

Newsletter

Connecticut PC User's Group

April 2013
Vol. 31 No. 8

Next CTPC Meeting

Tuesday, April 23, 2013 - 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Spring Cleaning

For our April meeting we've decided to dust off an old-time CTPC tradition: the Swap Meet!

This is a one-time opportunity for you to go through your shelves, closets, drawers – anywhere technology you no longer use might be lurking – and bring those items with you to sell, swap or give away. Here are a few guidelines:

- Bring items you think someone might actually want – computers, laptops, printers, monitors, power supplies, cables, adapters, memory sticks, hard

drives, modems, telephones, books, manuals, software, etc.

- Items should be in good condition. If an item doesn't work, make sure you know why and explain it – i.e. "missing part." Items should be new enough to be useful or have some redeeming antique or sentimental value. If you think its junk, others will likely agree.
- On an index card or a piece of paper, write your name and some information about the item – its intended use, its

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April 23rd, Tuesday, 6:30 p.m.
CTPC Meeting
Silver Star Diner, Norwalk, CT

May 28th, Tuesday, 6:30p.m.
CTPC Meeting
Silver Star Diner, Norwalk, CT

GENERAL MEETINGS

Meetings are held on the 4th (not last) Tuesday of each month except August and December. There is no charge to attend general meetings. See back page for location and directions.

www.ctpc.org

Ira Wilsker

LibreOffice 4 – Free Competitor to Microsoft Office

WEBSITES:

- <http://www.libreoffice.org>
- <https://www.libreoffice.org/download/system-requirements>
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Open_office
- <https://www.libreoffice.org/download/portable/>
- http://portableapps.com/apps/office/libreoffice_portable/

With a very few exceptions, I have used Microsoft Word as my word processor when writing these columns. Tonight I am using LibreOffice Writer, a component of the newly released LibreOffice version 4.0.0.3, a totally free and open source competitor of Microsoft Office. The Writer desktop looks very similar to the desktop used in Word, and all of the commands and shortcuts that I have been using with Word appear to work equally well with Writer. Anyone minimally familiar with Word should be able to immediately use Writer, as it has a "zero learning curve" for those familiar

files used around the world, including word processor, spreadsheet, database, presentation, desktop publishing, and other types of office documents. LibreOffice also includes an "Export to PDF" feature on the File button on the menu bar, that can create perfect PDF files, without the necessity of third-party PDF writing utilities.

LibreOffice (libreoffice.org), is aptly named "LibreOffice" because it is a free (Libre) office utility, and is an open source, comprehensive office suite that contains all of the office components found in its expensive commercial competitors. For those who like to use office templates, add-ons, plug-ins, and other enhancements, the massive international community of LibreOffice users has created an extensive library of free supplements for the suite. Many of the founders of LibreOffice were on the staff of its older cousin, OpenOffice, when OpenOffice lost the majority of its support funding due to a change in ownership. LibreOffice contains updates, enhancements, and features not found in

its older open source cousin. The original OpenOffice grew out of a commercial dispute between Microsoft and Sun Microsystems, which resulted in Sun purchasing a German office suite, Star Office, and giving it away for free as OpenOffice, in direct competition to the expensive Microsoft Office. IBM licensed OpenOffice, and released it under the banner Lotus Symphony. When Oracle took over Sun, there were some disagreements over the future of OpenOffice and its employees, resulting in many of the employees leaving and using the OpenOffice source code (open source, which means not copyrighted), to create an updated and more competitive LibreOffice. (Source: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Open_office).

LibreOffice 4 was a 183mb download (Windows version) which installed quickly and without any annoying options to install toolbars, search engines, and other irritants; it was a totally clean install process. An optional 7.9mb "HelpPack" (Windows version) provides integral, context sensitive help when needed. The Windows version of LibreOffice 4 will run under Windows XP, Vista, Windows 7, or Windows 8, and has minimal hardware requirements (256megs RAM, 1.5GB hard drive space, and 1024x768 minimum recommended screen resolution). Recent

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Speccy: Another Useful Utility

Way back in November 2009, in the heydays of XP, shortly after the release of Windows 7, I started reviewing useful utilities. Along the way I reviewed some very useful utilities such as Stickies, MP3Tag, CKRename, and UltraFile-Search. Just as a matter of review, Utilities are usually small programs that are intended to do a specific task or a small range of tasks, they are small software application. Today, after the release of the Apple iPad and in the current Tablet environment, we would call these Utilities “Apps”.

These Utilities (or Apps) are usually designed to help manage the computer hardware, Operating System (OS), or assist a particular software application. Just as a matter of history, sometimes a utility becomes so popular that the functionality of the utility is included in newer versions of the OS. The functionality of one long-time popular utility, Snagit, which allows a user to capture a piece of the display into a graphics file, is now included in Windows as the Snipping Tool. The functionality in Windows may not be as complete as the commercial version of Snagit, but it is a part of Windows, which means it is integrated into the OS, and therefore available at no additional cost.

Useful Utilities can be found in a variety of places such as computer stores (internet or brick & mortar), Google searches, and The Computer Buffet, edited by our own Monitor editor, Herb Goldstein. The Computer Buffet is a treasure trove of useful software, some of which can be considered Utilities, like Speccy, and some of which are fullblown application, like Open Office. Speccy was originally discussed in a Monitor article in the December 2012 issue. Speccy was developed by Piriform, the same company that brings us Ccleaner and Recuva, two other useful utilities that many SPCUG members have used. You can download Speccy at www.piriform.com/speccy. When you download it, be sure to uncheck the boxes for other things like the Google Toolbar, unless you want them to come along with the Speccy download.

Speccy is a Utility used to provide information about your computer hardware and Operating System. Speccy is very similar to Belarc, a Utility that is fairly well known and often used at the Refurbishing Facility. Belarc goes a little further and ad-

ditionally provides information about the software and the software versions, installed on the computer. Just remember “I have not come to bury Belarc, I have come to praise Speccy”. There is probably more information provided by Belarc, but what I like about Speccy is the visual organization and presentation. The initial results are presented in a two window-pane format, much like Windows Explorer. Highlight an item in the left pane and you get detailed results in the right pane. The left pane includes the Summary and all the major computer subsystems; Operating System, CPU, RAM, Motherboard, Graphics, Hard drives, Optical drives, Audio, Peripherals, and Network. The Summary that is shown on the right pane after the program completes its initial analysis phase has the answers to many of the basic questions regarding this specific computer. Immediately you know the Operating System name and the Service Pack (if applicable), and whether it is a 32 or 64 bit OS, and the type of computer CPU. Other basics in the Summary are the amount of RAM, the size of the hard drive, along with the drive connection type, and the Optical drive and its connection type. From the main menu you can Print any of the results or you can choose “Save as a Text file” and save the results for future review.

Details of the major subsystems, shown on the left, can be obtained by selecting the appropriate subsystem. Click on any of the major subsystems, and the details will be shown in the right pane. The details are very extensive, probably much more than the average computer user needs to know, but may be useful to someone trying to help solve a problem. Some of the detailed information provided by these subsystems is as follows:

- The Operating System subsystem shows the OS type (Windows 7, XP), 32 or 64 bit OS, the serial number, the Windows Update schedule, the Antivirus software installed and the age of its Virus Signature Database.
- The CPU subsystem indicates the number of Cores (today most modern CPUs are multi-core), the Bus speed, the Cache configuration, and the Average Temperature the CPU has been experiencing (if this is approaching 60 degrees C you may be in for some trouble, although the Critical Tem-

- perature depends on
- the specific CPU).
- The RAM subsystem shows the amount of RAM installed as well as the number of memory slots and the number of free memory slots (nice to know if you are thinking of increasing your memory).
- The Motherboard subsystem shows the motherboard manufacturer, the chipset (CPU and glue chips) vendor, and the BIOS brand and version number (things that you probably will never need to know).
- The Graphics subsystem provides information about your Monitor such as the Resolution, and the Graphics chipset (again probably never needed by the average user).
- The Hard Drives subsystem shows the Drive size, the File System type (FAT or NTFS), and the Partition information (nice to know if you think you will ever repartition the drive).
- The Optical Drive subsystem indicates the Media type (CD or DVD), and whether or not you can write to the drive (Writer or Read-only).
- The Audio subsystem just shows the Sound Card and the Playback Device (usually speakers).
- The Peripherals subsystem indicates the type of keyboard and mouse, the Printers that are currently in use, and any external disk drives or USB memory devices attached.
- The Network subsystem provides all the IP addresses, DHCP status (enabled or not), the Computer Name and Workgroup (if it belongs to one), the Wi-Fi SSID (network name) and channel number (good to know if you are experiencing slow operation caused by interference on the network). Surprisingly, I didn't find the MAC (or physical) address of the communications adapters.

As you can see, Speccy provides a lot of information and is definitely a very useful utility. Download it and pin it to the task bar so it will be available and easily accessible when you need it. By the way, a printed version of the results might be nice to have for reference if the computer is down for any reason.♠

Mac OS Lion—A Leap Ahead

The newest Mac operating system, Lion, has some really nifty features. It catches up to Microsoft Windows 7 in several areas, and then takes it a big leap ahead. Read about it here.

For years I have worked on and helped others with Apple's Mac computers as well as Microsoft's Window computers. I have watched the evolution of these two operating systems as they both "borrowed" ideas from each other to incorporate into their own systems. Over the years, Apple and Microsoft have leap-frogged each other with each system getting a small jump ahead with every release.

I have always been a Windows person, doing most of my main work on a PC. Although Macs have always been more secure, there were two main things reasons that I stayed on PCs: It is extremely easy to make a window fill the screen on a Windows PC and it is also easy to resize a window on a PC by dragging any corner to make it larger or smaller. In contrast, up until now, a Mac was stuck with windows that didn't fill the screen and only the lower right corner could be used to resize a window.

Apple's newest version of the Mac operating system, called Lion, removed both of those impediments. With Lion, Apple has added full screen support as well as the ability to resize a window by dragging any corner. And they have added much, much more—taking a huge leap over Windows 7, Microsoft's latest operating system.

It is obvious that Apple rethought the desktop operating system and took inspiration from the popular iPhone and iPad. They have redesigned the operating system software and created hardware to go with it. They have ingeniously added the ability to perform touch-screen functions like those found in the iPhone and iPad without actually adding a touch screen. You just use your fingers on a touchpad as you would use them on the screen of an iPhone or iPad. For instance, you pinch your fingers together to make things on the screen smaller, you move your fingers apart to make them larger. You move between pages by swiping your finger to the left and/or right. You scroll up and down a page by moving your finger up and down on the touchpad. These multi-touch gestures are fast, useful, and fun.

All of the Mac laptops have a touch pad that you can use for these gestures. If you

are using a desktop Mac or a Mac Mini, you simply add a \$69 Magic Trackpad. This is a simple 5" by 5" silver pad that sits next to your keyboard. This pad gives you enough room to move your fingers and pretty much replaces your mouse.

Several Windows computer manufacturers, like Gateway and HP, have produced computers with touch screens. In fact, I have a touch screen computer, but I seldom use the touch screen because it is uncomfortable to hold your arm out to touch the screen. Apple's Trackpad solution is much more elegant and also much more comfortable. After using it for several weeks I am totally hooked.

Apple has added other innovations with the Lion update. There is a wonderful autosave feature that automatically saves your work as you progress through it so you never have to worry about saving a file. The new Mission Control gives you a bird's eye view of everything running on your computer and makes switching between programs very easy. Launch pad lets you rearrange apps and programs just as you do on an iPhone. The E-mail program has also been updated. Apple now has a Mac App store where you can easily download programs. In fact, you can buy the Lion operating system in the Mac App store. If you have a Mac that you would like to upgrade, you will find the \$29.95 price quite appealing.

There are a few caveats for potential Lion users, especially those who want to

George Harding, Treasurer, Tucson Computer Society, AZ, June 2012 issue, eJournal, www.aztcs.org, [georgehardingsbd \(at\) earthlink.net](mailto:georgehardingsbd@earthlink.net)

Review: Kaspersky One Universal Security

There are many programs available to use to protect our computers. It must be a profitable field to have so many players wanting your business. Kaspersky One is a protection service that sets itself apart from all the others. One way it is different is that it is sold in combinations to protect multiple computers. There are three versions: three computers, five computers and ten computers. For those of us who have more than one computer, this is a boon, being able to acquire one protection package that can be installed in several computers.

A second way it is different is that not

just computers can be protected, but also certain smart phones and tablets. BlackBerry, Symbian, Android and Windows Mobile phones are currently supported. A third way it is different is that not only the Windows computer platforms are supported, but Macs are also. What's included? A lot!

The main one is that Lion will only run on Mac computers with Intel processors. So old PowerPC Macs have been left out of the upgrade. Apple has also removed support for Rosetta, which was the program that provides software compatibility for the older Mac's with PowerPC processors. This means that any older programs that used Rosetta will not run on Lion. This includes older versions of popular programs like Quicken, and many Adobe programs. Some hardware vendors have also had problems with Lion compatibility. For instance, Sonos, a whole house music system, was incompatible when Lion first appeared. Several printers and cameras also had software compatibility problems. Sonos will have the problem fixed shortly, and most printers and cameras are now compatible, but you should check compatibility before you upgrade.

No matter how you look at it, Apple has made a giant move forward with its Lion operating system. I, personally, am using the Mac more than ever before. In the next two weeks I will be helping two clients who are moving from PC to Mac. It is possible that the new Lion operating system will have a big impact on the computer industry. Most of us thought that Windows had won the operating system wars, but Apple is now giving Microsoft a run for the money. Microsoft will have to make Windows 8 pretty impressive just to keep in the game. ♠

• Anti-virus – for mail, file and web
• Firewall – two way
• Anti-phishing
• Anti-spam
• Anti-banner

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Some Web Sites I Have Seen Recommended

This is a list of sites that I have seen recommended. Some I have visited and the others have been recommended by people I trust.

Feels Like Christmas feelslikechristmas.com

The Feels like Christmas site contains a collection of Christmas songs by independent artists. You can listen to the songs or download.

JigZone jigzone.com/puzzles

JigZone is an online jigsaw puzzle site. A new puzzle is posted daily. Change Cut lets you choose the number of pieces the puzzle will have. Look at the sample of the picture and drag the pieces to complete the puzzle. There are others puzzles grouped by categories including animals, art, sports, nature scenes and travel.

Cultural Institute google.com/culturalinstitute

The Google Cultural Institute site collects digital artifacts like photos, videos and manuscripts from museums and collections around the world. Exhibits are shown along a time line on the home page. Select an exhibit and click the View button to read through it. Or search for an event by name, date, location, or person.

Cutest Paw www.cutestpaw.com

Cutest Paw contains cute photos to browse or view by categories.

Play Detective ffbi.com

The Fin, Fur and Feather Bureau of Investigation site was designed to help elementary and middle school students learn about places and cultures around the world. But can be fun for anyone. Select a mission and go across the globe from India to Antarctica, as an animated detective or try out a training game. Use logic and investigation skills to gather evidence and put catch the bad guys.

Remembering memstash.co

Memstash helps you commit something to memory. Working memory can fade quickly so going over something again later helps you remember information permanently. Sign up for Memstash and put the Stash It button on your browser toolbar. Then highlight anything and click

Stash It. Memstash then send a reminder of what you highlighted 10 minutes later, 24 hours later and one week later.

Games for the Brain www.gamesforthebrain.com

Counterfeit is a spot-the-difference game on the Games for the Brain site. Just click on the difference between two classic paintings before time runs out. It's a fun way to exercise the brain.

Internet Reference snopes.com

The Snopes site is an Internet reference for legends, folklore, myths, rumors, scams and misinformation. Search for an item of interest, or click one of the icons to browse the site by category. For information on scams click the Top Scams bullet on the left. There you can see the old Nigerian, Family Member in Distress and other popular scam. The website is updated with the latest new rumors, scams and urban legends.

Chronicling America chroniclingamerica.loc.gov

The Library of Congress has collected historic newspapers from all over the U.S. since 1836 in its Chronicling America section. Browse newspapers printed from 1836 to 1922 online or use the U.S. Newspaper Directory to find information about American newspapers published between 1690-present.

Internet Connection Speed speedtest.net

The Speedtest site can tell you the speed of your internet connection. Speedtest views your Internet service's performance history.

Old Farmer's Almanac almanac.com

The Old Farmer's Almanac site has the information you expect from the Almanac including weather reports, tide calendars, moon phases, cooking tips and recipes, gardening tips and outdoor advice.

Games gamesforthebrain.com

I enjoy games and puzzles so had to check out the Games for the Brain site. It features common games like Chinese Checkers, Chess, Sudoku, Mahjongg Solitaire and Checkers as well as lesser known games. I tried out Sudoku as it is one of

my favorites .

Relaxing and Almost a Game www.happinessislands.com

This site instead offers several calm and whimsical mini-games.

The Happiness Islands web site is an archipelago of mini-websites in the Internet Ocean. It's by Coca-and not really a game, because there's no winning or scores. Each island is really a creation of animation. I liked the falling dominos. But for the utmost in relaxation take a look at NoMoving. It is beautifully relaxing but then bring you back to a more alert state if you watch it to the end.

Road to Grammar roadtogrammar.com

If you want to improve your language skills, the Road to Grammar is a fun site. It is designed to help students learn English, but can help anyone. The site contains fun quizzes, games and study guides.

Crosswords

If you love crosswords here are some sites. You will have to sit through an ad on some commercial sites.

USA Today - <http://puzzles.usatoday.com/>

Washington Post - <http://games.washingtonpost.com/games/daily-crossword/>

LA Times - <http://games.latimes.com/games/daily-crossword/>

Freebook Sifter www.freebooksifter.com

Freebook Sifter has thousands of free books to download. It is a tool to help find free ebooks for Kindle on

Amazon.com. Browse the available books by category or search for a title, author or other search function to find what you want.

Car Care Kiosk www.carcarekiosk.com

Car Care Kiosk has help for those who may need to do some work on their car but are not a at home mechanic. It has collections of videos on car maintenance. You can see the routine tasks for your car and even what to do if you have a problem on the road. It is organized by make, model and year. Select your car and look for the task. Select it and watch the video. ♠

BingItOn" and "Scroogled" Microsoft's War on Google Dominance

WEBSITES:

<http://www.bingiton.com>

<http://www.bing.com>

<http://www.google.com>

<http://www.scroogled.com>

<http://youtu.be/63u-RG-31B0>

<http://www.karmasnack.com/about/search-engine-market-share/>

<http://www.email-marketing-reports.com/metrics/email-statistics.htm>

http://www.bing.com/community/site_blogs/b/thedetails/archive/2012/08/06/bingchallenge.aspx

<http://searchenginewatch.com/article/2203640/Bing-It-On-Bing-Goes-Toe-to-Toe-Against-Google>

<http://www.email-marketing-reports.com/metrics/email-statistics.htm>

<http://www.thepetitionsite.com/997/086/864/tell-google-to-stop-going-through-your-email-to-sell-ads>

In every basic economics or introduction to business class since the original "Adam Smith", the business student has learned that good competition between strong competitors is good for the consumer. As competing businesses battle for consumer acceptance, these businesses tend to offer some combination of better services, quality, or lower prices in order to entice the consumer to acquire the products or services of that business. Now we are seeing an epic, high budget battle between two of the most affluent powerhouses in the web based service industry engaging in a massive battle for consumer acceptance. The latest salvo in this ambitious drive to both acquire new customers and steal existing customers from the competition is Microsoft's attack on Google's dominance in both the ubiquitous search engine field, and the wildly popular free email service market. Two of Microsoft's primary weapons used in the recent assault on Google's dominance are its "Bing it On" and "Scroogled" campaigns.

There is not much doubt that in terms of popularity, Google has become the primary search engine for the majority of search engine users. While different reporting services report different market shares for the search engine competitors, one fact is abundantly clear is that Google is the number one most popular search engine with a current market share calculated from a low of 67% (according to comScore) to a high of about 88% according to a compilation by KarmaSnack. Google has become so dominant in the market place that the phrase "Google it" has almost become a generic term, much the same way that "making Xerox copies" implies making photo copies. By contrast, Microsoft's Bing search engine scores a market share calculated as low as about 4% of the global search engine market share,

to as high as 16% of the domestic market share. Anytime a provider of any good or service in a competitive market has that type of market share, it is inevitable that some type of "Jack, the Giant Killer" will try and topple the market leader and "steal" market share from it. While many other search engine services advertise and promote their services, Microsoft, with its deep pockets, is financing a massive campaign to dethrone the champ (Google) with its heavily advertised "Bing It On" campaign, promoting the claimed superiority of Microsoft's Bing search engine with a side by side comparison of similar search results on Google.

Microsoft's BingItOn.com website asks the user to enter a search term, and then displays an anonymous side by side display from both Bing and Google. The user is then asked to select which one provided the preferred search results by checking a box, or selecting the box indicating that the two results are a draw. After five searches, with each randomly displayed on a side of the window, BingItOn displays the selection results. I tried five different search terms (all in lower case), including "examiner beaumont", "lamar institute of technology", "sonic restaurants", "trend micro", and "parkdale mall beaumont", with BingItOn reporting that in all five searches, I selected the Google results. While I selected five out of five searches that appeared to me that Google produced better appearing results, Microsoft reports that in an independent test of a thousand users, composing a representative sample of internet search engine users, Bing was selected over Google by nearly a two to one margin. According to Microsoft, "When the results were tallied, the outcome was clear – people chose Bing web search results over Google nearly 2:1 in the blind comparison tests. Specifically,

of the nearly 1000 participants: 57.4% chose Bing more often, 30.2% chose Google more often; 12.4 % resulted in a draw." While Google is clearly the most widely used search engine, and Bing is attempting to make inroads on Google's dominance, I still choose to use Yahoo as my primary search engine; to each his own. While the search results as displayed on Bing are attractive and easy to read, Microsoft has quite a way to go to convince millions of users to switch to Bing from Google.

While search engine wars are appearing nightly on our TV screens, another battle is taking place between the titans, Microsoft and Google. Microsoft is in the process of phasing out its nearly 20 year old free Hotmail email service, replacing it with a more modern and sophisticated email service under the moniker of its popular email software, Outlook (Outlook.com). While the Hotmail service currently has an estimated 286 million unique global users, all of whom are being encouraged to migrate to Microsoft's new Outlook email service, Google's popular Gmail service claims 425 million users, according to current statistics posted on "Email Marketing Reports". Not to be outdone, Microsoft has launched an expansive advertising campaign to attract Gmail users over to its side. In its "Scroogled" campaign (scroogled.com), Microsoft claims that Google electronically scans all emails on Gmail for key words, and displays targeted advertising based on the content of the email. This is stated by Microsoft on the Scroogled website as, "Think Google respects your privacy? Think again. Google goes through every Gmail that's sent or received, looking for keywords so they can target Gmail users with paid ads. And there's no way to opt out of this invasion of your privacy. Outlook.com is different—we don't go through your email to sell ads."

In a challenge to the privacy of non-Gmail account holders who send email to a Gmail account, Microsoft says, "Outlook.com prioritizes your privacy. You won't see ads based

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Personal Archiving - Document Your Life with Photo-Graphic Memory

A PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORY is probably something we all would like. And, just think, you can have at least the effect of a photographic memory just by using your camera and your computer to document your activities ... your life.

It is amazing how much paper we collect along the way. Most of it goes neatly into file folders and then those folders go neatly into multi-draw filing cases or boxes. Before you know it you have multiple multi-draw filing cases in the den, the home office and/or the bedroom closet. Have you ever looked at the pile of paper you have collected over these many years?

Its not a pretty picture. Now there are some things that we just have to hang on to, like licenses, automobile registrations, titles of any sort, and certain special papers that might have an emotional or historical attachment. But the rest of the pile might be eliminated or at least pared down. (And how about old tax forms? How many years do you have to keep the paper? Or is an electronic copy good enough for taxes paid 10 years ago?)

What Im suggesting is that with your computer, and a scanner and a camera, you can probably cut the paper you need to save down to a very manageable size, and even eliminate some of those storage cases. The scanner is really the key here. The camera is for unusually large items, or those things that just cant be copied on a flat-bed scanner. Consider this, review the contents of some of those folders and if you need to know that something occurred, and is relevant, like an award you were given from your last employment. If you have not looked at it since you received it, then you can probably scan it in and throw away the original. I know how difficult this will be for some people, but after a little practice it will get a lot easier. (A very important thing here is that you have adequate backup to guarantee that you will never lose the scanned-in files. If you dont have adequate backup, which means multiple copies of the data files of the scanned objects, then this is not going to be a good idea. So before you commit to this, make sure you have a good backup plan in place. Make sure that you can guarantee at least two if not three copies of the scanned in files. The first two copies could be two external or portable disk

drives and the third might be on DVD or a flash memory device.) Once the backup plan is in place and you are really using it, the fun begins. Gather your papers, separate the ones that you have to keep and make a pile of those that can be shredded after they are scanned. Do you really need those greeting cards you received 15 years ago?

In order to make sure that you can retrieve any of these documents, it is good to establish a naming convention before you start to scan the paper documents; after all, it is no use to have all the data if you cant access it quickly. As you collect your scanned documents, you will be creating a database. Two popular ways of organizing your database are 1- by date, and 2- by event. If every file that you want to keep has a name starting with yyyy-mm-dd and is followed by a descriptive name, then when the digital files are put in a digital folder, they will organize in a chronological fashion. yyyy represents the year, like 2011, mm represents the numerical value of the month like 04 for April, and dd represents the day of the month like 01 for April 1. (For some databases only the year and month may be adequate.) Now, when you go looking for a document, all you have to know is the date associated with the item, and you can just look in the chronological order to find it. Lets say that if you scanned in an award that you received in June 1976, then you would look in the area of 1976-06, to find that document. Windows Explorer makes it easy to find scanned documents because it shows a thumbnail photo of the file, while you are searching for the file. This is especially helpful because a scanned file is usually saved as a .jpg file, a picture file.

If you do use this naming convention, then you can organize your folders to represent either years (or groups of years), or events. If you choose to be completely chronological, then the folders will be named 1970, 1971, 1972,... you get the idea. Then you could put the 1970s folders into a folder named 1970s, and you could do the same with all other decades. If you choose to organize around events, then the folders might have names like awards, house info, car info, career really, any collection of events or things that makes sense to you and any others who will use the database. Besides your scanned in

documents, you can include photos from your digital camera. If you use the same naming convention with your photos, then you can mix them in with the documents and they all will organize in chronological order. Sometimes that makes a lot of sense when you have both pictures and documents that are part of the same event. This combination sometimes helps tell the complete story of the activities of the specific event.

Another way to organize your database is to organize your folders around event; then you might name your folders birthdays, anniversaries, parties, weddings,... you get this idea too. So these would represent those types of events throughout the years. The fact that the files are chronologically named means they would organize chronologically inside the folders, making it easy to find a specific event within an event folder. And you can mix the two types of database folders. You could have your basic folders chronologically named, but inside a year you might have a series of events like a vacation trip to the Grand Canyon where the pictures from the trip would show what you saw and the documents you collected like maps and brochures from the particular destinations. As long as each file is chronologically named, the files will organize in a way that will make it easy for you to find a specific document, or group of pictures. Not only do you save storage space, but once your pictures and documents are in your database, they are immediately available because they are literally at your finger tips (if your fingers are on the keyboard). I bet youll be able to impress your friends how fast you can find those awards you received from your first employer. Of course there are always a few items that just cant be committed to electronic files and there are always a few pictures of the grandchildren that just must be made into an 8 by 10 for the wall. But - just think - with a lot of those paper documents shredded, and all of your photos committed to digital files, you wont need all of that paper and picture storage. It will probably free-up some valuable storage space, and maybe you can even make a few bucks by selling those filing cabinets.♠

Social Networks

Facebook, Twitter, Google+, YouTube, Pinterest, LinkedIn and other social networks have become an integral part of on-line lives. Social networks are a great way to stay connected with others, but you should be wary about how much personal information you post.

Have your family follow these tips to safely enjoy social networking:

- Privacy and security settings exist for a reason: Learn about and use the privacy and security settings on social networks. They are there to help you control who sees what you post and manage your online experience in a positive way.
- Once posted, always posted: Protect your reputation on social networks. What you post online stays online. Think twice before posting pictures you wouldn't want your parents or future employers to see. Recent research (<http://www.microsoft.com/privacy/dpd/research.aspx>) found that 70% of job recruiters rejected candidates based on information they found online.
- Your online reputation can be a good thing: Recent research (<http://www.microsoft.com/privacy/dpd/research.aspx>) also found that recruiters respond to a strong, positive personal brand online. So show your smarts, thoughtfulness, and mastery of the environment.
- Keep personal info personal: Be cautious about how much personal information you provide on social networking sites. The more information you post, the easier it may be for a hacker or someone else to use that information to steal your identity, access your data, or commit other crimes such as stalking.
- Know and manage your friends: Social networks can be used for a variety of purposes. Some of the fun is creating a large pool of friends from many aspects of your life. That doesn't mean all friends are created equal. Use tools to manage the information you share with friends in different groups or even have multiple online pages. If you're trying to create a public persona as a blogger or expert, create an open profile or a "fan" page that encourages broad participation and limits personal informa-

tion. Use your personal profile to keep your real friends (the ones you know trust) more synched up with your daily life.

- Be honest if you're uncomfortable: If a friend posts something about you that makes you uncomfortable or you think is inappropriate, let them know. Likewise, stay open-minded if a friend approaches you because something you've posted makes him or her uncomfort-

able. People have different tolerances for how much the world knows about them respect those differences.

- Know what action to take: If someone is harassing or threatening you, remove them from your friends list, block them, and report them to the site administrator.

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"BingItOn"

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You won't see ads based on keywords from your personal email. Your email is nobody else's business. But Google makes it their business. Even if you're not a Gmail user, Google still goes through your personal email sent to Gmail and uses the content to sell ads." (Source: Scroogled.com). In order to make the point to Google, Microsoft has created an online petition for Gmail users to protest to Google the alleged privacy infringement of Google "reading" Gmail emails in order to display targeted advertising. This online petition is clearly sponsored by Outlook.com, and cites as a primary concern, "Every word of every email. Even the most private ones, like messages about relationships, health care, finances, and more. Do you feel violated yet?" The body of the petition says, "Dear Eric Schmidt (Executive Chairman of Google); Going through every word of our personal emails to target and sell ads is inexcusable. While we understand that generating advertising revenue is important, that does not make it OK to violate our privacy. And to make it worse, there's not even a way to opt out. What we write in our emails is our business. It's time to end this intrusive practice. Please stop reading the contents of our Gmail to sell ads." As I type this, 103,038 claimed Gmail users have signed this petition, exceeding the petitioner's (Outlook's) goal of 100,000 signatures. In order to be fair to Google, it costs an enormous amount of money to process the billions of incoming and outgoing emails sent and received by nearly half-billion Gmail users hosted on Google servers. Google needs to recover that cost and make a profit on the service, as Gmail (and the other email services) is not run as a charity.

For the record, I have free email ac-

counts with Gmail, Outlook, and Yahoo, which I typically use for different purposes, and each has some advantages over the others. Any one of these three free email services would provide an excellent platform and service. One warning about any of the free email services, these three as well as the countless others available; some commercial websites will not allow users to register with email addresses of free email services as they are not necessarily indicative of the identity or affiliation of the user. As far as the privacy of email with any of these services, it is important that users read and understand the published privacy statements of the respective services, and if they are not acceptable, switch providers. Most of the free email services can import address books and email from the other services, easing the transition from one to another; most will also send out a free, personalized email to addresses in the address book informing others of the new email address, eliminating the need of the user to notify everyone manually.

As far as the current battle being fought for market share between Microsoft and Google, good luck to both! I like the benefits brought to the consumer when two major competitors battle for our business. ♠

Ira Wilsker - Ira is a member of the Golden Triangle PC Club, an Assoc. Professor at Lamar Institute of Technology, and hosts a weekly radio talk show on computer topics on KLVI News Talk AM560. He also writes a weekly technology column for the Examiner newspaper. Ira is also a deputy sheriff who specializes in cybercrime, and has lectured internationally in computer crime and security.

LibreOffice on Macs running MacOS X 10.8 (Mountain Lion), and these steps are shown on the “system requirements” page at libreoffice.org/download/system-requirements. LibreOffice is also available for computers running almost all iterations of Linux including Debian, Ubuntu, Fedora, Mandriva, Suse, and others.

Sometimes, it is convenient or necessary for a user to carry his own portable software and files on a USB flash drive, or similar device. LibreOffice has a fully functional portable version (100mb download) that includes a word processor (Writer), spreadsheet (Calc), presentation tool (Impress, a PowerPoint competitor), drawing package (Drawing) and database (Base). All of these are “packaged” to run in the standardized “PortableApps” utility, or run by itself from a USB flash drive, in the cloud, or from a local drive. As a fully functional portable office utility, the user can take all his documents along with everything he needs to work with them wherever he goes. As are all of the other forms of LibreOffice, this portable version is free (libreoffice.org/download/portable). I downloaded the portable version, installed it to a flash drive, and it worked flawlessly; I even opened a PowerPoint with it to be sure I could play it with LibreOffice Impress, and as all of the other documents that I tried, it worked just fine.

As I am typing this right now on Writer, the Microsoft Word competitor, I have not encountered any issues, as the look and feel of LibreOffice Writer is almost identical to Microsoft Word. One difference between LibreOffice 4 and Microsoft Office 2010 is the menu ribbon used in Office 2007 and 2010, while LibreOffice 4, by default, uses the more traditional menu bar as used in earlier versions of Office such as Office 2003. LibreOffice surveyed its users and found an almost perfect 50/50 split between those who preferred the classic menus to the newer Office 2010 ribbon menu. For those who prefer the more modern looking Office 2010 ribbon, several free add-ons are available which mimic the ribbon style.

I use Microsoft PowerPoint on a daily basis in my classes and for my external presentations; using the PC installed version of LibreOffice, I opened several of my PowerPoint presentations, created on either PowerPoint 2003 or PowerPoint 2010, with LibreOffice 4 Impress. Both PPT and PPTX PowerPoints opened and

played perfectly with Impress, including all of the slide transitions and animations. Since I carry backup copies of my PowerPoints on my USB flash drive when I do external presentations, the portable version of Impress could easily be utilized to play the slide show if the computer provided either has an older version of Office, or no Office at all. In terms of desktop appearance, the Impress window looked exactly like PowerPoint 2003, but had all of the features of PowerPoint 2010.

I use Office Excel for several types of record keeping, both at home and at work; to perform a quick test of compatibility between the LibreOffice Calc with files created with Excel 2010 (.xlsx) and Excel 2003 (.xls), I loaded Calc and opened a variety of Excel files. With Calc, all of the Excel files opened, maintaining all colors, fonts, graphics, formulas, spacing, and other characteristics of the original Excel files. As do all of the other LibreOffice components, spreadsheet files created in the dozens of spreadsheet formats used around the world, including all of the Microsoft formats, can be opened in Calc.

Base is the LibreOffice database utility, which, like all of the other LibreOffice components, can read and write other database formatted files. Base integrates seamlessly with the other LibreOffice components, and can also be used as a free-standing database utility. Linked tables and queries from MySQL, PostgreSQL and Microsoft Access can be imported, or the user can design his own in Base. Support is built-in or easily addable for a wide range of other database products, including HSQL, MySQL, Adabas D, Microsoft Access and PostgreSQL.

Draw and Math are two LibreOffice utilities that add enhanced capabilities over Microsoft Office. Draw allows the user to create diagrams and sketches ranging from simple images to dynamic 3D illustrations with special effects. Math is an equation editor that lets users lay-out and display mathematical, chemical, electrical or scientific equations quickly and in standard written notation. Users of Microsoft Publisher and Visio can easily import documents created with those products into LibreOffice using free import filters. An import filter for LibreOffice Draw opens Microsoft Office Publisher files, while another Draw import filter can open all Visio files ranging from the original

1992 Visio 1.0 format to the latest Visio 2013 files.

For anyone from students at all levels, to businesses and other agencies or enterprises, LibreOffice 4 is the way to go for those who want all of the features and useability of the expensive Microsoft Office suite, without the expense, as LibreOffice explicitly means “Free Office”. ♠

Ira Wilsker – Ira is a member of the Golden Triangle PC Club, an Assoc. Professor at Lamar Institute of Technology, and hosts a weekly radio talk show on computer topics on KLVJ News Talk AM560. He also writes a weekly technology column for the Examiner newspaper. Ira is also a deputy sheriff who specializes in cybercrime, and has lectured internationally in computer crime and security.

Next CTPC Meeting

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condition, system requirements and your asking price.

- If the item is a computer, hard drive, cell phone or anything that stores personal information, WIPE IT CLEAN before you bring it.
- And very important – BE PREPARED TO HAUL AWAY ANYTHING THAT ISN’T SOLD OR GIVEN AWAY. We will not dispose of it and if we leave it behind, the restaurant isn’t likely to invite us back.

There won’t be a formal program but we will have Random Access and would like to get your input on some issues pertaining to our meetings.

So come buy, sell, swap – or just socialize. It should be fun. We hope to see you there!

We encourage you to remain after the meeting for some socializing and to have pizza, salad and the beverage of your choice. Cost is shared and is normally less than \$14/person. The Silver Star allows us to use their facility at “no charge” and we think they deserve some benefit for their generosity. ♠

The Seventh Son of Windows

Windows 7 has arrived. Let's explore the features of this newest incarnation of Microsoft Windows...

**IPTV In Media Center
Dec 2012 issue of Boca Bits**

Introduction

You might be wondering what in the world is "IPTV"? It stands for Internet Protocol television. In other words, it is TV you can watch on your computer because it is delivered over the internet.

(It isn't quite the same as "Internet TV", but I'll leave you to research that if you're interested. A good place to start is the article on IPTV in the Wikipedia: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iptv>)

IPTV in Windows 7 is available through Windows Media Center.

Content

You can find MSNBC News under Internet TV in Media Center. Microsoft has something called SportsLounge, where sports fans can track their favorite sports. There are also many other types of content that Microsoft is busy acquiring to put on Internet TV.

There will be both standard and high definition content. If you have a touchscreen, there will be a lot of ways of easily accessing it just by stroking your screen.

In all, there is supposed to be a lot friendlier Media Center features for finding and navigating through a variety of video content. including movies, rock concerts and TV stations.

Accessing IPTV

You do not need to have a TV tuner kit to access IPTV. Microsoft decided to make this available in Media Center because a lot of people find it difficult to connect up a TV tuner.

You access this content in Media Center through the same Electronic Programming Guide that lists cable content for users of a TV tuner kit.

"XPS" stands for XML Paper Specification

Jan 2013 issue of Boca Bits

Documents with the .xps file type extension are created by "printing" them and choosing the "Microsoft XPS Document Writer" as your printer.

XPS documents are Microsoft's answer to Adobe PostScript and PDF (Portable Data File) documents.

Viewing XPS Files

In order to view them in Windows Vista or XP, you can open Internet Explorer, use Office 12, or download a viewer called XPS Viewer EP from Microsoft:

<http://www.microsoft.com/en-us/download/details.aspx?id=11816>

Microsoft XML Paper Specification Essentials Pack

Or, if you are using Windows 7, then there is an XPS Document Viewer built in.

Details About XPS

Here is a web page spelling out more details about XPS:

<http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/hardware/gg463373.aspx>

XML Paper Specification Overview

Windows 7 XPS Viewer Tutorial

This web page is a nice illustrated tutorial on using the XPS Viewer in Windows 7. If you cannot see the screenshots in the tutorial, then just search out the link for becoming a member of the forum and join — it's free.

<http://www.sevenforums.com/tutorials/339-xps-viewer.html>

Windows 7 XPS Viewer Uninstall

The XPS Viewer can be uninstalled in Windows 7 by going to Programs and Features - Turn Windows features on or off and unchecking XPS Viewer.

On Screen Keyboard

Feb 2013 issue of Boca Bits

XP / Vista

Both Windows XP and Windows Vista had an on screen keyboard, which you could easily get to by typing OSK.EXE into the Run dialog box off the Start Menu and hitting the Enter key. A picture of the Vista offering is shown top right.

Windows 7



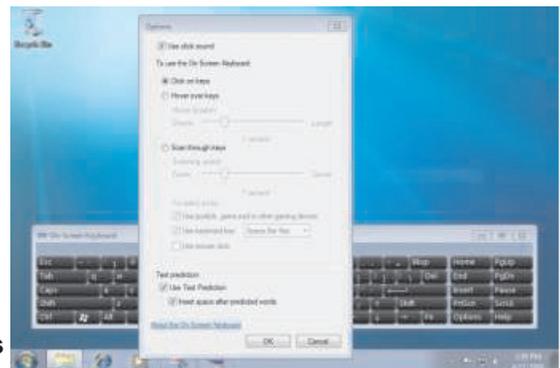
The Windows 7 On Screen Keyboard is accessible in the same way, and it looks much nicer. (See second screenshot above).

RESIZEABLE / TOUCH SENSITIVE

In addition, the Windows 7 On Screen Keyboard is resizeable, and is touch sensitive if you have a touch screen on your computer.

PREDICTION

It has an option for "predicting" what you type, which operates somewhat like "autofill" in the address bar of Internet Explorer. .



KEY SELECTION

As in Vista, you can also select the key you want to type just by hovering your mouse over the on screen key rather than touching it or clicking it with a mouse. ♠

Interesting Internet Finds

In the course of going through the more than 200 news feeds in my Google Reader, I often run across things that I think might be of interest to other user group members.

Feb 2013 issue

The following are some items I found interesting during the month of January, 2013. (Long URLs shortened with the Google URL shortener <http://goo.gl/>)

Why does a scan of a simple text document result in such a large file?
<http://goo.gl/TJMg5>

The Differences Between PPTP, L2TP/IPSec, SSTP and OpenVPN Connection - <http://goo.gl/Vm7MT>

The Best Choice For Your Mobile Android Office - <http://goo.gl/W5tjT>

Listen to radio stations in Google Chrome - <http://goo.gl/FQjww>

Download Project Gutenberg ebooks to your Dropbox - <http://goo.gl/eGyLt>

The Best Free Dictionary and Thesaurus Programs and Websites - <http://goo.gl/KjhtP>

How to Clean Up the List of Apps that Have Access to Your Accounts
<http://goo.gl/8IibW>

7 Windows Frustrations You Can Quickly Fix - <http://goo.gl/59mBk>

Hardware Secrets: Uncomplicating the Complicated (Website of the Week)
<http://goo.gl/XCvLy>

March, 2013 issue

HTG Explains: What Is RSS and How Can I Benefit From Using It?
<http://goo.gl/VS6H1>

How do I share my screen in a Google Plus Hangout? - <http://goo.gl/Tzo0n>

How do I copy photos from my phone to my PC? - <http://goo.gl/uq9Vx>

Create Google Maps of Your Own To Share & Collaborate With Friends
<http://goo.gl/EIVBY>

5 Ways To Get Data From Your Desktop to Your Android <http://goo.gl/2Pb0d>

Bits and Bytes Explained
<http://goo.gl/hEgQP>

Kaspersky

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- Pro-active defense
- Application control
- Mobile security
- Tablet security
- Password manager
- and more

This is a good program for protecting all your computers at a single price, whether you have three, five or ten computers. There is a 30-day free trial available.

About: Kaspersky One Universal Security

Vendor: Kaspersky
www.kaspersky.com

Price: Three computers, \$80; five computers, \$85; ten computers, \$150 (download)♣

How to Maintain Your DVD Player - For Dummies - <http://goo.gl/fMW20>

The Ultimate Guide To Private Browsing on the Internet - <http://goo.gl/XslrH>

How to Use Hyper-V Virtual Machines
<http://goo.gl/4dxBh>♣

Stay Safe Online

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Protect Yourself with these STOP. THINK. CONNECT. Tips:

- Keep a clean machine: Having the latest security software, web browser, and operating system are the best defenses against viruses, malware, and other online threats.
- Own your online presence: When applicable, set the privacy and security settings on websites to your comfort level for information sharing. It's ok to limit how you share information.
- Make passwords long and strong: Combine capital and lowercase letters with numbers and symbols to create a more secure password.
- Unique account, unique password: Separate passwords for every account helps to thwart cybercriminals.
- When in doubt, throw it out: Links in email, tweets, posts, and online advertising are often the way cybercriminals compromise your computer. If it looks suspicious, even if you know the source, it's best to delete or if appropriate, mark as junk email.
- Post only about others as you have them post about you. ♣

MEETING LOCATION

Silver Star Diner
210 Connecticut Ave. (US-1/ Post Road)

From I-95 Stamford: Take Exit 13 for US-1/Post Road and turn right at US-1 N/ Connecticut Avenue. The diner will be on your left almost at Exit 14.

From I-95 New Haven: Take Exit 14 for US-1/Connecticut Ave and turn right at US-1 N/Connecticut Ave. The Diner will be just ahead on your right.

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