

PACC TALK

Official Newsletter of the Pittsburgh Area Computer Club

July 2009

MEETING SCHEDULE

Sunday, July 19, 2009

- 11:00 - 11:25 am **Sign In, Pay Dues, Greet visitors, Purchase 50/50 tickets (Optional), Setup Computers, Connect to Internet , Prep for Meetings**
ROOM # 311
- 11:00 - 11:25 pm **PACC BOD Meeting**
ROOM # 301
- 11:35 - 12:00 pm **Windows New Users**
ROOM # 301
Can we help you? V. Agrawala
- 12:00 - 12:30 pm **General Meeting, Raffle.**
ROOM # 301 (pg. 1)
- 12:35 - 2:00 pm **F.lux, Secunia PSI, Belvedere Automated File Manager**
ROOM # 301 (pg. 1)
- 2:05 - 3:30 pm **More utilities - Linux-on-a-stick**
ROOM # 301 (pg. 1)
- 2:05 - 3:30 pm **Hardware SIG**
ROOM # 311
Users Helping Users - guests included
- 1:00 - 3:30 pm **Linux SIG, Members Helping Members, Computer troubleshooting, Info Exchange**
ROOM # 311
- 3:30 - 4:00 pm **Pack Up Equipment, Doors Close**

***** RAFFLE *****



“EASEUS Partition Master is comprehensive hard disk partition management tool and system partition optimization software, Professional Edition can let you enjoy all the powerful basic and advanced partition functions. “

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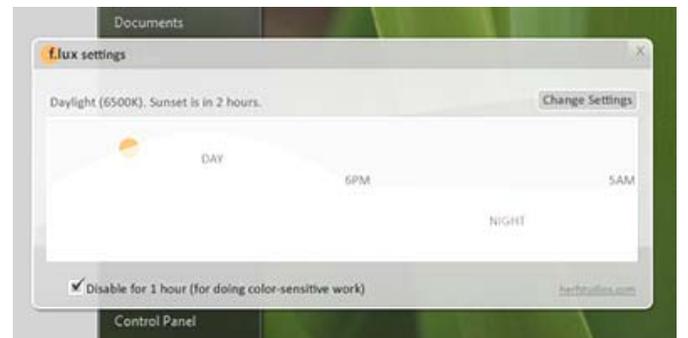
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f.lux™
Better lighting...for your computer

Well, I have this nifty program running on both my laptop and desktop. It promises relief for your eyes. Once you set it up for your geographical location, easy enough task, it automatically adjust the color of your PC's display to the time of day. It works for me! Try it!

The setup file at 545 KB, can be downloaded free from :
<http://www.stereopsis.com/flux/>

This from Stereopsis web site:
“Ever notice how people texting at night have that **eerie blue glow**? Or wake up ready to write down the Next Great Idea, and get blinded by your computer screen? During the day, computer screens look good—they're designed to **look like the sun**. But, at 9PM, 10PM, or 3AM, you probably shouldn't be looking at the sun. F.lux fixes this: it makes the color of your computer's display adapt to the time of day, warm at night and like sunlight during the day. It's even possible that you're staying up too late because of your computer. You could

(Continued on page 2)

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use f.lux because it makes you sleep better, or you could just use it just because it makes your computer look better.”

All I can say my eyes are not as tired as before. If you stay up at night staring at your monitor for long hours, give **f.lux** a chance.

How it Works - From the web site:

“The **Secunia PSI** - Secunia Personal Software Inspector - works by examining files on your computer (primarily .exe, .dll, and .ocx



files). These files contain non-specific meta information provided by the software vendor only. This data is the same for all users, and originates from the installed programs on your computer - never from their configuration. After examining all the files on your local hard drive(s), the collected data is sent to Secunia's servers, which match the data against the Secunia File Signatures engine (<https://psi.secunia.com/>) to determine the exact applications installed on your system. This information can then be used to provide you with a detailed report of the missing security related updates for your system.”

The 604 KB file can be downloaded free from here:

http://secunia.com/vulnerability_scanning/personal/

Belvedere Automated File Manager v 0.4 - From the web site:

“Windows only:

Keep your desktop or any other folder on your hard drive organized and under control with Belvedere, an automated Windows file management tool. Use Belvedere's friendly interface to create advanced rules to move, copy, delete, rename, or open files based on their name, extension, size, creation date, and more. “

This program is still being developed and improved, but it shows a promise!

The 878 KB file can be downloaded from here:

<http://lifelhacker.com/341950/belvedere-automates-your-self+cleaning-pc>



Things That You Can Do With That Flash Drive

**Written by Ira Wilsker, APCUG Director;
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Radio Talk Show Host
Iwilsker (at) apcug.net**

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WEBSITES:

<http://portableapps.com>
http://u3.sandisk.com/download/Download_no.asp
<http://www.microsoft.com/windows/windows-vista/features/readyboost.aspx>

With the demise of the floppy disk, and the approaching demise of the CD disc for data purposes, the USB flash drive has become the de-facto method of saving and transporting files between computers. These small USB drives are known by a variety of monikers, such as flash drive, pen drive, pin drive, and thumb drive. Since their introduction a few years ago, their capacity has increased, and their prices have plunged. They are readily available in the big box stores, discount stores, club stores, and online. The most recent ones I purchased for the holidays were 8 gig size (almost the equivalent of the data stored on 2 standard DVD discs, about a dozen CD discs, or about 5700 floppy disks), and cost under \$15 each. In the after-Christmas sales, some 8 gig flash drives were advertised for \$9 each (after rebate). This amount of non-volatile storage for the price was inconceivable just a few years ago. I thought I was getting a bargain a few years ago when I bought my first flash drive, a 64mb Lexar, for \$49, and now a drive with about 64 times that capacity is about one-fourth the price! I have co-workers and students who wear their flash drives on cords around their necks, where they are referred to as “geek beads”.

Most of us use the drive simply for portable storage, the ability to carry files around with us, but in reality these flash drives can do much more than to simply be used for storage. Most of the USB flash drives on the market today comply with the USB 2.0 standard for high speed transfer, while there still are a few inexpensive, low capacity drives that are of the slower USB 1.1 speed standard, or only about 3% of the speed of the USB 2.0 drives. From a practical viewpoint, the user will not notice any significant difference in speed if small files are saved and read, but will notice a difference if large files are used.

There are some other standards for USB flash drives that many users may find beneficial, if their flash drives have the capabilities. Users of Microsoft Vista (Home Basic, Home Premium, Business, and Ultimate versions) may find it advantageous to purchase flash drives that are labeled as “ReadyBoost”. According to Microsoft, “Windows Vista introduces Windows ReadyBoost, a new concept in adding memory to a system. You can use non-volatile flash memory, such as that on a universal serial bus (USB) flash drive, to improve performance without having to add additional memory “under the hood.” If the drive is compatible with the ReadyBoost standard, some of the flash memory in the drive can effectively and temporarily be added to the RAM (memory) installed in the computer, with an improvement on performance. If the Vista user with a compatible flash drive right clicks on the flash drive letter displayed under “My Computer” or Windows Explorer, and then left clicks on Properties – ReadyBoost, Vista will recommend how much of the available memory on the drive can be effectively and safely utilized by Vista. Other data stored on the ReadyBoost drive is protected from damage, and will not be

Word Processing Choices from A-Z (really)

Part 1: From A to N

Written by John White, a member of the ICON PCUG, NY
From The ICON Graphic,
Newsletter of ICON PC User Group, Inc., November 2008 Edition
www.iconpcug.org
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Besides the venerable Microsoft Word and WordPerfect, an array of word-processing applications-both cheap and free-is vast and growing rapidly. Some are freestanding singletons to install on the hard disk. Some serve in a suite of apps including a spreadsheet to run live via the Internet. Most online versions I viewed still manifest hurdles to leap before they reach maturity. Two installable versions of MS-Office alternatives, however, rival the Gates products in impressive ways.

Abiword: Although Microsoft's "Wordpad" performs at least half of the writing tasks most of us do, Abiword is installed on my four Windows computers. It will do 98% of what I ask of a word wrangler. Placing a tiny icon on the Quick Launch menu just to the right of the Start button provides this fast-loading, capable program in easy reach. The native file format, .abw, works equally in Abi's versions for Linux and Mac OS X, but there is also an easy drop-down option to save in .doc, .rtf, .txt, .html, .xhtml, and other formats. Abi is a favorite alternate of some of ICON's leaders. [Free download: <http://www.abiword.com/>] The latest version is 2.6.2.

Buzzword: Adobe's offering, self-described as "The First Real Word Processor for the Web" even though it's not, requires [1] a sign-up and password [2] and says "We're sorry, JavaScript must be enabled in order to use Buzzword." I'm sorry, too. If a program requires JavaScript, ActiveX, Flash, or Internet Explorer, I can live without it. The world is dangerous enough without them, and my life is already too exciting. Ah, so little time and so many other choices! If someone is willing to deal with it, please try it and give us your reaction to Buzzword.

[Free download required: <http://www.buzzword.com/>]

Flysuite: This one promotes itself as an online alternative to Word and Excel that focuses on document collaboration. When I went to their Web site, my Comodo firewall filled the lower right quarter of the screen with warnings about "blocked URLs," an all time record. That sounded too much an attack of potential bad guys and I stopped right there. Any braver soul care to report on Flysuite?

[Free: <http://www.flysuite.com/>]

Google Docs beta: Anew offline version exists but in an even earlier beta stage: Despite my awe for the quality and variety of many offerings from Google, Docs beta online doesn't make the list. It seems to drive a middle lane between "lightweight" and "lame." I see no reason to use it yet instead of Abiword or even Wordpad to create a new file. Any other users care to point out advantages too subtle for me to spot? To get there, enter your Gmail account name and password. Click on NEW>Document (or spreadsheet, presentation, or folder) and go to work. Don't look for rulers, tabs, or even clues about WordArt, mail

merge or even clues how to send the document as an email or attachment. A limited selection of insertable "special characters" offers barebones Wingdings but not Monotype Sorts or any other favorite character sources. You can insert other special characters if you know their Unicode numbers. Oddly enough, the insertable "Asian" character set includes angle brackets, printer dingbats, Western math symbols, plus cm, kg, km, and copyright (c). You may still have to wangle an "invitation" to Gmail if Google is still playing hard-to get with this powerful email/storage service.

Free: <http://docs.google.com/>.

Microsoft Works: Older versions required hop-skip-and-jump trips through menus to reach an otherwise inviting word processor with usable templates for home and school use. Works 8.5 came on my laptop a year ago, but some Vista machines reportedly include version 9 of Works employing a full version of MSWord although the MS Web site was somewhat vague about this. Version 8.5's word processor looks like Word Lite. It includes the ability to open its own .wps format and its .wpt templates (nice) as well as Word and other formats such as .rtf, .txt, .csv, and .html. Forget about .xml, .odf, or MS-Office 2007's own .docx. Works offers a friendly and capable database, a spreadsheet, calendar, and dictionary as well.

Version 8.5 is under \$10 at <http://store.purplus.net/miwo85.html>

Mindomo: As a preliminary for individual or group writing, this program calling itself an "Online Mind Mapping Process" offers a free visual organizer to clarify and plan the writing process.

Your turn: <http://www.mindomo.com/>

About John White: John has taught word processing and spreadsheets for a dozen years at New Horizons (Manhattan), Dowling College, NY Tech, and BOCES.

the end of the story

Word Processing Choices from A-Z (really)

Part 2: From N to Z

Written by John White a member of the ICON PCUG, New York
From The ICON Graphic,
Newsletter of ICON PC User Group, Inc., December 2008 Edition
www.iconpcug.org
editor (at) iconpcug.org

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Notepad: The built-in Windows plain-text editor makes a type minimalist HTML editor with clean unformatted code. Not all users know there are font and word-wrap options available. To check it those capabilities, go to Start>Accessories>Notepad>Format.

OpenOffice Writer: This article is being written with version 2.4. It retains a few minor quirks and inconveniences compared with MS-Word 2000, XP, or 2003 plus some decided advantages. For example, if the squiggly red line under correctly spelled terms (missing from its dictionaries) bothers you, UNclick the ABC button on the top of the screen-the one with a wavy red line. At any point, click its mate (ABC above a blue check mark) and manually check spelling. However, there is not button for the thesaurus. Call it up instead with Control-F7. You can also check in Czech or Nepali as well as more common

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tongues. The default language list supplies three flavors of English and three of German but none of French or Spanish. More 79 other language dictionaries are downloadable or under development. I switch between OpenOffice (“Writer” or “switer.exe”) and Word, depending on the task. OOW saves keystrokes by remembering recently typed words and inserting them in white letters amid blue bands after one types just a few of the word’s letters. To accept its suggestion after starting a word, tap ENTER and keep typing. To ignore it instead, just type on. Users of Excel will recognize and appreciate this option. OpenOffice outdoes Word in WYSIWYG cropping of inserted pictures. For a long time OO has offered in the File menu “Export as PDF” as one choice at file-saving time. A menu button also offers the same feature. It rapidly creates and saves the file directly instead of sending it to a printer menu as Adobe’s expensive version requires.

Logically enough, page formatting choices are found in the (TA-DA!!!) Format drop-down menu instead of the File menu. I especially like the “E-mail as Microsoft Word” button on my customized toolbar. I’ll use that one in a few minutes to send this file to Ira.

Although a paid-for version with telephone help is available as StarOffice (from Sun Microsystems) for under \$70, this free version is supported by a worldwide community of volunteer programmers and forumdwellers. The suite includes equivalent programs for Excel and PowerPoint, a capable database, and a drawing program—all accessible from the File>New menu in OpenOffice Writer. In place of Microsoft Publisher in the premium-priced MS-Office suite, the free open-source Scribus may be satisfactory [<http://www.scribus.net/>]. The native OOW file format, .odt, is widely employed around the world, conforming to the standard used in Europe and other ISO countries. This file type crosses platforms to work in Windows, Linux, and Mac OS X. OOW also opens and saves in .doc, .txt, .rtf, .xml, .html, plus several more formats including Microsoft’s .psw [for Pocket Word]. I have had better success with OOW opening and editing older Word documents than with MS-Office 2007.

[Free download to install: [<http://www.openoffice.org/>](http://www.openoffice.org/)]

Thinkfree Online: To me, it’s “ThinkLoser.” and forget the “free” part. This is/was supposedly a free online suite with an optional Premium version. Reputable media mentioned its limited beta offering was as early as December 2006 with cost estimates of \$5 to \$10 a month. Earlier this week (April 15) a Web search at Avant listed Broderbund as #1 among many download sources, but that link seized up both times I tried it. Reaching Broderbund by a different route, I found the installable (not “online?") Windows-only version for \$44.95. After 20 minutes or more trying to download, register, and fire it up the free one elsewhere on the Web, after email verifications, etc., plus two more crashes-amid various notices about what to do if downloading and installing failed in a variety of ways—I admitted failure and uninstalled it. Just before giving up, I had semi-installed and managed to find a Thinkfree screen claiming this to be the best office suite on earth. If so, earth is in trouble besides just growing warmer. Other screens apparently accessed their word processing, spreadsheet, and presentation software, but never revealed any way to actually create a file using any of those choices! Two teasers seemed promising at first—“Search” and collaboration. Since I had not yet created a document, it was no surprise that searching for one proved to be a dead end. With nothing yet in production by me or anyone I know, its collaboration had even less utility. Next, I searched in “Templates,” achieving my only Thinkfree success, sort of. I typed “letter” in the template search box and got five letter templates or something. The first didn’t seem to be a letter template at all, but was a document about how to use Haitian expressions. The other four were in Asian languages using characters I cannot read. To be fair to Thinkfree, I’ve copied and pasted below their exact message and boldfacing. Since I never reached the

“Sync Cache” folder they describe, I wish you better luck than mine if you care to try it. No date for the new version or demise of the older one was mentioned. If you have purchased TF Premium, store the receipt with your Enron stock certificates. Microsoft needn’t worry about this competitor.

“We will be launching ‘My Office’ and providing a new version of ThinkFree Office. You will no longer be able to use the old version which is called ‘ThinkFree Premium’ as of that time. You will be using our new integrated ThinkFree Online service after installation. Please remove ‘Sync Cache’ folder before you proceed installing the new version of ThinkFree Office. Location and Instructions for removing the sync folder.

For Windows:

C:\Documents and Settings\account\MyDocuments\TFSync

For Mac: /Users/account/Documents/TFSync

For Linux: /home/account/TFSync”

Wordpad: This little brother of MS-Word comes free with your Windows installation. It opens and saves in Unicode, .rtf, and the older MS-DOS .txt format but not Word’s .doc. It comes with bolding, italics, and underlining of installed Windows fonts in colors, a horizontal ruler with adjustable margins and tabs, and a single bullet style but no numbering button or mail merge. It is a good emergency word processor if the missing features aren’t needed for the project at hand. [Start>Accessories>Wordpad]

WordPerfect X3: One can pay the full “retail” price of several hundred dollars, but at <http://www.royaldiscount.com/corel.html> it is \$82.94. I prefer the “OEM” version for \$18.46 with free shipping for either version. The current X3 suite contains a powerful, customizable word processor compatible with MSOffice. Its Quattro Pro spreadsheet matches Excel quite nicely. A graphics drawing application and Presentations either its native mode or in PowerPoint mode. The word processor offers to work in MS-Word style, native WP X3 style, or older versions back to 5.1. All these apps play nicely with MS formats.

Zoho: I admit to saving the best for the last. Zoho wins my prize as winner among online word processors. All the integrated application elements of Zoho’s suite employ similar enough interfaces and working styles so that users of Office version through 2003 will either recognize or master them quickly. I wish Microsoft Office 2007 had been designed by Zoho. This suite connects many well presented applications in a style that handles like a nimble sports car instead of a ponderous “featuremobile.” It displays obvious buttons and tools, export/publish options (including PDF), offline options (after one installs Google Gears), a stunning array of accessible and complementary features: spreadsheet, blogger, chat, notebook, planner, mail, database creator and reporter, conferencing, wiki editor, project manager, CRM and contact manager, plus others. Even if “Help” seems a bit elusive, the buttons and menus provide intuitive answers better than traditional, encyclopedia-type help. I found no reference to mail merge, but the other word processing feature set is both complete and readily at hand. Spell check, tables, bulleted lists, tags as folders, comments, and collaboration features seems to be exceptionally friendly. I have just started using this impressive suite, so an in-depth evaluation will have to wait.

About John White: John has taught word processing and spreadsheets for a dozen years at New Horizons (Manhattan), Dowling College, NY Tech, and BOCES.

the end of the story

Freewaregenius – Evaluates Free PC Software

Written by Ira Wilsker, APCUG Director;
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WEBSITES:

<http://www.freewaregenius.com>
<http://www.freewaregenius.com/2009/04/07/the-best-free-antivirus-a-comparison>
<http://www.freewaregenius.com/2009/04/13/how-to-uninstall-everything-free-apps-that-get-the-job-done>
<http://www.av-comparatives.org>
<http://free.grisoft.com> (AVG)
<http://free-av.com> (Avira)
http://www.avast.com/eng/free_software.html
<http://www.appremover.com>
<http://www.pcdecrapifier.com>
<http://www.revouninstaller.com>

Reiterating what I wrote in a recent column, I still get a positive response from readers that they like the idea of getting free software for their PCs. From your feedback, these freeware columns are among your favorites, and I will continue to compose them.

I have used a variety of sources to denote which freeware programs would be most beneficial to most users, and have now come across another valuable resource on the subject. Lately I have been reading the listings and evaluations from a site "freewaregenius" (listed as one word in lower case), www.freewaregenius.com, which has been busily locating and testing some of the finest free software available. About once a week, freewaregenius posts its latest recommendations. Two of the recent postings were especially interesting to me, and they are a review of the best free antivirus programs, and a review of software uninstaller utilities.

On almost every radio show, and via a steady stream of emails, I am frequently asked about my recommendations for free antivirus software. Users are either fed up with the poor performance of their commercial antivirus software and are seeking free alternatives, or are seeking to conserve their scarce fiscal resources by utilizing free software rather than buying it. Freewaregenius evaluated the three most popular free antivirus programs in order to bestow the title "best free-ware antivirus program". The three contenders for the top spot were the enormously popular programs Avira Antivir, Avast, and AVG. The author of the review summarized his findings with the statement, "My conclusion: all three are very worthy contenders that can hold their own or surpass any heavyweight for-pay antivirus; however Antivir and Avast are definitely in the first tier, while AVG is a close second tier."

In his evaluations, the author used the latest available objective comparisons performed by a third party testing laboratory, AV-comparatives. While there are some other excellent freeware antivirus

programs (I have recommended Comodo in the past), for the purpose of evaluation, the author chose to compare the top three free antivirus programs. These three programs, which in their aggregate, arguably represent the large majority of users of free antivirus programs, were also compared to the performance of some of the top performing commercial programs, Kaspersky and Eset Nod32.

In the independent laboratory tests by AV-comparatives, Avast and Antivir both performed extremely well, and were very close in their abilities to detect viruses. In fact, the free Antivir came out at the top of the list in detection, beating out all of the commercial products tested. Antivir was also excellent at detecting new threats that had not yet been added to its virus signature database, using a detection technology known as "heuristics". AVG, while slightly behind in its detection ability, was ahead of the others by having the lowest rate of false positives. To swing the other way, AVG had a slower scanning speed than the other two.

While top rated in detection, Antivir does have one feature that many users found irritating, and that is that it displays advertisements with each update. Antivir also integrates anti-spyware (as does AVG), but both AVG (the most popular) and Avast are easier to use than Antivir. Personally, I have tried both AVG and Avast, and have recommended them, along with Comodo, for a long time. Cognizant that none of the three are by themselves a comprehensive security suite, but are a vital component in protecting the PC, I would feel comfortable with any of the three.

Another common situation that virtually all PC users eventually face is the occasional difficulty uninstalling no longer needed software. Microsoft's Add/Remove Programs utility is notorious for its inability to remove all traces of an application when uninstalled. Luckily for us there are several free utilities that are available that typically do a better job removing unwanted software than Microsoft's utility. Freewaregenius has recently obliged us by reviewing some of the best of the free uninstall utilities, Appremover, PC Decrapifier, and Revo Uninstaller.

Among the most difficult programs to uninstall are security applications, especially those from Symantec/Norton. Appremover (www.appremover.com) is a utility expressly designed to remove those no longer needed security applications. I have used Appremover to uninstall Norton security products that have been difficult to remove, even with the utility available directly from Symantec. Just recently, I tried to uninstall a Norton security suite from a troubled computer, and using Norton's uninstall utility, there still were large amounts of digital debris left on the hard drive, including now obsolete registry entries; Appremover handled the job much more efficiently and completely than Norton's own utility. Many other security utilities are almost as difficult to remove, McAfee products being among the most difficult, and Appremover handles them all with ease.

PC Decrapifier (www.pcdecrapifier.com) may have an unpleasant name, but it is a sweet program that I have used numerous times to selectively remove the trial software, demo software, and other useless items installed by computer manufacturers. Much of this factory installed software and services are commission generating or advertising in nature. One major PC maker actually charges the user \$50 to order a computer without such software installed! PC Decrapifier can remove that software from a new or not so new computer for free.

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Because I review so much software, I am frequently installing and uninstalling software and my most frequent utility to accomplish that task is Revo Uninstaller (www.revouninstaller.com). Revo Uninstaller displays all of the software installed on the computer, and can quickly and completely remove unwanted software with the click of a mouse. On my computer, Revo shows several times more programs than Add/Remove Programs, and removes them much more completely. Revo Uninstaller is the primary program that I use for this purpose on a regular basis, and I have been very satisfied with it.

At present, freewaregenius has a directory of over 600 free programs that it has reviewed and evaluated, and another listing of the programs that it has rated with its highest 5-star rating. Freewaregenius is a very worthwhile web site to periodically visit, and use as a resource to discover some excellent free PC software.

the end of the story

Online Backup Services

There Are Pros & Cons But They Are Up & Coming

Written by Ira Brickman,

**President, ICON PC User Group, Inc., New York
From The ICON Graphic, Newsletter of ICONPCUG,
October 2008 Edition**

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The changing face of how we use our computers includes the latest concept: using programs and services directly from the Internet. Many of us, for example, have found it more convenient to access our email using a Web browser (a.k.a. "Webmail") instead of a dedicated client like Outlook Express. The Internet's evermore ubiquitous nature means that receiving email is as simple as finding an available computer with browser software. Backing up your hard drive using an online service is one of the up and coming online services.

The advantages are:

- No need to buy backup software or purchase external USB drives or optical media to backup to.
- Not storing backups where the computer is located secures against fire, theft, and other risks.
- Like Webmail, the backups are available from any computer with an Internet connection & a browser.

As good as that sounds, some of the other considerations are:

- There are some costs usually involved.
- Backup privacy and security is dependent on a third party and transmitting your data over the Internet adds privacy and security risks.
- You become dependent the backup service staying in business. If not, you are out of luck.
- It takes a lot longer to backup or restore than using a local hard drive.
- There is no imaging which means you are not backing up a picture of your hard drive, including your operating system installa-

tion. Rather you are backing up folders and files.

All in all, the pros certainly make trying online backup worthwhile. The cons, however, mean you have to judge how private the files are and how large your backups will be. And the risk of a service folding means you should be wary of using smaller, totally free backup services for anything very critical to you.

There are some well-known, reliable services which can be free to use, within certain limitations. Or for a small monthly fee, you can get all the pros and limit your risks. If you want to use an online backup services, there are three commercial services you can explore and consider to start with. They are: Amazon S3/Jungle Disk, Mozy, and Carbonite.

All three have similarities:

- They require that you download and install a desktop client to configure backups, manage restores.
- Once your first backup is created, the client program then works in the background to backup of new and altered files.
- All three encrypt your data before transmission and store it in encrypted form on remote servers.
- None require you to restore from the original computer.

You can also restore your data to a different computer.

If you search the Web, you will find an abundance of reviews about each of these services. There is much that has been positively written about Jungle Disk and Amazon's Simple Storage Service (Amazon S3). The S3 service is part of a package of Amazon services meant to be accessed through third party software. Jungle Disk is the leading program to do that. It "mounts" the online storage so that it seamlessly appears as another drive in your Windows Explorer. Jungle Disk can schedule automatic backups, but the mounted drive means you can drag and drop to manually backup files and folders And it allows for incremental backups.

This last is important because there are costs involved. Amazon currently charges 10 cents per Gigabyte per month for storage and another 17 cents per GB for the data transfer. Incremental backups mean the transfer costs are kept to a minimum after your initial backup.

JungleDisk costs \$20 after a 30-day free trial.

Amazon S3: <http://tinyurl.com/qx87a>

Jungle Disk: <http://www.jungledisk.com>

Mozy, at <http://mozy.com/>, on the other hand, can be free if you use the "MozyHome" alternative, limited to 2Gb of storage. But for \$4.95 per month, Mozy offers unlimited backup of a single home computer. Though not as convenient as Jungle Disk, the MozyHome software makes backing up easy and has many backup options..

Carbonite, <http://www.carbonite.com/>, offers a yearly subscription for unlimited backup of a hard drive, starting at \$49.95 per year, with lower costs for upfront payment of multi-year subscriptions. This makes it a little less expensive than Mozy per year. The Carbonite software might be a little easier to use than Mozy. Some reviewers found Carbonite to be slower and the Carbonite Web site does contain a caution about speed.

With costs potentially less than the upfront cost of a hard drive, these backup services are at least worth a look for their convenience for computer users.

the end of the story



From The Dealsguy
by Bob (The Cheap skate) Click
Greater Orlando Computer Users Group
August 2009

I've been writing the DealGuy column for 14 years and have not missed a month, but its time I took a month off, so don't look for the column next month. I need a break and thanks in advance for the opportunity. I'm finding less and less to offer anyway so a break is probably in order.

A while back, I talked about the FACUG spring conference and the attendance of about 140, but I was unable to find out how many user groups were represented. I was able to take a look at the registration recently and it looks like they came from 39 user groups, but remember that there were also several APCUG officers there who listed their own users groups. I'm glad it was successful, but next year's FACUG conference will be really something to look forward to. I'm sure you will read about it, and it looks like the attendance for that one will set a record.

Thanks for your feedback about my comments pertaining to the special setup arrangements for the SAP Sapphire show. So far, readers said they understand the difficulty of taking pictures under such difficult conditions. I don't feel too bad because I have watched the official photographers for some shows get very frustrated trying to get good pictures of the booths they were supposed to photograph.

I'm working on an article about trade show setups, but here is something else to think about. When you walk through the entrance to a trade show, you probably don't pay much attention to that obscure security guard who stands in the background and is checking for badges as you walk by. You probably don't even consider that the person you are walking by sees much more than you realize. I can't say this about "all" the people checking badges, but it is mostly true of the more experienced guards you see. They usually look like they are casually checking for your badge, but here is what really happens with an experienced security guard:

They actually take a mental snapshot of your badge and automatically read the name on it to see if the name matches the gender of the person wearing it (is it a male name if the person is a male), some shows they may look for other traits; they read the year to make sure the person is not using a last year's badge, and they check for color codes that might be on it to allow certain people in only on certain days (sometimes the day of the week is there, but usually only a color bar on the bottom). For some shows there might be other info on the badge. A good guard can also spot a phony badge made with a computer pretty easily because they get used to seeing the right badge. Yes, people try all kinds of tricks to get in free because some shows have very high registration fees.

They also must be diplomatic when they run into a belligerent attendee who doesn't want to be bothered going to registration to obtain a proper badge. Some of them are ready to punch you when you stop them. As you can imagine, diplomacy is a good thing to master. They usually do all this for somewhere around eight or nine dollars per hour, depending on what city you work in.

Since I don't have very good vision, I try to avoid entrance door positions, although I don't mind working at loading docks where you mostly see the same people going in and out while working, and you get so you recognize them when you see them. Since most of those workers wear colored wristbands for ID, they hate to wear them on

their arm so you must look on the wrists, a belt loop (with their shirt hanging over it), or other spots to find it. Often you must ask them to see it if it is not in plain sight. Some convention center employees don't like to wear badges, but again, you get to know them, rather than argue with them. I once worked an entrance to a pharmacist job interview area where I had to watch for an ampersand on the badge someplace. That was a tough one for me. One person somehow got an interview without paying the fee and we were all given the name to watch for; and one guard found that person, who was then interviewed by show management.

Worried About A Web Site's Safety?

A popular warning product for dangerous Web sites is McAfee's "Site Advisor" <<http://www.siteadvisor.com>>. I've read a couple of reviews that were not all that complimentary, but have not tried it myself. Another one that I have not read about either way is Site Hound. When you get there, these products warn you if a Web site is safe to visit.

Site Hound is offered by Fire Trust <<http://www.firetrust.com>>. There is a free version, and also a pay version with more features for \$29.95. They also offer MailWasher if you want spam protection and it is a popular product with a one time price. There used to be free updates for life, but it doesn't look like that applies any more. Do your homework if you are interested in either of these. User group member discounts are available for Firetrust products through APCUG <<http://www.apcug.net>>. Your user group must be a member to have access to the Sharepoint page for that information.

Ever Consider A Virtual Cover?

(This is their announcement, but edited)

Insofta Development has unveiled the newest version of **Insofta Cover Commander**, a tool providing the effective solution to quickly and easily create quality custom-designed three-dimensional virtual boxes for software, e-books, DVDs, manuals, CD-ROMs and screenshots. Version 3.1 delivers a host of improvements.

Enhancements in the latest version of **Insofta Cover Commander** include support for batch processing from the command line, providing a perfect solution for creating a large number of similar virtual boxes, books, and many more. This is essential for those who create covers and boxes for on-line shops, catalogs and other large projects. The program also allows saving animation in SWF, GIF and AVI format.

The program enables creation of sophisticated and modern cover designs with very few mouse clicks; streamlining workflow. The program allows comprehensive customization of background color and transparency, gradient, shadow and reflection; what's more, the settings can be saved and used later. All the features are delivered in multilingual user interface (English, German, French, Spanish, Japanese, Hungarian and Russian).

Insofta Cover Commander is compatible with Microsoft Windows 98, ME, NT, 2000, XP and Vista, and costs \$48.30 for a single license, entitling a user to 1 year of free updates. Further information on the product, as well as its free trial version, is available from <www.insofta.com/cover-commander>. User group members get a 20% discount by entering the code ICC-RRDJ-DUG in the proper space.

Direct download link:

<www.insofta.com/download/covercommanderssetup.exe>

Company website: <www.insofta.com>

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Problems?

A while back I mentioned the problem I had not being able to access the memory in my digital picture frame with either of my desktop machines, but I could with my new laptop. Nobody was able to tell me what was wrong, but Bob Balogh, a past president of the Boca Raton Computer Society <<http://www.brccs.org>> , sent me a suggestion for finding the answer <<http://www.blackviper.com/>> and I am sharing his advice with my readers who might have their own problems. I have not had the time to go there to research it yet, but hope to get it done soon. Bob's suggestion is below:

"The above is one of the best sites available for learning about your computer. The section on Windows Configurations, left hand side, is most helpful." Bob also writes a monthly help column, and has traveled to other user groups in his area to do presentations."

I always read Bob's column in their newsletter, Boca Bits, and here is something he recommended for their members. Bob likes to keep a monthly calendar on his desktop. This enables him to see the entire month at a glance. The one he suggests also has an array of other features that lets you enter events that are upcoming, etc. It is called Rainlendar Lite, and it's free at

<<http://www.snapfiles.com/get//Rainlendar.html>>.



That's it for this month. I'll have some more new product announcements on my Web site that didn't offer discounts. Meet me here again next month if your editor permits. This column is written to make user group members aware of special offers or freebies I have found or arranged, and my comments should not be interpreted to encourage, or discourage, the purchase of any products, no matter how enthused I might sound.

Bob (The Cheapskate) Click
<[bobclick at bellsouth dot net](mailto:bobclick@bellsouth.net)>.
Visit my Web site at
<<http://www.dealsguy.com>>.



the end of the story



From the Editors desk

Hi PACCsters!



There are some great articles in the July 2009 PACC talk. The two part "Word Processing Choices from A-Z" by John White, does a great round-up of worthy and not so worthy word processors.

The "Freewaregenius – Evaluates Free PC Software" by Ira Wisker definitely deserves reading and while you are at it why ... read the rest of the PACC TALK as well!

I expect to see you all in the July 2009 PACC meeting.

PJK

Please change your address of PACC Web site to the following URL:
<http://pacc.apcug.org>

(Continued from page 2)

harmd if the drive is used as a ReadyBoost drive. Because of the higher performance requirements, ReadyBoost compatible flash drives are slightly more expensive than standard drives, but are often the least expensive way to add memory to a Vista computer.

Another useful feature often found on a USB flash drive is known as "U3". Drives that are U3 compatible are labeled as such. A U3 powered flash drive allows the user to carry special versions of hundreds of programs on the flash drive that can be run directly from the flash drive without being installed on the computer. This is an effective way to carry the actual software the user is familiar with, and run it on other computers. When unplugged from the computer, U3 leaves no data or other information left on the computer that was used. Some of the popular programs that come in U3 formats are the Firefox browser, Skype telephone, McAfee Antivirus (about \$15), RoboForm Password Manager, OpenOffice (the comprehensive suite of office software including a Microsoft compatible word processor, spreadsheet, presentation program, database, and more, free), Thunderbird email client, and dozens of games. Most U3 drives come preinstalled with password protection and a "U3 Launchpad" which is a menu driven directory of the software on the U3 drive.

For those of us who have standard non-U3 drives, there is now an alternative that provides for the same functionality. This alternative to U3 that will run on almost all contemporary flash drives is called "PortableApps", and can be found online at portableapps.com. According to the PortableApp website, "A portable app is a computer program that you can carry around with you on a portable device and use on any Windows computer. When your USB flash drive, portable hard drive, iPod or other portable device is plugged in, you have access to your software and personal data just as you would on your own PC. And when you unplug the device, none of your personal data is left behind." Dozens of portable apps are available, including the Firefox browser, OpenOffice office suite, antivirus software, games, password managers, and many other pieces of software. The PortableApp Suite is totally free, and does not contain any spyware or adware. In addition to the bundled suite, there are many other programs available, almost all free, which will run as portable apps. The PortableApp website keeps a running tally of new software that is available, including new releases and versions, as well as beta (pre-release) software. A simple click will install the selected software on the flash drive.

Now that many of us are routinely carrying flash drives, it is nice to know that they may be capable of doing much more for us than just transport data.

the end of the story

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PACC HELP LINE

Help is available to PACC members on various computer topics by contacting one of those listed below. It is recommended that the initial contact with any of these experts should be made via the PACC WEB SITE. In this way others can benefit from the questions and responses. Be courteous and call only during the listed times.

NAME	COMPUTER AREA	PHONE	TIME
Agrawala, Vishnu	Hardware	724-553-8051	3 - 6:00 pm
Cutrara, Phil	Geoworks	766-0274	
Fisher, Bill	Cobol, Word Perfect	367-8996	7 - 9:00 pm
Konecny, P.	Windows, DOS 6.2x, MS IE., Hardware	795-6075	8 - 9:00 pm

If you would like to become PACC HELP LINE volunteer inform the editor by sending e-mail to: pacccomm@aol.com

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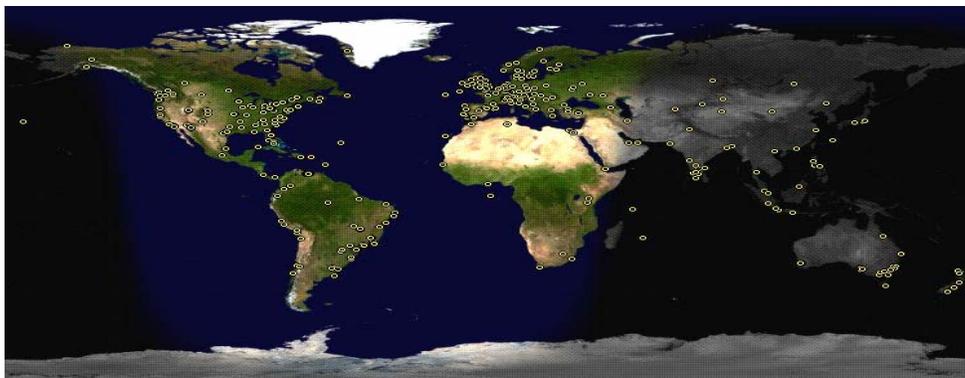


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NEXT PACC MEETING IS ON JULY 19, 2009

PACC 1975 - 2009
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NEXT MEETING: July 19, 2009

The Pittsburgh Area Computer Club (PACC) holds its meetings the **THIRD** Sunday of each month. The next meeting will be in room 311 at **Point Park University**, Wood St. and Blvd. of the Allies. The doors open at 11:00 am and close at 4:30 pm. Bring your PC!
NOTICE THE EXPIRATION DATE ON THE MAILING LABEL OF YOUR NEWSLETTER.
You won't get your newsletter if you let your membership expire. Renew your Memberships !!! Send a check or money order for \$25 made out to 'PACC' and addressed to Treasurer, PACC, P.O. Box 6435, Pittsburgh, PA 15212-6435.
Classified ads. Buy, Sell, Trade. Members may place free ads (up to 5 lines). Articles should be prepared in plain ASCII text. **WITHOUT** formatting. Deadline for articles is the 25th of the month. Send them to P.J. Konecny, P.O. Box 557, Monroeville, PA 15146.
PACC homepage can be found at: <http://pacc.apcug.org>

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