

# PC Post



Official Newsletter of the  
Modesto PC User Group.  
Modesto, California

29 YEARS OF USER HELPING USER

October 2011, Volume 29.10

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October 26, 2011

## Mac OS 10.7 Lion vs the upcoming Windows 8--the Fight is On!

By Terry Fix

Come and see Windows 8 running on an  
iMac and PC

The presentation will compare and contrast the two  
operating systems from Apple and Microsoft.

The presentation will ask the questions--Is Microsoft playing  
catch-up to Apple? Will Microsoft succeed in overtaking  
Apple?

Just how revolutionary will Microsoft be in "re-imagining  
Windows?"

The audience will see that technology is moving faster  
and--thank goodness--becoming more competitive --all for  
the good of us consumers!

As usual, the gathering will begin at 6:30 p.m. with the  
Random Access Special Interest Group, where members  
can get their most pressing computer questions answered.  
Following dinner at 7:30 p.m., Fix will make his presentation.

*The group meets at 6:30 p.m. at  
Denny's Restaurant, 1525  
McHenry Ave., for its Random  
Access Special Interest Group  
featuring questions and problems  
members are facing. At 7:30,  
following dinner, the presentation  
will start.*

*BOD Meeting - November 2, 7pm  
at Ridgeway's*



*Jim*





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## HDTV Resolutions 720p and 1080p Explained

If you go into the store to purchase a new television these resolutions will be prominently displayed. However they might not be as important as you think.

This is especially true if you are moving into the world of HDTV for the first time. Compared to an old standard TV, just about any HDTV will look spectacular, no matter what the resolution. Many experts in the field will tell you that they consider things like contrast ratio, color saturation, and color accuracy to be more important than resolution.

That said, when you choose a HDTV, the resolution will be the first thing you see when you start shopping. The resolution is the number of pixels on the screen. All other things being equal, more pixels will produce a better, sharper image. A 720p television has 1280 horizontal pixels and 720 vertical pixels. A 1080p television has the same number of horizontal pixels (1280) but has 1080 vertical pixels, essentially giving you more detail in the picture. The "p" stands for progressive scanning which is superior to another scanning technique called interlaced scanning, which is represented by an "i". You don't have to worry about the "i" or the "p" because most televisions sold in the US today use progressive scanning.

1080p is the best resolution available today and you will pay a premium to get it. Having a 1080p TV, however, is only good if you have 1080p content to show on the TV. Unfortunately, currently there are no over-the-air television broadcasts in the United States that are transmitted in 1080p. Although television stations and cable and satellite providers have the ability to transmit in that resolution, few are willing to take that step because 1080p transmissions take up a lot of bandwidth. At this time there are only a few satellite provider that utilize the 1080p format and these are strictly limited to their pay-per-view movies.

So most people will find that the only way to enjoy the full details of a 1080p television is to purchase a Blu-ray DVD player. Blu-ray disks are formatted in the full 1080p resolution and will show off the full potential of a 1080p TV.

Whether you purchase a 720p or 1080p television, standard-definition content won't necessarily look any better. Although, depending on the television, the signal may be upconverted to make it look better. In some geographic areas, you can get hi-def signals over the air. You can also get hi-def stations through cable and satellite providers.

If you don't want to purchase a Blu-ray player, you can still use your old DVD player and your old movies will look better than ever. Standard DVDs, which are 480p in resolution, will be upconverted by a HDTV and will look noticeably better on a HDTV, whether it is 720p or 1080p.

One other thing needs to be taken into consideration when talking about resolutions. In order to see the extra detail that a 1080p TV provides, the screen size must be quite large. That is why HTDVs are generally quite a bit larger than the old standard definition televisions. Also, you need to site close enough to the TV for your eyes to actually be able to see the extra details.

This is where it gets a little confusing. Basically, unless you have a very short distance between you and the TV, you will need a larger screen with 1080p than with 720p. That's one reason why most televisions in smaller screen sizes will be 720p rather than 1080p. Even with 1080p Blu-ray disks, the 1080p quality only begins to become noticeably better as the screen size increases.

You can see from these details that although 1080p is the premium resolution, 720p TVs are a lower-cost option, and may be perfectly fine depending on your needs.

Besides the options like plasma, LCD, LED, 720p and 1080p, there are plenty of other specifications that you can look at when purchasing an HDTV. Higher end televisions will also have things like better contrast ratios, extra HDMI ports for attaching additional equipment, and Internet connectivity. Higher ends LCD and LED TVs will also have higher refresh rates and better backlighting.

If you want the best hardware, look at the 3-D TVs. You may not want 3-D in a television. If you are like me, you may not even like it, but 3-D TVs have higher hardware requirements and will, in effect, be the best televisions, even without the 3-D.

Not everyone will want or need the best or costliest HDTV. Fortunately there are sizes and models available to suit the needs of almost everyone.

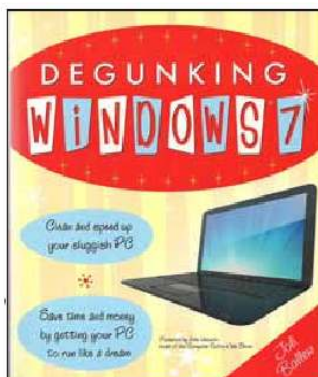
## Degunking Windows 7

By George Harding, Treasurer, Tucson Computer Society, AZ

October 2011 issue, eJournal

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The book is written by Joli Ballew, an author (36 books!), trainer and web site manager . She has written for the McGraw-Hill How to Do Everything series. The book has 273 pages, including an extensive Index of 19 pages. The theme of the book is how to easily clean up your PC and speed it up. The process does not involve any special tools. All you need is already contained in Windows 7. If you are running XP, Vista or 2000, many of the tools you need are available in those programs as well. A few are only in Windows 7.

The author has developed a 12-step process for degunking your computer. Here it is:

1. Get rid of files and programs you don't need.
2. Organize the remaining files and folders.
3. Clean up your desktop, Start menu and Task Bar.
4. Optimize your hard drive and limit the programs that run in the background.
5. Clean up and secure Internet Explorer and consider alternate web browsers.
6. Reduce e-mail spam, back up e-mail and organize e-mail.
7. Install Windows updates and reconfigure anti-virus, anti-malware and anti-adware programs.
8. Clean up your network and create a homegroup.
9. Fix problems with media, including duplicate files, files that won't play and files that are taking up hard drive space unnecessarily.
10. Optimize syncing with cell phones, music players, iPads, iPhones, netbooks and laptops.
11. Get rid of errors for hardware, the operating system and third-party programs.
12. Create a working, reliable and fool-proof backup system.

She realizes that not everyone can afford the time or is interested in doing every one of the steps. To address that she has developed 10-minute, 30-minute, one-hour and half-day programs. These capture the most significant actions that will give the most benefit for the time allotted.

The first step is probably the most difficult and time-consuming, because you pretty much have to look at a lot of the document, pictures and media files to determine what can be trashed and what must be saved. If you click on the Change My View button (in Documents or any folder) and select Details, simply click on the Date header to sort by date and see the oldest files. These may be the most likely ones to delete.

If you press the Delete key or right-click and select Delete, the file will be moved from its current location to the Recycle Bin. This is just a different location on your hard drive, which you can empty from time to time. To permanently delete a file, hold down Shift while you delete.

Getting rid of unused and unwanted programs can be easily done through Control Panel/Programs. Here, you can uninstall those programs you no longer need and those you didn't know you had. While you're there, note on the left side of the frame the option to turn off Windows components. Here, you can turn off or on various Windows components.

One last thing to do to clean things up is to run Disk Cleanup. In the Start menu Search window, type "cleanup" and click on Free up Disk Space.

When the analysis is done, you see a list of types of files and the amount of space that would be freed up by deletion. Check or uncheck as appropriate and click OK .

You can organize your files by creating folders inside the major system categories. For example, to organize your client letters, create folders in the My Documents folder for each client and save files in each for your clients. Likewise, for pictures, classify your photos by creating a folder for each trip or subject. You'll be able to find the pics you need much more easily this way.

Lastly, defragment your hard drive to reorder and reconnect the files you've moved and deleted. Right click your drive in Windows Explorer, choose Properties, then Tools . Click Analyze to see if defragmenting would be advantageous. You can also adjust the scheduled defragmentation that's currently set up .

You should clean up your Desktop by deleting any icons and shortcuts you don't use. You can put a shortcut on the Desktop for Computer or Network by browsing to that folder and right-clicking. Choose Send To/Desktop to create a shortcut.

You can customize your Start menu by right-clicking the Start icon and choosing Properties, then click on Customize. I like the Recent Items choice because it avoids having to first launch an application, then open the document I want to continue with. You can also pin items to the Start Menu or Task Bar by right-clicking and selecting Pin to Start Menu or Pin to Task Menu.

The author points out several things you can do to optimize your hard drive: convert to NTFS (assuming you're still on FAT), run Check Disk (under Properties of your drive), run Performance tests, run Disk Cleanup.

One of the most powerful enhancements is in Performance in Control Panel. Here you can adjust visual effects, control indexing and change system settings.

There's a chapter on IE8, including how to turn on Compatibility View, remove toolbars and add-ins, explore privacy and security settings.

Chapter 8 deals with email, how to organize it, filter it and how best to deal with spam. It also shows you how to back-up email lists.

Chapter 9 deals with the important subjects of security, Windows Update and the use of firewalls and other security packages.

The balance of the chapters deal with less crucial subjects. They may be of interest to some users, but probably not all.

I found this book to be useful. I tried out many of the ideas both to see how they worked and to see the improvement that might result.

About: Degunking Windows 7

Author: Joli Ballew

Publisher: McGraw-Hill Osborne Media

<http://www.mhprofessional.com/category/?cat=2834>

ISBN-10: 0071760059

ISBN-13: 978-0071760058

Price: \$25, \$16.50 @ Amazon

## Many Free Programs from Microsoft

By Ira Wilsker, Member, Golden Triangle PC Club, TX; Columnist, The Examiner, Beaumont, TX; Radio Show Host, Mondays, 6-7pm CT, KLVI.com  
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### WEBSITES:

<https://www.techsupportalert.com/content/best-free-microsoft-downloads.htm>

Microsoft is one of those companies that many of us have a love-hate relationship with. Despite some possible ill will towards Microsoft based on our experiences with Vista, BOB, and a myriad of other software issues, Microsoft does have a kind and generous side when it comes to producing and releasing for free, numerous pieces of useful software. My favorite free software directory, Gizmo's TechSupportAlert.com recently compiled and published a comprehensive directory of free software from Microsoft, which can be found at [www.techsupportalert.com/content/best-free-microsoft-downloads.htm](http://www.techsupportalert.com/content/best-free-microsoft-downloads.htm).

Gizmo, and his volunteer staff, have tested and reviewed all of the free Microsoft software titles listed, and only those that met subjective quality and performance standards are listed. According to Gizmo and his staff, "An unavoidable fact is that some alternatives will be better than programs listed here, but the programs listed here are still good and useful - however, if a Microsoft program is ridiculously inferior to other free alternatives and simply not worth using, I won't include it. If a program has a loose affiliation with Microsoft but is not actually a Microsoft product (e.g. Paint.NET), it won't be listed here."

The Gizmo listings of free Microsoft software are categorized into 11 types of utilities, including security software, internet, system tools, desktop, multimedia, office, educational, programming, online services, entertainment, and miscellaneous. At the top of the directory is a listing of recently added free Microsoft software. A few of these recently added programs include Standalone System Sweeper (creates bootable CD to scan and remove malware), Microsoft Safety Scanner (comprehensive computer scan to detect and remove malware), and Fix it Solution (Microsoft's automated utility to repair or correct many common Windows and Microsoft software problems).

I have been a strong proponent of securing our computers, and have repeatedly encouraged users to utilize any one or more of the many free or commercial security utilities that are

#### Best Free Microsoft Downloads – Quick Select Index

After clicking a link, use your browser's Back icon to return here.

**Items added or updated most recently:** Standalone System Sweeper | Microsoft Safety Scanner | RootkitRevealer | EMET | Process Monitor | BGInfo | AccessEnum | ZoomIt | Expression Encoder 4 | WebMatrix | Fix it Solution Center | Disk2vhd | BlueScreen (screensaver)

Security	Antivirus   Malware Scanner   Emergency Tool   Rootkit Detection   System Analysis   Network Analysis   Application Security   Virtualization   Parental Control   Windows Service Packs
Internet	Browser   File/Folder Synchronization   Mail   Instant Messenger   Blogging Tools
System tools	System Tools Suite   Startup Manager   Process Viewer   System Monitor   System Info   Permissions Analysis   Autoplay Utility   Tweaking   Search Tool
Desktop	CMD Shortcut   Task Switcher   Virtual Desktop   Screen Magnifier
Multimedia	Animation   Image Tools   Photo Organizer   Video Editor   Video Encoder   Slideshow Software
Office	Document Viewer   Spreadsheet Viewer   Presentation Viewer   Diagram Viewer
Educational	Mathematics   Programming
Programming	Programming Editor   HTML Editor   Web Development
Online Services	File Hosting   Online Office Suite   Support & Troubleshooting
Entertainment	Screensaver
Miscellaneous	Virtualization   USB Flash Drive Tool



available. For those who may like the idea of using free security software from Microsoft, such software is available. One of Microsoft's most popular free software utilities is Microsoft Security Essentials, a decent and often well regarded utility that can provide real-time protection from viruses, spyware, and other common forms of malware, as well as scan for malware already on the computer. In its review of Security Essentials, Gizmo says, "This may be the best free product ever from Microsoft, and it was chosen as Gizmo's Freeware 2010 Product of the Year. MSE is a free anti-malware program with an interface ideal for average users, and effectiveness ideal for advanced users as well." Microsoft Security Essentials will run on any computer with Windows XP, Vista, or Windows 7. While this is an "essentials" program, only providing adequate protection against the most common threats, it does lack many of the features incorporated into other competitive free and commercial security products.



I am frequently asked about parental control software, programs that can give parents control over their children's internet activities. Microsoft obliges with its free "Windows Live Family Safety", which comes in versions for Vista, Windows 7, and a special version for XP. This program can filter web content, and restrict email contacts. Windows Live Family Safety can also create an activity log that allows parents to see who has been on the computer, and a list of which websites the child has visited.

Many Windows users like to tweak their computers in order to eke out any available performance increase, or to better manage the software that is running on the computer. Microsoft has several excellent free system tools that can perform these tasks and more. One of my favorites, which I frequently use, is Microsoft's Sysinternals Suite, a comprehensive collection of about 70 system utilities and troubleshooting tools that can be used to monitor and maintain most functions on the computer. Not all tools will run on all Windows machines (but most will), as some tools are XP only, while others will not run on XP, and some tools are for 32-bit systems only; still the majority of these utilities will run on most Windows machines. Another way of improving computer performance and speed, as well as to improve boot time, is to control what programs load when the computer is booted; Microsoft offers for free one of the finest startup managers available at any price, and this program is "Autoruns". Autoruns can also be used to identify and disable malware that loads itself in the boot process, a critical step in the removal of many types of malware. Autoruns, which will run on any XP or later computer, is one of the programs that I routinely install on almost all computers that I work on, and is seen by many IT professionals as a mandatory item to use to analyze potential PC problems.

Under the heading "Image Tools" in the Multimedia category, is another of my favorite free utilities, Microsoft Image Composite Editor (ICE). This program performs a task that most users are unaware of, but once used, becomes a fun task to accomplish when manipulating a series of digital photos or images. ICE is a "panorama stitcher" in that it can seamlessly merge a series of overlapping photos, and use them to create a panoramic



image. Once this panoramic image is created, ICE can be used to crop, rotate, and otherwise manage the image, and then save the new image in a variety of popular image formats. If the user chooses to do so, images created with ICE can be uploaded to Microsoft's Photosynth website (photosynth.net) where they can join the 50,000 panoramic images that users have decided to share with the world.

Since taking digital photos and video have become some of the most popular personal activities, many of us have found a need to be able to edit our images and videos, but are often unwilling to pay for expensive editing software. For those who want a decent but free utility to accomplish those tasks, Microsoft offers Windows Live Photo Gallery and Windows Live Movie Maker. The Photo Gallery



software enables the user to easily edit, organize, and tag digital photos. Like most of Microsoft's other free programs, Photo Gallery is totally adequate to carry out the most common image tasks, but it lacks many of the enhanced features found on more comprehensive competitive products. Movie Maker can also directly upload videos to YouTube. Windows Live Movie Maker, like Photo Gallery, offers the user the most common video editing functions.



YouTube, Facebook, and some other video hosting services. For anyone wanting to create a slideshow using digital photos, Photo Story 3 is a powerful program that can do that and much more. Photo Story 3 can create transition effects between images, pan, and zoom in on images, as well as add text to the images, audio narration, and music to the slideshow. Slideshows created with this software are saved in the popular and universally viewable WMV (Windows Media) format.

One of my favorite programs in the Educational section is Microsoft Mathematics, which is a full featured mathematical and graphic calculator. This free program can solve equations, perform unit conversions, display 2 and 3 dimensional graphs, and can process algebra, trigonometry, and calculus. One very useful educational feature built in is its ability to display simple instructions on how to solve math problems, which is a valuable teaching and tutorial function. Microsoft originally sold this program commercially, but the newest version was released by Microsoft as freeware. One other interesting feature in Microsoft Mathematics is that it integrates with Word and OneNote as an add-in, which incorporates the math features into those programs.



These are but a few of the many free programs that Microsoft has made freely available to Windows users. It may be a worthwhile and profitable exercise to review the list of free



software from Microsoft before purchasing some commercial software. All of this software is available for download directly from Microsoft for an excellent price, that is hard to beat - free!

*Ira Wilsker is the Director of the Management Development Program at Lamar Institute of Technology, in Beaumont, TX. He also hosts a weekly radio talk show on computer topics on KLVJ News Talk AM560, and writes a weekly technology column for the Examiner newspaper <[www.theexaminer.com](http://www.theexaminer.com)>. Ira is also a police officer who specializes in cybercrime, and has lectured internationally in computer crime and security.*

## Do you want to tweet?

By Linda Gonse, Editor / Webmaster, Orange County PC Users' Group, CA  
September 2011 issue, Nibbles & Bytes  
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Many more people are turning to Twitter now that they realize using it is more than announcing your breakfast menu and where you shop for your socks. So, if you are thinking of joining in on this real-time, constantly changing, global communication, but are unfamiliar with some of the jargon, let me help get you started.

twitter



When a person writes 140 characters or less in their message box on Twitter and presses Send the message appears in their "timeline" and in the timelines of all the people who have chosen to "follow" that person. The message is called a tweet. You send tweets, get tweets, and read tweets.

When referring to other people on Twitter, the terms "tweeps" or "peeps" are used. I have seen "Twitterers" but that has too many letters to be used much. (No one uses "twits" which would be a negative term not linked to Twitter.)

All of Twitter has been called the "Twittersphere" but again, too many letters to refer to it. In a tweet, unless it's in a short tweet. Tweets that you read and enjoy can be forwarded to people who follow you. Forwarded tweets are called Retweets. You can also flag a tweet you write with a hashtag which looks like a pound (weight) symbol. The # symbol plus wordorwordswithnospaces is inserted in a tweet, usually at the end. It allows that tweet to be seen by everyone who searches for that subject; for example: #twitterhumor

Hashtags have other purposes, too, but are not ever necessary to use in a tweet.

I often get breaking news from subjects that "trend" -- this is where a multitude of tweets are sent about the same time and the same subject. These tweets may or may not be marked with hashtags. Trending topics recently were Occupy Wall Street, RIP Steve Jobs, Chaz Bono.

## Bluetooth - Not a dental diagnosis or a rare tooth problem

By Phil Sorrentino, President, Sarasota PCUG, Florida

October 2011 issue, Sarasota PC Monitor

[www.spcug.org](http://www.spcug.org) / president (at) spcug.org

Bluetooth is the name given to a technology that uses short-range radio links, and is intended to replace the cable(s) connecting portable and/or fixed electronic devices. The vision is that it will allow for the replacement of the many propriety cables that connect one device to another with one universal radio link. Its boasts such key features as robustness, low complexity, low power and low cost, and it was designed to be operated in noisy frequency environments.



Bluetooth is a communications standard for interconnecting electronic devices and is defined by the Bluetooth specification. Bluetooth uses a form of data packet switching, a technology that is used to transmit digital data via a wireless communications link. Bluetooth operates in the unlicensed ISM (Industrial, Scientific and Medical) 2.4GHz frequency band, and avoids interference from other signals by hopping to a new frequency after

transmitting or receiving each packet. Here is a little history, for you tech history buffs, to show how long Bluetooth has been around. Work on Bluetooth was started in 1994 by two Ericsson Corporation engineers, and the Bluetooth 1.0 specification was released May 1998. Version 1.0, with a data rate less than 1 Mb/s, had many problems, and manufacturers had difficulty making their products interoperable. Bluetooth 2.0 was released November 2004 with a faster data transfer rate (approx. 2.1Mb/s). And finally, Bluetooth 3.0 was released April 2009 with a data rate of up to 24Mb/s with improvements and new features and is the current standard.

Bluetooth uses a radio technology called frequency-hopping spread spectrum which chops up the data being sent and transmits chunks of it on up to 79 different frequencies. Bluetooth provides a way to connect and exchange information between devices such as Smartphones, laptops, personal computers, printers, Global Positioning System (GPS) receivers, digital cameras, video games, and others.

Bluetooth is an open, wireless protocol for exchanging data over short distances between devices, creating a personal area network (PAN). It was originally conceived as a wireless alternative to the old serial RS-232 data cables. Bluetooth is a network and thus can connect many devices, unlike RS-232 which was strictly serial point-to-point. Bluetooth is primarily designed for low power consumption, with a short range. Three ranges are defined in the standard, 100 meters (Class 1), 10 meters (Class 2), and 1 meter (Class 3). Because Bluetooth devices use radio (broadcast) communications, they do not have to be in line of sight of each other. Bluetooth makes it possible for these devices to communicate with each other and transfer information as long as they are in range.

Both Bluetooth and Wi-Fi are examples of wireless technology that use the unlicensed 2.4GHz frequency spectrum. Both have many applications in today's offices and homes such as: setting up networks, printing, connecting cooperating devices, and transferring data files among computers and smart devices. Wi-Fi is intended as a replacement for cabling for

general local area network access in work areas. Bluetooth is intended as a replacement for cabling among equipment in close proximity. Wi-Fi is intended for use in equipment as a wireless local area network (WLAN). Bluetooth is intended for use as a smaller, personal area network (PAN).

A PC uses a Bluetooth adapter in order to communicate with other Bluetooth devices. While some desktop computers and most recent laptops come with a built-in Bluetooth adapter, others require an external adapter, usually in the form of a Bluetooth Dongle. Bluetooth allows multiple devices to communicate with a computer over a single adapter. For Microsoft Windows platforms, Windows XP Service Pack 2, Vista, and Windows 7 all have native support for Bluetooth. (Previous versions required users to install their Bluetooth adapter's own drivers, which were not directly supported by Microsoft.)

Some of the more common applications of Bluetooth are:

- ! Wireless control of and communications between a mobile phone and a hands-free headset. This was one of the earliest applications.
- ! Wireless communications with PC input and Output devices, the most common being the mouse, keyboard and printer.
- ! Replacement of traditional wired serial communications used in: test equipment, GPS receivers, Medical equipment, bar code scanners, and traffic control devices.
- ! Between game consoles such as Nintendo's Wii, and Sony's Playstation and their respective controllers.
- ! Between video camera and remote monitor in Baby Monitor Systems.
- ! Between Garage Door Opener Motor and Remote Garage Door Opener Controller.

As you can see from this list, there are many reasons for computer devices to communicate with each other. Here is a quick computer communications concept tutorial. When any two devices need to communicate, they have to agree on a number of things before the communication can begin. The first point of agreement is physical: Will they talk over wires, or through some form of wireless signals? If they use wires, how many are required; one, two, eight, 25? Once the physical attributes are decided, additional questions arise, such as how much data will be sent at a time? For instance, serial ports send data 1 bit at a time, while parallel ports send several bits at once. And, how will they speak to each other? All of the devices in an electronic network need to know what the bits mean and whether the message they receive is the same message that was sent (i.e. checksums at the end of a message).

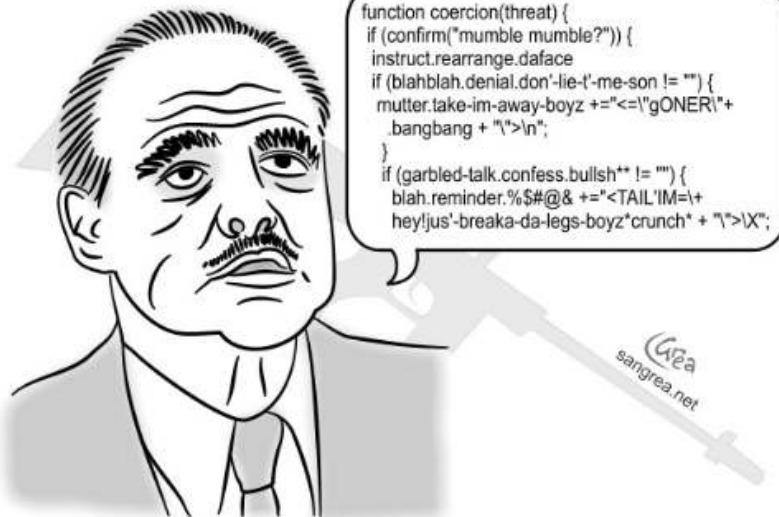
This means developing a set of commands and responses commonly known as a Protocol. Bluetooth is essentially a networking standard that defines these two levels, physical and protocol. Bluetooth protocols simplify the discovery and setup of services between devices. Before any communications can take place between two Bluetooth devices, they have to be paired. In order to pair two Bluetooth wireless devices, a password (or PassKey) has to be exchanged between the two devices. A Passkey is a code shared by both Bluetooth devices, which proves that both users have agreed to pair with each other.

A very brief description of Bluetooth pairing is as follows: Bluetooth Device A looks for other Bluetooth devices in the area. Bluetooth Device A finds Bluetooth Device B. Bluetooth Device A prompts you, the user, to enter a password (or PassKey). Bluetooth Device A

sends the Passkey to Bluetooth Device B. Bluetooth Device B sends the Passkey back to Bluetooth Device A. At this point, Bluetooth Devices A and B are paired and able to exchange data. Data between the devices will be accomplished wirelessly, over-the-air, a great boon to those who dislike the "rats nest" of wires typically found behind electronic devices.

So, although dentists probably cringe when they hear the term, with all the computer devices you may have or are thinking of getting, there's probably a Bluetooth in your future.

## Computer Humor



The Godfather's biggest contribution to society  
was inspiring the development of encryption

## Turn Your PC into a 3-D Game Machine

By Vinny LaBash, Regular Columnist, Sarasota PCUG, Florida

October 2011 issue, Sarasota PC Monitor

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3-D has been around for almost as long as photography. The general public's first major exposure to 3-D was the 1952 motion picture *Bwana Devil*. It wasn't the first 3-D movie, but it was the first to be shot in color and receive wide exposure. The film didn't win any awards, but the novelty of 3-D was a hit with big screen fans. People became enamored with the

illusion of depth for several years, but the thrill eventually faded, and 3-D was essentially gone from movies by 1960.

3-D was by no means dead; it bounced around development labs for years until it was combined with wide screen technology and ultimately merged with the incredible IMAX experience. You're not going to get IMAX on your PC, but you can get a solid 3-D effect in most of your games with a little effort and small expense. It might be fun too.

Several weeks ago I received an interesting email from Roy R. who is well aware of my fondness toward high end games. He told me about a web site that claimed to turn a PC into a platform that could display most games in 3-D even if they were designed for 2-D.

Since the process appeared both relatively uncomplicated and inexpensive, the only thing to do was to see if it really worked. The first thing was to go on Amazon and eBay and search for a pair of two color 3-D glasses. They can be red/blue or yellow/blue. You could probably make a pair yourself with colored cellophane. A few minutes of searching came up with an acceptable pair of glasses for \$2.00. For that amount of money I almost didn't care if they worked or not. Whatever the outcome, it certainly beat spending \$200 for a 3-D hardware accelerator, that much or more for a 3-D monitor, and up to \$200 for a pair of 3-D shutter glasses.

The next step is to go to <http://iz3d.com>. From there, download the free driver for their unique 3-D monitor. Here's how it's done.

1. From the iz3d.com home page, click the Get Software page.
2. From the dropdown menu, select Anaglyph.
3. When the download screen appears, select the Current version Download button.
4. After the software has been downloaded to your system, choose RUN to install the program.
5. Follow the instructions on the dialog boxes or simply select the defaults.
6. On the setup dialog box be sure to check the Run Control Center box. Accept whatever defaults the process offers, and then click Finish.
7. The Direct X dialog box will appear. In the Output section select Anaglyph (free) and the option matching the 3-D glasses you have. Click Apply.
8. Examine the selections under Direct X in the left side of the dialog box.
9. If you know what you're doing, change whatever is appropriate, otherwise close down the dialog box by clicking on the red X in the top right corner.

Install the driver on your machine.

1. Close any open applications or browser sessions.
2. Go to your Downloads folder and look for a file named iZ3DDriverSetup.1.12(4016).EXE. If the numbers at the end of the file name are different, don't worry about it. All it means is that the driver has been updated since I wrote this.
3. Double click on the file name to begin the installation process.
4. You may get a Security Warning dialog box stating that the publisher could not be verified. Click the Run button.
5. The Account Control dialog box may also make an appearance. Give permission to continue.



6. You will get several more dialog boxes. Accept the defaults to continue.
7. On the Select Destination Location dialog box either accept the default location for the installation files or choose another location. Click Next.
8. On the Select Components dialog box, choose Full Installation from the drop down menu.
9. Click Next on the Select Start Menu dialog box.
10. Click Install on the Ready to Install dialog box.
11. Accept the defaults on any dialog boxes that may appear.
12. Click Finish when the installation is complete. See illustration above.
13. On the DirectX dialog box select the Anaglyph (free) and Red/Cyan or Yellow/Blue depending on what kind of 3-D glasses you have.
14. Click Apply.
15. Close out the dialog box by clicking on the red X in the upper right corner of the dialog box.

Load any of your DirectX games and you will see a menu that will walk you through the steps to initialize the 3-D settings of the game. You may have to shift the focus by holding down the Shift key and pressing the + or - key on the numeric keypad. There are directions in the menu that refer to the "Num" key. This is not the Num Lock key, but a reference that the instruction refers to the numeric keypad.

The process worked with Mass Effect and Mass Effect 2, Call of Duty, Left for Dead, and World of Warcraft, an online game. I couldn't get it to work with Fallout New Vegas, so there's no guarantee it will work with all of your games, but for \$2 it's certainly worth a try.

3-D technology has changed and improved considerably over the years, but one thing remains constant. 3-D glasses still make you look like a dork.

#### **From Ray Nichols**

If you have items you would be willing to donate for our club drawings, they will be gratefully accepted. Be sure to wear your name badge for the drawing.

Please also remember to bring your used magazines, books, videos, DVD's, and cassettes for distribution to Veterans in our area. If you have old household or device batteries, or used CFL (Compact Fluorescent Lamp) bulbs, bring them for legal recycling (it is against the law to dispose of them in the trash). Old Cellphones can be converted to Telephone Calling Cards for overseas Military Personnel. Old eyeglasses will be turned over to the Lions Club for reissuing to needy people



## Smart Computing Tips & Fun Facts

[www.smartcomputing.com](http://www.smartcomputing.com)

### Save Space

Some of us have small, cramped workstations, where our monitors eat up most of the desk space. Some of us have plenty of room, but simply want a clutter-free desk. Whatever the reason for wanting to clean up your desk space, a trackball mouse is an excellent, comfortable way to do it. A trackball directs the mouse pointer using an external ball that sits in a socket with sensors that detect the ball's movement. The ball is moved with the user's thumb, while the rest of the hand rests over the right and left click buttons and across the scroll wheel. Because the trackball doesn't need a flat surface on which to roll mechanically or with a laser, there is no need to take up desk space with a mouse pad. The trackball sits in one position while your thumb moves the mouse pointer. The space-saving mouse style is also useful for generally cramped working areas such as airplanes or coffee shop tables.

### Protect Your Discs

Because DVD and CD drives use laser light to read data, music, and movies from optical discs, any scratches on the data side of a disc can cause skips or errors. Always store CDs and DVDs in their cases or sleeves, and never set bare discs down on any surface that could scratch them. If you can't commit to these rules of thumbs, try buying discs with special scratch-resistant coatings.

### Repeater Repeater

Your small business is doing well, and you've decided to move to a more expansive locale. Unfortunately, these bigger digs welcome almost everything but your wireless network. If you need your wireless network to cover more territory, buying a repeater is an affordable solution. A repeater essentially acts as the middleman between a wireless access point and any PCs beyond the access point's normal range. Many repeaters are compatible with wireless encryption standards, letting you securely grow your network without worrying about unwanted intruders.

### Carbon Copy Control

Understanding who's privy to the list of recipients to one of your emails can help you avoid a potentially embarrassing interoffice gaffe. Knowing Cc stands for carbon copy and Bcc stands for blind carbon copy is fairly remedial computing knowledge, but the blind carbon copy can be tricky to grasp initially. When you send an email, everyone will see the recipients in the To and Cc fields, but anyone in the Bcc field will remain hidden from all other recipients, even other recipients in the Bcc field. For example, if you want your recipients to remain unaware of the other recipients, include your own email address in the To field and put everyone else's email in the Bcc field.



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