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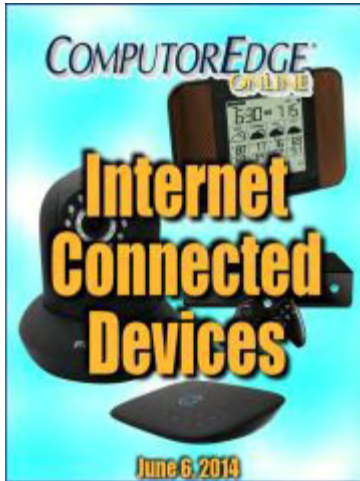
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Internet Connected Devices

Home Wi-Fi Is the Hub for a Multitude of Internet Connected Devices

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Editor's Letters: Tips and Thoughts from Readers

by ComputerEdge Staff

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

"Transparent Windows" Exit Resets to Defaults; Thank You for Video Streaming; Lost Internet Connection

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Digital Dave

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

Delayed Operation of Windows 7; Streaming Video to TV from Laptop

Delayed Operation of Windows 7

Dear Digital Dave,

I have a laptop with Windows 7 Home Premium that has a problem becoming operational after booting to the desktop. It takes approximately five minutes before it will actuate commands and programs normally. After that five minutes, it runs great. I have checked start-up and made sure unnecessary software does not start on boot, etc. I use CCleaner regularly.

Any help would be greatly appreciated.

Dave

Woodland Park, CO

Dear Dave,

There are a few possibilities, but no absolutes.

If this has just recently occurred, then you should "Restore your computer to an earlier time." There are a variety of reasons why your computer could become slow, but it is often fixed by restore to a point prior to whatever is causing your problem.

Some people have found that there are problems similar to yours when there are either multiple drives attached or a faulty power cable. Since you are using a laptop I don't think that you even have an alternative power source, but if you do have multiple drives (an external drive for backup or possibly a flash drive sitting in a slot), then it is possible that problems with that extra drive is causing Windows 7 to take longer to bring it up. Try disconnecting any extra drives or other USB devices. If this clears things up, then you know where to look.

Another possibility is software which had problems installing. This is most likely legacy programs which required special compatibility setup for installation and/or running. If you

remember any such problem, then you might try uninstalling it to see if it makes a difference.

If nothing clicks, disable all of your Startup programs, even the ones that you deem "necessary." If your boot time is improved, then you know that it's one of them. Then add them back one at a time rebooting between each enabling of a program. You should be able to find the culprit.

If you want a more systematic approach to tracking down the startup problem, then here is a technique which uses [Windows Event Viewer](#). There is a ton of information available through Event Viewer. You just need to know how to get it out. If you follow the steps outlined and it works (or not), let me know how it turns out. You may want to try this first.

You could also be infected with malware. Try booting into Safe Mode and running a scan.

I welcome responses from anyone who has experienced similar problems.

Digital Dave

Streaming to TV from Laptop

Dear Digital Dave,

I read the articles about streaming video to an HDTV. I hooked up my laptop through the HDMI port and set the TV to that HDMI setting. Nothing! Just a blank screen. Is there something else that I need to do?

*James Wilford
La Mesa, CA*

Dear James,

What you need to do will depend upon the age of your laptop. When you plug in the TV through an HDMI port it is the same as attaching an external monitor to your computer. The newer model laptops will usually immediately recognize the connection and start sending the signal to the TV. However, older laptops may act a little different.

In some cases the connection will be recognized and you will be given the option to mirror what's on the computer screen or add it as a separate monitor. The mirror makes the TV show what's on your computer screen which is what you want for streaming video.

Some laptop models won't do anything until you take specific action. This sounds like it could be your problem. There is usually a key in the laptop function key row which looks like a computer screen. This is the button that allows you to configure the laptop for an external

monitor. (Sometime the key works directly, other times it must be used in combination with a function activation key (Fn). You may need to try it both ways.) Pressing the key once should redirect the screen to the TV—although it may turn off the screen on the laptop. Pushing it twice may result in both monitors be turned on—in the mirror mode. A third press should change the mode again—possibly back to the original orientation. This will vary according to the type of laptop you own.

If your laptop is too old, you could be wasting your time by trying to use it for video streaming. Some machines are so slow that they cannot handle the constant data rebuffering without hesitating, jerking, and pixilating. You might be better off spending a small amount of money and getting a [video streaming device](#).

Digital Dave



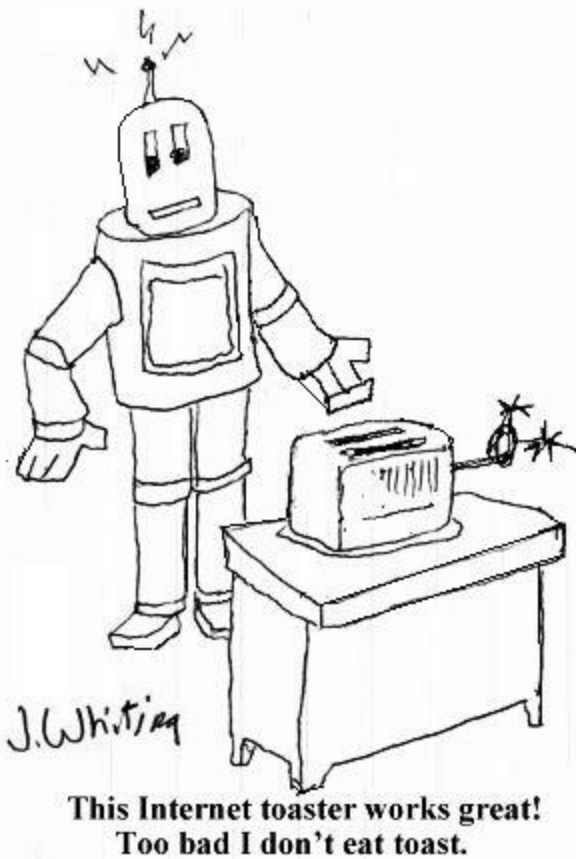
Internet Connected Devices

“You May Have More Devices Connected to the Internet Than You Realize” by Jack Dunning

We are now dependent upon the Internet for many of our daily activities. Almost everyday it seems there is another device to connect to cyberspace.

The Internet is creeping into all aspects of our lives. There was a time when it was considered a luxury to have a connection to the Web, but now it's unusual to visit someone's house and find that they don't have Wi-Fi. The demand for equipment connected to the Internet is rapidly growing. It's common to find homes where computers, smartphones, tablets, game players, and more are hooked up. The Internet connection has become our life line to the world—and it's getting worse (or better, depending upon how you look at it).

What's Connected in Your House?



In 2012 it was estimated that 90% of [homes with computers](#) had broadband Internet connection. If anything, that percentage is even greater today. If you own a computer, then it is highly likely that you use it to access the Internet—whether for e-mail, Web browsing, or one of the many other functions available on the Web today.

A recent survey estimates that 73 percent of computer users have [Wi-Fi in their homes](#). With such wide availability it only makes sense that Internet businesses would take advantage of the pervasive Wi-Fi. It seems that everyone wants you to connect something to their site or Internet service.

Computers

Of course, the first equipment that people connect to the Internet is their computer.

Before Wi-Fi, network connections were hardwired—which made adding more devices to the network a pain. But now with Wi-Fi, adding a multitude of devices is as easy as entering the wireless code. Despite dire warnings about the death of PCs, if you have an Internet connection in your house, most likely you also have at least one PC hooked up.

Tablet Computers

Apple created the tablet market and next to the computer these one-handed devices are among the most Wi-Fi connected devices in the home. In fact, without Wi-Fi the tablet would lose most of its popularity. What would be the point of a mobile tablet if you had to plug it into an Ethernet connection every time you wanted to use it? Whether browsing the Web or streaming video, the most popular tablet applications require an Internet connection. However, this handheld device is still no replacement for a computer. For example, it's problematic to configure a Wi-Fi router (which requires a direct Ethernet connection) with a tablet computer. It's safe to say that without the Internet, the tablet market might not exist. Can you envision bothering with a tablet computer without your Wi-Fi?

Smartphones

Originally the plan was for all cell phones to connect to the Internet through the 2G, 3G, or

4G, all sold and controlled by the mobile phone companies. However, with the introduction of the smartphone market (also launched by Apple with the iPhone), the demand for data service became so great that the cellular networks couldn't handle it. To ease the load, the mobile phone companies were forced to offload the bandwidth to Wi-Fi—whether in the home or hotspots around the country. Now smartphones are one of the most Wi-Fi connected devices found in the home.

The benefit to the user is faster speeds at no additional cost since it doesn't impact the usage of their smartphone data plan. The short term benefit to the cellular companies is the offloading of huge data demands to the Internet providers through Wi-Fi. (Ironically, the wide availability of [Wi-Fi may threaten](#) the mobile phone companies. While the cellular providers use Wi-Fi to offload data from their 3G and 4G networks, they aren't able to charge for activity over Wi-Fi (this is not by choice). As more and more apps for free worldwide calling become available, Wi-Fi could actually become the cellular companies' number one competitor.)

Meanwhile, the smartphone is also in the process of killing digital cameras and personal media players. While high-end digital cameras continue to do well, people who own smartphones have stopped looking for their point-and click camera. The quality of the smartphone camera is plenty good enough for quick snaps—plus it's easy to post them to the Web.

It is now common to see people wearing earplugs connected to their smartphone. Who needs an iPod? This is reflected in the rapid drop of iPod sales.

Video Streaming Devices

Hammering the cable television companies are the video streaming devices (see "[A Look at Internet Video Streaming Boxes](#)"). I look around my own house and see an Internet capable TV, a Wi-Fi connected Blu-ray DVD player, and a recently acquired Roku 3 video streaming box (which I bought after I read the above linked article). The Roku works better and offers more variety in Internet programming than either the TV or DVD player.

All three of my kids use Internet video streaming (via Wi-Fi) to replace the cable TV connection. (Plus they have no home phones—only their cell phones.) They have an Internet connection, but no cable programming. This is anecdotal proof that the cable television is in serious trouble. In fact, if it weren't for the broadband cable Internet connection they offer, cable companies could be doomed. Is it any wonder that the cable companies are trying to figure out how to squeeze more dollars out of each connection?

With a Wi-Fi connected video streaming device (for less than \$100), you can get a wide variety of programming with no additional monthly connection fee. You can watch what you want when you want to watch it—plus, you only pay for the programming you want, not a long list of boring cable channels.

Video Game Consoles

Once thought to be threatened by the computer, the video game console is in resurgence. It is a testament to the flexibility and power that now comes with products such as the [Sony PlayStation 4](#) and the [Xbox One](#) from Microsoft (see Figure 1). The [game consoles](#) are not just for playing Internet games, but they also provide video streaming and other capabilities. The game boxes offer as much power as most computers.



Figure 1. The Microsoft Xbox One.

I don't own a game console because I'm not a game player. (I do play "Angry Birds" occasionally—if it's a free version.) But my kids tend to travel with their game players so that they can hook it up to any television for the entertainment of their kids (and themselves). While an Internet connection is not required for many of the games, free Wi-Fi is certainly useful.

Internet Televisions

As mentioned in video streaming devices, more and more televisions are available with Wi-Fi built in. This is primarily available for video entertainment, but it's easy to see that once the TV is connected, it can be used for many other services. (The now defunct [WebTV](#) was way ahead—and too far ahead—of its time.)

I have one television which connects to the Internet through Wi-Fi. It was one of the reasons I bought it. However, the interface for the various services (Netflix, Amazon Prime, etc.) are lame compared to a computer or the Roku box, and the software is rarely (if ever) updated. The streaming is fine, but even finding the right program (especially in Amazon Prime) can be a real hassle. I'm not sure that I would bother with a Wi-Fi capable TV in the future. It's so much easier (and more flexible) to add a Roku box.

Internet Phones (VoIP)

As I look down at my desk, I see that I have an Internet phone (Vonage) attached to my router. I use it as a business line, but the real advantage is that my spouse can call her sister in Ireland and talk for hours at no additional charge—which she often does. The quality is as good as any land line and better than cellular.

Being an Internet phone, it doesn't care where I plug it in as long as there is an Internet connection. When I visit my kids, I plug it into their router and have the same service available (including calls to Ireland). If you want a home phone at all, many just use their cell phone, then a Voice over IP (VoIP) Internet phone is the way to go. If all you want is nationwide service then the [Ooma Telo Free Home Phone Service VoIP Phone and Device](#) gives you free calling in the United States (see Figure 2). (You still pay a monthly tax, but no phone bill.)



Figure 2. Ooma Free Home Phone Service.

The Internet phone is helping to kill the traditional home phone from the local phone or cable company, but that's okay because the cell phone has already been doing that for a long time.

Weather Prediction Devices

A couple of years ago I picked up an Internet weather device. It tells me the predicted weather in my local area for the next four days. That's useful in areas where the weather actually

changes (unlike San Diego). There is a transmitter which plugs directly into the router while the receiver/display can be placed in any room. Once registered with the Web site, there are continuous updates to the display.

Mine is not quite as fancy as the [Weather Direct WA-1240U-WAL 4 Day Talking Internet Powered Wireless Forecaster](#) (see Figure 3). It doesn't talk to me.



Figure 3. Weather Direct Internet Weather Forecaster.

I live in a location where it often rains and occasionally snows. In the summer it is usually moderate, but at times hits over 100°. It's useful for me to use a device that gives real predictions rather than merely the useless variations in temperature and barometric pressure found on many of the home weather stations. (I have one of those as well).

Internet Cameras

Most laptops and smartphones have cameras which can be used to take snaps, record video, or make video calls over Skype and other Internet services. However, you can also get separate Webcams for monitoring the rest of the house. Wireless/wired cameras such as the

[Wireless/Wired Pan/Tilt IP Camera](#) (see Figure 4) can be accessed via a Web browser from anywhere in the world. (You may need to get a fixed IP address from your Internet service provider.)



Figure 4. Wireless IP Camera.

Eventually, this type of home and business security system, similar to the [Internet & 3G](#)

[Phone Accessible 4-Channel DVR with 4 Night Vision Cameras and 500 GB HD](#) (see Figure 5), will become commonplace with alerts being sent directly to your computer or smartphone.



Figure 5. Internet Accessible Security Cameras.

In fact, the existence of Internet security systems will be a threat to those security companies who call the police when the alarm goes off. There is no reason that you can't call the police yourself from your smartphone.

E-Book Readers

While you don't need the Internet to read an e-book, you do need it to get the books. Whether, you use a tablet computer or a [Kindle](#), the Wi-Fi connection is important for perusing the possibilities.

Digital Picture Frame

If you're going to use a digital picture frame, at least get one that is Wi-Fi capable, such as the [Wi-Fi Cloud Digital Photo Frame](#) (see Figure 6). That way you will be able to control the content from your computer without messing with SD cards.



Figure 6. Wi-Fi Cloud Digital Photo Frame.

In the long run the losers in the electronic gadget wars are likely to be the non-Internet connected devices. Maybe it won't affect the toaster market very much, but many other devices can take advantage of information either being sent or received over the Internet. These are the items that we will want to connect to the Internet. I've mentioned the devices I

have connected—so far. I would be curious to hear about other equipment which is taking advantage of an Internet connection.

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

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

**EitherMouse
for Lefties, the**

Ambidextrous, and Multiple Monitors

“A Clever Little Tool for Using Multiple Mice on the Same Computer” by Jack Dunning

If there is a lefty in the house who wants a separate, properly configured mouse, then EitherMouse is the tool for you. You can even use two separate cursors. You don't need AutoHotkey for this one.

One of the reasons that I think that AutoHotkey is "absolutely the best free windows utility software ever!" is because while anyone can write simple, quick one-line scripts which add power to their Windows computer, AutoHotkey can also produce tools which compete with any professionally produced software on the market—although the AutoHotkey apps are usually free. This week I highlight one such utility program. You don't need to use or know AutoHotkey to make good use of this tool. Just download the app and run it.

EitherMouse for Lefties and Two Mice

The [EitherMouse](#) tool is for people who want to get more out of their mice. It's either for lefties who want to quickly switch the mouse buttons when moving a mouse to the left side or for users who want to plug in more than one mouse to use on the same Windows computer. As the name states, with EitherMouse loaded, you can use either of two mice (one for each hand) on your Windows computer. Move the right mouse and it takes over the cursor. Move the left mouse and it's in control—even swapping the left and right buttons. (If you only have one mouse, you can still quickly swap the right and left button functions.) Who needs this type of Windows utility?

Most of today's Windows computers will recognize when two mice are plugged in at the same time and allow swapping of the buttons through the mouse control panel. What Windows doesn't do is automatically swap those button functions when the alternative mouse is moved. Suppose you have more than one person who uses the same computer. Now you can attach two mice (one for the lefty and one for the righty). No need to move one mouse from the right side to the left, then swap the button functions. It's automatic with EitherMouse. Or, maybe

you prefer to use two mice at the same time, either because you're ambidextrous or you want to minimize the effects of carpal tunnel syndrome. Now you have two mice (one for each hand) to spread the load. The primary click is always under your index finger on either hand.

Add a Second Cursor

Maybe one of the coolest features of EitherMouse is adding a second cursor for the second mouse (see Figure 1). This might be convenient when you use multiple monitors or if you prefer not to drag the cursor across a huge screen. Perhaps you're playing a game with a child—each using a separate mouse.

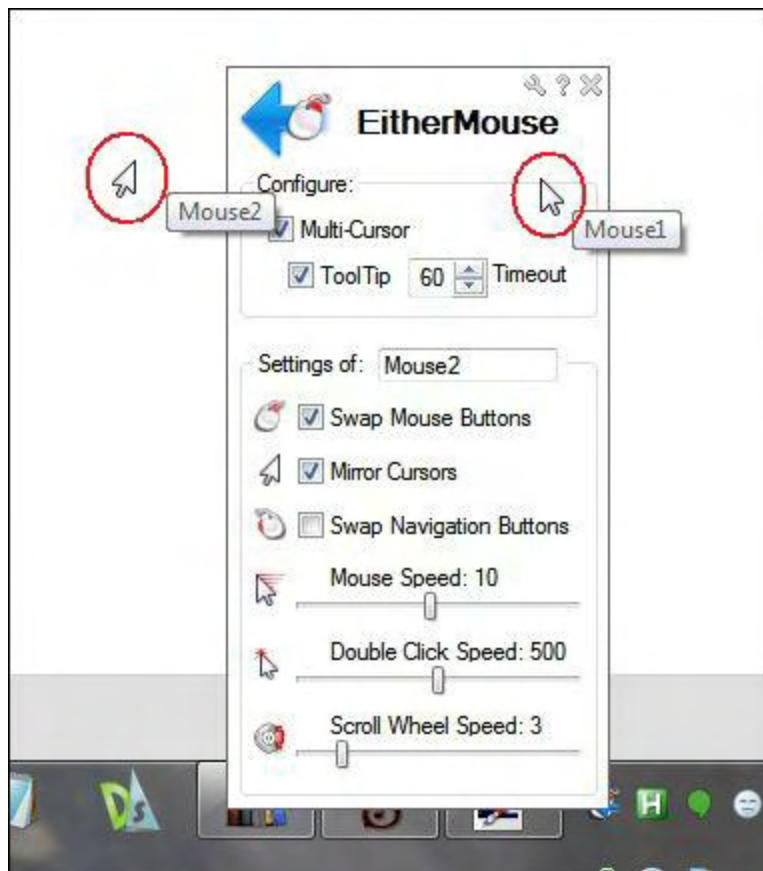


Figure 1. In the multi-cursor mode a separate cursor can be activated for each mouse (circled). Notice that the cursor points in different directions depending upon which mouse it is.

Of course only one mouse is actually active at a time. The control instantly swaps to the most recently moved mouse. (It's easy to see how mouse wars could start.)

To access the settings, click the little icon in the upper right-hand corner (see Figure 2). Notice that you can open the Mouse Control Panel through these settings. The mouse settings can be a little difficult to find in Windows 8.

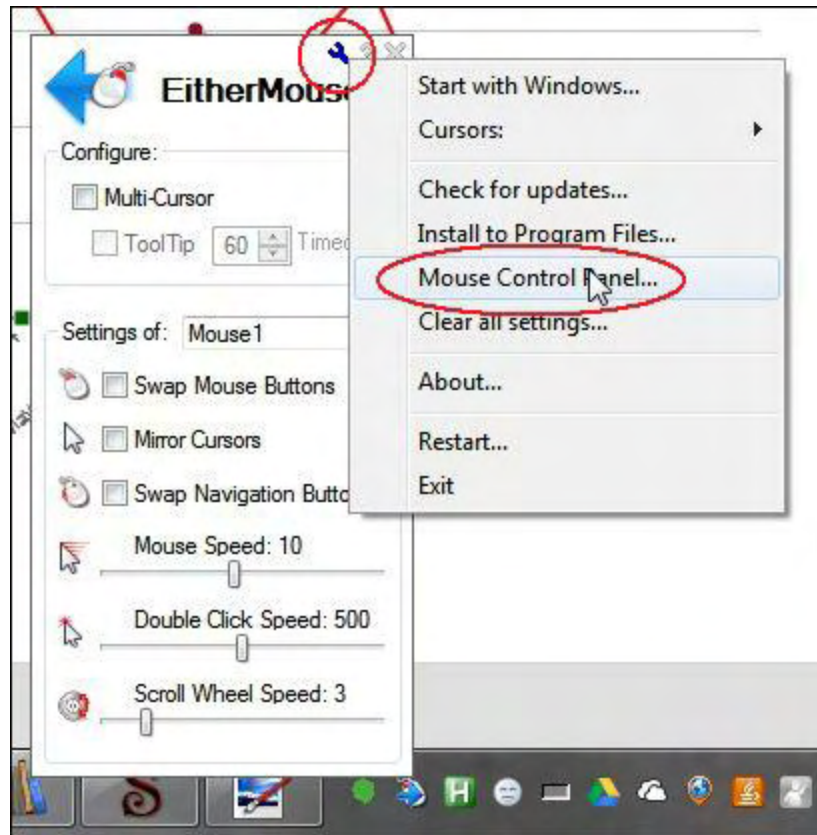


Figure 2. Click the little wrench icon in the upper right-hand corner to access the settings.



I originally found EitherMouse on the [AutoHotkey forum](#). First posted in 2009 by gwarble, it appears the latest version was recently posted on the new [AutoHotkey site](#) at [ahkscript.org](#). I can see a number of ways the app can be used. As mentioned in a recent update, "New features mean EitherMouse isn't just for lefties anymore!"

While I'm not adding any discussion of how it works (I don't have access to the source code), I think EitherMouse is an important demonstration of what AutoHotkey can do. (There is a script for

multiple keyboards available in the [original forum thread](#), "a quick mod to EitherMouse yielded EitherKBD", which may give some insight into the hidden mechanisms of EitherMouse.)

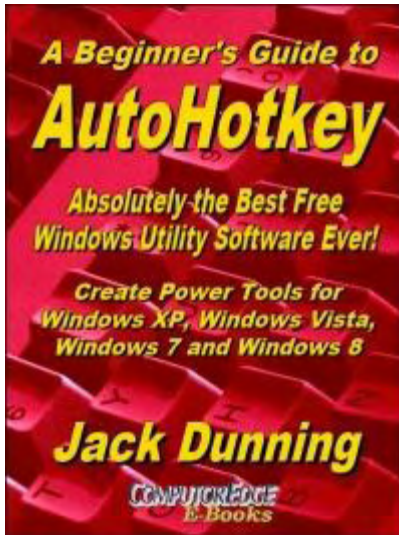
EitherMouse comes in compiled versions which can be downloaded and run with either a double-click or set up to automatically load with Windows. The automatic features appear to be built into the Settings menu which no doubt do the same things as the *EitherMouse Setup.exe* program. I'll leave it to you to decide if you need EitherMouse. I'm right-handed, don't have a separate monitor, nor any lefties in the house, so I'm not likely to be using it.

Otherwise, I think it's a really cool app.

* * *

If you're new to AutoHotkey and want to do a little exploring, then see our [beginner's AutoHotkey page](#).

* * *



The 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.

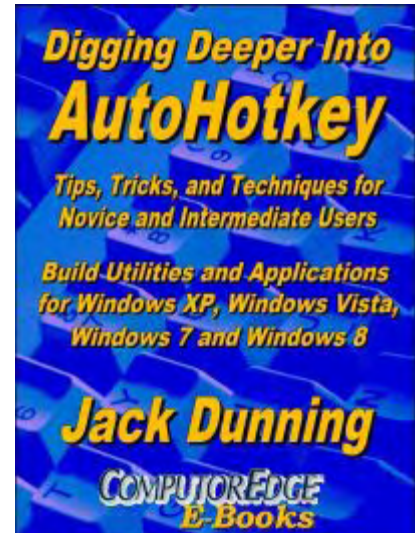
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* * *

Jack's second 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.

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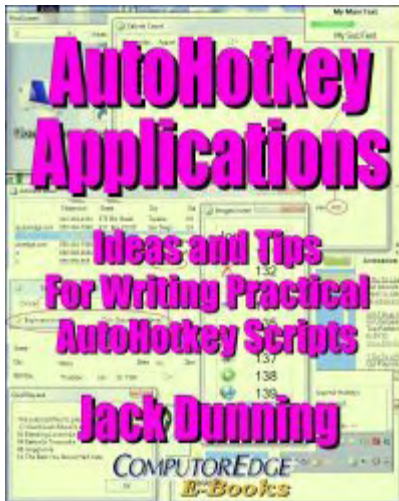


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Jack's third AutoHotkey book is an intermediate level book of ideas and applications based primarily on the AutoHotkey GUI command and is available at [Amazon for Kindle hardware](#) (or free software) users. The book emphasizes practical applications. The book is not for the complete beginner since it builds on the information in the other two books. However, if a person is reasonably computer literate, they could go directly to this book for ideas and techniques without the other books. There is an extension index to the ideas and techniques covered in the back of the book.

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

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Wally Wang's Apple Farm

“News From Apple's Developer Conference” by Wally Wang

Wally Wang's Apple Farm

News From Apple's Developer Conference; The Future of Music; Dead Web Sites; and Keeping Dead Software

In case you missed Apple's Worldwide Developer's Conference keynote, you can still watch the [two-hour video](#). Although Apple released dozens of new technologies, one of the more interesting ones is HealthKit, an SDK (Software Developer's Kit) for letting developers tap into health data presumably detected by a wearable computer like Apple's rumored iWatch. To show how to take advantage of HealthKit, Apple plans to release a new app called HealthBook, which can track and store health-related data.



Figure 1. HealthBook can retrieve health data for easy access.

Curiously, HealthBook can track the hours you slept. While it may be possible to manually type that data into HealthBook, it's probably more accurate to let a wearable computer detect and time your sleep instead. That likely hints that Apple's wearable computer will be light enough to strap on your body without causing you discomfort, although it does bring up the question how any wearable computer can detect when you're asleep and when you wake up.

With a wearable computer, doctors could immediately access someone's critical medical history such as whether they're allergic to certain items like penicillin or latex. Since an unconscious patient can't reveal this information, a wearable computer might be the only reliable solution, which further indicates that Apple will release a wearable computer sometime in the near future.

To further integrate iOS with OS X, Apple introduced a new feature called Continuity. This feature lets you start a task on one device and finish it on another. If you start writing an e-mail message on your iPhone and step near your Macintosh, you can finish the e-mail message on your Macintosh. You can also wirelessly connect to your Macintosh to your iPhone and

use the Macintosh's speaker and microphone as a speaker phone. Such tight integration between the iPhone and the Macintosh will just encourage anyone with either device to get the other one.

If you have a Macintosh and an iPhone or iPad, you can now use AirDrop to wirelessly transfer files from one device to the other, once again encouraging people to rely on Apple products for mobile devices and their computer. Anyone think Android can seamlessly integrate as well with Windows or Linux? Does Windows Phone offer similar features for Windows 8/RT?

Apple's latest developments make it easier to stick with Apple products and harder to use rival products. For decades, Microsoft helped keep people in the Windows ecosystem since you could rely on accessories to work with Windows. Only after Microsoft annoyed everyone with Vista and then horrified them with Windows 8 did people willingly defect from Microsoft's ecosystem and it's unlikely many of those defectors will suddenly turn around and return to a Windows 8 PC any time soon.

Apple introduced another software developer's kit called HomeKit, which will allow iOS devices to control home items like lights, security cameras, and thermostats. For gamers, the most exciting development is [Metal](#), a gaming toolkit that speeds up game animation to the point where video games previously capable of running only on dedicated game consoles can now run on an iPad.

Since the only value of any operating system is the number of programs available for it, Apple also introduced a new programming language called [Swift](#), which aims to be as powerful as Objective-C without the complexity of C. The goal is to make programming easier and more reliable so more people can write iOS apps faster and easier than ever before. The more people capable of writing apps, the more apps you can expect to see in the near future.

As more people develop for iOS, that gives more people a reason to rely on iOS devices like the iPhone and iPad. As more people see the advantages of connecting their Macintosh data with an iPhone or iPad, you can expect more people to rely on the Macintosh. Of course, anyone who wants to develop for iOS also needs to get a Macintosh or go through convoluted solutions to create iOS apps on Windows.

Although Apple didn't introduce any new hardware, you can already see they've laid the foundation for new devices from a wearable computer that can monitor health data to HomeKit for controlling items around your home through an iOS device. Clearly the future lies with iOS and mobile computing. If you rely on Android, you may have some features unavailable on iOS, but you'll be missing out on many features only available on iOS.

A wearable health monitoring computer like the rumored iWatch is inevitable along with computer controlled home appliances. Faster and more sophisticated video games will also come soon. If you want to try creating an iOS app, you can use Swift to turn your raw ideas into actual working software.

Expect new versions of OS X and iOS later this fall. If you want a sneak peek at the beta versions, sign up for an Apple Developer's account (\$99 a year) and try the new Swift programming language in Xcode 6 and the new HealthKit, HomeKit, and Metal developer's toolkit for creating apps for the future. Any developer who wants to stay current can't ignore the Macintosh and iOS any longer. For anyone who prefers to watch the future pass them by, feel free to ignore the Macintosh and iOS at your own peril.

The Future of Music

At one time, you could find music stores selling new and used CDs. When MP3 files became popular, people realized they could buy their favorite songs online, which offered a wider selection and the option of buying individual songs instead of entire albums. That's when digital audio downloads took off and music stores selling CDs faded into oblivion.

Now that streaming music has grown in popularity, the idea of buying digital music files has also faded, which means [iTunes sales have also been dropping](#). That's one reason why Apple has been pursuing streaming music through iRadio and their recent purchase of Beats for their streaming music service. If Apple had been content with digital music downloads, they would have seen sales continue dropping every year until iTunes faded into irrelevance.

Anyone remember when the iPod dominated the music player market? Nowadays, iPod sales keep dropping and Apple no longer makes major announcements about new iPod models because hardly anyone cares any more. If you have a smartphone, you have a digital music player so you don't need an iPod.

The key to survival is to assume that whatever business you're in will get wiped out tomorrow. If that doesn't happen, you'll still be fine, but if it does happen, then you'll be prepared. What will never work as a long-term strategy is denying unpleasant facts and trying to convince the world to stick with the old instead of embracing anything new.

Intel is currently falling into that trap by trying to convince every mobile computer maker to switch to Intel processors. Intel's main rival, AMD, is choosing a smarter path by continuing to make x86 processors while also branching out into making [ARM processors](#) as well.

Now if the world suddenly decides to shift to x86 processors for mobile devices, AMD can still sell x86 processors. However, if the world continues their shift to ARM processors in mobile devices, AMD benefits from that trend too. Anyone want to guess who will survive in the future, Intel or AMD? Maybe if Intel wants to remain rooted in the past, they can hire former executives from Blackberry, Blockbuster Video, and Kodak to help them fail even faster than before.

Dead Web Sites

For those people who still insist that the world can't change, you can visit some dead Web sites to see what people once thought was popular at one time. For the first trip to a dead Website, visit [Dell Rumors](#).



Figure 2. The never launched Dell Rumors site.

Back when almost everyone used a Windows PC, Dell Computers dominated the enterprise market. As a result, many people often bought Dell Computers for personal use and eagerly looked forward to new desktop and laptop models that Dell introduced every year. Anyone care about Dell any more?

Dell, like Gateway Computers, has simply faded into the background. You can still buy Dell and Gateway computers but few people look at Dell or Gateway as a leader any more. Since both companies hitched their fortunes on the back of Windows, the declining interest in Windows translates into declining interest in Dell as well.

At one time, everything Microsoft did was important because Microsoft dominated the computer industry. While proponents like to think that Microsoft dominated because their technology was (and still is) superior, that's like saying Mandarin is superior because more people on the planet speak that language than any other language on Earth. Sheer numbers don't necessarily imply superiority, which Windows proponents are quick to point out when trumpeting the advantages of Surface Pro tablets compared to the more popular and numerous iPad tablets, or the advantages of Windows Phone compared to the more popular and numerous iPhone.

To see another dead Web site that once promoted the latest news about Microsoft, visit the

[Everything Microsoft](#) site. The last entries on this site come from 2012, which shows you the lack of interest in Microsoft these days. Fortunately this site still documents Mike Halsey's giddy [criticism of the iPad](#) where he predicted that the iPad would fail and actually boost sales of Windows 7.

One site that hasn't died yet but has a dreary future is [CrackBerry](#), which documents the latest news about Blackberry products. At one time, Blackberry dominated the smartphone market. When the iPhone took over, interest in Blackberries shriveled up. While there are still a handful of Blackberry die hards out there, most people have long ago switched to Android or iPhone.

Visiting dead or dying Web sites can document what used to be popular. For more fun, visit [CompuServe](#), the [Excite](#) search engine, and [Lycos](#). After visiting so many once-popular Web sites, you can come back to the present and use a Windows Mobile phone to make calls, a netbook to access the Internet on the road, and a Windows XP PC to do your main work at your office.

Keeping Dead Software

If you think sticking with old equipment doesn't make any sense, just realize that Ray Bradbury wrote using a typewriter and George R.R. Martin, the author of *Game of Thrones*, still writes his books using [MS-DOS and WordStar 4.0](#). When something still works, there's little point in changing. That's why so many people still stick with Windows XP. Having the latest and fastest equipment means nothing if it doesn't do anything that you can't already do with your existing equipment.

For those who still prefer WordStar, you might be interested in a WordStar clone that can run on Windows, Linux, and OS X. Dubbed [WordTsar](#), this WordStar clone gives you all the writing features as the original WordStar.

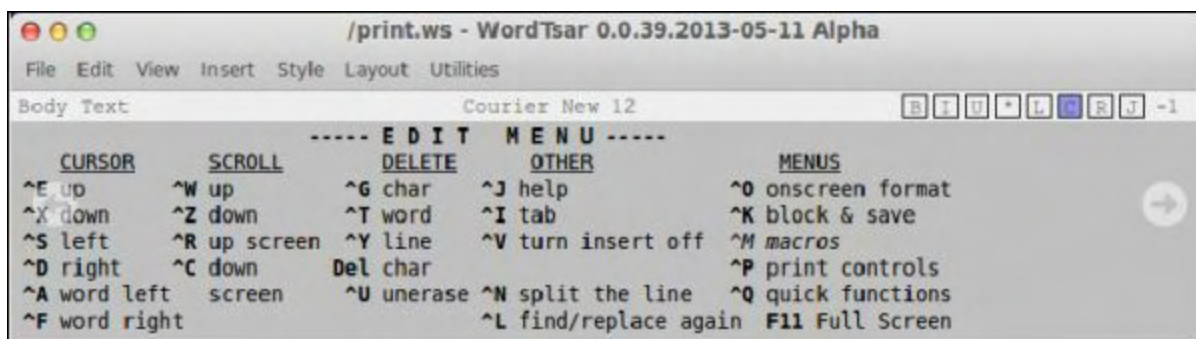


Figure 3. WordTsar clones the look and feel of WordStar.

By using a program like WordTsar, you can continue using your favorite WordStar commands without having to learn anything new. What's less important than the technology is the person using that technology, so try a copy of WordTsar and see if you can write the next great novel

like George R.R. Martin.

For another step back to the past, you can also download and install [FreeDOS](#), an MS-DOS clone. Now you can run all your old MS-DOS programs and show your kids what computers used to look like before touch screens and graphical user interfaces.

For those who switched from WordStar to WordPerfect back in the 80's, you might be pleased to know that [WordPerfect](#) is now available for the iPad. Unlike most iOS word processors, WordPerfect on the iPad looks almost exactly like WordPerfect on Windows with the familiar series of pull-down menus and a toolbar full of icons.

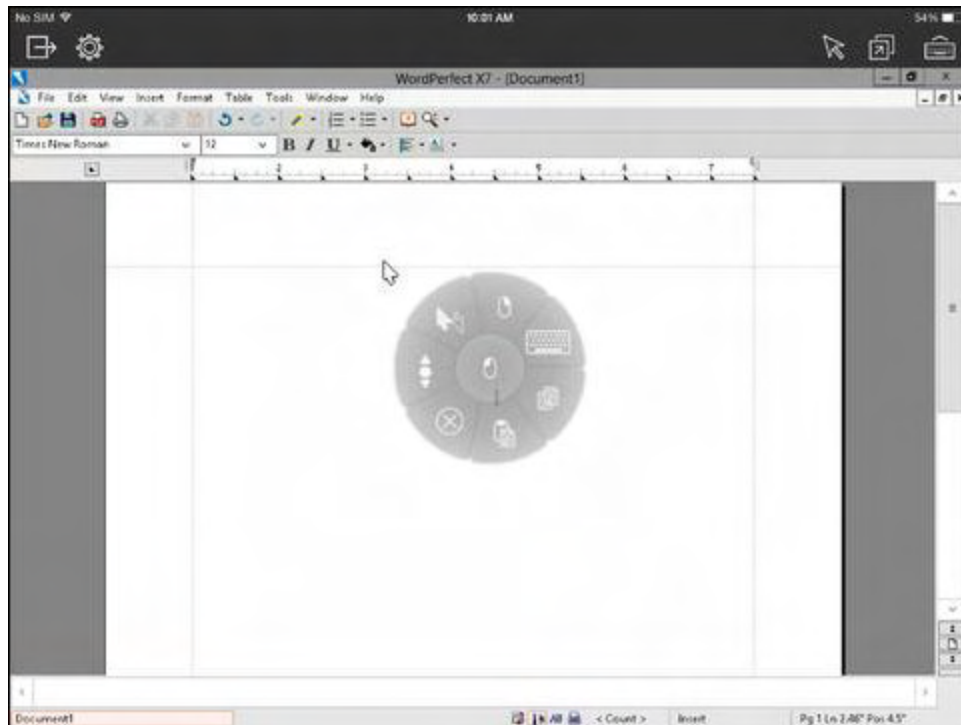


Figure 4. WordPerfect for the iPad looks like WordPerfect for Windows.

The only dead software is software that doesn't make people's lives easier, which means many people may consider WordStar more useful than Windows 8. If you really like the software you're using, the only reason to upgrade to something newer is if that newer product gives you advantages that you need. For many people, upgrading is simply an additional, needless expense that wastes their money and gobbles up their time so they can learn to do the exact same tasks as before. Until everyone can clearly see the advantages of upgrading to a new version of Windows, what's the point of upgrading from Windows XP?

* * *

At one time, many programs such as WordPerfect and WordStar relied heavily on function keys. Once everyone shifted from command-line interfaces (such as MS-DOS) to graphical user interfaces (such as Windows and the Macintosh), few programs use function keys any

more In many cases, especially on laptops, function keys control the hardware such as volume control or screen brightness.

Just in case you actually use function keys, you can turn them on. Just click the Apple menu and choose System Preferences. When a Preferences window appears, click the Keyboard icon and then click the Keyboard tab. Now you can select the "Use all F1, F2, etc. keys as standard function keys" check box.

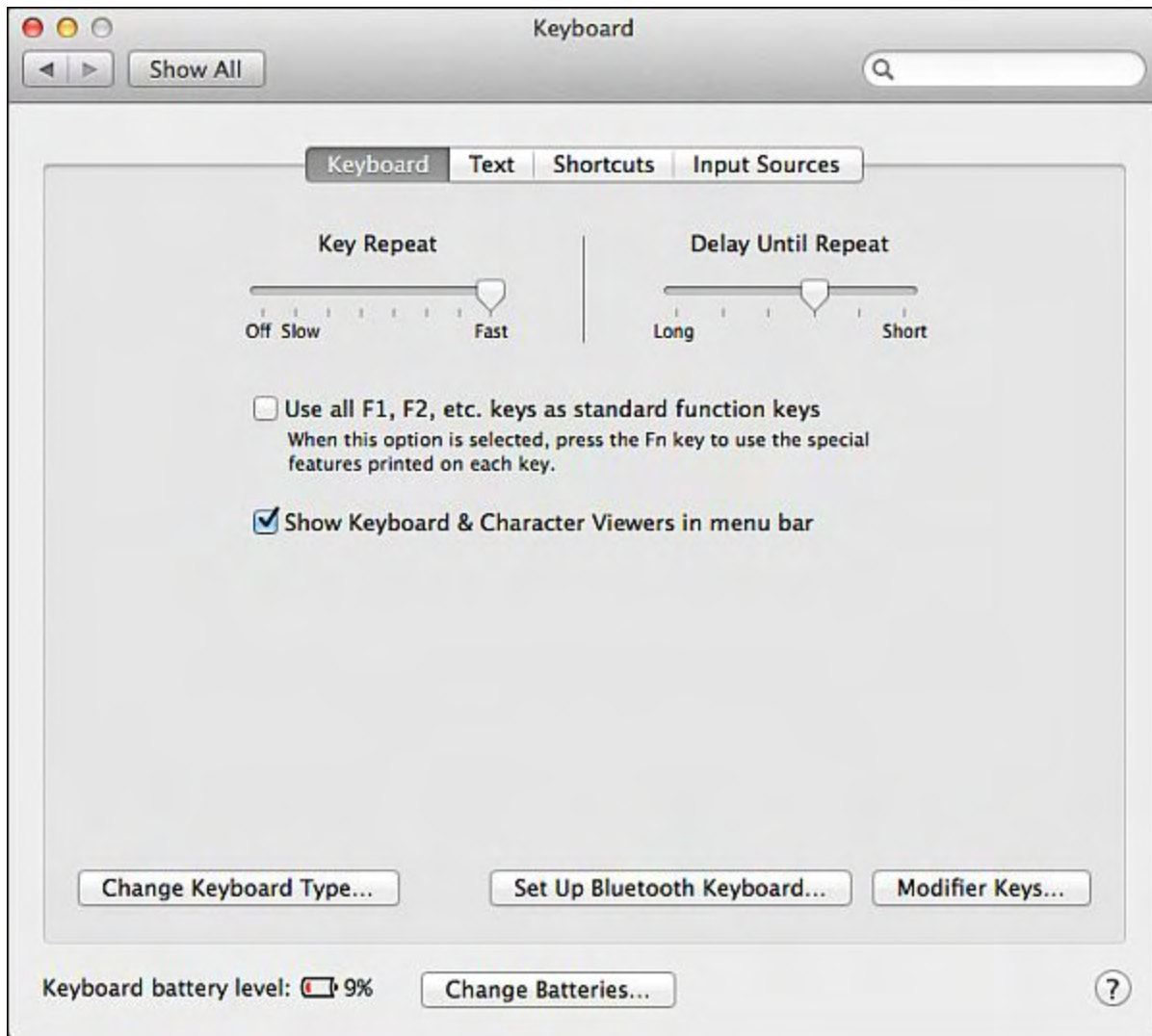


Figure 5. You can turn function keys on if you wish.

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](#)

[The Element of a Great Script: Back to the Future](#)

[The Elements of a Great Script: Rocky](#)

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](#).



Worldwide News & Product Reviews

"The latest in tech news and hot product reviews." by Charles Carr

Is Antivirus Really "Dead"?; What's Better for the Environment: Streaming Video or DVDs?; and Sony NEX 5R Mirrorless Interchangeable Lens Camera

Is Antivirus Really "Dead"?

The independent antivirus test lab, [AV-Comparatives](#), sent us the following comments about a controversial comment recently made by a Symantec Senior Vice-President:



"Antivirus is dead!" claimed Brian Dye, Symantec's Senior Vice-President for Information security, in an interview with the Wall Street Journal. This claim has been a source of confusion and argument.

Peter Stelzhammer, joint founder of the independent test lab AV-Comparatives, has some comments on this:

In an interview with the Wall Street Journal on the 4th May 2014, the Senior Vice-President of Symantec claimed that antivirus technology is "dead". He continued, "We no longer regard antivirus as a money-maker." In his opinion, current tactics have no future, and new technologies, which the company is developing, are necessary. What does Brian Dye's statement mean for computer users? Can Windows users all uninstall their security programs and feel safe online?

Or should the proclamation be taken as seriously as the statement by Bill Gates in 2004 that Spam would disappear within two years? 10 years later, AV-Comparatives' honeypots alone collect over 2 million Spam mails and 300,000 malware samples every day.

Did he really mean antivirus is dead? Surely he means signature-based detection?

The truth is that "antivirus software" today means sophisticated security programs in which the traditional signature-based detection works alongside new technologies such as heuristics, sandboxing, cloud analysis, whitelisting, URL-blockers and phishing protection.

The statement by Symantec's Vice-President clearly refers only to the old signature-based detection mechanism. Traditional antivirus software, which only recognizes threats by comparing them with a blacklist, is indeed obsolete, and has more or less ceased to exist. This has been the case for some years, so Symantec has not really said anything new.

Are car seat belts senseless?

In modern cars, traditional security features such as seat belts are being supplemented with modern technologies such as automatic braking systems, night-vision devices and lane-departure warning systems. The seat belt is still just as useful as ever, and the new features complement it rather than replacing it. Using all the features together provides the highest possible level of safety (even if absolute protection cannot be achieved).

The same principle applies to Internet security software. Using a combination of all the relevant technologies provides the highest possible level of security. Making security software without signature-based detection would be like making a car without a seat belt, and of course nobody would suggest doing that.

Philipp Wolf, Vice-President Protection Labs at Avira says: "As an antivirus company, we have developed along with the threats, and constantly update our technologies and tool sets." He claims that traditional antivirus software has already died out, and that suites with multiple protection technologies are almost always used today.

A similar view comes from Eugene Kaspersky, CEO und Chairman of Kaspersky Lab: "I've heard antiviruses being declared dead and buried quite a few times over the years, but they're still here with us - alive and kicking," he said. "I fully agree that single-layer signature-based virus scanning is nowhere near a sufficient degree of protection - not for individuals, not for organizations large or small; however, that's been the case for many years."

There is no miracle cure to protect against malware and polymorphic attacks. Cyber criminals are constantly developing new malware and new methods of attack. By means of social engineering, they can persuade people to open attachments they shouldn't open or click on links they shouldn't click on; this has proved to be a very successful tactic.

"Symantec's statement seems to relate to the enterprise, and not the consumer and small business", says Avast CEO Vince Steckler. "Enterprises have traditionally relied on many layers of defense and antivirus is one of those layers. Antivirus though is a broad-spectrum defense and as such is often complemented by other products, such as those protecting against targeted attacks that enterprises worry about. In the consumer and SMB space, the situation is quite different: customers typically do not have multiple layers of protection. They have one, their AV product. These products though are not the simple AV products of past years."

The comparison with car security may seem clumsy to some people, but there is sense in it. Would you buy a car without a seat belt? You would be laughed at if you suggested to a car dealer that you can do without the seat belt because the car has an airbag. I wouldn't hesitate

to choose a car with a seat belt over one without, and this is exactly the attitude to take with security software and signature-based detection.

What's Better for the Environment: Streaming Video or DVDs?

In a recent article, [ArsTechnica](#) and [IOP Science](#) do the math for us:

Even with its bandwidth costs, video can be more environmentally friendly than movies on DVDs, according to a research paper published Wednesday at IOP Science. The authors found that the emissions and energy consumption for DVD watching are higher altogether than for streaming video, all things considered, so ditching the plastic discs may be the most conscientious direction to take.



DVDs (courtesy arstechnica.com).

The authors looked at several possible distribution methods for DVDs, including transporting them to stores or warehouses; repackaging them for the store or rental business in question, if necessary; and then delivering them to their final destinations. The study also accounts for the efficiency and power use of DVD playback devices, including computers and game consoles,

as well as the energy consumption of watching the DVDs on monitors or televisions.

Across the whole category, the researchers estimated that 1.2 billion DVDs were purchased or rented over the course of the studied year (2011), with an average disc lifetime of three years for rentals and five years for purchases. Each disc and case was estimated to embody about 1.5 megajoules of energy, and about 58 grams of CO₂. ...

While the study showed that the conversion to video streaming would be universally better for a fixed amount of video consumed, it did not speak to how availability of video might affect that quantity. Part of the appeal of video streaming is that it's very accessible and often free, whereas video distribution via DVD is more constrained. Even if watching a YouTube video is more efficient and environmentally friendly than watching a DVD, one does not often get lost in a time vortex watching a DVD for four straight hours. YouTube, on the other hand...

Read the entire article at [ArsTechnica](#).

Sony NEX 5R Mirrorless Interchangeable Lens Camera

Product category: Mirrorless digital camera

Manufacturer: Sony

Model: NEX 5R

Web Site: [Sony Store](#)

Price: about \$400 street for body only - about \$500 street, with 16-50mm retractable lens

For the last few months I've owned a Sony NEX 5R mirrorless interchangeable lens camera which is classified as a mid-range system camera and uses the E-Mount lens system. The Sony NEX-5R is available in silver, black or white and comes with the 18-55mm f/3.5-6.3 kit lens. Additionally, many more lenses available using the Sony E-Mount system.

In the following review I will share some initial thoughts about the Sony NEX 5R outfitted with Sony's SEL50F18 portrait lens (which is an excellent lens for portraits and nature shots, providing great results and good quality pictures).

When I got the Sony NEX 5R I opened the package and wondered about the camera. First of all, I noticed an immediate difference in comparison to a standard DSLR—the size. The camera is way smaller and lighter compared to a DSLR. The camera's weight is 218 g (less than 8 ounces) and 38.9 mm (1½ inch) depth.

I didn't know what to expect with a mirrorless camera like the Sony NEX. The size of the combination Sony NEX 5R and the 50 mm lens with 1.8 aperture is almost the same size like the kit lens but it won't fit in a normal jacket pocket—perhaps in a super big jacket pocket, but not a normal jacket pocket—while the lens is attached to the camera. However, the camera

has a nice feel to it especially when in the palm of your hand. The casing is made of magnesium, but the grip itself is a plastic material, making it easy to hold.



The LCD screen can be tilted backwards by 40 degrees and forwards by 180 degrees for arm's length self-portraits ♦ if your arm is long enough. Sony also has High Definition video shooting capabilities at Full HD 1080p at 60fps with stereo sound and the welcome ability to control shutter speed, aperture and exposure compensation during recording. For low light pictures without flash there is an ISO between 100 and 25600 available. With these specs the cameras shouldn't hide behind a DSLR.



If you've never used a DSLR, you won't even realize what you're missing with this camera, but in the case you have used a DSLR already you might find yourself wishing for a few missing features on the 5R. For example, there is no built-in viewfinder, just the LCD panel with a touch screen interface. However, you can get an extra viewfinder to attach on top in the middle of the camera. I tried out this easy-fix and, for the first shoots, was almost convinced

that it solved the problem. I thought it would give me the same feel as a "normal" compact camera, but it didn't.



The handling is way different than a compact camera. You can choose between automatic shooting and the typically P/A/S/M modes, as well as adjust settings like a DSLR. The menu structure needs a bit of getting used to, taking me a bit longer than expected to configure the settings the first time. After a while you are in it and will quickly find the settings you need. Some settings require the click of one or two buttons, whereas others require a bit more adjustment.

All of my outdoor shots were uncomplicated and the portrait lens made it easy to work with the aperture to blur the background. I took a picture of a field of flowers as an example (below).



There is also a clip-on flash which you have to attach to the top of the camera. If the flash is connected to the camera you can easily pop-up the flash. The autofocus does not work as fast as some higher-end DSLRs, but it is still fast. The image quality is very good with the SEL50F18 lens. The Sony NEX 5R has a crop factor of 1.5 compared to a full-frame camera.

The coolest things about the camera are the small size and the light weight. Also it does a great job of allowing you to take pictures in different life situations with people, landscapes or whatever you want to capture.



However, it should be noted that the autofocus may not be suitable for super-fast sports shots.

Overall, the NEX 5T is one of the best compact cameras and even a good camera for hobby photographers who are looking to substitute for a DSLR.

The missing viewfinder is a big disadvantage in my opinion but for some consumers it might be suitable or not an issue at all. For anyone dying to have a viewfinder, one of 5R's 'big brothers,' several of which DO have traditional viewfinders, might be an option.

I should note that the model I have—the NEX 5R—has been discontinued by Sony, but the [NEX 5T](#) has basically the same features. You can still find the NEX 5R on lots of retail and auction sites. You might even save some money buying one generation back.



Review contributed by Tobias Waldenmeier

Product highlights (from Sony)

16.1 MP APS-C size HD image sensor

Uses Sony E-mount Lenses

Fast Hybrid AF with 10fps at full resolution

Full HD Movies (1920 x1080) at 60p/60i/24p

Low Light Performance up to ISO 25600

PlayMemories Camera Apps

180-degree tilt-able 3.0" Touch LCD with 921,000-dot resolution

Control Dial

Picture Effect mode

Sweep Panorama™ Technology

Auto Portrait Framing

Full 1080 HD 60p/60i/24p Movie Capture

3.0" 180° Tilt-able Touchscreen LCD

Fast Hybrid Autofocus

Wi-Fi Sharing

Multiple award-winning author Charles Carr has written more than two thousand newspaper articles, magazine stories, and columns for many publications including the San Diego Union Tribune, The Californian, The North County Times, Parent Magazine, ComputerScene, and ComputerEdge Magazine where he has been an editor for more than two decades. He is also a television producer/director with shows both currently airing and in production on Cox Cable and elsewhere.

In the 1990s, Charles wrote 3DHouse, a complete inside-and-out virtual reality tour of his family's log home in Southern California. One of the first virtual reality programs ever created, 3DHouse enjoyed tens of thousands of shareware downloads on all major portals. He also sold

the rights to Radio Shack and Egghead Software. 3DHouse has since been featured in many books and articles about VR.

Carr has also been commissioned to write and/or directed many of his own stage plays. Several years ago, Carr and others looking for ways to help organizations struggling in difficult economic times, founded Art Animates Life (www.artanimateslife.org).

To date, Art Animates Life, a CA incorporated, federal non-profit, has raised tens-of-thousands of dollars for San Diego area disaster relief, an arts non-profit and municipal gallery, a community outreach center, and several struggling community theaters.

Several years ago Carr was commissioned to adapt and direct the beloved Dickens classic, A Christmas Carol. The play, titled "Mr. Scrooge & Mr. Dickens," has sold out So Cal theaters for the past several years. Six shows will take place Dec. 2013 to benefit the San Marcos Historical Society.

Another original play, "All the Time in the World," has been performed many times and garnered broad acclaim from audiences and critics alike. Carr is working on a brand new adaptation of the classic Hitchcock thriller, "The Lady Vanished," to be performed spring 2014.

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

Carr is also a noted producer, director, and videographer. Several of his documentaries can currently be seen on So Cal's Cox Cable. Since its inception he has produced the Fallbrook International Film Festival's red carpet event and panel discussions.

Charles receives dozens of requests each year to appear on Southern California television and radio stations to talk about important tech events. He also speaks from time-to-time to high schools and organizations about his eclectic life in the arts.

Learn more at www.charlescarr.com.



Editor's Letters: Tips and Thoughts from Readers

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

"Transparent Windows" Exit Resets to Defaults; Thank You for Video Streaming; Lost Internet Connection

"Transparent Windows" Exit Resets to Defaults

[Regarding the May 23 [Instantly Make a Window Transparent and Click Through It! column](#):]

Take a look at the last post on the [page for the script](#): "Hey! [Here's](#) a version that resets each modified window to its defaults on Exit (not always on top, non-click-through-able, nontransparent)." Click on "[Here's](#)" to see this version.

-Ron Cerrato, San Diego

Thank You for Video Streaming

[Regarding Jack Dunning's May 23 [article](#), "A Look at Internet Video Streaming Boxes":]

Jack,

Thank you for the article on video streaming. It is so helpful to see all the offerings lined up together so clearly. I really appreciate articles as well done as this—so helpful for anyone wanting to choose a solution that works for them. Now, if you can just face up to updating it every year...

Regards,

-Krasna S, Carlsbad, CA

Lost Internet Connection

[Regarding the May 16 [Digital Dave column](#):]

Pat,

Having experienced your issues myself, there are a couple of things I found helpful I might suggest. With respect to the router, see if there is a firmware upgrade from the router's manufacturer's site. This can make a huge difference in preventing hangs and speeding up your network access speed.

The second suggestion is with respect to your computer. If there are multiple devices in your home (or, gasp, neighborhood) connecting to your network, sometimes they grab the same IP address your computer has been using because the router timed out your IP assignment. Rebooting your computer picks up a new, unassigned IP address. You can configure your router and/or computer to change the timeout to much longer than its default. Usually 24 hours is fine, assuming you shut down your computer at night.

-Stewart Levin, Centennial, CO

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