

# SacraBlue®

The Magazine of the Sacramento PC Users Group

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## Sacra Blue

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The Sacramento PC Users Group is a member of the Association of PC Users Groups (APCUG)

# The Meeting Report

Highlights of the presentations of last month's Guest Speakers.

*Transcribed by Brian Smither  
Photography by Mark Naber  
and Ron Lambert  
Recording by Gary Sloan*

Gene Barlow's company, User Group Relations, has recently compiled several informative tutorials onto two CD's. The first, "Discovering your Hard Drive," is a training CD that focuses on setting up and organizing your hard drive. It is packed with helpful and useful information about your hard drives, how to organize them and protect them. Over two hours of valuable information is included, most of which is not available elsewhere. By carefully studying the contents of this CD, you should be successful in using PartitionMagic to configure your hard drive to your particular needs. The other CD is "Backing Up Your Hard Drive," that focuses on what you should do to backup and protect your data. It will introduce you to the many backup approaches that are being used and show you the advantages and disadvantages of each. Included are detailed examples of how to do the various backup approaches using live examples using Drive Image v7, Drive Image 2002, and DataKeeper v5.

His presentation about using Drive Image as a backup solution is on his UGR web site and won't be summarized here. See [www.ugr.com/ugr6f.html](http://www.ugr.com/ugr6f.html) (derived from a PowerPoint slideshow and is viewable by Internet Explorer only) and [www.ugr.com/nl0102.html](http://www.ugr.com/nl0102.html).

Partition Magic 8 is the current version from PowerQuest. A show of hands in the audience indicated the vast majority uses or had used PM. Version 8's new features support for 160GB partitions (with several of these large partitions on the physical drive), LINUX EXT3 support, and external USB/Firewire hard drives. Other features include the Data Keeper File Backup utility.

It's purportedly the best version of PM that PowerQuest has put out, available since Sept. 2002. PowerQuest says the next release of PM won't happen until Microsoft releases LongHorn (2005).

In the first weeks of June 2003, PowerQuest announced the brand new release of Drive Image v7. Of this version, PQ claims it is able to create a compressed image of any partition including an "active" partition such as the partition where the operating system is installed. Typically, this cannot be done. Also, the time required to make this image is far less than competing products. DI7 now includes the ability to restore individual files from a compressed partition image, as well as "mount" the image under a distinct read-only drive letter. DI can write the image to another drive (internal or external), disk-cartridge drives (ZIP, etc), and burners (but not DVD-RAM). Disk spanning is supported.

Restoring an active (system) partition requires the use of the DI bootable CD. The CD loads a micro-version of MS Windows (Win-PE) with all necessary

drivers to read the backup drive/media. However, restoring a data or an application (non-system) partition can be done under normal system operation.

Drive Image 7 and V2i Protector is written only for Windows 2000 and XP and will not work on any other version of Windows. Therefore, the DI7 package also includes Drive Image 2002 for Windows 98SE, Me, and NT.

Shortly after the announcement of DI7, PQ announced the release of a workstation version of their V2i Protector, a server/enterprise drive imaging solution. Gene compared the differences between DI7 and V2i. Essentially, V2i Protector is an enterprise-capable solution for drive imaging software. Originally designed for servers, PQ has released V2i Protector Workstation Edition.

V2i Protector does not include the Basic, Easy-to-Use user interface. The only interface available is the more complex, professional business-oriented control panel. Also missing is the DI-2002 version of Drive Image that is included in the DI7 package.

V2i Protector includes the ability to have the workstation managed by the server version of DI/V2i. In a corporate environment, all workstations can be backed up remotely. But as a stand-alone application, V2i includes the capability of incremental image backups.

# The Business Report

Highlights of the group's business announcements made at last month's meeting.

*Transcribed by Brian Smither  
Photography by Mark Naber  
and Ron Lambert  
Recording by Gary Sloan*

Due to technical difficulties, most of the General Meeting was not recorded. Suffice it to say, the presentation of CrazyTalk was hilarious and Gene

Barlow's presentation was most informative. Gene's presentation can be reviewed at his web site, <http://www.ugr.com/ugr4.html>.

Gene also mentions that he has written some technical newsletters on hard drives. Last year he wrote four, this year sees a fifth newsletter. All of them are at his Web site. If you would to

automatically receive Gene's newsletters, send him an e-mail at [gene@ugr.com](mailto:gene@ugr.com) requesting to be adding to his mailing list. UGR will not give your address to anyone else, nor will UGR send you anything but these newsletters.

# President's Thoughts

By Milt Hull

Well this month I went up to Spokane, WA for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July and to spend time hiking in upper Idaho. We stayed with relatives and I was ready to have a real vacation. I did bring my computer to check my email while I was there. I have a fiber connection to the Internet at my house, but I also pay for dial-up so when I do travel, I can dial my Covad account. I asked my Brother-in-law if he had a fast Internet connection. He did not and he stated that he only had a dial-up himself. This time I did bring all my extra PC Cards and one of them was a 802.11b card. I use "G" myself, but I also have a "B" card just in case.

Well, the first night, I connected my wireless card up and low and behold, I found a very strong wireless connection with one of his neighbors. It was wide

open and he had it connected to a cable modem. I experimented and looked at his computers and found out his name was Brad. I asked my relatives if they new him but with no avail. It was not his next door neighbor because they knew both of those neighbors. It must have been the people behind them. The connection was fast and I surfed all day one day without anyone knowing. I checked my email and wrote my Technical Article after doing some research one night. It was nice because even while I was up there we needed a recipe so my wife looked one up on the net. The entire time we were up there, he never knew someone was tailgating on his internet connection.

This is very scary for most people who do not know how to tighten up their own security. I mean, if my brother-in-law was not a very morel person, he would just invest in a \$40.00 WiFi card and tap off

his neighbor all year long without paying a dime for an internet connection. I wonder if people do this. Wireless is becoming more and more popular now and people can purchase these for next to nothing. It is clear to me that this person Brad had a couple of machines and his computers where in a location that they could not be connected to each other without a wireless connection. So he just ran down to his local electronics store and connected the two together.

However, he either forgot or did not know how to encrypt his network and so therefore, I borrowed his connection for the week.

So if you have a wireless connection, please incorporate Wireless Encryption Protocol in order to lock out unwanted guests. If you do not know how, it might be worth hiring a consultant.

## BOOKS NOW AVAILABLE FOR REVIEW!

*Dreamweaver 4, The Missing Manual • Office 2000, Eight in One • Action Script, The Definitive Guide • Macromedia, "Generator & Flash" Demystified • FreeHand 10, F/X and Design*

If you would like to do a review on any of the above publications, please contact Stan Morris at stan@gohawk.com. You will have 30 days to complete the review of any book you choose and you may keep the book at no cost to you.

## New Horizons Learning Centers

As a benefit for SPCUG members, New Horizons has offered the group heavily discounted rates for several of their popular [Online Anytime](#) packages. These rates are good until April 2004. Arrangements can be made for payments but your access will be valid only when the program has been paid in full.

For a single annual subscription, services include OnLine Self-paced or OnLine Instructor-led training available anytime day or night. Available courses include industry standard applications, technical, network and general business subject areas.

Only yourself is permitted to access the Online Anytime package you have purchased, but New Horizons extends to your immediate household family members the same discounted rates. Other family and friends are encouraged to join SPCUG for these outstanding discounts.

The packages include:

- Office Productivity: \$95 (\$229 retail)
- Computer Professional: \$495 (\$1,799)
- IT Comprehensive: \$995 (\$3,223), includes the above.
- Design and Media: \$195 (\$600).

Contact [Dennis Duffy](#) for the forms you will need to enroll.



## The Sacramento PC Users Group meets the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday monthly at 7pm.

Sacramento Association of Realtors  
2003 Howe Ave., Sacramento (across from Kmart)

Doors open open at 5:30 pm  
Beginners tutorial from 5:45 pm to 6:30 pm  
Membership, library, and Q&A tables open at 6:30 pm  
Main meeting starts at 7:00 pm, and lasts until 9:30 pm

# The Volunteer Page

By Stan Morris

## On a Personal Note

I find myself extremely busy lately. I think it's only fair to the group that I seek my replacement. If anyone wishes to manage a volunteer workforce, please let me know.

## More Openings

**General Meeting Photographer:** We need a meeting photographer. If you have a camera and entry level experience, we could use your help. You will only need enough time to attend SPCUG General meetings and a small amount of time after each meeting to process and deliver the photos to the newsletter editor.

Contact: [Mark Naber](#)

**Book Review Editor:** Evelyn Kaehler found it necessary to give up her position as our Book Review Editor. I have stepped-in to do what I can in getting the books out to reviewers, but we need someone to take on this task.

Contact: [Stan Morris](#)

**Public Relations Coordinator:** This job entails collecting information on each month's speakers, potentially rewriting a press release, and faxing or e-mailing it to contacts at various newspapers, magazines, and TV and radio stations. Contact information for newspapers and magazines, TV stations, radio stations, and other organizations is provided.

Contact: [Tom Anderson](#).

**Entertainment Editor:** This is the position Chris Seip once held for many years. He was the Games Editor, but we expanded it to Entertainment Editor (indicating not just games but leisure-time software) when Diana DeMuth took over the position from Chris. But the position is available again. Can you help?

Contact: [Tom Anderson](#)

**Training Media Librarian:** The Training Librarian maintains the Training Media Library and sets the library up at the general meetings on the third Wednesday of each month. This material is available to members only (a definite benefit). At the meetings, material is checked out, a refundable deposit taken, and a record is made of the material the member checks out. Deposit amounts are determined by the librarian based on the value of the material, but generally not less than \$10. When the material is returned at the following months meeting, the deposit is returned.

Contact: [Mary Lint](#)

**Online Service Tutorial Coordinator:** These duties will involve directing and

organizing a team of volunteers that will go out to members homes on an "on-call" basis to help the members with setting up and accessing the Internet. Specifically, this is designed to encourage and assist new members with using the *eBlue* Web site. Operating procedures and a disclaimer have already been written and approved by the Steering Committee, and are now ready to be implemented.

Contact: [Stan Morris](#)

**Group Benefits Coordinator:** We need someone's help right away. Marsha Leonard was the last Group Benefits Coordinator listing the many benefits available to members that you may not be aware of from month to month. Is anyone interested in filling this?

Contact: [Stan Morris](#)

**Computer Store Representative:** We need several volunteers who will visit as many computer stores as possible on a monthly basis and ask them to have our membership information available to their customers. If we could get the big stores like Computer Warehouse, Fry's, and CompUSA to cooperate, we would probably get a lot of coverage. Other big computer sellers include office stores like OfficeMax, Staples, and Office Depot. Also, electronic stores like Good Guys, Circuit City, Best Buys, and even Radio Shack. Then the other computer-specific stores, like the Gateway stores and all the mom-and-pop computer stores.

Contact: [Ken Hopkins](#)

**Newsletter Writers:** Writers are needed for both *Sacra Blue* and *eBlue*. You could be writing tips and hints that may be used as filler. Also, you could write news articles about current events, evaluate hardware and/or software and write product reviews, or write stories on how you solved some computer problem.

Contact: [Sacra Blue Editor](#)

**Newsletter Typists:** Many articles in other user group newsletters would provide useful information to our members. Unfortunately, we cannot always obtain these articles in electronic format. We need volunteers to type up articles the editors have already selected.

Contact: [Sacra Blue Editor](#)

## What About Volunteering?

The SPCUG depends 100% on our volunteer force. We will need an even stronger force in the days ahead to meet the challenges of sophisticated computer users. Our members depend on us to get the information out; we depend on them to supply us with new volunteers.

Just let me know if you are interested in volunteering for one of the below positions at [stan@ghawk.com](mailto:stan@ghawk.com).

# Open Source Software

From PC Alamode, March 2003, Alamo PC Organization

## An Introduction

By Chris Montgomery

People today are considering Open Source software alternatives to proprietary software more than ever. As trade periodicals, online discussions, and e-mail newsletters talk up the open source initiatives, people are paying attention. Factors such as cost, security, and control issues are pushing users to find other solutions. The need to overcome some of these factors are causing people to experiment and test the waters of Open Source software products. I believe this is a positive trend and provides a win-win situation for consumers and product vendors.

### What is Open Source?

Open Source software is software where the code is open and accessible to developers or anyone that wants to view or modify it. Open Source software is typically characterized by a rapid evolutionary process. Open source licensing usually requires that any modified Open Source software code must also be freely available to anyone else if the developer(s) further distribute the code. Developers can use the code, make improvements to it, correct bugs, and share the improvements with others. In this way, the Open Source software can continue to evolve in an open environment that inspires collaboration and at a speed much quicker than what is normally found in proprietary, or closed, development environments.

### Formal Definitions of Open Source

“The basic idea behind open source is very simple: When programmers can read, redistribute, and modify the source code for a piece of software, the software evolves. People improve it, people adapt it, people fix bugs. And this can happen at a speed that, if one is used to the slow pace of conventional software development, seems astonishing.

“Open Source is collaboratively developed software created by

corporations, academic institutions and individuals. Originally created to run the Internet infrastructure, it now powers computing systems in financial institutions, Fortune 100 corporations, government agencies and many small businesses.”

### Licensing

The primary distinction between Open Source software and proprietary software is based on how the license is written. License terms for proprietary software are designed to protect the copyright. These licenses provide as much legal protection as possible to the copyright holder while granting few rights to users. Who holds the copyright is important in proprietary software licenses and terms of the licensing are very restrictive. In Open Source software, the opposite situation usually occurs. Rather than protecting the copyright holder, the terms of the license say that the copyright exists to protect the user of the software and only a few rights are reserved – primarily the right of the copyright holder to enforce the license. A copyright holder can't change the license terms for software a user already has.

Despite the fact that there are over 100 types of Open Source licenses, most all Open Source software uses one of these four types of “classic” Open Source licenses: the GNU General Public License (GPL), the GNU Lesser (or Library) General Public License (LGPL), the MIT license, and the BSD-new license. The GPL license will let anyone use the program and modify it, but prevents the source code from becoming proprietary once it is distributed. It also forbids proprietary programs from linking to it. The MIT and BSD-new licenses will allow developers to do just about anything with the source code but they are prohibited from suing the authors. The LGPL is a compromise between the GPL and MIT/BSD-new approaches. This type of license is mainly intended for code libraries. Similar to the GPL, LGPL-licensed software cannot be changed and made proprietary, but the LGPL license does allow proprietary programs to link to the

code library. Of the four classical types of Open Source software licenses, GPL is the most popular.

### Some Open Source software Examples

How about some examples of Open Source software? Most of you have probably heard of Linux. That's an Open Source software operating system. You may have also heard about the Apache Web server, another Open Source software product that runs more than 50% of Web sites. Both are free and continue to evolve through the active participation of developer communities. The Internet is heavily influenced by Open Source software being used commercially. Sendmail is the most widely used e-mail transport software on the Internet. BIND is software that provides domain name service (DNS) for the entire Internet's infrastructure.

Here are a few more popular Open Source software applications: Mozilla, a Web browser which forms the code base for Netscape; OpenOffice.org, an integrated office suite (you'll hear more about this in the near future); Perl and PHP, popular application scripting languages that serve up dynamically-generated Web sites; MySQL and PostgreSQL, two powerful database applications.

SourceForge.net has the largest repository of Open Source software projects anywhere. There are currently more than 56,000 Open Source projects listed at SourceForge.net and the numbers grow daily. One interesting Open Source project to keep an eye on is being worked on by the Open Source Applications Foundation. Code named Chandler, it is a Personal Information Manager (PIM) and is intended to be an Open Source replacement for Microsoft Outlook for managing e-mail, appointments, contacts, and tasks. Chandler will be free and will run on the Windows, Linux, and Macintosh platforms.

### The Good and Not So Good

There are many reasons cited for using Open Source software. Some studies have indicated that Open Source software

is more reliable or more secure than its proprietary equivalent. Since everyone has access to the source code, a peer review process encourages auditing of the code to uncover any potential security flaws. Other studies suggest that Open Source software run faster in some instances than proprietary software. So, do people use Open Source software because it is better than proprietary software? Some fervent Open Source software advocates would say yes. But Open Source software isn't better than proprietary software just because it's free or costs less or is worked on by many developers collaborating openly. Open Source software has bugs, just like proprietary software.

Even so, many people involved with Open Source software contend that its rapid evolutionary nature and open peer review process produces better software through rapid innovation. There are more eyeballs that can view the code and more hands to make changes. These changes tend to be released as updates much more quickly, sometimes within 24 hours of bugs being reported. In the traditional closed-source development process, only a few programmers have access to the code and everyone else is blocked from having access to it. Improvements to closed source, such as bug fixes, are frequently long in coming taking weeks or months. Some vendors of proprietary software products initially refuse to even acknowledge the reported bugs.

Many governments, educational institutions, and non-profit organizations are switching to Open Source software due to cost savings. With limited budgets, Open Source software, which is often free, is very attractive and these organizations are now finding suitable replacements over proprietary products. Individuals are starting to use Open Source software for the same reason. Many of us live on tight budgets and can't afford to run out and buy the latest software updates from Microsoft, Adobe, or Intuit. A case in point is the recent licensing fees and operating system restrictions for Microsoft's soon-to-be-released version of its Office suite. These fees and restrictions are driving people and businesses to look to Open Source for alternatives. In many cases, Open Source provides software that is just as good, or better, than proprietary products.

There is also a control issue. Sometimes, no matter how good a software product is, it doesn't do everything just the way you want it to do. With talented developers on staff, a business could modify the software to do what they need if they had access to the source code. With Open Source software, they can do that without worrying about restrictive licenses or copyrights. In addition, the open collaboration process of many people working together engenders a sense of community. People involved with a community are often receptive to sharing with others. This frequently leads to faster and better technical support, directly from developers and other users, in an open environment on e-mail discussion lists and message boards. Unlike a closed-source development environment, in the Open Source development process, people who are capable of contributing to projects, such as students, can now get involved.

Although some people are finding alternatives in Open Source software, others are hesitant to go there. People are often reluctant to make a change, even if better options exist. Some feel that software must not be very good, not worth anything, if they don't have to pay for it. Creatures of habit, we often resist change and feel more comfortable staying with what we know, even if the cost is higher. Even though free, there are costs involved with making a conversion to Open Source software from proprietary software. These costs are usually expressed in time to learn new ways to do things, converting existing files to new formats, and paying consultants to train them how to install and use the new software.

#### **Who is Involved With Open Source?**

Just about any programmer with the right skills can become involved with Open Source software projects. Traditionally, these people became involved because they had some free time to contribute, had a burning desire to help others, or just like to program. More recently, however, developers working on Open Source projects are starting to be paid for their efforts. Almost every major Open Source project is now being supported or funded in part by major corporations like IBM, Sun Microsystems, Dell, Oracle, HP, Intel

and others. These companies aren't just doing this for philanthropic reasons, either. Despite the fact that Open Source software can often be freely downloaded or purchased for the cost of a CD, companies are making money on Open Source software. The nature of Open Source software licenses does not prevent companies or individuals from charging for a product. There is a growing industry around providing support that is related to Open Source software. Red Hat, a Linux distributor, recently became profitable for the first time from its support services and IBM just announced it made more than a billion dollars in revenue last year on support and consulting services related to Linux. Apple has also started to encourage its developers to openly collaborate with others.

Governments are also getting in on the Open Source act. Many are starting to embrace Open Source software for security and reliability reasons or as a way to avoid being held hostage to closed source code by vendors like Microsoft. More than twenty national governments like Peru, Germany, Denmark, and South Africa have announced a move to Open Source software. In the U.S., parts of the federal government and some states and local governments are using Open Source software. Schools and non-profit organizations are jumping on the Open Source bandwagon when they realize that viable Open Source options exist at much lower cost.

#### **How Is This Affecting Retail Software?**

The trend of people, businesses and governments switching to Open Source software should continue to grow in the future. Will this trend drive software companies out of business? That remains to be seen. I suspect that those which make products of marginal quality may suffer and, in time, may disappear entirely. But the strong companies will survive by producing better quality products where costs can be justified. Microsoft publicly stated recently that the growth of interest in Linux and success of the Open Source software movement may force the company to lower prices, resulting in lower revenues and profit margins. The Open Source software movement should be good for MS's customers as it is forced to innovate and

*Continued on next page—*

# TCP/IP Strangling?

From the Usenet

By "Duncan"

Broadband connections reveal things that might not be noticeable on modem dialups – uploading at the maximum rate will strangle the download rate. For example, a DSL connection that allows for 1.5Mbps downlink will get strangled to the same rate as the 128Kbps uplink if you're saturating that uplink.

So, running an FTP server, where uploading data at the max rate would be the norm, will frustrate you to no end when what you want comes piddling in.

What you are seeing isn't so much a limit of the DSL line, as the protocol you happen to be using at the time. If you are using UDP, it will work better than if you are using TCP. Here's why.

TCP and UDP are the two protocols most often used over the Internet. They serve different drastically different needs, and thus, continue to exist in parallel. TCP is a connection oriented protocol, with guaranteed delivery and some error correction built in. As such, it has higher overhead than UDP, which doesn't have those features. Thus, UDP is the lightweight protocol to use if you don't require the features of TCP, or can build them into your specific application at a lower resource cost than that of TCP.

As part of the services provided by TCP, a two-way conversation is set up, such that when you are downloading something, TCP responds regularly back to the server with acknowledgements (ACKs) that you are successfully getting what it is sending. If there happens to be

an error, or something doesn't get through, TCP will request the defective packet be re-sent. The amount of data that can be sent, before the sending server has to wait for ACKs to ensure the data is getting through correctly, is determined by the Receive Window (RcvWin, or RWin). Ideally, this is set high enough so the ACKs have time to get back to the server before it thinks something went wrong, but not so high that in the event of an error, the server will be forced to re-send more data than necessary.

When your uplink is saturated, any TCP ACKs from a download must wait in line along with whatever you are uploading at the time. The general effect is to limit the downlink to roughly the same speed as the uplink – but only while the uplink is saturated, and only when TCP is the protocol being used.

UDP, being more lightweight, doesn't have this problem. It doesn't require ACKs, but then again, doesn't have any built-in way to ensure what is sent is actually received, and received correctly. Thus, UDP is ideal for, like, streaming media, where a packet lost here or there isn't a big deal, as compared to the extra resources TCP would require. TCP is more suited to file downloads and the like – particularly binary files – where even a single bit out of place means a wasted download. With the exception of some games and streaming media, most stuff we associate with the Internet is transferred with TCP. TCP is used for web browsing, news and mail protocols, FTP, and the like.

The net effect of all of the above, is that if your uplink is saturated, with WHATEVER kind of traffic, anything TCP on the downlink will be limited more or less to the same speed, due to the ACK requirements. Without those ACKs, the download cannot continue, so any TCP downloads are restricted to the ability to get the ACKs back upstream. OTOH, as long as you have UDP properly configured in your streaming media player of choice, you should be able to watch/listen almost unaffected by the upstream saturation. (There will be an effect, any time it needs to send a message upstream, such as when changing songs or videos, perhaps, but once going, it should play with less interruption than an equivalent TCP stream would under the same conditions.)

So what if your applications require TCP? The solution then, is bandwidth limit whatever is saturating the uplink, to something less than saturation levels. In this case, that would mean setting your FTP server to perhaps 75 or 90 percent of your upstream bandwidth. Some FTP servers have that ability, as do some routers, for FTP traffic. If you don't have a server (or router) that can do that, perhaps you should switch servers. (Traffic shaping routers, unless you build your own using a BSD or Linux solution, generally, cost more than you probably want to spend - a bandwidth limiting FTP server is probably a much more cost effective solution.)

That should cover the basics, anyway.

*From previous page—Open Source*

compete with more reliable and secure products at more reasonable prices.

[SPCUG Ed. Note: The Open Source movement now demands sufficient respect that Microsoft also was forced to relax one if its technology licensing terms that said in effect, 'You develop for Open Source, you ain't gettin' squat from us.']

## Summary

Open Source software is gaining in popularity as more organizations and

users realize that it provides viable alternatives to proprietary software products. Ushered in by cost savings, better support, greater reliability and more security, Open Source solutions are making inroads at work places, schools, and in homes. Commercial software vendors are being forced to look at how they now price, deliver, and support their products. The cost of acquiring software is becoming more reasonable and the total cost of ownership is often far less. Development and support of core software technologies is taking place

openly and with more people involved than ever before. This is a positive trend where users and software vendors can win together.

*Chris Montgomery is the owner of [Airtight Web Services](http://www.airtightweb.com) and a computer user since 1985. He's experimented with Linux in the past and advocates using Open Source software when possible. [monty@airtightweb.com](mailto:monty@airtightweb.com)*

# Mail-In Rebates

From PC Alamode, June 2003, Alamo PC Organization

By K. Joyce McDonald

## Another Black Eye for Technology

One of my favorite and most faithful readers is Richard Corbett. Richard is a favorite for several reasons. First, he came to computers late in life and has made great strides in getting control of the technology. Second, when he writes me, he always has questions or comments regarding some interesting issue. Third, he lets me use his name. So this column is dedicated to Richard. Sorry it took so long to write it.

Late last August, Richard wrote me regarding mail-in rebates. I had always found rebates a pain, but, like many consumers, I thought that my troubles were isolated incidents. Not any more. Take a look at Richard's e-mail:

Hello Joyce,

Hope you don't mind my writing you on this but I just wanted to get it off my chest. I hate to use the word "scam" but I have given up buying anything that is offered with a mail-in rebate. I have also informed all my friends and family to do the same. I don't believe that I am an exception who just ran into bad luck with it.

Case: A few years back I bought a new computer that came with a \$200.00 mail-in rebate. I sent in all the required items including the original purchase receipt (must be original). After a very long wait I was informed that I would not be receiving my rebate due to the fact that I had not met all the requirements.

When I voiced my displeasure I was told to resubmit. "How could I resubmit when I had sent them the original receipt?" I asked, "Can I send in a copy?" "No," I was told, "It must be original."

To make a long story short, after many calls and yelling I was told that I would receive my rebate: that a mistake had been made. It then took about another two months, but I finally got it.

Recently I purchased a new monitor that came with a fifty-dollar mail-in

rebate. That, plus another store instant rebate made the price very desirable. This time I took everything including the box that the monitor was packed in back to the store, Office Depot, and asked the manager to assist me in putting together all the items that were required.

She did, including the bar code off the carton, and I then mailed it in. About two months later I got a card that I had not fulfilled all the requirements and would not be receiving my rebate. I called and was told the same thing by the person I spoke to.

I then informed her what I had done with the Office Depot manager and told her that someone was going to give me my rebate even if I had to take it out of the store manager's pocket myself.

She then asked me to hold on for a moment. She could not have been away from the phone for more than five seconds – yes, five seconds – and she then said that a mistake had been made and that I would be receiving my rebate.

"How come?" I asked, and she didn't seem to want to discuss it. I then received my fifty-dollar rebate. I wonder how many people have let it pass and lost their rebate, which was their inducement to buy some of these products?

Thanks for listening.

*Richard Corbett*

Shortly thereafter, I received another e-mail from Richard with further information:

Hello Joyce,

Reference my recent mail to you concerning my experience with mail-in rebates. A friend in Florida that I had also mentioned this to sent me this address to look at: <[www.compliants.com](http://www.compliants.com)> and type in "Rebates." There's a lot of unhappy people out there experiencing the same thing. Just thought I'd pass this along to you in case you want to look at it.

*Richard*

Richard's e-mail came at an opportune time, because we were about to go through our own Rebate Inferno, and the

idea that we weren't losing our minds was comforting.

Misery loves company. Consider this. We endured terrorists, Anthrax, Enron, et al, Saddam and SARS. Why should we have to endure mail-in rebates? Mail-in rebates are another misery the beleaguered customer must endure so that corporate fat cats can have five homes in Colorado and a yacht worthy of the Americas Cup.

The underlying logic for mail-in rebates is that the average consumer is stupid and lazy. Thus, most will never get around to filing the paperwork and the rest can easily be duped into believing they didn't do it right. The problem with this assumption is that most anyone who does the research when buying a computer or computer peripheral is pretty far up there on the IQ and productivity scale. So why is the technology industry trying to alienate their best customers?

Our own misery began last July when we purchased a top-of-the line Dell laptop for our daughter, Laura, who was starting graduate school at UCLA.

On July 21, Laura filled out and mailed a form titled "Mail-In Redemption Form." This was the form that was sent to us after we called Customer Service to ask for it. (Since it wasn't packed with the laptop.)

Shortly thereafter, we received a card with the following comments: "Thank you for participating in this promotion. Unfortunately, we could not honor your request because of the following reason: We did not receive a packing slip with your request." We *did* send the packing slip. However, unlike the rebate form, it must have been "lost in the mail." After Richard's warning, however, we had taken the precautions to make a copy, which we sent off immediately. Shortly thereafter, we received another card: "Thank you for participating in this promotion. Unfortunately, we could not honor your request because of the following reason: The packing slip you submitted did not demonstrate purchase of the product required for the rebate."

After a phone call to customer service, my husband managed to "clear things up," and we were assured we would be a

couple hundred bucks richer in the near future.

A little after mid-September, we received another card: "Thank you for participating in this promotion. Unfortunately, we could not honor your request because of the following reason: The Dell product you purchased is not valid for this promotion."

Another phone call yielded the astounding news that we had sent the wrong rebate form. Of course this was the rebate form that customer service had sent to us upon request. My husband is a patient man (the reason he was doing the calling and not I). He downloaded and filled out a new form and resubmitted it along with yet another copy of the packing slip and receipt.

A little later, my husband checked the Website <[www.rebatestatus.com](http://www.rebatestatus.com)>. When he input our customer account and order number, he found the following message: "Unfortunately, your Customer Account Number and Order Number are not valid. You will receive a letter or postcard explaining this problem. The letter or postcard may have additional instructions on how to correct this problem."

After more phone calls, on 9/26 and 10/16, we began to see positive messages on <[www.rebatestatus.com](http://www.rebatestatus.com)>. "We have received and processed your submission. You should receive your rebate or premium item soon. Please check back again to receive the date your rebate or premium item was mailed."

On 11/10/02, we received the message: "Your rebate or premium item was mailed on the date above. Please allow approximately ten days for delivery." I do not recall when we actually received the check, probably before Christmas, but we did get it.

An April 10, 2003 column online at MSNBC.com featured "Motley Fool" Jeff Fisher asking the question "Are rebates scandalous? Complaints about faulty or bogus offers mount." Mr. Fisher comments: "This marketing gimmick started to make a big comeback three years ago, and now mail-in rebates are so popular you rarely see the true price for certain products listed anymore. The price shown, to get your attention, is always after the rebate."

Mr. Fisher describes some of his own experiences with rebate-seeking, which space does not allow us to cover here. But you already have a good idea of what his experiences were.

Mr. Fisher goes on to relate that most rebates are handled by rebate processing organizations on behalf of manufacturers and retailers, and some consumers theorize that these organizations are given incentives by clients to deny or not fulfill as many rebates as possible. Mr. Fisher says it sounds like an inverse reward system: "Do not fulfill most of our customers' rebate applications, and we'll be happy with your services."

I have another theory regarding the purpose of rebates. Most rebates require

the *original* purchase receipt and the UPC code from the package. Once you send these items off, if your product quits working, you would be hard pressed to find a retailer that would accept a return. Mr. Fisher suggests that you "should never let a rebate offer be your primary motivator behind a purchase, and only consider rebates offered by reputable companies." Mr. Fisher suggests also that you be ready to call not one but several times to make sure your rebate eventually arrives. I might add that you should make sure that the item you purchase works as advertised before cutting up the box and sending off the receipt.

[SPCUG Ed Note: *It seems to me that State Legislatures will be hard pressed to come to the aid of the consumer. An out-the-door price for a hard drive of \$100 generates \$7.75 cents in taxes. If the selling price were actually reduced to the bottom-line cost – after the \$50.00 rebate – to the consumer, the State's take would be half that. There's also the matter of your demographic and personal data being sold by the companies offering the rebates.*]

*Joyce is a contract and free-lance technical writer who has recently become an independent writer of electronic books. Contact Joyce at <[kjoycemcdonald@satx.rr.com](mailto:kjoycemcdonald@satx.rr.com)>.*

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## The Importance of Using Correct E-Mail Address

A couple from Minneapolis decided to go to Florida for a long weekend to thaw out during one particularly icy winter. Because both had jobs, they had difficulty coordinating their travel schedules. It was decided that the husband would fly to Florida on a Thursday, and his wife would follow him the next day.

Upon arriving as planned, the husband checked into the hotel. There he decided to open his laptop and send his wife an e-mail back in Minneapolis. However, he accidentally left off one letter in her address, and sent the e-mail without realizing his error.

In Houston, a widow had just returned from her husband's funeral. He was a minister of many years who had been "called home to glory" following a heart attack. The widow checked her e-mail, expecting messages from relatives and friends. Upon reading the message, she fainted and fell to the floor.

The widow's son rushed into the room, found his mother on the floor, and saw the computer screen which read:

To: My Loving Wife  
From: Your Dear Husband  
Subject: I've Arrived!

I've just arrived and have been checked in. I see that everything has been prepared for your arrival tomorrow. Looking forward to seeing you then! Hope your journey is as uneventful as mine was.

P. S. Sure is hot down here!

# From the DealsGuy

Greater Orlando Computer Users Group

By Bob Click

## Alas, Its Another Goodbye From a Great User Group Supporter

I was about to release the August column to my editors when I received Bonnie Mitchell's e-mail with the sad news that Casady & Greene is closing their doors after 19 years in business. Bonnie, their users group coordinator, sent out her sad goodbye to all of us who are users group contacts. While we were only connected with C&G for eight years, many of you have met Bonnie at APCUG or regional events across the country. She was always ready to help with review products and prizes for drawings. C&G supported us when the expense of it might've been questionable, but they were there when we needed them. This recession is certainly taking its toll in the business community, and in the process, the user group community is losing some great friends along the way. Thanks for everything Bonnie, and good luck in any new endeavors.

## Eliminating The Competition

Palm has declared its intention to purchase Handspring and they will do business under a new name, but with two different units; one for handhelds, and the other for "so called" smart phones. Since Palm is not an APCUG sponsor, it looks like Hand-spring will be gone too. According to Value Line, Handspring's liquidity was deteriorating and revenues were significantly below last year's levels. Sales for both have been declining so perhaps it's time.

## Ink Jet Deal Is Jetting Back Again

I don't often repeat a deal, but this one was very popular. Susie McLean of Inksell.com agreed to repeat the original deal offered last year and extend it until the end of this year (2003). The differences are; the expiration date, the coupon code, and free shipping on orders over \$49.00 (an improvement). I am repeating it below with the changes.

"[Inksell.com](http://Inksell.com) is a discount printing Supply Company that specializes in cartridges for all makes of ink jet and laser printers, solid ink printers, copiers,

and fax machines. We sell brand names, new compatible cartridges (for most brands), and remanufactured cartridges and refill kits. Our compatible cartridge quality is certified to match that of the manufacturer and our prices are up to 70 and 80% less. We would be happy to offer DealsGuy readers a 10% discount on purchases at our online store.

"A discount coupon code will be valid through December 31, 2003. To redeem the 10% discount, (not valid with any other discount or offer), simply visit our site, place your order and continue to 'check out' where there will be a blank to enter the discount coupon code (DealsGuy2003). The discount will be automatically calculated. Should anyone have questions or need assistance, phone customer service at 1-800-255-0483, or [send e-mail](mailto:send@dealsguy.com). Don't forget the free shipping on orders over \$49.00."

## Its Not Free This Time, But Its Still A Bargain

Colleen Toumayan from [Executive Software](http://ExecutiveSoftware.com) e-mailed me to let my readers know that they have a good price on Undelete and Diskeeper bundled together. The bundle is \$39.95 and would normally be \$59.90 if bought separately. About Diskeeper: "they say built-in defragmenters are slow, labor intensive and use too much system resources to keep up with the performance demands of today's computing needs. Ultimately, they don't get used. Running Diskeeper is like hiring an expert to constantly monitor and maintain your system's maximum performance."

About Undelete: "you store a lot of data on your computer, and you need to protect it 24/7. Re-creating accidentally deleted files takes a lot of time, and using backups to restore deleted files is not always reliable-especially if you've created and deleted something between backups. New Undelete replaces your recycle bin with a Recovery Bin, which catches all the files you delete so file recovery is quick and easy."

These products in the bundle are for home use and available through our site.

## What's Going On Your Web Site?

If you have a Web site, it often helps if you know all the statistics about the visitors. One problem though, if you're using the free space given to you by your ISP, you probably have no access to the log for it (and can't use this product). On the other hand, if you have a paid Web space, usually you have access to the server log for your site. You should find out if your server log is accessible. You could analyze things the hard way and download the log file, then sift through it manually to see what you can determine. Sure it will work, but it's time consuming. I know in my case, I'd like to know which files were hit, and for how long.

I talked to [Sane Solutions](http://SaneSolutions.com) about offering a discount on their products and they agreed to do it. I have to say, their NetTracker Professional software is already much cheaper than another well known software for the same purpose, but Sane Solutions feels theirs does it better. They did not give me a product to review so you will have to do your own evaluation, but you can download a fully functional two-week trial version to evaluate. Check their Web site and look at the product descriptions.

NetTracker Professional sells for \$495.00 and NetTracker Enterprise is \$995.00. Darryl Cunningham, sales manager of Sane Solutions, said that if you call him with your request, he'd personally handle the order giving you a 20% discount on their products and support. Wow! That's \$99 discount just on NetTracker, making it very competitive! The 20% discount is good on all orders through August 31, 2003. You can contact Darryl at 1-800-407-3570 ext. 122 to order. Be sure to tell him you heard this from the DealsGuy.

## Talk About Tweaking!

Many of you have used TweakUI and loved it. It performs many very useful tasks for Windows. Lee Reynolds of Boca Raton Computer Society Inc. wrote some time ago in his monthly "Nibbling At The Net" column about another even more useful utility that he feels is much

*Continued next page—*

# Right-Click

From the Editorial Committee of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG)

By Les J. Kizer

## Try It – You May Like It

My friends, there was a time long ago. It was way back in the early age as computer time is told. Even some of us old folks find it hard to recall; however, you know, for the children's sake, we need to remember history. It was a time before the ascent of the rodent.

In those prehistoric PC days, when we copied text from one place to another, we blocked the beginning of the copy or move by pressing CTRL-B. Then we would use the up and down arrow keys to go to the end of the block. Again we would press CTRL-B to define the end of the block. Eventually someone, who is long forgotten, highlighted the area from the beginning to the end of the block and told us the text was now *selected*, not blocked.

Unblocking was done with CTRL-O, which today will help you open a file. CTRL-B now causes selected text to become bold, which in those dark days before the rodent invaded, I can't remember having bold type at all.

Then while the text was blocked, or selected, we pressed CTRL-X for cut or CTRL-C for copy followed by using the up and down arrow keys to point to the place where we wanted the text inserted. Then press CTRL-V for paste. CTRL-X, CTRL-C and CTRL-V still exist and are used by only the oldest among us.

When the rodent arrived and we plugged its tail into the PC, many advances came. The menu bar was enhanced buttons, and then the toolbar was added. Most application programs added rodent buttons for cut, copy and paste. With the index-finger pressing on the rodent's hind-quarter, selecting text was easier, and highlighted also. Moving the rodent to the cut or copy button followed by a flick of the index finger gave the command to be. Then sliding the somewhat tamed rodent to the location of the insert, a quick flick and then back to the paste button for another flick of the index finger. Progress! Ease of Use! Fabulous! And rodents become famous, heralded throughout the land.

That, though, is not the end of the rodent's march to fame. For all this fame was obtained by pressing the rodent with

only the left or index finger. What about pressing the rodent's other hind-quarter?

Silently, with great stealth, someone slipped in something new. It was done so quietly and without a fanfare, we are not even sure when it began to happen. It is called simply: "right-click", as opposed to simply "click".

Now we can select the text we want to cut or copy. Then without an arduous effort of guiding the rodent to the menu or toolbar, we simply right-click. Walla! A menu pops up on the spot giving us likely choices upon which to flick our index finger. Move the rodent to the insert point, and right-click again. The same or a modified menu pops up for us to flick our choice. Neat, and so effortless.

Today, we can right-click almost anything – desktop, icons, menu bars – or anywhere, and a small menu pops up containing the choices we are most likely to flick. Such is the added triumph of the rodent and the right-click.

Is there any end to what we can accomplish simply by flicking a rodent's hind-quarter – one side or the other.

**Long live the rodent!**

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*From previous page—DealsGuy* better than TweakUI. It is [Xteq X-Setup](#). It's absolutely free for home users. However, they do take donations if you enjoy using it.

This product has an incredible number of features that you can hardly imagine. It is also updated constantly. To add to its value, it also offers to help other software such as Office 97 and 2000; not to mention hardware installed on your

computer. Sounds like a great product. Thanks for letting us know Lee.

That's it for this month. Meet me here again next month. This column is written to make user group members aware of special offers I have found or arranged, and my comments should not be interpreted to encourage, or discourage, the purchase of products, no matter how enthused I might sound.

Bob (The Cheapskate) Click  
[Bobclick@mindspring.com](mailto:Bobclick@mindspring.com)

Past columns are on my Web site at [www.dealsguy.com](http://www.dealsguy.com). Also, I keep adding interesting articles (taken from user group newsletters) to my "Articles of Interest" page for viewing or downloading.

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**Q:** I just installed Windows XP Pro. The hard drive is Primary Master, a ZIP drive is Primary Slave. Secondary Master/Slave drives are CDROM & DVD units. After install, WinXP shows the hard drive as F: and the ZIP as C:. Cable swapping makes no difference.  
**A:** The fault is with Windows XP. If a ZIP disk drive is on an IDE channel while XP is being installed, this happens. Disconnect the ZIP drive before installing Windows.

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# Been There, Done That!

From PC Alamode, June 2003, Alamo PC Organization

By Meredith Poor

## Ponderings

My billing rates depend upon how much I hate the programming language.

A discussion I had with someone recently revolved around his learning Java, which is in high demand in Europe, a place he has become attached to. Here in the United States, the skills that seem to be in extremely short supply are mainframers, the Cobol/JCL/CICS propellerheads. These days, they have been renamed to 'Enterprise Servers', but they still live in rooms with raised floors and freezing air-conditioning and fishbowl windows so the boss can see what the operators are up to.

After programming in Databus and Basic and 8008 Assembler and 360 Assembler and 8086 Assembler and APL and Cobol and LabView and C and C++ and C# and RPG II and Javascript and Visual Basic and Visual Basic Script and Visual Basic for Applications, I can tell you that after a while programming languages don't really do much for me anymore; if you need something programmed I'll program it. They all have conditional operators and looping structures and variables of various kinds and I/O statements, and it ain't going to cost all that much more to do it one way or another. My billing rate may depend on how badly I hate the language, among other things, but my highest rate is still cheaper than anyone trying to make a living in San Francisco.

Many of us remember programming when our files were saved on punch cards, paper tape, and cassettes. The term 'overlay' appeared frequently, followed eventually by 'virtual memory'. Some of us remember thinking carefully about whether we could persuade the accounting manager to convince the owner to buy another 16K for our computer, so that we could close the books within thirty days of the end of the month. That was a period of time when the way a language used computing resources mattered a lot. These days, the

chip running the TV remote has more memory than some of the computers I had access to in 1971.

Micron Technology has recently delivered a 4GB memory module to Intel, presumably as a component to Intel's Itanium computer, a 64-bit computing behemoth that currently requires 220-volt power. The programmer these days is not thinking in terms of how to reduce byte counts and get every computing cycle to do useful work; rather the task of the day is to figure out which function, object, or library included in the development environment already does whatever it was the programmer was thinking of writing. Anyone that's simply attempting to catalog the functions in Excel is bewildered, and this is aimed at non-technical users!

A programmer 'learning' Java is probably actually learning something else: e-Commerce, manufacturing, order-entry, for examples; in an industry: automobiles, medicine, banking, etc. Most people that are really interested in the issues of property management are probably kind of weird, so the programmer discusses Windows Server 2003, .NET, and SOAP and hopes the government will reduce the H1-B quota so that it will be possible to find work in bio-informatics. In short, most programmers muddle through users' problems in order to make a living. Really interesting stuff is elsewhere.

A programming background aids in grasping other concepts. You might have a hard time taking the cube root of 100 million in your head, but if you realize this is simply a field of 27 bits (which can be split into three nine-bit fields), you can persuade someone that a large H-bomb will not blow up a two mile-high mountain. You also realize that your fully sequenced DNA would require most of, but not more than, one CD-ROM.

Much 'programming' work is really hacking the operational procedures of a business. Things are done a particular way which no one has documented, and which in many cases no one has even explored. Management hands the specs to the programmer, and an application is

developed. In the deployment phase, everyone discovers that the

grunts actually do something else. Usually, all this leads to is a long-overdue discussion of the 'we've been trying to tell you this forever' variety.

Reading '2600' (the hacker quarterly) reveals details about K-Mart, Blockbuster, and various federal law enforcement agencies that I have no need to explore in the first person. While reading these exploits are certainly amusing, one can only ask: "Who would spend one minute of time doing stuff like this?"

American ex-pats attempting to develop systems in countries and businesses that are less than transparent find themselves in a minefield, perhaps literally. There are, so to speak, things you don't need to know. That being the case, 'shortages' develop for programmers with specific language skills. The actual shortfall is in people that know how to design a system by reading people's minds. The more paranoid the environment, the less automation is possible. The more politically driven the distribution of resources, the less appreciative the players are of anyone nosing around trying to figure out what's going on, particularly if the result of the inquiry is any kind of documentation.

So my friend wants to pick up a job in Europe, preferably Paris. My personal experience with such visits is a feeling of having traveled back in time, not because of the Ionic columns and the Roman sarcophagi in the Louvre, but because of the industrial-era thinking where you get a factory job for forty years and retire with benefits. Your role in society is largely established by the time you're in high school. Any external force, whether technological or economic, that upsets this apple cart is to be resisted with every fiber of one's being.

Where this is true, the American technologist is an essential but evil presence in the land.

# Recycled Ink Jet Cartridges

Reprint Courtesy of Charlie Brown Distributing, Inc./ Dynamic Laser Products

## **“A Guide for the New User of Recycled Ink Jet Cartridges: What You Should Expect”**

If you're new to recycling – in particular to the use of recycled inkjet cartridges – we think it might be helpful for you to understand how your cartridges work and to learn more about what you should expect from your recycled ink jet cartridges. You already know recycling is good for the environment and that you can save up to 50% off the price of your cartridges by recycling. But just how long will your recycled cartridges last? To answer that, let's first look at how they work.

### **Operation of the Printhead**

The print head and circuitry that perform most of the work of the inkjet printer are contained on the small ink jet composite cartridge itself (containing an ink tank and print head on the same replaceable unit). Today, there can be anywhere from 48 to 320 nozzles or “jets” on the print head located at the bottom on your cartridge.

Each nozzle or jet is smaller in size than a human hair and each is connected electronically to a heater or resistor which heats and cools the ink inside the cartridge. When the ink is heated, a bubble forms. When the heat source is removed, the bubble “bursts” sending dots of ink on the page through the nozzles or jets. These dots form the print characters on the page at the rate of up to 6000 drops per second. The heating and cooling process is happening at very high rates of speed, too. It was once believed that the heaters in the cartridge would only last for one use of the cartridge. But we've learned that the heaters will continue to do their work and the jets will continue to fire for more than that one use in most models of ink jet cartridges. In fact, the heaters or resistors on most inkjet cartridge will continue to fire until they either burn out completely or weaken significantly. On the average,

that happens from the third to fifth time the refilled cartridge is used.

### **How Many Times?**

How many times a cartridge can be recycled varies from cartridge to cartridge. Five to ten percent of the most common cartridges can't be recycled even once. Some cartridge styles, including most tri-color cartridges, have higher “unserviceable” rates. At the same time, some cartridges can be recycled more than five times. The only thing that is predictable is that all ink jet cartridges will eventually wear out – and this probably won't happen at the same time your cartridge runs out of ink. Even if you decide to recycle your ink jet cartridges, keep in mind you'll eventually have to toss it. Ink jet recycling doesn't mean you'll never buy another new cartridge. It just means you can save money for several cycles until your cartridge needs replacing. Each time you do recycle, you'll see those savings mount.

### **Wearing Out?**

So what are the signs that your cartridge is getting worn out? If a jet in your cartridge is “burned out,” you will see horizontal bands or white streaks in your print. Print characters may appear incomplete and filled graphic areas will show thin strips with no ink or different colors. A word of caution, these white streaks can also be caused by other problems, so don't assume your cartridge is gone when you see them. Some of the things that can cause the white streaks are fixable.

Another sign that your cartridge may be nearing its useful life is the appearance of dramatically lighter than normal print. This can mean the heaters are weakened and putting less ink on the page. Again, this can be caused by other “fixable” problems. Here are some common fixes that can often resolve a print problem in an ink jet cartridge:

1) Run a little warm tap water over the print head. This might dissolve any ink

which may have dried in the cartridge. This is especially helpful if the cartridge has been removed and exposed to air for any length of time.

2) “Dirty resistors” or heaters can often be cured by cleaning the contacts on the cartridge and on the printer carriage. This can be done with water or alcohol. After cleaning, snap the cartridge in and out a few times to be sure you have a good connection between contacts in the cartridge and the printer.

3) “Smearly” print can be caused by build-up of ink on the wiper blade found in most HP Deskjet models. If this is your problem, clean the wiper blade according to printer manual instructions.

If these tricks don't work, contact your dealer to have your cartridge tested. Save a print sample to help diagnose the problem. The dealer may have cleaning methods and other procedures which may solve the problem. Once the dealer has fully tested the cartridge, you'll either have the problem fixed or you'll learn the cartridge has reached its useful life. Then it's time to buy a new cartridge and start recycling again.

Since we know all ink jet cartridges will fail eventually – your dealer can't be expected to replace your cartridge when it wears out anymore than you would expect your car dealer to replace your car when it wears out. But most dealers will allow you to recycle another cartridge at no cost if your cartridge fails before it is less than 75% used. The warranties on most ink jet cartridges do have a time limit – both new and recycled – because ink jets can be harmed when removed from the printer for an extended time. So contact your dealer as soon as you suspect your cartridge may have a problem. Although, inkjet cartridges won't last forever – we know from successful testing and use throughout the world that recycled inkjet cartridges work and they can save you money.

So don't throw those cartridges in the trash – it's like throwing money away.

# Latest in the Digital World

From PC Alamode, Sept 2002, Alamo PC Organization

By Dale Swafford

As we trudge into the dog days of a summer here in ol' San Antone, we have to appreciate what a year we've had weatherwise. We started with about seven months of drought. That was punctuated by what is euphemistically called, The Floods of 2002. Do you suppose the consultants who have screwed-up the DVD formats so badly decided to take a break and do some consulting work for our weather makers? It could happen! This was supposed to be the big year for DVD. Unfortunately, the greedy proprietary interests of the drive makers combined with the fears of the entertainment industry to cause mass confusion for the early adopter DVD burner buyers.

## DVD and HDMI

Any way you look at it, DVD is only an interim technology. The DVD-R was supposed to be the universal format that would play on almost all current DVD players. But then there is +R offered on some DVD burners, which use a different disc, and is not compatible with some players. The three rewriteable DVD formats (DVD+RW and -RAM) is where it really gets fun. Each uses a different blank, and of course, the prices are different for each format. And forget about trying to compare their audio recording capability. The existing Digital Visual Interface (DVI), a unidirectional data-transfer protocol, is doing a pretty good job of preventing DVD movie copying, at least to anything worth watching.

The new High Definition Multimedia Interface (HDMI) developed jointly by seven of the big-dog brand names is ready to expand DVI protection to digital music and sound tracks. DVD-Audio is being welcomed like some brown stuff in a punch bowl. That could change with HDMI multi-channel protected outputs on the next generation of players. I don't think that was really the problem. Exorbitant price is what is driving the Y and Z generations to find an alternate source of music. Most music has a shorter shelf life than Roquefort cheese in

the hot sun. I certainly hope we haven't raised a generation that in 20 years gets all misty-eyed over their favorite cop-killer, female-degradation rap music.

The multi-level burners due out by Christmas [*Editors note: This was originally published in Sept '02*] also offer great potential, but we won't know till the testers get their hands on them. The hard disk recorders are being stalled until the cop-chip is required. In the meantime, CD burners are selling for less than the price of the bundled software; DVD burners and blank discs prices are falling fast (look on Pricecheck.com), and the blue-ray chipsets are on the way to drive makers. ALi (formerly known as Acer) decided to develop its own burner chipset to copy movies and stuff. An interesting concept. A drive maker using its own chipset. Stay tuned, this promises to confound your expectations.

Heard of 'di'-music technology? A Hungarian artist named Sandor Mester came up with digital improvisation (di) or Multi-version Play. Every time a di (MS3) file is played, you hear a different version or re-mix of the song. It allows virtually infinite versions of a song to be stored as one file. The first release in Europe is titled "Life isn't static, why should music be?" This is so cool it boggles the mind!

Intel has announced they plan on selling their new P4 3+Ghz CPUs around Christmas. I guess they want the title of the fastest and baddest back.

## DRIVEZILLA

Western Digital has announced a new IDE hard drive called the Drivezilla. It's a 200GB, 7200 RPM, ATA/100 monster for \$400.

Wow! I still think two smaller drives with a RAID interface is a safer setup, but what do I know.

## Windows Media Player

I recently downloaded a Microsoft security update for Windows Media Player and it trashed my whole music playing/recording setup. I'm very thankful for GoBack. Our favorite monopolist must be trying to curry a little favor for past sins. Make sure you read

the End-User License Agreement (EULA) before you download this security update. It will really mess-up your file associations, deny access to your burner except through WMP, and trash bunch of other music programs including MP3 jukeboxes. If I had read 'The Register' article by Thomas C. Green titled "MS Security Patch EULA Gives BillG Admin Privileges on Your Box" before I downloaded that security update, it would have saved me a lot of grief. Here is a sample of the EULA and the article:

"If you caught our recent coverage of the Windows Media Player trio of security holes you may have followed a link to the TechNet download site for a patch, or you might have activated Windows Update. If you did the former (though, oddly, not if you did the latter), you would have been confronted with an End-User License Agreement (EULA) stating, most ominously, that: 'You agree that in order to protect the integrity of content and software protected by digital rights management ('Secure Content'), Microsoft may provide security related updates to the OS - components that will be automatically downloaded onto your computer. These security related updates may disable your ability to copy and/or play Secure Content and [the] use [of] other software on your computer. If we provide such a security update, we will use reasonable efforts to post notices on a Web site explaining the update.'

"Reasonable efforts to post notices' somewhere on the Web. I think it's clear from the wording that MS has absolutely no intention of bringing this behavior to our attention. Instead, Microsoft has just assumed the right to attack your computer and surreptitiously install code of its choosing. You will not be warned; you will not be offered an opportunity to examine the download or refuse it. MS will simply connect remotely and install what it will, or install it secretly when you contact them.

"This means Microsoft will have administrator privileges on your personal computer. What they feed you may be

infected with viruses; it may break your applications, corrupt data files, destroy weeks or months or even years of work, but you'll have no recourse if it does. By downloading this WMP critical security patch, which you must do to operate WMP safely, you'll agree to give BillG deed and title to your personal property and to leave Microsoft immune from legal retaliation if they damage your machine. The pusillanimity of wrapping what amounts to a digital land-grant into a needed, critical security patch is matched only by the arrogance of assuming that Windows is now such a fundamental linchpin of a human life worth living that no retaliation in the courts or at the retail counters is conceivable. (And that's not to mention 'informal' retaliation by outraged IP warriors, which we fully expect to see.) We've heard the BillG rubbish about Trustworthy Computing until we're sick to death of the trivial incantation. Ironically, Microsoft has just taken steps to make the Internet immensely more untrustworthy than it already is. When we know that arbitrary code will be secretly installed on our connected boxes by software vendors who are not accountable for the damage they may do, any issue of trust is obliterated."

On my system, the bit-bucket is where Windows Media player belongs.

Can't live without Windows Media player? The new version 9 has been leaked to the Beta-news. The new version adds DVD copying, improved encoders, and better plug-in management. File-sharing on MSN and DVD copy-to-disk are listed features, as are cross-fade and normalization plug-ins. Scheduled for launch September 3, 2002 in LA – interesting to see what the EULA says.

If you use CloneCD and want the "Amplify weak sectors" to work, search the registry for "weak sectors". Edit the 0 to a 1. It should work.

Combo drives - that's a CDRW drive with a DVD-ROM read capability, are currently more expensive than buying two separate drives with this capability. The anticipated demand in the market is for a DVD burner with a fully functional

CD-RW. I would think since many of the current coaster burner wannabes already have a CD burner, the drive makers should jump a generation and concentrate on giving us an affordable Blue-ray or Multi-Level burner.

I'm still not sure why we need all that burning capacity since the entertainment industry is working so hard to preclude us from time-shifting or recording our favorite TV shows and movies. We are going to find it impossible to copy our favorites since all digital devices are going to have a cop-chip to preclude making copies of anything that is copyrighted – and everything is copyrighted by some big corporation. My guess, the "Fair Use" rule will soon go bye-bye and the cop-chip will be mandated on all digital devices (including the A/D converters). You have to give the greedy entertainment industry credit for getting help from the most influential legislators money can buy. Nothing gets the attention of a politician running for re-election like a ton of soft money. You can watch the play-by-play at the [Library of Congress](#).

Been wondering what it would be like to have a personal video recorder (PVR) like TiVo or ReplayTV? Stan Miastkowski at [PC World](#) posted an article titled "Step by Step: Turn Your PC into a Personal Video Recorder." It's a hoot! And if you had the Drivezilla, you could record forever. You'll need to have a video capture card, some software, and a big hard drive. I have an ATI All-in-Wonder card and it has everything needed to use it as a PVR, including software and cords. For the techno-geek, it can be a lot of fun. Check it out! It makes digital recording video and audio from cable, satellite, VCR or analog camcorder easy and fun.

Finally, Sony and Universal Music Group have figured it out. They plan to offer their U.S. song catalog this summer for download at reasonable rates (99 cents per single song and \$9.99 per album). At last, Sony, the innovator, has got it right. The service also is supposed to allow transfer to MP3 and portable devices. It'll be interesting to see how RIAA reacts to this defection. The

"catches" in some previous record company down-load plans made them overpriced rip-offs, like if you dropped the service, none of the previous down-loads would work anymore.

### **Burning Tip of the Month**

For the more complicated CD burns (audio, photo, video, etc.), it's a good idea to make a checklist of the steps involved for your computer setup. A step like not deactivating your virus checker or not un-checking Auto Insert Notification can interrupt a burn. Or not remembering to set the appropriate burn speed and track-at-once/disc-at-once choice gives you a worthless CD. If you do the same burn all the time, you probably have the settings where you want them. If you do a different burn, or with new software, a checklist will jog your memory and save you time and effort, and that's a good thing.

### **Think Clean**

Think clean when you load a CD in your drive. It doesn't take much to defract the laser light and confuse the reader diode. A little skin oil or hand cream smudges can cause read/write errors. Tiny scratches from using paper attempting to clean the surface make the error correction circuitry go crazy. So what to do? Handle CDs by the edges. Always store them in their jewel cases. If the bottom face is dirty, use a mild soap that doesn't leave a residue, and a clean, soft, lint-free cloth to remove the water spots. It's no longer recommended, but I use a 5% rubbing alcohol solution on a clean, soft cloth to clean the bottom face of my CDs. Do not use anything on the label side. It works for me. Do not try to rub out or fill scratches in CDs. The laser focus and polycarbonate defraction are critical, so don't mess with it. You will probably be worse-off than if you just made a copy of the CD before it becomes unreadable. Buy a defraction lens cleaner (looks like a CD with a fuzzy bottom side) for about \$12 at your favorite computer store and use it at least quarterly. A little prevention goes a long way.

"Technology is the word given to the stuff that doesn't quite work just yet."

—*Supercomputer designer Danny Hillis*

# HardCopy

## Google Hacks

Reviewed by Brian Smither

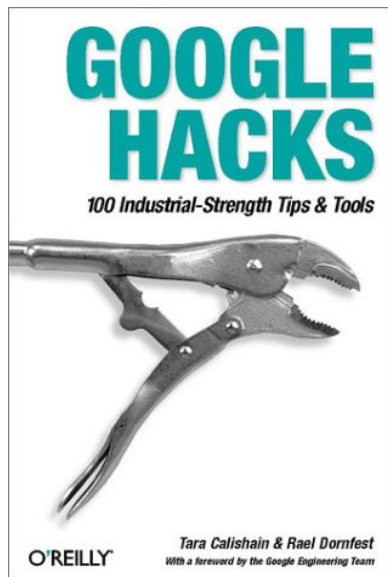
If you don't know the word "Google," you haven't been using computers very long. "Google" has been misappropriated and verbified as badly as "Xerox" – much to the company's dismay. They can't complain too much, though, as such is perhaps the greatest form of respect.

Google Hacks is currently the most comprehensive source of "how to" information on the world's best tool for searching the web. The book presents 100 things to do with Google, Google's programming hooks, and third-party Web sites that will glean and compact info returned from search results.

Chapter 1 goes through in intimate detail the page of results one gets when submitting terms to search. There's a lot more than is apparent to the eye. This section also goes into deep detail on how extensive you can formulate your search terms. Not only in how you specify the words to search for, their grouping and order, but also restricting the search to those words that appear only in page titles, web addresses, the links on those pages, etc. (Here's one I didn't know: an "\*" is a wildcard – "Sacramento \* Users Group" will get PC, Amiga, Macintosh, Linux, and any other name in that form.)

Discussion also goes into the power the Google people have put into your hands through what is called their "application

programming interface" (API). The Google API allows programmers to write utilities that directly access Google's databases. (And that is the *only* way Google allows the automated retrieval of search results. Getting caught doing it any other way will cause your IP address and everyone else's who shares the first three numbers as you to be locked out for an uncomfortably long time.)



The Google people have also created a toolbar that computer users can attach to the Internet Explorer browser. The chapter goes into how cool the Google toolbar is, and some of things you can do with it that can't be done easily using Google's Advanced Search.

Chapter 2 takes what was explained about search results and applies it to the other databases Google maintains:

newsgroups, images, catalogs, news, categorical directories, the Froogle shopping service, the reverse phonebook, and a peek at what's cooking in the Google Labs.

Chapter 3 explores what other people have done to enhance what you do when searching. It's kind of a mish-mash of special-results searches that intend to amuse and educate.

Chapter 4 introduces us to the concept of "scraping." While the Google API is set up to allow us direct access into the database, it currently does not supply everything that regular HTML-based search result pages provide. Hence, there are programs that will scan through said pages, extract the relevant information, and dump it all into a spreadsheet. Why?

Why create spreadsheets, databases, and lists in the first place? To organize the data. Here's the thing... Even lists of sources and peripheral data can be as valuable (or perhaps even more so) as the actual data itself.

Chapter 5 and 6 delve even deeper into the Google API and gives dozens of examples of how to write your own programs in any of several programming languages for a dozen or so purposes.

Chapter 7 is included to provide a balance to the seriousness and power that is Google. Games can be played and results intentionally sought other than what Google was created to provide. One popular pastime is "Google Whacking." Try to run a search in which no results turn up. There are rules and the effort is harder than it sounds.

Chapter 8 returns to the serious side of things and discusses what Webmasters can do in order to get their site ranked higher, what they should do make their site easier for Google to index, and what they must not do to keep Google from punishing their site by dropping its ranking into the abyss.

There have been and continue to be schemes hatched that attempt to use Google's rank determination algorithm unfairly. The programmers at Google are some of the most ingenious people at data indexing and retrieval. They are continuing to tweak the system, managing more disparate kinds of data, and developing means of delivering a sorted list of results that have true meaning and relevance.

### Google Hacks

Tara Calishain & Rael Dornfest  
2003 O'reilly & Associates  
\$24.95, 330 pages  
ISBN:0-596-00447-8

**Q:** After applying SP3 to Win2000, I can no longer create a new TCP/IP printer port. When I use the "Add New Printer" wizard, I get a message saying the "TCP MIB library" is not found.

**A:** This problem happens most often when you have upgraded a system from WinNT4 to Win2K. Later, you then apply SP3. Comparing the different systems – NT4, 2K, 2K/SP3 – shows

that (among others) there are two files of which there are more than one instance of them. The files are SNMPAPI.DLL and WSNMP32.DLL and they should *only* exist in the System32 folder. Look within the C:\WINNT folder for these two files and rename their extension to .OLD (or put them in the recycle bin).

# Fixing Windows

From Boca Bits, Apr 2003, Boca Raton Computer Society

By Lee Reynolds

Windows is broken, and cannot get up! What do you do about it? Perhaps this column will be of some help to you in that regard. It will furnish you with tips, techniques, and general advice on fixing the most common problems with Windows 9x and ME.

## Incorrect Sort Order in Dialog Boxes

You're looking at files and folders in a Windows dialog box after doing an Open or a Save (or Save As). The files and folders are all out of order! You may see files listed in front of folders, which is the reverse of what it should be. The folders and/or files may be sorted in descending alphabetic order rather than the usual ascending order. This can happen if you have changed the normal sort order of Windows Explorer from the default order you usually see. In order to bring back the normal sort order, here is what you have to do: right click the Start button. Click on Explore, and in the Windows Explorer window that comes up, click on drive C: On the View menu, click Details. Click the Name column in order to sort the items by name. Finally, hold down the Ctrl key as you quit Windows Explorer by clicking on the Close icon in the upper right-hand corner of the screen. Now release the Ctrl key and restart your computer. When you next boot up, the correct sort order should have been restored in the Windows file/folder dialog boxes.

## Slow Performance

Degraded performance of a formerly quick running computer can come about for a great many reasons. It's not always possible to tell what the reasons are, but there are a number of steps you can take to try and correct this problem.

1. Much of the slowdown of computers is having too many programs running at once and consuming resources. Take a look at your System Tray (the little indented area of your Taskbar on the right-hand side, near the system clock.) Are there a lot of little icons in that area? If so, then you should hold your mouse cursor over each one to discover what it is (usually, a little "tool tip" will appear after a second or two that will identify the application). Do you need all those things? In most cases, you can stop them from running at startup. Often, if you can run the application to get to a main program window, there will be a menu option for disabling the automatic run at boot time. Or you might be able to right-click the icon and find an item on the context menu for doing this. If neither of these solutions work, then if you have Windows 98 or ME, you can use the Microsoft Configuration Utility to disable any unneeded startup programs. Click on the Start button, then choose Run, enter MSCONFIG and click OK, select the Startup tab, remove checkmarks from startup programs you wish to disable.
2. There are a number of ways in which you can clean up old data on your hard drive that will affect a speedup. Clean out your Temp folder, if you have one, and your Windows\Temp folder. Search the drive for files with a file extension of tmp, chk, and the like, then delete them. If you have Windows 98 or ME, you can easily do the cleanup as follows: click on Start, Programs, Accessories, System Tools, then Disk Cleanup.
3. Clear your browser's cache. If you are running Internet Explorer 5.0 or later, you can do this by clicking on the Tools menu, selecting Internet Options, and in the Temporary Internet Files section of the General tab, clicking the button for Delete Files. It might also help to limit

the size of the browser cache after clicking on the Settings button in that area, for Internet Explorer has to search this cache when it's trying to bring up a page you've visited before.

4. Empty your Recycle Bin. (Right-click on the Recycle Bin icon on your Desktop and select Empty from the context menu.)

5. Compact your e-mail folders and empty your Deleted Items folder and your Sent Items folder.

6. Run Scandisk and Defrag. Both of these Windows utilities can usually be found on Start, Programs, Accessories, System Tools.

7. Do you have Microsoft Office, or some component thereof installed on your system? Then very likely you will find that there is a built-in part of that suite called FindFast running all the time in the background. You will see an icon in Control Panel for FindFast if your system is running it. This is a very resource-hungry and time-consuming accessory that should be disabled according to the instructions in this Microsoft Knowledge Base article 158705.

8. Change your File System Performance from Desktop Computer to Network Server (even if you're not on a network). This increases the size of the cache that the operating system uses. How you do it: right click on My Computer, select Properties. Click on the Performance tab. Click on the File System button. Change from Desktop Computer to Network Server and click OK enough times to exit the System Properties dialog box. In order to see the effects of this change immediately, you will have to reboot.

## Cartoon Law V: All principles of gravity are negated by fear.

Psychic forces are sufficient in most bodies for a shock to propel them directly away from the earth's surface. A spooky noise or an adversary's signature sound will induce motion upward, usually to the cradle of a chandelier, a treetop, or the crest of a flagpole. The feet of a character who is running or the wheels of a speeding auto need never touch the ground, especially when in flight.

# Windows XP Hints & Tips

From PC Alamode, June 2003, Alamo PC Organization

By Bill Beverley

## Firewall

WinXP comes with a built-in firewall. To install it, open the Start menu, right-click on My Network Places, and choose Properties. Right-click on the connection you want to protect, and choose Properties. If using a dial-up account, you right-click on that icon. If using a network in your home or office, you right-click on the Local Area Connection. Either way, choose Properties and click the Advanced tab. Click the box to activate the WinXP firewall. If you're using a network and one computer acts as the gateway, the firewall should be activated only on the host computer that's actually connected to the Internet. It doesn't need to be activated on the client computers that share the host computer's modem.

## Media Player

Most people want to play music when they open WinXP Media Player. But it often is set to open at the "Media Guide." If that is your problem, begin by clicking Start, All Programs, Accessories, Entertainment, and Windows Media Player. Then click Tools, Options, the Player tab and deselect "Start player in Media Guide." Finally, click Apply and OK. The program should start in "Now Playing" mode. You can also use Windows Media Player to record and organize music as well as to play your favorite tunes. WinXP Media Player makes it easy to copy music from audio CDs or from the Internet radio stations. You can then organize the music copied onto the hard drive into play lists. They can be played in Windows Media Player or copied onto portable devices, such as a portable MP3 player. If your computer has a CD-R (CD recordable) or CD-RW (CD re-writable) drive, you can even copy the music files onto blank formatted CDs. You view Windows Media Player in one of two modes: full mode (Ctrl+1) and compact mode (Ctrl+2). Full mode is the default.

## Mouse Pointer

Frequently, the mouse pointer obscures parts of an online form or document. Whenever this happens you must reach for the mouse to move the pointer. To solve this problem, you can instruct WinXP to make the pointer go away whenever typing a document by clicking Start, Control Panel, Printers and Other Hardware, then Mouse. In the Mouse Properties dialog box, select the Pointer Options tab. Under Visibility, check the "Hide Pointer While Typing" checkbox, click Apply followed by OK.

## My Documents

To remove the My Documents folder from the desktop because it's too easy for people to snoop your documents, you will need to right-click the desktop. Click Properties, select the Desktop tab, click Customize Desktop, deselect My Documents, and click OK. You now have only deleted the desktop link to the folder. The My Documents folder is still accessible in Windows Explorer and off the Start button.

## New User Accounts

To set up a new user account, log in to your administrator account, click Start, Control Panel, and User Accounts. You will now be asked to choose a task such as changing accounts, adding new ones, or changing log-on/log-off options. Click Create a New Account. The most common identification method is to name user accounts after the people who will use them. Now click the Next button, choose the type of account, and conclude by clicking Create Account.

## Online Icon

To put the Network Status icon in your System Tray, click Start and select My Computer. You can right-click it to find your Internet Service Provider (ISP) connection's speed, and to close the connection. It's easy enough to find in WinXP. In the Other Places menu, click "My Network Places." In the Network Tasks menu, click "View Network Connections." Next you should right-click the icon of the ISP connection or network and select Properties. On the

General tab, check the box for "Show icon in notification area when connected" and click OK.

## Password

If you forget your password, WinXP lets users create a password reset disk. To create this disk, insert a floppy disk into your drive, open "User Accounts" in the Control Panel, and double-click on your account name. On the left side of the window, under Related Tasks, select "Prevent a forgotten password." A wizard will pop up and walk you through the process of creating the password recovery disk. If you try several times to log on using the wrong password, will prompt you to insert the password reset disk and will then use it for authentication. You can log in to the system, but you'll have to select a new password. The floppy disk will be updated to reflect your new password.

## Performance Enhancements

There are several ways to tune XP's visual performance. One is to adjust the color depth by right-clicking anywhere on an empty portion of your desktop and selecting "Properties and Settings." For most normal business users, the Color Quality setting should be set to Medium. Higher settings only matter in photo/video editing and similar applications but not for Web browsing, e-mail, and word processing. Another suggestion is to adjust XP's desktop animations and visual effects by right-clicking on My Computer, selecting "Properties, Advanced, and Performance Settings." You can choose to activate/deactivate individual items or use the general "best performance/best appearance" buttons. When you've made a change, click Apply, and you'll see the effects. A third idea is to customize the Taskbar by right-clicking on an empty spot in the Taskbar and un-checking the "Lock the Taskbar." You can now resize various portions of the Taskbar to your preferences. A fourth trick is to control your trash in the Recycle Bin and Internet Explorer's (IE) cache, both of which consume large amounts of your hard drive space. Right-click on the Recycle Bin, select

Properties, and on the Global tab, decide how much space you want the Recycle Bin to consume, either for all drives in your system, or on a per-drive basis. Similarly, open IE and select "Tools and Internet Options." Under Temporary Internet Files, click the Settings button and select a reasonable size for this cache, such as 5-10 megabytes.

### Personal Folders

The My Pictures and My Music folders offer several specialized options that you can select to work with your pictures and music. My Pictures - view as a slide show; display all the pictures in the My Pictures folder as a full-screen slide show; order prints online; and send the pictures selected to a Web site that allows you to order prints of the pictures. My Music-play all the music in the My Music folder; shop for music online; and display the [WindowsMedia.com](http://WindowsMedia.com) Web site, which allows you to listen to and purchase music.

### Power Tools

Microsoft has provided a few add-ons for its operating systems (OS) in the form of PowerToys or Tools. To view the list of these Power Tools, see [Microsoft's PowerToys Download page](#). At this site you'll see short descriptions of each Power Tool and download links on the right side of the screen. Click the link for the Power Tool you want and save the file to a location that's easy to remember on your computer's hard drive. After you download the file, double-click it to start the installation process and then follow the on-screen instructions to install your new tool(s). Once the installation is complete, click Start, All Programs, and PowerToys for WinXP. You will now see a list of a few PowerToys installed on your computer. Although these Power Tools were created to work smoothly with WinXP, they are not actually a part of the OS. If you have any older PowerToys/Tools installed on your system, remove them using the

Add/Remove Program icon in the Control Panel before updating to these new versions. Be sure, too, that your WinXP Taskbar isn't locked before installing and using the Power Tools. Do this task by right-clicking the Taskbar. Some of these Power Tools include: Tweak UI, PowerToy Calculator, Alt-Tab Replacement, Virtual Desktop Manager, HTML Slide Show Wizard, CD Slide Show Generator, Taskbar Magnifier, Image Resizer, Webcom TimerShot, and Open Command Window Here.

### Privacy Reports

Internet Explorer (IE) 6, which comes with WinXP, includes a new tool that tells you about the cookie settings for a particular Web site and how the site measures up against your cookie settings. For example, if your cookie settings prohibit third-party cookies, the report tells you about any violation attempted by that site. You can easily get this Privacy Report by accessing the desired Web site using IE, and then choosing "View and Privacy Report." A single window appears, based on the page and linked information. You see a note at the top of the page indicating if any cookies were restricted or blocked by the settings.

### Program Installation and Removal

Installing and removing programs is generally easy in WinXP. Here's a quick lineup of the various ways you can install and uninstall programs. To install a program that was delivered to you on a CD, place the CD in your CD-ROM drive and wait a few seconds for installation instructions to appear onscreen. If the CD doesn't display installation instructions automatically, use the same procedure to install a program from a floppy disk. To install a program from a floppy disk, click the Start button, choose Control Panel, and open the Add or Remove Programs icon. Then click the Add New Programs option in the left pane of the dialog box that opens at this time. To install a program you downloaded from

the Internet, just click (or double-click) its icon, and follow the instructions that appear onscreen. To install missing Windows components, or remove installed components, open the Add or Remove Programs icon in Control Panel. Then click the "Add/Remove Windows Components" option in the left pane. To remove an installed program, click the name of the program you want to remove in the Add or Remove Programs dialog box. Then click the program you want to remove, and click the Change/Remove button that appears. To install OpenType, TrueType, Type 1, and Raster Fonts, open the Fonts icon in Control Panel, and choose File, Install New Font from its menu bar.

### Reinstallation

If you reinstall WinXP it must be reactivated. However, there's a way around this reactivation. WinXP maintains the activation information in the file Wpa.dbl, which you'll find in the Windows\System32 folder. After you activate WinXP and any time hardware is added to your system, backup the file to another disk. If you need to reinstall WinXP for any reason, go through the installation routine and then copy the latest version of Wpa.dbl to the Windows\System32 folder. WinXP Home Edition has been a headache for many college students who arrived at school with their new notebooks and needed to connect to a campus network. Most of their notebooks came with WinXP Home preinstalled on them. To the surprise of these students many colleges do not run Windows servers and those that do can host Home in only a limited way. Unlike WinXP Professional Edition, WinXP Home does not support multiple processors. You should keep these version differences in mind not only for college but also for business use.

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The HP 56/57/58 inkjet cartridges are easy to refill if you don't let them go totally empty. However, you will soon get sick of having the printer constantly tell you that you are out ink after re-filling. You can disable the ink level reporting. It's among the available options if you use the hidden HP Toolbox for your printer. To find the Toolbox, open the Printer Assistant, click on 'About,' then in the next window, while holding the Control key down, double-click on the top-right HP icon. A window opens up behind the others but can be brought to the front by clicking the appropriate button on the taskbar. Click on 'Continue.' The 'low on ink warning' option is at the bottom.

# Calendar of Events

July 13	July 14	July 15 Visual Objects/ Clipper	July 16 <b>Main Meeting</b> Wordperfect SIG Beginner's Tutorial	July 17	July 18	July 19
July 20	July 21	July 22	July 23 Auburn eCommerce/Web	July 24 Orangevale/ Folsom	July 25	July 26
July 27	July 28	July 29	July 30	July 31	August 1	August 2
August 3	August 4	August 5	August 6	August 7	August 8	August 9
August 10	August 11	August 12	August 13 <b>Steering Committee</b>	August 14	August 15	August 16
August 17	August 18	August 19 Visual Objects/ Clipper	August 20 <b>Main Meeting</b> Wordperfect SIG Beginner's Tutorial	August 21	August 22	August 23
August 24	August 25	August 26	August 27 Auburn eCommerce/Web	August 28 Orangevale/ Folsom	August 29	August 30
August 31	September 1	September 2	September 3	September 4	September 5	September 6

