Next CTPC Meeting   Tuesday, May 28, 2013 - 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

iPad Model 3 Operation

Our subject for the May meeting will be the iPad 3. Jonathan Brown will give us a presentation outlining the uses of iPad. He will also include a demo of SIRI the voice actuated feature that answers questions as well as provides info. He will discuss market share and competition and how it differs from the PC.

In addition, we will discuss our recent trip to the Microsoft retail store in Danbury where we received a briefing and demo on Windows 8, Microsoft Office 2013 and Office 365. Microsoft offers some very interesting options for users that reduces the initial cost of purchasing the Office Program and spreads the cost over time. Most of the changes introduced in Office 2013 over Office 2010 have to do with much more access to the Internet rather than having new features installed on the local computer.

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.♠

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

June 25ᵗʰ Tuesday, 6:30 p.m.
  CTPC Meeeting
  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

Sandy Berger, CompuKISS, www.compukiss.com, sandy (at) compukiss.com

HDTV – What to Buy

For those of you who are thinking about buying an HDTV this year, here's a quick recap on the specs that you need to know about.

There are three main types of HDTV: Plasma, LCD and LCD with LED backlighting. Each is different in the technologies they use to light the screen. While plasma used to be the cat's meow, LCD technology has improved more over the last few years and with the addition of LED backlighting, it is now pretty close to an equal contender. Plasmas still have darker blacks and are better in dark rooms. As far as price goes, plasma can give you good bang for your buck if you want a really big screen. How \ever most of us don't want to keep the drapes drawn during the day and many of us are happy with a 42" to 48" screen.

In that size screen, LCD and LED are more cost effective than plasma. An

LED TV is simply an LCD with LED (light emitting diode) backlighting. You will pay a slight premium for LED over a plain LCD TV. LEDs offer better energy efficiency and are often thinner. Most, but not all, LEDs have slightly brighter pictures. If poorly done, however, they can have lighting uniformity issues. So let your eyes be your guide in that respect.

You will still hear about 720p and 1080P in the TV specifications. If you have 20/20 vision and sit 12 feet from the TV, you won't really notice much difference between a 720p and a 1080p TV. You would actually have to sit quite a bit closer to see any additional details. These days, however, 1080P TVs are becoming the norm and not adding much to the cost, so you may want to get a 1080p TV just because you can.

Two other common HDTV specifications are refresh rate and contrast ratios. You will see refresh rates of 60 Hz, all the way up to 480 Hz and you will see a wide variety of contrast ratios. These two specs are often used to entice people to purchase more expensive TVs. In another article, I'll give you a rundown of exactly what these two specs mean, but my simple advice is that in purchasing an HDTV, you can pretty much ignore them both without detriment.

When buying an HDTV, the last thing

to consider are the extras like 3D and Internet connectivity. I personally don't like 3D. Not only does it give me a headache, but I don't want to have to wear glasses to watch TV. If, however, you like 3D, go for it. Just remember that because of lack of 3D content, the only way to really take advantage of a 3D TV is to buy a Blu-ray player and 3D movies on disks.

As far as Internet connectivity, it can be a plus if you plan on using Netflix, Amazon videos, or other content from the Web, but don't pay too much of a premium for Internet connectivity because you can always add a device like Roku, Apple TV or others to add it later fairly inexpensively.

Okay Betsy that brings us to your TV cabinet, your choice of manufacturer, and sound. Building a cabinet around the TV is a bit old fashioned and not really necessary with the new TVs. They are so thin and light that you might be better off to simply buy a small stand or hang your new TV on the wall.

Many of you mention to me that Samsung and Sony are the two brands that you feel are highly rated. Yes. They are both good brands but even good brands are not perfect. I have a smaller Samsung that has been going without a glitch for

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Ira Wilsker

Improve Your Facebook Privacy and Security

However we personally feel about it, Facebook has become enormously popular. According to Facebook's Key Facts page (newsroom.fb.com/Key-Facts), Facebook has, "More than a billion monthly active users as of December 2012. ... 618 million daily active users on average in December 2012. 680 million monthly active users who used Facebook mobile products as of December 31, 2012." These numbers are impressive, indicating extreme growth in Facebook utilization, since its introduction in 2004. One issue facing Facebook, as well as many other social networking and online services, is the privacy and security of its users. Sadly, the small percentage of the global population that wants to commit a variety of cyber-crimes against innocent individuals have found that social networking services are a fertile hunting ground, and Facebook is no exception.

Facebook is well aware of the risks that its users face on a regular basis, and actively revises its system and policies in order to mitigate the risks to its billion users. While Facebook does what it can to secure its system, Facebook users must proactively choose the appropriate security settings offered by the service, engage in safe online practices, and have appropriate security software installed on their computers or other devices. Users must be cognizant of several facts when they post anything on a social network, such as Facebook; first, nothing posted online is totally private, and regardless of selected settings, it is always possible for others, including those with illicit intent, to access postings. On Facebook, anytime a user clicks on a "Like" button, some of their personal information is gathered by the "liked" page, and can be used for a variety of purposes as the users' data can be collected and catalogued. Also be totally aware that once something is posted online, it is effectively forever available, even after being deleted by the user. Facebook may become a virtual diary that may be accessed later by potential employers, social acquaintances, government agencies, and others for both totally legitimate purposes

and dangerous dishonest use.

In the initial registration process of be-

WEBSITES:

https://www.facebook.com/help/safety
https://www.facebook.com/security
https://www.facebook.com/security/app_268616169836752
http://techland.time.com/2013/04/04/facebook-privacy-settings-guide/
https://www.techsupportalert.com/content/seven-tips-improve-your-security-facebook.htm
https://www.techsupportalert.com/content/protect-your-online-privacy-terrific-new-chrome-extension.htm
https://www.techsupportalert.com/content/probably-best-free-security-list-world.htm?page=0,13
http://www.makeuseof.com/pages/download-the-very-unofficial-facebook-privacy-guide
http://www.daniel-puscher.de/fpw/
http://newsroom.fb.com/Key-Facts

coming a Facebook user, personal information including name, email address, and other information was provided to Facebook. People join Facebook primarily as a medium of communications, with the simple ability to locate other users and have them locate you on the Facebook network. Users need to determine who can find their personal information and contact them, and then set the Facebook privacy settings accordingly. Personal listings access may be restricted by the user by selecting one of the privacy settings that can allow everyone to locate the user, approved friends, or even a "friends of friends" that provides a geometrically larger universe of potential friends. While many users take pride in their huge number of friends on Facebook, often using the large number of friends as a form of status symbol, that also means that the same huge group of friends is more likely to include users who may pose privacy and security threats to the user.

Facebook users can easily access and modify security settings by opening the account control menu by clicking on the "gear" icon on the top right edge of the Facebook menu bar, and then selecting "Privacy Settings". This opens the "Privacy Settings and Tools" which controls who can see your posts and look up your personal information. Once the "Privacy Settings and Tools" window is open, the left margin of that webpage offers additional security controls that the users should make use of. Under the "Timeline and Tagging Settings" the user can control who can post on their timeline, who can view the users' timeline, and can control

the tagging and posting of images and posts.

Some Facebook users are unfortunately the victims of cyber stalking and cyber bullying; the "Blocking" menu icon on the left margin opens the "Manage Blocking" window. It is here that the user can create a "Restricted List" which controls who specifically can see information and posts. From this location unwanted users can be blocked by entering their name or email address, which means that the person blocked can no longer be your friend on Facebook or otherwise interact with you. Using a similar, simple procedure, the user can easily block app requests or event invites from other specific users or groups. Individual apps can be stopped from contacting you and accessing your non-public information on Facebook.

Facebook itself offers substantial privacy and security assistance and information that users may use in order to improve their security and safety while on Facebook. Facebook has a "Family Safety Center" at facebook.com/help/safety where users can get a wealth of information including tools and resources, teen and family safety, Facebook resources for parents, information that teachers can use to teach online safety, and additional information on Facebook safety, security, and privacy. Facebook also offers detailed safety, security and privacy tips and related information on its page at facebook.com/security/app_268616169836752.

There are currently several third-party utilities and resources available that can help implement appropriate privacy and security settings on Facebook. On my primary computers I have Trend Micro's Titanium Maximum Security installed which offers as one of its features a Facebook privacy utility that is implemented by clicking on the "Check My Privacy" button. Trend Micro then runs a utility which checks and verifies all of the privacy settings, displaying any potential privacy threats; in my Facebook account, Trend Micro found

The Demise of the Digital Camera

I probably should have used one more adjective in the title, "inexpensive", so that the title would have read "The Demise of the Inexpensive Digital Camera". You only have to look around you at any party or gathering and see that the majority of the picture taking is being done by the guests with "smart phones". Relatively few cameras appear at these gatherings, so you might ask why? What has happened? What is happening to fuel this dramatic change?

By some estimates, smart phones account for over 50% of the cell phones in use today, and those smart phones all have built in cameras. And within the last couple of years, the cameras in those smart phones are getting much, much better. To prove my point you only have to look at two new products to be announced, one from Nikon and the other from Nokia, one a camera company the other a phone company.

The Nikon S800c combines a camera with Wi-Fi capability, even internet browsing. It will not be long before a phone is added to that device. Nokia on the other hand created a phone, the 808c Nokia PureView Pro which combines a phone with new digital technology. It dispenses with the usual scaling/interpolation model of digital zoom used in virtually all smartphones, as well as optical zoom used in most digital cameras, to vary the magnification and field of view. This new technology which is already in use by Sony in some of their more advanced cameras (Sony NEX F3), allows zooming without any lens elements changing positions. And amazingly enough, the results are really fantastic.

More and more camera manufacturers are equipping their cameras with the ability to transfer images from the camera to a phone, iPad type device or a computer directly, no wiring required. As phone manufacturers start to incorporate this new technology into their phones, the need for people to have both a smart phone AND a camera diminishes. Many manufacturers, aware of the missteps of Kodak in failing to recognize the change in technology (film to digital) and the eventual destruction of the company, are moving quickly to rearrange their product offerings.

What will be showing up in the marketplace are more mid to high end cameras with fewer and fewer low end cameras.

The reasoning is pretty simple, the camera phones, as good as they are getting, are still a very long way from producing images as good as those from the mid to high end range of cameras. If you take a close look at the camera offerings of today you may note the changes that are taking place right now.

Digital SLR cameras are moving in two price directions, up and down. Canon/Nikon/Pentax/Sony are locked in a battle in both the high end professional/ semi –professional/dedicated amateur ines at one end and the beginner/intermediary dSLR camera lines. However, this is an area that has fragmented greatly; new camera designs along with new technology are resulting in smaller and lighter cameras capable of producing results equal to that of their bigger cousins. I can hear the verbal challenges now to that statement, but I am noticing more and more pros/semi-pros using this newer technology and reaping the benefits of fewer backaches from the lighter, pounds lighter equipment. These stark changes were brought about by the "mirrorless" interchangeable lens cameras. In some circles these are referred to as CSC (compact system cameras) or ILC (interchangeable lens cameras) or EVIL (electronic viewfinder interchangeable lens cameras). Cameras in this mirrorless grouping are the Fuji X-Pro 1, the Sony alpha and NEX family of cameras, the Nikon J1/Vi cameras, the just announced Canon EOS M cameras, the micro four-thirds (mFT) line of cameras such as the Olympus OM-D5 and Panasonic GX1, and of course the entirely different Ricoh line of interchangeable lens AND sensor cameras.

In addition to those camera groupings another new collection of cameras has appeared, the large sensor fixed lens cameras such as the Canon G1 X and the Sony RX 100 along with the Fujifilm X10 and X100. I can see some questions arising about what constitutes a large sensor. To my way of thinking, sensors in the size range of 1/1.7 and larger meet that criterion, but just barely. But wait, the camera companies are also introducing more mid-to high-end point and shoot cameras such as the Panasonic FZ200, Pentax X5, Canon SD500, Nikon P7700, and Fuji SL300.

But if you look, you will see relatively little effort or money being spent on the inexpensive line of cameras, those retailing for $200 or less. What you are seeing is product renaming with a change in camera color but very little in the way of any new features. What also appears to be happening here is that as the new models appear the older models are marked down substantially. As an example, Olympus Pen LP-2 was $550 or more. It can now be had for about $300 while the even older version, the LP1 is still around and going for a bit under $300 and those are prices with the kit lens. The Fuji S4500 came out at about $300, but today it can be bought for under $200 and it came out in January of this year.

The economic downturn of the last few years certainly has played a part in the changing face of digital photography, making it less lucrative to introduce middling to low cost cameras and to focus on the mid to upper range of cameras with special features, such as better video, longer zoom ranges, great low light and high ISO ability. You will also be seeing a move away from the traditional CCD sensor to the CMOS and BSI-CMOS type sensor since these are far better suited to video and low light photography.

One other very bad thing is happening and that is the increase in camera complexity. I hear it almost every week from my students, "I can't understand the manual (if there is even one included), there is no index or the index is vastly incomplete, the booklet uses abbreviations without ever defining them, they seem to assume I know something when I do not, they don't explain a feature or how to use that feature." I have long maintained that the instructions are written by people whose native language is NOT English and may not even be photographers.

This is a most interesting period in photography. Image quality and the ability to use high ISO settings or shoot in dim light has never been better. Cameras, at least the mid to high price cameras, have more features and generally perform much better. The next five years will see very significant changes in the photographic landscape, stick around, you may even like what you see. ♠

Tablets — a Review with Random Musings

Those of you that know me understand I have fallen in love with tablets. They are sweet in my mind. This doesn't mean that all tablets are created equal.

I thought it was time for some random musings on what I've found in the tablet markets.

My tablet journey has consisted of 16 tablets with something like 10 different models. I've owned:

Apple iPad 1, Apple iPad 2 (2 of these), Apple iPad 3, (all 9.7"), Samsung Galaxy Tablet 8.9 (4 different ones, all 8.9") a Sony S Tablet (9.7"), a Asus TF101 (10.1"), an Acer A500 (10.1"), a Toshiba AT305 (10.1"), a Acer W500 (10.1"), and a Google Nexus 7 (7").

I've also spent significant time with Lenovo's ThinkPad Tablet (10.1").

Of the tablets I've experienced, four have run Apple iOS, 10 have run Android of various versions (2.2, 3.1, 3.2, 4.x, 4.1 and 4.2) and one runs Windows 7/8.

I currently have 4 tablets, two iPad's, the Nexus 7 and the Acer W500.

Observations

My first suggestion is don't buy a cheap tablet. You'll be sorry. You'd be better to wait till you can afford the $200 price of a Google Nexus 7 than spend $100 on a low end tablet.

Why you ask? The low end tablets are under powered and have very limited storage. And they typically use resistive touch screens.

Without getting into the dynamics, resistive touch screens are not as sensitive or responsive as the capacitive touch screens used on higher end tablets.

With the Google Nexus 7 selling for $200, buying something less expensive to save a few bucks will only bring on frustration.

That brings another observation. Buy a general purpose tablet, not a reader.

Amazon and Barnes and Noble both sell very good tablets in the Amazon Fire and Nook Tablet.

However, all these are intended to lock you into their store. You buy your books and applications only from them. Unless you root the device. We'll talk about rooting a little later.

Give the Google Nexus 7 is available for 200 bucks, pass on the Amazon and Nooks and go for it as a fantastic general purpose tablet.

Customizability

By this I mean your ability to change how the tablet looks and works. This should be more than just changing your wallpaper.

iOS limits the customizability to what Apple feels you should do. Change the wallpaper and organization of the applications is about all you can do. Even when jailbroke, you cannot perform a lot more extensibility on iOS.

Android allows a lot more customizability. You can change the wallpaper including live wallpapers that change while you view.

Android also allows you to change the default keyboard and other input methods and select alternate launchers. What's a launcher? Basically a launcher is the method you interface with the tablet. Think of this as the look and feel of the screens.

Overall, Android allows more extensibility than iOS.

Applications

Applications written for tablets typically use higher resolutions. Applications written for phones use lower resolutions. I know duh! Right!

Screen Size

I like to hold the tablet in one hand in a vertical position and use my other hand to navigate on the tablet.

Given this, I find the traditional sized tablets of either 9.7" or 10.1" too big, bulky and heavy to hold comfortably in one hand for very long.

My favorite tablets are the smaller sized ones. 7" is a good size for personal viewing of videos. It can be a little too small when viewing web sites. The 8.9" form factor is about perfect in my opinion; videos are great and web sites show clarity.

Storage

The presence or lack of expandable storage probably isn't too big a deal for me. Tablets typically come with some built-in memory ranging from 2 GB and up to 64gb or more. The more storage, the more stuff you can store on the tablet. Another duh right?!

I don't use my tablet to listen to music from. Waste of good hardware in my opinion. I carry either an iPod or Sansa device to listen to music. That's what they were made to do and they do it very well.

Music typically takes lots of storage; removing it saves a lot of space on the tablet.

I find 16gb a decent amount of internal storage. That's enough to store 10 or so movies for viewing on long flights.

Books and applications typically don't take a lot of storage, 16gb is a decent amount. Sure, you'll not be much of a pack rat with 16gb,

Larger amounts of storage allow you to get sloppy.

Expandable storage can be used to back the device up which we all should do, right?

Device memory

Here you have to watch. It's pretty easy to find the amount of storage. Much more difficult to find the amount of memory in the device. My experience is if the device has 512kb or less, stay clear. It's going to run out of memory and slow down.

iPads and most higher end tablets have at least 768k memory. Some have 1 to 2 GB. The more memory, the more applications. On a duh role aren't I!

CPU

Again, here you may have to search to find the specs on the tablet.

The best tablet experience also has fast multicore CPUs. Didn't know tablets come with multiple cores on their CPU's heh? Well it's true.

Quad core tablets are all the rage. The Nexus 7 uses a quad core CPU and it's fast and responsive.

Dual core tablets are normally responsive, but there may be times you experience a lag because either you don't have enough memory or enough CPU to do the task you're asking for.

My suggestion is get at least a dual core CPU running at least 1.0 gHz.

Battery Life

iPads have better battery life. Before you get ready to argue with me, this is my column with my observations so I can write what I feel. So there!

Ira Wilsker

On the Shelves Now – New Technology Replacing Old Standbys

Recently, I was one of several presenters at the Taylor Career Center's Business and Technology Summit. My topic was on the new computing technologies currently on the market that are making the existing technologies obsolete.

According to published reports, during the first quarter of 2013, PC sales (desktop and laptop) dropped 14%, while tablet and smartphone sales soared. Some of the blame for the decline in PC sales has been the lack of widespread acceptance of Microsoft's new Windows 8 operating system, as well the fact that tablet computers are generally less expensive and more portable than traditional laptops and desktops. With over a billion smartphones expected to be sold this year, along with 200 million tablets, many users have decided to forgo purchasing a new PC. Sales of PCs this year are predicted to be about 300 million, down from 353 million in 2012, and far less than Microsoft's "hoped for" 400 million PCs sold in 2013. "This is horrific news for PCs," said BGC Financial analyst Colin Gillis. "It's all about mobile computing now. We have definitely reached the tipping point."

Some pundits are predicting the slow demise of such traditional giants as HP, Dell, and Microsoft as smaller upstarts continue to erode their market shares with newer, less expensive technologies that also add enhanced portability. On the hardware side, HP and Dell are far behind the curve when it comes to technological replacements for the traditional desktop and laptop computer, while Microsoft has not captured much market share with its builds of Windows 8 intended for the portable market. As has been typical, Apple, with its successful iPad series of tablets, tends to be a leader in the introduction of new technologies. A growing threat to the established and traditional software operating systems, best represented by Microsoft's Windows and Apple's iOS, is Google's Android operating system, which has garnered a 75% market share of the operating systems of smart devices, including phones and tablets. Even giant chip maker Intel is feeling the sting, as most of the PCs utilize Intel chipsets, and a decline in PC sales ultimately impacts Intel. In terms of the new portable smart devices becoming so popular, Intel is but a bit player, with many feisty small chip makers picking up a growing share of the CPU chip market with their sales to smart device manufacturers.

A visit to any of the local big box stores will clearly show the increasing market share of tablets and other smart devices, as they devote more shelf space to the smart devices, and much less shelf space to the

more traditional laptops and PCs.

One feisty new player in the hardware market is none other than powerhouse Google, which has introduced a line of relatively low cost but highly portable devices that combine the portability of a tablet with the convenience of a traditional laptop or notebook PC. As thin as half-inch, and weighing only a few pounds. these new devices are being marketed as "Google Chromebooks", which retail for as little as $199, and have screens typically larger and more readable than most tablets. Unlike most common tablets, Chromebooks have a traditional keyboard and are in a form similar to a laptop. Using Google's Chrome operating system, these Chromebooks are complete and ready to run out of the box, without the need to purchase additional software. For those who want even more software, thousands of free apps (applications) are available from Google's Chrome Web Store. Included in all Chromebook models are Google Docs, which can create, read, and write office documents (word processing, spreadsheets, presentations, etc.) from and to almost all other major software formats, including Microsoft Office products (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, etc.). Other included apps are a variety of music, voice and video utilities. Chromebooks include "Google Drive", highly secured data centers with file storage service that stores files safely online, without the need to create backups of critical files. Data files can be accessed from anywhere, and are safe and recoverable even if the Chromebook is lost or damaged.

In terms of security, Chromebooks do not require any additional security software as they use multiple layers of protection providing a "defense in depth" that is generally considered safe from malware, viruses, and other threats. At boot, Chromebooks perform a rapid self-check to verify that the system is secure and free of malware; any necessary security updates are automatically downloaded and installed, meaning that Chromebooks always have the latest security features and updates.

Many users find the boot time of traditional PCs to be somewhat aggravating, often taking several minutes; the typical Chromebook can boot in as little as 10 seconds, making its features and apps almost instantly available. Also, many PC users fail to install operating system upgrades as well as software updates; Chromebook users do not have that problem as Chromebooks automatically update themselves and their installed apps for free; there is never a need to purchase or manually install updates and software upgrades with a Chromebook. All Chromebooks are Wi-Fi equipped, and several models offer optional wireless connections through Verizon, with 100 MB of data per month for free. All Chromebooks include an interesting feature, "Google Cloud Print" which can print to many printers without the need for connecting cables.

Chromebooks are currently manufactured by Acer, HP, and Samsung, with other makers soon to have Chromebooks of their own. At present, Chromebooks are available locally at Best Buy, and online from Amazon, TigerDirect, Newegg, Best Buy Online, and HP's online store.

Another new technology which is being used to make smart devices and laptop computers more rugged as well as extending their battery life is the "SSD" or "Solid State Drive". Now built-in to many newer laptop and desktop computers, as well as available for installation into almost all other laptop and desktop computers, the new SSDs are much smaller in physical size, have no moving parts, require less power to operate, do not emit a lot of heat, are silent in operation, have very fast access

However, this is backed up by a number of independent studies.

Why you ask? iOS is a single tasking operating system. The application that runs is in the "foreground". Other applications simply pause. This saves battery life.

Android allows applications to run in the "background". You may find the features performed by the background applications useful, but they do affect your battery life.

Screen Resolution

The more expensive tablets come with better screens. Currently iPad 3/4 and the Nexus 10 have the highest pixel count screen. Can you see the difference? Absolutely. This truly is a time where more is better!

What price do you pay for the increased screen resolution? You will pay a price in battery life as the more pixels to be changed, the more power that it takes. You may not see much difference when watching movies, although you can see the difference on the iPad 1 and iPad 2 with their lower resolution screens pretty easily.

Select a table that has at least 800x600 resolution. If you can afford it, go for 1280x800 (720p) resolution.

Cameras

Tablets have built in cameras, sometimes multiple ones, front and back.

They can be useful if you're Skypeing with someone. You will probably not use the cameras for much, although the higher resolution ones (5 mpixels and up) take great pictures.

An Android tablet running Ice Cream Sandwich (Android 4.0) typically has a panoramic view allowing you to have a scene that pans a wider area, much like a wide angle lens. It's a unique feature that you might find useful. There are multiple applications available to edit the photos on the tablet.

Application Stores

Applications written for tablets typically take advantage of a tablet's higher resolution screen.

The Apple Store has more applications than Google Play and more that take advantage of a tablet's higher resolution screen.

Having said this, you will find both stores have selections in almost whatever type application you desire. Lots of games, utilities, weather updates, etc.

Without jailbreaking, iOS applications can only be downloaded from the Apple Store.

Android tablets can download from the Google Play store, the Amazon store and other locations. You don't need to root the device to enable installation from other than the Google Play store however.

Rooting/Jailbreaking

Both refer to the same thing, but on different platforms. You root an android tablet and jailbreak an iPad.

So what is rooting/jailbreaking? Basically it's removing the limitations the hardware vendor placed on you.

Jailbreaking an iPad means you can install applications from places other than the Apple Store. Once jailbroke, an iPad can install applications from non-Apple Store locations. Additionally you can customize the iPad interface somewhat. Not as much as Android allows, but you can add things like a mouse driver.

Rooting an Android device allows more control over the hardware. Typical things you can do include over or under clocking the CPU (running the CPU faster or slower than rated). Note: you don't really need to under clock as the Android OS does a pretty good job of slowing the CPU down when it's not required. Another thing rooting does is allow for total backups. I know, you mean you cannot backup everything about an Android tablet without rooting? Sad but true. While email accounts typically are synced with your Gmail account, application settings are not.

Do you need to jailbreak or root the tablet to enjoy it? Absolutely NOT! I use to jailbreak/root a device soon after acquiring it. Now I'm not finding the need to jailbreak/root it. Just enjoy the tablet is my current view.

Expandability

By this I mean accessories, cases, hardware add-ons, etc.

iOS takes the cake here hands down. There are simply more add-ons available that use the Apple Dock connector. Radios, speakers, video games, even piano keyboards.

Apple has complicated this with the iPad 4. The Apple Dock connector was changed from the 30 pin one that has been standard. This immediately obsoleted many of the hardware accessories out there. Yes, there is an adapter from the old to new Apple Dock.

Android tablets have suffered and continue to suffer special connectors which limits the reusability of devices. Even power connectors can be unique to a tablet.

Android allows Bluetooth connectivity for keyboards and mice while iOS only supports Bluetooth keyboards. Both support Bluetooth headphones.

As previously discussed, iPad does not support addition memory, while many Android tablets allow you to use a SD or microSD card for additional storage.

I do encourage protecting the tablet with a case and possibly a screen protector.

There are a lot of different cases available. I prefer those that allow you to have the tablet vertically and horizontally. They're called 360 rotatable. I also like cases that allow the tablet to be detached and protected. Not a lot of these are available in the 9.7" or 10.1" tablets. The 7" tablets have a number of better options.

Screen protectors are available for almost any tablet. Some will say if the tablet has Gorilla glass (a type of glass that resists scratches) you don't need a screen protector. Personally I prefer a screen protector on every tablet as the screen protector can improve readability in bright light situations.

Manageability/Backups

How do you manage the tablets?

iPad makes it easy. iTunes is the universal answer. You transfer music, movies, and applications within iTunes. You back up the device using iTunes. You restore to a new device using, yes, iTunes.

Android doesn't have an iTunes. Most of the manageability is drag and drop. Want to copy an application to the device. Drag the install file from your laptop to the device. Need to copy a movie? Same thing, drag and drop. Music? Ditto!

Backup of an Android tablet requires an application. Yes, you can "mount" the tablet's internal storage on your laptop and

Android Phone Tips & Tricks

Android phone and tablet users will find their devices more customizable than Apple devices. That's a good thing, as long as you know some of the basics. And I am here to help you with that.

Today, I will focus on phones running Ice Cream Sandwich because it currently has the most widespread use. This is Google's stock Android 4.0 operating system. There are several other Android versions currently in use. Also, be aware that each phone manufacturer modifies the Android software with its own custom interfaces. Because of all this, what you see on your phone may be slightly different from the following instructions.

As with the iPhone, Android devices use three basic finger movements:

Tap — quickly touch a icon, button, or word.

Double-tap — quickly touch the item twice.

Press and hold — press and hold your finger on the word, icon, or picture for two seconds.

Newer Android phones have three buttons on the bottom of the phone. Some older phones have four. While these can be physical buttons, on most newer phones they are not raised buttons. Instead, they are simply areas of the black bottom bezel that are marked with icons. Often these are referred to as soft buttons.

There is a slight difference between these buttons depending on whether there are three or four buttons. There is always a home icon that looks like a house and an icon that look like a back arrow which is the back button. On four-button phones there may also be a menu button and a search button. Newer phones, however, have no Search button. You will also see that the Menu button has been replaced with a combination Recent Apps/Menu button. This button is usually simply called the Recent Apps icon.

Use Your Face to Unlock the Phone

The Android operating system has some great features. One is the ability to unlock the phone with your face. Yes, with Android, you can unlock the phone just by putting it in front of your face. You simply access the Settings and look under Security for a place to set it up. There are step-by-step instructions. Once complete, just hold the phone up in front of your face to

unlock it. Don't worry; you can set up a pin number in case the phone doesn't recognize you. In my testing, however, it worked seamlessly. One caveat: If you wear glasses, make sure that you tilt your head so that there is no glare on the glasses when you open the phone. Also, although I took my security picture without glasses, my phone recognizes me with one pair of glasses, but will not recognize me with my thicker-frame glasses. Face unlocking is a new security option for Android 4.0. It doesn't work in previous versions.

When the phone is locked

Like on the iPhone, you can jump directly to the camera, and manage your music without unlocking the phone. You can also check for messages.

Add Widgets

With the iPhone every app is the same size and they are not interactive. One of the best things about Android is that you can embed live content directly to the home pages through resizable interactive widgets. Widgets show current information. For instance, they let you see the weather and time, play music, look at

stocks, and more — right from the home screen, without having to launch apps.

To add a Widget, go to the home screen where you want the widget to appear. Press and hold any blank area of that screen. Tap on Widgets, and then scroll through the choices by swiping from side to side. When you find one you like, just tap and it will appear on the chosen screen.

Recent apps

Press and hold the Recent Apps button to scroll through the recently used apps. Tap on any app to switch to that app.

Working with apps

When you are using an app, the Recent Apps button works more like a Menu button or like a right-click on a computer. Tapping it gives you a list of things you can do with that app.

Take a Picture of the Screen

Press the volume down button and the on/off (sleep) button at the same time and a picture of whatever is on your phone's screen will be saved to the picture Gallery.

Improve Facebook Privacy – *continued from Page 2*

one privacy threat suggesting that I turn off the "Instant Personalization" feature on my "App Settings" menu. Other similar utilities are available as browser plug-ins and include Facebook Privacy Watcher for Firefox (www.daniel-puscher.de/fpw/), Privacy Fix for Firefox and Chrome (privacyfix.com/start), and others. The popular technical support websites all have some form of Facebook privacy and security information. While somewhat dated, the Dallas based MakeUseOf website offers a free download (registration or "Like" required) of its 52 page "The Unofficial Facebook Privacy Manual" from its website at www.makeuseof.com/pages/download-the-very-unofficial-facebook-privacy-guide. Gizmo's TechSupportAlert.com website offers several sources of Facebook privacy and safety information. One such webpage, "Seven Tips To Improve Your Security On Facebook" is available at techsupportalert.com/content/seven-tips-improve-your-security-facebook.htm; another Gizmo directory of comprehensive Facebook (and other social

media) safety information is included in its master security directory, under the "Online Services - Social Media Privacy" heading at techsupportalert.com/content/probably-best-free-security-list-world.htm?page=0,13.

By implementing the privacy and security recommendations of the above web pages and software utilities, Facebook users may greatly enhance their privacy and safety while utilizing Facebook, one of the world's primary social media networks.♠

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.

Warning: Major License Change for Office 2013 May Cost You $$$$$

For retail customers, if you install Microsoft Office 2013 on your computer, and it fails or is lost or stolen, your Office 2013 license is no longer valid. That means you will have to buy another copy of Office 2013 when you replace that computer.

You will find a thourough discussion of this change at this Computerworld article. However, here are 3 quotes from that article to give you an appreciation of just how significant this change is:

"Microsoft yesterday confirmed that a retail copy of Office 2013 is permanently tied to the first PC on which it's installed, preventing customers from deleting the suite from one machine they own and installing it on another."

"Prior to Office 2013, which debuted last month, Microsoft's EULA for retail copies of Office plainly stated that cus-

tomers could reassign a license when, for example, they replaced an aged PC with a newer model or the original machine gave out."

". . . Microsoft confirmed that once a retail copy of Office 2013 is installed on a PC and activated—the process of entering a 25-character "key" to prove the software was legitimately obtained—it cannot be uninstalled and then re-installed on another machine owned by the customer."

So . . . what can you do about this?

Here is what Microsoft wants you to do (quoted from the article):

"We've been very clear in all of our communications that customers seeking transferability should get Office 365 and that Office 2013 is licensed to one device,' the Microsoft spokeswoman said in an email reply to questions."

"Very clear"? Perhaps, but conveniently missing from that statement is the fact that Office 365 will cost you $100 each and every year you use it.

If you find that objectionable (and it will be interesting to see how many potential Office 2013 customers find it so—if they know about it before they purchase the product), you have at least one other alternative.

That alternative is the open source (FREE) office suite Libre Office. You can download the latest version (v. 4.0) from http://www.libreoffice.org. This office suite includes these applications:

> word processor
> spreadsheet
> presentation
> database
> math
> drawing

In addition, if you have Microsoft Visio and Publisher documents, ". . . (y)ou can retrieve and reuse your graphical content stored in these formats and edit it with LibreOffice's tools."

There is much more. See http://www.libreoffice.org/home/Discover#/Discover%20it.

If you are concerned about compatibilty with Microsoft products, note that:

"Conversion with non-natives formats, like RTF or DOCX have significantly improved . . . ."

Although I have not extensively tested all of the Libre Office applications, my experience with the word processor leads me to conclude that there are only very minor issues, which are easily corrected.

It may be of interest that it is not easy to find the Office 2013 license (End User License Agreement, or EULA) on the Microsoft website. Eventually, I found this web page in a Google search and downloaded a pdf of the license, where it clearly states:

"You may not transfer the software to another computer or user."

Save yourself some (perhaps a lot of) money and frustration. Download, install and use Libre Office in place of Microsoft Office 2013. ♠

On the Shelves Now – *continued from Page 5*

times, and are generally far more rugged than more traditional hard drives. A typical SSD is very small and light in weight, typically measuring about 4 inches long, by 2.8 inches wide, by 0.4 inches thick, and weigh about three ounces; some are as small as 1.8 inches wide, while some are about the same package size as a 3.5 inch hard drive. Many newer laptops and desktops incorporate an integral mounting for these SSDs, and inexpensive (about $7 - $10) adapters are available to mount SSDs into most other laptop and desktop computers. Some newly manufactured PCs utilize a hybrid system with an SSD drive containing the operating system and other frequently accessed files, and a traditional hard drive for extended storage capacity; these hybrids often boot much faster than similar PCs can boot with a common hard drive.

Even though prices have dropped considerably in the past year, and prices are projected to continue to drop in coming years, they are still generally more expensive than traditional electromechanical hard drives, and offer less storage capacity, even though some SSDs are available with terabytes of capacity.. It is expected that as storage capacity increases, and prices drop on these SSD devices, the common electromechanical hard drives may go the way of floppy discs, and disappear from the marketplace due to obsolescence.

Considering the "gee whiz" factor when 5.25" floppies replaced 8" floppies, which were in turn replaced by 3.5" floppies; when early 10MB hard drives were scarce and terribly expensive; when colorful flat wide-screen monitors replaced older monochrome CRT monitors; when the first smart phones appeared on the market; when laptops first out-sold desktops; Pocket PC's; Palm Pilots; and other technological wonders appeared, they were greeted with vigor, and then disappeared down the trashcan of history. Do not get too attached to your Windows (or Mac) desktop or laptop with your hard drive, as they too may soon be relegated to functional obsolescence as were our Commodore 64, TI 99/4A, Atari 800, Adam, Amiga, VIC-20, TRS-80, and other popular computer types that we loved during yesteryear. Get ready to say hello and welcome new technologies and devices, as the future is already here today.♠

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.

Frank Bollinger, ORCOPUG

Goodbye Firefox

Mozilla Firefox, my browser of choice for years, has let me down.

The trouble began with printing problems a few months ago and Firefox is now raising havoc with PDF documents.

I have been a happy Firefox user since switching from Microsoft Internet Explorer a few years ago. The trouble started in mid-2012 when Firefox suddenly stopped printing my custom-sized Google Calendar. I carry a printed version of the calendar which requires using a custom paper size of 6" x 9". That process worked fine for over a year. Now Firefox pretends to accept the print command but nothing actually happens. Although it looks like it's working, it's as though the printout goes to some place where I can't see or hear it. My workaround has been to open the calendar in Google Chrome, where it prints normally.

I'm guessing the problem came with a Firefox upgrade but can't pin it down for sure. Since I rarely print the calendar more than once per week, I continued using Firefox for everything else.

The next shock came in February 2013 after upgrading to Firefox v19. I post PDF files to a website a few times per month and discovered that Firefox no longer displayed the text. In one case, it showed gridlines, but still no text. At first, it seemed to only affect PDFs I created with OpenOffice (other PDFs were still displaying normally). I even tried using the similar LibreOffice, but got the same result.

Initially, there wasn't too much comment on the Internet so I felt the issue must be a new incompatibility between OpenOffice and Firefox. Then I looked at my latest issue of U.S. News & World Report (now distributed as a weekly PDF document) and found a lot of weird spacing and blanks where all the apostrophes belonged.

The final straw came with the March 2013 Orange County PC Users Group (ORCOPUG) "Nibbles & Bits" newsletter. It contained unusual fonts, dropped letters, funny spacing, and gibberish characters all over the place.

Note that Chrome and Internet Explorer were displaying all of these documents properly the entire time I wrestled with this problem. I got back on the Internet and now found lots of angry complaints about what Firefox 19 was doing to PDF documents.

I believe the issue is that Firefox implemented a built-in PDF viewer with v19, replacing plug-ins from third parties such as Adobe or Foxit. Although it was, I think, a well intentioned attempt to escape from the many security flaws in current Adobe software, the built-in viewer mangles many PDF documents so badly that it is unusable.

While researching the problem, I found a work-around. It's possible to tell Firefox to still use a plug-in instead of the built-in viewer. I changed the Portable Document Format (PDF) "action" to use the Foxit plug-in. That fixed all the problems, for now.

Unfortunately, this entire episode has left a sour taste. It shouldn't be necessary to hunt for workarounds to perform basic functions. With frequent and unannounced Firefox upgrades, I'm concerned about going through situations like this repeatedly. Since Mozilla is about to drop support for my email program, Thunderbird, I'm wondering if this article shouldn't really be called "Goodbye Mozilla?"♠

HDTV

continued from Page 1

about eight years. The 42" Samsung that I purchased a few years ago, however, has had two repairs that would have each cost more than the TV. Luckily I took out a five year service policy when I purchased the TV. A friend of mine has already had to replace the Sony that he purchased three years ago.

Bottom line is that if you pay more than $700 for an HDTV, you may want to see if a service policy is cost effective.

As far as brands go, if you want to save some money, I also like Visio, which is a less expensive brand. My Black Friday purchase was a 26" Insigna LED 1080p 60 Hz TV for $99. Insigna is a value-brand from Best Buy. I don't expect this TV to be perfect, but for $100 I won't feel bad if I have to throw it away in three or four years.♠

Darry D Eggleston, darryd.com

Reverse PIN Hoax

"Contrary to popular rumors, entering your PIN in reverse at any ATM will not call the police," reports OMGFacts, http://t.co/HqAjkrfl.

"In September of 2006, an online rumor that entering one's Personal ID Number (PIN) in reverse at ATMs will give one the money requested but also contact the police gained prevalence.

"People were so comforted by the idea that if someone was forcing them to take money out of their ATMs, they could quickly and silently call for help; that they didn't bother to confirm whether or not it was true.

"The Credit Card and Accountability Responsibility and Disclosure Act of 2009, forced the Federal Trade Commission to provide an analysis of any technology (existing or in development) which would allow an ATM user to send such a signal.

"In response to the command, it was stated in FTC's 2010 report that; 'respondent banks have reported that none of their ATMs currently have installed, or have ever installed, an emergency PIN system of any sort,'" OMGFacts also said.

When you hear, read, or suspect such technology, make the time to Google it and find out the real facts.

Everyday, I'm exposed to stupid reports wanting me to believe the unbelievable — everything from President Obama wanting to take away our guns to the United Nations orchestrating wars, disasters, and financial crises so as to deplete the money and other resources of the U.S. to make us a Third World country. (We're doing the latter on our own, thank you very much.)

It is not foolish to want to believe.

It is foolish not to investigate and to ensure the validity.

Just because your 'good friend', Ida Nos, claims her third cousin's best friend's wife's co-worker knows it, does not make it so. ♠

What is a RAW File?

RAW is NOT an abbreviation so writing it as RAW is actually wrong. But JPG is an abbreviation. A raw file is literally a raw file. (raw: In its natural state; not yet processed or purified.)

There's a sensor in your camera. When you take a shot, the shutter opens (if it's a DSLR) and the sensor is exposed to the light depending on your shutter speed. Then the shutter closes and the sensor collects the information and sends it to the processor to process it. That's where the option comes in use. You can shoot in two formats: raw and JPG. When the data comes in the processor, the processor needs to decide on what to do to the data. Save it on the memory card the way it is or 'manipulate' it. If you set it on RAW, the data comes from the sensor to the processor and directly goes on the memory card WITHOUT any modification. This is why it's called raw. It means the photo is NOT modified by the camera at all.

But if you set it on JPG, when the data comes from the sensor to the processor, the processor has to apply a series of modifications on the image. JPG is an 8-bit image. RAW files are 12- and 14-bit images. It means that your sensor captures a lot of information then sends it to the processor. The processor then needs to convert the raw data to JPG.

JPG does not support 14-bit images. So the processor literally removes data from your image in order to convert it to an 8-bit image and in order to minimize the file size.

Then it applies the options you have chosen like white balance, sharpness, clarity, HDR, vibrance, etc. Then the camera sends the information to your memory card to be saved.

This is why some say shoot in RAW because you have the very raw and original data.

There are also lots of advantages to RAW. You can always change the exposure up to five stops with RAW files, change the white balance without seeing banding (color fringing). Also your RAW files are absolutely indestructible. You can never overwrite a RAW file. Also in case of copyright violation, you can prove that you own the copyright by bringing the RAW file. The RAW files cannot be produced by computers so if you have a RAW file, it means you have taken the photo and therefore you own the copyright.

But don't forget that there are also disadvantages. RAW files occupy more space on your hard drive because they contain a lot of information. An 18MP raw file can be up to 25MB but an 18MP JPG file can be about 8MB. Another disadvantage is that many devices do not read raw files. (RAW is NOT an extension. Every company has its own RAW extension. For example, Canon's raw extension is CR2 and Nikon's raw extension is NEF.)

But the question is: Do you have to shoot in RAW or JPG? Well, that's totally up to you. If you retouch your images a lot then it's better to shoot in RAW. If you go out for a vacation and want to shoot and then print photos on your PC and upload them on Facebook without retouching your images one by one then you should shoot in JPG, because you don't need to convert them. You always have to convert your raw files to JPG or any other format to be able to publish them online. ♠

Tablets

continued from Page 6

copy the files from the tablet to the laptop.

Without rooting the Android tablet, backups do not include application settings. Want to preserve your high score or customized settings on your favorite game? The only way is to root the tablet and run a program like My Backup Pro or Titanium Backup Pro.

Whew! Are you as tired as I am?

You've probably noticed a lack of Windows tablets? Ok, the Acer W500 is a Windows tablet and it's currently running both Windows 8 and Android Ice Cream sandwich.

I simply cannot afford a Windows Surface tablet. They do look very interesting. The main claim to fame seems to be the ability to run Microsoft Office. Hummmm, is this enough to sell a $500 device?

Stay tuned!

We've been through a lot and hopefully you have a better idea about tablets and some pointers on what to look for when shopping for a tablet.

What other things might you find? ♠

Free OCR Service

Free-OCR.com is a free online OCR (Optical Character Recognition) tool. Use this service to extract text from any image you supply. The service is free, no registration necessary. They also do not need your email address. Just upload your image files. Free-

OCR takes either a JPG, GIF, TIFF, BMP or PDF (only first page). The only restriction is that the images must not be larger than 2MB, no wider or higher than 5000 pixels and there is a limit of 10 image uploads per hour.

- Steve Costello, BRCS

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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