



Newsletter

Connecticut PC User's Group

October 2013
Vol. 32 No. 2

Next CTPC Meeting

Tuesday, October 22, 2013 - 6:30 p.m.

Skype

At this month's meeting, CTPC members Bill Hart and Ed Fitzgerald will talk about Skype, the IP communications application created in Denmark in 2003, sold to eBay in 2005 and purchased by Microsoft on May 10, 2011.

According to Wikipedia, "The Skype service allows users to communicate with peers by voice using a microphone, video by using a webcam, and instant messaging over the Internet. Phone calls may be placed to recipients on the traditional telephone networks. Calls to other users within the Skype service are free of charge, while calls to landline telephones and mo-

bile phones are charged via a debit-based user account system. Skype has also become popular for its additional features, including file transfer, and videoconferencing.

Unlike most other VoIP services, Skype is a hybrid peer-to-peer and client-server system. It makes use of background processing on computers running Skype software, and this is reflected in Skype's original proposed name of Sky Peer-to-Peer.

Bill will give an overview of Skype and

Continued on Page 6

Oct 22nd Tuesday, 6:30 p.m.
CTPC Meeting
Silver Star Diner, Norwalk, CT

Nov 26th 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 - see page 10 for background on Ira

Is Windows Going the Way of the Dinosaur?

Microsoft has been the major provider of computer operating systems since the earliest days of the personal computer. I have had my own PCs running a series of Microsoft operating systems including MS-DOS, Windows 3.1, Windows 95, Windows 98, Windows ME (no jokes, please), Windows 2000, XP, Vista, and Windows 7. I have tried Windows 8 on a new computer, and setup several computers using Windows 8, and I did not personally find it as difficult to use as some allege that it is. Throughout American and world history, many companies have grown to a huge size with enormous profitability, only to enter a state of decline where if they survive, they tend to be only a shadow of their former greatness. Busi-

nesses depending on a specific line of products and services tend to follow the traditional product life cycle known to all business students; introduction, growth, maturity, and then decline. With some thought we can all think of some megabusinesses that have dramatically declined including big steel, big railroads, "Ma

Intel, AMD, and other component makers. According to an April 10, 2013 press release from IDG, "PC Shipments Post the Steepest Decline Ever in a Single Quarter" (source: <http://www.idc.com/getdoc.jsp?containerId=prUS24065413>), Bob O'Donnell, IDC Program Vice President said,

WEBSITES:

- <http://www.zdnet.com/windows-its-over-7000013964/>
- <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887324695104578414973888155516.html>
- <http://www.foxnews.com/tech/2013/04/11/windows-8-blamed-for-biggest-pc-shipment-plunge-ever/>
- <http://www.foxnews.com/tech/2013/03/26/windows-8-update-coming-this-summer/>
- <http://www.idc.com/getdoc.jsp?containerId=prUS24065413>

Bell", Montgomery Ward, and many others. There are some contemporary pundits who are now adding Microsoft to that esteemed list of big businesses that matured in the past, and may now be in a state of decline.

While some blame the economy, competition, or technological change for the decline of Microsoft and its flagship operating system Windows, there is no doubt that Microsoft's current offering, Windows 8, is no where even close to meeting its sales projections. This failure to meet sales projections has also hurt others in the industry dependent of the sales of Windows based computers, including such manufacturers as Dell and HP, as well as

"Worldwide PC shipments totaled 76.3 million units in the first quarter of 2013 (1Q13), down -13.9% compared to the same quarter in 2012 and worse than the forecast decline of -7.7%, according to the International Data Corporation (IDC) Worldwide Quarterly PC Tracker. The extent of the year-on-year contraction marked the worst quarter since IDC began tracking the PC market quarterly in 1994. The results also marked the fourth consecutive quarter of year-on-year shipment declines. ... At this point, unfortunately, it seems clear that the Windows 8 launch not only failed to provide a positive boost to the PC market, but appears to have

Continued on Page 4

Table of Contents

Way of the Dinosaur?	1
The Tip Corner	2
Tech Toys to Make Senior Life Easier	3
The Mac Corner	3
Windows 8 Corner - The Store App	4
Threats to Android Mobile Devices	5
Winows 8 Hacks: A Review	6
What Are File Types?	6
Simple Tips for Microsoft Word	7
The Digital Zone - A Review	7
Useful Bits & Pieces	8
Web Browsing 101	9

The Tip Corner

LCD Resolutions

LCD monitors are super. They're flatter, lighter, and let's face it, cooler than the bulky old CRTs out there. However, unlike CRTs, LCDs look their sharpest at their native resolutions, such as 1,280 x 960 or 1,600 x 1,200 pixels, as listed in their users' manuals. If you have your computer's display settings set to a different resolution, onscreen text and graphics may appear slightly fuzzy. On the other hand, the native resolution may be so fine relative to the physical size of the screen that onscreen objects may be way too small for your tastes. If the labels of your icons are too tiny to read at the LCD's native resolution, try lower settings until you find a resolution that's reasonably sharp. If you are the market for a new monitor, look around for a touch screen which will make you ready for Win 8 when you get it.

Adjust Monitor Brightness

Since we are on monitors let me ask: Do your eyes hurt after sitting at your computer, it may not just be from spending too much time staring at your screen. An overly bright monitor (particularly in a dark room) can be uncomfortable for some users. Check your monitor's sides and bottom (of the screen, rather than the stand) for buttons that will let you lower the display's brightness setting.

Log Out Quickly

If you regularly log out of your Windows XP/Vista computer instead of shutting it down, try this handy key combination to quickly switch user accounts or "lock" your computer, depending upon your security settings. Press the Windows key (next to the ALT key on many keyboards) and L at the same time. You'll still be logged on, but you'll be able to switch user accounts. If your account requires a password, your PC will be "locked" until you supply it. When you return to the same account, you'll see the same documents and applications that were open before you pressed Windows-L.

WEP & WPA

You probably already know that you shouldn't set up a WLAN (wireless local-area network) or Internet connection without protection in the form of encryption. What you may not realize is that WEP (Wired Equivalent Privacy) encryption is

no longer enough in the eyes of most experts. WEP may discourage casual attempts to connect by nearby users that detect your WLAN's presence, but it won't keep out skilled and determined hackers. A better choice is WPA (Wi-Fi Protected Access), which adds several layers of protection beyond WEP. To use it though, you'll need WPA support in both your router or access point and your computer's wireless adapter.

Convert To Print or Web

Microsoft Publisher's Convert To Print and Convert To Web Publication options let you change a print publication to a Web publication and vice versa. Open the publication you want to convert and click File. Next, click either Convert to Web Publication or Convert to Print Publication and follow the instructions to make the switch. As a word of caution, certain features available in one publication type may not be available in the other, so your publication may experience a few formatting changes when you convert it.

Take a Screenshot in Word

Microsoft Word 2010 provides you with the capability to take a screenshot from another open program and paste it within Word. Just click the Insert tab and select Screenshot.

Gadwin Screen Capture

Since I mentioned the Word 2010 screenshot capability, I thought I would mention Gadwin Screen Capture. This is a free download (just Google Gadwin) and allows you to take a screenshot of a window at any time. You can be on the internet, browsing a PowerPoint presentation or any time you want to capture something on the screen. Once loaded it works when you hit the printScrn button. (I think the latest version has you hold down the Control key at the same time). You can set up the name of the capture and whether you want to capture it to the clip board or to a PrintScreen folder, or both. What you end up with is a jpg or bmp picture. If you take a picture of a document you can always use a free OCR program to convert it to actual text. One thing you must do is set it for 'rectangle' while you are setting it up. This way you can capture any size portion of the screen - from full monitor to a small rectangle containing just what you need. I know there are other screen capture pro-

grams out there, but I have been using this one for many years and it works simply and flawlessly.

Background Removal Tool

Need to quickly remove the background from an image? With the Background Removal Tool in Microsoft Word 2010, you can clean up the background to make your image blend with the document.

Recall A Message In Outlook

Catch a spelling error right as you were sending out an email? If you are using Microsoft Outlook, you can recall the message. Open your sent messages, open the email you want to recall, select Actions (located in the Move section of the ribbon), and click Recall This Message.

Put Recent Items On The Start Menu

Windows 7 has a Recent Items feature, which can display any documents you've recently used. To put this button on your Start Menu, click Start and then right-click the Start menu. Click Properties. When the Taskbar And Start Menu Properties window opens, click the Start Menu tab and then click the Customize button. When the Customize Start Menu button opens, scroll down to Recent Items and check its box. Click the OK button. Click the OK button on the Taskbar And Start Menu Properties window. Now, click the Start button. You'll see the Recent Items button on the right side of the Start Menu. Hover the mouse over Recent Items (or click it) and you'll see the list of recently used documents. Click any document in the list to open that item.

Go Incognito

If you are using a friend's computer and don't want your browsing history to remain on his PC after you leave, you might want to use Chrome's Incognito window. It prevents the PC from retaining most traces of your browsing. (It won't, however, prevent a keystroke capture device from tracking your keystrokes.) To use the feature, click the wrench icon and then click New Incognito Window. ♠

Tech Toys to Make Senior Life Easier

Once upon a time, as far back as the 1990s, the words “technology, techie, electronic gizmos” and others made mature adults cringe. “I can’t understand them”, or “I’m too old to learn new things”, or “I don’t need all that stuff” were often uttered reactions to the wave of the new silicon chip world.

But, as is the case with new technology today, the speed of progress is limitless.

It is also a fact that “mature adults” now are more in-sync with the gadget world than ever before. One of the primary reasons for this phenomenon is the fact that the gadget-makers are making the products easier to use, easier to understand and more functional for navigating through the aging process.

Here are some examples of what I’m talking about:

Google Wallet

Google’s payment application or “app” replaces a wallet full of credit cards, coupons or cash. When you check out at one of the retailers signed up for the system you simply tap your smartphone to a special terminal and use any debit or credit card. Your phone then sends payment info to the terminal. Google Offers from participating merchants are redeemed automatically.

Currently, you can use the app at many popular stores, including Macy’s, Champs, Bloomingdale’s, The Container Store, CVS Pharmacy, Jack in the Box and others. <http://www.google.com/wallet/>

Looxcie Live

Looxcie Live is the first app to make sharing real-time video hands-free. It pulls continuous video from the company’s one-ounce, ear-mounted Bluetooth camcorder. Depending on the strength of the network connection, the app adjusts the video resolution for smooth replay. Family and friends can view the video through a browser or the Looxcie app. The camcorders start at \$150. www.looxcie.com

Misfit Shine

Misfit Wearables has introduced an activity monitor or tracker that is not only useful, but also manages to make a fashion statement. The Misfit Shine tracks steps taken, and distances swum or cycled. It is waterproof and sturdy with a six-month replaceable battery. The \$79 device also al-

lows you to transfer the collected data by holding it close to your smartphone’s screen. www.misfitwearables.com/shine

iLunar RBX-500

Want to turn your room into one giant stereophonic experience? Now you can with the iLunar RBX-500 Bluetooth/dock music system. Using Sonic Emotion’s Absolute 3D sound technology, the iLunar system eliminates “sweet spots” and fills the entire room with top-quality sound no matter where you are situated. Dock your iPod or iPhone into the system and it streams music wirelessly from any Bluetooth-compatible smartphone, tablet or PC. Amazon has it for \$249.

<http://www.intl.onkyo.com/>

y-charge 2.1

Charging your phone, laptop or video-player while in your vehicle has always been a one-at-a-time affair. Not anymore.

Danny Uff, Lehigh Valley Computer Group, PA, April & May 2013 issues, The LVCG Journal, www.lvcg.org, [danny.uff \(at\) gmail.com](mailto:danny.uff@gmail.com)

The Mac Corner

iTunes 11

Now that iTunes 11 is out, some users may be wondering how (or even if) they can still convert a song to other file formats such as MP3.

Fortunately, Apple did not take that feature away in iTunes 11. But the steps are slightly different than in other versions. Here’s how:

1. Just go to iTunes Preferences General Import Settings.
2. From the Import using option, select MP3 Encoder.
3. Under that is the Settings option, select the bit rate at which you want the file recorded at. The higher the number, the better the quality of the music.
4. The “use error correction” option doesn’t apply here since we’re not taking the file from a CD.
5. Click “OK” twice to get back to iTunes.

When there, click on the Songs Tab to bring up your song library in a list format.

To convert one song, right click (or CTRL-CLICK) on a song. A drop down menu will appear. Look for an option that says “Create MP3 Version” and click it. The conversion process should begin.

The y-charge 2.1 Dual USB Car Charger allows two devices to be charged simultaneously. It is small, lightweight and has a brightly colored casing. Price: \$99 at www.tylt.com.

YUBZ Retro Handset

Back in the old days people weren’t subjected to every phone call made near them – the microphone part of a phone handset was close to the mouth. YUBZ has brought back the old Bell-style handset with a modern twist – it connects to a mobile phone. The company says it also reduces radiation from holding a mobile phone close to your ear. Each handset is shipped with adapters to fit a large variety of phones. Available in solid or customized artwork styles, the YUBZ Retro Handsets are priced at \$45 and \$56, respectively.

<http://www.yubz.com/retro-handsets/> ♠

When finished, you’ll have two versions of the song. One version is the iTunes file, and the other is the newly created MP3 file.

To get to the new MP3 file, do the following:

1. Go to the Finder and select the Music Folder.
2. Select iTunes iTunes Media Music Band Name Album Name.
3. The MP3 file and the iTunes file should be shown.
4. Copy the MP3 file to the device that you wish to have the file on.
5. That’s it.

Note: If you have any songs in iCloud, you have to download the song(s) to your computer before you can convert them.

To convert more than one song at a time, select the first song you wish to convert, then hold down the [SHIFT] Key and use the [DOWN ARROW] to highlight the song(s) that you wish to convert.

Then do the conversion steps above.

Security for Your Mac

Security for your Mac is very important and should be at the top of anyone’s “to-

Continued on Page 8

slowed the market.” Sales of PCs in the United States were down 12.7% in the first quarter of 2013, following a plunge of 18.3% over all of 2012. In the fourth quarter of 2012, which included the busy Christmas shopping season US sales of PCs totaled 14.2 million, down 9.6% from the same quarter in 2011, the lowest level since 2006.

Some of the issues that have dissuaded consumers from purchasing PCs running Windows 8 is the initial appearance of its “Metro” interface that utilizes “tiles” on its default desktop, rather than the more familiar icons used since the earliest days of Windows. While it is fairly simple to display a more traditional desktop on Windows 8, many users find the default tile approach confusing, and notice that the lack of the classical “Start” button annoying. For many users, tiles are a convenient way to have live, real-time content on their desktops which can simultaneously display any of many combinations of social media, news, sports, weather, stock quotes, entertainment, and other content in each of the individual tiles. While many users of tablets and other touch screen devices find that manipulating tiles with a swipe of the finger to be fast and convenient, many users of the more traditional PCs with monitors or laptop computers find working with the tiles confusing and cumbersome. Among the most popular free-ware downloads for Windows 8 are utilities that restore the start button of Windows 7 and earlier versions of Windows, as well as set the traditional desktop with icons as the default desktop in Windows 8. Despite the ready availability of free utilities that make Windows 8 look and work more like Windows 7 or XP (very few want Windows 8 to behave and look like Windows Vista), there are many potential purchasers of PCs that have forgone the purchase of a new computer because they do not want a new PC with Windows 8.

In an article dated April 15, posted on the well respected ZDNet, author Steven J. Vaughan-Nichols proclaimed, “Windows: It’s over”, giving his interpretation of facts that Windows is nearing its end as an operating system (source: www.zdnet.com/windows-its-over-7000013964). Citing the growth of smart phones and tablets running operating systems other than Windows, which have

taken away Windows’ market share (other sources have published that Google’s Android operating system has taken 75% of the market for tablets and smart phones), the decline of Windows as we know it is inevitable. According to Vaughan-Nichols, “... Windows 8 gets to take a lot of the blame too. After all, the debate wasn’t whether or not Windows 8 was any good. It’s not. The debate was over whether it could be saved.”

With the threat of a disastrous operating system that had the noble idea of unifying the interface used on PCs, tablets and smart phones, Microsoft is well aware of the predicament that it is in, considering the drastic decline in revenues of Windows 8, compared to its previously rosy projections. Microsoft might get a second chance or reprieve when later this summer, it releases an “improved” version of Windows 8, codenamed “Blue”, which will be released as Windows 8.1. The new product will likely be rolled out at a software developers’ conference in San Francisco, to be held June 26–28. Supposedly, Microsoft is well aware that the current iteration of Windows 8 is too touch screen focused and is not very intuitive (one Microsoft VP allegedly used the word “counterintuitive” in a blog post on Windows 8). “Product leaders across Microsoft are working together on plans to advance our devices and services, a set of plans referred

to internally as Blue,” wrote Frank X. Shaw, corporate vice president of corporate communications at Microsoft. Among the changes and improvements rumored to be included in Windows 8.1 includes resizable tiles (already available in Windows 8 smart phones), and the ability to customize the Start Screen without having to go through the Desktop Control Panel. Other rumored improvements to Windows 8.1 includes the ability to “snap” two windows side-by-side, as well as to optionally display four running applications on the display (source: fox-news.com/tech/2013/03/26/windows-8-u-pdate-coming-this-summer).

Will “Blue” be able to save Windows 8 from the dustbin of failed operating systems, and stop the hemorrhage of market share currently being suffered by Microsoft? Will Microsoft even survive as a corporation in its current form, as other operating systems win away market share for new technology smart devices, for which Microsoft is currently only a bit player? Is Microsoft the “Titanic” of the software industry, unable to turn in time to avoid disaster? Only time will tell. Good luck Microsoft; I have used your products faithfully for almost 30 years, and would hate to see you go the way of your long ago nemesis, IBM’s OS/2. ♠

[See editor’s note at the top of page 5]

Rosita Herrick, Member, Sarasota PCUG, FL, May 2013 issue, PC Monitor, www.spcug.org, editor (at) spcug.org

Windows 8 Corner – The Store App

One of the Apps (applications) distributed with Windows 8 is the Store application as shown below.

There are over 100 free Apps available for download including games, productivity and utility Apps like U-tube Downloader, Windows 8 Tool Box etc.

When you click on the Store app, you will see three tiles titled: Top Paid, Top Free and New Releases. Clicking on any of these tiles will open a full screen with names, (prices if any) and description.

Installing an App from the Microsoft store is easy. If the App is free, just click on the install box and in less than a minute it is installed and available for access. If the App is not free, you can download it for a free trial or pay using your Microsoft ac-

count.

Uninstalling an App is just as easy. On the Start Screen, right click on the App. At the bottom of the screen, a bar with 6 icons is displayed. Just click on the Uninstall icon and it will be uninstalled and removed from your PC.

If you are curious why the number 1 is displayed on the Store App tile, it is because on one of the Apps I downloaded it has an available update. When I click on the Store tile, the Update link is displayed on the upper right corner.

A click on the link will show the name of the App (in this case Utube Player/Downloader) and at the bottom of the screen will be the option to install the update. ♠

DHS, FBI, Warn About Threats to Android Mobile Devices

[Ira provides a number of interesting screen shots to go along with each of his articles. Due to space constraints, I omit them from the printed version of the newsletter but post all of them on the CTPC website. They are at the end of the HTML version of this article - see the September online newsletter. CTPC Editor]

In a document labeled "U//FOUO (Unclassified For Official Use Only) Roll Call Release for Police, Fire, EMS and Security Personnel", dated July 23, 2013 the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the FBI issued a warning about security threats to Android powered mobile devices.

According to recently published industry figures, mobile devices powered by Google's Android operating system currently comprise about 75% of all mobile smart devices, making Android the world's most widely used mobile operating system. Even though Google designed Android to be secure, and have each running "app" or program run in a closed memory space or "sandbox" in order to protect one bad app from infecting the entire device, Android devices have become a primary target for malware authors. Because the Android operating system is released as "open source", and the program has much in common with the well known Java operating system, Android has become the targeted operating system of choice for creators of malware.

While Google has frequently released updates and upgrades to Android, many of which have improved and increased the security of the operating system, 44% of Android users are still using the out-of-date (2011) "Gingerbread" or versions 2.3.3 to 2.3.7 of the operating system. These older versions of Android, which were once thought to be secure, are now known to have several known security vulnerabilities; Google repaired and patched these vulnerabilities in later versions of Android. In this "Roll Call Release", the DHS and FBI warned that, "The growing use of mobile devices by federal, state, and local authorities makes it more important than ever to keep mobile OS patched and up-to-date." It only seems logical that this warning would equally apply to privately owned Android devices as well. Personally, as the owner of several Android powered mobile devices, I can attest to the fact that many of the "older" Android devices running

some form of Gingerbread, many of which are still currently available in the marketplace as "new" devices, cannot be readily upgraded to the newer versions of Android. The latest version of Android re-

security suites listed by Gizmo are available from the Google Play Store, accessible directly through the device, or from Android web store at play.google.com.

The second major type of threat to An-

WEBSITES:

<http://publicintelligence.net/dhs-fbi-android-threats/>
<http://info.publicintelligence.net/DHS-FBI-AndroidThreats.pdf>
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Android_\(operating_system\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Android_(operating_system))
<http://www.techsupportalert.com/content/best-free-antivirus-app-android.htm>
<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.qihoo.security>
<http://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.trustgo.mobile.security>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carrier_IQ
http://money.cnn.com/2011/12/01/technology/carrier_iq/index.htm
<http://androidsecuritytest.com/features/logs-and-services/loggers/carrieriq/>
http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=T17XQI_AYNo

leased by Google is "Jelly Bean", a tweak to version 4.3, released on August 23, 2013. It is important that, in terms of security, the latest Android updates available be installed and updated again as appropriate.

According to this DHS-FBI warning, there are three primary security threat types currently targeting mobile devices running the Android operating system. Almost one-half of the current threats are called "SMS (Text Messaging) Trojans". Targeting predominately the older, unpatched versions of Android, such as Gingerbread, these trojans send text messages, unknown by the user, to premium rate numbers owned or operated by the hackers; these financial charges, often unreasonably high, appear on the monthly bills of the victim user, with the bulk of the proceeds going to the criminal enterprise. While Android devices are essentially immune from traditional computer viruses, the DHS-FBI warning suggests that this threat can be reduced with the simple installation of a comprehensive security app. While almost all of the commercial security software companies offer a paid Android security suite, there are also several excellent Android security suites available for free. An updated list (revised August 8) of the top rated free Android security suites is available from Gizmo's TechSupportAlert.com at www.techsupportalert.com/content/best-free-antivirus-app-android.htm. According to the Gizmo reviews, the current top-rated free Android security suite is 360 Mobile Security - Antivirus by Qihu Software, closely followed by what I have on my personal Android phone, TrustGo Antivirus & Mobile Security. These, and all of the other free

droid powered devices are generically called "Rootkits", which are a type of malware that hides itself from traditional forms of detection. In 2011, a controversial rootkit, that had likely been intentionally installed on the phone by its manufacturer or carrier, was found to be running on millions of mobile devices. According to Wikipedia (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carrier_IQ), an intentionally installed rootkit, Carrier IQ, has been installed on over 150 million Android phones. Wikipedia says that Carrier IQ, "is software, typically pre-installed on mobile devices by handset manufacturers or network operators, designed to gather, store and forward diagnostic measurements on their behalf. Data available can include metrics on the device itself (e.g., firmware, battery levels, application performance, web performance) and performance data on voice and data connectivity between the device and radio towers."

While this may seem innocent enough, as the phone carriers need to monitor system performance, there is also substantial evidence that this Carrier IQ software "phones home" with a lot more than basic performance information. On December 1, 2011, CNN broke the story "Carrier IQ: Your phone's secret recording device" (money.cnn.com/2011/12/01/technology/carrier_iq/index.htm). According to the CNN report, "Carrier IQ is a piece of software installed on millions of mobile phones that logs everything their users do, from what websites they browse to what their text messages say." CNN was referring to an earlier study by Android expert Trevor Eckhart who first published con-

Continued on Page 10

Windows 8 Hacks

Windows 8 Hacks is a nifty little task-oriented volume. It is not an overview or introductory text to Microsoft's latest Operating System. And granted, much of what is contained within these pages can be found online. However, I fall into the category of not knowing enough about Windows 8 and its underpinnings to know what to ask the Great Google to fetch for me. So I looked through this book and thought it would be a great instructional guide to learning the ins and outs of customizing this OS. As I continued to browse, I noticed some of the hacks I was interested in require Windows 8 Pro or Enterprise to be installed on my machine. Microsoft has eliminated many of the command-line utilities we all love to use to get "under the hood" in a new computer's edition of the OS that's installed by default. Sadly, even the first hack, Disable Windows 8's Lock Screen, just won't work for me because `gpedit.msc` is not accessible on my new laptop. I feel as if I just bought a cripple-ware computer! But enough whining.

This book contains an abundance of useful step-by-steps for making Windows 8 more efficient for you. Even more important, there are great explanations of how the particular subject of the hack works. For example, Hack 70: Hack DNS to Speed up Web browsing (a way to speed up your web browsing using any type of connection). This hack has a succinct explanation of the Domain Name System and how to implement the free OpenDNS service on your computer and/or entire network. It's simply a matter of changing the DNS addresses in Internet Protocols on your PC or router. Windows 8 Keyboard Shortcuts are listed nicely in a table in Hack 38.

This is really handy for us non-touchscreen users. Using the keyboard for direct access to features is so much more efficient than pointing at corners of the screen and then click-click-click. Hack 39 is a table of Windows 8 Gestures. Hack 44 is all about SkyDrive, what it is, how to use it, and why you should download SkyDrive for Windows (not the one pre-installed) to gain full functionality.

I surely miss the Start Menu. I hear I am far from alone in this complaint. Hack 8 explains how to create a folder that contains a complete listing of all your installed applications, including the system apps

and Win8 apps.

Pin it to the start menu and drag it into an accessible spot. Double-click the folder to see the complete list and use the new File Explorer search bar to find anything quickly. Hack 85 contains instructions for accessing the Win8 secret administrator account. This account is not subject to the UAC controls. Think super-user or root on Linux systems.

So once you figure out how to get past your start screen, you'll find Preston Gralla's book a great asset in modifying or optimizing everything Windows 8. From [startup and desktop to networking and se-](#)
Jim Cerny, Director, Sarasota PCUG, FL, May 2013 issue, Sarasota PC Monitor, www.spcug.org, [jimcerny123 \(at\) gmail.com](mailto:jimcerny123@gmail.com)

curity to e-mail, hardware and the registry, every aspect of the OS is touched upon.

While the title uses the term Hacks, I consider them 121 gems of hidden keys to opening up the potential of Win 8.

About: *Windows 8 Hacks: Tips & Tools for Unlocking the Power of Tablets and Desktops*

Author: Preston Gralla

Publisher: O'Reilly Media

<http://shop.oreilly.com/product/0636920024958.do>

ISBN-13: 978-1449325756

Price: \$24.99, \$14.45 @ Amazon ♣

What Are File Types?

Did you ever try to open a file and the computer wouldn't let you? Did you ever wonder what those three or four letters mean after the dot (i.e. period) in a file name? Well, it all has to do with "file types" also known as file "formats". And the purpose of my article is to give you a good basic overview of "file types".

Why are there different "types" of files?
Well, there are many different programs out there that can run on your computer. These programs are written by different people and different companies. If you use a program to create (and save) a new file you will generally need that program to open or use that file. For example, if I use the Paint program to create a drawing, and I save that file in the "My documents" folder, I will need to open the Paint program again to see that file. If I give that file to someone else, that person needs to use the Paint program on their computer to open and see my drawing. In another example, if I create a spreadsheet using the Excel program, I will need to use the Excel program to open that spreadsheet. That's not too hard to understand, is it? The problem is when you try to open a file you did not create on your computer. Suppose, for example, someone sent you a file attached to an email. You need the right program to open that file.

What are some common "file types"?
Here are some common file types and the code (three or four characters after the dot in a file name) that is used for each:

.bmp – Microsoft Bitmap image (created by the Microsoft Paint program)

.doc – Microsoft Word doc (2003 version)

.docx – Microsoft Word doc (2010 version)

.exe – an "executable" file (i.e. a program)

.html – Hypertext Markup Language (used for creating web pages)

.jpg – Photo, picture, or drawing image

.mpg – a movie or video

.pdf – Portable document format (Microsoft WordPad program)

.ppt – Microsoft Power Point

.rtf – Rich Text Format, a basic text file

.xls – Microsoft Excel spreadsheet

And there are only a few thousand more! You can get the huge list by using Google and entering "file types" or you can learn about a particular file type by entering it in Google as well. The point here is that if a program can create a file you need the same program to open or use that file.

Now having said all that, there are programs than can open and save more than one file type. If you have a digital camera and take photos, for example, each photo is a file and each photo is probably a ".jpg" file (or file type). But there are MANY programs out there than can open these types of photo files and work with them – Picasa, FastStone Image Viewer, Windows Photo Viewer, Adobe Photoshop, and the Paint program are just a few. They can all open and work with .jpg photos.

On the other side of the coin, a program may be able to save the same file as different file types. For example, if I create a new document using the Microsoft

Continued on Page 9

Simple Tips for Microsoft Word

If you use Microsoft Word, you will want to read this list of simple tips that can make you feel like an expert in no time at all.

Find a Recently Used Document

It seems to happen to everyone. You created a document just the other day and now you can't find it. Don't worry. Word makes it easy to find anything you recently worked on. Just click on File then choose Recent. In Word 2010, Recent Documents will be listed on the left side of the screen and Recent Places will be listed on the right. They are listed in order with the most recently used items on the top. Scroll down and choose the document you are looking for. On this list of recent documents screen, you will see a pin next to each document. Click on the pin and that file will be pinned to the upper part of the recent window for quick access at any time.

Correct a Mistake

None of us like to admit to making mistakes, but we all make them. Microsoft Word and many other programs will respond to this quick keystroke that can correct just about any mistakes you can make. Just hold down the Ctrl key and pressing

CTPC Meeting - from Page 1

Ed will focus on the Microsoft's Skype integration, particularly as it affects Windows 8. They will demonstrate the process of making a call from PC to smartphone.

On a similar topic if time permits, Walt Graham will give an overview of an app combo that can help cut cell phone costs or fill in service where the cell provider's network is spotty but WiFi is available. Talkatone (good app, terrible name) along with Google Voice can enable a cell phone to make and receive phone calls through its WiFi and data connections.

Meetings are held at the Silver Star diner in Norwalk. We invite 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 Z key at the same time. This will undo your last action. You can use this function to erase a sentence, delete formatting that you've just added, or just about anything else. This shortcut is especially useful when you don't know what just happened. If the page suddenly looks different and you don't know what happened, try CTRL+Z to undo the last action. If the undo is not satisfactory, you can use CTRL+Y to redo the action. This function is even more useful when you realize that you can undo more than one previous action. Continuing to press CTRL + Z will undo one change at a time often back up to 12 or more changes. Remember this tip will also work in many other programs, as well.

Print only Part of a Document

We all like to print the documents we create, but sometimes we just want to print one or two paragraphs rather than the entire document. Word, and other programs like it make that easy to do. Just highlight the portion of the text you want to print and click the Print icon. When the printer dialog window appears, look for an area that says Page Range and choose the option Selection.

In Word 2010, they have changed the print option box. If you are using Word 2010, look for the Setting area of that

Reviewed by Mark Mattson, Editor, Computer Users of Erie, PA, www.cuerie.com, cuerie1 (at) roadrunner.com

The Digital Zone System by Robert Fisher

For those of you who grew up in the black and white film photography days, the phrase 'Zone System' should ring a bell for you. For those of you that have never heard of it until now, this book should be on your reading list, especially if you want to improve your photography skills.

The Zone System was developed by Ansel Adams in an effort to allow the capture of the widest possible tonal range in images possible. It is a ten step (eleven, actually, counting zero) exposure system, where exposures are separated into zones, with zero being pure black and zone 10 being pure white.

The concept and use of the Zone System is to give photographers a guide to allowing their photos to be properly exposed across the entire tonal range. In the simplest terms, to make use of the Zone Sys-

tem, you expose for the shadows, and develop for the highlights. In other words, you want to make your exposure such that there is sufficient detail in the shadows, but you also will need to develop the image so that the highlights also retain detail, and do not burn out.

Zoom In To See Better

Newer versions of Word have a zoom control box at the bottom right of the screen. You can use the slider to see as much of the screen as you like and to make the text larger or smaller. If you have an older version of Word you can accomplish the same thing by holding down the CTRL key and moving the wheel on your mouse up and down.

Some people have trouble highlighting text. That simple click-and-drag technique can be difficult if your hand shakes. So here is a simple technique that can be used. It can also be a valuable time-saver. To highlight a word, double-click on that word. To highlight a paragraph, triple-click on any word in that paragraph. To highlight a single sentence, hold down the CTRL key and then click on any word in that sentence.

If you found any of these tips useful, I encourage you to investigate Word a little farther. We have just touched the surface here. Word is filled with useful features and shortcuts that can be beneficial even to the casual user. ♠

This was oftentimes a long involved process in the old wet darkroom days. Adams would make countless prints to arrive at the desired look and feel he wanted, and he set out to make it easier on not only himself, but countless other photographers. The result was the Zone System.

The digital darkroom is a much different place than the old wet one. Computers, software and digital imaging have made the production of outstanding prints even easier than before.

Continued on Page 10

Useful Bits & Pieces

Open Garden

Open Garden has nothing to do with horticulture. It's a technology that interconnects devices such as smartphones, laptops and tablets to form a wireless peer-to-peer mesh network for access to the Internet. For example, by installing Open Garden on your cell phone and laptop (PC and Mac), your laptop has access to the Internet via your phone when Wi-Fi hot spots are not available. If others have Open Garden installed on their devices you would all share connectivity and bandwidth. It is the digital equivalent of grazing on the commons. Open Garden provides an "automatic path choice." When the software detects multiple Internet connections, it will select the fastest one available and will switch to another connection if the original slows or goes off line. The advantage is that it can offload traffic from an overburdened access route to one less utilized, say from a 3G or 4G connection to an enabled Wi-Fi__33 connection.

Currently Open Garden is available for Android, Windows, and Macintosh operating systems. An iOS version (for the iPhone) is planned for the future. In principal widespread deployment of this technology could reduce capital expenditures for wireless carriers such as Verizon, AT&T, Sprint, etc. by transferring traffic from their cellular circuits to Wi-Fi__33. However, the carriers might revolt if they perceive they will lose revenue that is not made up by lower capital investments. It is a complex business situation and no one knows at this time how the cell phone companies will react or if consumers will adopt Open Garden. For more information see <http://opengarden.com/>,

<http://opengarden.net/> and <http://opengarden.com/story.php>.

Improving PC Performance by Adding Memory

Increasing the amount of memory in your PC is the simplest and least expensive way to improve performance. The procedure is quite simple even for those who are hardware challenged. These instructions pertain to desktop PCs, although adding or changing memory in laptops is similar (see <http://www.wikihow.com/Upgrade-YourLaptop%27s-RAM-Memory>).

1. Determine how much memory is

currently in your computer (instructions for Windows 7) by: left-click on Start, right-click on Computer, then left-click on Properties. Under System will be a line "Installed memory (RAM)".

2. Determine how many memory slots are available in your computer. This can be done by consulting your PC owner's manual, opening up your computer for inspection (more on this later), or using one of the tools such as that available from Crucial.com (see below).

3. Determine how much memory you need. This is rather subjective. Many will advise "you can't have too much memory", but 4-8 GB is probably adequate for most people. 12-16 GB or more may be advisable for those doing video or photo editing. For those playing computer games or doing heavy duty processing, the more the better.

4. Determine the correct memory needed for your computer. Again, this information should be available in your PC owner's manual. For example, for the HP Pavilion HPE h8xt the memory specified is SO-DIMM, 204-pin DDR3DIMM, PC3-10600 (1333 MHz) DDR3-SDRAM, Unbuffered, non-EC (64-bit) DIMMs, 1.5 V memory only. It is crucial that you buy the correct memory; there are many kinds of memory (DDR, DDR2, DDR3, RDRAM, SDRAM, etc.) sold by numerous vendors (Amazon, Newegg, TigerDirect, Micro Center, etc.) including some manufacturers. Companies that sell memory will sometimes provide a tool you can download that will tell you the type of memory your computer uses, the number of memory slots available on your machine, etc. For example see Crucial.com at <http://www.crucial.com/store/drammemory.aspx>. It is generally advisable to use exactly the same brand, model with the precise specifications for all memory rather than just add additional memory.

5. Installing the memory.

a. Unplug everything from the computer, although some recommend leaving the power cord plugged in to ground the computer, but be certain the computer is not running.

b. Be sure to ground yourself to the computer case before working on the machine. Static electricity can seriously dam-

age components of your computer. It is preferable to use an antistatic wrist strap for this purpose (see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antistatic_wrist_strap). These devices are quite inexpensive.

c. Open up the computer's case. This will be somewhat different for every machine. Sometimes a screw driver will be needed.

d. Locate the memory module(s) and carefully remove them, assuming they are being replaced. Some memory cards have clips at the ends while others tilt forward or backward to remove. Look carefully and go gently.

e. Snap the new memory module(s) in place taking care to seat them correctly. Apply pressure evenly across the width of module. Often you will hear a "click" as the module is seated.

f. Close up the computer and re-

Continued on Page 9

The Mac Corner

cont'd from Page 3

do" list. Even though the Mac is not as susceptible to as many viruses as Windows, there is always that "what if..." question in the back of your mind. If it isn't, it should be.

But most of us don't think about security when it comes to securing the computer when we are not at the keyboard. We can manually log out each time we leave it, but that can become a pain - especially if you have to do it multiple times during the day.

Fortunately, all recent Macs have the ability to automatically log a user out of his/her

desktop after a given amount of time. Here's how to enable it:

- Go to Apple icon System Preferences.
- Select the Security & Privacy icon.
- Click the General tab and then the Advanced button.
- Place a check mark next to the Log out after option.
- Select the amount of minutes you wait your Mac to wait before it auto-logs you off.
- Click OK to save the above configuration. ♠

Web Browsing 101

Do you know the difference between a browser and a search engine? If not, it's time to learn the jargon! At the same time you can learn all about Web browsers and what they can do for you.

Often when I ask people which Internet browser they are using, they respond "Google." Yet, Google is not a Web browser. It is a search engine. This is a confusing concept for many. When you go to the store you may be browsing through the aisles while searching for a certain item. You can't be searching for a certain item unless you are already in the store browsing through the displays.

You can apply that concept to the Internet. You browse with an Internet browser like Internet Explorer, Google, Chrome, Safari, etc. You search with a search engine like Google or Bing. You cannot use Google, Bing, or any other search engine unless you use a Web browser to get on the Internet first. So the Web browser is your gateway to the Internet.

There are many different Web browsers. If you use a Windows computer, phone, or tablet, the default Web browser is Internet Explorer. You may know it as the blue "e" that you use to get on the Internet. If you are using a Mac, iPad, or iPhone, the default Web browser is Safari. The icon that starts it looks like a compass. Other popular Web browsers include Opera, Firefox, and Chrome.

All of these browsers are free. All work in a similar manner. Each has tabbed browsing, bookmarks, auto fill, zoom, pop-up blockers, and automatic updates. Yet each one is just a little bit different. The toolbars and menus look different. Things are in different places. For instance, each browser handles downloaded files a little differently and may give you different download options and put the downloaded files in different folders.

Sometimes, even main features vary. For instance Safari, Internet Explorer, and Firefox have parental controls. Chrome and Opera do not. Both Opera and Safari have Mouse Gestures, which allow you to move your mouse in simple ways to give the browser commands without using the more cumbersome menu choices. Internet Explorer, Chrome, and Firefox do not have Mouse Gestures.

All of these browsers work with Windows XP, Vista, Windows 7 and Windows 8. All, except Internet Explorer, which is

Windows only, also work with the Mac OS. Depending on which tablet and/or smart phone you own, you can often also install these Web browsers or mobile versions of them on your portable devices. Your tablet may also have a special Web browser for use only on that tablet. One example of this the Web browser called "Silk" that is built-into the Amazon Fire tablets.

If you are working on a PC or Mac, it is a good idea to install a second Web browser. This gives you an alternative way to get on the Internet if, for some reason the browser you usually use is not working properly. Not only can you install two or three different Web browsers, but you can use them all at the same time, if you wish. This makes it easy to try an alternative browser. You can run them side-by-side to decide which one you like better.

If you are currently using Internet Explorer or Safari and want to try another browser, check out Opera or Chrome. If you look at both of these browsers, you will see a stark contrast. Opera has all of the controls and menus visible while Chrome has a much cleaner look, with fewer obvious controls. It is up to you to determine which type of interface you prefer.

Here are links to several popular Web

browsers. All are FREE!

Opera – www.opera.com

Chrome – www.chrome.com

Safari – www.apple.com/safari

Firefox – www.firefox.com

Internet Explorer – Built into Windows ♣

Useful Bits & Pieces

cont'd from Page 8

attach all the peripherals.

g. Boot up the computer and check to verify (step #1) that the computer "sees" all the memory you installed.

6. See <http://www.microsoft.com/athome/setup/addmemory.aspx#fbid=jzzxbLYldz7> for useful information on this topic from Microsoft. ♣

CTPC Dues Due

01/01/14

You can mail your check (postdated or not) to the CTPC, PO Box 291, New Canaan, CT 06840. You can also bring your check to the November meeting.

There is no official meeting in December but we will produce and mail a newsletter. This will give us another opportunity to remind you about your dues. ♣

What are File Types? – continued from Page 6

Word program, when I save the file (using "Save as...") I can select from several file types at the bottom of the "Save as..." window. If you left-click your mouse on the small black triangle arrow at the right end of the "Save as type" box you will get a list of the different file types that Microsoft Word can use to save your document – such as "rich text format", "plain text", or other old versions of Microsoft Word.

So here are the key lessons for today:

1. If you use a program on your computer to create and save a file you will always be able to open that file again because you have the program that created it to begin with.

2. If you try to open a file that you did not create (such as a file someone sent to you via email) you may not be able to open it unless you have a program on your computer that can open that file type.

3. If you receive a file from someone that you cannot open, contact them and ask them what program they used to create that file. If you do not have that program, ask them to send the file to you in a different format – one that you can open with a program you do have.

4. Use Google to find out more information. Perhaps there are some free programs on the internet that will allow you to "open" and "read" a file.

Hopefully this is not too difficult to understand. It really is not the computer's fault (this time, anyway) and it's not your fault either if you cannot open a file someone else has given you. It's like someone giving you a machine made in another country which uses the metric system. You will need metric tools to work on that machine. Or maybe I can just ask my mechanic for help. ♣

cerns that Carrier IQ was transmitting more than just system data, followed up by a YouTube video (http://youtu.be/T17XQI_AYNo) detailing the personal data being captured and sent to the carriers. In his YouTube video, Trevor Eckhart showed how the Carrier IQ software factory installed on his Android phone recorded every key stroke, every text message, and the URL (internet address) of every website that he visited, including websites that are encrypted to prevent tracking. Immediately following the CNN report, the publisher of Carrier IQ announced, “While a few individuals have identified that there is a great deal of information available to the Carrier IQ software inside the handset, our software

does not record, store or transmit the contents of SMS messages, email, photographs, audio or video.” (Wikipedia).

There are several free (and paid) Android apps in the Google Play Store that can detect Carrier IQ, and notify the user of its presence; simply search the Google Play Store (play.google.com) for “Carrier IQ”. While it is free and simple to detect the Carrier IQ rootkit software on Android phones, it is extremely difficult to remove, with some published reports that many phones that have had the Carrier IQ software removed lost functionality, and were no longer covered by warranty (source: Wikipedia). There are also some apps that can cripple some of the Carrier IQ reporting, without actually removing it

from the phone. The DHS-FBI warning recommends that Android devices used by first responders should have Carrier IQ removed. For the record, all of my Android devices tested positive for the Carrier IQ software.

The third security threat mentioned was “Fake Google Play Domains”. These websites were created by cyber crooks to trick innocent users into downloading and installing malicious apps. These malicious apps, which often appear as legitimate music, books, magazines, movies, TV programs, and other applications, are designed to steal sensitive information, financial data, user names, and passwords. While not perfect, as some malicious apps have been slipped through and been posted, the genuine Google Play Store (play.google.com) is probably the safest resource for Android apps. The DHS-FBI warning also advises that security software, such as some of those mentioned above, should be installed on the Android devices and frequently updated. If any malicious software is found, it should be removed immediately, followed by an immediate change in any possibly compromised user names and passwords.

If the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the FBI believe that the security threat to Android devices is serious enough to post a “Roll Call” message to first responders, perhaps the same warnings should be considered by private citizens.

Just in case that Apple iOS device users think that their smart devices are immune from security threats, do not be complacent; your devices are at risk as well. ♠

Ira Wilsker hosts “My Computer Show” a call-in tech support show on KLVI radio, 560AM, from 4-5 p.m. Mondays, Pacific time. The show streams live over the net at KLVI.com and on the free iHeartRadio app.

The Digital Zone System– continued from Page 7

prints even easier than before. One would think that the Zone System would therefore be outdated and not much use any longer.

Nothing could be further from the truth.

In this volume, author Fisher explores the background behind the original Zone System, and goes from there to reveal the logic and details of the Digital Zone System.

Built upon the original system, the Digital Zone System takes into account the technology of today, and adapts it to the digital world. For example, an entire chapter in the book is devoted to exposure and metering in the Digital Zone System.

One important point to remember: the Zone System was originally designed for black and white photography. But with the widespread use of color, the Zone System would be much harder to implement for color shooting. But these issues are also

addressed in the book, allowing you to use the system for all types of imaging. Chapter two is devoted to Color management and setting up Photoshop correctly to allow proper use of the Zone System.

If you want to make the best photos possible, this book should be one you read, no matter how much experience you have. It will get you closer to capturing images that reflect what you see, and spend less time correcting things afterwards. I used the original Zone System in my early days of photography, and this book brings it back in a new and fresh way. I can’t wait to fully implement it into my workflow and see what happens!

This book is published by Rocky Nook, and can be ordered from O’Reilly. It has a list price of \$39.95. The ISBN is 978-1-937538-13-2. O’Reilly’s website is at www.oreilly.com ♠



REPRINTING OF ARTICLES

Unless otherwise noted, nonprofit user groups may reprint or quote from any uncopyrighted articles appearing in the CTPC newsletter without prior permission as long as credit is given to the author and the original publication.

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.

DISCLAIMER

The opinions expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the CTPC or its members.

Neither the CTPC, contributors nor the Editor of this newsletter assume any liability for damages arising out of the publication or non-publication of any advertisement, article or any other item in this newsletter. Articles are published at the discretion of the Editor.