

PC Post



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Modesto, California

30 YEARS OF USER HELPING USER
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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 – July 3, 7pm at Ridgeway's

Adobe Acrobat – the Work Horse of Document Processing Kirk Stockham

Many do not know that the "PDF" file is world famous and stands for "Portable Document Format." If you are not using this program then you are missing out on some fantastic "document" processing that you can use for home, fun, the Internet, and business.

Adobe Acrobat has so many features that they can't all be previewed during just one club meeting. You will learn enough of Acrobat's amazing features that even if you have some Adobe Acrobat experience you will definitely learn something new.

It's a feature-rich program that is so popular that there are Adobe Acrobat "clones" that attempt to sell "PDF" features at lower prices and fewer capabilities. If you have a scanner you will find that almost all scanners have a "PDF" setting!

Don't forget to bring a USB flash drive for some software that you may want to have, compliments of Adobe. AND it is NOT the free Adobe Acrobat Reader.

Make sure your flash drive is 1 gigabyte or greater in capacity. "Someone" bring an extra USB laptop too so you can transfer the software to your flash drive.



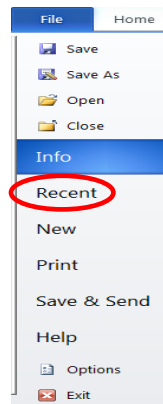
www.adobe.com



www.compukiss.com
sandy@compukiss.com

Simple Tips for Microsoft Word

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



Find a Recently Used Document

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

Correct a Mistake

None of us like to admit to making mistakes, but we all make them. Microsoft Word and many other programs will respond to this quick keystroke that can correct just about any mistakes you can make. Just hold down the Ctrl key and pressing the Z key at the same time. This will undo your last action. You can use this function to erase a sentence, delete formatting that you've just added, or just about anything else. This shortcut is especially useful when you don't know what just happened. If the page suddenly looks different and you don't know what happened, try CTRL+Z to undo the last action. If the undo is not satisfactory, you can use CTRL+Y to redo the action. This function is even more useful when you realize that you can undo more than one previous action. Continuing to press CTRL + Z will undo one change at a time often back up to 12 or more changes. Remember this tip will also work in many other programs, as well.

Print only Part of a Document

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

In Word 2010, they have changed the print option box. If you are using Word 2010, look for the Setting area of that print box and click the down arrow next to Print All Pages to get to the Print Selection choice. In either case, if Print Selection is grayed out, it means you did not highlight anything.

Zoom In To See Better

Newer versions of Word have a zoom control box at the bottom right of the screen. You can use the slider to see as much of the screen as you like and to make the text larger or smaller. If you have an older version of Word you can accomplish the same thing by holding down the CTRL key and moving the wheel on your mouse up and down. Some people have trouble highlighting text. That simple click-and-drag technique can be difficult if your hand shakes. So here is a simple technique that can be used. It can also be a valuable time-saver. To highlight a word, double-click on that word. To highlight a paragraph, triple-click on any word in that paragraph. To highlight a single sentence, hold down the CTRL key and then click on any word in that sentence.

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

GET SMART!*

**Would you believe that you could become a smart phone junkie?
By Bob Woods, Webmaster, UCHUG (Under the Computer Hood
UG), CA**

[www.uchug.org / webmasters \(at\) uchug.org](http://www.uchug.org/webmasters(at)uchug.org)



A couple of weeks ago we had a phone call from my son seeking help with setting up his first Android Smart Phone. My wife and I have been using one for about six months so have already gone through much of the learning curve. We are using the non-contract provider Straight Talk and a ZTE Merit 990 phone. The Straight Talk service is half the cost per month as compared to a contract service and there is unlimited data, texting and phone calls. The only down side is the phone cost is not subsidized through a contract so you will be paying whatever the going cost is for the model you choose. But, you will quickly recoup that cost in relation to the much higher cost of a contract service.

Anyway, it got me thinking about how much we had learned about setting up and using the Smart Phone. Remember, the phones are small computers. They have a CPU, memory (RAM, ROM and an SD Card slot for external memory); displays that are touch screens, operating systems and applications. Learning to use and manage them takes a bit of time and effort as the manuals that come with them do not give you much insight as to how this is done. So here is some of what the first time user will be faced with on an Android based Smart Phone. Note - I am not going to recommend a particular phone as there are many choices available with plenty of reviews to back them up. Basically the choices have to do mainly with individual preferences and what you're willing to spend.

For a fully interactive tutorial of Android go to:

http://tracfone.deviceanywhere.com/straighttalk/home.seam?custId=STZEZ990G&locale=en_US < <http://bit.ly/Z6hRWC> >



The tutorial uses the phone I have (ZTE Merit 990G), but should be pretty close to what you will encounter on most Android phones.

No matter which version of Android is installed on the phone you choose the interface was designed for the touch screen. It responds to a tap to select an item or double tap to launch an app. Swiping a finger across the screen left to right, right to left, up and down will scroll in the direction of the swipe. Touch and drag will move an item or, in the case of text, select all between starting and stopping points. Touch and hold will usually bring up a popup menu of actions to take.

Most phones have accelerometers to see the orientation of the phone. When using the on screen keyboard it is really nice to turn the phone sideways to get a wider screen and more spread out keyboard. Also, if the screen does not respond to the turn or goes dark a light shake of the phone it will wake it up to the action. You will quickly get used to using the screen.

After you turn on the phone and unlock it the first screen you will see is the home page. The home page is the Android equivalent of the Windows desktop. Most phones have home pages that are a few screens wide. To move between them you swipe your finger across the screen to the right or left. You will find some icons or small control panels on most screens. At the top right of the home screen you will see status icons showing time, battery level, signal strength for Wi-Fi and provider signals (2G/3G/4G), Bluetooth (if turned on) and GPS (if turned on). On the left top will be notify icons for when you get a text message, email, or voicemail message or other items such as application updates. If a notify icon shows up you can touch the notify area and drag down to open a drop down menu. At this point you can touch the item to open it or clear the box by touching the clear button. At the bottom center of the screen there should be an icon that will take you to the main screen showing all of your installed applications (apps). On my phone it looks like a square of tiny dots. When your phone is new, all of the apps you see come hardwired to the Android OS and cannot be uninstalled. I highly recommend that you do not update any of the apps that you do not use. When an app is updated it takes more internal phone memory than the previous version. The built in apps must reside in the phones internal memory. You will find that not using up all of your phones free internal memory will be a constant challenge (more on that later). To put the icon of often used apps on the desktop just touch and hold the icon. A copy of the icon will be put on your home page. As the home page fills with icons or you want to group icons on different pages just touch and hold the icon until it changes size and then drag it to the bottom corner to the right to move it to a screen to the right, left for left. You can also delete an icon by dragging it to the trashcan in the middle. It will not delete the app, just delete the icon from the home pages.

I found that if you have large fingers you will get the best result moving icons with your little finger.

Many phones will have on screen buttons at the bottom or actual buttons at the bottom of the phone below the screen. The button with the house symbol will take you from an app directly to the home screen. The one with a $\frac{3}{4}$ round circle with an arrow at one end will take you back one screen. The button with a symbol that looks like lines of text or bars will open a menu box with functions appropriate to the active screen.

On one of the home screens you will have an icon that looks like a gear. That is the settings icon. It is the Android equivalent of the Windows Control Panel. It takes you to a menu of utilities and control panels for the various phone functions. You will want to take a few minutes looking around in here to familiarize yourself with this area.

The Contacts icon is what you touch when setting up your contacts. You enter names, phone numbers, email addresses, street addresses and any other info you want to add. Caution, when you put in phone numbers for your contacts, always include the “1” and area code. Make sure you do this even if the phone number is in your own area code. When you make a phone call or send a text message to someone in your area code the “1” and area code portion will be ignored. However, when you respond to a text message that has been sent to you the messaging system needs the “1” and area code for your response. Without them you will get an illegal error code from the messaging system and the reply will not be sent. While in Contacts touch the extra menu items button (at the bottom of the screen phone and looks like lines of text). Select the Import/Export and export your contacts to the SD card. Then if you lose your contacts you can import them back in. There is also an app that will assist you in storing your contacts in your Google account.

When you are ready to add apps to your phone you will want to use the Google Playstore. There will be a Google Playstore icon on one of your home screens that will take you there. During the initial phone setup you will have created an account with Google that identifies what phone you have. The Playstore is tied to your account so will indicate to you if an app you are looking at is compatible with your phone and will not install anything that is not compatible. During the app installation there will be a checkbox for allowing automatic updates of the free or purchased application. This choice can be changed at a later time, but only through the phone connecting to the Playstore. If you log onto the Playstore from a PC the checkbox for changing the update selection will not show.

Most phones have slots for micro secure digital or some other type of digital memory. When you add memory you might be thinking that you will never run out of memory. Well, there is internal phone memory that is a fixed part of the phone and there is external memory. For this discussion we will call external memory the SD card. You cannot move any of the built in apps from phone memory to the SD card. Any extra apps you add to the phone install to phone memory by default. Most apps will require cache memory to function which is stored in phone memory. Also, text messages, documents, and pictures taken from the built in camera or saved from other sources will go into phone memory. So

you may have a 16 or 32 GB SD card installed, but you will still have the internal phone memory as your biggest limitation.

So you may ask, what do you use SD memory for if everything wants to natively store to phone memory? After installation, some of the added apps can be moved from phone memory to the SD card. Others will require residing in phone memory and will not move. I have found that an app called “AppMgr” (also known as App 2 SD) by Sam Lu will help to quickly determine if an app will move from phone to SD and easily complete the action. It also has the added benefit of clearing cache files for all apps with one click, a job that would otherwise take opening each app in the built in Android Application Manager. It also shows you at a glance what apps are installed in which memory and how much internal phone memory is free for use. Another app called “Send to SD” by Denis Nelubin will help you to quickly send pictures and documents to a folder in your SD card by adding a SD Card item to the Share menu. The Share menu is accessed by touching the extra menu items button that looks like lines of text at the bottom of the screen or physical button at the bottom of the phone.

Most versions of Android have a built in file manager app called Filer. You will find it grouped in with the Apps when you touch the Apps main screen icon. Filer is kind of limited as it only allows you to see what the developers thought was safe. Kind of like Windows Explorer at its default setting of not allowing you to see system files. For viewing directories and file management I like to use “ES File Explorer” by ES APP Group. It has no restrictions and many nice features. I used it to create a folder on the SD card for moving pictures from my phone memory to the SD card using the Share menu item “SD Card” created by the “Send to SD” app.

For keeping the bad guys at bay I installed the Avast! Antivirus app located in the Playstore. Avast has the best ratings for protecting Android devices and is free.

Other apps that we have found to be extremely useful are:

- SwiftKey Keyboard by SwiftKey – Replaces your Android dumb keyboard with a keyboard that learns your writing style and makes auto corrections and saves typing by allowing you to select words as you type. It is spooky how it quickly gets to know what you want to write. After the trial period the free version does not give you guesses to select word insert. We paid out the \$3.99 for the Pro version because we found the word insert to really save time.
- Split N Tip by Handy Apps – This free tip calculator app not only calculates tips quickly and easily but also helps to split the bill between any number of people.
- Wi-Fi Analyzer by Farproc - Turns your android phone into a Wi-Fi analyzer!! Shows the Wi-Fi channels around you. Shows signal strengths and info for wireless routers within range. Helps you to find a less crowded channel for your wireless router.
- Epson iPrint by Seiko Epson Corp – Easily find your wireless or networked Epson printer and print to it from your phone. You can also scan documents or photos to

your phone. If you do not have an Epson printer you should be able to find other similar apps for your printer brand.

- Barcode Scanner by Zxing Team – This free app scans barcodes on products then looks up prices and reviews. You can also scan Data Matrix and QR Codes containing URLs, contact info, etc. Also share your contacts, apps, and bookmarks via QR Code
- iHeartRadio by Clear Channel Digital - iHeartRadio offers free music in an all-in-one, digital internet radio service that lets you find more than 1,500 live radio stations. With the free music app for Android, create commercial-free, all-music Custom Stations featuring songs from the artist you select and similar music. We especially like listening to talk radio shows.
- SugarSync by SugarSync, Inc. - SugarSync is the easiest and most advanced way to sync, share, as well as search and access all of your files – documents, photos, videos and music. SugarSync for Android puts all of your files from across all of your computers right at your fingertips, making you more productive when you're on the go.

My phone came with 512 MB of internal phone memory. The OS and pre-installed apps take up 350 MB leaving me 162 MB free for my installed apps and contacts. Updates to pre-installed apps also take up internal memory. So with all the stuff and apps that I have loaded I am left with 32 MB of phone memory free. Not a whole lot, but I am managing it. My son had to one up the Old Man with a more current Smart Phone that came with 1 GB internal memory. So I am envious as he has yet to get the dreaded “Out of Memory” warning that I get if not diligent with keeping everything clean. Oh well, maybe on my next phone...

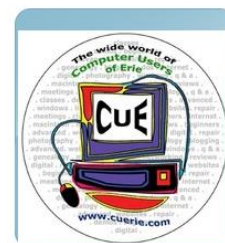
If you have not used a Smart Phone before you will be delighted and amazed at just what you can do with them.

PS from his better half - With this wonderful article Bob forgot to mention the fact that you have Google, Google maps, and Google navigation readily available on these phones. Even if you don't have the GPS active the phone will triangulate your location on Google maps from nearby cell towers. By the by, I use the voice recognition on my phone for quick texts and emails. After six months I'm a smart phone junkie!

[* Read more about Get Smart, Maxwell Smart, and the original smart phone, aka shoe phone, circa 1965 – UCHUG Editor] < <http://nyti.ms/16UVFU7> >



Got Windows 8? Then get Start8
Tom Kuklinski, President
Computer Users of Erie
April 2013 issue, Horizons
www.cuerie.org / [tkuklinski \(at\) gmail.com](mailto:tkuklinski@gmail.com)



Some reviews of Microsoft's Windows 8 have been brutal. I have been using Windows 8 since December 2012. It is on a desktop and does not have a touch screen. It works well. I have not experienced a crash to date.

Overall, I do like Windows 8. Do I prefer it to Windows 7 or XP? Yes, I do! That is a powerful statement. Here is why.

Windows 8, like Windows 7 is pleasant to use. I find it overall to be aesthetic in appearance. It is like having two operating systems. The so called Metro-Modern Start Screen consists of blocks that contain your programs. There is no START BUTTON like in previous Windows versions. This look was made to conform to hand-held devices like phones and tablets. These devices use touch screens and this layout works. However, when using a traditional Windows 7 desktop, it almost becomes useless. There is no point to have it other than to remain consistent in appearance between hand-held devices and your desktop or laptop. Microsoft made one of these Metro-Modern Start Screen program blocks to access the good old traditional desktop of by gone Windows versions. EXCEPT, there is no START button like previous versions of Windows.

Some of the apps that are made for the Metro-Modern look may work different that you would expect on a laptop or desktop application. For instance, Internet Explorer 10 when in the Metro-Modern mode will be in a minimalist mode. You will not have the full robust appearance that you would be used to having if launched from a Windows 7 desktop. However, Microsoft did include the full version of Internet Explorer 10 in the Windows 8 desktop. Sounds confusing. It is, until you become accustomed to this. However, this difference really is not great. You can choose to stay in the familiar traditional Desktop mode that looks like Windows 7 and not visit the Metro-Modern Start Screen very much.

However, one great issue exists. This single issue may be the problem as to why Windows 8 has not been too successful. The START Button at the lower left corner of your screen is missing. Microsoft purposely left this button out. So if you use Windows XP, Vista or 7, you are familiar with the Start button and rely on it for just about everything you do. Picture it gone. Now you see the problem.

It is this anomaly that may have caused the negative reviews and caused slow sales of Windows 8. So Microsoft, wake up and give us that START BUTTON back.



Until Microsoft does include the Start Button, here comes a company that has been around for thirty years. It is Stardock. This company created a program

called START8. The purpose of this program is to put the good old Start Button back on the Windows 8 Desktop screen and function as before.

START8 costs a mere \$4.99. To me this is a bargain. Lets take a look at this START8. You need to download it from www.stardock.com. Then install it. Simple and done. You can customize this START. You can choose a STYLE. It can be the traditional Windows 7 theme or custom to your preference. You may choose a Windows 8 style. You may have translucency, flag look START button or customize.

You also can choose, Large Icons, Show Recently used applications, Open sub Menus, create shortcuts, show Windows 8 Modern User Interface, control some Window 8 features – on and on.

That is about all it does. It is cheap and works well. This is one of those programs that is so obvious. In fact, this one program may actually increase sales of Windows 8.

I recommend this to anyone that uses Windows 8. Thank You Stardock.

**Are we all turning into magnetic ink?
By Greg Skalka, President, Under the
Computer Hood User Group, CA
April 2013 issue, DriveLight
www.uchug.org
president (at) uchug.org**



I've miles
And miles
Of files
Pretty files of your forefather's fruit and now to suit our great computer,
You're magnetic ink.

(From "In the Beginning" by Graeme Edge, from the album "On The Threshold of a Dream" by The Moody Blues, 1969)

Are we all turning into magnetic ink? That poem was written over 40 years ago, before the Internet, server farms, Amazon.com, big data, social media and digital image recognition, yet it predicts a road we are traveling down now. In the liner notes, it is the "Establishment" that speaks these words, with the goal of turning man into a quantifiable set of data. Are we all on our way to being defined by our data?

Companies compile more and more data about our habits and preferences, reducing our privacy and our ability to remain anonymous. From Google's targeted advertisements to Amazon's purchase suggestions, we are being reduced to a database of our likes and dislikes, ready for commercial exploitation. Our web searches are tracked so we can be

presented with “more relevant” advertising, but the goal is more effective advertising, meaning more sales for less cost. It may be nice to be presented only with things we really would be interested in, but when algorithms are implemented incorrectly, it can lead to limiting and even inaccurate suggestions. I once bought my daughter a lamp she wanted as a gift from eBay; now I regularly receive suggestions for other lamp purchases, something I care nothing about. The history of one oddball purchase may haunt my account forever.

A bigger problem is privacy in this era of commercial digital surveillance. From all this seemingly innocent and inconsequential data being collected about us, we could become defined by our purchases (like the lamp) or our searches. It has probably gotten to the point that one must be careful about what one searches for on Google, or any other search engine.

While the Internet represents an almost unlimited data resource, asking for the wrong things could get you in trouble, or at least earn you an undesirable label. This goes way beyond the obvious illegal activities like child pornography or online involvement with hate groups. Simply searching for information about embarrassing topics like incontinence or a gambling problem can put those topics into your “profile”, so later ads reflect those issues. When you let someone else use your computer, those embarrassing issues may be revealed. And since that data is out of your control, who is to say that someday a record of your searches on cancer won't be sold to life insurance companies that could use it to deny you additional coverage.

Though the commercial world probably collects more data, governmental categorization of all of us is even more troubling. Repressive governments all over the world use data collected on their citizens in bad ways. Searching on the wrong topics in some countries can lead to imprisonment. Here we would hope to have more freedom and privacy, but some day, following another incident like 9/11, could we find a misinterpreted web search leading to a visit by the FBI or inclusion on a no-fly list?

There are also real criminals out there trying to collect data on us. Whether it is data to be sold or used for identity theft, or personal information from social media sites exploited for scams, home burglaries or child abductions, our data is sought after by malicious people intent on taking advantage of us. Once again, this may be data that we have no control over, stored on company servers, perhaps with poor safeguards.

Unfortunately, we are often willing, though possibly unknowing participants in this conversion of our lives into data. All the information we freely share on social networking sites can be a treasure trove to marketers, prospective employers and anyone interested in taking advantage of us. As time goes on, new ways are developed to monitor each of us, from location tracking through our phones, keyword analysis of our emails and facial recognition and tracking of our movements through security camera images. Even data collected with the best of intentions can fall into the wrong hands, or the intentions of the collectors can simply change. Once lists are started for convicted criminals, sex offenders,

the mentally ill and potential terrorists, how hard would it be to make more lists, like of those that complain about the government? After all, we are only data.

Where to Put All That Data

All the data we store, and that others store about us, has to be kept somewhere. Today it is stored not in the “magnetic ink” of magnetized domains on recording tape, but in magnetized regions of spinning metal platters. Mechanical hard drives, though losing out in some applications like tablets and phones to solid state memory, are still the primary means of bulk data storage. Seagate recently shipped its two billionth unit, the first hard drive manufacturer to reach that milestone. That is a hard drive for almost every third human on earth. While that seems amazing, what is really of interest is how they got to 2 billion. They have been making drives since 1980, and took 29 years to produce and ship their first billion units. Their second billion took only four years.

That is a tremendous amount of digital storage, especially since that last billion were probably each 100 GB or larger drives.

This exponential increase in cumulative drive capacity is necessary, as our need for storage grows exponentially. In 2007, we were uploading just over 5 hours of video to YouTube each minute. Now it is estimated that 72 hours of video is uploaded per minute to the site. To put this in perspective, if you were in the habit of watching YouTube 12 hours a day, every day, then in the five minutes it will take you to read this column, another month’s worth of new content was put on the site. The break is over; get back to watching!

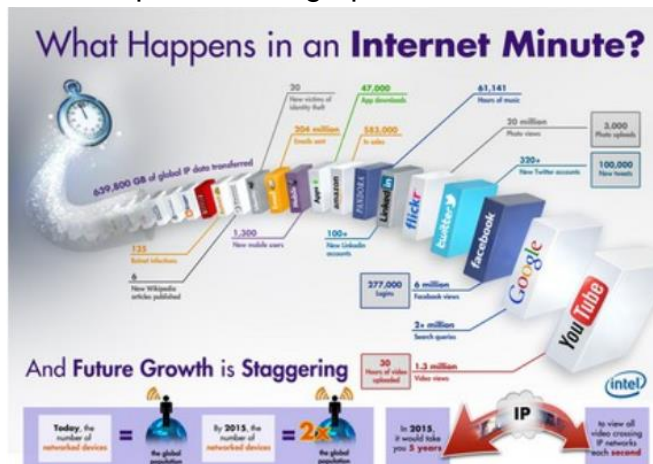
High-Tech Pants

I just bought a new pair of my favorite kind of pants, Costco’s Kirkland blue jeans, and got a surprise. Costco jeans have gone high tech. The product label advertises a new feature I’d not seen before - a cell phone pocket. It seems that Costco has tinkered with the classic five-pocket design and turned the small right front coin pocket into a cell phone pocket. They made that pocket deeper and a bit wider, so it could hold a standard cell phone. A large smartphone would probably be a tight fit. Of course, making that pocket so much deeper makes it useless for holding (or at least extracting) coins.

Most people today think that fifth pocket was designed for coins, but in the days before cell phones and wrist watches, it was meant to hold a pocket watch (the kind on a chain). That was the intended purpose of that pocket on the first Levi’s 501 jeans introduced in 1890. If this cell phone pocket thing catches on, it would thus be appropriate, as many people have stopped wearing wrist watches, using their cell phones as timepieces instead. If we get to the point where we also use our phones for making retail purchases like they do in Japan, then we won’t need to worry about where to put our displaced coins either.

Just A Minute

Intel has produced a graphic and video outlining what happens today in an Internet minute.



It shows 639,800 GB of global IP data transferred on the Internet in a minute, with the amount of various activities in that time listed. Some numbers are staggering (6 million Facebook views, 204 million emails sent), some are crazy (320+ new Twitter accounts, 1.3 million video views) and some are scary (20 new victims of identity theft, 135 botnet infections). And just as with hard drive shipments, future growth for the Internet appears to be exponential. Today the number of networked devices equals the global population; by 2015, it

will be 2x. If the Internet and the number of devices on it keep growing this way every minute, it won't be long before humanity is minute by comparison.

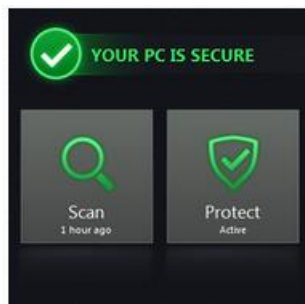
< <http://intel.ly/wjibt1> >

Protect Your PC with IObit Malware Fighter 2

Danny Stieben, Writer, MakeUseOf.com

May 24, 2013

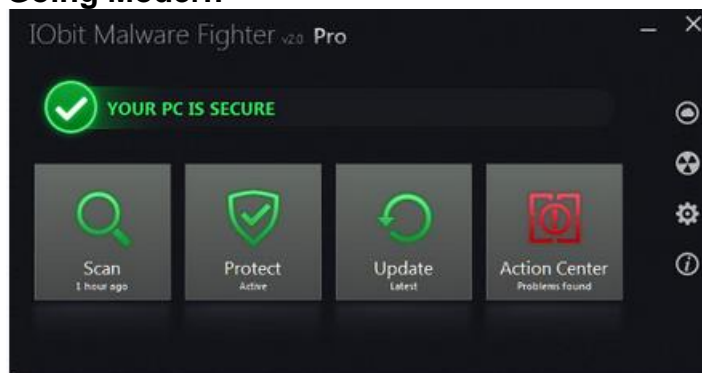
<http://bit.ly/14IhOBk>



Malware remains a potential threat for many PC owners. Here at MakeUseOf, we've been helping to combat that threat by offering several anti-malware apps free of charge through our Rewards Program. And one of those apps, IObit Malware Fighter, has a sequel.

The appropriately named IObit Malware Fighter 2 (I must admit, I'm disappointed it isn't subtitled "The Reckoning") is a major overhaul of the company's anti-malware app. It adds a variety of features that update the software for modern times, including a Metro-style UI, cloud security and full Windows 8 support. Though I was given access to the paid version, the basic anti-virus functionality can be accessed for free. Let's see how IObit's new app stacks up.

Going Modern



Users who've previously used IObit Malware Fighter will immediately notice the new interface, which is a complete overhaul of the software's aging UI. To keep itself up to date, IObit has opted for a Metro UI interface inspired by Windows 8. This ensures it integrates well with the new Windows interface and also makes the software easier to use on a touchscreen device.

With that said, the developers haven't gone crazy with the new design. Software re-forged with Windows 8 sometimes ends up with an interface that looks comically huge on a desktop, but there's no such problem here. The default window is large enough to make buttons usable with touch, but not so large that it consumes your entire desktop.

Once you move past the main screen you'll find that most portions of the interface look quite slick. The Smart Scan view, for example, has a minimalist look that's at once informative and futuristic.

One-Touch Protection



Obit's interface is not just meant to look more modern. It's also meant to provide protection without confusing users. To this end, the company has implemented a simple "Fix All" button. This is something that has appeared in previous IObit software, and it's a nice feature to carry over.

The Fix All option covers four main areas; scan, protect, update and action center. Protect and Update will generally be correct unless the user purposely turns off automatic updates and protection. Scan runs a quick scan for threats, a feature that can be scheduled to occur at a specific time or happen whenever your PC is idle. And finally there's the action center, which highlights problems (like malware that has been quarantined) that need additional user input.

There's no doubt that the Fix All button does its job. However, I was dismayed to find the Action Center reports "problems" which can only be resolved by Advanced SystemCare and Smart Defrag, two other IObit products. The latter was particularly irksome because my system's primary drive is solid state and thus doesn't benefit from defragmentation. I

can understand such advertisements in the free version, but these alerts continued even after I upgraded to Pro.

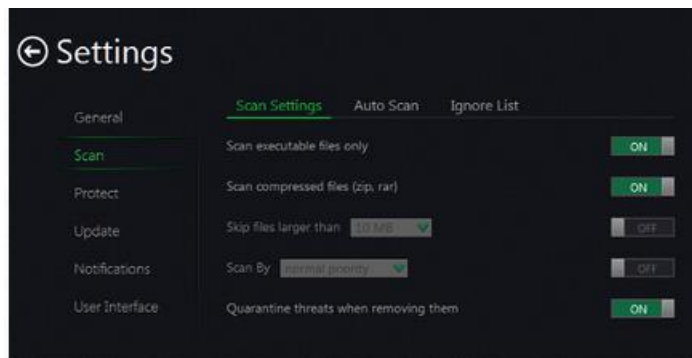
Cloud Security

Perhaps the most significant feature added to IObit Malware Fighter Pro 2 is Cloud Security. For those unfamiliar with the concept, cloud security uses the power of collective analysis to help identify files that are troublesome. If a file behaves suspiciously on one PC, that information is uploaded to IObit's server and can be used to flag similar or identical files on other PCs. Also, users can directly upload a file that they believe suspicious for analysis before uploading it.



IObit is not the only company to offer this feature, but it's far from the last, and I'm glad to see that it's been included. This review was largely written with a pre-release version of the software but, even so, there were already almost 200,000 files analyzed. Most were fine. But a small handful (about 2%, as can be seen in the screenshot above) were not.

Advanced Options



The app's settings menu is split into six sections. The most important is the scan options, as this is where you'll set up how the software handles both the quicker "smart" scans and through system scans. The software lets users decide if they'd like to skip certain files (like large files or compressed archives) and choose if threats should be automatically quarantined. There's also a scan scheduling feature and an ignore list, which can be helpful if a certain program you know is safe for some reason generates a false positive.

In the protect menu users can make a few minor adjustments to protection levels. There are only two different levels of protection, High and Recommended, as well as one feature (DOG, a heuristic malware detection algorithm). In theory, reducing protection levels and turning off DOG may make IObit less intrusive and solve performance problems on slow systems, but I had no such issues, so I can't comment on if these options would actually resolve them.

Also important are the update and notifications options. Malware Fighter 2 has a slick notifications system that pops up in the lower right, based on several different conditions. Some of these may eventually annoy. For example, you probably don't have to know every time the software auto-updates. So you can turn some notifications off. And speaking of updates, they can be changed so they occur only at a scheduled time or only when the program starts. There is no option to turn updates off, though they can be skipped if a system is on battery power.

Conclusion

This is a solid update that offers improved protection, a better interface and easy one-button protection. Anyone looking for a simple, intuitive anti-malware solution should check it out. You can download Malware Fighter 2 for free, then upgrade to Pro, or grab a Pro version key with your MakeUseOf Rewards points.

What Has Your Computer Been Doing? Free Utility Shows All **by Ira Wilsker**

Ira is a member of the Golden Triangle PC Club, an Assoc. Professor at Lamar Institute of Technology, and hosts a weekly radio talk show on computer topics on KLVI News Talk AM560. He also writes a weekly technology column for the Examiner newspaper <www.theexaminer.com>. Ira is also a deputy sheriff who specializes in cybercrime, and has lectured internationally in computer crime and security.



Many of us have encountered frustrations with our computers. Sometimes it appears that running programs crash or otherwise cease functioning without explanation. On older computers, most notoriously those running Windows XP, a cryptic "Blue Screen of Death" (BSOD) sometimes appears when there is a crash of some type, often displaying nonsensical error codes that require extensive research to decode. Some suspicious computer users believe that others are accessing their computer, running unauthorized software or malware. Other wary users may find it interesting seeing what other people may have done on a particular computer, and what programs they may have run, what documents were viewed, and when (what time) the computer was booted and shut down. If a computer was infected by malware, it may often be of great interest to see what was being run on the computer at the time of infestation, and even identify the malware and its payload. This, and more, can be readily displayed by a tiny, free utility, LastActivityView.

LastActivityView is one of dozens of small free utilities published by a feisty software engineer, Nir Sofer, on his website at



www.nirsoft.net. Nir personally writes all of his own software in his spare time, and makes it available to all for free. Many of his utilities are given the highest ratings by a variety of web services and computer

publications; all of his software is free of advertising and other pesky irritants, making it popular among his huge and loyal user base. In his spare time, Nir personally maintains his website and updates his software, as well as creates new utilities. One of his newest titles, LastActivityView has caught the attention of computer technicians, forensic experts, hobbyists, and others who really want to know what has really been running on a computer, and when the computer was accessed.

Windows users may be passively aware that their computers save extensive, but often invisible files, about what they have run; LastActivityView has the capability to read these historical files and display additional information about many of the computer's activities. On my primary computer, this record starts on the day it was manufactured, and documents everything that I have done since I first powered it on after removing it from its box. Every piece of software that I ever installed or uninstalled is listed, including date, time, description, filenames, path on the hard drive, and other information. Every boot, shutdown, crash, and other event was also duly recorded. In addition to simply displaying a huge file with all of my computing activities, LastActivityView also has the power to provide additional information for many of the items listed. LastActivityView also can display detailed information about program interactions, and conflicts that caused software and hardware crashes.

The actual program file itself is tiny, only about 100k in size, and requires no installation. It is totally portable, and can be run from any Windows connected device. The LastActivityView program, an exe file, is one of only three components included in the 64k ZIP (compressed) file downloaded from NirSoft; the other two items in the ZIP file are a small "readme.txt" file with simple instructions and other information, and a standard format Windows Help File (chm format) that can be opened with any version of Windows, and displays detailed help and other information. I downloaded the zip file, and using Windows native utility, "unzipped" or uncompressed it into a new directory that I created for it. Total space required for all three files is a miniscule 130k of drive space. I also copied the files to the USB flash drive that I always have on my car keychain, so I can use it whenever and wherever needed.

Actions/Events List

The following actions and events are currently supported by LastActivityView:

- **Run .EXE file:** .EXE file run directly by the user, or by another software/service running in the background.
- **Select file in open/save dialog-box:** The user selected the specified filename from the standard Save/Open dialog-box of Windows.
- **Open file or folder:** The user opened the specified filename from Windows Explorer or from another software.
- **View Folder in Explorer:** The user viewed the specified folder in Windows Explorer.
- **Software Installation:** The specified software has been installed or updated.
- **System Started:** The computer has been started.
- **System Shutdown:** The system has been shut down, directly by the user, or by a software that initiated a reboot.
- **Resumed from sleep:** The computer has been resumed from sleep mode.
- **Network Connected:** Network connected, after previously disconnected.
- **Network Disconnected:** Network has been disconnected
- **Software Crash:** The specified software has been crashed.
- **Software stopped responding (hang):** The specified software stopped responding.
- **Blue Screen:** Blue screen event has been occurred on the system.
- **User Logon:** The user logged on to the system.
- **User Logoff:** The user logged off from the system. This even might caused by a software that initiated a reboot.
- **Restore Point Created:** Restore point has been created by Windows operating system.
- **Windows Installer Started**
- **Windows Installer Ended**

According to the included readme.txt file, " LastActivityView is a tool for Windows operating system that collects information from various sources on a running system, and displays a log of actions made by the user and events occurred on this computer. The activity displayed by LastActivityView includes: Running .exe file, Opening open/save dialog-box, Opening file/folder from Explorer or other software, software installation, system shutdown/start, application or system crash, network connection/disconnection and more... " The file created by LastActivityView can be quickly exported in a variety of formats that can be utilized by a variety of other programs that can read csv, tab-delimited, xml, or html formatted information. A simple copy and paste can also place information in other programs, such as an Excel spreadsheet. For those who may wish to customize the execution of LastActivityView, several command line options are available, but most users will find that simply running the file without any additional commands will provide comprehensive and useful information.

In addition to the obvious tracking of what was run on a computer, LastActivityView can also provide additional and valuable information. I was able to prove this to myself when I examined some recent logs, looking for software crashes and conflicts. One of several reasons why I do not use Internet Explorer as my primary browser is that for some reason, it sometimes crashes when open. According to the report, my most recent software crash occurred on May 17, at 9:11:07pm when Internet Explorer, version 10.0.9200 crashed. By right-clicking on the line in the log showing the crash, an options menu appeared which displayed what additional information could be shown. I first selected "Properties", which

displayed the Action Time, Description (Software Crash), File Name, Full Path (location on hard drive), and what was most important to me, More Information. Similar information can be displayed as a webpage in HTML by selecting "HTML Report - Selected Item". The More Information line showed precisely the software conflict that caused the crash; in this particular case, according to the display, there was a memory conflict between IEXPLORE.EXE 10.0.9200.16576 and TmBple32.dll, which is a module or component of my TrendMicro security suite. Now that I have recorded this conflict, it would be easy to determine whether this is a one-time anomaly or a continuing problem that requires attention and remediation. Doing a quick online search for TmBple32.dll, I found that this file is a Trend Micro Browser Plug-In for Internet Explorer that is designed to protect the browser from exploitation. According to Wikipedia, "A browser exploit is a form of malicious code that takes advantage of a flaw or vulnerability in an operating system or piece of software with the intent to breach browser security to alter a user's browser settings without their knowledge. Malicious code may exploit ActiveX, HTML, images, Java, JavaScript, and other Web technologies and cause the browser to run arbitrary code." I would not have been able to easily and quickly determine the cause of that particular crash without LastActivityView. This is but one of countless purposes that can be accomplished with LastActivityView.

LastActivityView runs on any version of Windows since Windows 2000, and includes XP, Vista, Windows 7 and Windows 8; both 32-bit and 64-bit systems are supported.

For such a tiny, fast, and free program, LastActivityView is a powerful utility that can provide extensive information on what has been done on a Windows computer. For anyone who would like to see for himself what has been running on his computer; what crashed, what caused the crash; files downloaded, installed, or uninstalled; and a wealth of other information, LastActivityView is a very worthwhile program to add to the user's arsenal of utilities.

WEBSITES:

<http://www.nirsoft.net>

http://www.nirsoft.net/utills/computer_activity_view.html

<https://www.techsupportalert.com/content/nifty-way-find-out-what-your-windows-computer-has-been-doing.htm>

This weekend, my father brought over his new laptop, purchased at a major retailer. It was taking 4-5 minutes to boot into the OS. It was discovered that there were several utilities loading during startup, some of them multiple times. Not wanting to void the support warranty, we called tech support. After my father related the problem, they talked him through removal and unchecking many of the options. A reboot then took about 2.5 minutes, still quite a long time. When he asked what else could be done, he was told, "Just reboot a few more times. It should get faster as it works in." We just sat there with our mouths open.



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

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Elizabeth Leedom

Modesto PC User Group Officers

President	Jim Goodman	579.0122	president@mpcug.net
Program VP	Elizabeth Leedom	523.4218	programvp@mpcug.net
Secretary	Terry Fix	524.8062	secretary@mpcug.net
Treasurer	Barbara Cameron	522.1389	treasurer@mpcug.net
Director-at-Large	John Selover		dal@mpcug.net

Appointed Positions

SIG Coordinator	Jim Goodman	579.0122	sig@mpcug.net
Press Relations	Elizabeth Leedom	523.4218	programvp@mpcug.net
Membership	Terry Fix		membership@mpcug.net
Webmaster	Jim Goodman	579.0122	webmaster@mpcug.net
Editor	Judy Tylour	661.252.8852	scvjudy@usa.net

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