the problem with sharing files is particularly slow in Dropbox, it is exactly the same problem that exists on networks and in programs without file/record locking. These situations require human control systems. "Hey, I'm using this file. I'll let you know when I'm done." In some cases it may be a logging system that shows who is in control of a file. When someone else is up to bat, you can probably read a file, but don't make any changes.

Understanding that these difficulties exist, I still want the To Do List AutoHotkey app to share the data file over Dropbox. I do have a script running, but it still has some noticeable bugs. For

those who are interested in using AutoHotkey to work with sharing files over Dropbox (or a similar Web drive service such as Google Drive), I will dig deeper into the solution next week. But I warn you that it won't be perfect because of the inherent problems in sharing files over the Internet.

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Find ComputorEdge *AutoHotkey scripts at our* [AutoHotkey Scripts page](#)*!*

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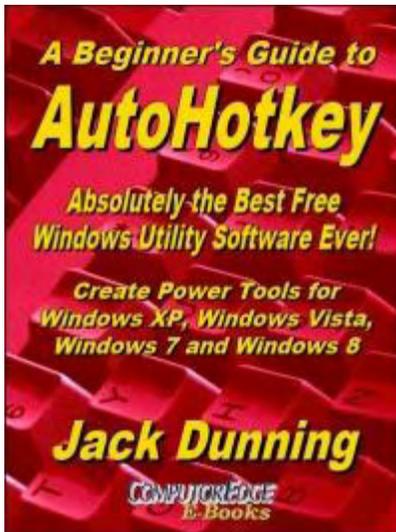
The new second edition with more chapters and an index to the AutoHotkey commands found in the book is available in e-book format from Amazon (and other formats—EPUB and PDF— at the ComputorEdgeBooks Web site linked below). Jack's *[A Beginner's Guide to AutoHotkey, Absolutely the Best Free Windows Utility 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 *ComputorEdge*, 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!](#)

<div align="center">*   *   *</div>

Jack's latest AutoHotkey book which is comprised of updated, reorganized and indexed columns from *ComputorEdge* 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.
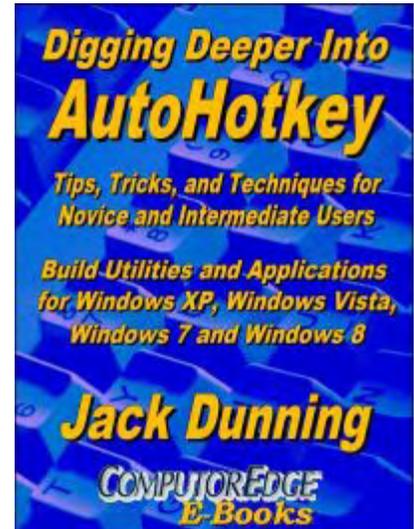
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Jack is the publisher of ComputorEdge Magazine. He's been with the magazine since first issue on May 16, 1983. Back then, it was called The Byte Buyer. His Web site is www.computoredge.com. He can be reached at ceeditor@computoredge.com. Jack is now in the process of updating and compiling his hundreds of articles and columns into e-books. Currently available:

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 *ComputorEdge* cartoons from 2011 and 2012 is now available at Amazon! *That Does Not Compute, Too! ComputorEdge Cartoons, Volume II: "Do You Like Windows 8 or Would You Prefer an Apple?"*

Special Free Offer at ComputorEdge E-Books! *Jack's Favorite Free Windows Programs: What They Are, What They Do, and How to Get Started!*.

Misunderstanding Windows 8: An Introduction, Orientation, and How-to for Windows 8 (Seventh Edition)!

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.

Wally Wang's Apple Farm

"Technology Startups in the Middle East" by Wally Wang

Technology Startups in the Middle East; The Real Revolution of Mobile Computing; Teaching History Through Gaming; Apple's Quarterly Results; Free-Form Note-Taking; Protecting Your Privacy; Navigate a Web Page Without a Mouse or Trackpad.

If you've used one of the most popular weather apps, called Clear Day, you might be surprised that it comes from a company that started in Egypt. Despite constant news reports about violence and oppressive regimes (often funded and supported by Western democracies), the Middle East is actually one of the fastest growing Internet regions. Wherever you find problems, you can find entrepreneurs making money providing solutions.

Figure 1. Clear Day provides beautiful images to go along with weather reports.

In the book *Startup Rising*, author Christopher Schroeder surveyed a variety of technology

startups that are creating more disruptive change in the Middle East than any wars or covert funding could ever do. After seeing videos of how companies recycle materials from discarded computers, another Egyptian entrepreneur founded a recycling company called RecycloBekia. Despite knowing nothing about recycling, this entrepreneur taught himself how to recover precious metals from used computers and make money from the process.

Although the Middle East has a reputation for oppressing women, that didn't stop from a woman named Hind Hobeika from starting a company called Instabeat that sells a wearable heart rate monitor so swimmers can monitor their performance in real-time. As you swim, you can compare your current heart rate to your optimum heart rate just by looking inside your own swim goggles.

Figure 2. Instabeat's monitor can be worn with swim goggles so swimmers can see their heart rate in real-time without using their hands.

Plenty of Middle East entrepreneurs are looking to the West for ideas to bring back to their home countries, but that also means many Westerners can look to their Middle East counterparts for great ideas that could benefit people in America and other parts of the world.

As much as Americans might like to think that they somehow have a monopoly on technology, Silicon Valley isn't the only place where technology entrepreneurs can start up and thrive. If a volatile region like the Middle East can spawn a new generation of technology entrepreneurs who have to battle dictatorships, civil wars, and terrorists to not only survive, but flourish, then what's to stop anyone from any part of the world to look for problems they can solve and then go out and do it?

Entrepreneurs are people who see problems they can solve with technology. Any time you see a problem, there's potential profit in finding a solution. With few people using credit cards in the Middle East, there's a huge potential in mobile payments through smartphones, which completely upends the traditional banking system and government regulations of most Middle Eastern governments. Technology offers one way to change that part of the world through

innovative products that solve pressing needs. Before governments can even recognize the world is changing around them, it's already too late for them to stop it.

In the future, expect the Internet and technology to reshape places like Africa and the Middle East. While those regions will still have problems, entrepreneurs offer the best chance for changing that part of the world (for better or worse).

The next time you think of the Middle East, you might have to think of something other than terrorists. If you want to see religious fanatics willing to kill others for their beliefs, just look at your own national government and the political parties that want to control it.

The Real Revolution of Mobile Computing

Anyone remember when critics gleefully claimed that the iPhone and iPad were useless toys? Apparently even these critics have conveniently forgotten their own claims that completely missed the potential of mobile computing. The introduction of the iPhone and iPad helped people see smartphones and tablets as mobile computers. In underdeveloped areas, low-cost, mobile computers can change the way people live just like PCs changed the way Western countries live and work.

Besides giving people the ability to talk to each other, smartphones also give Africans access to the Internet along with computing power equal to early PCs. More importantly, Africans lack a banking infrastructure, so that's why Kenyan-based Safaricom [relies on M-Pesa](#) to handle payments on their smartphones.

In 2011, over $10 billion dollars passed through M-Pesa, which represents close to half of all mobile transactions in the world. Through M-Pesa, it's now easier for people in Africa to send money to each other through their smartphones than it is for Americans to do the same task. So who's ahead in technology now?

In places like Africa, books are rare and expensive just like computers, telephones, and Internet service. Instead of spending money buying books, PCs, and telephones, many Africans avoid this entire costly infrastructure by reading on their smartphones instead. In fact, smartphones and e-books promise to [spread literacy](#) around Africa and other places where printed books are scarce.

With so many uses for smartphones and tablets, it's hard to believe that anyone could have not only missed the incredible potential of mobile computing, but could have even actively argued against it. Perhaps when the wearable computing revolution starts gaining popularity, these same critics will claim that wearable computing can be duplicated better and less expensively by strapping a netbook to your arm or face because a netbook can use an obsolete operating system with a file management system, a physical keyboard, and the ability to run Adobe Flash.

Teaching History Through Gaming

Barnard College had a typical problem. Teaching history often meant reading facts and memorizing them. To make history seem more real and exciting, professor Marc Carnes decided to turn history into a role-playing game where students took on the roles of various characters in the historical event and had to interact with one another. By actively influencing history with the context of a game, students could better understand the role of the different players in the game.

The game, called "Reacting to the Past," teaches skills like speaking, writing, critical thinking, problem solving, leadership, and teamwork—in order to prevail in difficult and complicated situations. While students must adhere to the philosophical and intellectual beliefs of the historical figures they play, they must devise their own means of expressing those ideas persuasively, in papers, speeches or other public presentations; and students must also pursue a course of action they think will help them win the game.

Playing games can not only be fun, but educational as well. The next time your kids want to play a video game, they might actually want to learn something. Either that or they might just want to blow up cartoon zombies and ram a chainsaw through a zombie's face just for the sheer joy of watching animated blood squirt all over the screen.

Apple's Quarterly Results

While analysts claim that Apple has stopped innovating and that iPhone sales are going down, Apple surprised them by revealing iPhone sales actually shot up. Even though critics claimed that the iPhone 5C was a flop, that flop managed to sell more units than every other phone except for Samsung's Galaxy S4. If the iPhone 5C is a flop, then every smartphone but the Samsung Galaxy S4 must be an even worse flop. Of course, analysts rarely apply the same standard to other companies when they can use distorted logic to skewer Apple instead.

Top 3 Smartphones	September/13	October/13	November/13
AT&T	Apple iPhone 5s ($200/$300/$400)	Apple iPhone 5s ($200/$300/$400)	Apple iPhone 5s ($200/$300/$400)
	Apple iPhone 5c ($100/$200)	Apple iPhone 5c ($100/$200)	Samsung Galaxy S 4 ($200/$250)
	Samsung Galaxy S 4 ($200/$250)	Samsung Galaxy S 4 ($200/$250)	Apple iPhone 5c ($100/$200)
Verizon	Apple iPhone 5s ($200/$300/$400)	Apple iPhone 5s ($200/$300/$400)	Apple iPhone 5s ($200/$300/$400)
	Samsung Galaxy S 4 ($200)	Samsung Galaxy S 4 ($200)	Samsung Galaxy S 4 ($200)
	Apple iPhone 5c ($100/$200)	Apple iPhone 5c ($100/$200)	Apple iPhone 5c ($100/$200)
Sprint	Apple iPhone 5s ($200/$300/$400)	Apple iPhone 5s ($200/$300/$400)	Apple iPhone 5s ($200/$300/$400)
	Apple iPhone 5c ($100/$200)	Samsung Galaxy S 4 ($200)	Samsung Galaxy S 4 ($200)
	Samsung Galaxy S 4 ($200)	Apple iPhone 5c ($100/$200)	Apple iPhone 5c ($100/$200)
T-Mobile	Apple iPhone 5s ($649/$749/$849)	Apple iPhone 5s ($649/$749/$849)	Apple iPhone 5s ($649/$749/$849)
	Samsung Galaxy S 4 ($600)	Samsung Galaxy S 4 ($628)	Samsung Galaxy S 4 ($626)
	Apple iPhone 5c ($528/$649)	Apple iPhone 5c ($549/$649)	Apple iPhone 5c ($549/$649)
Top vendors	Apple Samsung	Apple Samsung	Apple Samsung

Figure 3. The iPhone 5S and iPhone 5C were two of the three top selling smartphones.

Tim Cook said that 62 percent of iPhone 4s buyers and 60 percent of iPhone 5c buyers switched from Android smartphones to buy an iPhone. Perhaps Samsung could release data showing how many new customers Samsung gets from people switching from an iPhone to Android. Most likely, the main switchers will be people who want a larger screen on their phone, which means if Apple releases a larger size iPhone 6 at the end of the year, which will eliminate one more reason for people to use Android over the iPhone.

Although iPhone sales skyrocketed, iPad sales dropped. Unlike the iPhone that has a fairly predictable two-year upgrade cycle, there's little reason to upgrade from one iPad model to another. The iPad 2 works perfectly well while the iPad Air offers just a lighter weight. Not everyone wants to buy a whole new iPad just for a lighter model when your older iPad still works perfectly well.

Another surprise came from Macintosh sales of over 4 million units. Compared to the holiday season, Macintosh sales are down 14 percent but up 5 percent from the previous year in the same quarter. Clearly people are still buying Macintosh computers despite the gradual shift to mobile devices. Why would so many people buy a Macintosh when they can get a cheap PC for much less that gives them more RAM, hard disk space, and a faster processor?

One huge reason could be that people see the advantage of using a Macintosh over Windows 8. Anyone who wants to develop iOS apps also needs a Macintosh, so as the app market continues growing, Macintosh sales will keep growing as more developers flock to iOS.

Not surprisingly, iPod sales keep dropping since anyone with an iPhone or iPad essentially

have an iPod anyway. The iPod represents the dying digital music player market.

At Apple's developer's conference this June, expect announcements about new versions of iOS and OS X. Since nobody will have a reason to get excited about a new operating system that just changes things around without providing new features that give people advantages that they never had before, expect these new operating systems to focus on Apple's rumored iWatch and updated AppleTV that will likely run iOS 8. To take advantage of the latest features of OS X, expect announcements about new MacBook Air and Mac mini models too.

The world of wearable computers and Internet streaming to TV sets is coming from Apple soon so if you want to be part of the future, it's easier to get started with an iOS device and Macintosh today. Or you can watch the future pass you by as you cling to technology that gives you no productivity advantages in return for forcing you to learn new ways to do the same tasks you could do with older technology.

Free-Form Note-Taking

If you need to take notes, word processors force you to organize your notes linearly on a page from top to bottom. If you want to separate and organize your notes, you can copy and paste text around, which can be clumsy since all your notes still remain locked in a linear format.

You could use the Notes program that comes with OS X to store ideas on different pages, but then you can't see all your notes at once. You might want to get a mind mapping program to let you jot down ideas, but then you have to connect them in a hierarchy.

To avoid all of these problems, you might want to look at [Scapple](), a unique note-taking program that lets you type text and move it around anywhere on a page so you can lump related notes together, yet still see all your other notes.
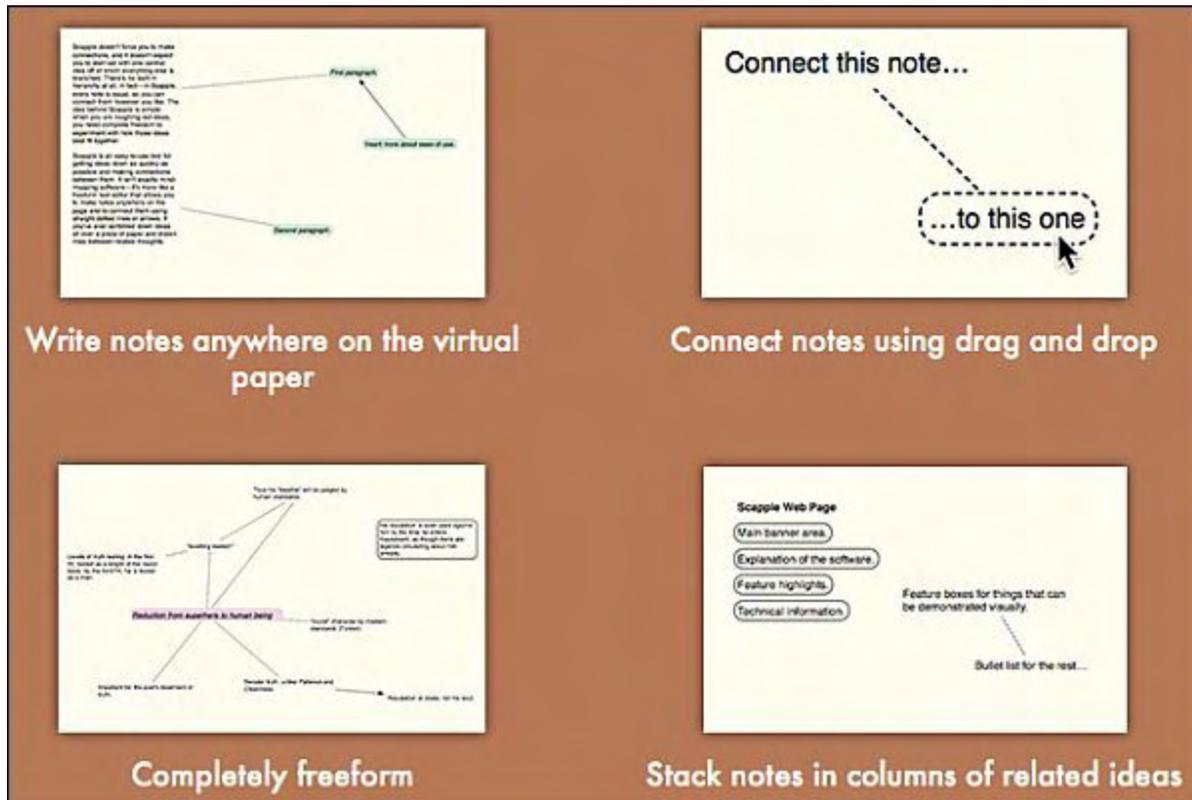
Figure 4. Scapple lets you type and move text on the screen.

With mind maps, you start out with a central idea and create links to that main idea. With Scapple, you can freely organize ideas anywhere on the page and link only those ideas that are actually related to each other. This lets you type and store two different sets of ideas on a page, yet still view them all.

Scapple gives you more freedom than a mind mapping program, but more organizing capabilities than a word processor. If you need to capture notes quickly and find them easily again, you may want to try Scapple. If you like jotting down random ideas and then playing around with them to see how they might be related, you'll definitely love Scapple.
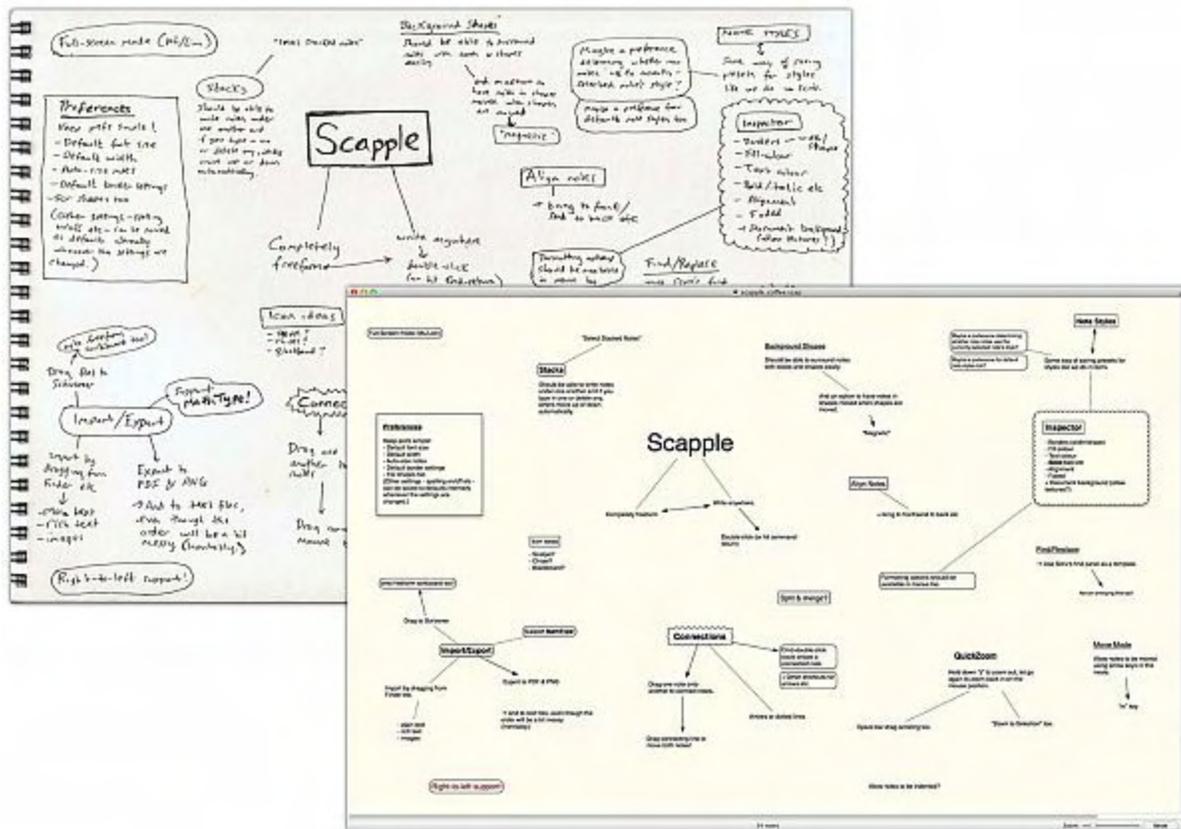
Figure 5. Scapple lets you link only those ideas that are actually related.

A program like Scapple can be just as easy to capture notes as a pencil and pad of paper, but far more versatile in letting you reorganize and manipulate those ideas afterwards. By letting you play with notes, Scapple can actually help you think more clearly about your ideas. Given the way some people think (or don't think), any tool that can help them capture and organize their thoughts can only help everyone.

Protecting Your Privacy

If you're paranoid that the National Security Agency or other spy agency might be watching your Internet activities, you might be interested in TunnelBear, a program that masks your IP address and keeps people from tracking you. You can download and use a free, limited version of TunnelBear or pay a monthly or yearly fee for more features.

The basic idea behind TunnelBear is to route your Internet activity through another computer, theoretically making it difficult if not impossible for someone to find exactly where you are. Whether this is effective or not (or actually a front for the NSA so they can spy on people trying to hide from them) remains to be seen, but you can investigate it for yourself and see what you think.

<div align="center">*   *   *</div>

When using Safari, it's usually easier to use the mouse or trackpad to point at a link and then click on it. However, if you don't want to use your mouse or trackpad for some reason (i.e. it's broken), you can still navigate through a Web page by pressing Option+Tab to highlight each link. Then press Return to click on that link and open it.

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

How to Write a Great Script with Final Draft 9

How to Write a Great Script with Fade In

The Elements of a Great Script: Star Wars

The Elements of a Great Script: Die Hard

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* or you can follow him on Twitter @wallacewang_com.

Editor's Letters: Tips and Thoughts from Readers

"Computer and Internet tips, plus comments on the articles and columns." by ComputorEdge Staff

"Removing Problem Software," "Fixed! Word 2003 Crashes Pasting Web Content," "Selling Pretty Things," "Google Inject?" "Safari and Other Browser's Remembering Passwords"

Removing Problem Software

[Regarding the April 18 Digital Dave column:]

Hello Dave,

I've found the free Revo Uninstaller is very effective with hard to remove junkware. After running the program's uninstall routine, it searched the Registry and hard drive for left-over pieces. The Moderate setting removes normal programs, but I use the highest level for junkware that resists removal.

-Don Bishop, Golden, Colorado

Fixed! Word 2003 Crashes Pasting Web Content

[Regarding the April 18 Editors Letters: Tips and Thoughts from Readers column:]

Having seen that someone else had the same problem I had with W8 and Office (Word) 2003 instantly crashing when pasting larger amounts of Web content, but with Windows 7, where Office 2003 *is* supported, I started researching it and found the problem *and* solution! Requires editing the Registry, so if squeamish, have a friend or someone knowledgeable do it for you. I saved the key first, then deleted it. Didn't even have to reboot and no more crashes! Here's a link to the instructions on a registry key to delete (related to Adobe!)

(Here's the tinyurl link with preview in case that gets mangled.)

-Rich Ernst, San Diego, CA

Selling Pretty Things

[Regarding the April 18 [Editors Letters: Tips and Thoughts from Readers column](#):]

Wally,

You're apparently misinterpreting what I actually said. Nowhere did I say anything that would equate pretty with all-in-one.

And you're setting up a straw man argument, I also never said anything about having a computer that makes you "unhappy." I've run into many, many computers users, both Mac and PC who are unhappy with their computing experiences, but never because their computer was "ugly." (I never mentioned ugly, just because something isn't "pretty," doesn't make it ugly).

If a pretty computer is important to someone, then they have the right to buy it. I'm just trying to educate those considering *some* of the prettier ones about the potential drawbacks. Sort of like buying a Ferrari because you like the way it looks and performs, but no one ever telling you it won't cost $30 for an oil change or a couple hundred for a tune-up like a Ford, GM, or Toyota might.

As for pretty, my desk is a mess, my CPU/tower is underneath where I don't care if it's pretty or not, and all I see are the monitor, keyboard and mouse (and the mess of papers, discs, flash drives, etc... :) So what the case looks like, to *me*, is irrelevant.

-Rich Ernst, San Diego, CA

Google Inject?

[Regarding the April 4 [Without Digital Music, Life Would Be an Error column](#):]

I'm both concerned and curious about the feasibility of Google Inject. Hmmm...

-B. Bob Bailey, E of the Sun, W of the Moon

Safari and Other Browser's Remembering Passwords

[Regarding the April 18 [Wally Wang's Apple Farm column](#):]

Most current Web browsers have password remembering options. I found a free plugin/add-on utility several years ago that I *love* and love to share so folks *will* use complex passwords and not have to remember or write them all down. Just remember one (hopefully complex) password for it and you're good to go!

It's called LastPass, available from your favorite browser's plugin/add-on feature or from

lastpass.com directly.

They have a pro version as well that you'll need to upgrade to for use on mobile applications, otherwise the free utility works great.

I recommend *not* having it remember its (LastPass's) password if you close your browser on notebooks on other shared computers. Just log out of it, or close the browser and all your passwords are not only safe, but easily used on any browser. (This is a great feature, works in IE, Safari, Chrome, Firefox, Opera at least).

You can also get to your saved passwords from elsewhere by going to the *lastpass.com* Web site and signing in. This is great if visiting friends.

And no, I'm not affiliated with LastPass, and don't get any kickbacks for recommending them... :)

Oh, they also have a nifty "fill form" feature you can use as well. *Great* for filling in Web site forms you run into all the time and very customizable.

-Rich Ernst, San Diego, CA

ComputorEdge 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 ComputorEdge.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 "ComputorQuick Review", or yell at us, please e-mail us at ceeditor@computoredge.com. If you would like to review our recent e-books, please visit ComputorEdge E-Books.

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