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Attendance at the
January general meeting:
51 members and guests.

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

To Contact CIPCUG

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On Facebook: Facebook.com/groups/cipcug

Nonprofit agency seeks computer helpers

Volunteers with a passion for people and some computer skills are being sought by a Newbury Park nonprofit, Paradox, which has the goal of "bridging the digital divide by providing cost-effective, reliable computers for low-income families and nonprofit organizations."

Robert D. Phillips, president and CEO of Paradox, discussed his efforts at the January meeting. He can be reached at 805-208-1984 or at robert.phillips@paradoxct.org for more information about the project and the skills needed. The website is www.paradoxct.org.

Because of the work involved, Phillips said, he can't provide lots of training for volunteers but will walk them through what is needed. His presentation made it sound like the volunteers would be more involved in software than hardware.

COMMAND.COM

By Jim Brown, President

Hello, everybody.

We are now in the month of February, and one of the holidays that we celebrate is Valentine's Day — a day devoted to the higher ideal of love and respecting the higher qualities of our inner spirit. You might wonder why I am beginning this column with those words. I felt that I should begin this writing this evening because an issue was brought to the attention of your board after the last meeting.

A member of our group alerted the board about a section in the book we have been promoting — "Secret Guide to Computers" contains a section entitled "Tricky Living." It is the "Tricky Living" section that troubled our

Brown

member. The section also troubled our board members. This section of the book contains material that some may find troublesome. The author writes about subjects that do not have anything to do with computers. In reading this section, I believe the author (who is also the publisher) has written information, expressed opinions, and included jokes, many of which I have already seen in emails sent to me. Here I believe the author is an equal opportunity offender. It is as though he has seen so much of emails, etc. that he has become desensitized to the possible feelings of others. The conclusion is that this section does not belong in the guide. If he wanted to create a joke book or express ideas, fine, but this section does not belong in this book.

We have utilized this guide in the past for a number of reasons: It contains useful information on computers; other computer associations have recommended the book and we have seen it as a benefit for our members, and finally we used the book as a fundraising device for our treasury. We did not suspect that anything would be different with this edition of the guide.

Our response is to apologize to any of you who find the section "Tricky Living" troublesome. It is my hope that you can ignore that section. Secondly, we will contact the author and advise him of our feelings and suggest that in the future he writes about the subject of his guide — in this case, computers. We will also write to our larger regional computer associations and advise them of our concerns.

I hope that you might relate instead to my opening words in this column

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GENERAL

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Coming events

No program confirmed by deadline forTOE

Programs

No program had been confirmed by the deadline for this month's TOE, so be sure to check the CIPCUG website closer to the meeting date for the latest details. The February meeting starts at 8:45 a.m. on Feb. 25 in the Camarillo Boys & Girls Club, 1500 Temple Ave. (Ponderosa Drive and Temple Avenue), Camarillo. (See the map on the last page.)

The doors open at 8 a.m. The Internet and Networking SIG and the Social Media SIG will start at 8:45 a.m.

Other meeting dates for this year:

March 24

April 28: Avast

May 26: Abby Stokes, author of "Is This Thing On?"

June 23

July 28

Aug. 25

Sept. 22

Oct. 27

Nov. 17 (**third Saturday**)

Dec. 15 (**third Saturday**)

SIGs

The Special Interest Groups (SIGs) are sponsored by CIPCUG and led by volunteer club members. They are free to CIPCUG members.

Other than those presented during or just after the regular meeting, the SIGs run from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at Ventura County Computers, 2175 Goodyear Ave., Unit 117, Ventura; phone 289-3960. From the 101 Freeway, exit at Telephone, take Telephone south to McGrath, turn left and go one block. Turn right on Goodyear and right again into the second driveway. Unit 117 is the back, right corner of the building. The pre-meeting SIGs are at 8:45 a.m. at the Boys & Girls Club. The after-meeting SIG is at locations to be announced on the meeting day.

Door prizes

We have two types of raffle tickets: one for prizes offered by the presenter and one for club-provided prizes. The tickets for the presenter's prizes are free and limited to one per member.

The tickets for the club-provided prizes are $1 each, $5 for six tickets, $10 for 13 tickets, $15 for 20 tickets and $20 for 27 tickets and are available to anyone. Those who can't stay until the drawing may sign their tickets and give the person selling the tickets a list of the prizes they would like in the order they'd pick them. Winners' prizes will be held until the next meeting.

Consignment table

A consignment table is set up at every meeting. Anyone can buy, but only members can sell.

The club gets 10 percent of the sales price. Sold items must be picked up at the end of the day's meeting.

Any items not picked up will become the property of CIPCUG and will be subject to disposal at the club's discretion.

CIPCUG is not responsible in any way for items bought or sold at the table. Each item is sold as-is unless otherwise stated.

Meeting, SIG notices

If you would like e-mail notices of regular meetings and SIGs, go to www.cipcug.org, where you'll find a link on the home page to sign up. The URL is cipcug.org/listserv.cfm.

You will need your membership number, which is on the back cover of TOE, to complete the sign-up.

The general schedule:

Fourth Tuesday: Linux.

Fourth Saturday (or the regular meeting day): Social Media SIG (Jessica Scott and Mark Maidel) and Internet and connectivity SIG (Toby Scott), 8:45 a.m. The location of Michael Shalkey's after-meeting SIG is announced at the meeting.

The February and March schedules

Minutes of the January meeting

By Diane Mortensen

The CIPCUG Board of Directors held its monthly meeting on Jan. 28, 2012. In attendance were Toby Scott, Craig Ladd, John Weigle, Art Lewis, and Helen Long. Absent were Jim Brown, and Diane Mortensen.

Art presented the December 2011 treasurer's report, which appears elsewhere in TOE. The board approved the December 2011 treasurer's report.

Craig informed the board that there are many possible programs lined up, but at this time, nothing definite is scheduled.

Mortensen

Toby has been working with the Camarillo City Library regarding future computer programs and other possibilities. He stated that the library could not provide a storage area or confirmation of dates. He believes that more communication is necessary.

The topic of plans for CIPCUG's 25th anniversary was discussed. Suggestions were made and Jim Brown has begun asking volunteers to work on the details.

A CIPCUG member asked to speak to the Board on the book "Secret Guide to Computers & Tricky Living." There were parts of the book in the section Tricky Living that he felt were personally offensive and did not belong in a computer book that was promoted by computer user groups. After the board meeting, several board members reviewed the book, in particularly the sections the member spoke about. Comments and suggestions from those reviews will be discussed at the next board meeting — in particular, if and how to communicate to the author and other computer user groups that also promote the book about the author's personal comments contained in the Tricky Living section.

There being no additional business to discuss the Board meeting adjourned.

Social Media SIG, Q&A

Passwords, Windows Live and failed autofills

Reported by John Weigle

Internet, email, social media SIG

Because the Boys & Girls Club had to set up for an event later in the day, we had to use the auditorium as a single room, so we the Social Media and Internet and connectivity SIGS were combined this month. Unless otherwise noted, Toby Scott answered questions and Jessica Scott ran the computer. — Editor

Passwords in Firefox

Q: I have an incorrect password in Firefox. How can I change it?

A: Go to Tools > Options > Passwords > Security > Saved Passwords, where you can remove the incorrect password or all passwords if you decide you don't want any of them saved. Then go to the site in question, use the correct password and ask Firefox to save it.

Windows Live preferences

Q: In Windows Live Mail, messages keep downloading if we mess something up. How can I change that?

A: Go to Start > All Programs > Windows Live Mail > Options > Mail Accounts > Properties > Advanced, and check the box to remove from server when deleted from deleted items.

Passwords not remembered in Firefox

Q: My password for my ISP's spam filter isn't being remembered in Firefox.

A: I haven't had that problem, but go to Firefox > Tools > Options > Security and check the saved passwords to see if it's there. You can't add a password manually. Also check exceptions to be sure the site isn't listed as one that's supposed to forget the passwords.

> **This month's Q&A topics:**
> **Internet and Social Media SIG**
> Passwords in Firefox
> Windows Live preferences
> Passwords not remembered in Firefox
> Autofill fails
> Java Script
> Tablets
> 3G, 4G, Wi-Fi
> Finding downloads
> Users
> Indexing USB drives
> Music folder lists
>
> Removing update files
>
> **Regular Q&A**
> Sharing printers
> Missing DLL file
> Printing from tablets
> LPT ports
> Moving programs from XP to 7
> Public Wi-Fi
> Router password
> CCleaner
> Computer slowing down
> Updates and other installations
> Showing file sizes

From the audience: I've had the same problem in Firefox and ended up switching to Chrome, which I didn't really want to do. So far I haven't had the problem with it.

Jessica Scott: Could it be a cache or cookies setting?

Autofill fails

Q: The automatic completion feature doesn't always work on my browser. Why not?

A: It's a result of the HTML coding on the site, not the browser. Autofill will recognize field names like First name, Name, Address and so on, but it can't perform autofill for names like Field1 and Field2. Sometimes, but not always, the browser will remember what goes in such fields on your second visit.

Java Script

Q: I got an email with some pictures attached and when I clicked on the file, it said it needed Java Script to run it. How do I enable it?

A: The best thing to do is save the file to a folder and view it there. A lot of the programs that automatically open attachments are turning the feature off because of fears of viruses. People say it's inconvenient, but how inconvenient is a virus? If some security expert has decided there's enough danger in the feature to turn it off, it's a good idea not to try to bypass it. Moving the file to a folder and then opening it lets your anti-virus program scan it. If you just run it out of email the anti-virus doesn't have a chance to scan it.

In addition to attachments, be especially careful about clicking on links in email. We're all aware of the websites that appear to belong to banks or other financial institutions but are really scams to collect your login names and passwords so they can empty your accounts. The link itself is not the virus, but when you go to the site, it can install viruses or grab your information as you type it in.

From the audience: And no bank will ever send you email asking for your personal information.

Toby: But banks will sometimes send you email with links to click on, and the scammers are depending on people to carelessly click on such links in the scam emails.

Q: Is it safe to go to such sites and leave nasty messages because you know they're phony?

A: I wouldn't because you're leaving

More on coming events ...

follow:

February

Saturday, Feb. 25: Regular meeting, pre-meeting Social Media and Internet, connectivity SIGs.

Tuesday, Feb. 28: Linux SIG. Topic: We will explore the live version of Linux Mint 12 and try to answer any questions.

March

Saturday, March 24: Regular meeting, pre-meeting Social Media and Internet SIGs.

Tuesday, March 27: Linux SIG. Topic TBA.

Be sure to check the calendar on cipcug.org for updates on event programs, dates and times.

(Continued from page 4)

traces, and the owners of the sites might be able to track you down and possibly launch denial of service attacks on your machine.

From the audience: Some email programs let you hover your mouse over a link in an email to show the full URL.

A: That's true. But the basic rule is to go to any financial site the way you normally do — by typing in the URL or using the link in your bookmarks or favorites. You can be sure that if there's really a problem with your account, it will show up when you go to the page this way. And I'm willing to wager that 99.999 percent of the time, there's not going to be any security problem.

Tablets

Q: Can you tell me why anyone should buy an iPad or any other tablet?

A: It's a matter of how you want to — or need to — access the Internet. Some people need a desktop, some a laptop, some a smartphone, some a tablet and some a combination of one or more of the above. There's no one solution that fits everyone.

For example, my laptop has a battery life of about 2½ hours. The Thrive tablet I bought from Staples after last month's program has a battery life of about 11 hours. That would have gotten me all the way to Beijing when we went to China; my laptop couldn't get me to Hawaii. The tablet will fit in a woman's purse, whereas I had to have a separate carry-on bag for the laptop. Some tablets have phone access, and if you travel a lot, that can be useful. It isn't that anybody *ought* to have anything. You have to decide what you need based on you lifestyle, physical transactions and what works best for you. There's no universal solution for all people.

The decision is similar to picking a vehicle. Do you need a van, an SUV, a limousine or a sports car? I can tell you what a pickup does, but I can't tell you

that it's the right vehicle for you. That's determined by your needs.

3G, 4G, Wi-Fi

Q: Can you describe the differences between 3G, 4G and Wi-Fi?

A: 3G and 4G are phone connections. They're automatically encrypted and can be used for GPS devices and are extremely portable. They can be hacked, but it's very difficult. They can be used while driving down the freeway — if you're a passenger, of course. They're very handy and very portable.

Wi-Fi is a broadcasted signal you can pick up and use. We create a Wi-Fi spot here for our meetings by putting in a router that's connected to the Internet and connecting to it. If you want to use it, just ask us for the code. You can also find Wi-Fi spots at Barnes & Noble and Starbucks, among many other places. You can't use Wi-Fi while driving down the freeway because of its limited range. The 3G and 4G cover wide areas.

The differences between 3G and 4G are speed, along with some advanced security features in 4G. Generally, Wi-Fi is much faster than either 3G or 4G, but this won't be the case if you have extremely slow DSL service. Basically, you can't get unlimited data download contracts anymore, although some people are grandfathered in. Providers will slow you down and at some point will raise the cost considerably if you go over the data limit in the contract. Wi-Fi downloads are not being limited by anyone I know of. If you get a message that you're asking for a very large file and offered the chance to wait for a Wi-Fi connection, it's a good idea. In some hillside areas of the county you can get only a slow speed DSL.

Finding downloads

Q: How can I find my downloads? I have several newsletters that I get by email. I save them and I see a list of downloads, but I don't know how to get to them.

A: Hold down the Windows key and

the E key to open Windows Explorer (*not* Internet Explorer; the two programs are entirely different despite the similarity in names) to search for the Downloads folder. Later versions of Windows create one automatically, but if you don't have one you can create it and then set up your browsers to put downloads there.

If you want to create a shortcut to your Downloads folder in XP, Vista or Windows 7, right click on the folder and then click on Send to, select Desktop (create shortcut) which will create a shortcut on your desktop. You can then drag it to your taskbar if you prefer it there. In Vista and Windows 7, you can also place the current location in your list of Favorites in Windows Explorer by opening the folder you want to add, right-clicking on Favorites and selecting Add current location to Favorites. You can pin anything you want to there.

You can do the same thing with libraries, which are collections of shortcuts to data. Right click on documents and you can put any folder you want in a documents library. The Favorites list is a one-click wonder to a single folder. The libraries are for the total hierarchy; i.e., if you put My Photos in the library, it shows all the subfolders.

Users

Q: If you foolishly set up your computer with users, do you get a Downloads folder for each user?

A: First, let's address "foolishly." If you eliminate all the users on your computer, you make it unbootable. Windows operates with users and user permissions to determine who can do such things as install or uninstall programs.

Lots of information is stored in each user's folder. Microsoft doesn't want you to mess around in the Users folders. It wants you to use the libraries. For security and other reasons, it's encouraging the use of shortcuts in libraries.

More on Command.com ...

(Continued from page 1)

— to focus on the higher qualities of the human spirit, to realize that any discomfort we may feel is how we relate to the subject, so we may have to look inward

and to practice forgiveness.

On another subject, I found a handy tool, the Microsoft Fix-it Center, which is a free download and with your input will advise and correct many possible issues if

your computer is not working correctly. Reminds me of some of the things Norton 360 might do. I hope you will all attend our next meeting on the 25th. Until then, be happy.

(Continued from page 5)

Shortcuts can be put on the desktop or the taskbar. When computers had little memory, users were discouraged from having lots of desktop shortcuts because they used up memory, but with today's computers, the amount of memory used is minimal. Put the shortcuts where they're most useful for you.

Indexing USB drives

Q: I'm using indexing in Windows 7 to speed up searches. If you have a USB drive can it be indexed?

A: It can, but it's not a good idea because if you remove it and conduct a search, you'll get unexpected results because the search won't know that the USB drive is no longer connected.

Music folder lists

Q: When I open My Music folder, the column headings aren't what I want them to be. Can I change them? And can I make changes apply to all folders?

A: In theory, you can make changes universal, but it doesn't always work. Windows is Windows. Sometimes it has a mind of its own. Open a folder and use Alt+T to open the Tools menu. Open Folder Options, click or unclick the listed options and then click on Apply to Folders. To change the column headings, open a folder, right click on the bar of column names and select what you want to show. You can adjust the order of the columns by left clicking on a column name and dragging it where you want it. There is no way to create a new column name on the list.

Removing update files

Q: I tried to update .NET, but it wouldn't install. I have several versions of this. Do I need them all? And can I delete the installation files after the updates are up and running?

A: Technically, you probably don't need all the versions of .NET (1, 1.1, 2, 3, 3.5 and 4), but in actuality, if you remove the earlier ones, you'll probably end up breaking something.

The .NET package lets programs, especially installers, use libraries of files they need. Generally, a program that needs the files installs the .NET package. If you ever need to uninstall or reinstall one of the programs that installed the .NET software and you've removed the installation files, you won't be able to

uninstall the program, which also means you won't be able to reinstall it to fix the problem. Hackers figured out how to get into version 1.1, so it was revised, but some older programs still use it. The same thing applies to each of the other versions. When you have installation problems, you should normally get an error message with a code indicating why it failed. Search for the code number, .NETx (where x is the version number) failed and you can usually find a fix-it tool to repair the problem.

Regular Q&A

Unless otherwise noted, questions were answered by Toby Scott. Jessica Scott handled the computer duties.

Sharing printers

Q: I have an HP laser printer that I want to share on a network but can't figure out how. Right now we have to move it back and forth and connect it to the computer we want to print from. Could we connect it via the router?

A: There are three kinds of printers in general use today: wired to a computer by USB or parallel port; connected to a network cable; and wireless.

To use the printer on a network, go to the computer that the printer is connected to and in Control Panel > Network and Sharing > Change Advanced Sharing Settings turn on File and Printer Sharing. Then, on the same computer, go to Control Panel > Devices and Printers and select Printer Properties > Sharing and click on Share this printer. Give the printer a name.

Then, on the computer the printer is not connected to go to Control Panel > Devices and Printers > Add a Printer and click on Add a network, wireless or Bluetooth printer. The computer should be able to find the printer on the network. If it does, just select it. If it doesn't, you can navigate to it and click the next, next, next, just as if you were installing a printer.

For the share to work, both the printer and the computer it's connected to must be turned on when you try to print from the other computer.

Art Lewis: I have a printout that explains how to do this. I can send it to anyone who asks for it via email. It was developed for the AARP income tax program I work with.

Missing DLL file

Q: When I tried to do some of this, one of the computers is missing a DLL file. I tried going to Lexmark and looking for a new driver or other updates, but that didn't solve the problem. We discovered that Windows 7 plug and play will work but not the one on XP. The files were there last year but not on this year's computers. We have to give the computers back to the IRS each year.

A: I'd download the drivers for the printers for XP.

Q: I tried that and it didn't work, but I'll try it again.

Printing from tablets

Q: Can you connect a tablet to the network and print from it?

A: Yes for many tablets, but finding the drivers for the tablet might be difficult. Not all tablets have printer support.

LPT ports

Q: A program I use requires output to an LPT port. Is there anything that will convert LPT input to USB?

A: There is a DOS fix: First, share the printer and give it a share name. Then open a Command Prompt by right mouse clicking on it and selecting Run As Administrator. Then at a prompt, type:

net use lpt1 \\computer\printer / persistent:yes

where computer is the name of your computer and printer is the name you gave your printer in the first step above. Note that there are spaces after lpt1 and printer.

Moving programs from XP to 7

Q: Is there a way to migrate programs from XP to Windows 7?

A: There are programs that say they do that, but they're not reliable, and I wouldn't use them. The best solution is to do clean installations of the programs you use.

Public Wi-Fi

Q: If I'm on a public Wi-Fi, if I just surf the Net and don't use my email, am I vulnerable in any way?

A: If you hadn't added "in any way" I would have said no. From a practical standpoint, the answer is generally no, but there's always a possibility that you could be hacked. Hackers are going to go after heavy users who are going to financial

sites so they can gather login information and passwords. They're generally not that interested in your email or the files on your computer. Don't buy anything online on a public Wi-Fi. People who hack Starbucks's system are looking for the biggest possible return, and email isn't it. Being hacked at Starbucks could be a first step to a takeover attempt, but that's generally not done on a drive-by shooting. For that to work, you have to install a program to make your computer a zombie, which means you have to be tricked into clicking on something that starts an installation. I would not visit password-protected financial sites or sign into my email at a public Wi-Fi, however.

Router password

Q: I was updating my AOL email and went into the contacts, where I seldom look, and found the password for our wireless router at the bottom of the list. My daughter said she'd given the password to a visiting friend so she could use the network, but I'm curious how it got to the contacts list.

A: Someone put it there. It wasn't a computer thing. But even so, it's not much of a problem. If someone hacks into your AOL account, which they'd have to do to see it, they're probably not going to be sitting outside your house where they could use your network. Your daughter shouldn't have put it there, and I'd delete it, but I wouldn't worry much about it.

CCleaner

Q: Have you had any experience with the CCleaner software (http:// www.piriform.com)?

A: Of all the registry cleaning programs, it's probably the best. Such programs either fix some minor problems or they seriously break something. I don't think they're useful enough to counterbalance the risks, especially if your computer is at all unusual or idiosyncratic. They can delete entries that you need for some obscure program or hardware and can even make your computer unbootable. If you're going to use a registry cleaner, create a good backup first. They might be helpful on an old XP machine that is running slowly, but I wouldn't use them on Vista or Windows 7 machines. There are techs who use and like them, however.

Computer slowing down

Q: My computer was slowing down. The D: drive wasn't working and was replaced. My daughter installed a new D: drive. She thinks it's either a virus or a hardware problem. I'm using a free anti-virus but don't remember which one (the questioner later said she thinks she's using Norton, a paid program).

A: We run into lots of machines in the shop that are running up-to-date AVG and Avast but still have many viruses. Those are the two most popular free anti-virus programs. If you're using one of them, I'd install Windows Security Essentials, which is free (http:// windows.microsoft.com/en-US/windows/ products/security-essentials). It's probably the No. 3 anti-virus program (Norton and Kaspersky, which are paid programs, are the top two in no particular order).

I'd also run Malwarebytes (http:// www.malwarebytes.org). If either of the programs won't run or won't install, you need to take your machine to a shop to get it fixed. Viruses generally block anti-virus and other security programs from being updated or installed, and the longer you wait to get rid of the infection, the worse it will be and the more it will cost to repair it. Attempting to play with it yourself won't help and can make the problem worse.

(The questioner said she thinks she has Norton and has been getting messages that it's updating.) Norton generally updates in the background and you wouldn't be getting a pop-up message that it's updating. That could be a sign a virus has disabled it. The D: drive dying could cause your computer to slow down. If you're not getting error messages after removing the D: drive but the computer is still slow, that points to a conclusion that there's a virus, but it's impossible to diagnose with this limited description. There could be a physical problem with the C: drive.

Q: Would the Symantec hack have any effects on this problem (http:// nakedsecurity.sophos.com/2012/01/25/ symantec-stop-pcanywhere/? utm_source=Naked+Security+- +Sophos+List&utm_medium=email&utm _campaign=f2702580f3-naked% 252Bsecurity)?

A: Some hackers obtained the source code for certain Symantec programs, but the anti-virus program involved was the 2006 version. The code is so far out of date it's useless.

PC Anywhere is a problem, and the best rule for anyone who uses it is not to leave it running all the time. The suggestion is to turn it on only when it's needed, but that sometimes can't be done for corporations that have accountants logging in at night.

Updates and other installations

Q: Very often when I install updates, I go through two steps. I download a file, and when I click on it, it downloads am additional file. Can I delete the first procured file that brought the update down and can I throw away previous versions of updates?

A: The first program that you get is a downloader that gets the information to your computer. The second is the installer. Well-behaved program will clean up after themselves and delete TEMP files. If you delete the installation files, you might not be able to properly uninstall programs or repair an installation because the necessary information is gone. The alphabet soup folders on your C: drive contain all that information. We talked earlier about the .NET files. If you've deleted the folder, you won't get it back again. If you can't uninstall, you can't reinstall, and then you're in deep trouble.

Showing file sizes

Q: XP showed me file sizes, but Windows 7 doesn't. Is there a way to see them?

A: Right mouse click on the file and go to properties, which will show the size. Also, if you view files in Windows Explorer in Detail mode, you can right mouse click on the header bar (the one that shows Name, Date Modified, Type, etc.) and check the Size option. Then it will show. After doing that, click Alt-T > Folder Options > View > Apply To Folders. This should keep the settings on all folders — but Windows has the habit of changing folders of pictures or music back to icons.

Program: Organizing, protecting, sharing a hard drive

Acronis products let you partition, back up

By John Weigle
jweigle@vcnet.com

"Organize, Protect and Share Your Hard Drive" was the subject of a webinar by Gene Barlow at our January meeting.

Barlow, who represents Acronis True Image and Acronis Disk Director, among other products, has been making presentations to CIPCUG for several years. He formerly represented PowerQuest, the manufacturer of Partition Magic, before the company was sold to Symantec. He also represents, but did not discuss, Invisus Internet Protection Services, the details of which are on his website.

Organization

In addition to files and file folders (directories), hard drives can be organized with partitions, Barlow said.

A partition is a specially formatted portion of the hard drive, he said, with each partition having its own drive letter. The partition with the operating system is always the C: drive. The most common format for Windows machine hard drives is NTFS, although the FAT 32 system is also used on some discs.

A hard drive must have at least one partition, which is often the entire drive, but can have almost any number. The drive size and the limitations on how useful very small partitions would be are the determining factors. Computers may contain more than one hard drive, and each of them can have additional partitions.

The C: drive is the most likely to have problems, Barlow said, because it contains Windows and other programs, which can be corrupted. The C: drive is written to often as programs are added, updated and deleted. Corrupted versions of Windows are the most common cause of hard drive crashes, Barlow said.

Physical failure or damage can also cause crashes.

With today's large hard drives — often 500 gigabytes or more — not partitioning a drive is "like having a very large file cabinet with just one drawer in it," Barlow said. Partitioning a drive also simplifies backups, he said, by separating data files, which need to be backed up most often, from program files, which change less often and so don't need to be backed up as frequently.

Using Acronis Disk Director 11, Barlow splits his hard drives into three partitions: Programs, including Windows; Data; and Photos, because he and his wife, Linda, are avid photographers. Genealogists or those with other activities that require lots of computer work might want to create partitions for that information.

Barlow said he backs up his photo partition without using any compression but compresses the programs and data partitions. That lets him preserve as much data in each photo as possible.

Disk Director allows users to create, delete, resize and move partitions, along with selecting the format type, he said. The program supports dynamic discs. The current version works with Windows XP, Vista and 7. It can set up Linux partitions, but does not work on Macintosh machines, even if they can run Windows. Flash drives probably don't benefit from partitions, but internal and external hard drives do, he said.

He recommends getting one license per household for Disk Director, uninstalling it from the computer after it's partitioned and reinstalling it on another computer if you need to partition its drive. True Image, discussed next, requires licenses for each computer, he said.

Protection

Regular backups are the ultimate protection, he said, because viruses can sometimes get past anti-virus and other anti-malware programs and damage a drive. Barlow recommends backing up at least once a month but more often for some material. He compared backups to insurance: Homeowners insurance covers the building and its structure (comparable to the hard drive's operating system and programs and all its data) while renters insurance covers only the contents of the home (comparable to just the data). It's foolish to have only renters insurance if you own a home, he said. Backing up only data is a similarly bad idea, he added.

Backup types are full disk and partition (operating system, programs, data and hard drive structure); and file (data files only). If your hard drive crashes, the full disk and partition backup can re-create the old drive on a reformatted or new drive. File backups require you to reinstall Windows and your software — tasks that can take hours — before putting the data back.

Barlow recommends backing up to an external hard drive rather than CDs or DVDs because those methods are slow and cumbersome. The external drive should be the same size as the drive you're backing up or a bit larger, he said, but it does not have to be gigantic.

Large corporations should back up every few hours, and small business should do so daily. For the typical home user with a partitioned drive, he recommends a daily backup of data, a weekly backup of less active files (the photo or genealogy partitions he suggested), and a monthly backup of the C: drive (operating system and programs). He also backs up his entire hard drive once a quarter so he'll have backups of any hidden partitions some manufacturers use to restore a computer to its original configuration.
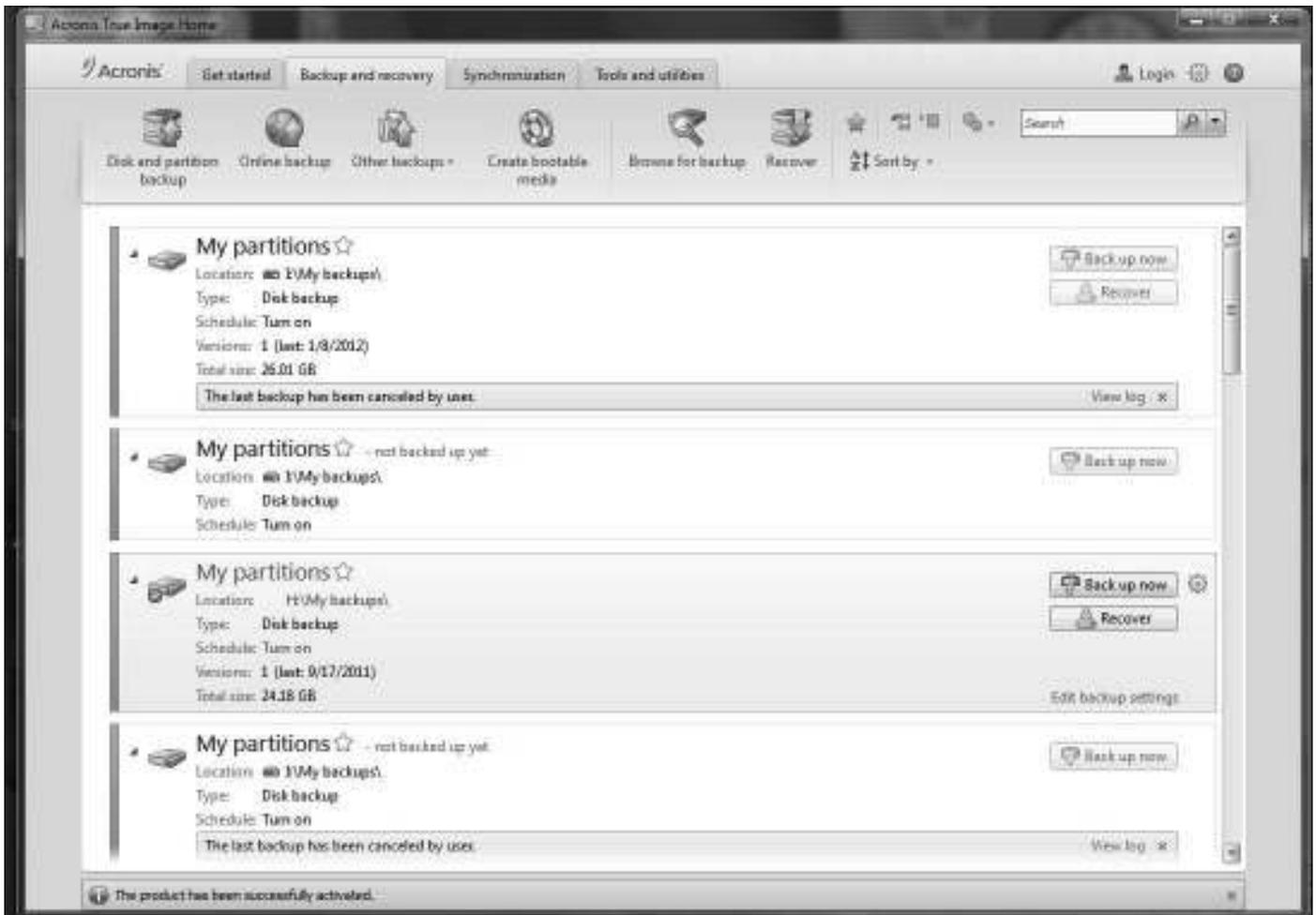
To restore a drive, you go from the bottom of the list to the top: first the full hard drive, second the Windows and software, third the less active files and finally the data files. Going in this order means that you end up with all software updates and the latest data that was backed up.

True Image is "a lot easier to use this year," he said. "It's a really delightful package."

The opening screen shows four tabs: Get started; Backup and recovery; Synchronization; and Tools and utilities. The Get started page offers tutorials on how to back up, when to recover and sync.

The backup and recovery page shows all the partitions on all internal and external hard drives. Two options — Back up

The Backup and recovery page of True Image 2011 shows information about all drives and partitions.

(Continued from page 8)
now and Recover — are offered for each drive. The information for each partition shows its location, the type of drive, a backup schedule if one is established, backup versions and total size.

Buyers of the CD that Barlow offers also get a 21-page starters guide on the CD. He suggests printing it and reading it while taking the actions on a computer.

Other options on the Backup and recovery tab are Disk and partition backup, Online backups, Create bootable media, Browse for backup and Recover. After performing a full backup, Barlow said, he recommends incremental backups, which copy only files that have changed since the previous backup.

Restore

To restore a drive, Barlow said, remove the old hard drive and install the new one. Attach the external hard drive with your backup to the computer. Boot the computer from a bootable CD that you create with the program when you install it. "In a few minutes, you will restore the hard drive to exactly what it was." The program copies about a gigabyte per minute, he said.

To restore individual files, attach the external hard drive to the computer, open Windows Explorer, which was modified by True Image to read the backup files when it was installed, and drag or copy the files you want to restore to the hard drive.

Synchronization

True Image Home 2012 is "the most powerful backup on the market," he said, and this year added the synchronization feature.

Computer owners can set up special groups of users, whose computers will each contain synchronization folders. Many groups can be established, and each group will have separate folders. A fam-ily group might be established to let all family members see the latest family pictures or information on family activities. A work group could be set up to share work-related information. And users can even synchronize information on their own computers — for example a desktop and a laptop — as Barlow does when he travels.

Each computer must have a copy of True Image on it and, of course, must be connected to a network or the Internet for the synchronization to work. The program will send new information in the folder to the other group members quickly, but not immediately, Barlow said. If a member's computer is turned off, the synchronization occurs the next time both computers are on at the same time.

Some similar programs require online storage to perform the synchronization, but that's not the case with True Image,

Review: IrfanView

Free program allows picture editing, organization

By Jim Thornton
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I take photographs with my digital camera, but infrequently a picture or two have needed me to edit and improve them by using my favorite picture editing and enhancing tool titled IrfanView (pronounced Ear-Fan-View).

When you first start reviewing the pictures that you have recently taken, you may notice that there are some color problems. With IrfanView, you can easily adjust color, brightness, contrast, and tint on your pictures and do even more by changing the depth of the colors, enhancing the colors, or swapping the colors. Plus you can adjust the color of the background as well as adjust its brightness and contrast. You can convert the colors to a grayscale if you like, and if there are any red eye problems, they are easy to remove.

It is easy to change the size of your pictures, especially to make them smaller for emailing. In addition, you can easily crop and rotate your pictures. The picture sizes range from 50x50 pixels (0.67x0.67 inches) to 600x600 pixels (8x8 inches). Should any of your original pictures be larger than your monitor's screen, IrfanView will automatically reduce the picture to completely fit onto the screen.

There are additional interesting features, such as the ability to make a single picture out of several individual pictures. This is often used when photographing a large landscape area and is called panorama. The extra-wide picture may be either horizontal or vertical. Another fea-

This is a screen shot of IrfanView with a picture from the January issue open.

ture is the ability to make and show animated GIF (Graphics Interchange Format) pictures. This is done by using a group of pictures to make an automated display, such as a young child dancing, etc.

Another interesting feature is that you can add lines, circles, arrows, and other similar images to your picture to point out a special or unusual item in the picture.

Another way of identifying your pictures is to add text to the picture, for example to identify the location, and/or the people in your picture, etc. You can select the font and size of the text that you want to use. Other uses are to identify the date

that the picture was taken and the number of the pictures taken at that location, etc. Plus you can select the color of the text or even make it transparent. Another feature is that you can make a blank image and add text to it and use it as the introduction page to your slideshow.

A slideshow is a feature that is lots of fun and very useful. It is a series of pictures shown for the time that you have set to view each picture before the next picture appears. Another interesting feature is to add music to your slideshow that will play all through the slideshow. The music needs to be from an MP3 music

More on hard drive protection ...

he said.

Barlow is working with Acronis on a beta version of a synchronization program for Android devices, he said, but it's not generally available yet. He suspects similar testing is going on with the iPad, he said.

Barlow also said Acronis offers a free Drive Monitor, which watches disk tem-

perature, backups and critical events. If it finds any issues, it puts a pop-up message on the monitor. Barlow got a warning of a critical event that the NTFS file system in one partition was corrupted so nothing could be backed up to it. A Microsoft utility fixed the problem. The URL for the program, which does not require the installation of True Image or Disk Manager, is listed below. For those who

missed the meeting, the special prices are available at Barlow's User Group Relations website, the URL of which is also listed below.

On the Net:
User Group Relations: ugr.com
Acronis: acronis.com
Acronis hard drive monitor (free): acronis.com/homecomputing/download/drive-monitor

Linux Mint an up and coming contender

By Bill Wayson
bwayson@gmail.com

I have mentioned in my recent articles that the major distributions of Linux — Ubuntu with Unity, Fedora with Gnome 3, and openSUSE with KDE 4, as well as others — are each moving to significantly new desktop environments that require their users to learn new ways of using their computers and applications. Predictably, much grumbling and complaining by some users has resulted, and many are looking for alternatives to their favorite Linux desktop. This has created an opportunity for other Linux distros, and some are taking advantage of it and trying to woo those users over to their communities. One that

Penguin's Lair

Wayson

has received a lot of attention is Linux Mint, which offers users a more classic desktop interface while incorporating some of the more useful features of Gnome. I'll talk about the current Linux Mint, version 12, also known as Lisa, and why it has received so much attention.

The two primary complaints about the recent desktop directions are that they are much greater resource hogs than past versions, and they require newer and somewhat more specific hardware in order to perform at an acceptable level; and the new user interfaces come with a somewhat steep learning curve, which is annoying (at best) to anyone who just wants the computer to work, and specifically make it difficult to find applications.

Linux Mint, which is a derivative of Ubuntu, responded in recent versions by staying with the Gnome 2 desktop. With its current version 12, the default desktop is Gnome 3 running underneath but with

an added layer called Mint Gnome Shell Extensions (MGSE) running on top. MSGE provides a more traditional desktop experience, including the familiar bottom panel (a top panel can be added); an application menu with a traditional "Start" button and hierarchical menus presenting the installed applications, albeit in an updated manner; a desktop list of open windows; a task-centric desktop (i.e. you switch between windows, not applications); and visible system tray icons. In short, Linux Mint 12 provides an incremental change to the familiar computer desktop environment that computer users will still feel comfortable with. When pressed, the Application Button dialog presents three vertical columns. The left column holds icons of favorite programs, like your Web browser, file manager, music player, and others. The middle column shows multiple categories of applications, like

More on IrfanView ...

file. The slideshow is best seen from a CD that you have created.

Another slideshow device to use is a thumb drive, also called a USB flash drive, which can carry a large quantity of pictures and music. A popular picture size used on a thumb drive is 800x600 pixels (10.67x8 inches), and, as you know, the thumb drive is easy to carry and to use on other computers.

IrfanView is also a music player and plays the popular MP3 music files. There are several other music files that it can play: ASF, AU/SND/AIF, AVI, MID/RMI, MOV, MP3, MPG/MPEG, WAV, WMA and WMV. In addition to playing music, IrfanView can play other audio files in up to 15 audio formats. These nonmusical audio files come from audio CDs, numerous other devices, and many types of sound, animation, and movie files.

IrfanView can also display five movie file formats, including some of the more common graphics formats, including multiple-image icons, animated GIF

files, multipage TIF (Tag Image File) files, and watermark image option,

IrfanView is a fast and compact image and converter as it supports file formats and features. IrfanView can view 26 or more file types as well as convert and edit these files. The more common image formats are BMP, ECW, EMF, Flash, FSH, GIF, ICO, JP2, JPEG, JPM, LDF, LWF, MIDI, MP3, MPEG, Ogg Vorbis, PBM, PCX, PDF, PGM, PNG, PNGOUT, PPM, RAW, TGA, TIFF and text files.

IrfanView has many options, and it is nice that the program includes a large Help feature. However, if you need more help, it is available on the Internet. For example, using Google, type in the Google search box the IrfanView feature that you need more help with, and you will see several websites appear. In addition, on the CNET website, http://cnettv.cnet.com/irfanview/9742-1_53-50001925.html, you can view a two-minute video on the features of IrfanView after a 30-second advertisement for something else. The video is of an earlier 2007 version.

There are many other similar programs. Some of the best are Corel Paint-Shop Pro, Adobe Photoshop, and MGI PhotoSuite, but IrfanView remains by far the best one.

The program was first released in 1996, and I did a review of the program in the July 2001 issue of TOE. The current version is 4.32, which was released on Dec. 15, 2011, and is functional with numerous versions of Microsoft Windows — Windows NT, Windows 2000, Windows 98, Windows ME, Windows XP, Windows Vista, Windows Server 2003, and Windows 7. The downloadable program is 1,477 KB in size and is available as freeware from www.irfanview.com for private or noncommercial use. It's also available as freeware for educational use (schools, universities, and libraries) and for use in charity or humanitarian organizations. For use in your place of business or for commercial purposes, the price is $12. Kim Komando, the popular weekly computer radio host, and PC World, a popular computer magazine, both recommend IrfanView.

Copyrights, Internet create a difficult conflict

By Toby Scott
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Now that the Stop Online Piracy Act and Protect IP Act (SOPA/PIPA) have been defeated, it is time to look at the dynamics of the conflict between copyright holders and Internet hosts.

If a publisher creates a book, you can do pretty much whatever you want to with it. You cannot, however, photocopy it and then sell the copies. This isn't much of a restriction as it is time-consuming and expensive in paper and ink to make the copies and in almost all cases it is far easier to just buy another copy from the copyright holder. This has long been a precept of U.S. law.

Things changed with the advent of the Internet. Now, you can copy nearly anything and distribute it for nothing. Copyright holders are justifiably irked that the sale of one copy of a work can result in the work being distributed to hundreds, thousands or even millions. What makes it even worse is that in most cases the people making the clones are kids. They have no money, criminal prosecution makes the copyright holders look like ogres and the public thinks the copyright holders are just a bunch of greedy slobs who want to deprive the public of what is rightfully theirs.

So, the copyright holders are attempting to force those who have deep pockets and control some layer of the Internet into being their enforcement arm. This flies in the face of current legal precedents originating with the Digital Millennium Copyright Act. The DCMA essentially provides a safe harbor for online service providers as long as they don't deliberately shelter copyrighted information.

SOPA/PITA was essentially an attempt to repeal the safe harbor provisions of the DCMA. Doing so would have made life much easier for the copyright holders. They could go after companies with deep pockets and force them to take steps to remove copyrighted material — or even prevent it from being uploaded in the first place.

The problem with this solution, at least as far as the online service providers are concerned, is that they would become (at least theoretically) liable for the publi-

More on Penguin's Lair ...

Accessories, Graphics, Office, and others (the topmost option allows you to browse all installed applications). Selecting one of these categories populates the rightmost column with just the applications in that category, and never a submenu.

Linux Mint further supports a traditional desktop experience by including MATE, which is a fork of Gnome 2 that is compatible with Gnome 3. Mint allows the installation of both Gnome 3 and MATE at the same time. I suspect that many Mint users wonder why MATE is not the default desktop environment. Unfortunately, as the Mint community states, MATE is not completely stable yet and is missing a few parts. But it is hoped that MATE will eventually be in every way identical to Gnome 2 and represent the future of traditional desktops within Linux. Clearly, the Linux Mint developers feel a community of users loyal to the traditional computer desktop will remain for some time to come, and they could very well be right.

The other areas where Linux Mint 12 shows much change from previous versions are in the areas of artwork and search engines. Looking down the road, the Mint community has recently announced a project it calls Cinnamon. Cinnamon seeks to provide an entire desktop environment, forked from the Gnome 3 Shell, that will run directly on top of Gnome 3 while retaining the paradigms and familiarity of the Gnome 2 desktop, as opposed to MSGE, which are just extensions to the Gnome 3 Shell. In other words, Cinnamon is an attempt to re-create the popular GNOME 2.x style desktop with a GNOME 3.x engine. With no doubt, there are many Linux users who will follow the progress of Linux Mint with hope that it succeeds well.

The one area of vulnerability in the Linux Mint road map may be the reliance on Gnome 3, which is resource-intensive. Some of us Linux users enjoy not being required to upgrade our hardware every three to five years because of the requirements of software upgrades. But Gnome 3 (and KDE 4.x) have imposed this requirement for many, and we are not particularly happy about it. Time will tell whether or not this is a show-stopper for more than a few of us, and I am not sure it will be.

Linux Mint, in recent versions of its distro, has moved to answer the call of those who do not see a reason to abandon the user experience that has dominated the computer desktop for over 15 years. Given how loud and continuous that call has been for the past two years, I will predict that the recent popularity enjoyed by Linux Mint will continue and probably grow.

Windows users may soon be able to experience this change in desktops and join the discussion if Microsoft succeeds in pushing its new Metro interface to the front of Windows 8. Now wouldn't it be interesting if the result was a separate open source desktop that would run on top of Windows 8? I won't hold my breath, but it would be interesting.

If you have questions or would like to learn more about Linux and FOSS, come to the Linux SIG meeting at 6:30 p.m., Tuesday, Feb. 28, at Ventura County Computers in Ventura. We will explore the live version of Linux Mint 12 and try to answer any questions that are asked. See the CIPCUG website for more information. If you have a question or topic you would like the Lair or Linux SIG to cover, drop me a line at bwayson@gmail.com.

Until next month, happy computing.

(Continued from page 12)

cation of copyrighted material. Can you imagine Facebook trying to vet every post of every user before the rest of the public could see it? Could Google possibly know whether the content it indexes is copyrighted by the owner of the site? I host about 100 websites on my server. In most cases, I have no idea what my customers put up on their sites. Had SOPA/PIPA passed, we would have had to go out of the webhosting business. We don't have the resources to examine the content, nor the deep pockets necessary to fight if someone protests. And you can't just remove the material as soon as someone claims to be the owners and threaten you with legal action if you don't remove it. People have already started making the accusation that their work has been pirated simply to shut up viewpoints they disagree with.

It is ironic that just about the time SOPA/PIPA died, the Justice Department closed down Megaupload, one of the largest file download sites. Megaupload allowed users to create accounts, upload files and share them with friends. Certainly, lots of the material on

the site was copyrighted by others, but a considerable amount was also family pictures, company material for sharing with employees and other perfectly legal material. As it stands, no one who uploaded can access their data, so someone who thought the data was safe "in the cloud" is without it now. It is possible some may be able to retrieve their data, but appears unlikely at this point.

The key here is that a lot of data at Megaupload was perfectly legal. Undoubtedly the majority of it was stolen copyrighted material. Not only is the founder in jail, but several employees are as well. It will be interesting to read the details of the criminal trial, assuming it happens in the U.S.

The fact that authorities were able to coordinate an international investigation has some believing that SOPA/PITA were unnecessary. Others claim that given that Megaupload was making hundreds of millions of dollars, mainly from people distributing copyrighted material, it is evidence that more needs to be done.

It is one thing to go after Megaupload, where it is certain that the bulk of the income comes from illegal

activities, but it is vastly different for Facebook, where clearly the vast majority of the material is not copyrighted. How far should online service providers go to prevent copyrighted material from being distributed through their servers?

Perhaps more chilling is the thought that should the U.S. force online service providers to create software to screen content, foreign governments could then require them to screen content offensive to the government. Governments already require that they have a backdoor so they can listen to cell phone conversations, and they restrict search engines from indexing certain sites, so coercing online service providers to toe the line would be child's play. Software that screened for copyright would be more than powerful enough to screen for material critical of a government. That is, of course, if such software could be written in the first place. It's not clear that it could be.

At some point, the whole concept of copyright and fair use will have to be revisited to take into account the technological advances that are rapidly outdating laws that were created 150 years

Review: Start Menu

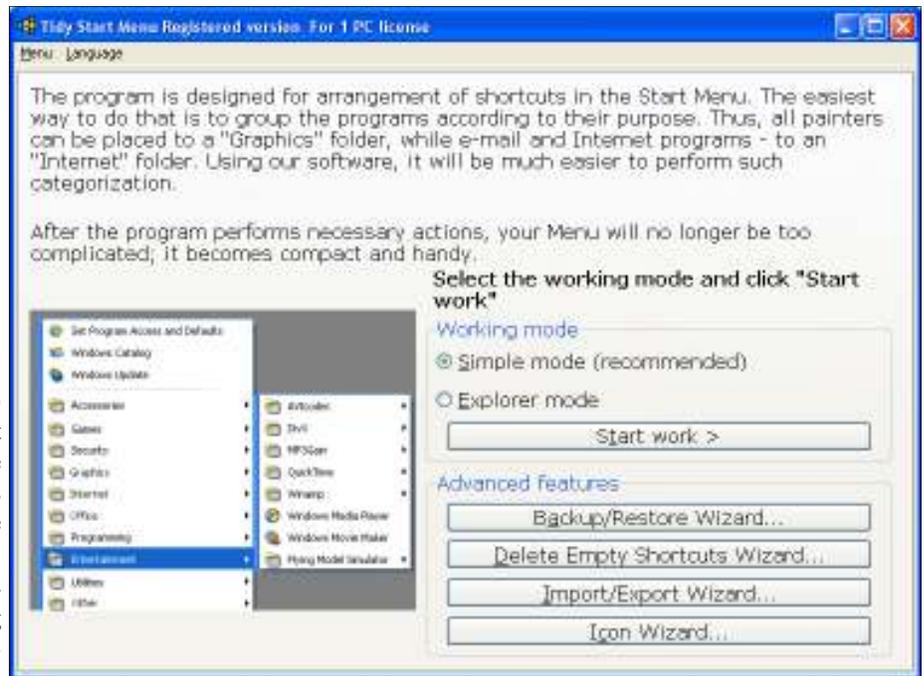# Program lets users revamp Windows tool

By John Weigle
jweigle@vcnet.com

The Windows Start Menu seems to irritate many users, even though Microsoft provides several ways to customize it (type customize start menu into the Windows search to find many items covering the topic).

Several of them were pointed out during December's Q&A session, including changing the size of the icons, creating flyout menus for many items and alphabetizing the menu items.

Those who want an easier way might want to consider Tidy Start Menu (called Start Menu 7 for Windows 7). The programs comes in two versions: free and professional, which offers additional features.

Developer Dennis Nazarenko said he wrote the program because "my Start menu used to be really huge. Once I got tired looking for some item in the menu and I decided to make my

Start Menu 7 offers users several ways to use the program.

life easier."

The program is easy to use. Its opening screen (above) lets you pick the simple mode or explorer mode. The simple mode rearranges the Start menu by making flyout menus for Programs, My Documents, My Pictures, My Music, My Videos,

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Members' classified ads

Classified ads are free to members. Each ad is limited to 105 characters, including spaces and to one ad per member per month. Copy has to be to John Weigle, editor of TOE (editor@cipcug.org), within the week after the regular meeting. Otherwise, the ad is held to the following month.

Free

For sale

Wanted

Other categories

The Outer Edge is printed and prepared for mailing by:

More on copyright ...

ago. That's going to be exceedingly difficult. And it can't happen until all sides have a reasonable understanding of the issues the other sides face.

Finally, there's a safe way to opt out of spam

By Toby Scott
tscott@scotts.net

It wasn't long ago that we gave the oft-repeated advice, "Never, ever, reply to spam asking to be taken off the list." The reason is that the spammers would have confirmed that your email address was a good one and then sold the list to even more spammers.

But that was before the CAN-SPAM Act (see FTC Guide at http://business.ftc.gov/documents/bus61-CAN-SPAM-act-compliance-guide-business for details). For marketers, the key details of the CAN-SPAM Act are:

● Tell recipients where you're located. This must include a valid postal address (includes P.O. Box).

● Tell recipients how to opt out of receiving future email from you.

● Honor opt-out requests promptly.

● Once people have told you they don't want to receive more messages from you, you can't sell or transfer their email addresses, even in the form of a mailing list.

If you opt out of diet, dating, finance, cooking and other garbage-ware, you will actually reduce the amount of spam you are receiving.

Rick started doing this and I laughed at him. But after two weeks he gets hardly any spam.

With fear and trepidation, I began doing the same, and my spam has reduced by about two-thirds.

Oh, sure. You can't opt out of the Nigerian banker who wants to split the millions one of his clients left behind when he died. And you won't get rid of the Rolex watch ads that come from China. Those don't have any opt-out links in them, anyway. But you will reduce the number of U.S. solicitations, and that is wonderful.

When you start this, you'll see multiple emails from FTD Flowers and other vendors. You'll think they didn't honor your opt-out since you keep getting the email. But many companies license "marketing companies" to help them with marketing their products. It isn't enough to opt out of one FTD message. You have to opt out of all the different marketing companies' lists. It takes time initially.

But keep after it. Before long you will have a trickle of spam instead of a flood. I was getting 300+ spam messages per day. After two weeks I'm down to about 50. Some of the lists say they need 10 days to complete the removal process, so hopefully I'll reduce this even further.

This article first appeared on vccomputers.com/OptOut.cfm and is reprinted with permission. — Editor

More on Start menu ...

(Continued from page 14)
All Control Panel Items, Computer, Desktop, Search, Run, and Help and Support. The lists are alphabetized.

You can also use several built-in headings, such as Games and Internet, and select the programs to put under them. This might take a bit of experimentation as you determine what organization plan works best for you.

As you would probably expect, all subfolders under a heading such as My Documents appear on the flyout menu, and folders within folders show up as you click on each folder.

The freeware version lets users configure the menus for all users of the PC and hide some programs from children or employees.

It also allows deletion of obsolete shortcuts, among other things.

The paid version includes a Start Menu Icon Wizard; a quick uninstall feature; a way to create your own categories; a free subscription to new versions of the program and priority support. The extended version costs $24.99.

"Before creating Start Menu 7 program, I've spent a lot of time to understand how a human brain works with visual information," Nazarenko says on his Web site.

"That's why Start Menu 7 is so easy and natural to use for everybody."

Although I removed the program after several weeks because the Start Menu covered a large part of my desktop when it was open, I can see how it would be a big improvement for some users. Like many things in the computer world, it's a matter of personal preference.

I noticed a few quirks, one of which was that the screen location of the beginning of the open Start Menu periodically changed for a reason I could not determine. I'm not sure if it was a result of unknowingly clicking on something in the menu itself, something on the desktop — although I did not notice anything when it happened — or some other reason.

When it's uninstalled, the program returns the Start Menu to its standard configuration, so there's no danger in giving it a test drive to see if the results are what you want.

These sites offer some suggestions on how to change the Start menu manually:

http://www.sevenforums.com/tutorials/296-start-menu-all-programs-add-delete-shortcuts.html

http://www.sevenforums.com/general-discussion/6901-cant-re-arrange-start-menu.html

http://en.kioskea.net/faq/1244-rearrange-the-menu-start

http://superuser.com/questions/281606/windows-7-automatically-rearranges-the-start-menu

After checking these sources, you might decide it's easier to just use the Start Menu 7 program.

On the Net:
Home page: http://www.startmenu7.com/

Be sure to keep your anti-malware programs up to date and run regular scans.

Waiting, waiting, waiting — is that site working?

If you've ever sat in front of your compuer waiting for a website to load and wondering if your ISP is just slow, the Internet is dying or the one site you want isn't working, consider bookmarking the easy-to-use website at http://www.downforeveryoneorjustme.com.

The site has one of the easiest interfaces I've ever seen. There's an ad, and a line that asks Is google.com down for everyone or just me? Type the name of the site you want to check in

Editor's corner

Weigle

the box that cotains "google.com," which overwrites that name, and watch for results. You don't have to press the Enter key. Within a second or two you'll get an answer to the question.

Of course, if you can't reach the 'Is it down …" site or any other location on the Internet, it's time to start a little troubleshooting. Are your modem and router on? Are all the connections properly made? If you're on DSL is your phone connection up and running?

If the answer to all those questions is yes, it's probably time to call your ISP. And while your connection is working, it's a good idea to go to your ISP's website and copy the phone numbers to contact it. You might not be able to find them without an Internet connection.

Facebook page

I've said this several times, but it's worth saying again. I'd like to enoucrage all CIPCUG members to join our Facebook page if you have a Facebook account. I got the first word that Craig Ladd has confirmed two programs for this year — neither one for February, unfortunately — through a posting at https://www.facebook.com/groups/cipcug/. The group is open only to CIPCUG members, which means you'll have to ask for permission to join on your first visit. This means you're going to reasonably safe from suffering through lots of notices about Facebook games and other irritating subjects. Several members post links to computer-related news fairly regularly and try to respond to questions that they know something about.

Some of you might find some of the posts too basic, while others might find them too advanced, but I think everyone could find some that would interest them.

Give it a try. You can always block the page or just stop going to it if you can't find anything of interest, but I have trouble thinking that will be the case.

What do you want to read?

Jim Thornton, who has resumed writing for TOE, periodically asks what our readers want to read. I have to respond that I have no idea because I seldom get any responses to specific articles. Jim uses a lot of software and is reviewing it for us, but if you have specific programs you'd like to know more about or topics you'd like to see covered in TOE, please let me know and I'll pass the word along. Many thanks.

— John Weigle, editor

Treasurer's report for December 2011

By Art Lewis
treasurer@cipcug.org

Lewis

12-1-2011 through 12-31-2011

Category Description		
INFLOWS		
Coffee income		-2.75
Memberhip Income		
New members	40.00	
Renewals	170.00	
TOTAL MEMBERSHIP		210.00
Publication sales		300.00
Raffle		65.00
TOTAL INFLOWS		**572.25**
OUTFLOWS		
Corporate Expenses		26.40
Membership Expenses		17.60
Publication Purchase		10.00
Raffle prizes		96.44
Rent Paid		150.00
TOE		268.09
Uncategorized Outflows		0.00
TOTAL OUTFLOWS		**568.53**
OVERALL TOTAL		**3.72**
Unrestricted Funds		6,034.19
Restricted Funds		0.00
Bank Balance 12-31-11		**6,034.19**
Year to Date Income		4,612.75
Year to Date Expense		4,365.89
Net Year to Date		246.86

2012 contributors to The Outer Edge

Your name can appear here, too. Share your knowledge with other members by sending an article, letters or computer tips to editor@cipcug.org.

CIPCUG MEMBERS
Ken Church
Art Lewis
Helen Long

Diane Mortensen
Toby Scott
Michael Shalkey
Rick Smith
Jim Thornton
Bill Wayson
John Weigle

Membership report:

Is it time to renew?

By Ken Church
email address: *membership@cipcug.org*

CHURCH

Welcome –
New members: Needed

Attendance at the February 2012 general meeting:
51 members and guests

Total membership: 189

MEMBER RENEWAL INFORMATION
$30 for single membership,
$35 for two or more family membership.

NEW MEMBER INFORMATION
$40 first year for single membership,
$55 first year for two or more family member-
ship in same household.

Please send your payment to:

CIPCUG MEMBERSHIP
P.O. BOX 51354
OXNARD, CA 93031-1354

Or bring your payment to the sign in table for
the Feb. 25, 2012, meeting.

December 2011 renewals payment due:

Mbr#	Last Name	First Name	Pd to Dt
0037 T	Hosford	Victor	201112
1115	Nagy	Marlene	201112
1131	Richardson	James	201112
1048 T	Ulam	Frederick	201112

January 2012 renewals payment due:

Mbr#	Last Name	First Name	Pd to Dt
0926	Curry	Rick	201201
1217	Donohue	Joseph	201201
0947	Ellis	Dick	201201
1132	Hales	Clifford	201201

February 2012 renewals payment due:

Mbr#	Last Name	First Name	Pd to Dt
1129	Escobedo	Ray	201202
1063	Field	Dwayne	201202
1063 A	Field	Sharon	201202
0412	Guess	John	201202
1116	Hazeltine	John	201202
0843	Isaman	Harry	201202
0566	Meeker	Kirsten	201202
0565	Meeker	Mary	201202
0656 T	Mori	Ken	201202
1184	Murray	Tom	201202
1183	Norbutas	John	201202
1218	Panczel	Marika	201202
1082	Perry	Jim	201202
1232	Riggan	Lee	201202
1135	Sherbrooke	Rosalie	201202
1169	Smith	Donald	201202
1083	Stoutz	Hank	201202
1140	Wayson	Bill	201202
0130	Whelchel	Claude	201202

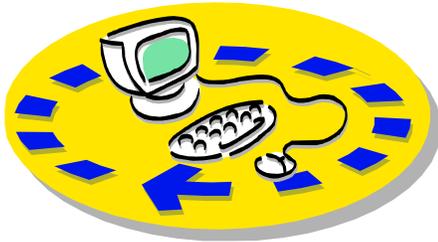| Initials	Name	(805)
BDV	Bob de Violini	rjddev@gmail.com
BR	Bill Robinson	389-2997 (b) bill@bzus.com
DM	David Minkin	469-6970 (cell); 484-2974 (home); dddave@cipcug.org
MS	Michael Shalkey	mshalkey@cipcug.org
RP	Robert Provart	498-8477 (b)

Phone: (d) = days; (e) = evenings; (b) = both

If you would like to volunteer to help others, please send your contact information and programs you're willing to help on to editor@cipcug.org.

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WEB HELP SITES (Updated 2-7-12)

Steve Bass TechBite Newsletter registration page: www.techbite.com

DSL reports: www.dslreports.com
Steve Gibson: www.grc.com
Kim Komando: www.komando.com
Leo Laporte: www.leoville.com
Jeff Levy: www.jefflevy.com
Linux distributions: www.DistroWatch.com
Microsoft: www.microsoft.com
OnGuard Online: http://www.onguardonline.gov
PCMag: www.pcmag.com
PC Pitstop: www.pcpitstop.com
PC World: www.pcworld.com
Recalled products: www.recalls.gov
SANS Institute — Computer Security Education and Information Security Training: www.sans.org
Smart Computing: www.smartcomputing.com
Spyware Warrior: www.spywarewarrior.com
User Group Relations (Gene Barlow): www.ugr.com
Ventura County Computers (Rick and Toby's shop): www.vccomputers.com
Virus Bulletin: www.virusbtn.com/index
Windows Secrets: www.windowssecrets.com
Windows The Official Magazine (UK): www.officialwindowsmagazine.com/

If you have a favorite help site on the Web, please forward it, so we can expand the section. If you find a link that doesn't work, please tell us that, too.

F1—Your Help Key

(Revised Sept. 7, 2008)

COMMUNICATIONS/INTERNET (GENERAL)
World Wide Web   DM

DATABASES
Access   BR

DOS   RP

E-MAIL
Outlook   MS
Outlook Express   BR, DM
Thunderbird   MS

GRAHICS PROGRAMS
IrfanView   MS
Paint Shop Pro   DM
Photo Shop Elements   BR
Print Shop   BR

SPREADSHEETS
Microsoft Excel   DM

WORD PROCESSING
Microsoft Word   DM
WordPerfect   DM

WINDOWS
Windows 98, 95   DM, MS (98)
Windows 2000   BDV
Windows XP   DM

Why join Channel Islands PC Users Group (CIPCUG)?

Every month, members of the Channel Islands PC Users Group have access to:

♦ The Outer Edge newsletter, which includes a list of members willing to help other members.

♦ The general meeting, featuring a question-and-answer session and program on new software or hardware.

♦ Special Interest Groups — special meetings held several times a month.

♦ Door prizes at the regular meeting. Other benefits include:

♦ Special user group discounts on books and software.

♦ A flash drive containing many useful freeware programs.

♦ A chance to make friends with people who have similar interests.

♦ The ability to put your knowledge to good use by helping other members. The whole concept of user groups is members helping members.

Please clip the coupon below and send with payment to CIPCUG-Membership, P.O. Box 51354, Oxnard, CA 93031-1354.

Please make checks payable to CIPCUG.

Dues for new members

Individual member, $40.

Family membership (same address), $55.

Renewals are $30 and $35 per year respectively.

TOE subscription only (in the U.S.), $20.

CIPCUG E-MAIL ADDRESS

Members who would like to have an e-mail address through CIPCUG in the form of YourName@cipcug.org may obtain one for $20 per year.

CIPCUG MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Amount enclosed: _____

Please Print the following information:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____, State:_____

ZIP Code: _____

Phone (Home): _____(Work): _____

E-mail address: _____

User level: Novice ____; Intermediate _____;

Advanced _____

Can you help the club as a volunteer? If so, what would you be interested in working on?

Date _____ Member # _____

Channel Islands PC Users Group Inc.
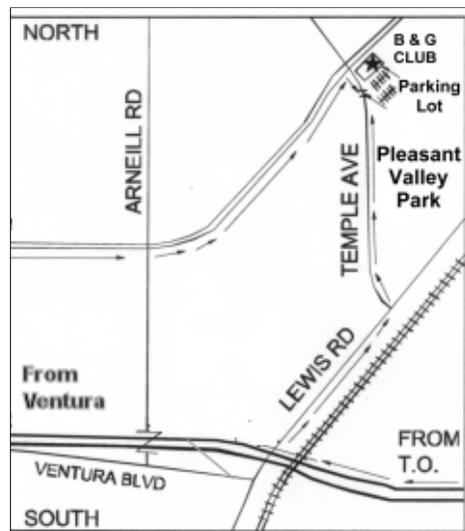
P.O.Box 51354
Oxnard, CA: 93031

DATED MATERIAL
Please Do Not Delay

DUES REMINDER

If the number above your name is 2012 FEBRU-ARY, your membership dues are payable in February 2012.

FEBRUARY 2012 MEETING
OF THE CHANNEL ISLANDS PC USERS GROUP

The map shows the easiest route to the Boys & Girls Club, but if you prefer, you can take the Carmen Drive offramp to Ponderosa Drive, which leads to Temple Avenue.

Saturday morning, Feb. 25, at the Boys & Girls Club, 1500 Temple Ave. (Ponderosa Drive and Temple Avenue), Camarillo.

Meeting Schedule:

Time	Event
8:00 a.m.	Doors open
8:45-9:30	Internet and networking SIG, Social Media SIG
9:30-10:30	Business meeting, Q&A
10:30-11:00	Break — Please contribute requested amounts for coffee and doughnuts
11:00-12:00	Program — TBA Drawing