

Spring Cleaning — Computer Style

With the birds singing, the flowers blooming and the weather warming, it's time to think about spring cleaning. Your computer could use some spring cleaning also, so this month's presentation will be on how to clean up your computer, making sure the programs that protect it are up to date and making sure that your data is safe. PC Post editor Bud Bondiotti will show us how to do all of these little chores as well as explain why we need to do them. Additional emphasis will be placed on the importance of backing up your data and the ease of using the program available in Windows to do it successfully. As an additional incentive, he will throw in some tips to help us remember the things that need to be done and have our computers do them automatically. The presentation will start at 7:30 p.m., and there will be a full hour of questions and answers in our Random Access SIG starting at 6:30. Bud will take suggestions prior to the meeting on how to approach some chores. Email him at editor@mpcug.net with your suggestions or questions. As always, guests are welcome.

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**For the meeting location see
the inside back page
for directions**

**Next Meeting
Thursday, March 24,
7:30 p.m.
Random Access SIG
6:30 p.m.**

Next board meeting
Come have dinner with the board at
7 p.m. Wednesday, April 6, at
Ridgeway's Restaurant, Modesto.

Be sure and check our web site at least once a week: www.mpcug.net



President's Corner Mike Kumler

Uncharacteristically, I have few words this issue. It just seems, sometimes, that things won't slow down. I haven't spent much time at my computer, except for the necessary things. Looking forward—we do have some great programs coming up. I think they will interest everyone.

That's about it—happy computing!

Membership Report Hank Mudge

New Members - Welcome to the Club

Riva Lee, Malcolm Roeder

Returning Members - Welcome back

Jerry Jackman

Renewals - Thank you for your continued support

Betty Hinkley 12/05, Donald Risen 2/06, Joel Williamson 2/06, Dick Philpot 2/06. Hank Mudge 2/06
Ed Sill 3/06, Mike Kumler 3/06, David Futrell 4/06

Members' Dues Expiring in March

Virgil McVicker, Rick McCombs, Roger Bremer, Skip Pringle

Members' Dues Expiring in April

E & Virg Watts, Bettie Nickerson, Tony Parisi, Lester Maxfield, Vincent Kerrigan

Club Notes ...

Some of my favorite websites

Clusty— similar to Google but groups findings according to significance
<http://clusty.com/>

MSNBC— One of many news information web pages
<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/>

Ask Jeeves— Another search engine that allow you to search using a question. Utilizes keyword search
<http://ask.com/>

The Official US Time Clock— Get the correct time every time
<http://www.time.gov/timezone.cgi?Pacific/d/-8/java>

Download.Com— One of the internet's best sources of shareware programs. Provides reviews on software also.
<http://www.download.com/>

Seat Guru— A must for any airline traveler who books his own flights. Allows you to see where you're seated.
<http://www.seatguru.com/>

Bud Bondietti, Editor, PC Post

Sounding alarm over spyware threats and antispyware cooperation ...

by Linda Gonse, Editor, Orange County IBM PC Users' Group www.orcopug.org

When I first learned about spyware makers iSearch and iDownload threatening anti-spyware advocates and anti-spyware makers in February to cease and desist listing them as candidates for removal or face legal action, I was incensed. <http://www.windowssecrets.com/050224/>

Several sites have received the letters and now face steep legal fees in fighting this brazen and outrageous threat to consumer rights to share information and protect ourselves from being victimized by spyware. <http://www.edbott.com/weblog/archives/000491.html>

What these spyware makers are saying is that their products are not spyware, although available studies and articles all show that the products are indeed spyware. <http://www.dslreports.com/shownews/60608>

But, wait. It gets stranger. Another spyware company, WhenU, actually struck a deal with Aluria to be delisted as spyware. Aluria develops anti-spyware technology used by AOL and several other ISP's affecting millions of users. Aluria actually agreed to remove WhenU from the definitions it uses for Spyware Eliminator. WhenU products are now declared "Spyware SAFE" and are left intact on the systems of users, although WhenU's products did not change! What's more, Ad-aware and Pest Patrol have also stopped listing WhenU's spyware. <http://www.dslreports.com/shownews/58023>, <http://tinyurl.com/6b96j>

Why is this happening? And, what effect will it have on users?

Apparently, spyware vendors, in anticipation of looming anti-spyware laws, are attempting a public image makeover that includes buying legitimacy from anti-spyware developers. <http://tinyurl.com/4rj9o> The spyware makers are being driven by money. And, antispyware makers who cooperate with them do so for the money, as well.

If we cannot learn who makes spyware from advocacy sites, and we cannot rely on antispyware makers to list them for removal, we computer users are the ultimate targets/victims for the sleazy programs that install and run on our computers without our knowledge and approval, that affect the performance of our computers and programs, and invade our homes and our privacy, without fear of litigation or removal.

Isn't this where computer users and user groups must band together and pressure antispyware companies to keep these perpetrators in their databases? Shouldn't we lend our support to antispyware vendors and tell them not to cave into these demands or we won't buy or use their products? Isn't this a good time to write to your legislator? NOW! Before you lose the right to protest and deny these companies access to your computer and private information.

Names and addresses of your elected state and federal officials are at <http://www.congress.org/congressorg/home/>. Find contacts at antispyware companies by clicking on links at <https://netfiles.uiuc.edu/ehowes/www/soft6.htm> .

There is no restriction against any non-profit group using this article as long as it is kept in context with proper credit given the author. The Editorial Committee of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG), an international organization of which this group is a member, brings this article to you.

Claude's Bytes By Claude Delphia, Editor Emeritus

In two parts — Notes, Photo SIG report.

Notes

Win XP 2 is weird — Just when you feel comfortable with your computer — I've been using XP with Service Pak 2 for quite a while now — then it starts acting different. Twice now when I've gone to turn off my computer, and it tells me it is updating before it turns off and it then goes through a totally new procedure that I've never seen before. This just started in mid February. It could be that an automatic upgrade was in progress when I told it to turn off.

Windows is also offering me upgrades and no longer tells me what they are. It just says they are available. In one way I suppose it is safer, but at what point will these updates turn into a virus or worm? How do I know what's being updated?

Not all scams equal — don't be tempted. We all get email scams of one sort or another. Rarely do I open one usually when I can't tell who is sending it. I recently read one just for the fun of it. It was tempting because I guess there is a secret little room in my head that wants to believe in the impossible. But like most of these scams, it clearly had some problems which were like flashing yellow caution lights. Of course the first one was that the scam could really be true. Now you would think that would make it easy to spot. But unfortunately people are being taken every day, maybe every minute.

The next clear warning signal was the obvious language problems. If the grammar or syntax in any email is clearly wrong — and I don't mean a typos — then close that email and dump it. Do not respond to it in any way.

Here's where scams differ. Some scams want to get some money out of you, and that's probably most of them. However there is a more insidious scam. That's one that wants you to give them information. Even giving them a return email address can be giving out information you don't want them to have. So the number one rule, despite how curious you may be, doesn't respond in any way shape or form to a scam email. If you really want to know what the scam is about, Google it. Take a key phrase from the email and put it into Google with quotes. It is highly likely that you will find lots of information about that particular scam and exactly how it works.

Googling a scam or even an email that sounds too good is a simple thing to do.

Too good to be true emails — I regularly get emails from well-meaning friends who just can't wait to forward a wonderful email. Unfortunately, no matter how good they sound, quite often they are untrue.

I don't forward email because of this problem. "Pray for such and such because..." And then you read a heart-warming story. Even some of the best I Google before I consider sending to anyone else. And if someone has sent me one that turns out to be untrue, I advise that himself due to sending out a false email. I don't mind admitting that I've saved some family and friends from perpetuating bad, but heart-warming stories.

I can't say I understand it, but some of these emails have been around for years. Not only that, but they've been added to. Someone has taken an email that sounds wonderful for friends or enemies and decided it can be even better, so they add their own emphasis or ideas and pass it along as part of the original.

(Claude Continued on page 5)

(Claude Continued from page 4)

As I say, I don't understand the psychology of this, but it happens regularly.

I've now stopped most of my family and friends from sending me this stuff. They are probably afraid that I will tell them the true story, and they won't like what I have to say.

Wives and computers — Is it my imagination or are a lot more wives savvy to computer usage than husbands, especially among the older generation?

Photo SIG Report

Fifteen members gathered on March 5¹ for a thorough demonstration of Google's free Picasa2 digital photo editing software. The plan for the meeting was to find one good free editing program that we could all get and learn.

Virtually all digital cameras come with free software, but the software varies from camera to camera. Usually the software is a variant of someone else's software. In other words the camera manufacturer didn't create it. They bought a license to distribute it with their camera. Quite often they also include software that communicates between their software and your computer. Sometimes the two pieces of software are integrated.

There is not such thing as digital photo software that does everything. Quite often, each piece of software will feature something that is special to that program only. It's getting harder for software designers to come up with unique features and so they design a variation on someone else's but avoid copyright infringement.

With just a few exceptions, Picasa2 does most things that digital photographers need on a regular basis, and it also does a few things that other software doesn't. For example, it has a neat feature that changes the color "temperature" of a photo from "cool" to "warm." Yes other software does this, but almost none of them makes it as simple as a one button slider. I just don't see how it could be simpler. Other programs require that you understand color mixing theory, and you have to decide which color to change in order to balance the color in an off-color photo.

Picasa2 has also adopted a feature that I enjoy in MS Digital Image Pro. It's called "fill." What it does is to take dark areas of the photo and fill them with "light" as if a flash had gone off. This feature alone, is worth a mint in fixing very dark pictures. Add contrast and other adjustments, and you can save a poorly light photo.

A side note: you can't easily fix an overexposed photo. There just isn't enough digital information to work with.

One of the really nice features in Picasa is that, unless you decide to, you aren't changing the original photo. You can make all kinds of edits, including cropping, and the photo will still have it's original information available in case you don't like your edits. As with all things, this goes only so far. You can still wreck your original if you aren't careful. Always have an unedited backup.

If you want to take advantage of digital photo use and manipulation, you have to get in and learn it. You can't just use it every three months and expect to get a lot out of it. You won't remember what to do the next time.

You need to learn a bit about your computer, such as where your photos are stored. Most of the photo editing programs have various ways of storing your photos and making them available to you. But each one is different. Picasa has its own scheme which is too detailed to share here.

Picasa doesn't do some things. It has no way to edit out wrinkles in someone's face. It has no way to add text

to a photo. It is not presentation oriented. It's more basic: find the photo and get it ready to print or send to a friend via email.

(Claude Continued on page 10)

FTC Names Its Dirty Dozen:

Twelve Scams Most Likely to Arrive Via Bulk Email

Email boxes are filling up with more offers for business opportunities than any other kind of unsolicited commercial email. That's a problem, according to the Federal Trade Commission, because many of these offers are scams.

In response to requests from consumers, the FTC asked email users to forward their unsolicited commercial email to the agency for an inside look at the bulk email business. FTC staff found that more often than not, bulk email offers appeared to be fraudulent, and if pursued, could have ripped-off unsuspecting consumers to the tune of billions of dollars.

The FTC has identified the 12 scams that are most likely to arrive in consumers' email boxes. The "dirty dozen" are:

1. Business opportunities

These business opportunities make it sound easy to start a business that will bring lots of income without much work or cash outlay. The solicitations trumpet unbelievable earnings claims of \$140 a day, \$1,000 a day, or more, and claim that the business doesn't involve selling, meetings, or personal contact with others, or that someone else will do all the work. Many business opportunity solicitations claim to offer a way to make money in an Internet-related business. Short on details but long on promises, these messages usually offer a telephone number to call for more information. In many cases, you'll be told to leave your name and telephone number so that a salesperson can call you back with the sales pitch.

The scam: Many of these are illegal pyramid schemes masquerading as legitimate opportunities to earn money.

2. Bulk email

Bulk email solicitations offer to sell you lists of email addresses, by the millions, to which you can send your own bulk solicitations. Some offer software that automates the sending of email messages to thousands or millions of recipients. Others offer the service of sending bulk email solicitations on your behalf. Some of these offers say, or imply, that you can make a lot of money using this marketing method.

The problem: Sending bulk email violates the terms of service of most Internet service providers. If you use one of the automated email programs, your ISP may shut you down. In addition, inserting a false return address into your solicitations, as some of the automated programs allow you to do, may land you in legal hot water with the owner of the address's domain name. Several states have laws regulating the sending of unsolicited commercial email, which you may unwittingly violate by sending bulk email. Few legitimate businesses, if any, engage in bulk email marketing for fear of offending potential customers.

3. Chain letters

You're asked to send a small amount of money (\$5 to \$20) to each of four or five names on a list, replace one of the names on the list with your own, and then forward the revised message via bulk email. The letter may claim that the scheme is legal, that it's been reviewed or approved by the government; or it may refer to sections of U.S. law that legitimize the scheme. Don't believe it.

The scam: Chain letters-traditional or high-tech-are almost always illegal, and nearly all of the people who participate in them lose their money. The fact that a "product" such as a report on how to make money fast, a mailing list, or a recipe may be changing hands in the transaction does not change the legality of these schemes.

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4. Work-at-home schemes

Envelope-stuffing solicitations promise steady income for minimal labor—for example, you'll earn \$2 each time you fold a brochure and seal it in an envelope. Craft assembly work schemes often require an investment of hundreds of dollars in equipment or supplies, and many hours of your time producing goods for a company that has promised to buy them.

The scam: You'll pay a small fee to get started in the envelope-stuffing business. Then, you'll learn that the email sender never had real employment to offer. Instead, you'll get instructions on how to send the same envelope-stuffing ad in your own bulk emailings. If you earn any money, it will be from others who fall for the scheme you're perpetuating. And after spending the money and putting in the time on the craft assembly work, you are likely to find promoters who refuse to pay you, claiming that your work isn't up to their "quality standards."

5. Health and diet scams

Pills that let you lose weight without exercising or changing your diet, herbal formulas that liquefy your fat cells so that they are absorbed by your body, and cures for impotence and hair loss are among the scams flooding email boxes.

The scam: These gimmicks don't work. The fact is that successful weight loss requires a reduction in calories and an increase in physical activity. Beware of case histories from "cured" consumers claiming amazing results; testimonials from "famous" medical experts you've never heard of; claims that the product is available from only one source or for a limited time; and ads that use phrases like "scientific breakthrough," "miraculous cure," "exclusive product," "secret formula," and "ancient ingredient."

6. Effortless income

The trendiest get-rich-quick schemes offer unlimited profits exchanging money on world currency markets; newsletters describing a variety of easy-money opportunities; the perfect sales letter; and the secret to making \$4,000 in one day.

The scam: If these systems worked, wouldn't everyone be using them? The thought of easy money may be appealing, but success generally requires hard work.

7. Free goods

Some email messages offer valuable goods—for example, computers, other electronic items, and long-distance phone cards—for free. You're asked to pay a fee to join a club, then told that to earn the offered goods, you have to bring in a certain number of participants. You're paying for the right to earn income by recruiting other participants, but your payoff is in goods, not money.

The scam: Most of these messages are covering up pyramid schemes, operations that inevitably collapse. Almost all of the payoff goes to the promoters and little or none to consumers who pay to participate.

8. Investment opportunities

Investment schemes promise outrageously high rates of return with no risk. One version seeks investors to help form an offshore bank. Others are vague about the nature of the investment, stressing the rates of return. Many are Ponzi schemes, in which early investors are paid off with money contributed by later investors. This makes the early investors believe that the system actually works, and encourages them to invest even more.

Promoters of fraudulent investments often operate a particular scam for a short time, quickly spend the money they take in, then close down before they can be detected. Often, they reopen under another name, selling another investment scam. In their sales pitch, they'll say that they have high-level financial connections;

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that they're privy to inside information; that they'll guarantee the investment; or that they'll buy back the investment after a certain time. To close the deal, they often serve up phony statistics, misrepresent the significance of a current event, or stress the unique quality of their offering—anything to deter you from verifying their story.

The scam: Ponzi schemes eventually collapse because there isn't enough money coming in to continue simulating earnings. Other schemes are a good investment for the promoters, but no for participants.

9. Cable descrambler kits

For a small sum of money, you can buy a kit to assemble a cable descrambler that supposedly allows you to receive cable television transmissions without paying any subscription fee.

The scam: The device that you build probably won't work. Most of the cable TV systems in the U.S. use technology that these devices can't crack. What's more, even if it worked, stealing service from a cable television company is illegal.

10. Guaranteed loans or credit, on easy terms

Some email messages offer home-equity loans that don't require equity in your home, as well as solicitations for guaranteed, unsecured credit cards, regardless of your credit history. Usually, these are said to be offered by offshore banks. Sometimes they are combined with pyramid schemes, which offer you an opportunity to make money by attracting new participants to the scheme.

The scams: The home equity loans turn out to be useless lists of lenders who will turn you down if you don't meet their qualifications. The promised credit cards never come through, and the pyramid money-making schemes always collapse.

11. Credit repair

Credit repair scams offer to erase accurate negative information from your credit file so you can qualify for a credit card, auto loan, home mortgage, or a job.

The scam: The scam artists who promote these services can't deliver. Only time, a deliberate effort, and a personal debt repayment plan will improve your credit. The companies that advertise credit repair services appeal to consumers with poor credit histories. Not only can't they provide you with a clean credit record, but they also may be encouraging you to violate federal law. If you follow their advice by lying on a loan or credit application, misrepresenting your Social Security number, or getting an Employer Identification Number from the Internal Revenue Service under false pretenses, you will be committing fraud.

12. Vacation prize promotions

Electronic certificates congratulating you on "winning" a fabulous vacation for a very attractive price are among the scams arriving in your email. Some say you have been "specially selected" for this opportunity.

The scam: Most unsolicited commercial email goes to thousands or millions of recipients at a time. Often, the cruise ship you're booked on may look more like a tug boat. The hotel accommodations likely are shabby, and you may be required to pay more for an upgrade. Scheduling the vacation at the time you want it also may require an additional fee.

The FTC works for the consumer to prevent fraudulent, deceptive and unfair business practices in the marketplace and to provide information to help consumers spot, stop and avoid them. To file a complaint or to get free information on consumer issues, visit www.ftc.gov or call toll-free, 1-877-FTC-HELP (1-877-382-4357); TTY: 1-866-653-4261. The FTC enters Internet, telemarketing, identity theft and other fraud-related complaints into Consumer Sentinel, a secure, online database available to hundreds of civil and criminal law enforcement agencies in the U.S. and abroad.

Review of PDF Factory

By Claude Delphia, Editor Emeritus

What is a PDF and why would I need it?

PDF stands for Portable Document Format and was created by the Adobe software people. Its main purpose is to take a computer image, whether Word, spreadsheet or graphic layout, and create a file that can be viewed with all the detail and layout of the original.

The original software comes in two forms: Adobe Distiller which creates PDF's and Adobe Reader which is used on a huge number of websites around the world. Basically it is the standard for creating viewable and printable documents that look like the original. Adobe reader is used by government websites to create documents from the lowest levels of local government all the way to the top and specially the IRS. You know that if the IRS is using Adobe Reader, it must be OK, right?

In any case, when you click on a PDF file, it automatically opens Adobe Reader so you can view and or print it. Basically the PDF format allows you to see and print an image that is almost exactly like the original. I know of no other way to view an original from the Internet except a full graphic or scanned image.

For years, you had to have Adobe's own Distiller to create a PDF. But then several other versions started to appear. PaperPort, a graphic file tracking/management program comes with a built in PDF creator. So does MS Publisher. So if Microsoft has a PDF creator, you know it's pretty important.

The latest versions of Family Tree Maker also comes with a PDF creator. It's not all that unusual to see PDF files on the web that show a family tree that if printed, would be 8 feet high by 22 feet wide. Such a chart would probably include 16 generations high.

So now we still have the original Adobe Distiller which has a new version 7 just out. And we have some generic PDF creators and then there's "pdfFactory" which is used to create our very own PD Post. What follows is what I've personally experienced using these programs.

First let me mention that I tested these after creating a six page very high quality newsletter that I needed to send to a print shop in PDF format via email attachment. So I'm writing from recent personal experience.

pdfFACTORY review

pdfFactory, is, if you will, an Adobe Distiller clone. As indicated above, there are now a number of PDF creation programs available out there. pdfFactory is one that you can buy for \$50. A professional version sells for \$100. That compares to the latest version of Adobe Distiller which is \$299.

So why not just buy pdfFactory? Well for this review, I had a chance to put pdfFactory to the test and while it was generally good, it isn't Adobe Distiller's little cousin. Well maybe 5 times removed. However don't stop reading now as you will find that pdfFactory may be all you need.

Compared to Adobe Distiller

I'll make this quick and easy. Most of these Adobe clones do a reasonable job. pdfFactory does a reasonable job of recreating the original page. And it comes with some ways to tinker with the result. However,

(PDF Continued on page 10)

(**Claude**—continued from page 5)

Why should you edit photos—partially because you can? The biggest reason is that you can save otherwise bad shots. You can also make pictures better for the relatives and friends you want to send them to. An example: a picture of your grandson sitting on a sofa. The child is only taking up one sofa seat, and yet the photo shows all the rest of the empty sofa and half the room wall behind it. That's not a good picture to be sending out.

Always take the best picture you can first. While editing can now save many a badly taken photo, you are still be better off if you can take a really good photo in the first place. In the above example, get closer to the child before you take the photo. We can't always do that, but we can have better photos if we do.

The April photo SIG will feature more tips on how to deal with digital photos. Maybe we should go back and talk about what your camera can do for you. As more members try out Picasa, we plan to talk about it some more. We all learned a lot at the March meeting. About 16 people attended.

(**PDF**—continued from page 9)

overall, the same quality found in a PDF made by Adobe Distiller, isn't there. It was particularly true of photos and other graphics, which in Adobe Distiller, were automatically of very high quality, just as you would expect from a \$300 program.

I was not able to create the same quality in pdfFactory.

However that said, pdfFactory is probably more than adequate for the average person not creating publication quality documents. In other words, the IRS probably wouldn't use pdfFactory because there might be some variables in the appearance of the result. The IRS wants a virtual exact duplicate of its forms.

PdfFactory would probably be OK for things such as a self-published family history or an exchange of a replica document with family and friends. It would also be adequate for most PDF files placed on websites.

Based on my experience, it is not adequate for sending a file to be printed by a commercial printer. It just didn't work qualitywise in my case. There was serious degradation of fine graphic dots and representations. The photos just didn't work.

But again, as you can see in the PC Post, the graphics look fine. So I feel that it is more than worth it for the average user.

Other PDF creators — PaperPort and Publisher

My experience with the free versions such as provided by MS Publisher, is that they tend to leave out some graphics. For example, in Publisher, certain lines and borders will not show up or print. I found that I had to trick the program into creating a border by adding a texture to it. This didn't affect the printed result, but at least it allowed me to create proper lines and borders. It also takes some extra time. This problem occurred mainly in Publisher. The Family Tree Maker version creates lines with no problems.

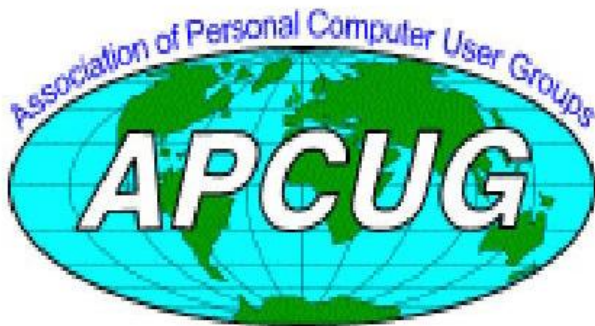
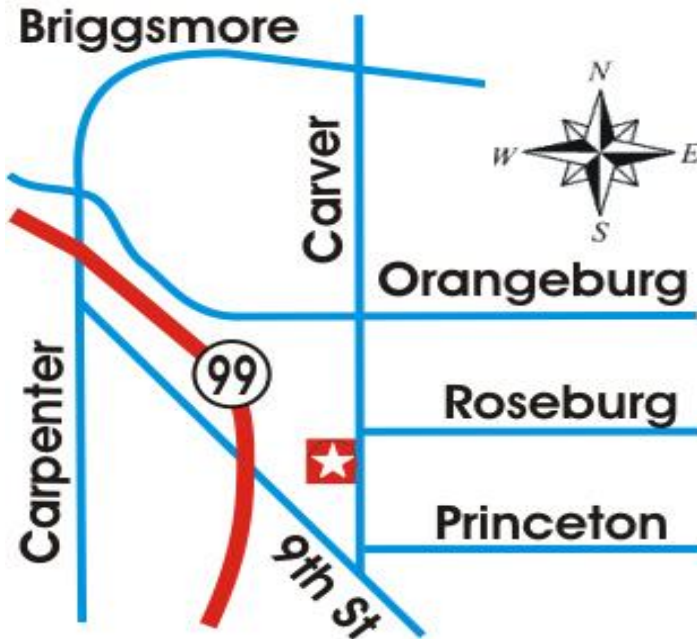
The quality of these other PDF creators does vary and so often doesn't meet publication requirements.

Conclusion

If you can afford it and you need high quality for publication purposes, buy Adobe Distiller. You won't regret it. For anything else, go with the free included versions. If you have a free version, there is little need to buy pdfFactory except for the deficiencies noted above.

The Club's Meeting Place

Our General Meeting and the Random Access Special Interest Group is held in the Destiny Christian Center in Modesto on the west side of Carver Road, right across from Sam's Food City.



Modesto Area
ARTS AND HOME.com
 News, Reviews, Features and Sources

Claude Delphia, publisher, 209-537-9604

Reasonable Website setup and design
 209-537-9604

Free classifieds for members. Email the text to the editor at editor@mpcug.net



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*Resumes, letters, applications,
articles, newsletters,
press releases, theses*

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Need help hooking up
that new PC,
or installing DSL-Cable?
Call Jim Goodman, \$50 for as
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Be sure and check our web site at least once a week at www.mpcug.net

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Join The Modesto PC User Group

Web site: www.mpcug.net

To join MPCUG (or just get more information about us go to our Web site and fill out the new member form or mail your check to: MPCUG, P.O. Box 5122, Modesto, CA 95352-5122. Membership is just \$24 a year and includes 12 issues of the PC Post along with participation in all meetings and events. You will also receive e-mail advising you of extra events or news.

The PC Post and Editorial Policy

The PC Post is published online 12 times per year and is available to all group members as a membership benefit. Annual group membership dues are \$24.

For information write:

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Opinions expressed in the PC Post do not necessarily reflect the opinions or views of the members as a group or the Board of Directors.

The PC Post encourages group members to submit articles for publication. We would like to have articles which deal with the writer's experience with computer hardware and software.

An article may deal with any computer-related subject provided it contains no libelous or offensive material. We can't use information copied from other publications without written permission except for quotes.

Articles should be submitted in MS Word text. Do not spend time formatting your article such as indents or centering. Please use only one space between sentences. and do not use bold, italicize or otherwise format the submission as we can't guarantee results in translation to Publisher. Proof read and run your spelling checker. Watch

for special upper and lower case in brand names. Do not tab or indent to layout text.

If you want to include a graphic, please contact the editor for instructions.

We reserve the right to edit articles, for length or to improve readability. Longer articles may be published in several parts. We will not knowingly promote unlicensed businesses.

Letters to the editor are encouraged. All articles and letters to the editor should be submitted to the editor via email as an attached file. Call him at (209) 667-1980 before submission. Please include your name, day and evening phone numbers, and email address for contact.

The MPCUG exchanges some articles with other user groups around the country via the Association of PC User Groups (APCUG). If for any reason you object to having your article distributed to APCUG member organizations for reprinting, please notify the editor at the time you submit the article. Your wish will in no way affect publication of your article in the Post.

Production notes: Prepared using **Microsoft Publisher 2003**, MS Office 2003, Minolta laser color printer and a lot of sweat and a few tears.

Special Interest Groups

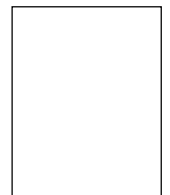
SIG meetings are held at the discretion of the leader and participants. Sometimes the date, location and time have to be changed or a meeting cancelled. Give the leader a call before the meeting if it is your first time.

SIG Name	Leaders	Phone#	Date / Time / Note
Beginners' SIG	Bud Bondietti	667-1980	6:30 p.m., 2nd Monday, Denny's 1525 McHenry Ave.
Board Meeting	Mike Kumler	531-2262	7:00 p.m., 1st Wed. of the month. Call for place.
Digital Photography.....	C. Delphia	537-9604	On hiatus
Random Access Q&A			6:30 p.m. before general meeting
Website SIG	Jim Goodman	579-0122	Looking for a place to meet.
Genealogy SIG	C. Delphia	537-9604	On hiatus
Women's' SIG	Elizabeth Leedom	523-4218	On hiatus

Membership renewal: As with all organizations, MPCUG is run solely by volunteers. That means that when your membership comes due, someone must send you a reminder, sometimes several times. We try to cut back that need by e-mailing you that your membership is expiring. Please help by renewing your membership in a timely manor. It saves user group money and volunteer time.



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