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The SouthEastern Michigan Computer Organization, Inc. (SEMCO) is a non-profit, 501(c)(3), group dedicated to providing information, education and a forum to computer users (professional and amateur) and other interested individuals. Membership in SEMCO is open to all individuals 18 years or older. Persons under 18 years may become members through the sponsorship of a parent or guardian. Dues of $30/year include monthly DATA BUS and free personal ads.

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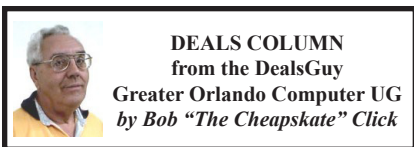
Lightning Fast Trades

Here's an interesting article for investors. It explains how modern technology has progressed to the point where stock trades are now processed almost at the speed of light. I found it very enlightening <http://www.informationweek.com/showArticle.jhtml;jsessionid=R3M3IYXUGJSZGQSNDLOSKHSCJUNN2JVN?articleID=199200297&queryText=Richard+Martin>.

Microsoft Plays Catch-Up

It's hard to think of Microsoft being behind the times in technology, but that is said to be the case in Web interface design. Adobe's Flash has prevailed so far, but Microsoft will introduce a competitor called "Silverlight" and some tools called Expression Studio that sound interesting. After I read about this in InformationWeek, I saw more in the 5/21/07 "Microsoft At A Glance" newsletter. They made mention of those products and gave the URL to watch a video and download the beta version of Silverlight. It is referred to as a "cross-browser and cross-platform plug-in." They also included the URL for the Expression Studio design products <http://go.microsoft.com/?linkid=6824909> where you can download free trials. There was other information included in that newsletter.

Another Use For Wi-Fi

On another note, I have always thought of Wi-Fi as a connection for my laptop, or a broadband installation of some kind, but one particularly well traveled rail route in southern California will be getting Wi-Fi for security purposes. Because railroads often traverse very remote areas, this project is a difficult one and includes some solar powered nodes. Vandalism is a problem in the area getting that installation. I have often wondered how good the cell phone service was on some rail routes that are less traveled and have remote routes. Some cruise ships offer limited cell phone service and it is slowly being introduced on airlines, but not without resistance from the airlines and from the public. I know I wouldn't want the person next to me talking on a cell phone for the entire trip.

Reminder

Again, the announcements below are written by the PR people and I edit to shorten them and try to improve on the wording. I have not tried any of these products so check their Web site carefully and do your homework if you are interested.

This Add-On For Microsoft Windows Might Help

Addintools announced the release of Classic Menu for Office 2007 v.2.18, a user interface enhancement add-on for Microsoft Office 2007. The new interface will replace the system of layered menus, toolbars and task panes with a so-called Ribbon. It lets users retrieve and show the main menu bar, standard toolbar, and formatting toolbar that are hidden or moved away from direct view. The program works with Word, Excel, and PowerPoint. All new Office 2007 features remain accessible in the classic menu and toolbars.

Classic Menu for Office 2007 also lets users add the menus and toolbars to the Quick Access Toolbar so it becomes possible to minimize the Ribbon and

finish all operations without having to open it again. The program has been optimized for complete compatibility with Microsoft Office 2007 and supports all major languages, including English, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Japanese, Arabic, Korean, and Chinese.

Classic Menu for Office 2007 v.2.18 runs under Microsoft Windows XP/2003/Vista and costs $29.95 (USD) for a single-user license. User group members receive 15% discount on the purchase of Classic Menu for Office 2007 v2.18 by entering coupon code ADDI-CARU into the coupon box on the order page. Licensed customers are entitled to free updates and technical support for 2 years after the date of purchase.

Product page link: <http://www.addintools.com/english/menuoffice>

Direct download link: <http://www.addintools.com/english/menuoffice/Setup_OfficeMenu.exe> (2.62 MB)

Company website: <http://www.addintools.com>.

File Recovery Product, Might Help In Some Circumstances

Enplase Research Corporation has announced the immediate availability of MultiStage Recovery 2.8 that will recover any file and back it up to a hard disk drive. MultiStage Recovery lets users recover all recoverable files (20 gigabytes in 20 seconds!) The program supports all Windows file systems and comes with a built-in preview for over 60 file formats. Designed as do-it-yourself data recovery software, MultiStage Recovery will restore all file types including audio, images, and documents. It supports all FAT12/VFAT/16/32 and NTFS/NTFS5 file systems used by Microsoft Windows.

It helps users restore precious data if files are lost due to a virus, malicious hacker attack or an operating system crash in which a hard disk drive has not experienced physical damage, and restores files from any brand of hard disk drive and type of storage media, including hard disks, floppy disks, flash drives, and digital camera cards.

MultiStage Recovery 2.8 runs under Microsoft® NT 4.0 (with SP4), 2000, XP, 2003, Vista and costs $39.95 (US) for a single-user license. User group members get 20% off by using the coupon code 8192 (making it $31.96) at <http://enplase.com/pages/BuyProduct/ProductName-MultiStage+Recovery.html>. For other types of licenses, please refer to Enplase's Software Store at <http://enplase.com/pages/Purchase.html>. Additional information on the product, as well as its free evaluation copy is available from <http://enplase.com/>. Product page link: <http://enplase.com/pages/MultiStage+Recovery+description.html>.

I Am Not A Fan Of Screensavers, But Here Is An Announcement

DealsGuy Note: Screensavers have long been known to sometimes cause problems so I don't use them. Also, this company only offers a discount for purchasing more than one, but I am including it because there are certainly fans for screensavers, and I get asked for deals on them quite frequently.

FancyBytes Software announces the release of Dolphin Aqua Life 3D Screensaver 3.0, Shark Water World 3D Screensaver 1.5, and Mountain Lake Waterfall Screensaver 1.0. Unique to these screensavers is their dual monitor support and sleek 3D graphics. If you have two monitors installed on your system, you likely have already

looked for screensavers that can fit your configuration. With FancyBytes Software you can now enjoy beautiful 3D screensavers with dual monitor support. Of course, the screensavers will look nice on a single screen, but with two monitors, you'll receive a continuous panoramic image, showing the aquatic world in all its beauty. Use these screensavers to make the most of your dual monitor system. The free trial downloads are available at <http://www.fancybytes.com>. Below are the screensavers:

Dolphin Aqua Life 3D Screensaver
Travel to the sea bottom with the most intelligent inhabitant of the sea, the dolphin. See the amazing play of light on its skin as light creates interesting patterns on the sea floor, which is covered with age-old rocks and shells. This dignified creature and a variety of small fishes leisurely swim back and forth, as you admire the aquatic scenery and take a rejuvenating rest.

Shark Water World 3D Screensaver
Find the remnants of ships that once belonged to unlucky Caribbean pirates who now lie in Davy Jones' Locker. Chests containing countless riches peacefully lie on the sea floor, but watch out for the sharks! These hunters guard the treasures from anyone who would dare steal their gold.

Mountain Lake Waterfall Screensaver
See the pristine beauty of Mother Nature. Stand in awe of the majestic waterfall tumbling into a clear mountain lake. Unwind to the sounds of murmuring water. Admire the picturesque lake scenery and nearby forest. Just the kind of place you've been wanting for some rest and relaxation?

Dolphin Aqua Life 3D Screensaver costs $19.95 (USD). Shark Water World 3D Screensaver costs $19.95 (USD). Mountain Lake Waterfall Screensaver costs $14.95 (USD). For a discount on two or more of the registered versions of these products, please visit; <http://www.fancybytes.com/orders_special.html>. All prices are for a single-user license. The screensavers run under all versions of Microsoft Windows. Licensed customers are entitled to the fully functional version of the product, free technical support and free upgrades. Additional information on the screensavers, as well as free trial copies are available from <http://www.fancybytes.com>.

Product pages
<http://www.fancybytes.com/about_dolphin_aqua_life_3d_screensaver.html>
<http://www.fancybytes.com/about_shark.html>
<http://www.fancybytes.com/about_mountain_lake_waterfall_screensaver.html>
Direct download link: <http://www.fancybytes.com> Click the Download buttons for the desired file.

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@mindspring.com>. Visit my Web site at <http://www.dealsguy.com>

The Little Tab Key That Could
By Al Gruber

Ever since Mr. Microsoft decided that he couldn't afford manuals for his software, there has been a grand opening for windbags to write 1,000 page books without saying all that much. This article results from a bet that a bloated chapter on tabbing and indenting in Microsoft Word could be done in 10% of that space, and tell more.

History

On an old-fashioned typewriter, the only way to insert multiple spaces was with the tab key. Ordinarily, each press would advance you 5 spaces. That was only the default but we didn't yet know that word then. The main purpose of tabbing, then and now, was to indent text. It was also the only way to make tables. Today, things are a lot different. You can still set tab stops manually, which now come in assorted fancy flavors, and you still hit the Tab key to get there, but the need for them is much reduced. The indent function has been taken over by various indent commands; the tabular function by the table commands.

The direct indenting commands can cause some confusion as compared to old-fashioned tabs, because they sometimes use tab stops and sometimes not, and they use some tab stops but not others. Also, like all software, some of their aspects are counterintuitive, so it's easy to start on the wrong foot, for which Word will punish you.

The following sections will untangle this:

1. Setting tab stops
2. The relation between tabs and indents
3. Tabbing on the fly vs. using styles

Setting tab stops

Vocabulary

Margins   distance from edge of the page to the text; set in File-menu→Page Setup. Also the strip on the page defined by this distance. You can set left, right, top and bottom margins. If you set the left margin at 1", a tab stop at 0.5" will land on the paper at 1.5".

Tab mark   when you hit the Tab key to move to the next Tab stop, Word puts a mark in the text, which you can see as a "→" by turning on Show Formatting Marks in Tools → Options → View tab → Formatting marks section or by clicking the ¶ icon in the formatting toolbar if you have it displayed. When you set an indent, there is no such mark. Ordinarily, this is not important, except when you are trying to fix in your mind that a tab is not the same as an indent.

Indent   noun: the empty space from the left margin point (say 1") to the start of the text. We also speak of first line indents, right indents and more. Verb: causing the above indents, often by pressing the Tab key

Ruler	tape-measure-like strip that divides Word's command stuff from your text. It can be shown or hidden by clicking View-menu → Ruler. Turn it on to see the various tab-related markers discussed here. Its full name is the "horizontal ruler" to distinguish it from the "vertical ruler" which does not concern us.
Cursor vs. I-bar:	The Cursor is what moves when you move the mouse. If you click the cursor in text, it deposits a flashing vertical bar (the I-bar), which tells you where the next letter will land. Some call this the "Insertion point."

Where to set tab stops

Word usually has three or four different ways to do any single thing and tab stops are no exception. They can be set at:

Format-menu → Paragraph → Tabs button, or

Format-menu → Tabs, or

Click, drag icons on the ruler

The Default tab stops field:

The 0.5" in that field means that as shipped, Word has a tab stop every ½".

If you have set a left page margin of 1", then the first stop will be at 1.5", measured from the left edge of the page. Manually set stops are of course measured the same way. To use centimeters, or other units, instead of inches, see Tools menu → Options → General tab.
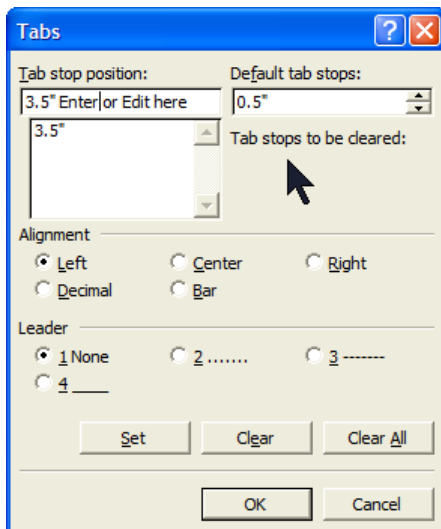
If you enter a manual stop at the 2" point, it cancels the three defaults stops to its left (at 0.5", 1", and 1.5"). This is a gotcha: don't count on defaults to the left of where you plan to place a manual stop. But hold it: the default tab stops can also be used by the indent commands, and there, manual stops don't cancel them.

If you change the default setting to say every ⅓", this will apply only to the current document. To change the default for all new documents, you must edit the document template—not covered here.

The rest of the Tabs dialog box is used to enter tab stops manually. But why do that? If you need stops at 2" and 4", you could just as easily give the Tab key a few extra hits. One answer is that manual stops have certain exclusive features. Even more important, positional adjustments are easier with two manual stops instead of eight defaults. Manual stops will simplify your life.

The Enter/Edit field; The Tab stops list (screenshot above)**:**

The top line, see "Enter or Edit here", works in tandem with the Tab stops list panel immediately below it. Entering the stop, say 3.5", doesn't make it so until you click the set button to put it on the list. To set three tabs, you do three sets.

To change a stop, you highlight it, click the Clear button, and then enter the replacement.

Tab stops to be cleared:

Notice this wording. They aren't cleared yet. If you are used to closing screens by clicking the red x, don't do it here. It means cancel. To make anything happen, you must click OK or hit Enter.

Alignment:

Word has 5 types of tab stops. The first four align the text you type, as follows:

Left   the tab key moves the I-bar to this stop; then the letters you type go to the right as always. This is the most used tab stop. The rest are pretty much left over from the days of using tabs to make tables.

Center   the words you type get centered on this tab stop.

Right   the words you type grow leftward so that the last letter sits on the tab stop.

Decimal   if you enter $4,567.89, the decimal will sit on the tab stop. This can also be used with text for some special effects. I hear that if you buy Word in a country that uses commas as decimal points, this tab will center on the commas.

Bar   Puts a "|" at the tab stop, for drawing an old-fashioned table?

Leaders:

These are used to visually connect left ....to right, page numbers for example. To apply a leader, click the tab stop then click the leader button. This feature also seems to be a leftover from making tables, especially Tables of Contents, which are nowadays automated.

Now the mystery; what do these settings set?

If you always work in a straight line and never need to add tab stops during editing, you can skip this part. Otherwise, read on. There is a gotcha here, caused by two Word features:

1. The tab settings, and most other important things, are stored in the paragraph marker—which can be seen as "¶" if you enable Tools → Options → View tab → Show formatting markers.
2. As you type, new paragraphs conveniently inherit these settings from the previous paragraph, but if you change a middle paragraph later, the next paragraph doesn't do that inheriting.

If you set a tab stop at the top before you start typing, it will apply to everything that follows. Then if you change it at some point, the new setting will apply from then on. It will seem to you that tab stops apply to sections of text, with new sections starting whenever you change the tab settings.

But if you try the same thing during editing, setting a tab stop in paragraph *one* applies only to that paragraph, not to the whole document. This is not the end of the world so long as you know this behavior. You can select several paragraphs and specify tab stops for all of them. But if some of these paragraphs use default tab stops, the new manual stops will override them. Also, Word will only show the stops that are common to the selected paragraphs. If the paragraphs differ, you will have to alter each separately.

Tabs vs. Indents

The purpose of Word's indenting commands is to eliminate the need to hit the tab key. Given say a 5-line paragraph to indent, the typewriter would need a tab at each line. Word, once set, not only indents each line in this paragraph, but in every succeeding paragraph, until you tell it otherwise.

There are three types of indents: 1. First line, 2. Paragraph indents, both left and right, and 3. Hanging indents.

First Line Indent, as the name says, indents the first line of a paragraph. This is used in many books, as an economical way to show the start of a new paragraph without requiring a separator line.

It is also used in some correspondence styles. In times past, it was a favorite but has now been largely replaced by what is known as block style. The DATA BUS uses first line indent. Block style just uses a blank line between paragraphs.

> **Indented paragraphs** are often used for quoted materials. At minimum, they are indented on the left. For more impact, you can also right-indent. An additional flourish is to use a smaller typeface and apply full (left and right) justification.

Hanging Indent The opposite of a First Line Indent. The second and subsequent lines are indented. The space on the first line is optional but represents the most common and visually pleasing use of this feature. Rather than a hanging indent, you might think of this as a hanging paragraph.

Where to set indents

As usual, there are several ways to set indents. The most complete is from the menu:

Click Format → Paragraph > Indents and Spacing tab:

Our interest here is only the Indentation section. We have cut off the irrelevant bottom half. At the top, Outline level has nothing to do with indents, and Alignment is only barely relevant.
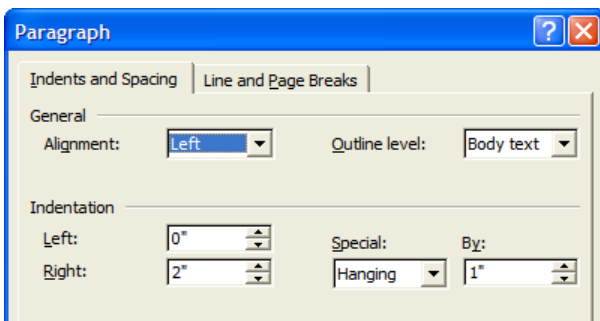
To use these commands, place the cursor in the desired paragraph or line where you plan to type, or in the case of multiple paragraphs, select them. Then:

Indentation, Left: Like tab stops, entering 1" here will place the start of the text 1" to the right of the page margin. If your left margin is set at 1", the text will start at 2". You can also set a negative indent: -0.5 will shift the start of the text ½" left; use it to temporarily change the Page Margin

|	
Indentation, Right:	Unlike tab stops, a 1" here will pull the end of the line 1" to the left. With a right margin setting of 1", the lines will end 2" from the page edge, at 6.5" on 8.5"x11" paper. A negative indent of -0.5 will override the right Page Margin and let the line run to within ½" of the paper's edge.
Special:	This field offers 3 choices: First Line, Hanging, and None.
Indent First Line By	The amount you enter here is added to the left indent. If the left indent is 1" and your first line request is 0.5", the marker on the ruler will be at 1.5". On the paper, if you also have a left margin of 1", the first word will actually print at 2.5".
Indent Hanging By	The numbers work exactly as above, except that here it is the 2nd and later lines that are indented, and the first line represents the left edge of the paragraph.
Alignment	The standard choices are: left, center, right, justified. Even specially indented paragraphs can be aligned—if you find a reason for it.

Once you turn on these settings, they continue paragraph to paragraph. To turn them off, go back to Format menu → Paragraph and change the Indents to 0 and the Special field to None.

Using the Ruler to set Tab Stops

Though the Tabs dialog box is more complete, setting tabs is faster and easier on the Ruler. If necessary, turn it on via View menu→Ruler.
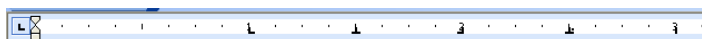
1. Put the I-bar in the desired paragraph. If no text yet, put it on the desired line.
2. To place the stops accurately, scroll the paragraph up close to the ruler.
3. To select the stop type (left, center, etc.), if it's not set to what you want:
   • click on the ▣ leftmost button and run through the choices;
   • hover over it to see the tool-tip that identifies it.
4. To place the stop, click on the bottom border of the ruler, at the place you want. You can drag stops to adjust their placement; Alt-drag shows measurements; To remove a stop, drag it down into the text.
   (The stop on the ruler graphically tells its type. For what the graphic means, hover over the leftmost button. Move the cursor if the tool-tip is reluctant.)
5. If you want a leader, click Format menu → Tab (Screenshot 1) while the I-bar is still in the paragraph.

Using the Ruler to set Indents

The only difference between tabs stops and indent stops is which symbol you choose on the leftmost button. There are 3 indent symbols:

First line indent: ▽

Hanging and Left Indent: ▢ on the button, ⬠ on the ruler. The tool-tips call the square "Left Indent" and the triangle "Hanging Indent", but the two never appear separately.

There is a fourth symbol, Right Indent ⌂, but this is not a choice on the leftmost button. It just sits at the right edge of the ruler, waiting to be dragged to where you want it.

Here are some actual settings:

Paragraph indent just a bit more than 1":

Same paragraph indent plus **first line indent** of 0.5":

Same paragraph indent plus **hanging indent** of 0.5":
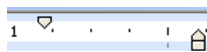
It may seem strange that the First Line marker is now left of the Hanging/Left marker, but it's true: The Hanging Paragraph is indeed indented past the first line. Or to put it another way, the First Line marker shows where all the lines would start without the Hanging Indent.

You use these symbols just like the tab stops. To do a First Line indent:
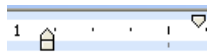1. put the I-bar on the desired text,
2. click the leftmost button until you see the ▽,
3. then click the lower border of the ruler where you want the stop.

To Left Indent a paragraph, do as above except the leftmost button must show the ⊔.

To combine Left Indent with Hanging or First line, make the ruler look like the examples above.

Other ways to set indents
As you might have guessed, Word has several other ways to set indents. For typists who prefer to do everything from the keyboard, indents can also be set with the tab key.

But first, this must be enabled at:
Tools→Autocorrect→Autoformat As You Type tab→"Set left/first indent with Tabs" etc.

To set a First Line, type at least one word, then go back to the left edge and hit the Tab key. Word will move the First Line marker to the first default tab stop, and each additional hit will advance to the next default position. To reduce the number of keystrokes, it makes sense to permanently set your default tab stops to your customary First Line indent distance.

To set a Paragraph Indent, type at least two lines, then go to the left edge of the second line and hit the Tab key. The entire paragraph will move to the first default tab stop. Again, additional tabs will increase the indent.

To set a Hanging Indent, type the text that is to sit left of the hanging paragraph, then hit the tab key, which will this time cause an actual tab. If the I-bar does not land exactly where you want it, put in a manual tab stop using the "on the ruler" method described above. Then continue typing.

When you finish the paragraph, put the I-bar at the left edge of line two or later, and hit the tab key. Now the entire hanging paragraph will advance right, default tab stop by default tab stop, until it coincides with the stop on line one. This method assumes that you want a complete hanging paragraph, with a gap on

line one. To cancel or change these indent settings, put the I-bar at the place where you previously hit the Tab key, and hit Backspace instead.

Another way to set or change indents is to drag the indent markers but this takes a sharp eye. Alt-drag shows measurements to make it a little easier. Also, undoing indents by dragging is sometimes frustrated by a first line indent marker that seems to have a mind of its own—really, it's just doing what you asked it to.

Finally, there are two useful buttons on the format toolbar, to the right of the bullet list button. These only do paragraph indents, but they are especially convenient because they work with the I-bar anywhere in the paragraph. Also, when undoing indents, they are guaranteed to get back to zero, instead of near-zero which is common if you drag.

Tabbing on the fly vs. using styles

The tone of this article suggests that you are tabbing and indenting on the fly, formatting your paragraphs as you feel the need. This is surely true for occasional and home typists. But in a business environment or for reports and books, a consistent look is more desirable than freedom of expression. The experts' consistency tool is Word's styles, by which you can create say a style named Hang2, which specifies indenting, typeface, space before and after the paragraph, and more. To use such a style, you pick it from the style field, the first drop-down on the format toolbar. The experts suggest a set of styles, FirstLine, LongCite, Dialog, whatever fits your taste and output. Creating these styles is of course a separate subject.

This article was based on Microsoft Word 2002 SP3, but should be applicable to all recent versions of Word.

Al Gruber is a longtime member of SouthEastern Michigan Computer Organization, Inc. (SEMCO) and has written several articles for the DATA BUS. He gets his brief style from writing online help screens.

Apple's New Safari Browser for WINDOWS
By Ira Wilsker

Apple recently released a free version of its Safari 3 browser for Windows. While this is the first public release of an Apple produced browser for Windows, many of us already have some Apple software on our computers. Many of us have viewed QuickTime videos on our computers, and QuickTime is a long-standing Apple product.

One may ask why Apple would produce a browser for Windows, when there are other, well-established Windows browsers available. Microsoft's Internet Explorer still has the vast majority of Windows browser market, followed in distant second by Firefox, and then Opera and Netscape. According to published reports, Apple sees Safari 3 for Windows as a marketing tool to better acquaint Windows users with Apple products, in the hopes that they would buy more Apple offerings, such as the new iPhone. The default startup page for Safari, which is easy to change, is an Apple marketing and support website.

I already have four browsers installed on my main computer, with Firefox being my primary browser, followed by Internet Explorer with occasional use, and Opera and Netscape that I

only rarely use. There is no conflict or problem having more than one browser installed, as they do not interfere with each other. Despite what I already have installed, curiosity dictated that I download and install Safari 3. Clicking on the download link at <http://www.apple.com/safari> offered the choice of two Windows downloads, a 28 meg download of Safari with QuickTime for XP or Vista, or a smaller 8 meg download of just the Safari for XP and Vista. As may be already obvious, Safari for Windows will only run on computers with XP or Vista.

Apple has done a good job trying to create demand for Safari for Windows, by proximately posting relative performance information on the main Safari website. According to Apple, Safari can load web pages about twice as fast as Internet Explorer version 7, and 1.6 times faster than Firefox. Java scripts execute 2.8 times faster in Safari 3 than they do in Internet Explorer 7, and 1.6 times faster than Firefox. Application load time of Safari 3 is also faster than Internet Explorer or Firefox, while the much smaller Opera loads in about the same time as Safari 3. If Apple's claimed performance advantage survives scrutiny of the trade media, then it may indeed have an edge in the highly competitive market.

I downloaded the full version of Safari 3 with QuickTime. And it installed smoothly with minimal effort. Upon loading Safari 3 the first time, it was immediately apparent that the look and feel of Safari is definitely Apple-esque. While the interface was clean and intuitive, it lacked some of the flair and color of Internet Explorer and Firefox, with a flat gray toolbar and border, which Apple calls "elegant."

The commands and structure of the toolbar are similar to other browsers, and required a "zero" learning curve. As is now universal in other recent browser releases, Safari 3 offers tabbed browsing, where multiple browser windows can be sequentially opened in a single application. Safari 3 is a full featured browser, with easy to use bookmarks, an integral pop-up blocker, integrated search function, auto-completion of forms, a built in RSS reader, and other features. One somewhat unique feature is "SnapBack", which allows the user to quickly return to previously viewed web pages more efficiently than using the "back" button. An interesting privacy feature is the "Private Browsing" feature (found in the "Edit" menu), which turns off any saving or record of websites visited (history), searches made, cookies received, forms filled, and other current information. In terms of security, Safari 3 supports all of the major Internet encryption standards, and proxy configurations. One feature I liked is that Safari 3 automatically imported the bookmarks from my other browsers, allowing me immediate access to the websites I typically visit using those other browsers.

Safari 3 allows the use of plug-ins, much like Firefox. Unlike the well-established Firefox, with thousands of open source plug-ins available, the recently released Safari 3 only lists six plug-ins at its site at <http://www.apple.com/safari/download/plugins.html>. These six plug-ins offer features that may already be integrated into other browsers, such as an Acrobat PDF viewer, Java, Flash viewer, Real Player, QuickTime, and Windows Media Player. As Safari 3 gains popularity

among Windows users, it is conceivable that more plug-ins may appear.

There is a potentially interesting feature built into Safari 3 that I personally do not yet feel comfortable with, but others may find very useful; this feature is "Bonjour for Windows." Bonjour <http://www.apple.com/bonjour> allows the user to network computers, printers, and other smart devices through the Safari 3 browser. Bonjour uses the open standard IP protocol, and can connect items hard wired through an Ethernet cable, or wirelessly through an 802.11 system. One example that Apple lists is using Bonjour to automatically configure a printer by going to an appropriate Bonjour compatible website, which provides the information to configure the printer. Apple lists printers from Brother, Canon, Epson, HP, Lexmark, and Xerox that are compatible with the Bonjour feature.

In using Safari 3 for Windows for a few days, I noticed some interesting usability features. One I especially liked was the feature that allows the size of the screen fonts to be instantly changed, which may improve readability of a web page. The feature in Safari 3 is identical to the same feature in Firefox, and uses the same command (CTRL +) to make the fonts larger, and "CTRL −" to make them smaller. This feature in Safari 3 is superior and more flexible than the method used in Internet Explorer to change font sizes. In terms of readability, most web sites were easier to read in Safari 3 than in Internet Explorer 7. I did notice some minor negative difference between Safari and the others, and that was in terms of page formatting. One minor annoyance was displayed when viewing my weather page <http://www. beaumontweather.com> which is written in fairly pure HTML, the basic web page language. On Safari 3 some items that used the HTML "center" command did not appear centered, while the same items looked fine in Firefox or Internet Explorer. On some other pages, such as the starting page for a local TV station, some graphics do not appear to load at first, but this is usually rectified by reloading the page. Except for these anomalies, almost all other web pages I visited appeared correctly, and were very readable.

I found Safari 3 to be an attractive alternative to Internet Explorer, and may be of interest to those who might want to try something different in terms of a browser. It is clean and full featured, as is typical for Apple products. As another free browser, users may want to download it and try it.

WEBSITES:
<http://www.apple.com/safari>
<http://www.apple.com/safari/download/plugins.html>

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[*Three security holes in Safari for Windows were reportedly found within hours of its release and more holes have reportedly been found since. Several of these flaws are claimed to be applicable to Safari on OSX also. To Apple's credit, they responded quickly to the discovery of the flaws and have released fixes for Safari for Windows in the form of version 3.0.1. It should be remembered that Safari for Windows is still in Public Beta.* —Ed.]

These online spoofs and shams have made the rounds on Web sites and through e-mail. Perhaps you even believed one or two of them yourself.

Obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups.

Though some of these deceptions originated years ago, the originals—and dozens of variants—continue to make the rounds. If you keep a patient vigil over your e-mail, you too may eventually spot a message urging you to FORWARD THIS TO EVERYONE YOU KNOW!!! And if you haven't had enough when you finish reading this article, take a hoax test at the Museum of Hoaxes, and then hop over to Snopes, the premier myth-dispelling site for coverage of zillions of other falsifications.

Hoaxes 1 Through 5

From the supposed last photo taken at the top of the World Trade Center to the endlessly revised request for assistance from a Nigerian functionary, here are our top five Web and e-mail hoaxes.

1. The Accidental Tourist (2001)

Quite possibly the most famous hoax picture ever, this gruesome idea of a joke traveled around the Web and made a grand tour of e-mail inboxes everywhere soon after the tragedy of September 11. It depicts a tourist standing on the observation deck of one of the World Trade Center towers, unknowingly posing for a picture as an American Airlines plane approaches in the background.

At first glance, it appears to be real, but if you examine certain details, you'll see that it's a craftily modified image. For starters, the plane that struck the WTC was a wide-body Boeing 767; the one in the picture is a smaller 757. The approach of the plane in the picture is from the north, yet the building it would have hit—the North tower—didn't have an outdoor observation deck. Furthermore, the South tower's outdoor deck didn't open until 9:30 a.m. on weekdays, more than half an hour after the first plane struck the WTC. The picture is a hoax, through and through—and not a particularly amusing one, under the circumstances.

Image courtesy of Snopes.com.

2. Sick Kid Needs Your Help (1989)

This gem had its roots in reality. It all began in 1989, when nine-year-old cancer patient Craig Shergold thought of a way to achieve his dream of getting into the Guinness Book of World Records. Craig asked people to send greeting cards, and boy, did they. By 1991, 33 million greeting cards had been sent, far surpassing the prior record. Ironically, however, the Guinness World Records site doesn't contain any mention of Craig Sherwood or a "most greeting cards received" record, presumably, because the fine folks at the site don't want to encourage anyone to

try to break his mark. (Astonishingly, Guinness doesn't have an entry for world's stoutest person, either, but it does honor the World's Largest Tankard of Beer.)

Fortunately, doctors succeeded in removing the tumor, and Craig is now a healthy adult, but his appeal for cards has turned into the hoax that won't die. Variations on the theme include a sick girl dying of cancer, and a little boy with leukemia whose dying wish is to start an eternal chain letter. A recent iteration tells a tragic tale of a girl who supposedly was horribly burned in a fire at Wal-Mart, and then claims that AOL will pay all of her medical bills if only you forward this e-mail to EVERYONE YOU KNOW!!! Okay, enough already.

Image courtesy of Snopes.com.

3. Bill Gates Money Giveaway (1997)

No, it's true. I thought it was a scam, but it happened to a buddy of mine. It seems that Microsoft is testing some new program for tracing e-mail, and the company needs volunteers to help try the thing out. He forwarded me an e-mail that he received from Microsoft—and get this, from Bill Gates himself! Two weeks later, as a reward for participating, my pal received a check for thousands of dollars! Sure he did. Another version of this hoax claims that AOL's tracking service is offering a cash reward. Tell you what—when you get your check, send me 10 percent as a finder's fee, okay?

4. Five-Cent E-Mail Tax (1999)

"Dear Internet Subscriber," the e-mail starts. "The Government of the United States is quietly pushing through legislation that will affect your use of the Internet." It goes on to reveal that "Bill 602P" will authorize the U.S. Postal Service to assess a charge of five cents for every e-mail sent. Not a bad way to cut down on the number of dopey e-mail chain letters and lame jokes people let loose on the world. But credulous curse averters and connoisseurs of boffo laffs can relax: This e-mail alert, which popped up in 1999 and comes back for a visit every year or so, just isn't true. Still, it sounded plausible enough to fool Hillary Clinton during a 2000 debate when she was running for the Senate.

5. Nigerian 419 E-Mail Scam (2000)

"DEAR SIR," the e-mail starts. "FIRSTLY I MUST FIRST SOLICIT YOUR CONFIDENCE IN THIS TRANSACTION; LET ME START BY INTRODUCING MYSELF PROPERLY…" I'm sure you've received one of these—a confidential, urgent e-mail message promising you a reward of mucho dinero for helping this person convey money abroad. All you need do in return is entrust your name and bank account number to the government bureaucrat (or his uncle, aunt, or cousin, the ostensible "credit officer with the union bank of Nigeria

plc (uba) Benin branch") who needs your help.

It's the Nigerian con, also known as an Advanced Fee Fraud or 419 scam (so called because of the section number of the Nigerian criminal code that applies to it). Ancestors of these scams appeared in the 1980s, when the media of choice were letters or faxes—and they're still wildly successful at snagging people. In fact, Oprah recently featured a victim of the Nigerian scam on her show. And if you think that smart, educated folks couldn't possibly fall for it, you'll be surprised when you read "The Perfect Mark," a New Yorker magazine article profiling a Massachusetts psychotherapist who was duped—and lost a fortune.

To see how the hoax works, visit Scamorama <http://www.scamorama.com/bunyan.html>, a fascinating site that features a progression of e-mail messages stringing along 419 scammers, sometimes for months at a time. Finally, check out the 3rd Annual Nigerian E-Mail Conference <http://j-walk.com/other/conf>, an absolutely perfect spoof.

6. It's Kidney Harvesting Time (1996)

The subject line is laden with exclamation points: "Travelers Beware!!!" If that's not enough to get your attention, the chilling story certainly will. The message warns that an organ-harvesting crime ring is drugging tourists in New Orleans and Las Vegas, snatching their "extra" kidneys, selling the organs to non-Hippocratic hospitals, and leaving the victims to wake up in a bathtub full of ice and find a brief note that explains the situation and conveniently identifies the phone number of the nearest emergency room. Hey, maybe they'll get lucky and the hospital will have a compatible replacement kidney on hand. But travelers, fear not!!! According to the National Kidney Foundation, this scenario has never actually occurred—though it does have the makings of a great horror flick. (Freddy's Last Harvest, anyone?)

7. You've Got Virus! (1999 and on)

There's isn't a Teddy Bear virus. Nor is there a sulfnbk.exe or A Virtual Card for You ("the WORST VIRUS EVER!!!…CNN ANNOUNCED IT. PLEASE SEND THIS TO EVERYONE YOU KNOW!!!").

The jdbgmgr.exe hoax (also known as Teddy Bear because the jdbgmgr.exe file is represented by a teddy bear icon) warned recipients of the e-mail message that they were at risk of infection from a virus sent via address books or Microsoft Messenger, and that they should delete the file immediately. But in reality there was no virus—and unfortunately, jdbgmgr.exe was a necessary Java file. The sulfnbk.exe hoax nailed even advanced users with its insistence that the file—a legit one that's used for fixing long file names—was a virus. Lots of people removed it.

Similarly, A Virtual Card for You claimed that McAfee had discovered a virus that, when opened, would destroy the hard drive on an infected system and would automatically send itself to everyone on the user's e-mail contacts list. Of course, it didn't do anything except scare people. So before you forward an e-mail virus warning to anyone (especially to me), look it up on Sophos <http://www.sophos.com/search> or Vmyths <http://www.vmyths.com> to make sure it isn't a fraud.

8. Microsoft Buys Firefox (2006)

Talk about scaring the entire open-source community. In October 2006, a previously unknown Web site popped up, announcing Microsoft's acquisition of Firefox and promoting the company's new Microsoft Firefox 2007 Professional. The site talks glowingly about the browser's new features and provides a video advertisement for the product. It was a great prank, and the image of the Microsoft Firefox 2007 box was so elaborate and professional looking that the blood pressure of real Firefox users went sky-high.

9. The Really Big Kitty (2001)

There are big cats and then there are even bigger cats. This one, reportedly tipping the scales at almost 90 pounds, was enormous. The claim seemed plausible and even snookered a lot of e-mail cynics (I'm raising my hand)—until they read the accompanying

copy, that is. With nonsense about the owner working at Atomic Energy of Canada Limited, and more balderdash about nuclear reactors, the jig was up. Eventually, the cat's owner fessed up to a creative Photoshop session, though he claimed that he never expected anyone to believe the photo was real.

Image courtesy of Snopes.com.

10. $250 Cookie Recipe (1996)

The woman loved the cookie she had just nibbled at a Neiman Marcus cafe in Houston, so she asked her waiter for the recipe. "Two-fifty," he said, and she agreed without hesitation, instructing him to add it to her tab. But when the woman's Visa bill arrived, it read $250, instead of $2.50. Bent on revenge, she proceeded to ask you to blast the recipe to—okay, ready?—EVERYONE YOU KNOW!!! Like many hoaxes, this one predated the Internet, only to resurface in the electronic age. It appeared in a cookbook in the late 1940s as the $25 fudge cake, popped up in the 1960s as the Waldorf-Astoria red-velvet cake

recipe, and re-emerged in the 1970s as the Mrs. Fields cookie recipe.

Hoaxes 11 Through 15

This group of five begins with a phony e-mail message promising money and other prizes from Disney, and ends with the classic deaf-to-reason arguments of the Apollo moon landing deniers.

11. Free Vacation Courtesy of Disney (1998)

Dear Goofy… Forward this e-mail chain letter to everybody under the sun and, once 13,000 people have received it, Walt Disney Jr. will send five grand each to 1,300 lucky people on this list. And "the rest will recieve a free trip for two to Disney for one week during the summer of 1999." Is that Disney World, Disneyland—or Walt's house? The "Jr." after Disney, in reference to a nonexistent person, ought to have been the first clue that this was a hoax. And the misspelling of "receive" was the clincher (remember, hoaxters, "i" before "e" except after "c"). Yet people forwarded the message around the world using the time-honored e-mail chain letter adage: I'm sending it to you…just in case it's true.

12. Sunset Over Africa (2003)

Now that's a dazzling photo of Africa and Europe, taken right around sunset from the Space Shuttle Columbia. What makes the image especially amazing is that, while London remains in daylight, night has fallen in Italy (a little to the southeast) and the bright lights of Rome, Naples, and Venice are blazing. Too bad it's a digitally altered photo, most likely layered from multiple satellite images. To see an accurate, computer-generated illustration, check out the World Sunlight Map <http://www.die. net/earth>.

Image courtesy of Snopes.com.

13. Alien Autopsy at Roswell, New Mexico (1995)

Roswell, New Mexico: ground zero of UFO controversy. It's also where the movie of the Roswell alien autopsy was filmed 60 years ago. The story goes that a UFO crashed at this site, and the U.S. government performed a hush-hush autopsy on the dead alien. In the mid-1990s, unnamed individuals "discovered" the secret film and posted it for the edification of a disinformed public. Looks pretty real, right? Now fast-forward to 2006 and a conspiracy-deflating admission: The movie is a hoax created in 1995 by John Humphreys, the animator famous for Max Headroom, in his apartment in north London.…Or was it???

14. Real-Time GPS Cell Phone Tracking (2007)

Have you heard about the Web site that can track the location of your cell phone in real time? It uses satellite GPS in combination with Google Maps, and it's amazingly accurate (not to mention a disturbing invasion of privacy). Go ahead, check it out yourself by going to

the SunSat Satellite Solutions <http://www.sat-gps-locate.com> site and tracking your own cell phone's location. Select your country, type in your cell phone number, click the Start Searching button, and wait for it. (This is one of the year's best pranks. And I won't give away the ending.)

15. Apollo Moon Landing Hoax (1969)

You're aware that we never landed on the moon, right? It was all just an elaborate hoax designed to score Cold War points for the United States against the Soviet Union in a world of falling dominoes. The whole lunar landing thing? It was a video staged at movie studios and top-secret locations.

Okay, you can stop laughing now, but some sites, such as Apollo Reality <http://web.archive.org/web/20040609120420/www.geocities.com/apolloreality> and Moon Landing <http://web.archive.org/web/20010407065641/thepeoplesrevolution.tripod.com/moonlanding.htm>, still insist that the Eagle never landed. Of course, enemies of Flat Earthism will point to the Rocket and Space Technology <http://www.braeunig.us/space/hoax.htm> site, which does an in-depth job of debunking the hoax. But true

www.moontruth.com

disbelievers should check out this terrific video spoof <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mouUUWpEec0>, complete with outtakes showing lights and cameras.

Hoaxes 16 Through 20

The world of weird eBay auction items starts off this page, which concludes with a photo hoax purporting to show a 1950s-era vision of the home computer of tomorrow.

16. Sell It on eBay! (1995)

You won't believe what people have sold on eBay—some of the items pranks, some of them for real, and some, well, it's hard to tell. For a sampling of the weird, you need look no further than a haunted tree stump and a pork chop shaped like a grizzly bear. The Internet itself once went on the market at a modest starting bid of a million bucks, as have a dozen spontaneous images of the Virgin Mary (on toast, on windows, and heaven only knows where else). Bidders have also had a shot at someone's soul, a guy's virginity, and a human kidney, with the price of this last item having reached $5.7 million before eBay pulled the plug. (Hey, guys, don't you know that what you lose in Las Vegas is supposed to stay in Las Vegas?)

But my favorite eBay offering involves a tattooed guy who, as a joke, dressed up in his ex-wife's size 12 wedding gown and put it up for auction. Only, the dress ended up selling for $3850, and the guy got five marriage proposals. Nice.

17. Chinese Newspaper Duped (2002)

Information on the Internet may want to be free—but if it's posted by a for-profit publisher, you'd better take it with a grain of salt.

That's the lesson learned by China's Beijing Evening News, which was taken in by the Onion's Capitol Dome spoof. Famous for its authentic-sounding but tongue-in-cheek articles steeped in the language of the Associated Press, the Onion <http://www.theonion.com> reported that Congress had threatened to leave Washington, D.C., and head for Memphis unless the District agreed to erect a new domed Capitol building with a retractable roof and luxury box seating. Having accepted most of the Onion article at face value, the Chinese newspaper at first stood by its source in the face of international derision and refused to back down. When it finally published a retraction, it blamed the Onion for the confusion: "Some small American newspapers frequently fabricate offbeat news to trick people into noticing them with the aim of making money." Right.

18. The Muppets Have Not Already Won (2001)

In early October 2001, just prior to the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan, protesters at an anti-American rally in Bangladesh showed their support for Osama bin Laden by marching, chanting, and waving placards. One of the posters captured on film by Reuters News Agency was a photo-montage of the Al-Qaeda leader, and in one of the shots a yellow felt puppet to his right glowers furiously at the camera. It's…Bert of Sesame Street. Originally a Zelig-inspired creation of San Francisco Webmaster Dino Ignacio, the satirical Web site Bert Is Evil <http://www.bertisevil.tv> depicted Bert hobnobbing with the worst of the worst in history, tormenting his roommate Ernie, and generally reveling in wickedness. After Ignacio retired from active efforts to expose Bert's career of evil, others filled the Photoshop void, capturing the cone-headed miscreant with all the latest baddies-du-jour.

Evidently, the company responsible for printing the pro-Osama poster found the doctored dual portrait irresistible, although (according to the Urban Legends References Pages <http://www.snopes.com/rumors/bert.htm>) its production manager claims to have produced about 2000 copies of the Osama-and-Bert poster without realizing "what they signified." Well, if you can't trust pictures you find on the Internet, what can you trust?

Image courtesy of Snopes.com.

19.Chevrolet's Not-So-Better Idea (2006)

The ad folks at Chevrolet thought they had a winner: Let site visitors create their own 30-second commercial for the company's 2007 Chevy Tahoe SUV. It'll be fun, they probably thought. We'll give them a choice of video clips and soundtracks, and let them add their own text captions. Yep, viral marketing at its best.

Unfortunately for Chevrolet, a few pranksters decided to use the opportunity to express what they thought of the SUV. One commercial said, "Like this snowy wilderness? Better get your fill of it now. Then say hello to global warming." Another lambasted the SUV as a gas guzzler: "Our planet's oil is almost gone. You don't need G.P.S. to see where this road leads."

20. Rand's 1954 Home Computer (2004)

This intriguing image of a room-size computer made the rounds of the Internet, accompanied by a breathless blurb: "This article is from an issue of 1954 'Popular Mechanics' magazine forecasting the possibility of 'home computers' in 50 years." The steering wheel in the picture is the predecessor to today's mouse, and the keyboard looks like those on teletype machines. It even comes complete with a guy right out of the Eisenhower era.

Cool stuff, and easy to believe—but it's not a 1950s Rand Corporation mockup of what a prototype home computer might look like. It's actually a shot that was taken of a submarine display at the Smithsonian Institution and subsequently modified for inclusion in a Fark.com <http://www.fark.com> image-manipulation competition.

Hoaxes 21 Through 25

Our final five takes you from the ultimate instance of Microsoft hubris to an ill-conceived experiment in Internet democracy (or is that Internet anarchy?).

21. Microsoft Buys Catholic Church (1994)

More than a decade ago, an e-mail press release—from Vatican City, no less—landed in my inbox. Microsoft was announcing that it was in the process of acquiring the Roman Catholic Church in exchange for an unspecified number of shares of Microsoft common stock. The story was a prank, but it sure looked real, circulating for months and perhaps worrying residents of the Holy See.

Just think: If the press release had been true, it might have stopped the Vatican from using Linux. And no, I'm not kidding about the Linux part. Watch this video interview <http://scobleizer. com/2007/02/19/the-geeky-sister-behind-vaticans-website> with the woman who helped build the Vatican's Web site.

22. Hercules, the Enormous Dog (2007)

Wow, that dog's almost as big as the horse. That's what I thought when I first looked at this e-mail. The picture depicts a couple, one walking a horse, the other holding the leash of Hercules, a 282-pound English Mastiff and "The World's Biggest Dog Ever According to Guinness World Records."

Horsepucky. Here's my analysis of the Photoshop modifications. First, take a close look at the grass under the people and the animals. The area has been subtly lightened in order to make all of the shadows match and look authentic. Next, examine the shadows and you'll notice two anomalies: First, the shadows

of the dog and the man start at their feet, but the same doesn't hold true for the horse. Second, the woman's shadow is missing altogether; instead, the man's shadow extends in front of her. Oh and by the way, the Guinness World Records site doesn't have a listing for Hercules or for the world's biggest dog. Okay, okay, so the pictures of the big kitty and the big dog are both fakes—but have you seen the shot of Craig Sherwood riding the world's largest jackelope?

23. Lights-Out Gang Member Initiation (1998)

People have a tendency to believe e-mail messages that come from authority figures. In 1998, a message purportedly from a police officer working with the DARE program circulated around the Internet. It warned recipients not to flash their lights to inform oncoming cars that their headlamps were off. According to the message, a recently devised gang initiation ritual involved having new gang members drive at night with their headlights turned off until an oncoming car flashed its lights at them; then, in order to become initiated, they were to shoot everyone in that car. It's just another urban myth—and about as silly as the one claiming that gangs mark off their territory by hanging sneakers from power lines.

24. Hurricane Lili Waterspouts (2002)

It's weird, it's disturbing, and it's seemingly plausible—all of the elements necessary for a successful e-mail forward. The image shows three dark waterspouts in the distance. The subject is "here comes lili," and the e-mail began appearing in inboxes at about the same time that Hurricane Lili started battering the Louisiana coastline. But three waterspouts, all neatly lined up? According to About.com, the National Weather Service labeled the picture a hoax and said that it was a modification of a genuine photo taken in 2001 by a crewmember of the Edison Chouest Offshore supply boat "C-Rambler".

25. Pranks Shut Down Los Angeles Times Wiki (2005)

It seemed like a bright idea. The LA Times' "A Wiki for Your Thoughts" fandango asked readers to chime in on the newspaper's editorials via a Wiki. In their explanation of how it would work, the editors even acknowledged that "It sounds nutty." Yet they went ahead with it—and achieved disastrous results.

The Wikitorial (the name was nearly as dumb as the scheme) brought out the best and then the worst in readers. On the first day, an editorial about the war in Iraq prompted civil and thoughtful contributions. On day two, pranksters littered the unmoderated Wiki with rude comments, pornography, and profanity. The Webmaster removed the offending entries, but only after they were available for public viewing. By the next morning, the publisher had dismantled the Wiki.

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There are 10 types of people—those who understand binary and those who don't.

Windows XP Upgrade to Vista
By Vinny La Bash

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Previous versions of Windows always accepted an installation disk as proof you had a legitimate copy of Windows. This entitled you to install the upgrade version of the latest release of the operating system. Vista doesn't work the same way. The only thing it will recognize is a copy of Windows already installed on a hard drive. Why Microsoft did this remains a mystery, but perhaps there really are things that mere mortals are not meant to know.

Don't go out and splurge on a full version of Vista. Read on and save some money. There are four primary versions of Vista:

Vista Home Basic
Vista Home Premium
Vista Business
Vista Ultimate

The difference between the full and upgrade versions of each variation of Vista ranges between $72 and $155. Even though Vista is a big improvement over XP, why spend the extra money for a full version if you don't have to?

If you're attempting to upgrade from a version of XP or Windows 2000 that's already installed on your hard drive, the upgrade version of Vista will install as soon as it recognizes the older version of Windows on your system. However, if you've formatted your hard drive, Vista refuses to accept an installation disk from a previous version of Windows as evidence that you do indeed own a

legitimate copy of Microsoft's flagship product.

Fortunately, there is a legitimate method to work around this otherwise severe and unnecessary restriction. There is an undocumented procedure that allows you to do a full clean install of Vista to a physical hard drive without a previous version of the operating system installed.

The setup program in the Vista upgrade is the tool that lets you perform a full clean install of the product. In addition to XP and Windows 2000, Vista will recognize a copy of itself that has not yet been activated. What if we install Vista twice? We are going to install Vista, and then "upgrade" to Vista. Before you do ANYTHING, please read the entire 20 step procedure first. I'll wait while you do this. OK, let's get started.

1. Boot your PC from the Vista DVD.
2. In the dialog box that comes up select "Install Now." DO NOT enter the product key at this time. You'll do that later.
3. Turn off the option that says "Automatically activate Windows when I'm online."
4. Another dialog box comes up. Confirm the Vista installation without the product key.
5. Tell the installation program what version of Vista you're installing. Don't fib about this.
6. This step is important. Select the "Custom (Advanced)" install, NOT the "Upgrade" install.
7. Wait for the install program to copy files. Your system will probably reboot several times. Don't touch anything. Let the install complete.
8. Eject the installation DVD WITHOUT activating Vista.

9. Reboot to make sure everything is working OK.
10. Reinsert the Vista installation disc and run setup again.
11. Click "Install Now."
12. Select "Do not get the latest updates for installation." You can do that later.
13. Enter the product key.
14. Turn off the option to "Automatically activate Windows when I'm online."
15. Now select "Upgrade," not "Custom (Advanced)." This is where you do the actual "upgrade" to Vista.
16. Pay attention! Don't do anything while the setup program copies files and does a reboot.
17. At some point the system will ask if you would like to boot from the DVD. Decline the invitation.
18. No matter what happens on the screen, leave the keyboard and mouse alone. Resist the urge to do something. Vista setup is making all the right choices for you automatically.
19. The Thank You dialog box will eventually appear. Click Start.
20. Vista's login screen will come up shortly. Enter the user name and password you created during the first installation.

Congratulations! You're finished upgrading to Vista, but you still have a housekeeping chore to perform. You have to activate Vista within 30 days of installation or it will cease working properly. To activate Vista:

1. Reboot your machine.
2. The Welcome Center appears.
3. Click "Show more details."
4. Click "Activate Windows" now.
5. Activation will now take place automatically over the Internet.

It is unknown why Microsoft programmed this procedure into the setup program. My conjecture is that the procedure was implemented for the convenience of programmers while testing the product and someone decided that it was too much trouble to remove. Another possibility is that when Microsoft management gave the order to stop development and concentrate on fixing bugs, there was no time to remove the feature before product release. Whatever the case may be, let's use Microsoft's perhaps unintentional gift to save a few bucks.

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Vista Alternatives Part II
By Brian K. Lewis, Ph.D.
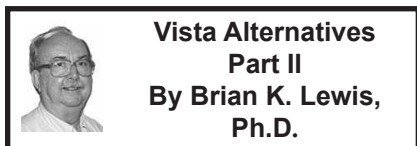
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This article is being written in the Linux version of Open Office 2.0 on a computer that uses Ubuntu as the operating system (OS). Since this system is now networked with my Windows XP computers, both desktop and laptop, I can easily transfer files between the computers. I am also able to print from this Linux computer to my laser printer over the Windows network. So what did I have to do to accomplish this?

The first thing I had to do was to install a copy of Samba on this Linux computer. Ubuntu has an Add/Remove graphic interface for the Synaptic Package Manager. This has a one-click download install for new applications. The Samba package that was installed had a GsambaD graphic front end. This turned out to be very frustrating as it insisted I had to be logged in as Root to run the application. Now with most Linux versions this would be a simple change of user. Root is usually the designated Administrator and is the only user allowed to alter system files and add/remove software. There is also a user that has fewer privileges. (Sounds somewhat like Vista, doesn't it?) However, in Ubuntu, the user is also the administrator. To carry out any functions that require administrator privilege, the OS asks for the password. The idea being that only one password is required for the user to remember. Anyway, the GsambaD software refused to acknowledge that I was the administrator and didn't ask for a password, it simply shut down after presenting me with the error message.

The next step was to manually edit the samba configuration file. I did have to do some searching through the Ubuntu on-line forum in order to find some help on the lines I needed to edit. It also required some facility with the command line mode (terminal) in Ubuntu. Obviously, if you are not comfortable making these types of changes, this OS are not for you. Until Ubuntu is able to install peripherals and local networking functions as easily as does Windows, it will not attract a truly large following.

So after making the configuration changes and re-booting the system, I

went to the Places → Connect to Server menu. Immediately on clicking on that line, an icon was placed on the desktop and a window opened up showing the shared folders on my WinXP computer. I had no problem pulling up data files or PDF files and reading them. On my Windows computer, I also found a new icon in the "My Network Places" folder. This was the icon for the Ubuntu computer. Here I was also able to read the folders and located data files that could be opened on the Windows computer. So the file sharing was successful.

My next complication was to setup a network printer. This had not worked in any of my previous attempts. Now that I was definitely connected to the Windows network, I tried again. Going to System → Administration → Printing brought up a window with an Add Printer icon. This time by following the instructions in each window, I was able to install my networked laser printer. When I indicated that I wanted to install a networked printer there were a series of windows to go through. I had to change the designation from a CUPS printer to a Windows (SMB) printer. Then using the drop-down list, I was able to select the name of the Windows computer. The next line also had a drop down list and I was able to select the name of the laser printer. The list did show both of the networked printers. The most difficult part of the printer install was locating the device driver file. First, I had to select the manufacturer and the printer model. Then I was asked to locate the PPD driver file. I had to go back to the file management search function to find the folder where the driver files are located. Search is located at the bottom of the Places menu. The folder

turned out to be at the end of this path: File system-usr → share → ppd. Yes, the folders in Linux have names that are not always straightforward. It takes some getting used to the differences. Once that was done, the last window asked for a description and a location. For the location, I typed in the name of the Windows computer. Once back at the Add Printer window the laser printer icon appeared. Then I right-clicked, opened Properties and did a test print. The test print came through much faster than it did when I had tried printing from Windows Vista. So at least I had one printer that I could use with the Ubuntu OS.

The next thing I wanted to test was using a dual boot setup. I had Windows Vista installed on this computer but the changes to the boot menu to allow a choice of booting Vista didn't work. So, I tried another tactic. I installed the latest version of Linspire. After its installation I rebooted the system and ended up back in Ubuntu. So, after using the Linspire CD to force the boot from the Linspire partition I printed out the Linspire loader file. Then I used that information to edit the Ubuntu loader. I added five lines of code that I had copied from the Linspire loader file. After saving the file, I rebooted the computer and brought up the boot menu. Linspire was listed as the first application in the list. Pressing return selected this item and Linspire loaded. So now, I had a dual boot system with Linspire and Ubuntu.

One of the first things I accomplished in Linspire was installing the network printer. Linspire automatically installed Samba so I didn't have that to do. In the graphic printer installation, I was able to select a network printer as the type. Next, I provided the network name; the

server name and the application found my networked printers. After that, it was simply a process of letting the installer find and install the printer driver and run a test print. I still don't have my inkjet connected to either Linspire or Ubuntu. That will be another project.

Finally, I checked on the networking ability of Linspire. It found my Windows XP computer with no problems. Then I had to figure out how to list the Windows folders I wanted to show in the Linspire file manager. Every time I tried to bring up the Windows "My Documents" folder, it would appear to be empty. Since I knew that wasn't correct I went back into the Linspire Network Share Manager and tried to figure out the problem. When I would put in the folder name, I would get a bad share name error. So then, I made the entire Windows C drive shareable. That worked but I still couldn't get any files or folders listed under my user name. I tried using the Windows user name and password but that didn't work either. Finally, I used the Admin user name and password and that worked! Now I can browse all of the folders and files in the Windows "My Documents" folder. The Linspire "My Documents" folder also shows in the "My Network Places" on the Windows computer. So, I can now move files and folders either direction on my local network. The final network setup was to connect my laptop to the wireless network and see if it was visible in Linspire. The laptop immediately found the Linspire computer and I was able to transfer a number of files with no difficulty. However, I did have to first provide the Administrator name and password.

After playing with Linspire for a time I went back to Ubuntu. Most Linux distributions don't come with any anti-virus software. Both Linspire and Ubuntu do include a built-in firewall. So, I wanted to add an anti-virus. Since my Windows anti-virus of choice is Avast I checked their web page first. They do have a Linux version of their free home edition and it was a Debian package. Both Linspire and Ubuntu are Debian based versions of Linux. This, again, is one of my preferences as I find it easier to obtain and install software packages based on Debian. So, I downloaded the Debian version of Avast. Clicking the install package Ubuntu brought up a menu asking if I wanted to install the package using "Gdebi Package Installer" and I clicked on OK. The installation took no time at all, but I couldn't find Avast on any of the menus. So, I went to the Avast forum on the web and looked through some of the Linux questions. Not surprisingly, there were a number of questions related to installation on Ubuntu systems. I found a command line entry fairly quickly. So I copied it and pasted it into a Terminal window. That put an Avast icon in the Applications → Accessories menu. The next problem was when I clicked the icon it immediately asked me for a license key. I had found a comment in the forum that you could use a Windows Avast key for the Linux installation. Since I had a license key that I obtained for Vista that I was no longer using, I typed it in, pressed Enter and Avast came up in the graphic interface. With one click I did an update on the virus database. Then with another, I started a full system scan. So, Avast is now protecting my Ubuntu installation.

There was another application that I wanted to install on the Linux systems. This is Picasa, a photo editing and

organizing application. It is produced by Google and is another example of quality freeware. I use it for downloads from my digital camera, for photo editing and for e-mailing photos. Picasa automatically compresses photos for e-mailing. For Linspire I was able to find Picasa in the Click-n-Run (CNR) warehouse. So, that was a single click to have it downloaded and installed on the hard drive. In Ubuntu I had to go to the Picasa web site and find the download page and select a Debian version. Once it was downloaded I double-clicked it and Gdebi installed it just as had been the Avast. In both OS's I found that Picasa worked just as cleanly as it did under Windows. Incidently, both Linux OS's identified and installed my USB card reader as soon as I plugged it into a USB port. That will make downloading photos from my camera as easy as it is in Windows.

So why have I spent so much time playing with these Linux systems? It is mainly because I see them as viable competition for Windows. Granted there is a learning curve to getting these systems running on a computer. But, that is true whenever you install any new software application. However, I believe that Linspire and Ubuntu have come a long way toward meeting the needs of Windows users. There is a wide variety of software available for these Debian versions of Linux and the download-install functions have been quite simplified. In some respects adding software to either Linspire or Ubuntu is simpler that installing software under Windows. It is only in rare instances that you have to reboot your Linux system after installing a new application. The graphic interface of both of these Linux versions has improved to the point that most Windows users would have no difficulty in making the transition. The major problem is finding drivers for peripherals. I think this is a real stumbling block for some users who might like to change from Windows. Because of this problem, I can't recommend either OS for novice users, only for those willing to do some web searching when they can't find drivers for their printers, scanners or other devices directly through the OS software.

I do have several remaining questions on my use of Linspire and Ubuntu. The first is solving my problem with a driver for my Canon printer, possibly replacing it. The second is seeing if some of my Windows software can be run on either system. There are several applications that allow Windows software to be run under a Linux OS. One is called WINE and the other is CrossOver Linux sold by CodeWeavers <http://www.codeweavers.com>. WINE is a free application <http://www.winehq.org> and CrossOver Linux sells for either $39.95 or $69.95. So, in the next few months I will continue my adventures with both Linspire and Ubuntu. You will see an occasional Linux article whenever I come across something that I think might be of interest to Windows users looking for alternatives. As for me, I intend to gradually transition all of my work to Linux.

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**The New, the Best, and the Worst—May 2007
By Pim Borman**

Google – The Rest of the Story

[*Since the original publication of this article Google has changed its main Web page. The "more" button is now on the menu bar and the drop-down menu does not list all the features described in this article, although they are still available. The easiest way to find all the Google services is to do a Google search on "google." It yields more than 40 direct references to Google offshoots.***—**Pim B.**]**

If you only use Google the way I do, using keywords to **search the Web**, you're like the polar bear walking on top of an iceberg, ignorant of all that's underneath. As scientists are finding out in the Antarctic, there is an awful lot to be learned from drilling down into the ice below, and there is a lot to be learned by drilling down in the Google menus. Go to <http://www.google.com>, click on *more…* and in the pop-up window click on *even more…* and you'll find a page full of links to Google offshoots. I'll just list some of them here, as space permits, but you may want to go see for yourself.

Google News <http://news.google.com> presents a current news update worth being bookmarked for a quick check on what's going on in the world. **Google Finance** <http://finance.google.com/finance> has all the latest financial news. **Google Alerts** <http://www.google.com/alerts> sends e-mail updates on the topics of your choice.

Monitor a developing news story, get the latest on a celebrity or event, or keep tabs on your favorite sports teams. This site is still in beta.

Froogle <http://froogle.google.com> is the place to go for online shopping. If you like to browse through catalogs, go to **Google Catalogs** <http://catalogs.google.com>. Find local businesses as well as directions for getting somewhere with **Google Maps** <http://maps.google.com/maps>. Use **Google Checkout** <http://google.checkout.com> to set up a Google account with which you can order from many participating stores and be protected against online fraud.

Search a variety of printed matter with **Book Search** <http://books.google.com>, covering the full text of books, although many publishers refuse Google permission to put the content of their books online. Scholarly publications are available in **Google Scholar** <http://scholar.google.com>, but many of the publications at best only provide an abstract to non-subscribers. Sometimes you may be able to get access to the complete articles through the Web site of your local library, such as the Evansville-Vanderburgh Public Library. Over 7 million US Patents can be searched with **Google Patent Search** <http://www.google.com/patents>.

Google Images <http://images.google.com> lets you search for images that include a title, description, or keywords. To come up with descriptions for unlabeled images Google uses an online game, **Google Image Labeler** <http://images.google.com/imagelabeler>. Two separate contestants are shown a picture and asked to come up with descriptive labels. For each label, they provide in common they earn points. It is an addictive game with the

benefit that the resulting winning labels are accurate descriptions of the image.

For general searches, use the **Google Directory** <http://www.google.com/dirhp> that organizes the Web by topic into categories. And if you have a problem locating stuff on your own computer drives, **Google Desktop** <http://desktop.google.com> will help you find it.

Other Features

Google has been extending its services beyond searching. **GMail** <http://mail.google.com> offers online e-mail accounts with many features and very large mail storage areas (several gigabytes as of this writing). **Docs and Spreadsheets** <http://docs.google.com> offers an online word processor and spreadsheet program that facilitates project cooperation between groups of persons. Additional cooperative programs are **Calendar** <http://www.google.com/calendar>, to organize your schedule and share events with friends, and **Groups** <http://groups.google.com> to create mailing lists and discussion groups.

With **Talk** <http://www.google.com/talk> you can IM and call your friends through your computer. You can also use **Blogger** <http://www.blogger.com> to create a shared online diary. **Picasa** <http://picasa.google.com> lets you edit, organize and share your photos with others, while **YouTube** <http://www.youtube.com> lets you watch, upload and share videos.

Google Earth <http://earth.google.com> is in a category of its own. It lets you roam all over the earth and zoom in on specific areas of interest.

If you want to know what else Google may come up with visit Google Labs <http://labs.google.com> for a preview.

Rebates With Manners?

I recently purchased a copy of Adobe Photoshop Elements. It came with a $20 upgrade rebate offer for which almost any photo-editing program, including Picasa2, passed muster. I sent in the box tab with a Xerox copy of my old MS PhotoDraw disc and the invoice. To my surprise, I received an e-mail, several days later, acknowledging receipt of my submission. A week later, I received a notice that "Your rebate check was mailed on 09-Apr-2007. Please allow at least 30 days for delivery." So far, so surprisingly good. I received the check on April 25, not bad for, maybe, surface mail from India.

Super Internet Creation?

Many newspapers carried an Associated Press article by Anick Jesdanun, dated April 14, 2007, about movements afoot to create a new and improved Internet from scratch to replace the current one. As the article states, "...many believe a clean slate approach is the only way to truly address security, mobility and other challenges..." For some time this has been the dream of university researchers trying out new concepts, but now "Industry is playing a bigger role this time, and law enforcement is bound to make its needs for wiretapping known." Sounds ominous.

The National Science Foundation is sponsoring several projects toward the goal of establishing an experimental network known as the Global Environment for Network Innovations, or GENI. Major universities are involved, as well as the Defense Department. The European Union has its own independent efforts underway.

The current Internet and its World Wide Web superstructure, with all its shortcomings, is a truly wonderful achievement. Twenty years ago, no one in his wildest dreams could have foreseen the worldwide scope and the extent to which it has become an integral part of our civilization. It demonstrates how natural evolution can achieve the unthinkable. And that should now be replaced by a politically correct product, created by committees of programmers and approved by international governments and "industry"? Lord help us. Let's stick with evolution.

(If you want to read the original article use Google to search for "Jesdanun Associated Press". Thanks to Linda Gonse, editor of the Orange County PCUG, for bringing the article to my attention.)

Pim Borman is a member of the SW Indiana PC Users Group, Inc

Irfanview 4.0 Freeware Image Editor and Media Player
By Ira Wilsker

Imagine a free (for non-commercial use), full featured utility that can display and edit almost all known image formats, and convert from any one format to any other. Imagine a utility that can play almost every known audio and video format with its free "Plugins" file, all in a small and very efficient software package. Some skeptics may say that this sounds too good to be true, but lucky for us, it is indeed true. The program that can do all of the above, and more is the very popular Irfanview, version 4.0 <http://www.irfanview.com>, written by a Bosnian named Irfan Skiljan. This outstanding program is not a well known secret, as the popular download site <http://www.Download.com> alone reports over 26 million downloads of Irfanview (including previous versions), with probably tens of millions of copies downloaded from countless other download resources, and over a million additional copies downloaded every month.

People send me several e-mails every day with images or videos attached, and I have Irfanview set as my default viewer and player for almost all images, audio files, and videos. Using Irfanview is fairly simple, straight forward, and somewhat intuitive. After downloading <http://www.irfanview.com> and installing the file, I recommend that the companion file "Irfanview Plugins" also be downloaded and installed. After installing the "plugins" the user is given the option to selectively choose Irfanview as the default for any or all of the file extensions it supports. It may not be a bad choice to allow Irfanview to be the default for those extensions, but the decision can be reversed if decided later.

One frequent function that I use Irfanview for on a regular basis is image editing. Recently, a relative sent me several unedited JPG digital photos of her new puppy taken at maximum resolution with a 6 megapixel digital camera. Each image was huge both in file size (several megabytes), and in viewing size. I have a big-screen monitor running at a high screen

resolution, and still could not view the entire image without scrolling, as the image size was greater than my monitor resolution. Since I opened the attached images in Irfanview, it was but a few mouse clicks to edit them down to a more manageable size; I clicked on IMAGE → RESIZE/RESAMPLE and then selected a percentage of the original size, and then saved the image in its reduced size. It is good netiquette to reduce the size of multi-megapixel images, and then e-mail the digital images in a more reasonable size such as 800x600 or 1024x768. [*If the recipient is likely to want to print a large high-resolution copy of the image, sending it at full resolution may be desirable, but for screen viewing, lower resolution should be preferred.* —Ed.] It is also good netiquette to crop the image, which can be done simply by clicking and holding the left mouse button on a corner of the desired image, and then dragging it in a frame to the desired borders of the cropped image. EDIT → CROP SELECTION will instantly produce the cropped image which can be saved or further edited.

Another purpose of Irfanview is to improve the quality of digital images by enhancing the colors. The command IMAGE → ENHANCE COLORS opens a dual pane window that shows the unedited original image and the new image with the changes applied. Possible changes that can be made include brightness, contrast, color balance, gamma, and saturation. By using a slider or manually entering values allows the user to see the effects of any changes before saving the edited image. Another selection I often utilize is the "sharpen" command on the image menu; this automatically

sharpens a fuzzy image. Other image commands include red-eye reduction, and a panorama function where separate images can automatically be knit together to make a larger panoramic image.

Readers of this column will notice that sometimes images are displayed along with the text. Most of these images are screen captures made with Irfanview. By selecting OPTIONS → CAPTURE/SCREENSHOT a hot key is then used to capture the image on the monitor. I use the default hotkey (Ctrl-F11) for image capture, crop the image as desired, and then save it in the desired format.

While there are many other image-editing features included in the program, Irfanview also shines as an audio and video player if the plugins are installed. Popular audio formats, such as MP3, RA, and WAV are fully supported, allowing this single program to play almost any audio format, with full control of volume and other technical details. There are many video formats in common use, such as MPEG, AVI, and WMV that are often used for the videos that people e-mail or display on a webpage, and Irfanview can handle almost all of them interchangeably, and can serve as an able substitute for Windows Media Player, and most other media players. Audio and video on CDs and DVDs can also be played with Irfanview.

Irfanview 4.0 will work well on all versions of Windows from 95 to Vista, and is simple enough for beginners, and sophisticated enough for professionals. The software is free for non-commercial use, and the author encourages purely voluntary contributions via PayPal. I suggest that readers of this column

download it and try it. There is no adware or spyware embedded in it, and the program has a clean and uncluttered interface. I have personally used Irfanview on an almost daily basis on all of my computers for several years, and can strongly recommend it. Try it, and you may end up liking it as much as I enjoy Irfanview.

WEBSITE

<http://www.irfanview.com>

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Build It Yourself
By Brian K. Lewis, Ph.D.

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You may never have considered building your own computer, but it is really just an assembly job. When you are familiar with the components of your system, you will find it is easier to understand and possibly diagnose problems. A couple of weeks ago I had the opportunity to assemble two new computers for one of my children. She needed two additional systems for the growing work force in her business. I had forgotten how much fun it is to put a new system together. So, I thought I would share some of the reasoning behind the selection of the components and assembling them into a working product. Even if you don't build a new computer, it might be useful the next time you are looking for a new system.

For these computers it was not necessary that they be "state of the art," so I selected an Intel Celeron D central processor (CPU). These CPUs function quite well, especially at the 3.2 Ghz speed. Since they were intended for a specific office environment the price point and the speed were ideal. However, Celeron processors do not support dual-threading nor are they dual-core processors. If you want the latest in processors then you should consider the Intel Core-2 Duo or an AMD dual processor. Another alternative would be to use a 64-bit processor instead of these 32-bit processors. The main drawback to that is that most software isn't really ready to take advantage of 64-bit processing and there are still problems with some drivers for peripheral equipment.

Once I decided on the CPU, the next step was to find an appropriate motherboard. I selected an Intel 946 series with the 775 socket. This motherboard supports Intel processors from the Celeron D to the Core-2 Duo. This makes it a good choice for any upgrades to another CPU. It also supports up to 4GB of RAM. This board also features built-in sound and video. Naturally that has both pros and cons associated with these features. With the integrated video you can run Windows Vista in the mode which uses the "Aero Glass" graphics because it borrows memory from the system RAM. As this graphic interface is one of the primary features of Vista, you would need to install a separate video card which meets the requirements of the Vista video specification. For the computers I was building this was not a problem as they will not be running Vista.

Instead I purchased 2 OEM copies of Windows XP which run very well with the integrated graphics on this Intel board.

The Intel motherboard also requires DDR2 RAM (system memory) modules which improve the processing speed over that of the original DDR RAM. It also has a front-side bus which can run at 533, 800 or 1066 MHz.

With the Celeron D this bus runs at 533 MHz. For those who are not familiar with bus speeds, the front side bus refers to the speed at which information is transferred to/from the various peripheral slots to the CPU. In today's computers this can be one of the bottlenecks for data transfer. The other is the Input/Output transfer for the hard drive. Other features of this board include 8 USB 2.0 ports, a 10/100 LAN port and four SATA hard drive ports.

I have always found Intel motherboards to be very solid and dependable performers. If I were intent on building a faster system with a Core-2 Duo or AMD processor then I would be looking for an ASUS motherboard. In general they get much stronger reviews related to state-of-the-art installations. I have also used them in a number of systems some of which are still running some five years later. So I always consider them for a top-of-the-line system.

The next item I considered was the case for these systems. The one I selected was an Antec Sonata II which is a mid-size tower. This comes with an air control system that channels air from outside the case directly to the CPU. It has a 120 mm exhaust fan and provisions for an additional fan in the front of the case. The Antec power supply provides 450 watts maximum and has two fans. The exhaust fan runs only when the power supply reaches a specific temperature. As it turned out, this was the quietest case I have ever used. The fans are really whisper quiet. With any ambient noise in the work space you really can't hear the computer. This is also related to the shock mounting of the hard drives. The hard drive cage has individual removable mounts with rubber grommets around the attachment screws. Each drive is therefore mounted on these rubber grommets and essentially no vibration is transmitted to the cage or the case.

One thing I haven't mentioned yet is the RAM I installed. For these computers, considering how they were to be used, I only installed one GB of RAM. This was one Kingston 1GB DDR2 240 pin module for each system. This leaves one slot open for additional memory should an upgrade be needed.

Installation of the components into the case is not really difficult. The first part is to screw in the motherboard supports and to replace the I/O shield at the back with the one supplied with the motherboard. I always install the CPU, the CPU fan and the RAM before I try to put the motherboard in the case. Then the trick in getting the motherboard into position is to make sure that you tilt it toward the back so it fits the I/O shield and then lay it on the supports. You generally have to put a little pressure on the front edge of the motherboard to get the screw holes lined up. Once it is screwed down you can install the power connectors and the various connectors for the LEDs and front panel USB connectors. The Antec case manual is quite helpful in this regard. The Intel instructions are all pictorial and might take some thinking if you've

never done this before. I found that the ASUS motherboard manuals are much better designed for non-commercial installers. Intel obviously figures that anyone using their motherboard has done this before.

Now we get to another really important component, the hard drive. As I mentioned earlier the motherboard supports up to four SATA (serial ATA) drives. So I selected Seagate Barracuda SATA2 160 GB hard drives for these systems. I went with Seagate because I have found over the years that they are more reliable than other brands. Even though some are now Seagate subsidiaries, I still prefer the Seagate label. Also, I would not consider installing IDE drives in any new computers. The transfer rates for SATA2 are so much better it doesn't make sense to install an IDE drive anymore. The other point is that the price of SATA2 is quite competitive with IDE. I suspect that it won't be long before it will be very difficult to find IDE drives. Oh yes, the cost of 160 GB drives is only a few dollars more than an 80 GB drive. And, you can go up to 500 GB for not much more. The attachment to the motherboard uses a power cable from the power supply and the data cable which comes with the motherboard. Each of these are keyed so they fit only one way into the drive and the motherboard.

At this point I usually do a power-on test to see if everything wakes up. So, I connect the video monitor and external power, then press the power switch. Once the power connection is made the motherboard LED lights up. Then, pressing the power on results in the case fan and CPU fan spinning. Of course, I get an error message on the monitor

that there is no operating system. But everything else looks good, so I just hold in the power button until the system powers down. Then I disconnect the power and video.

The only other internal drive that I installed was a NEC DVD burner. This fits into one of the exposed 5¼" drive slots. To get this in you have to remove one of the slot covers. The easiest way in the Antec case is to push it out from the inside. Then on the back of this cover are two rails that are removed and attached to the DVD drive with the supplied screws. Then you simply slide the drive in so it is supported by the rails. The motherboard comes with an IDE cable that attaches to the motherboard and to the drive. Each end is keyed so you really can't attach it incorrectly. These systems did not require a floppy drive.

The monitors I selected for these systems are Samsung 17" LCD. The monitors have an adjustable height stand and can be rotated for either portrait or landscape orientation. The contrast ratio is one of the highest I've seen for LCD monitors. In addition, I didn't find any dead pixels in any of the three systems I purchased. I've had similar success with other Samsung monitors I have installed.

The final hardware components are the mouse, keyboard and speakers. The speakers for these systems are an inexpensive CyberAcoustic set since they are headed for an office environment. You can certainly find better and more expensive speakers if you prefer. The keyboard and mouse are a wireless combination from Logitech. As I use Logitech's wireless systems, I find I really like the way they operate. The only drawback is that they do

require batteries. However, in the mouse that I use with my laptop, the two AA alkaline batteries lasted for a year. The mouse and keyboard operate using an RF (radio frequency) receiver that plugs into the PS/2 ports on the case. With Windows XP both of these were immediately recognized as being the usual PS/2 components.

As I mentioned earlier, the operating system for these computers is Windows XP. After I had all the components installed, I put the Windows CD in the drive and rebooted the computer. The system booted from the CD with no problem. Then all that was needed was to follow the on-screen instructions to partition and format the new drive. After that, Windows continued with the installation of XP. That took about 30 minutes after the completion of the drive formatting.

The final steps in the preparation of these systems was the downloading of various software components. These included Firefox, Avast anti-virus, ZoneAlarm firewall, Spybot, Spyware Blaster, Ad-Aware and the OpenOffice software suite. I can highly recommend all of these components as I have used them myself for multiple years and installed them on many other computers. Oh yes, the total cost for each system, including the monitors was just over $800.00. Sure, you can buy a computer for less, but you may not get what I consider to be quality components. And, you won't know your system as well as the one you built.

How long does it take to assemble a computer? With experience, it will take a few hours. If you have never done it before, I suspect it could be 4-8 hours. But, like anything else, when you do it yourself there is a great deal of satisfaction obtained from a final working system. Who knows, you might enjoy trying it. Even if you don't, I hope this article has given you some additional insight into the workings inside that "black box" called a computer.

Dr. Lewis is a Columnist, Sarasota PCUG, Florida <http://www.spcug.org> and a former university and medical school professor, but not in computer science. He has been working with personal computers for over thirty years teaching, repairing, assembling and writing software for computer systems. He can be reached at <bwsail at yahoo.com>.

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Secure Your Flash Drive Cap
By Fran Damratowski

Obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups.

Have you ever misplaced your flash drive cap? No need to ever do that again. Secure it with a button. You will need:
- a shirt button,
- some heavy thread such as carpet thread,
- double sided self-sticking adhesive mounting foam,
- double sided sticky tape, and
- some colorless nail polish.

Procedure
1. Run the thread diagonally through two of the buttonholes and secure with a square knot.

2. Place the knot on the top of the button, not on the flat bottom of the button.
3. Cut the thread long enough to secure it with enough play to remove the cap.
4. Cut a small piece of the double-sided self-sticking adhesive mounting foam about the size of the button.
5. Remove the backing from one side of the double-sided self-sticking adhesive mounting foam and place a small piece of the double-sided sticky tape on the sticky side of the double-sided self-sticking adhesive mounting foam. (The double-sided self-sticking adhesive mounting foam does not hold well without the sticky tape. The tape alone does not hold well either.)
6. Securely attach the flat side of the button to the sticky tape.
7. Trim the excess tape and foam using an X-Acto knife.
8. Remove the backing from the other side of the double-sided self-sticking adhesive mounting foam and place another piece of double-sided sticky tape on the foam.
9. Securely attach the button foam and tape to the flash drive cap.
10. Secure the other end of the thread to the flash drive or lanyard.
11. Leave enough play to easily remove the cap, but not get tangled.
12. Use the colorless nail polish to secure the knots so they don't become undone.
13. After the nail polish dries trim the thread.

OR

You could go to your local photo shop and buy a $2+ button sized lens cap keeper (or cap retainer) and modify

**BOARD MEETING
06/10/2007
Chuck Moery**

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

President Gary DeNise, Treasurer Bette Gay, SIG-Advanced Chairman Franz Breidenich, SIG-IBM Co-Chairman Tom Callow, SIG-IBM Intermediate Chairman Carl Massie, Jr., Publications Committee Chairman Warner Mach, and Members-at-Large Bob Clyne and Chuck Moery. Also present was Internet Committee Chairman Mike Bader. The meeting was called to order by Gary DeNise at 12:10 p.m.

OLD BUSINESS

Bette Gay reported that the June Treasury consisted of $3,718.49 in the Checking Account and $4,523.36 invested in three Certificates of Deposit for an overall total of $8,241.85. The membership currently is 81. There are currently 10 Complimentary DATA BUS recipients on the distribution list. It is time for Jerry Comptois and Al Gruber to renew their membership.

NEW BUSINESS

Tom Callow moved to reimburse Gary DeNise $7.44 for refreshments. Bob Clyne seconded the motion and it was carried.

Bob Clyne moved to adjourn. Gary DeNise seconded the motion and the motion was carried. The meeting adjourned at 12:20 p.m.

Computer History
1977: First Annual West Coast Computer Faire held in San Francisco.

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SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS (SIGS)

SIG-IBM
Tom Callow
Warner Mach

July 8: Excel Revisited—Part 2: Long-time SEMCO member Bill Landrum concludes his two-part presentation on Excel spreadsheets. The use of Excel arrays will be considered briefly, but the major emphasis will be on three topics: (a) importing external data into a spreadsheet and linking to an external database table via SQL, (b) the building and use of pivot tables, and (c) creating and using VBA macros.

Bill will use Excel XP for the demos, but everything shown should work on Excel from Excel 4 (1992) through Excel 2007.

SIG-IBM INTERMEDIATE
Carl Massie, Jr.

July 8: "Wikinomics How Mass Collaboration Changes Everything": SIG-IBM Intermediate Chairman, Carl Massie Jr. discusses the book by Don Tapscott and Anthony D. Williams which offers a view and a vision of the emerging global economy. Examples taken from the book and others taken from current events will be offered of the transformations that are occurring in corporations. From the book: "For individuals and small producers, this may be the birth of a new era, on par with the Italian renaissance or the rise of Athenian democracy."

NOVICE-IBM GROUP
Rotating Volunteer Hosts

July 8: Help Q & A: Discussion directed by the audience. No question is too simple!

SIG-ADVANCED
Franz Breidenich

August 6, 2007: (First Monday), 6:45 p.m, at the Oak Park Library. The library is located at 14200 Oak Park Blvd., Oak Park, MI. Phone: (248) 691-7480. **Topic: Wide ranging discussion of computers and computing.**

Warner Mach
machw@att.net
(to post monthly computer group info)

CALENDAR-OF-EVENTS OTHER GROUPS

COMP (Computer Operators of Marysville & Port Huron)
September 5, 7 p.m., (1st Wednesday); St. Clair County RESA, 499 Range Rd., Marysville, Admin. Building. Jane Wheatly 810-982-1187 <http://www.bwcomp.org>. Topic: TBA.

DCOM Computer Club
August 17, 6:30–8:30 p.m., (2nd Friday); Henry Ford C.C., Patterson Tech Bldg, Ford Rd/Evergreen, Rm T143, Parking Lot C. Info: Doug Piazza 313-582-2602.

MacGroup- Detroit
July 22, 2:15 p.m.–5 p.m.; Birmingham Temple, 28611 West 12 Mile Rd., Farmington Hills. Info: Terry White, <terry@macgroup.org> or 313-571-9817. <http://www.macgroup.org>. Topic: Digital Photography Workflows with Adobe Photoshop Lightroom.

MacTechnics, (MAC User Group)
July 21, 11:00 a.m., (3rd Saturday); (SIGs at 9:30); Washtenaw County Learning Library, 4135 Washtenaw Ave., Ann Arbor. <http://www.mactechnics.org>). Cassie at <cassiemac@yahoo.com> or 313-971-8743.

MDLUG (Metro Detroit Linux User Group)
July 14, 12:30–2:30 p.m., (2nd Saturday); MDLUG meetings will be at The Gaudior Academy located at 27100 Avondale Avenue in Inkster. Web: <http://www.mdlug.org>. Info: Raymond McLaughlin 248-960-1864.

Michigan Apple Computer User Group
July 12, 7:30 p.m., (2nd Thur.); General meeting; Fraternal Order of Eagles Hall in Clawson, 174 Bowers St. (one block North of 14-Mile and one block East of Main). Avi Drissman 248-232-7865. Web: <http://www.themichiganapple.com>.

MUG (Michigan User Group)
July 10, 6:00 p.m., (2nd Tuesday): MUG meetings are at The Farmington Community Library–Main Branch, 32737 W. 12 Mile Rd., Farminton Hills, MI. 48334. Web: <http://www.mug.org>.

Oak Park Computer Club
Every Fri., 10:15 a.m. at Oak Park Recreation Bldg, Oak Park Blvd. west of Coolidge.

SHCC (Sterling Heights Computer Club)
September 4, 7:30 p.m., (1st Tuesday); Macomb Community College South Campus, Bldg. K, 14500 E. 12 Mile Rd. Don VanSyckel <Don@VanSyckel.net>, 586-731-9232; Web: <http://www.SterlingHeightsComputerClub.org>. Topic: Wireless and Other Wonders of Home Networking.

Wayne State University Mac User Group
August 11, 10:00 a.m.–Noon, (2nd Saturday); at Mich.com, 21042 Laurelwood, Farmington. Information: Lorn/JoAnn Olsen 248/478-4300 or Denny MeLampy 248-477-0190.

it as needed. Most of them appear to come with elastic bands that are placed around the lens barrel as opposed to a leash that can be attached to another part of the camera.

Fran Damratowski is the Refurbishing SIG Leader for the Chesapeake PC Users Group, MD <http://www.chesapeakepcusersgroup.org> and can be reached at <refurbishing(at)chesapeakepcusersgroup.org>.

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JUNE REFRESHMENT DONORS
Gary DeNise, Coordinator
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Gary DeNise
Kaye Johnson
Warner Mach
Betty Mackenzie
Roland Maki

STILL NEEDED: A VOLUNTEER TO BE REFRESHMENTS COORDINATOR

COMPUTER RESOURCE PEOPLE

This is a list of members willing to be resources for other members to call when they have hardware or software questions.

Are you willing to help members learn?

Which software programs are you familiar enough with?

It is not necessary to be an expert, but just have some familiarity with the program and be willing to help someone starting to learn it. Please give this some thought and volunteer at the next group meeting.

Almost Anything: Vander-Schrier
AutoCAD: Comptois
Genealogy: Cook
IBM PC Hardware Issues: Clyne, Yuhasz
Operating Systems: Callow, Clyne, Yuhasz
MAC Hardware and OS Issues: Yuhasz
Security: Bader

MS Office for Windows: Callow
MS Word: Clyne
Networking: Callow
Novell Netware: Yuhasz
Quicken: Clyne
Geocaching: Cook

Bader, Mike—586-573-7330, 9am–8pm................... mdbader@flash.net
Callow, Tom—248-642-5770 9am–5pm................... tcallow@monaghanpc.com
Clyne, Bob—810-387-3101, 9am–10pm .... clyne@lodden.com
Comptois, Jerry—248-651-2504, anytime
Cook, Stephen—313-272-7594, eves....................... scook48227@ameritech.net
Vander-Schrier, Jack—586-739-7720,12–8pm .... jvanders@myself.com
Yuhasz, Steve.. Help@yuhasz.org

SEMCO CALENDAR

ArvinMeritor Building
2135 West Maple Road
Troy, Michigan

July 8–SUNDAY (Meet 2nd Sunday)

SEMCO Board Meeting at 12:00 noon. For Officers and SIG Chairpersons. Other members are invited to attend.

SEMCO General Meeting at 1:30 p.m.

Special Interest Groups (SIGs)

SIG-IBM 1:45 p.m. Program: Excel Revisited—Part 2: Long-time SEMCO member Bill Landrum concludes his two-part presentation on Excel spreadsheets. The use of Excel arrays will be considered briefly, but the major emphasis will be on: (a) importing external data into a spreadsheet and linking to an external database table via SQL, (b) the building and use of pivot tables, and (c) creating and using VBA macros.

SOCIAL PERIOD 3:15 p.m. Refreshments! (Reminder: We must continue to maintain a neat environment.)

NOVICE-IBM GROUP 3:45 p.m. Program: Help From An Expert With Discussion Directed By The Audience.

SIG-IBM Intermediate 3:45 p.m. Program: "Wikinomics How Mass Collaboration Changes Everything": SIG-IBM Intermediate Chairman, Carl Massie Jr. discusses the book by Don Tapscott and Anthony D. Williams which offers a view and a vision of the emerging global economy. Examples taken from the book and others taken from current events will be offered of the transformations that are occurring in corporations.

SIG-ADVANCED, August 6, 2007–MONDAY, 6:45 p.m., (First Monday), Oak Park Public Library, 14200 Oak Park Blvd.,Oak Park, MI. Phone: (248) 691-7480. Directions: Oak Park Blvd. is 9 1/2 mile Road; library is west of Coolidge. Info: Franz Breidenich 248-398-3359. **TOPIC: Wide-Ranging Discussion Of Computers & Computing.**
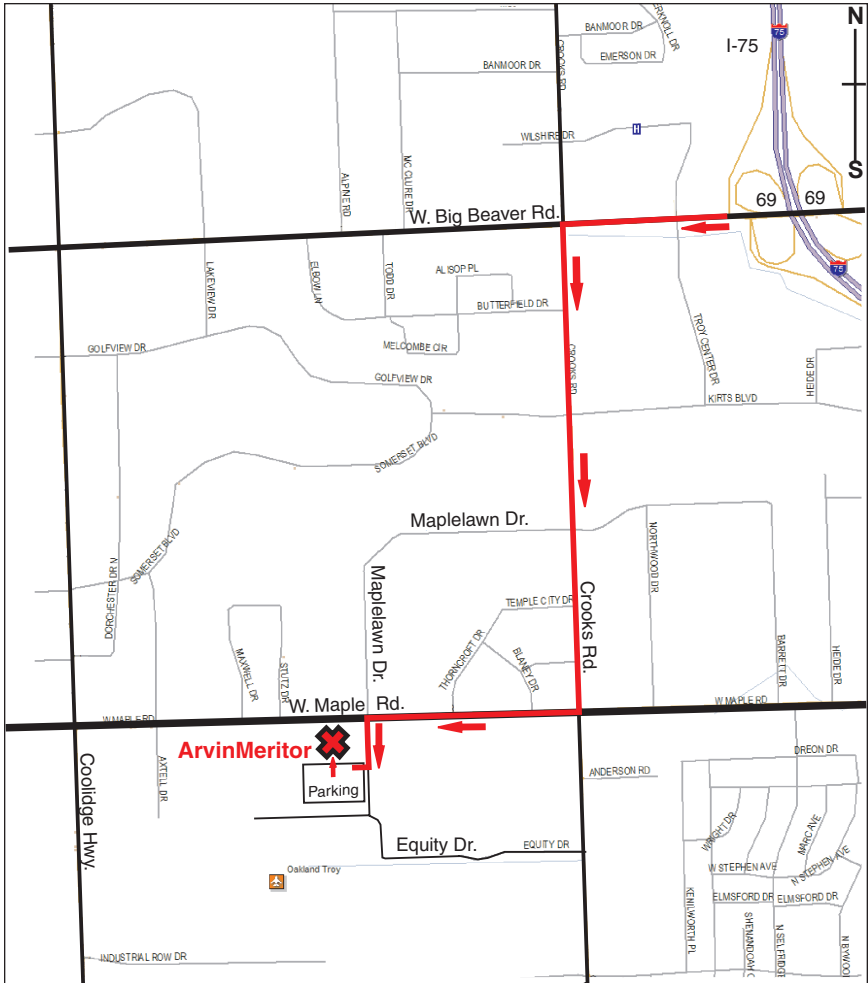
August 12–SEMCO Sunday

http://www.semco.org

PUBLIC INVITED

(Please copy this and the next page to post on your bulletin board)

SEMCO Meetings at ArvinMeritor
2135 West Maple Road, Troy, MI 48084

DIRECTIONS

From I-75, take Exit 69 to westbound Big Beaver Rd. (16 Mile). Turn left (South) on Crooks Rd. Turn right (West) on Maple Rd. (15 Mile). Turn left (South) on Maplelawn Dr. Turn right into the parking lot at the rear of the ArvinMeritor building. The building is shaped like an X. Enter the building thru the South entrance at the center of the rear of the building. Follow the SEMCO signs.

SEMCO thanks the ArvinMeritor Corporation for their hospitality in providing their facility for our meetings.

SouthEastern Michigan
Computer Organization, Inc.
P.O. Box 707
Bloomfield Hills, MI 48303–0707

SEMCO (future meetings)
July 8
August 12

SEMCO: A Community Organization
Helping People for the 21st Century