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What Is PCI Express?

by Brian K. Lewis, PhD
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Sarasota PCUG, FL

Let's start this off with an explanation of PCI (Peripheral Component Interconnect). These are the slots in the motherboard of your computer used for connecting peripheral devices directly to computer bus. Now you're asking what is the computer bus? Essentially, the bus is the electrical means for a peripheral device to connect to the computers

chipset. The chipset is the interconnection between the peripherals, the main processor and system memory. (Got all that?)

The original PCI bus released in 1992 had a maximum communication rate of 33 MHz. This allows data transmission at a maximum rate of 133 megabytes per second (MB/sec.). The bus is used by such things as the sound system, video card, network adapters, parallel and serial ports.

In the PCI system all data are transmitted in parallel. In parallel transmission many "wires" or connections are required for each PCI slot or inte-

grated device. For example, if you have a 32 bit data transmission path from the PCI slot to the chipset, this requires 32 connecting wires just for data. Additional wires are required for control signals. With six PCI slots you can have more than 1,000 wires required for the connections. Each wire should be exactly the same length so that all the data arrive simultaneously. However, in a computer it is impossible for each wire to be exactly the same length. So as the speed of devices increased, data started arriving out of order. Therefore, the receiver had to delay until all the data were available before it could be processed. Another aspect of PCI is that all the devices share the bus at the same time so the actual data rate per device will be significantly less than the maximum rate.

It's like having a speed limit of 65 miles per hour on a multi-lane highway. When all the traffic lanes are full, everything slows down. Think Chicago or Atlanta in rush hour!

Shortly after PCI was introduced, the arrival of 3-D video cards made PCI obsolete for graphics purposes. That resulted in the development of the AGP slot in the motherboard for AGP video cards. AGP uses a separate bus and this freed up bandwidth on the PCI bus for other peripherals. The AGP-8X system can transmit data at the rate of 2.134 gigabytes per second (GB/sec.). In spite of the removal of the data intensive video card transmissions, the number of high-speed peripherals being added to computers quickly saturated the PCI bus and it remained a data transport bottleneck. Additional problems arise as communication can only be made in one direction at a time. Today, many communications networks utilize bidirectional traffic.

In 2004 the PCI Express (PCIe) bus started showing up on computer motherboards. This is quite different from the original PCI bus and in the strictest definition is not a true bus. It is described as a high performance, scalable, point to point serial bus. Now, that statement requires some further explanation as I'm sure it is not immediately clear to all of you. It certainly wasn't to me the first time I read it. First, consider the "serial" relationship. In a serial device the data is transmit-

ted in a single stream rather than in several parallel streams.

This is like reducing a multi-lane highway to one lane in each direction. That should slow things down instead of speeding it up! But in PCIe the clue is that you now have a point to point relationship. That means the device is connected directly to the chipset and does not have to share bandwidth with other devices. It is like having a high speed commuter corridor that bypasses all the slow traffic on the rest of the multi-lane highway. You may have multiple PCIe connections to the chipset. To prevent problems the connections occur through a system similar to a router. This router passes the data packets from each device in an ordered manner with a minimum of delay and contributes to the speed and accuracy of the transmission.

Because this is a point to point connection with each device having its own pathway, this is not a bus under the strict definition of a computer bus. It is also important to note that PCIe transmission occurs in data packets. The connections are in dual pairs so there is a possibility of a simultaneous bidirectional transmission. One pair is used for transmission and the other for receiving. As mentioned above, data is transmitted in packets, rather than in a continuous stream. Each packet contains an identifier so the data can be reassembled at the receiving end. This allows the receiver to work with multiple inputs. The data is encoded in what is called 8b/10b. This means that eight data bits are packaged with two information bits in a ten-bit package. (See how much simpler it is to call this 8b/10b?) Also consider that this is the method used for data and voice transmission on the Internet. Hard drives have moved to an SATA interface that is a serial connection instead of the parallel IDE connection. Gigabit ethernet cards are also designed with a serial connection.

More devices are moving to serial connectivity to gain additional speed and reliability. The scalable part of the PCIe bus is in its ability to work with more than one pair of connections. These are called x1 (or times 1), x4, x8 or x16. The x1 version (two data pairs) can transmit the encoded data at a bidirectional rate of 500 MB/s or 250 MB/s in each direction. The x16 version (32 data pairs) can

transmit at a rate of 8 GB/s. This is the combined bidirectional rate. The rate in one direction is half this figure. There is a second version of PCIe in the works, PCIe 2.0. This is expected to double the current transmission speeds and provide other benefits.

PCIe slots in the motherboard come in various sizes depending on the number of lanes they use for connection. These vary from the smallest connector for the x1 version to the largest for x16. It is the 16x version that is currently found on new motherboards which supports the latest graphics (video) cards. Unlike the AGP slots, the x16 slot can be used for peripherals other than the video card.

Another interesting aspect of PCIe is one means by which it achieves its high data rates. It is called "low-voltage differential signaling." Another phrase that I had better explain a little more. As I mentioned earlier, connections occur in a pair of "lanes" in each direction. One

of the lanes carries a "positive" image of the data and the other carries a "negative" or "inverted" image. The transmission of the data follows strict rules such that any noise that occurs will affect both lines. When the data is reassembled at the destination, the receiver collects both signals, inverts the negative back to positive and sums both signals. This effectively removes the noise from the signal.

PCIe is also backward compatible with PCI devices and software that uses PCI devices. The configuration space and programmability of PCI Express devices are unchanged from traditional PCI. In fact, all operating systems can boot without modification on a PCI Express architecture. Programs originally written for PCI devices can run unchanged on PCI Express devices because the PCIe layer is transparent to the application software. This provides benefits to users who don't have to upgrade software applications to work with newer hardware.

PCIe has another characteristic that greatly improves on PCI. It has an active power management (APM) system. When a PCIe link is not in use it does require that the link remain active so that the transmitter and receiver remain synchronized. It is the role of the APM to reduce the power level

whenever the link is inactive. The catch is that when data needs to be transmitted there is a recovery time to allow full activation of the transmitter/receiver. The longer the recovery time, the lower the power usage. Overall, the systems are designed for the lowest power usage with the shortest recovery time. There is a gradual transition from the motherboard with combined PCIe/PCI slots to those that will have only PCIe slots as more PCIe plug-in cards become available. This will also affect the size of the motherboard and the ultimate size of the computer. The specification for the PCIe mini-card allows for a card half the size of a standard

PCI mini-card. Most of these mini-cards may be destined for laptop computers. However, some desktop designs that take advantage of all PCIe input are far smaller than the standard desktop computer. Some of the new small box computers utilize these smaller motherboards.

So when you get your next computer you should now have a better understanding of the role of the PCIe slots it contains.

Dr. Lewis is a former university & medical school professor. He has been working with personal computers for more than thirty years. This article has been provided to APCUG by the author solely for publication by APCUG member groups. All other uses require the permission of the author (bwsail at yahoo dot com).

Professor Franklin's Instant Photo Artist 2.0

by Tom Ekvall

newsletter editor for Northeast Wisconsin PCUG

Can someone create a photo art masterpiece from a snapshot within a matter of minutes without going through a lot of training and reading manuals?

This was my challenge for this month's column of Creative Imaging and the subject of this review of Professor Franklin's Instant Photo Artist 2, developed by Streetwise Software. The company promotes that anyone can create a masterpiece in just minutes even if someone who is a beginner.

Unlike some image editing programs that apply filters to create "instant" artistic effects, those using Instant Photo Artist use their mouse to paint over the picture with a cursor that actually looks like a

paint brush. The result is a painted look based on the style desired.

Version 2 of this interesting software recently was released and is designed to be compatible with Microsoft Vista as well as all other previous OS releases including Windows 95. I first became interested in this product when it came out a number of years ago. The new version supports high resolution images and sports a redesigned interface that keeps most of the tools readily at hand.



The software was shipped on a CD with a four-page quick start guide. No problems in installing the software. The product is very intuitive to figure out and I was able to start photo painting without needing to access the help section or user guide.

Photo artists have their choice in painting in the artistic styles of Van Gogh, Cezanne, expressionists, pointillists or creating watercolor, acrylic, charcoal, and crackle antique images.

Each style from the “styles of the Masters” browser has its own pre-set brush, color, opacity, and added effects.

You can also select one of the painting tools on the palette, such as the airbrush, paint brush, colored pencil, and tip style associated with the painting tool.

Or if you want to get creative, you can use the freehand tool and apply color manually.

For me, I prefer using the “styles of the Masters” palette and then selecting the brush size, which is based on a series of five dots graphically representing the size of the brush. No custom controls here to

tweak the size settings. The different types of painting styles is also significantly more limited than in high end programs, but give you a decent selection to choose from to create your masterpiece without feeling overwhelmed.

A nice feature of the program is what is referred to as the “realistic” mode which when selected will paint back the actual photo image as it looked before you started the painting activity. This is particularly helpful when you want to feature specific detail without it looking somewhat abstract. An example of this is facial features. I took a photograph from my wedding, applied oil paint effects and then restored my face with the “realistic” brush. Nice touch. The brush also helps to remove flaws created when painting.

The brushes (also known as the mouse) create strokes based on the direction and speed of each movement. This simulates how an actual artist would create a picture. If you move the mouse in random directions, it may create unwanted effects.

The secret behind creating your new artwork is a blue outline created of the picture selected on the canvas. This provides the basis for selecting brushes and seeing how the image will look as it is being painted, accessing the color of the original painting rather than choosing paints to use and mess up the results. You can though select to



choose colors and manually paint, which may be a desirable situation when creating a monotone print. Another option is creating paper texture effects, such as canvas.

Once the picture is finished, Streetwise Software offers another exciting product to jazz it up. It's called Instant Photo Effects, which also has been improved in the present Version 2. Instant Photo Effects creates a wide variety of edge effects, frames, accents, photographic effects such as antiquing, and even artistic images similar to that created by Instant Photo Artist.

The special effect options are fabulous and easy to apply to create a piece of "fine art" ready to be framed and hung on the wall.

The difference between the two products in creating painted effects is that Instant Photo Artist requires applying brush strokes whereas the Instant Photo Effects "instantly" creates the image with little outside intervention.

You can even apply multiple effects to the same image for some interesting artwork.

Both programs also allow you to add text to the picture with varying levels of effects, controlling size, type style, warp effect, color, and transparency.

I installed both software on an Acer Laptop Aspire 5570Z running Vista Premium OS with Intel Pentium dual-core processor at 1.6 Ghz and 2 gigabytes of RAM. The products operated without problems, although the RAM quickly gets consumed as more effects are added to the image.

Each product sells for \$59.99 and is available from the software manufacturer through their website at www.swsoftware.com. A special deal for both products is available for \$99.99. I have talked to the company and they are willing to give APCUG member groups a 10% discount through August by entering the word "PCUG" in the promotion code on the purchase order form. Trial copies can also be downloaded from the site so that you can check it out first.

Here's how to use the coupon... Go to www.swsoftware.com, choose the software you want and add it to your shopping cart. On the CHECKOUT PAGE, under SALES AND DISCOUNTS, please enter the code: PCUG and hit APPLY. You need to hit APPLY, then proceed. The discount only applies to the two products.

The verdict. Both products are great for those who want to create "painted" photo art with little

effort and training. However, just remember that the selection of styles and brushes is limited, which in some cases may be an asset.

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Hint #1

DeskJet Driver Saves Ink on Other HP Printers

In the Known Issues column on July 12, I pointed out the cost-saving measure of setting your printer driver to "Monochrome" if your printer uses colored ink even when printing black-and-white documents. (You can look at a printout with a magnifying glass to check this.) If you own a Hewlett-Packard printer, however, changing this setting may not be possible.

Scott Lewis of San Antonio, TX, has a solution for you:

"I have a HP Photosmart P1000 printer, and there doesn't seem to be an easy way to get black-only output. My workaround is to use 'Add a New Printer' manually in Windows.

"Go to the Printers section of the Control Panel and click Add Printer. In the dialog boxes that follow, I select a local printer and uncheck the option to Detect and install a plug-and-play printer. I make sure to select the same port (USB, parallel, etc.) that the color printer is attached to. I then manually select an HP DeskJet 500 printer from the list of printers that Windows displays. I finish installing this printer and set it as my default printer.

"Since the drivers for the DeskJet 500 know nothing about color, I get pure black ink from the black cartridge and no color from the tri-color cartridge. Every HP inkjet printer I have come across is backward-compatible with the DeskJet 500." Thanks, Scott! If you don't have an HP printer, you can try a similar strategy to see if a driver for a black-only printer from your manufacturer will perform the same trick.

Thanks, Scott! If you don't have an HP printer, you can try a similar strategy to see if a driver for

a black-only printer from your manufacturer will perform the same trick.

From Windows Secrets Newsletter, Issue 116, 2007-07-19. Windows Secrets has both a free and a paid version. This tip is from the free version. To subscribe go to <http://windowssecrets.com/>.

Hint #2

If you need to know which Windows XP services are safe to disable and what the ramifications might be for each disabled service, use Tech Republic's Windows XP Services that can be Disabled spreadsheet <http://downloads.techrepublic.com.com/download.aspx?&q=Windows+XP+services&docid=172521>

For a look at how to enable and disable Windows XP services, watch this short video. <http://downloads.techrepublic.com.com/download.aspx?docid=173114>.

Courtesy of member Jim McGrath.

Can't Play Online Videos? Here's What To Do

by Sandy Berger
CompuKISS

Recently I was installing some software at a local business when one of the workers approached me with a problem. She could not play a video on her computer even though co-workers could play it on their computers. The same problem appeared a few days later when I was troubleshooting some computer equipment for a local church and the Pastor could not view a news video on his computer. Since this seems to be happening all over my town, I thought it would make a good topic for a column. So here's the scoop.

Generally, each video you find on the Web will play only using the software that it was formatted for. If you try to play a video and you don't have the proper software, you won't be able to view the video. The area where the video would normally appear will be blank, usually showing either a gray or black square. However, on or near the blank video screen you will see a link that will lead you to the website where you can download the necessary software.

Many of the online news services are now using software called Flash for their videos. To view a

Flash video, you need software by Adobe called Flash Player. Just click on the link to get to the proper place on the Adobe website to download the software. If there is no link available, you can access the download by clicking on the "Get Adobe FlashPlayer" button on the front page of the Adobe website at www.adobe.com. It's a free program and it will provide additional functionality to your computer, so don't hesitate to download it.

To get the player, click on the Download or Download Now button. You may have to scroll down the page to see the button, and you may have to agree to their policy. In most cases, the software will download and install automatically. (If it does not install automatically there will be step-by-step instructions for installation.)

One thing that the website may not tell you is that you may have to restart your computer for the new video software to be fully integrated with the computer. So if the software seems to have downloaded and installed, but you still don't see the video, close all the open windows and programs, and restart the computer.

While many online videos use the Flash software that I just talked about, others may use Windows Media Player, Real Media, or a program called QuickTime. If you are using a Windows computer, you will have Windows Media Player already installed. It comes with the Windows operating system.

The Real Player is a free program that can be found at www.real.com. The QuickTime Player is a free program from Apple that can be downloaded at www.quicktime.com. Even though it is an Apple program, it runs on Windows computers as well as on Macs. Both of these pieces of software are downloaded in a manner similar to that of the FlashPlayer.

Be aware that both RealPlayer and QuickTime will offer you an advanced version that you can purchase for a fee. Although you may want to purchase these programs in the future, it is perfectly alright to start with the free versions. The additional features in the paid versions will give you the ability to handle advanced video functionality, but everything you need to play online videos is included in the free versions.

You can download these video software programs as the need for them arises. Or if you like you can download all of these programs before you need them so you will be able to play almost all of the videos on the Web. These programs do not interfere with each other and will simply stay on your computer until they are needed.

Now you're all set to watch all the videos on the Web. Enjoy!

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Fix That Fan

by Jim Sanders

Editor, The Orange Bytes, North Orange County Computer Club, California

Cheap (Sleeve Bearing) fans die young. Bet on it. The cheaper the system, power supply, cooler, etc., the cheaper the fan. A cheap ball bearing fan may be just as bad. When you hear that sleeve bearing fan (or a ball bearing fan for that matter) rattle, notice a fan is barely turning, or not turning at all, fix it!



As shown in photo #1 of a fan out of a power supply, get the fan out where you can work on it. On the side where the wires go into the middle, carefully peel back the label/sticker that covers the shaft area. The round item in the middle of the sticker in photo #2 is a metal hole plug. The better fans have a rubber plug that seals well and is almost invisible at times. The really cheap fans

don't have a plug over the shaft area. If the fan still turns without much effort, just oiling it may make it well again. Apply a few drops of a good light machine oil such as, 3in1, Singer sewing machine,



even ATF, but not the 30wt for your car engine, in the shaft hole. Sewing machine oil works well. Be careful not to get any oil on the surface where the label/sticker needs to be re-applied. This has to be put back in place to cover the opening and keep the oil in place.



If you get oil on the fan surface, it can be removed with acetone or MEK. If the label gets wrecked, I have found that on a clean surface a piece of black electrical tape works well. If you don't have a good applicator, see photo #3, use a toothpick.

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How I Find My "Deleted" Emails

by Tom Thiel

President, Lake-Sumter Computer Society

Old Emails are one of my most frequent retrievals from my backed-up files.

My current rate of email accumulation is about 20-30 a day. I've forced myself to maintain my accumulated emails in my Inbox and Sent Emails folders to a maximum of not more than 1,000 each. So periodically I just arbitrarily "lope off" the oldest one-half to one month or so of emails. I try to manage some of these by placing them into other folders but that isn't very effective for me.

What this procedure means is that frequently I find myself wishing I still had that old "deleted" email. (The latest one was the Acoustica email sending us Spin it Again software.)

How do I retrieve that email after I've "deleted" it from my Inbox or Sent Items? Here is how I do it with Internet Explorer 6.

Sometime ago I found out where IE stores my emails. What I did then was to move the place where my emails are stored by default to a folder named "Toms emails" in my "My Documents" folder. (How to do this is briefly outlined in the addendum at the end of this article.)

My basic backup procedure is to frequently, at least once a week but usually more frequently, and usually daily with very active folders, copy the contents of my My Documents folder to an external USB connected 300 GB Maxtor drive and to other similar portable USB drives (a 100 GB SimpleTec, and a 40 GB Pocketec hard drive) that are stored away from my computer.

When I do this of course I am backing up the current contents of all my emails at the moment the My Documents backup is performed. (Actually, any true backup procedure will work.)

So, when I want one of those old emails that had been arbitrarily "loped" off the tail end, I do the following:

1. Open Outlook Express and set it to Work Offline so that new emails are not loaded in with old ones (only needed if you are continu



Spin the fan some to work the oil onto the shaft. Re-assemble and you are likely to have a fan that quietly moves air again. If the fan is so gummed up that it is hard to move the blades, you will need to remove the retaining ring (C-ring) on the shaft. This allows the shaft to be pulled out of the bearing, see photo #4, so that both can be cleaned with a good strong solvent before oiling. I like the effectiveness of Methyl Ethyl Ketone or MEK. A pipe cleaner works well for cleaning the inside of the bearing, especially on the smaller fans.

Arguably, this is more work than it is worth, but it is not always easy to find a replacement fan.

The video card fans and the motherboard chipset fans can be near impossible to locate. Even if you find a replacement fan, oiling the fan before putting it into service maybe a good idea as manufacturers seem to be chintzy about the amount of oil in new fans.

PS—Clean the crud off the fan before you replace it. In fact, if you have access to an air compressor regulated at about 90 PSI, it is a great idea to take a blow gun attachment on the end of an air hose and blow out the entire system keeping the tip about six inches away from parts. The little duster cans are better than nothing, but really don't have the horse power to do a good job.

ously on-line). You may set IE to Work Offline as follows: With IE open select File, and then check Work Offline. No new emails can come in under this mode.

2. Now close OE.
3. With Windows Explorer I find the folder “Toms emails” in My Documents and rename it to “Toms emails Today”
4. Then I try to guess what backup might have the particular email I’m looking for from among the various backups I have on the external USB drives.
5. With Windows Explorer I find the folder “Toms emails” on that external backup copy.
6. Then I Copy that folder and Paste it into my current My Documents folder.
7. I now see two email folders in My Documents; “Toms emails” which just was Pasted from the backup copy and the folder “Toms emails Today” which had been renamed earlier.
8. Next I open IE again.
9. It asks me “Do you want to work online?”
10. Be sure to say NO!
11. I then try to locate the desired email; sometimes I use IE’s Find capability to do this. Hopefully, I have guessed correctly and I find the desired email the first guess.
12. I open it and then copy it to my Desktop by choosing File and then Save As and Save To Desktop.
13. Now I close IE and with Windows Explorer find the folder “Toms emails”, the one I just loaded from the backup, and from which I retrieved the desired email, and I delete it.
14. Next I rename “Toms emails Today” back to “Toms emails”
15. Then I open IE and say Yes I want to Work Online.
16. I find the email that I had copied to my desktop and double-click on it to open in IE. I can then save it back into my current emails and do whatever I wanted to do with it.

And that what I do to find that old “deleted” email! Of course it only works for so long as you maintain those backup copies—in my case about six months.

Addendum: How you may change the default location where your e-mails are stored in Outlook Express.

In OE, first select the *Tools* menu, and then *Options* tab. On the pop-up screen, click the *Maintenance* tab, then click the *Store Folder* button.

Outlook Express will show you where it is currently keeping your e-mail files.

You may then select *Change* and a *Browse* window will appear where you may chose to indicate the new place you wish to store your emails.

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The AntiSpyware Revolution Starts Here

by Lou Torraca

President, The TUG, Hawaii

CounterSpy V2 was completely rebuilt with a revolutionary new design. More powerful and effective than ever, CounterSpy's award-winning spyware detection and removal is now merged with our all-new VIPRE™ antimalware technology to create the industry's first hybrid antispyware engine.

- Heavy-duty antispyware protection treads lightly on system resources.
- Kernel-level active protection.
- Hybrid design combines antimalware technology with our award-winning spyware detection and removal.
- Deep-rooted malware is exterminated at boot time, before Windows loads.
- Incremental definition updates greatly reduce update downloading time.
- Vista compatible: Integrates seamlessly with the Vista Windows Security Center.

Sounds pretty good doesn't it? The description above from Sunbelt Software caught my eye and I decided to check it out. What follows is a list of the features, system requirements, some suggestions before your install and a blow by blow that recounts my download, install and use of CS. As always, I recommend you backup your files and/or set a restore point before you begin.

Features

CounterSpy contains the following key features:

- **System Scan**—The scanning engine checks your entire computer by using in-depth scans of your computer's hard drives, memory, process, registry and cookies. It uses a continually updated database of thousands of known spyware signatures to provide you with ongoing and accurate protection. You can scan for spyware manually or schedule times for CounterSpy to scan your computer.
- **Active Protection**—Active Protection guards your computer's privacy and personal information from hidden spyware threats before they can attack. Active Protection acts as a series of security checkpoints, comparing any unknown activity with the most up-to-date database of spyware threats at Sunbelt's Research Center—stopping new spyware in its tracks.
- **System Tools**—My PC Explorers let you explore and manage key elements of your system that are normally hidden and difficult to change. My PC Checkup helps secure your computer by updating your computer settings to recommended security levels. The History Cleaner is a privacy tool that removes all Internet History usage logs and 75 different activities. The Secure File Eraser is a powerful deletion tool that completely erases any files you want removed from your computer.
- **First Scan**—Before your computer completely boots up, CounterSpy deletes tough to remove or locked files and catches spyware before it has a chance to run on your computer.
- **VIPRE**—VIPRE is an antivirus technology that enables CounterSpy to further analyze each suspect item, using heuristic and detection definition files.

System Requirements

Make sure your computer meets one the following system requirements in order to run CounterSpy effectively:

Operating System Requirements:

Windows 2000 Professional and Windows XP Professional/Home SP2, Vista
Minimum

Intel Pentium II processor (or compatible) at 133 MHz or higher with at least 128 MB of RAM
32 MB of available hard disk space
Internet Explorer 5.0 or higher Recommended

Intel Pentium III processor (or compatible) at 1Ghz or higher with 256 MB of RAM.

(I wouldn't recommend the minimum and as for the recommended, I'd go for at least 512 MB of RAM.)

Before Installing CS make sure to uninstall any other anti-spyware programs and restart your computer. Also, close all other Windows programs, including programs displayed in the Windows system tray. (I didn't uninstall my other antispyware as I don't have them scheduled to run, I do it manually.) One note-CS turns off Windows Defender, but you can turn it back on as I did, and didn't have any problem running it.

Installing CS

I downloaded CS to my desktop, then did a scan with my AVG and clicked on it to open the installation wizard. After CS is installed and you have restarted your computer, double-click the icon on your desktop or click Start; then, select All Programs>Sunbelt>Software>CounterSpy> CounterSpy. The Getting Started setup wizard opens. The wizard guides you through the initial steps needed to configure CS.



After you complete the Wizard and open CounterSpy, the main page is displayed.

It provides general summary information like the last time you ran a scan, when the next scan is scheduled to run, important information, etc. Notice that it also contains buttons for you to access the three main features that are covered next-System Scan, Active Protection, and System Tools. You can also update your security risk definitions by clicking the link in the Important Information box. The

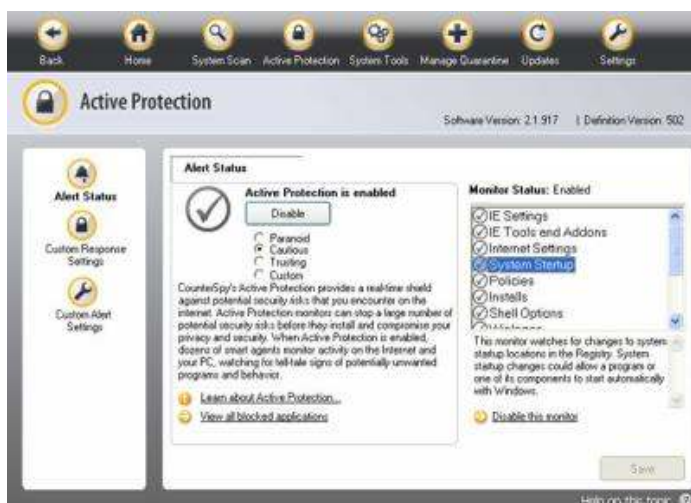
updated version is displayed above the current status box along with the software version number. The key thing to note on this page is the red text next to Current System Status: Some Items Require Attention. This text alerts you to the status of key items in the list below; for example, if you have not run a scan, or if Active Protection is disabled.

System Scan

Click the System Scan button on the main page to open the System Scan page.



Scanning is CounterSpy's main function. The System Scan page allows you to set scan options, perform scans, access the scanning schedule page, access the Manage Quarantine page, view scan details, and extend your subscription for updating security risk definitions. Take a note of the Scan



Options listed on the left side of the System Scan page. You can select from three system scan options: Full System, Quick, and Custom. For the

purposes of this review, you should use the default setting, a Full System scan, to scan your computer's processes, registry, drives, and folders.

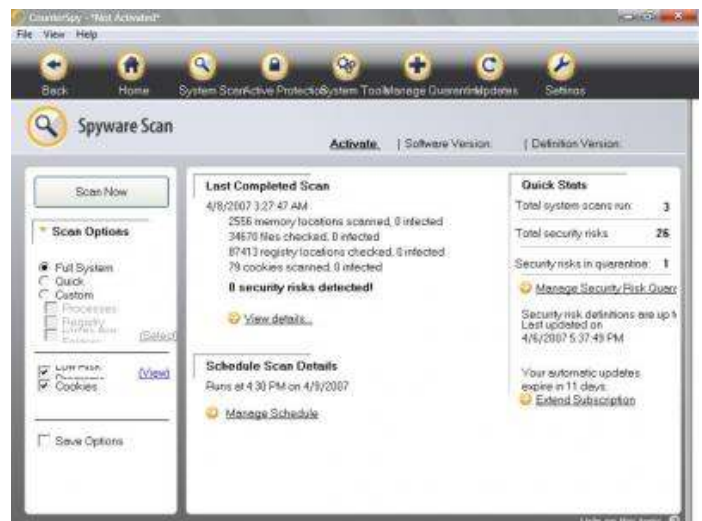
To scan your computer

Click Spyware Scan on the main page; then, set the scan options on the left side of the page. I recommend you select Full System scan. Click Scan Now. CounterSpy starts scanning your computer. After the scan is complete, the CounterSpy Spyware Scan Results summary window opens.

Review the summarized information; then, click View Results. You go to the Spyware Scan results page.

Scan Results

After your computer is scanned, a scan results dialog box is displayed. Click OK, to open the Scan



Results page. Review the items listed on the page; then, take actions against spyware threats. The dropdown lists under recommended actions provide you with several options. You have four options to choose from when managing the scan results: Ignore, Quarantine, Remove, and Always Ignore. To set a single action for all spyware threats, click the link: Set a single action for all spyware threats; then select the action from the Recommended Action drop-list.

Scheduling Scans

The Manage Schedule link on the System Scan page allows you to set the scanning schedule. The Spyware Scan page offers four main selections: Add a new schedule, view/edit a current schedule,

enable /disable a current schedule, or delete a schedule.

When you click the Add New or View/Edit buttons, the schedule wizard opens. Use this wizard to set the dates and times as well as the scan options for the scheduled scan. The options below the Scheduled spyware scan drop-list change depending on the selection you make. Also, CounterSpy must be closed for the scheduled scan to run.

Working with Active Protection When software is installed, or when a change is made to your computer, an internet setting, or an application setting, Active Protection quickly reacts to analyze the change. CounterSpy decides to allow the change if it is not threatening, block the change if it is known spyware, or ask you to decide.

Click the Learn about Active protection monitors...link to open a page with detailed information about Active Protection Monitors. Active Protection



helps protect your privacy and identity, as well as prevent unauthorized programs from taking control of your computer. It works much like a series of security checkpoints in your computer. It monitors system changes, application changes, and Internet activity, watching for anything that could be potentially hazardous.

When Active Protection prompts you for action, a small Notice alert window is displayed in the bottom right corner of your computer screen that includes information concerning the change. This enables you to make an informed decision regarding the notice. You can quarantine the item, allow the action, or block the action. You also have the option of remembering the action you select and/or sending

feedback to ThreatNet, a community that connects hundreds of thousands of CounterSpy end users together so they can share and identify spyware risks. These popups will probably bother you, as they did me, at first, but I think they should show up less frequently as the programs learns which are ok based on your checking the remembering box.

System Tools

CounterSpy contains four unique system tools to help you maintain a clean, smooth running computer: My PC Explorer, My PC Checkup, History Cleaner, and Secure File Eraser.

My PC Explorer

My PC Explorers enable you to explore and manage key elements of your system. Use them to view and modify settings on your computer that are normally hidden and difficult to change. My PC Explorers are powerful tools. Use them to find out what applications are currently connected to the internet, what programs automatically start when windows starts, to see and modify which applications are changing your Internet settings, and much more.

My PC Checkup

My PC Checkup helps tighten computer security. It updates your computer settings to recommended security levels. It thoroughly scans your computer for over 1000 different settings, suggests recommended changes, then, allows you to execute the recommended changes.



The first time you run My PC Checkup; there could be many recommended changes. Subsequent

My PC Checkups will contain mostly suggested changes.

History Cleaner

The History Cleaner is a privacy tool that removes all Internet History usage logs and 75 different activity histories from the most popular windows and Internet applications. History Cleaner enables you to delete your Web browsing and search history, and Windows temporary folders and your search history. You can also erase the history stored by many popular applications, such as Windows Media Player and MSN Messenger.

Secure File Eraser

The Secure File Eraser is a powerful deletion tool that completely destroys files you want to remove from your computer. The Secure File Eraser completely removes all traces of selected documents, images, music, movies, or applications under 10MB in size.

Summary

As you can see, this program does a huge bunch of stuff in addition to just protecting your computer from spyware, malware, etc. The more you use it and review the help program, the more features you will find. To get your fully functional copy of CS, visit www.sunbeltsoftware.com.

That's it for now, until next time, have fun with all those computer and electronic gadgets, but remember to be careful out there on the 'net!

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Q. How can I check the amount of memory I have on my computer? At one time I saw a blue and pink diagram of how much used and free space I had, but I can't remember how to get to that. Thanks, Mr. M. I love your newsletter.

A. Hard drive space (what you observed in blue and pink), and memory (or RAM, which is short for

Random Access Memory) are two different things, though they are frequently confused. Think of your hard drive as long-term storage. Your hard drive is where all your data files and software programs reside. It doesn't matter if your computer is on or off, that data remains on your hard drive.

RAM, on the other hand, is short-term memory. When you're using a program, it emerges from its long-term storage on the hard drive and moves into short-term memory for speed of access. When your computer is turned off, nothing in memory is retained. That's why it's a good idea, even if you leave your computer on all the time, to periodically restart it, to purge your system's memory.

To check your main hard drive's space, double-click My Computer, right-click your C: drive, and select Properties. On the pie chart, you'll see free space in pink and used space in blue.

To check how much memory is installed on your computer, go to your Control Panel and double-click the System icon. RAM appears under the Computer Section of the System Properties screen.

Q. I have a digital camera and was curious how I can create a super-wide or panoramic photo? Is there some way to do that?

A. By definition, a panoramic photo captures a view that is wider than what the camera is capable of taking. For example, if you're at a scenic overlook and want to take a 180-degree photo of the vast expanse below, one snapshot isn't going to be able to take it all in.

Taking multiple photos and taping them together is one way to create a panoramic photo, though the whirring sound you may hear in the background will be Ansel Adams spinning in his grave. "The Master" would not approve of the Scotch-tape approach to panoramic photography.

Through the miracle of software, however, comes AutoStitch (<http://tinyurl.com/5xa4o>), heralded as "a new dimension in automatic image stitching." AutoStitch allows you to select multiple photos and stitch them together to create one big, beautiful panoramic image. Take a look at the spectacular example on the AutoStitch Web site. The photo of a mountain range is composed of 57 individual photos stitched together. Be sure to check out the Panorama Gallery (<http://tinyurl.com>

/dmmay) while you're there. AutoStitch is free if not used for commercial purposes. Commercial versions are also available.

Q. How can I create special characters, such as accent marks that appear over French and Spanish letters?

A. Special keystroke combinations will provide those (and many other) special characters. For example, using the numeric keypad located to the far right of many keyboards, pressing ALT + 0234 will create the ê symbol. (Just to clarify that process, hold down the ALT key, then press 0-2-3-4 in sequence, then release the keys.)

For additional information, read my Special Characters article at <http://tinyurl.com/33g6qc>. The Accents, Symbols and Foreign Scripts Web site at <http://tinyurl.com/2tqzxn> explains how to create accent marks and special characters in hundreds of languages, from Afrikaans to Yiddish. Sorry, no Zulu.

**Mr. Modem's DME
(Don't Miss 'Em)
Sites of the Month**

Fantastic Fruit

Fruit is nature's dessert, providing healthy and delicious snacks that should make up an essential part of any diet. Seriously. The Fruit Pages contain everything you could possibly want to know about fruit. Those who aren't fruit enthusiasts will probably think Fantastic Fruit is the pits, but it's actually quite informative. www.thefruitpages.com

Internet Slang Translator

As the Internet continues to evolve, so does its native language. This site translates Internet acronyms and terms commonly used in email, chat rooms, and text messaging, into readable text. This is especially useful for parents whose children are now talking in virtual tongues while communicating online. For example, The Translator can take an incomprehensible sentence such as, "lol. i'm afk, bbiab d00d," and translate it into a much easier to understand, but equally unintelligent, "Laughing out loud. I'm away from keyboard. Be back in a bit, Dude. (If this isn't a sign that civilization is coming to an end, I don't know what is.) www.noslang.com

Summer Subscription Spectacular!

Subscribe to Mr. Modem's Pulitzer-lacking, weekly, computer-help newsletter and get one month free! Simply subscribe online using Promo Code 0746 and receive a free month with your 6-month subscription (28 issues!) To view a sample issue or to subscribe, visit www.MrModem.com.

The Inside Security Recovery Toolkit (INSERT)

by Dick Maybach

Brookdale Computer User Group, NJ

Most of us use an OEM (original equipment manufacturer) version of Windows supplied by the vendor who built our PC. Although we often receive a Windows CD-ROM, it is not the same as the disk included with the retail version of Windows. In particular, we must go to our PC hardware vendor for Windows support, rather than to Microsoft, and we can't use the OEM CD-ROM to install Windows on a new computer or to repair an existing installation. Instead, we can only restore the software to the state it was in the first time we turned on the PC. This will delete all our data, as well as any applications we've installed. While XP is usually quite stable, problems such as virus infections, operator errors, and hardware and software failures can cripple a PC to the extent that it won't even run. This means that without a good recent backup or good recovery software, all of our data will be lost.

A particularly powerful recovery tool is INSERT, a version of Linux designed to correct problems in Windows, Linux, and the latest Macintosh PCs. INSERT is a "live CD", which means it does not use the hard disk at all, but runs directly from the CD-ROM drive; as a result, it can run even on a PC with an inoperable hard disk. It has a graphical user interface and many useful maintenance applications, including those for file-system repair, data recovery, virus scanning, network analysis, and Internet browsing. In this short article I'll just introduce INSERT; you can download a tutorial on it from What's New section of the BCUG Web site, www.bcug.com, and this includes instructions on how to obtain the software for free.

After any serious problem, your first action should be to copy all your data to an external

(usually a USB) drive. Especially if the problem is a failing hard disk, you have no time for experimenting; just copy everything in My Documents. INSERT has file managers that let you do this graphically, much as you would with Windows Explorer. However, Linux is not Windows, and you should get some experience with INSERT before the next PC disaster. In particular, Linux uses different designations for hard disks than does Windows. The first ATA hard disk is hda and its first partition is hda1. (On most PCs, hda1 is c: in Windows.) If this disk has a second partition, it is hda2 (usually d: in Windows). If you have a second ATA drive, it is hdb in Linux. SATA, SCSI, and USB drives are designated sda, sdb, sdc, etc. Before you can access the information on a storage device, you must mount it. Fortunately, INSERT has a graphical mounting tool that lets you mount a device with a mouse click; see the tutorial for more information.

When INSERT is running, neither Windows nor any of its programs are running. This means that any viruses are dead and hence are easier to deal with, since they cannot hide themselves. INSERT has the clam virus scanner—a Linux program that looks for Windows viruses. With this you can clean up any infections before you restart Windows.

INSERT has tools to manipulate entire partitions. These allow you to change partition sizes and create new ones. You can also move your entire file system to a new disk—handy if you are replacing your c: drive with a new and larger one. If you are selling an old PC, there are tools to wipe your hard disk completely clean, which avoids giving the new owner your passwords, checkbook files, tax returns, etc. It also has tools to recover damaged files. Finally, it is possible to damage a hard disk's master boot record (mbr) or a partition boot record, which prevents Windows from booting, even though none of its files are damaged. The retail version of Windows has the tools fixmbr and fixboot to repair such problems, but these aren't present in the OEM version. INSERT allows you to repair damaged mbrs and boot sectors.

With INSERT you can also reset Windows passwords and edit its registry (if you are sufficiently courageous or desperate). You can edit boot.ini; this is a text file, which if corrupted, will

prevent Windows from booting. There are also programs to explore the hardware, view files, and look at any connected networks. All in all, INSERT is an especially valuable maintenance tool, especially if you are responsible for maintaining several PCs. Other maintenance programs are available, in particular the Ultimate Boot CD and the System Rescue CD, but I've found that INSERT is the easiest to use and has the most complete set of tools.

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[If you are interested in the tutorial I can get it for you. —Sally]



From the DealsGuy

by Bob Click

Greater Orlando Computer Users Group

Help for the Sight Impaired

I saw this article in ComputerWorld about the efforts of the city of Stockholm to provide voice instructions for guiding the blind, or people with poor vision, to wherever they want to go without other help. It is a serious undertaking and sounds promising. See it here:

<http://www.computerworld.com/action/article.do?command=viewArticleBasic&taxonomyName=Mobile_and_Wireless&articleId=291724&taxonomyId=15&intsrc=kc_1_i_story>

What About the Centralizing of Medical Records?

I'm sure you've read about the desire for a centralized database of medical records for every individual so doctors can have quick access to your complete records. This interesting article talks about some of the efforts <<http://www.informationweek.com/story/showArticle.jhtml?articleID=199702199>>. Yet, that has not even come close to fruition so far. Everybody has a different approach including the many companies trying to develop products to accomplish it. Then there's the HIPPA law, along with other concerns about confidentiality, and your medical records. I worked in a UAW retiree office for two years helping retired members with benefit problems. Most were trying to get medical bills paid.

Calling insurance companies and medical centers was an exercise in frustration after the HIPPA law took affect. You had to hope for a friendly person who would try to work around that law to solve the problem, even after telephone permission from the subscriber. The office person on the other end couldn't actually see us both sitting there and often refused to help.

When I ran the Medistick product a few months ago (a USB Flash Drive to contain your personal medical information in PDF format for doctors to access), I thought that was a good idea, but now I'm not so sure because of the different software and office procedures used by doctors, and their efforts to keep office costs down. When I tried a new cardiologist last year I mentioned various doctors I had seen in the last few years. He wanted to contact them all for my records to do his homework. On my next visit, he had done that and most used paper records, but he gave me two CDs with medical information from other offices saying his software was not compatible with their format. Those were extremely important medical records that were useless to him that way. I visited those offices to get my records on paper, although it was difficult to find a helpful secretary.

If I had a USB Medistick, how would a doctor want my medical information organized and formatted to be useful? It's a safe bet that few doctor's offices will put that information on your Medistick since they are concerned about the time to prepare it for you.

So far, even President Bush's intervention has had little affect on the push for centralization of medical records. We are the ones suffering the repercussions of this lack of coordination. If I could simply get a report on the office visit, or procedures performed, from that doctor's office, perhaps I could type it up myself on the Medistick if there was a centralized format. As you know, there are other problems if you want to record doctor data for your own reference since they often aren't willing to give it to you. Also, the public is very suspicious about any governmental control of that information, and who would be exceptions to the rules, such as a prospective employer? If you got sick on a distant

vacation, seems like that central database could be invaluable to a doctor or ER.

Be Aware!

These are announcements I received, but I have not tried any of them.

Keep Track of Your Ink

AVPSoft.com has announced APFill Ink Coverage Meter 4.2. You can determine the cost of a document, and if needed, optimize the pages to spend less ink or toner and consequently money. APFill Ink Coverage Meter is ideal for home users who have a color printer, or print shops that print a large number of copies. Usually printer owners rely on the printer manufactures that describe ink usage as being 5% ink coverage of an A4 page. With APFill Ink Coverage Meter in place, you will know the exact ink coverage and determine the accurate cost of a printed copy based on such properties as paper density, paper format and original color density.

APFill users can measure the ink coverage of the highlighted screen area when, for example, they preview the page in a graphic editor before printing.

It's also possible to measure the ink coverage for every single page, or for the entire document in either PostScript or PDF format with CMYK separation up to 8 color spots. There's also a 'Selected area surface measurement' feature, allowing you to measure the area filled in with a specified color. The measurement results can be displayed in either pixels or any user-defined units.

APFill Ink Coverage Meter 4.2 is available for \$79.95 (US) for a single-user license. We offer user group members a 10% discount on the purchase of APFill Ink Coverage Meter. The coupon code is APFILL10PR.

The product requires Windows 2000, XP, 2003 and Vista. Registered users are entitled to free upgrades and technical support. Additional information on the product, as well as its 30-day evaluation copy is available from <<http://www.avpsoft.com>>. Product page link: <<http://avpsoft.com/products/apfill/>>

Direct download link: <<http://www.avpsoft.com/download/apfill.exe>> (2.55 Mb)

Another Data Recovery, It's Free!

Smart Data Recovery is an effective and powerful, easy-to-use software program that enables the recovery of lost data. Restore your important files absolutely free. Smart Data Recovery is compatible with almost all kinds of data storage devices from computer hard drives to digital cameras. It supports flash drives, floppy disks, memory sticks, PC cards, multimedia cards, and secure digital cards. Smart Data Recovery restores all sorts of files, including electronic documents and pictures. It restores files from FAT32 and NTFS hard drives and has a really simple interface with Windows operations systems.

Even if the partition table is lost, the program gives you a chance to retrieve your important files. Smart Data Recovery applies a simple yet powerful algorithm that allows restoration of your lost data quickly and effectively. Smart Data Recovery also recovers any deleted files, including MS Office files, images, MP3 and zip files!

Smart Data Recovery runs on Windows NT/2000/XP/2003/Vista. The current version is downloadable free at <<http://www.smartctools.com>>.820kB. There are other interesting Freeware products listed on their Web site. PDF Anyone?

Acrobat is costly and there are cheaper ways to create a PDF. PDF995 can be found at <<http://www.pdf995.com>>. (There are three free downloads that are adware). People who have used the product say it produces a different file size, but works as well as other PDF software. The free versions display a sponsor page in your web browser each time you run the software. If you prefer no sponsor pages, you may upgrade by obtaining individual keys for each product at any time for \$9.95 each, and also get e-mail support.

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

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

Society News

Planning Meeting Notes

July 3, 2007

by John McMillan

A block party on Sally Springett's street did not prevent Bob Avery, Tony Dellelo, John McMillan, Dan Rothfuss, Steve Staub, Tom Thompson, and guest Jan Rothfuss from attending the planning meeting that Arpad chaired.

Everyone thought that Dave Thompson's presentation at the June meeting on the format of next years Photography Special Interest Group was excellent and well received. Several new members have joined recently because of the Digital Photography SIG.

Arpad will talk about portable applications at the next meeting July 10th in the Brighton Library. Sally will check to see if they have a mobile microphone in addition to the one at the podium. Steve mentioned that to date, only 10 people have signed up for the picnic but in previous years, there has been a rush just before the deadline. Arpad will be out of town for the picnic but Tony Dellelo will take over the flea market arrangements.

The newsletter will be assembled Saturday June 21st. Steve mentioned that St. Stephens is looking for some help with problems they are having with the SWEM system. John McMillan volunteered to have a look.

Sally mentioned the possibility of using live Internet presentations for fall meetings. This will be passed along to Mike Lavelle for further exploration.

Help's Half Hour

Led by: Dave Thompson

Recorded by Jan Rothfuss

Q: When I right click on a document name, I get a menu showing Edit with Notepad. This does not seem to respond to my 'Return' key but shows long lines.

A: Notepad is not good at formatting. It is best to bring it up into a word processor software.

Q: I want to forward an email but it creates an attachment of the original.

A: You may need to check the settings within your email software and set it to put the original email appearing as the email text. Perhaps also try the Reply to feature and then change the recipient to the new person.

Q: When sending movie MediaPlayer files via email, the recipient cannot open the attachment. She has a Mac.

A: There may be a Mac version of the software.

Q: One member has sent an email that includes a table within the email but it gets 'jumbled' during the process. While the original is fine, the attachment format has been changed.

A: Perhaps it would help to set your email options to 'text' and not HTML format. This may cause the attachment to be processed in the native Word software with no interpretation.

Q: In Windows98, can I increase the brightness in the display? The monitor is extremely dark.

A: Those present agreed that this feature relates to the hardware setting. This may be a signal that the monitor is going to die soon. You may also try googling the problem to see if others have a remedy.

Q: Recently I was using a Mac mouse that allowed the buttons to be set up.

A: A MS wireless mouse does have a programmable mode that will allow you to set up the features.

Q: Ubuntu disk has not successfully loaded on four different machines. What else do I need to do?

A: Try to google 'Linux on Windows' and see what is available. It is not as easy as Nick suggests. NTFS file system from XP will be an issue. It prefers FAT32. Try emailing Bill Statt—our club's guru. There are some links that have been published on our website. Luger user group may be another source.

Q: Is there any interest in starting up a Linux SIG?

A: Yes, but, to date, there has been no leader to volunteer. We may want to consider inviting Nick to attend the first meeting to test out the waters. Maybe he will continue to help out.

Q: One member has a problem with his printer. As one died, he now has a new one that requires USB but his Win98 machine has only parallel. Is there a cable that can be used?

A: There may be a cable but it is not guaranteed. The PC should handle USB if it is Second Edition.

He may be better to install a USC card, install the drivers and then use the USB cable.

July Meeting Minutes

by John McMillan

Steve Staub began the business meeting by requesting that anyone whose dues are in arrears should see him. The next planning meeting will be at Sally's house August 7th and the Monitor will be assembled July 21st at 9:30 AM; at St. Stephens. Next months meeting will be the picnic at Brighton's Buckland Park, the same location as last year. August 1st is the deadline to sign up. Tony Dellelo will supervise the flea market in Arpad's absence.

The digital photography SIG will not meet until September and any one interested should send an E-mail to dthomps1@roch-ester.rr.com to get on the distribution list for meeting notifications. Steve mentioned that we had System Suite 7 as a door prize but that a review was required. Chairs need to be stacked and the room should be picked up at the end of the meeting.

Our speaker for the evening was Arpad Kovacs who discussed "Computers on a Stick," a catchy name for applications on a portable drive. His first slide showed a number of portable storage devices that utilize USB or flash card drives and a quick survey indicated that most of the members who were present have thumb drives. These drives have solid state memory that, unlike computer RAM, does not need power to retain data. It is accessed in blocks like hard drives and floppies. Memory sticks for USB ports were first introduced by IBM in 2001.

In 2004, Sandisk created U3 specifications for the first commercially available portable application platform. Such portable applications must be designed specifically for U3 platforms that store all of both the data and the software components necessary to run the applications. It does not change the host system, or leave any footprints when the drive is removed. Arpad pointed out that more information is available if you Google www.u3.com. He felt that one of the down sides is that the software must be designed onto the drive and most of it is not free.

Having said that, he introduced Portable Apps, a product that does not use the proprietary U3

protocol so it can be downloaded from portableapps.com to any portable drive rather than a U3 apps capable drive. It has a program launcher that looks similar to a Windows Start Menu and will run on machines with Windows 95 or later. U3 drives will not run on Windows 95 or 98 machines. USB speed is more likely to be the controlling factor rather than the clock speed of the host machine.

The main suite package uses about 350 MB and contains programs like Firefox (web browser), Thunderbird (E-mail clients), Open Office suite (a replacement for Microsoft Office that includes segments for word processing, spread sheet, drawing, presentation, and a graph generator), Gaim (mobile instant mes-saging), Clam (portable anti virus program), Gimp (a photo processing program similar to Photoshop), and Audacity (a sound mixing and conversion program). Each of these components is freeware so there is no charge for downloading them.

Some portable devices go as high as 16 GB. They do not have the quickest read write speeds so putting the software on the portable drive may take 20 minutes or more, however that is a one time operation. Arpad used Open Office Impress from the key drive to create his presentation before demonstrating some of the applications contained on his key drive, a 4 GB model available for \$50-\$60.

The 1st topic was 7-Zip, a program similar to Winzip, which Portable Apps uses to read and compress zip files thereby saving space. Remember that files created in Portable Apps are not recorded in Windows so they cannot be tracked using Windows Explorer.

Clam will let you scan any component of the computer but must be activated in order to scan. Virus definitions are updated weekly.

Arpad did not have an Internet connection so he did not demonstrate Firefox, a browser that he recommends highly. It is the full version just like the one on a desktop. He reiterated that all of the elements of browsing, favorites, passwords, history, bookmarks, and cache are stored on the key drive, not on the host computer. However it is possible to transfer files between the host computer and the key drive.

He pointed out the Gaim is not just AOL, it has protocols for Google, Yahoo, MSN, and ICQ. There is a PDF file reader but not writer though Open Office lets you save files in PDF format. VLC Media Player will display photos and also many of the video formats as well as playing music files or CD's. Arpad mentioned Mac On A Stick, a MacIntosh emulator that lets you run the host machine as if it were any Mac with a 1500 processor.

Portable Apps has an internal clipboard and does not use the Windows clipboard. You cannot remove the key drive while any of the Portable Apps are running. They will all be closed before the drive is unlocked.

I am sure that Arpad made many other points that I have missed in trying to record and translate this very interesting topic. For more information about the product Arpad discussed go to <http://portableapps.com/> but for best results try to attend the meetings in person.

See you at the picnic.

GEEK OLYMPICS VII

Tuesday Aug. 14th

Buckland Park

1341 Westfall Rd. (Between Winton Rd. and Clinton Ave.)

Arrive at 4 pm

Eat at 5:30 pm

Bring a dish to pass:

A-I (munchies)

J-R (salads)

S-Z (desserts)

A \$5 fee will be collected for each person in attendance. The club will supply condiments, meats, coffee, tea, soda, and shelter rental.

Contact Steve Staub by e-mail srstaub@rochester.rr.com or by phone (585-429-9877) to reserve your place.

Deadline is Wednesday, August 1st. Please provide the following information: names, meat desired, and how many of each is needed. The choices are red or white hots, cheese-burgers, or Italian sausage.

The flea market will run throughout the evening. Tony Delello is in charge. Items not sold must be taken home again. Profits will stay with the club unless otherwise arranged.

Treasurer's Report

by Steve Staub, Treasurer



Balance as of 06/14/07	\$889.01
Income	
Donations	\$20.00
Picnic	85.00
Dues	<u>70.00</u>
Total income	\$175.00
Expenses	
Staples (toner)	\$127.98
St. Stephens	60.00
Sally (ink)	<u>32.94</u>
Total expenses	\$220.92
Balance as of 07/07/07	\$843.09

Renewals: Charles Wells

New member: Virginia Lyle

This past month long-time member Stanley Lochacki passed away after a long illness. He'll be missed.

The Lighter Side

Wonder how your cursor works? Check out:

<http://www.l-click.jp/>



Once a customer asked me if there could be virus attached to a printed file that would infect his computer if he scanned it back in.

A guy came into my office, in a real panic. He kept saying something about how his computer screen was shaking violently, and he thought it had a virus! Going down to the computer, I found that the picture on the screen was indeed shaking a lot, but I also noticed something else...a desk fan was placed right next to the monitor, which was plugged into the same power strip. I switched the fan off, and the picture stopped shaking. I told him to move the fan away from the monitor in future, to avoid that problem. Later on I heard him telling a colleague that his desk fan had a virus, and he had to keep it away from the screen to stop it from infecting his computer.



Customer: "Hi, I was wondering if you could fix my laptop. It's under warranty."

Tech Support: "What seems to be the trouble?"

Customer: "My wife got mad and threw it in the pool."