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August 15, 2014

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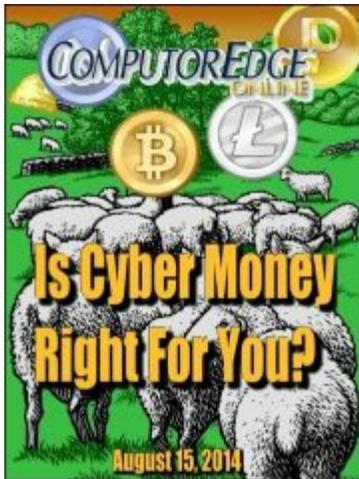
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Is Cyber Money Right For You?

New cryptocurrencies are popping up everywhere. Should you get your own digital wallet?

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Digital Dave

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

Outlook E-mail Problem; Security Software; WordPerfect X6 Lockup.

Outlook E-mail Problem

Dear Digital Dave,

I have Time Warner as my mail service provider. I use Outlook for e-mail, so I had all e-mail downloaded to my hard drive and the Time Warner e-mail files deleted. Recently something changed and Time Warner still gets the e-mail, but some files into Outlook are modified. They come into Outlook with dashes and spaces. When I highlight the file, Outlook begins an endless search for the file in question and locks up my computer. Time Warner tech says that I have to contact Microsoft for this problem.

I try to read all your articles for years. Can you help me?

Tad Tsukida

San Diego, CA

Dear Tad,

It sounds like there's a corrupted entry for those e-mails in your Outlook database. It thinks there should be an e-mail there, but can't read the subject properly and displays dashes and spaces. Then when you try to open it, it doesn't actually exist. I found [this Microsoft support page](#) for repairing the Outlook Inbox. This is my best guess.

Second, if messages are coming in with funny characters, then I would check encoding. I'm not sure how to open the feature in Outlook (I don't have Outlook), but I'm sure that you can find it on the Web by searching for "outlook encoding." Often it's found in *View => Encoding* or *Action => Other Actions => Encoding* depending upon your version of Outlook. (Or possibly another reader will let us know how it's done.) There are a number of possibilities, but it won't hurt to try different ones to see the effect.

Most commonly your program may be set to Western European (ISO) or Western European (Windows). Give Unicode (UTF-8) a try and any others that may look reasonable. However,

this feature primarily affects outgoing messages.

Another option is to determine if "Read all messages in plain text" is active. This may be found by:

1. On the Tools menu, click Trust Center, and then click E-mail Security.
2. Under Read as Plain Text, select the Read all standard mail in plain text check box.

Most e-mail includes some HTML code which formats the message with fonts, images and other extras. If the "text only" feature is turned on then you will see the raw HTML code as text only. Turning off this feature will return Outlook to interpreting the HTML code.

It may be that I don't understand the problem well enough, but I'm not sure why there is an endless search—unless the message does not exist. It could be that your computer has just become bogged down with issues. You may want to run the free [CCleaner](#) to remove the chaff.

Digital Dave

Security Software

Dear Digital Dave,

I currently have Windows 7 and have been using Avast Security Software (the free version). I've heard so much about Security Essentials and am wondering whether I should delete Avast and go to Security Essentials. What do you think? Does Security Essentials have a firewall?

Thanks for your help.

*Gabby DeDonato
San Clemente, CA*

Dear Gabby,

The only complaint about Avast Security is that they keep sending you messages trying to get you to upgrade to a paid version. Since all versions of Security Essentials from Microsoft are free, there is no reason for them to send you any upgrade messages.

It's important to note that no security software is perfect and the safety of your computer depends primarily on you practicing safe computing. Having said that there is no particular reason to believe that Security Essentials is superior to Avast. They both support a firewall and do a decent job. I use Security Essentials because it is adequate, easy to install on new

computers and once installed I never get annoying upgrade messages.

Security Essentials is built into Windows 8.1 as Windows Defender. Once you delete any pre-installed malware product, it's only a matter of turning it on.

Digital Dave

WordPerfect X6 Lockup

Dear Digital Dave,

My WordPerfect X6 stops responding if I attempt to move the cursor from page 201 to 202 in a document. The cursor disappears from the page of text, then is visible if moved off the page. Clicking on the close X button causes an error message, "WordPerfect is not responding" with a choice of closing the program with loss of data or waiting to see if the problem self corrects. I waited five minutes without a correction. After closing the program it checks online unsuccessfully for a solution.

This problem occurs on my Toshiba C55 laptop running WIN 8.1 with 6GB memory. It doesn't happen running the same file on my old Lenovo laptop running WIN 7.1! Please suggest a fix if you can thanks?

Mike

Cardiff, CA

Dear Mike,

Can you go directly to page 202 on WordPerfect from anywhere in the document? Can they go back from 203 to 202? If so then the problem is associated specifically with the action of moving from page 202 to 203. I would guess that there is an embedded formatting problem to which Windows 8.1 is sensitive.

There may be a special character embedded in the document at the location where you are having a problem. It may not appear in the text of the document, but could be causing the choke under Windows 8.1. I would try saving the document to another file name to see if the new saved file cleans up the document. I might even save it in different formats, then back again, since this may actually remove the problem.

Another trick for removing mysterious problems is to copy just the offending section of text (not the entire document) from WordPerfect and into Notepad. Then copy it again from Notepad. This will effectively strip all of the special formatting out of the text. Now, paste it back into WordPerfect for a clean start. You may need to do some reformatting of that section. That's if it's even possible to paste the document into Notepad since WordPerfect might not read or write page 202.

It could also be a problem with Windows 8.1. If that is the case then it is unlikely that there is an immediate fix. It sounds very much like a document specific problem. However, these situations may point to a bug in Windows 8.1. If so, the automatic reporting for problems to Microsoft may eventually get it resolved.

Your best bet is converting between document types and back again. You may try that in Windows 7 as well, then testing the new documents in Windows 8.

Digital Dave



The Real Future of Cryptocurrencies

“Bitcoin, Litecoin, Dogecoin, and Many Other Virtual Coins Are Flooding the Cyber Currency Market” by Jack Dunning

Computer software is making electronic money from nothing. Some people have gotten rich. Is it a real opportunity or the new Ponzi scheme?

Last February I wrote an article about the [cryptocurrency Bitcoin](#) and how the digital money operated. Cryptocurrencies, or cyber money, is nothing but software designed to create, store, and trade denominations of a particular named virtual monetary unit. The electronic "coins" are created through a mining process which solves computational puzzles. All transactions between digital wallets are encrypted. While the transactions are in the open and processed by the miners, there is no identity attached to each and it is difficult (if not impossible) to trace to any particular person or computer. These "coins" have a value established by markets where they are traded. The markets are uncontrolled and not regulated by any authority other than the software which makes the cybercoins. The use and trading of cyber currency has been banned in some countries—although it's difficult to see how the ban is enforced.

Along with the [Darknet](#), cryptocurrencies provide an anonymous way for people involved in illicit activities to communicate and do business—although some reputable businesses have accepted Bitcoin, the granddaddy of them all. Some people did make millions of dollars out of virtually nothing, but that is the exception rather than the rule. There are now well over 100 such cyber currencies as people rush in to make a killing as the price per coin rises—or not. My prediction is that these currencies will likely vanish one by one as each bubble pops, but the technology may evolve into useful software for other types of secure transactions.

It's time to take a closer look at how this new type of money is working out. With only a little bit of research, it didn't take very long to determine the probable future of cyber currencies. Although the electronic cash looks like it has promise, in the long run it is no more important

than a passing fad and as dangerous as any Ponzi scheme. To properly evaluate the various forms of newly created currencies such as Bitcoin, Litecoin, Dogecoin, etc (the list goes on and on), it's important to understand that all money (including the United States dollar) is based upon a fiction—albeit a useful fiction.

Money as a Useful Fiction



Money has little or no intrinsic value. The worth of the paper or electronic bits which represent the currency is insignificant compared to the price we have endowed on it. It's only worth what we think it's worth. Or more appropriately, its value is only equal to the real goods and services that other people are willing to give up for the cash. If people decide that any currency is no longer worth anything in terms of goods and services, then the currency collapses. (On the other hand, if the value of the metal in a coin is greater than the stated denomination, then the coin loses its usefulness as a currency. People will hang onto it or melt it down for its real value.)

The value of any currency is propped up by a fiction embraced by a group of people. It's a called useful fiction because it enables world trade. Without money economies would have extraordinary difficulty participating in any type of trade. Fortunately, there are enough people in the world who will accept our intrinsically worthless dollars. Everyone benefits by this happy mistake—as long as we keep believing.

For example, suppose a farmer from eons ago wanted to trade a cow for some pigs. If the pigs are ten miles away, the farmer would be forced to drag the cow ten miles, make the trade, then herd the pigs back. (Not looking forward to that trip.)

A neighbor who wants the cow, but doesn't have any pigs, offers the farmer some pretty beads for the cow. The farmer takes the beads under the mistaken belief that the beads actually have some value. This could be a catastrophe for the farmer, but he happily takes off to the next village (ten miles away) looking for some pigs.

Upon arriving in the village the farmer explains to a pig owner that he traded a cow for these special beads. The pig owner assumes that the farmer is honest and the beads must be valuable. He accepts the beads for two pigs thinking they are worth at least one cow. Another mistake because the beads don't really have any value. The error was originally all in the farmer's head—and now it's been transferred to the pig owner's head.

For the farmer this is a great boon since the pigs owner's error in judgment cancels out the initial error made by the farmer—taking the beads in the first place. The farmer has effectively

traded the cow for two pigs—although he still needs to bring the pigs back to his village. This is called an antithetical (equal and opposite) error and is the key to an effective monetary system.

To expand this example of a monetary system, others in both villages might make the same mistake of accepting the beads. It is conceivable that any number of other trades could occur without all the products being hauled to a market. It is quite possible that the farmer sells his cow and buys his pigs without ever leaving his village. (That leaves more time to watch TV.) The ultimate antithetical error results when the person who originally offered the colorful beads for the cow, now accepts them for some wooden plates he crafted.

This example can be further developed by noting that one person may control all of the beads, thus ensuring that they don't lose value by becoming too plentiful. Plus, he may even decide to lend some beads to people for making other purchases—as long as they pay him back with either more beads or chickens from the next brood. The benefits of a currency are tremendous, but that doesn't make the money any less of a fiction.

The backbone of any monetary system is based upon our mistaken belief that our money has intrinsic value. That's the initial error. But that error is cancelled out by the equally mistaken belief other people hold (the antithetical error) that the same money has value. It's like adding (or subtracting) the same thing to both sides of an equation. There is nothing in nature which says that we should be able to do it, but it works. The only criterion for useful fiction is that it works.

Why Not Bring Back the Tulip Standard?

You will hear as occasional politician argue that the [gold standard](#) should be brought back to support the US Dollar. I say, "Why not bring back the tulip standard?" Commonly studied in business and economic classes is the [tulip mania](#) which reportedly occurred in the Netherlands during the 1600s. (There is some dispute as to whether the tulip mania was nearly as severe as suggested by many sources.) The demand for tulips grew so much that contracts to buy certain varieties sold for ten times the wages of the average person. In effect, tulip contracts became a currency—at least until people grew tired of them. Tulips are only worth as much as people are willing to pay for them. (Tulips do have some nutritional value—if you stay away from the poisonous bits.) No one is suggesting tulips as a currency because there aren't many people (except my brother) who would accept them as payment.

The point is that anything can become a currency (at least for a short period of time) if enough people believe in it. That is where cyber currencies come in.

The Future of Cyber Currencies

The problem with cyber currencies is that there is no overriding authority (such as the US government) to convince us that the new made up computer money has any value. If there was someone (maybe Bill Gates) who would guarantee the value of any new virtual coins by backing it with, say, cows or pigs, then there would be a decent chance that the money might survive. But that's not likely to happen. Right now Bitcoin and others are floating along on a tenuous fiction which will eventually collapse—and no one is going to pick up the pieces.

The US Dollar is backed by the "[full faith and credit](#)" of the United States government—whatever that means. (It doesn't really matter what it means as long as enough people believe it.) That's why US currency is not under the same threat as your average cybercash. At least, we don't believe it is—and that's the whole point. Bitcoin, Litecoin, and all the other will eventually go away leaving worthless digital wallet residue on discarded hard drives because there is no supporting myth for people to believe in. Eventually, it will be seen that the emperor has no clothes.

But don't take my word for it. Just look at the facts.

Cyber Currency Price

While digging around for information on the performance of Bitcoin and other virtual money, I came across a [chart from November 2013](#) (see Figure 1). This is a snapshot of the cryptocurrency market eight months ago.

#	Name	Market Cap	Price	Total Supply	% Change (24h)
1	 Bitcoin	\$ 11,634,216,330	\$ 965.93	12,044,575 BTC	+14.47 %
2	 Litecoin	\$ 645,025,963	\$ 27.58	23,389,742 LTC	+90.40 %
3	 Peercoin	\$ 77,344,278	\$ 3.72	20,798,011 PPC	+34.32 %
4	 Namecoin	\$ 57,632,949	\$ 7.79	7,402,700 NMC	+11.78 %
5	 Primecoin	\$ 15,569,041	\$ 4.84	3,217,203 XPM	+23.13 %
6	 Feathercoin	\$ 12,644,394	\$ 0.52	24,241,450 FTC	+47.91 %
7	 Megacoin	\$ 12,334,301	\$ 0.59	21,029,550 MEC	+56.33 %
8	 Novacoin	\$ 11,971,414	\$ 23.95	499,946 NVC	+4.20 %
9	 ProtoShares	\$ 8,709,360	\$ 9.03	964,039 PTS	+6.91 %
10	 QuarkCoin	\$ 6,169,685	\$ 0.025	245,205,921 QRK	+278.55 %
11	 WorldCoin	\$ 5,004,536	\$ 0.15	32,585,248 WDC	+35.98 %
12	 Infinitecoin	\$ 3,779,648	\$ 4.3e-05	87,931,519,501 IFC	+114.69 %
13	 Freicoins	\$ 3,717,330	\$ 0.11	33,464,757 FRC	+225.76 %
14	 CryptogenicBullion	\$ 2,669,927	\$ 2.94	907,496 CGB	+26.23 %
15	 Tickets	\$ 2,181,059	\$ 3.7e-05	58,706,518,582 TIX	+243.55 %
16	 BBQCoin	\$ 1,678,926	\$ 0.061	27,589,595 BQC	-2.53 %
17	 Terracoin	\$ 1,664,034	\$ 0.38	4,417,250 TRC	+12.74 %
18	 Anoncoin	\$ 1,625,950	\$ 2.98	544,823 ANC	+31.95 %
19	 Ixcoin	\$ 1,619,503	\$ 0.097	16,766,258 IXC	+27.28 %
20	 Devcoin	\$ 1,393,733	\$ 0.000245	5,771,570,050 DVC	+19.34 %
21	 Digitalcoin	\$ 1,245,454	\$ 0.11	10,925,121 DGC	+15.61 %
22	 Mincoin	\$ 1,212,321	\$ 0.86	1,408,130 MNC	+5.70 %
23	 GoldCoin	\$ 966,574	\$ 0.034	28,574,150 GLD	+16.65 %
24	 Yacoin	\$ 739,097	\$ 0.067	11,025,444 YAC	-12.52 %
25	 Copperlark	\$ 727,854	\$ 0.15	4,890,799 CLR	+4.39 %
26	 Zetacoin	\$ 523,196	\$ 0.0033	156,804,050 ZET	+4.96 %
27	 Fastcoin	\$ 477,008	\$ 0.012	41,152,706 FST	+54.46 %
28	 TagCoin	\$ 428,704	\$ 1.71	250,980 TAG	+62.15 %
29	 I0Coin	\$ 370,677	\$ 0.019	19,965,312 I0C	+0.00 %
30	 Luckycoin	\$ 230,043	\$ 0.028	8,119,904 LKY	-28.47 %

Figure 1. The leading cryptocurrencies listed November 27, 2013 showing capitalization and price.

At the top is Bitcoin with \$11.6 billion in perceived total value of all the "coins" available on the market. That amounts to a price of \$966 per Bitcoin—which leads all other cyber currencies by far. Litecoin is second with a value of \$27.58. Third on the list is Peercoin with a selling price of \$3.72. What a deal! But it needs a little perspective.

Using the [same source](#) as the chart in Figure 1, I captured the current list on August 11, 2014 (see Figure 2). Now the lights start to turn on!

#	Name	Market Cap	Price	Available Supply	Volume (24h)
1	 Bitcoin	\$ 7,637,667,813	\$ 581.79	13,127,900 BTC	\$ 12,699,000
2	 Litecoin	\$ 199,366,617	\$ 6.42	31,044,754 LTC	\$ 3,170,570
3	 Ripple	\$ 42,542,652	\$ 0.005155	8,252,600,677 XRP *	\$ 299,757
4	 Nxt	\$ 35,140,798	\$ 0.035141	999,997,096 NXT *	\$ 201,553
5	 Darkcoin	\$ 24,413,521	\$ 5.36	4,550,788 DRK	\$ 223,417
6	 Peercoin	\$ 19,757,758	\$ 0.913439	21,630,079 PPC	\$ 87,521
7	 BitSharesX	\$ 17,591,962	\$ 0.008797	1,999,775,140 BTSX *	\$ 56,425
8	 Namecoin	\$ 13,374,960	\$ 1.40	9,566,800 NMC	\$ 63,195
9	 Dogecoin	\$ 13,329,302	\$ 0.000149	89,517,278,777 DOGE	\$ 184,460
10	 MaidSafeCoin	\$ 11,464,601	\$ 0.025333	452,552,412 MAID *	\$ 19,338
11	 BitShares PTS	\$ 7,300,112	\$ 4.40	1,658,106 PTS	\$ 23,681
12	 Counterparty	\$ 5,520,820	\$ 2.08	2,648,739 XCP *	\$ 9,682

Figure 2. The leading cryptocurrencies listed August 11, 2014 showing capitalization and price.

The capitalization of Bitcoin has dropped 35% to \$7.6 billion. The price of a Bitcoin is down 40% to \$582. People may be losing confidence. If you happened to buy any Bitcoins last November and failed to sell, how do you think you would feel now? Would you buy more because they are so cheap today?

What about Litecoin, the number two competitor to Bitcoin? Market capitalization is down 69% at \$199 million. The price has dropped 77% to \$6.24. Humm. You can pick up a Peercoin—now sixth on the list—for under a buck.

As you go down the list, the results are consistent. Down! When you go to the [Crypto-Currency Market Capitalizations](#) site, it seems that some of the currencies on the first chart have disappeared. This tells you a lot about where cyber money is headed. (Update: I checked the chart again on August 14 and the general collapse appears to continue.)

Government Warnings

According to Cyrus Farivar from [Ars Technica](#), "The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) has issued a new warning to the general public, alerting everyone to the potential dangers of Bitcoin, Litecoin, Dogecoin, and other cryptocurrencies." These threats include hackers, fewer protections, cost, and scams (see Figure 3). (I have to laugh at the warning about scams, since everyone one of these "coins" smacks of a mistaken belief in something that doesn't really exist—which is the definition of a scam.)

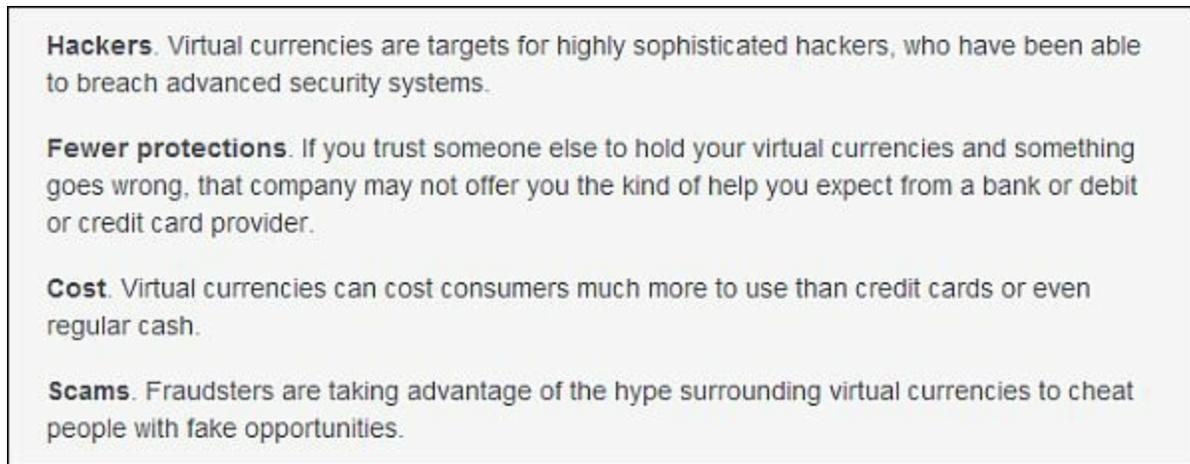


Figure 3. Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) issues warnings about cryptocurrencies. (Ars Technica).

Why isn't "Because it's a stupid thing to do!" on the list? Invest in something tangible like baseball cards or intangibles such as company stock. At least they are backed up by a sense of real value—at least until the company goes bankrupt. (Baseball cards are forever!) Unless you're a compulsive gambler or drug dealer, you should probably avoid the all forms of virtual money.

These cryptocurrencies will probably never go away completely. New ones pop up at regular intervals. I'm sure that some serve a real purpose such as selling and trading "enchanted powers" in online computer games. But they will all eventually collapse when even the drug dealers and terrorists find them too risky to continue using them.

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:

Recently released is Jack's FREE AutoHotkey book, [AutoHotkey Tricks You Ought to Do with Window](#), available exclusively at ComputerEdge E-Books in the EPUB for e-readers and tablets, MOBI for Kindle, and PDF for printing formats.

ComputerEdge E-books offering is his [AutoHotkey Applications](#), an idea-generating intermediate level e-book about using the AutoHotkey Graphical User Interface (GUI) command to write practical pop-up apps for your Windows computer. (It's not as hard as it sounds.)

[Hidden Windows Tools for Protecting, Problem Solving and Troubleshooting Windows 8, Windows 7, Windows Vista, and Windows XP Computers.](#)

Jack's [A Beginner's Guide to AutoHotkey, Absolutely the Best Free Windows Utility Software Ever!: Create Power Tools for Windows XP, Windows Vista, Windows 7 and Windows 8 and Digging Deeper Into AutoHotkey.](#)

Our second compilation of stupid *ComputerEdge* cartoons from 2011 and 2012 is now available at Amazon! [That Does Not Compute, Too! ComputerEdge Cartoons, Volume II: "Do You Like Windows 8 or Would You Prefer an Apple?"](#)

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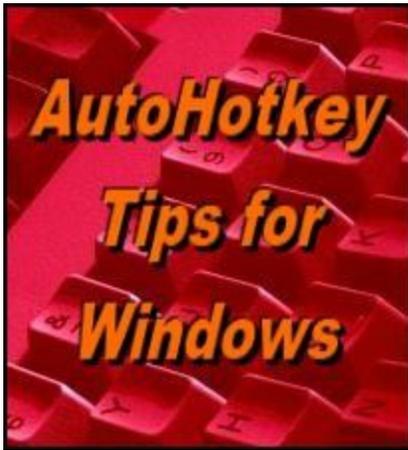
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[Sticking with Windows XP—or Not? Why You Should or Why You Should Not Upgrade to Windows 7,](#)

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



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

A Simple Pop-up Help Window and More Calorie Counting

“One Line of Code Makes a Help Window and Completing the Calorie Counting Food List” by Jack Dunning

One line of code can be used as a reminder for your AutoHotkey hotkeys or for any other purpose. Plus, loading the food history into the Food List view in the CalorieCount AutoHotkey script.

Here is an e-mail I recently received from Sandy:

Jack,

I love AutoHotkey! I'm encouraging all of my co-workers to use it and passing along the script I use at work for the common things I do. I thought I saw a script quite a while ago that I could use to pop-up a list of all of the key combinations and what they do. This would help a person to quickly review what keys do what, without having to open the script to remember. When I looked back through the articles, I thought FolderOpen.ahk did that, but I was wrong.

Is there a script that does that, or is there a way to pop-up a window that is hard-coded with the key combinations and what they do?

Thanks for the great lessons!

Sandy



Hi, Sandy,

Here is a link to the column which includes the section on "[Making an AutoHotkey Help Window](#)." It is also found in Chapter Eleven of [A Beginner's Guide to AutoHotkey](#). I don't think I put it in any of the posted scripts.

Thanks,

Jack

Jack, thank you! I was close!

Sandy

For those you are not familiar with this simple AutoHotkey script, it's a great way to construct any type of help window. Even though it looks like a number of lines, it's actually only one-line:

```
^F12::MsgBox,4160,Hidden Folder Hotkeys
,`nCTRL+W+S`tStartup Folder
,`nCTRL+W+P`tPrograms Folder
,`nCTRL+W+I`tPictures Folder
,`nCTRL+W+T`tSendTo Folder
```

When the CTRL+F12 key combination is depressed a message box opens displaying the list of hotkeys. The special character for a new line (`\n`) is used to create a separate line for each hotkey. The tab character (`\t`) is used to align the second column.

The only reason this one line of AutoHotkey is broken up is for readability of the code. The AutoHotkey technique used is line continuation for [splitting a long line into a series of shorter ones](#). Most commonly, if a line of code starts with a period (`.`), comma (`,`), the word "and", or the word "or", it is assumed by AutoHotkey to be part of the previous line. Most expression operators can also be used for line continuation.

Using the [MsgBox command](#) is a great way to add quick informational pop-ups to any Windows computer. They can be activated by a hotkey combination or be set to open at specific time intervals with the [SetTimer command](#). Maybe you could be greeted with an inspirational quote every morning?

Completing the Calorie Count History List

The last two AutoHotkey columns discussed the problem of adding a food history/dictionary to the *CalorieCount* script. The [first AutoHotkey column](#) shows how the *CalorieCount* variable is parsed to create a new variable with only a sorted list of food items, the serving size, and number of calories. In the [second AutoHotkey column](#) the *Tab2* control is added to allow space for the new *Listview* of the food history to appear in a second tab without increasing the size of the GUI window. This time the new *Listview* in the added tab is filled from the new variable.

But first, let's take a look at how to place the one control on all tabs at the same location and make the Tab control change width with the resizing of the GUI window.

Placing One Control on All Tabs

As I noted last time, a control can be placed on all tabs (or no particular tab) by using the [Gui, Tab command](#) without any parameters:

```
Gui, Tab  
Gui, Add, Button, xm x+275 gUpdate, Update/Save ;
```

In this case an *Update/Save* button is added outside the tab outline (see Figure 1). For placement purposes the new control effectively ignores all other controls assigned to individual tabs, except the *Tab* control itself. This is an excellent way to add buttons and edit fields which have a universal function in the app.

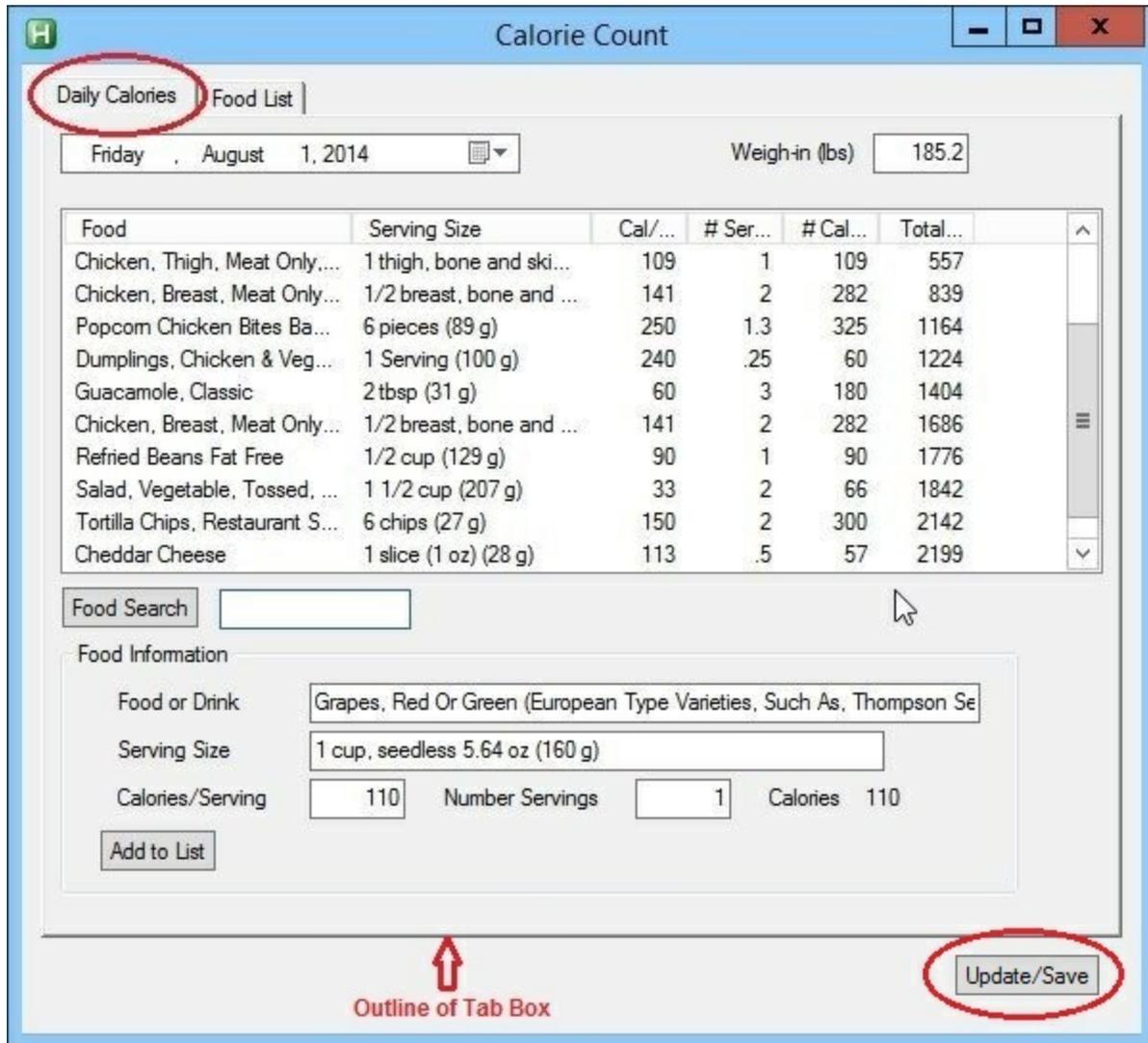


Figure 1. An Update/Save button is added to the lower right-hand corner of each tab.

When Food List is selected, the new Update/Save button appears in the same location on the tab (see Figure 2).

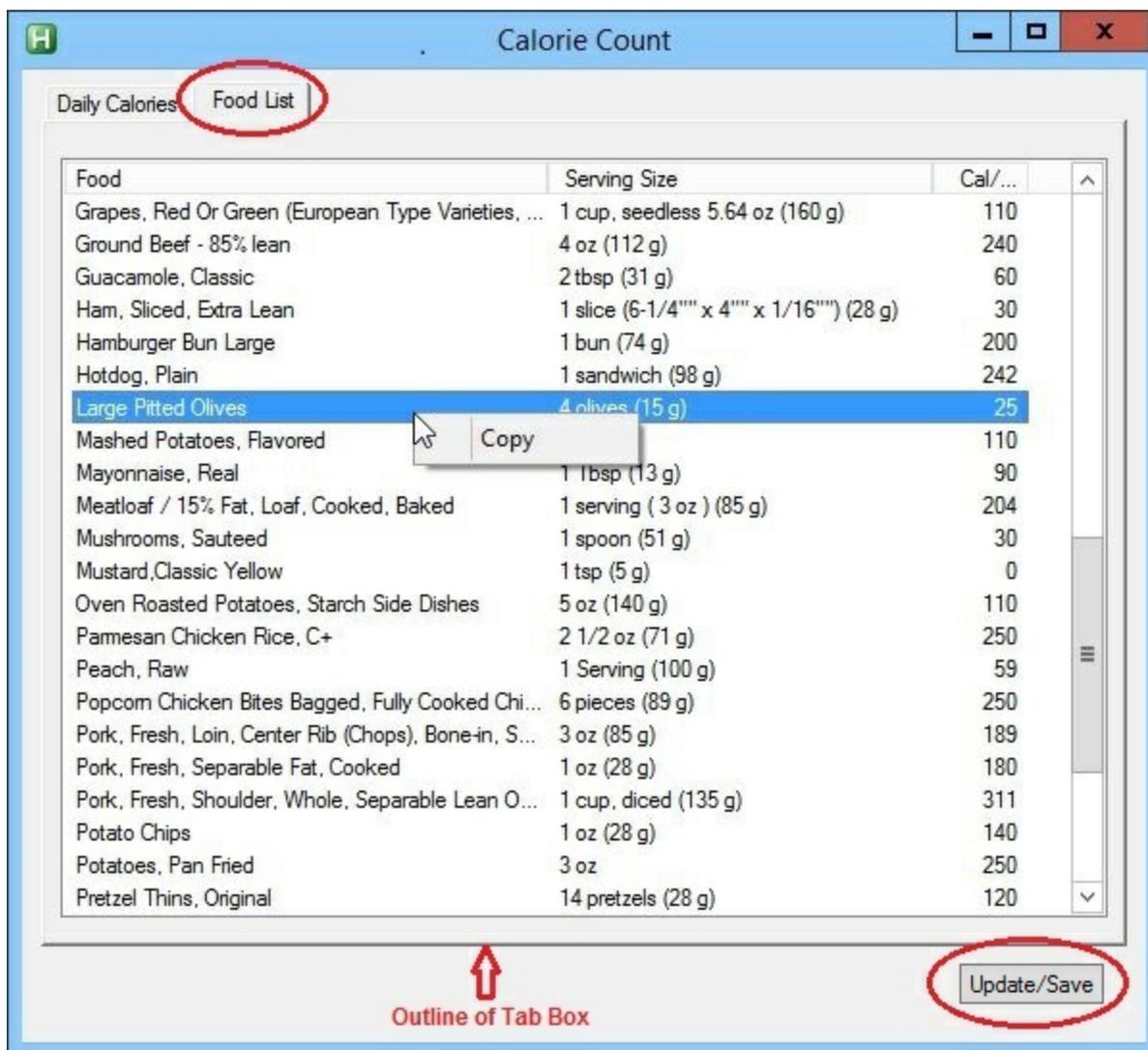


Figure 2. The added Update/Save button appears at the same location on each tab.

The Update/Save button calls the label (subroutine) *Update* which merely issues the *Reload* command which initiates saving the latest changes and reloading the *ListViews*.

Automatic Resizing of GUI Controls

As explained in the "[Making GUIs Resizable](#)" section of an earlier AutoHotkey column, it's desirable for the *Listview* (and other) controls to change in size and/or position whenever the GUI window is resized. I gave up on resizing the *Listview* vertically because the positioning of the other controls was problematic. However, the resizing was most needed horizontal. Naturally, the new Tab control and Update/Save button should conform to the same feature.

AutoHotkey has a built in label called *GuiSize:* which triggers whenever a GUI window is resized. (*Gui +Resize* must appear in the script to make the GUI windows resizable.) The new controls were easy to add to that label:

```

GuiSize: ; Widen or narrow the ListView (and Tab)
        ; in response to the user's resizing of the window.
If A_EventInfo = 1 ; The window has been minimized. No action needed.
    Return

    GuiControl, Move, MyListView, % "W" . (A_GuiWidth - 40)
    GuiControl, Move, MyFoodView, % "W" . (A_GuiWidth - 40)
    GuiControl, Move, Button4, % "x" . (A_GuiWidth - 100)
    GuiControl, Move, SysTabControl321, % "W" . (A_GuiWidth - 20)
Return

```

Button4 (as found by Windows Spy) is the *Update/Save* button. *SysTabControl321* is the *Tab* control. (The name *Update/Save* and the variable *TabNum* can be used in place of *Button4* and *SysTabControl321* respectively.) As the right edge of the GUI is dragged to the right (or back to the left), the position of the *Update/Save* button and the width of the *Tab* control adjust relative to that right edge.

Each control is repositioned by the [GuiControl, Move command](#) only in the horizontal direction by evaluating the expressions "*x*". (*A_GuiWidth - 100*) and "*x*". (*A_GuiWidth - 20*) respectively. *A_GuiWidth* contains the width of the window at any given instance and changes as the window is resized.

Loading the MyFoodView ListView

In [this AutoHotkey column](#) two weeks ago, the variable *FoodList* was created by parsing the variable *CalorieCount* (which holds all of the data found in the main *CalorieCount.txt* file). The next step (and second half of the function *FoodList()*) is to parse the *FoodList* variable while loading it into the *MyFoodView ListView*.

But, first before running the *FoodList()* function which creates the *FoodList* variable and loads the new *ListView*, *MyFoodView* must be selected as the active *ListView*. *ListView* functions only operate on the last active *ListView*:

```

FileRead, CalorieCount, CalorieCount.txt
LoadWindow(A_Now) ; load data into MyListView daily calorie ListView
Gui, ListView, MyFoodView ; switch to the MyFoodView as active ListView
FoodList() ; load data into MyFoodView food list ListView
Gui, ListView, MyListView ; switch back to MyListView as active ListView

```

Note: Not mentioned last week was that when the second *ListView* (*MyFoodView*) was added with the *Gui, Add, ListView* command, it then became the active *ListView* for all *ListView* functions. Since, *MyListView* is loaded first through the *LoadWindow()* function, it's necessary to add the line:

```
Gui, ListView, MyListView
```

just after adding the new *ListView* to reset *MyListView* as the active control. Otherwise, the script would attempt to load the daily calories into the food item list.

In the second half of the *FoodList()* function further filtering of the list is done to remove more duplicates and any blank items left by the initial sort:

```

LastOne := "xxxx"
Loop, parse, FoodList, `n
{
    Loop, Parse, A_LoopField , CSV
    {
        RowData%A_Index% := A_LoopField
    }

    StringReplace, RowData1, RowData1, |, ", All
    StringReplace, RowData2, RowData2, |, ", All

    If RowData1 and RowData1 <> LastOne
        LV_Add("", RowData1,RowData2,RowData3)

    LastOne := RowData1
}

```

The *LastOne* variable is created with an arbitrary value (*xxxx*) for comparison with the first food item. The *Sort* command in the first part of the function (discussed two weeks ago) may have left some duplicate food items because, while the food name may have been the same, the serving size might have varied leaving both entries in the list. This time only the food name will be compared with duplicates being omitted. For this filtering technique to work the items much be sorted—which the *FoodList* is.

The data is now parsed line by line in preparation for adding to *MyFoodView*, the food item history in tab two. As each line is parsed, the double quote marks (") removed when first creating the variable are replaced with the two *StringReplace, RowData1, RowData2, |, ", All* lines of code. This removing and replacing of the double quotes is done to avoid the issue of escaping the double quote characters in a Comma Separated Values (CSV) format—which can get pretty confusing. (The double quote is marked as a special character with another double quote. This is not the norm for most programming languages, but it works.) This is a relatively simple method for dealing with the double quotes within the text without resorting to counting the number of quotes marks.

Next the *LV_Add("", RowData1,RowData2,RowData3)* function is used to add the data to *MyFoodView*—which was made the active *ListView* just before the *FoodList()* function was called. However, the value of the food name (*RowData1*) is checked against the variable *LastOne* and is only added if, first, it is not blank, and, next, it doesn't match (*If RowData1 and RowData1 <> LastOne*).

First entry only needs to not be blank and not match "xxxx" which isn't likely unless a food item with the name "xxxx" has been added to the list. After that the food name (*RowData1*) of the latest entry added is stored to *LastOne*. That way the previous entry is always checked for duplicates before the item is added to the *ListView*.

What follows is the complete *FoodList()* function found in the *CalorieCount.ahk* script which creates the *FoodList* variable and loads *MyFoodView*:

```

FoodList()
{
Global
Loop, parse, CalorieCount, `n    ; beginning of first half creating the FoodList var:
{
If (A_index = 1 and SubStr(A_LoopField, 1, 1) = "x")
{
Continue
}
Else
{
Loop, Parse, A_LoopField , CSV
{
RowData%A_Index% := A_LoopField
}
StringReplace, RowData2, RowData2, ", |", All
StringReplace, RowData3, RowData3, ", |", All

FoodList := FoodList . """" . RowData2 . """, """" . RowData3 . """, " . RowData4
}
}
Sort, FoodList , U    ; end of first half which creates the variable FoodList

LastOne := "xxxx"    ; beginning of second half which loads MyFoodView
Loop, parse, FoodList, `n
{
Loop, Parse, A_LoopField , CSV
{
RowData%A_Index% := A_LoopField
}
StringReplace, RowData1, RowData1, |, ", All
StringReplace, RowData2, RowData2, |, ", All

If RowData1 and RowData1 <> LastOne
LV_Add("", RowData1, RowData2, RowData3)

LastOne := RowData1
}
}

```

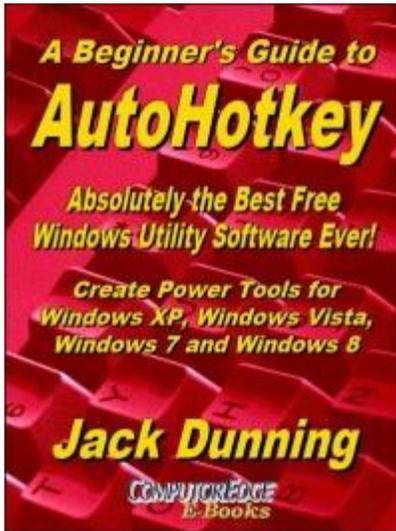
Next week, we'll add a Copy command to *MyFoodView* and look at some issues and bugs which bring up important concepts for making AutoHotkey scripts work.

* * *

Recently released and free from ComputerEdge E-Books! [AutoHotkey Tricks You Ought To Do With Windows!](#) This e-book includes both those tips and the reference material (Table of Contents and indexes) from the other three AutoHotkey books below. Pick up a copy free and

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* * *



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*](#) (preferred, EPUB format for iPad, Android, and computers; MOBI for Amazon Kindle; and PDF for printing) offers a gentle approach to learning AutoHotkey. (Also available from [Amazon](#) for the Kindle and Kindle software on other devices.)

Building Power Tools for Windows XP, Windows Vista, Windows 7 and Windows 8, AutoHotkey is the most powerful, flexible, *free* Windows utility software available. Anyone can instantly add more of the functions that they want in all of their Windows programs, whether installed on their computer or while working on the Web. AutoHotkey has a universality not found in any other Windows utility—free or paid.

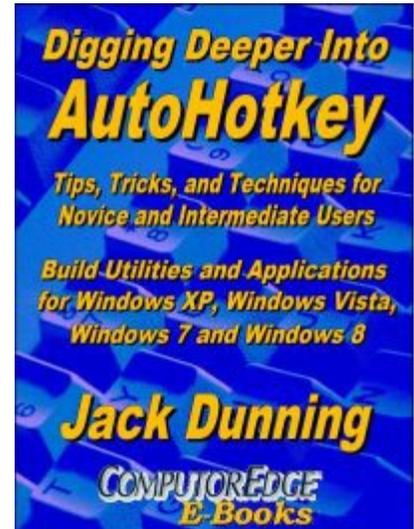
Based upon the series of articles in *ComputerEdge*, Jack takes you through his learning experience as he explores writing simple AutoHotkey scripts for adding repetitive text in any program or on the Web, running programs with special hotkeys or gadgets, manipulating the size and screen location of windows, making any window always-on-top, copying and moving files, and much more. Each chapter builds on the previous chapters.

[For an EPUB \(iPad, NOOK, etc.\) version of A Beginner's Guide to AutoHotkey click here!](#)

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* * *

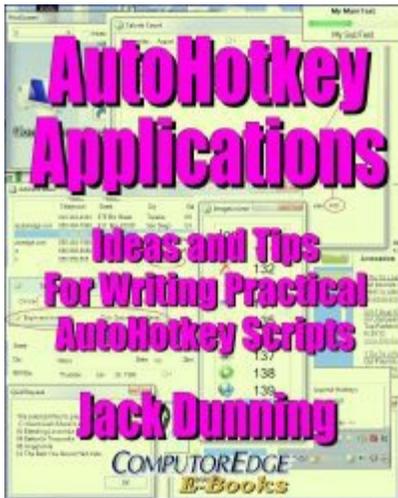
Jack's second AutoHotkey book, [*Digging Deeper Into AutoHotkey*](#) (preferred, EPUB format for iPad, Android, and computers; MOBI for Amazon Kindle; and PDF for printing) is comprised of updated, reorganized and indexed columns from *ComputerEdge* is now available. Since the columns were not all written 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. (Also available from [Amazon](#) for the Kindle and Kindle software on other devices.)



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* * *



Jack's third AutoHotkey book [*AutoHotkey Applications*](#) (preferred, EPUB format for iPad, Android, and computers; MOBI for Amazon Kindle; and PDF for printing) is an intermediate level book of ideas and applications based primarily on the AutoHotkey GUI command. 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 extensive index to the ideas and techniques covered in the back of the book. (Also available from [Amazon](#) for the Kindle and Kindle software on other devices.)

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Jack is the publisher of ComputerEdge Magazine. He's been with the magazine since first issue on May 16, 1983. Back then, it was called The Byte Buyer. His Web site is www.computoredge.com. 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:

Recently released is Jack's FREE AutoHotkey book, [AutoHotkey Tricks You Ought to Do with Window](#), available exclusively at ComputerEdge E-Books in the EPUB for e-readers and tablets, MOBI for Kindle, and PDF for printing formats.

ComputerEdge E-books offering is his [AutoHotkey Applications](#), an idea-generating intermediate level e-book about using the AutoHotkey Graphical User Interface (GUI) command to write practical pop-up apps for your Windows computer. (It's not as hard as it sounds.)

[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.](#)

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[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

“Interesting Uses for iBeacon” by Wally Wang

Wally Wang's Apple Farm

Interesting Uses for iBeacon; The Confusion of Windows; Making the Periodic Table Interesting; Updating to iOS 8 and OS X; Tracking Your Mileage; The Twisted Logic of a Physical Keyboard; Turn Plug-ins Off.

While so many people wait for Apple to release something innovative that many others will simply dismiss and overlook, practically everyone keeps ignoring innovation right in front of their face. Apple introduced iBeacon a year ago with iOS 7 and now organizations are finally figuring out creative ways to apply iBeacon to solve real problems that older technology couldn't solve as easily. To read a list of interesting applications for iBeacon, browse through InfoWorld's slideshow of [iBeacon applications](#).

One potential use is to identify passengers in an airport. If a flight is leaving soon, yet passengers are stuck in line at a security checkpoint, iBeacon could identify those passengers and allow security personnel to put those people ahead of the line so they won't miss their flight.

Slap an iBeacon onto equipment and now a company can track exactly where that equipment might be in a building. Warehouses could locate forklifts or boxes containing certain types of products. Hospitals could track medical equipment, medical supplies, and even patients in a building.

For home owners, iBeacon could help you find your car keys around the house, remind you to take the trash out on a certain day, and help you find lost pets in your neighborhood.

Innovation is less about technology and more about solving problems that couldn't be easily solved with current technology. If you dismiss any innovative technology because you don't like the company that makes it or because it doesn't exactly duplicate existing technology, then you're completely missing the point of innovation.

What makes iBeacon innovative isn't the technology that has been around for years, but its ease of use and availability buried in every iOS 7 device. With so many people capable of

using iBeacon without having to buy or add anything new, iBeacon makes it easy to implement in a variety of situations whether at work or at home.

A microwave oven may be innovative for tribes living in the Amazon jungle, but it's useless to them because they don't have an electrical outlet to plug it in. Innovation never springs up overnight because it needs the right combination of circumstances to flourish.

Alexander Bain invented [the fax machine](#) in 1843, yet the fax machine never became popular until long-distance phone calls became so common and so cheap. When practically anyone could make a long distance phone call at low cost, then sending faxes made sense. Until then, the fax machine remained an innovative solution that didn't make sense to use for over a century.

If you're waiting for Apple or any other company to introduce innovative technology every week, then you're being unrealistic, especially when so many people can't even identify innovation when it appears right in front of their face. Innovation is less about technology and more about problem-solving. When you can solve problems you didn't even know you had, that's innovation.

For many people, iBeacon is easy to overlook because the technology that makes it work doesn't appear exciting. The whole idea behind proximity-based tracking is the real innovation whether it comes from iBeacon or a rival standard. In any case, watch the growth of iBeacon because that's the future of mobile computing that ordinary desktop and laptop PCs can't match.

The Confusion of Windows

For a company that dominates the desktop PC market, Microsoft has no trouble giving rivals a chance by releasing losers like Vista and Windows 8. Vista's problem was that it required more advanced hardware without increasing productivity over Windows XP. So in return for buying new hardware and upgrading to Vista, you couldn't do anything better than you could with Windows XP.

Windows 8's problem was that it required a touchscreen to use easily and it made common tasks harder without increasing productivity over Windows 7. So in return for buying a touchscreen PC and upgrading to Windows 8, you couldn't do anything better than you could with Windows 7. With both Vista and Windows 8, Microsoft released products that didn't help users solve problems faster or solve problems they couldn't do with previous versions of Windows, so why did anyone have a reason to upgrade to Vista or Windows 8?

Sales of Windows 8 has now slowed behind the glacial pace of acceptance that greeted Vista. In case you're one of the few Windows 8 users out there, you can now accept the fact that Microsoft will [stop major updates](#) on Windows 8 in favor of working on Windows 9. If you're

waiting for the return of the Start menu, you can either get a free program like [Classic Shell](#) or wait for Windows 9 to arrive. To get people to stick with Windows, Microsoft may even offer Windows 9 [for free](#).

If Microsoft makes Windows 9 a free update, that essentially guts their whole business model of selling operating systems. With less revenue coming in through sales of Windows 9, maintaining Windows 9 will bring in less profit for Microsoft while becoming more expensive to support. Microsoft hopes that a free version of Windows 9 will keep people from defecting to rival operating systems, but even a free version of Windows 9 won't be without problems for users.

If people upgrade their older Windows XP/Vista/Windows 7/Windows 8 PCs to Windows 9, there will be incompatibility problems, especially for Windows XP users. Even if Windows 9 is free, why bother upgrading if you have to deal with new problems that you won't have if you simply stay with the version of Windows that works for you?

With companies like Hewlett-Packard and Acer looking at alternative operating systems like ChromeOS and Android for their PCs, people sticking with older versions of Windows because it does everything they need, and Microsoft toying with the idea of giving Windows 9 away because few people want to pay for operating systems anymore, Microsoft's dominance with Windows is over.

If you're still using Windows, it's time to decide what to do in the future. In the short-term, it's always easier to do nothing so there's little reason to upgrade to any version of Windows. In the long-term, you have to decide if switching to another operating system will cause less trouble than struggling with a newer version of Windows.

Even if you stick with Windows, there's a growing number of people who won't be relying on Windows for the future. The longer you avoid looking at alternatives to Windows, the further behind you'll get with the rest of the technology world that's eagerly embracing less troublesome options like iOS, OS X, Linux, Android, and ChromeOS. Whatever the future brings, it's certain it will no longer be a Windows-only world any more.

Making the Periodic Table Interesting

Anyone who has taken a science class has seen a periodic table of the elements. However, a plain table of different elements might not capture the attention of many people so that's why there's an iOS app called [EleMints](#).

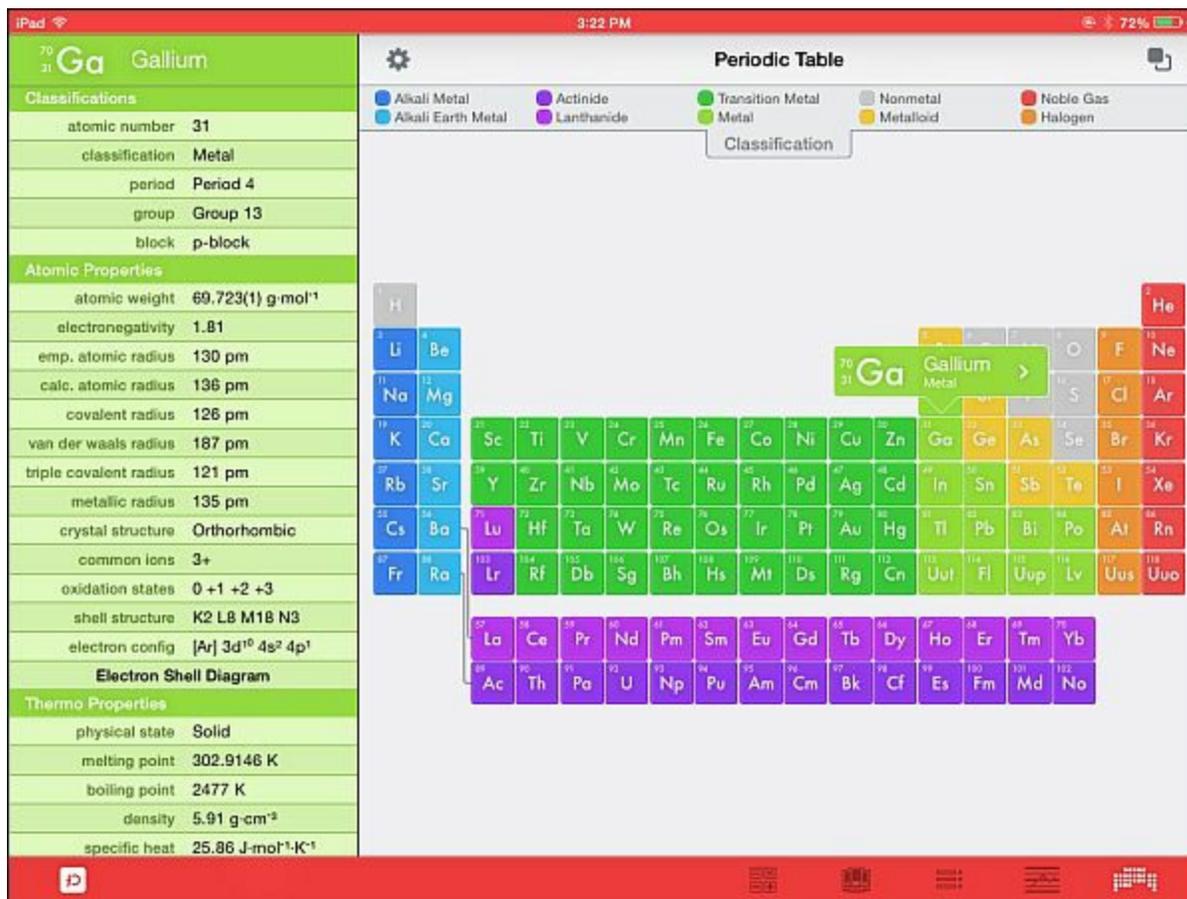


Figure 1. EleMints uses color to identify different types of elements.

At a glance, EleMints helps you identify nonmetals, metals, noble gasses, and alkali Earth metals. Tap another icon and you can view a list of all the elements in a table so you can easily compare one element to another.

The screenshot shows the EleMints app interface on an iPad. The top status bar indicates the time is 3:22 PM and the battery is at 72%. The app title is 'All Elements'. The left panel displays detailed information for Lawrencium (Lr, atomic number 103), including its classification as an Actinide in Period 7, Group 3, and d-block. It lists various atomic properties such as atomic weight (262 g·mol⁻¹), electronegativity (No Data), and oxidation states (0 +3). The right panel shows a periodic table with columns for Symbol, Name, Classification, Atomic Weight, and Atomic Number (Z). The table lists elements from Hydrogen (H) to Manganese (Mn).

Sym	Name	Classification	Atomic Weight	Z
1 H	Hydrogen	Nonmetal	1.00794(7) g·mol ⁻¹	1 H
2 He	Helium	Noble Gas	4.002602(2) g·mol ⁻¹	2 He
3 Li	Lithium	Alkali Metal	6.941(2) g·mol ⁻¹	3 Li
4 Be	Beryllium	Alkali Earth Metal	9.012182(3) g·mol ⁻¹	4 Be
5 B	Boron	Metalloid	10.811(7) g·mol ⁻¹	5 B
6 C	Carbon	Nonmetal	12.0107(8) g·mol ⁻¹	6 C
7 N	Nitrogen	Nonmetal	14.0067(2) g·mol ⁻¹	7 N
8 O	Oxygen	Nonmetal	15.9994(3) g·mol ⁻¹	8 O
9 F	Fluorine	Halogen	18.9984032(5) g·m	9 F
10 Ne	Neon	Noble Gas	20.1797(6) g·mol ⁻¹	10 Ne
11 Na	Sodium	Alkali Metal	22.98976928(2) g·m	11 Na
12 Mg	Magnesium	Alkali Earth Metal	24.3050(6) g·mol ⁻¹	12 Mg
13 Al	Aluminium	Metal	26.9815386(8) g·m	13 Al
14 Si	Silicon	Metalloid	28.0855(3) g·mol ⁻¹	14 Si
15 P	Phosphorus	Nonmetal	30.973762(2) g·mc	15 P
16 S	Sulfur	Nonmetal	32.065(5) g·mol ⁻¹	16 S
17 Cl	Chlorine	Halogen	35.453(2) g·mol ⁻¹	17 Cl
18 Ar	Argon	Noble Gas	39.948(1) g·mol ⁻¹	18 Ar
19 K	Potassium	Alkali Metal	39.0983(1) g·mol ⁻¹	19 K
20 Ca	Calcium	Alkali Earth Metal	40.078(4) g·mol ⁻¹	20 Ca
21 Sc	Scandium	Transition Metal	44.955912(6) g·mc	21 Sc
22 Ti	Titanium	Transition Metal	47.867(1) g·mol ⁻¹	22 Ti
23 V	Vanadium	Transition Metal	50.9415(1) g·mol ⁻¹	23 V
24 Cr	Chromium	Transition Metal	51.9961(6) g·mol ⁻¹	24 Cr
25 Mn	Manganese	Transition Metal	54.938045(5) g·mc	25 Mn

Figure 2. EleMints makes it easy to compare different elements.=

If you have an Internet connection, EleMints can retrieve Wikipedia articles to clarify different terms such as atomic number, shell structure, and atomic radius. By making the periodic table colorful and interactive, EleMints makes learning about different elements more fun and engaging. If you need to learn about the periodic table of the elements but find ordinary tables too boring, grab a copy of EleMints and see how having fun and learning don't have to be mutually exclusive activities.

The screenshot shows the EleMints app interface on an iPad. The left sidebar displays the element Titanium (Ti) with its atomic number 22 and various properties. The main content area shows a Wikipedia article titled 'Atomic Number' for Helium (He), which is redirected from the 'Atomic Number' page. The article includes a diagram of a Helium atom with labels for Neutrons, Electrons, and Protons, and an explanation of atomic notation. Below the article is a diagram of an atom with three shells (n=1, n=2, n=3) and a central nucleus labeled '+Ze'. A red arrow points to the shells with the equation $\Delta E = hf$.

Titanium	
Classifications	
atomic number	22
classification	Transition Metal
period	Period 4
group	Group 4
block	d-block
Atomic Properties	
atomic weight	47.867(1) g·mol ⁻¹
electronegativity	1.54
emp. atomic radius	140 pm
calc. atomic radius	176 pm
covalent radius	136 pm
van der waals radius	No Data
triple covalent radius	108 pm
metallic radius	147 pm
crystal structure	Hexagonal
common ions	4+, 3+
oxidation states	-1 0 +2 +3 +4
shell structure	K2 L8 M10 N2
electron config	[Ar] 3d ² 4s ²
Electron Shell Diagram	
Thermo Properties	
physical state	Solid
melting point	1941 K
boiling point	3560 K
density	4.506 g·cm ⁻³
specific heat	25.060 J·mol ⁻¹ ·K ⁻¹

Figure 3. EleMints can retrieve Wikipedia information within the app.

Updating to iOS 8 and OS X

It's no secret that Apple will release iOS 8 and OS X this fall. The only secret is the exact release date. If you're using the original iPad or the iPhone 4 or older, you won't be able to update to iOS 8. Any other model of the iPhone and iPad can update to iOS 8.

In the Macintosh world, things get a little more complicated. If you bought a Macintosh within the last five years, you should be able to update to [OS X 10.10 Yosemite](#). If you have a Macintosh older than five years, just stick with the latest version of OS X you can run. Otherwise your other option is to buy a new Macintosh.

Since both iOS 8 and OS X 10.10 updates will be free, there's little reason not to update your operating system when you're ready. For the cautious types, avoid the first official update since every new release contains inevitable bugs. Then update when you're ready.

Before updating, make a list of your favorite software and make sure it can run on the new operating system. If not, then you'll either need to wait for a software update or switch to another program altogether.

You don't need to update your operating system, but many newer programs will require the latest operating system. Just make sure you back up your data before updating any operating system because you can always expect the worse to happen when you can least afford it.

Tracking Your Mileage

Here's a deceptively simply, yet annoying problem. For people who need to track their mileage for tax purposes, it's relatively simply to use a notepad, jot down your starting mileage, then write down your ending mileage and subtract the two figures. In reality, most people forget to write down their starting or ending mileage. That's why you can rely on the [TrackMyDrive app](#) instead.



Figure 4. TrackMyDrive automates the process of tracking mileage.

The TrackMyDrive uses your iPhone's GPS feature to accurately track your mileage. Just tap a big button that says Start Tracking and tap the Stop Tracking button when you're done. Wherever you drive, the TrackMyDrive app dutifully records your mileage, lets you type in an description of your trip purpose, and stores all this information that you can later export as a PDF, CSV (comma-separated value), or Excel file.

While a notepad kept in your glove compartment might seem like a simpler way to track your mileage, it's far too easy to forget. By relying on TrackMyDrive, you can get a more accurate record of your mileage without the risk of losing your data as long as you back up your iPhone to your computer on a regular basis. The combination of accuracy plus the lowered risk of losing your data (unlike losing a single notepad) makes TrackMyDrive an interesting app for business travelers.

The Twisted Logic of a Physical Keyboard

For some odd reason, critics seem to claim you can't do anything productive on an iPad because it lacks a physical keyboard. Yet they claim you can be productive with a Microsoft Surface tablet, even though it also lacks a physical keyboard. Of course, you can buy Microsoft's optional keyboard just as you can buy an optional keyboard for your iPad.

One of the latest physical keyboard accessories for the iPad is the [BrydgeAir](#), a keyboard that lets you prop an iPad up in a traditional clamshell configuration. Now you can type on a physical keyboard using an iPad, which you could have done a long time ago with any other physical keyboard accessories available from companies such as Logitech.



Figure 5. The BrydgeAir can turn an iPad into a laptop design.

For those who feel they need a physical keyboard to be productive, they can buy an optional physical keyboard for either a Microsoft Surface tablet or an iPad. While the Microsoft Surface tablet (running Windows 8) can run traditional desktop programs like Photoshop and Microsoft Office, the iPad can run programs optimized for touch gestures. If you absolutely need to run Windows programs, get a MacBook Air and run Windows as a virtual machine using a free program like [VirtualBox](#). A MacBook Air won't let you use it like a tablet, but at least any software you run on it will be optimized for a keyboard and a trackpad.

The idea of using one device that works as both a laptop and a tablet may sound enticing until you realize the Microsoft Surface is a compromise as both a laptop and a tablet. If you really don't like compromises, just get a Macintosh so you can run both OS X and Windows programs at the same time, which is a major compromise that the Microsoft Surface tablets can't do.

* * *

Browser plug-ins like Flash waste power, especially when they show meaningless banner ads that you probably don't want to see anyway. To keep plug-ins like Flash from wasting the battery life of your laptop, click the Safari menu and choose Preferences.

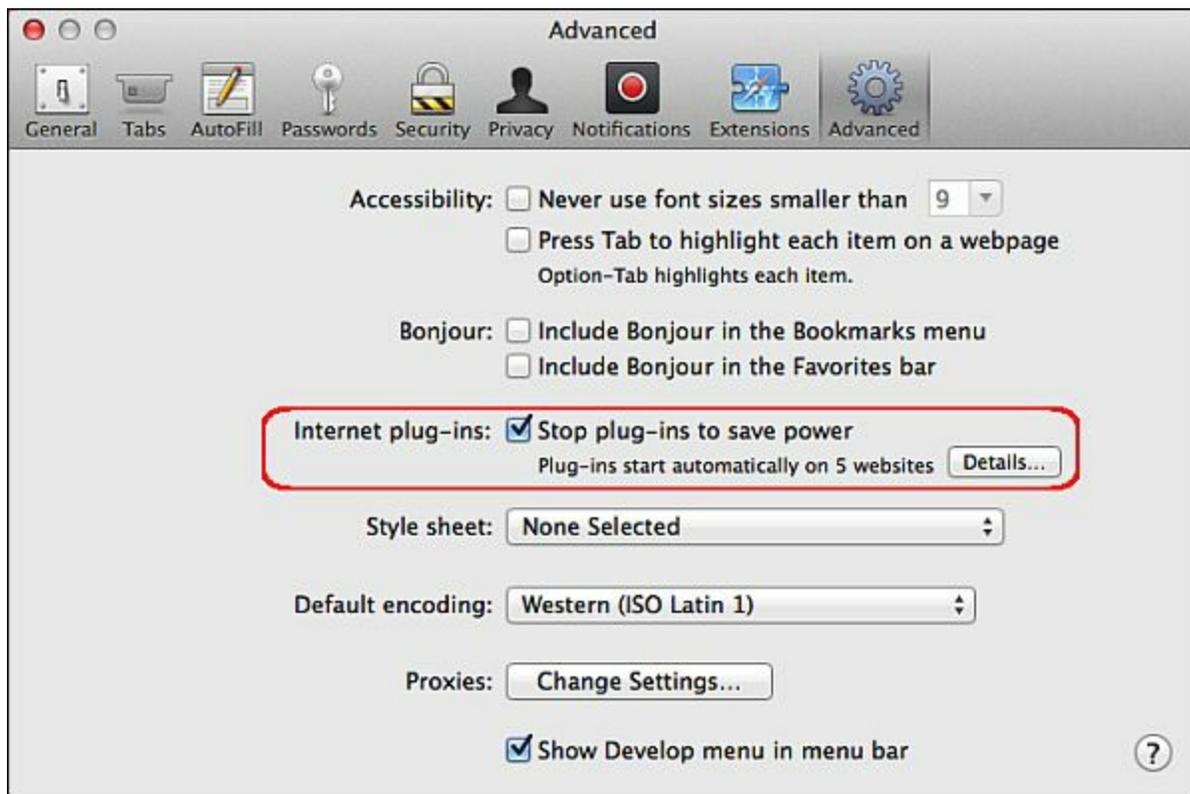


Figure 6. Safari lets you turn plug-ins off.

Now click the Advanced icon and select the "Stop plug-ins to save power" check box. If you click the Details button that appears nearby, you can see a list of sites that run plug-ins automatically. By checking this list, you can make sure plug-ins only run automatically on sites you commonly visit.

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](#)

[The Elements of a Great Script: It's a Wonderful Life](#)

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, News and Reviews Editor

CryptoWall Ransomware Continues; Mobile Market Update; Joe's TV Tech Mystery, Part Deux—and He Hopes There Won't Be a Part Trois!; Belkin NetCam HD .

CryptoWall Ransomware Continues

Kathy Wattman from KnowBe4.com writes in this week with an update on so-called ransomware from her group:



As predicted by IT Pros and security experts, ransomware continues to proliferate. The problem of ransomware is compounded by the resultant data breach at a New Hampshire brokerage firm.

The recent data breach at brokerage house Benjamin F. Edwards & Co. (BFE) was a result of a CryptoLocker copycat ransomware called CryptoWall.

The brokerage house announced this week that they had suffered the data breach on May 24, 2014 when they had their computer systems compromised by an unauthorized third party. The breach was discovered three days later on May 27, 2014. A month later, on June 27, they started sending out breach notification letters to their customers, offering affected customers free identity protection, fraud protection and credit monitoring for 12 months.

This additional information was included in the New Hampshire disclosure notice:

"In more detail, an employee of BFE was the victim of a CryptoWall malware infection (a variant of the more common Cryptolocker malware) that encrypted files on the employee's computer and files on certain shared drives to which the user had access. As a result of the infection, data was transferred to a suspicious IP address. The investigation of a professional forensic expert has not, however, been able to reveal the content of the data transmitted to the IP address."

According to Stu Sjouwerman, CEO of KnowBe4, "We are seeing a new wave of ransomware

created by Russian cybercriminals, and our recent survey shows that IT pros expect it to get worse the rest of the year. To add insult to injury, apart from the confidential files being encrypted and ransom extorted, the ransomware sends unidentified data out of the victim's network. That means the malware infection needs to be treated as a data breach with accompanying very high costs. Educating users with effective security awareness training can proof companies against ransomware like CryptoLocker plus its copycats and protect against lost credibility with customers."

Mobile Market Update

[Mobile Future Forward](#) is a thought-leadership summit that attracts some of the most influential minds in mobile who are instrumental in shaping the industry and in managing its growth of revenue and profits.

Here are some notable excerpts from the company's Q2 2014 report:



The US mobile services revenues in Q2 2014 declined 2% (a billion dollars) making it one of the biggest revenue declines in recent times. The mobile data services revenue however continued to increase and is on track to exceed the \$100B mark in mobile data services revenue. Data contribution to the overall revenues is now at 55%.

T-Mobile continued to outperform its competitors in net-adds. T-Mobile has almost recovered all its postpaid losses that started back in Q3 2009 and continued till Q1 2013. It should move into the positive territory next quarter. T-Mobile also crossed the 50M sub mark and is now within a striking distance of Sprint and could become the number three operator in the country before early 2015.

The net-adds in the US market is now primarily driven by connected devices. Eighty-four percent of the net-adds in Q2 2014 were from the non-phone category. Tablets are driving the connected devices segment with 70% share. The net-effect has been that while the overall subscriber count has increased, there has been a negative impact on the ARPU which declined by 2.27%. All operators saw their ARPU decline.

Smartphone penetration increased to 70%. Roughly 93% of the devices sold now are smartphones. Android beat iOS handily in the quarter. For the first time, Verizon sold more iPhones than AT&T.

Will there be further consolidation in the mobile industry? Short answer is—yes. The only question is about the timing. T-Mobile has complicated things by being successful in the short-term. A third player with 30% market share will of course be better but T-Mobile has been able to change the market by being the fourth at 15%.

Is Windows Phone Getting Zuned Out of the Market?



In 2012, we described "Zuned Out" as a phenomenon wherein the market punishes the player (even incumbents and dominant ones) for late entry into the market. The fast follower strategy that had served Microsoft so well for a couple of decades is no longer a useful framework for competing. Either one needs to be a "really fast follower" like Samsung (though they did invent the big-screen device segment that Apple is now following) or a trend setter like

Apple/Google to have some command of the control points in the ecosystem.

Google was tempted by the lure of the device business and to some extent was forced to buy Motorola. It took 10 quarters to realize that the device business is a different beast, that there was a DNA mismatch, but the exercise did provide some key business insights to the management team. Google shed the device business and kept its partners happy.

Microsoft's acquisition of Nokia followed a similar pattern. Nokia threatened to go Android and Microsoft had no choice but to acquire the beleaguered company that has been just devastated since it picked up Windows as its primary OS. It was clearly a mistake both by Nokia first and Microsoft after that. The new CEO (to his credit) shed a good part of the business in a mere 3 quarters (a clear admission of a mistake).

While the impending decimation of the once vaunted Finnish brand was very obvious, the bigger question in front of Microsoft is "what to do with Nokia that's remaining?" The current plan is to continue churning out the Lumia devices at different price points and see what happens.

The market share of the windows devices in the US last quarter was 1.3%. Globally, it fared marginally better at 2.7%. Granted that in some countries, Windows is starting to approach double digit market share, even Microsoft admits its mobile strategy is in shambles. After being in the US market for more than 2 years with billions spent in marketing and distribution, 1.3% share is nothing to write home about. Microsoft can get better traction in markets where new subs are entering the ecosystem vs. replacement markets like the US. However, what market is telling us is that despite the blood, sweat, and tears that have been spent over the past few quarters, there is little appetite or need for another platform.

Amazon Phone

Amazon phone has been talked about for more than three years. It finally arrived but

disappointed. While there were some interesting tech innovations seamed together to provide some differentiation, without any service pricing innovation (and the fact that it is only available on one operator), its fate seems similar to that of the Facebook phone.

The Bifurcation of the Wearables Market

After visiting the show floor at CES in January, we noted that "The space is going to get commoditized very quickly and it is likely going to get stratified into two major buckets—really cheap \$10-20 wearables. The other bucket will be high-end fashion driven wearables."

Last month, Xiaomi released a \$13 tracker and Apple is expected to announce its wearable next month. The mid-market will mostly disappear.

Unraveling of Nokia

The mobile (more broadly digital) markets continuously remind us how brutal the markets can be if one is not quick enough to adjust strategies. As the old saying goes, "the bigger they are, the harder they fall." Motorola was founded in 1928 and only a skeleton of the old glorious days remain as a subsidiary of Lenovo. An 80+ year old firm disappeared very quickly.

In the case of Nokia, the decomposition was even more stunning. A company founded in 1865 had 40%+ of the phone market only 7 years ago, employed tens of thousands of employees around the globe. After the latest round of rightsizing, only a few thousand remain (at least for the short term). Blackberry experienced a similar slide downwards. The cycle of complacency spares no one. The bigger the host, the more lethal the complacency virus is. This decomposition process is actually healthy for the ecosystem. Though the process is traumatic for those who are in the middle of it, it lays the fertile ground for new ideas and startups to germinate, and the cycle continues.

Read the entire report at www.chetansharma.com

Joe's TV Tech Mystery, Part Deux—and He Hopes There Won't Be a Part Trois!

Last time we checked in with longtime CE contributor, Joe Nuvolini, he was stuck in the middle of an HDMI dilemma:

Basically, Joe's old flat screen TV gave out, so he decided to replace it with a new 50" LED set.

Shortly after installing it he noticed that the sound and picture would go out for about two seconds and then return. The technician and Joe agreed it was most likely the power supply board but a new one did not fix the problem.

So Joe returned the 50" set and purchased a model from a different manufacturer—only to have the same problem.

He reseated the connectors on an HDMI extension cable, which seemed (as of his previous writing) to resolve the problem. But it turns out that was not the end to the story.

This week, Joe notes: "I thought all was well but, as Lee Corso says on College Game Day, 'Not so fast, my friend.' While reseating the HDMI cable *did* seem to resolve the problem for a short time, eventually it returned. The final solution turned out to be to replace the Dish receiver. I had a Dish technician come by and after reading my Tech Mystery story, he agreed.

"They shipped me a new one, I installed it and all is well. I also backed up my recorded movies/shows to an external hard drive and restored them to the new Dish receiver. End of story, I hope!"

Belkin NetCam HD+

Product category: Wireless camera

Manufacturer: Belkin

Model: NetCam HD+ F7D7606v1

Web site: www.belkin.com

Price: \$129.99 list

The Belkin NetCam HD+ is an excellent example of how far we've come with remote camera technology.

Using the NetCam (or similar Wi-Fi enabled device), you can see—and hear—what the kids are up to, how grandma or grandpa is doing, or who's poking around your place from your

smartphone or tablet—all in pretty amazing-looking 720p HD video.

Setup is surprisingly simple, no CD installation routine or even a computer required. Just download the free app to your phone or tablet from the Google Android or Apple iOS store, plug in the AC adapter (supplied), flick a switch on the back to the up position, and you're in business. The app automatically sees the NetCam through your home or business Wi-Fi router (required) and starts streaming video and sound over the Internet almost immediately. You can also watch the NetCam from your laptop or desktop computer.



All that good stuff said, connecting the NetCam to our Wi-Fi network and setting it up with an account and password was not as easy as we wish it could have been. At one point we had to reset the device. No biggie—push a paperclip into a tiny hole and hold it for 20 seconds, but we had to set up all the account info again. The various screens and options menus are not always as intuitive as we would like them to be and could probably do with a makeover in a later version.

The picture is actually pretty amazing. The NetCam shoots wide-angle so you can see more in the frame, giving it a slight "fisheye" look. The frame rate can be set. Images are especially amazing after dark when infrared night vision kicks in. It's incredible what it can see in total darkness.

Another great feature is NetCam's ability to detect motion and (if you want) send you an instant e-mail not only alerting you that motion has been detected but showing you a pic of what it captured (hopefully you don't have a ton of cats in your neighborhood!).



You can also make recordings of the action and save them to your phone or tablet so they can be later enjoyed (kids) or inspected (crooks). Sound is surprisingly good. You can definitely hear everything that's going on.

The NetCam also works in tandem with a whole bunch of WeMo home automation devices. For example, turn WeMo-enabled lights on/off when someone walks into view and lots more.



Using the NetCam wirelessly is free, but purchasing the NetCam gets you a 30-day subscription to something called Cloud+ Premium Services which allows you to automatically save your recordings to the cloud.

All-in-all, though, the Belkin NetCam HD+ is a very impressive device — and an exciting technology.



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

"Favorite Free Programs"

Favorite Free Programs

[Regarding Jack Dunning's July 25 [article](#), "Free Software I Actually Use":]

A couple of free programs that I use all the time are: [Foxit Reader](#) instead of Adobe Reader; it's smaller, quick, has more features built in and allows Word docs to be converted to PDF's through the print menu. And [VLC Media Player](#); it plays everything including [FLAC audio](#) and just about any video files you can think of—it's also small and quick.

-John H., Encinitas, CA

Jack, FYI, IrfanView includes a paint dialog/feature. Edit/Show Paint Dialog, or F12. Saves having to open a picture or screenshot in paint just to add text... :)

This may only be included with the full plug-ins package, but I always add that anyway. I've been using IrfanView for *ages* (v1.something, perhaps?) when ACDSEE went from free to pay.

-Rich Ernst, San Diego, CA

I'll second the comment by John for Foxit Reader vs. Adobe's Acrobat Reader (not the full Acrobat that lets you edit PDFs and is expensive). I went to it several years ago when I saw how big Acrobat was, just to read PDFs. So big, it loads part of it at boot and is running all the time so the program starts in a reasonable length of time.

Best feature of Foxit Reader is the "typewriter tool" available from Tools/Typewriter/Typewriter (I customize my toolbar to include it since I use it all the time). This allows you to add text to *any PDF*, even ones without fillable form "fields." Fantastic.

Of course, you can add comments, arrows, etc. with Foxit as well.

I also use the VLC player when Windows Media player won't play something.

Lastly, my replacement for Notepad has been [TextPad](#). I went to it originally since I missed the macros (and control keystrokes if you want to go that route) from the old WordStar 3.3 I was familiar with from the DOS days. *Very* powerful search and replace, including using regular expressions.

-Rich Ernst, San Diego, CA

Free software I use for Windows and Linux:

Thunderbird - mailreader

Firefox - Web browser

The Gimp - image manipulation

LibreOffice - Writer & Spreadsheet

VLC media player - for music & videos

Audacity - audio editing and conversion

Calibre - ebook management and conversion

GNUCash - money management

VirtualBox - to run different virtual computers on one machine at the same time

Free Software for Windows

Document Viewer -for reading PDFs

PDFCreator - to print to a PDF from any windows program.

Infrarecord - to burn CDs & DVDs

Free Software for Linux

OpenShot - video editor

Brasero - to burn CDs & DVDs

I use Linux most of the time, but there is one program that I need that runs better in Windows than on WINE in Linux, so I run it in Win7 in a virtual machine on a Linux host. I also run W2k and WinXP in virtual machines, as well as various distributions of Linux. If I want to try a new program, I try it on a virtual machine first.

There are other free windows software available at [OpenDisc](#). You can download & burn the ISO file.

-Dennis, San Diego, CA

Rich is right. TextPad is a great little editor. It's shareware, so I bought a license for it years ago, version 4.3.1. It's my default text editor in Windows. Version 7 is out, but version 4 still works great for me so I say "if it ain't broke, don't fix it."

-Dennis, San Diego, CA

Dennis,

Do you have a link for Document Viewer for reading PDFs?

-Paul Anthony, San Diego, CA

Here is a link to the download page.

wiki.gnome.org/Apps/Evince/Downloads

It is a project of GNOME.org and I think the program is called [Evince](#), but it shows up as Document Viewer on the desktop. There is a Windows version and a Linux version.

Hope this helps

-Dennis

My standard list of free installs each time I build or rebuild a PC:

CutePDF

Belarc Advisor

PDFill Free PDF Tools

Adobe reader

FastStone Photo Resizer (although—thank you—I just installed IrfanView so I may not need this one anymore.)

MP3Tag

7-Zip

and some applications:

WinAMP

Skype

Google Earth

Google Drive

FreeMind

-Roland Melzer, Escondido, CA

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Favorite Free Programs

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