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**Free “Cheat Sheets” for
Software and Hardware
By Ira Wilsker**

Recently, I was asked to teach an eight hour non-credit class on Excel to the employees of a local company. I know by experience that handouts are a popular adjunct for any class, so I had to find some useful handouts for this Excel class; so-called “cheat sheets” are as good as any other handout, so I proceeded to print a set of Excel cheat sheets for Excel versions 2003, 2007, and 2010. The information on those cheat sheets alone was more than adequate for a one-day class, and could have also been used for a longer class.

In this context, a “cheat sheet” is not a device used by a college student in an act of academic dishonesty, but a digital or printed copy of instructions for a software product that clearly explains and shows how to use the features and functions of that product. In addition to the various versions of Microsoft Office, free cheat sheets are available for many other PC, MAC, LINUX, and other computer related software and hardware products. While most of the free cheat sheets are for software products, some cheat sheets, called by their publisher “Make Use of Guides” <http://www.makeuseof.com/pages> are for hardware and services. Some of the nearly three dozen available include: How To Easily Build Your Own Cheap Computer, The Awesome Automation Guide for Mac Users, The (Very) Unofficial Facebook Privacy Guide, The Office Worker’s 101 Guide to a USB Thumb Drive, The Windows 7 Guide: From Newbies To Pros, The Ultimate Guide To Gmail, Your Guide

To Create Professional Documents on Word, The Internet Music Guide For The Audiophile, The Essential Guide To Digital Photography, A Newbie’s Getting Started Guide to Linux, The Mac Manual, The Underground iPhone Guide, The Big Book Of iTunes, and about 25 other such titles.

One of the best sources of free software cheat sheets is Custom Guide’s “Quick References,” available online at <http://www.customguide.com/computer-training/quick-references>. On this Quick Reference page are free PDF format cheat sheets for Office 2010, Excel 2010, Outlook 2010, PowerPoint 2010, and Word 2010. With free registration, the user can also access the full collection of Custom Guide’s Quick References, including the 2007 and 2003 versions of the Office products, as well as Microsoft’s OneNote, Project (2007 and 2003), Publisher, SharePoint, and Visio. There are also Quick References for Windows 7, Vista, and XP. Apple users may also find these Quick Reference Guides useful, as there are guides for Appleworks, MAC OS, Microsoft Entourage, and the Apple versions of Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint. Some of the guides for Adobe products are available for both the PC and MAC versions, and include Acrobat, Dreamweaver, Fireworks, Flash, and Photoshop.

Almost all of the Custom Guide’s Quick References are of a similar design and format as downloadable PDF files. The guides are in full color, and typically two pages in length. They all display the opening screen of the product with all of the features labeled with a clear and concise explanation of each item. If there is a ribbon or menu bar in the software, the guide labels each

function on the image of the item, and presents a summary of the functions in a table adjacent to the image. Most of the products covered by the guides also have a selection of “keyboard shortcuts” displayed that can be used to increase the speed and efficiency of the user by using these shortcuts rather than clicking on menu items. Commonly done tasks like copying something can be accomplished by utilizing the common Windows shortcut CTRL-C, and then pasting the item with CTRL-V; this is much quicker than clicking on the menu and then scrolling to COPY, and repeating the menu process and clicking on PASTE. In many Office products (including competitors to Microsoft Office), formatting can also be done with intuitive shortcuts, such as CTRL-B for bold, CTRL-U for underline, CTRL-I for italics, and several other similar shortcuts; these shortcuts are among the dozens displayed in the Quick Reference guides. The guides also include information (as appropriate) for formatting, graphics, editing, styles, animations, special effects, tables, and other functions of the software. There is a lot of very useful information crammed into these two-page guides, and they would be ideal for all users of these products, regardless of experience level. These are precisely the handouts that I use in my non-credit software classes.

The “MakeUseOf Guides” available free from <http://www.makeuseof.com/pages> are also downloadable in PDF format. While these guides are free, a one-time registration is necessary to download them. In addition to the “MakeUseOf Guides,” there are also dozens of other free guides available for download (free registration required)

at <http://www.makeuseof.com/pages/downloads>. Some guides that I have used to learn shortcuts include guides for Firefox, Gmail, Linux, and Internet Explorer. MAC users may find useful the shortcut guides for OS X, and the MAC versions of Firefox. Since its release, I have been using Windows 7 as my primary home computer, and have found “The Ultimate Windows 7 Guide: From Newbies To Pros” a very helpful document. This free 50 page guide (PDF) to Windows 7 is written in an easy to read and understand format, and contains useful information and tips for Windows 7 users of all levels. I have used “The Essential Guide To Digital Photography” to help me with my digital camera, and since it seems that almost everyone today has a digital camera, this guide may be invaluable. I know a lot of people who use Google’s Gmail service as their e-mail provider, and the “The Ultimate Guide To Gmail” is 35 pages full of Gmail hints, tips, and ideas. “The Incredible Free Manual For Every Mac User” is a 69-page ebook (PDF) with a treasure trove of information for MAC users. In all, there are 32 such ebooks available.

With all of this free information available for computer users, there should be several titles that would be of interest to just about everyone. I use some of these “cheat sheets” in the classes that I teach, and recommend them as needed to my students and coworkers. You too may find them very useful.

WEBSITES:

<http://www.makeuseof.com/tag/14-great-cheat-sheets-posters-to-make-you-a-software-wizard/>.

<http://www.customguide.com/computer-training/quick-references>.

<<http://learn.customguide.com/index.php?module=QR&action=Index>> (free registration required).

<<http://www.makeuseof.com/pages/>>

<<http://www.makeuseof.com/pages/downloads>>.

<<http://www.makeuseof.com/tag/7-essential-cheat-sheets>>.

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Most of us are blissfully ignorant about the inner workings of the Internet. We are quite happy when we turn on our computers and access the Internet to surf the web or read our e-mail. There are several utilities that can optimize the computer's and browser's settings to maximize their performance, and I have discussed these in past columns. What many of us are unaware of is that there is a setting that we can configure that may significantly improve our Internet performance, and that is to find the fastest "DNS" freely available to us.

"DNS" is an acronym for "Domain Name Server" (or "Domain Name System"), more commonly referred to by the moniker "nameserver." According to Wikipedia, DNS "... serves as the phone book for the Internet by translating human-friendly computer hostnames into IP addresses. For example, the domain name www.example.com translates to the addresses 192.0.32.10 (IPv4) and

2620:0:2d0:200::10 (IPv6)." Simply, when the user types a web address, or "URL" (Uniform Resource Locator) in the address bar of the browser, the browser checks the computer's default DNS, and converts the website address from words to a numerical address (IP address); thus www.yahoo.com is converted to the Internet Protocol (IP) address of 209.191.122.70, a format that can efficiently be used by the Internet to connect the user to the desired website. The default DNS is typically configured for a specific Internet service provider (ISP) when the user first subscribes to that particular ISP. Normally these ISP specific DNS work just fine, but many of them are not the fastest available, and many of the ISP providers' DNS are also vulnerable to hijacking, or misdirecting the innocent user to a rogue website, opening the user to a variety of attacks or identity theft. Some DNS are unfiltered, and let the user connect anywhere they desire, while other DNS offer selective filtering, which can block access to undesired websites, such as pornography and phishing (identity theft). Many adults are perfectly satisfied being able to connect where they want, but families with children and others may want filtered access, and some DNS provide that service.

What is possibly the largest and most widely used alternative DNS is OpenDNS <<http://www.opendns.com>>. Anyone can configure his computer to use OpenDNS instead of his ISP's default DNS, and may experience faster and more secure Internet connections. The basic OpenDNS services are free to individuals, and enhanced commercial (pay) services are available to everyone. Thousands of businesses, government agencies, K-12 schools,

colleges and universities, non-profits, and others utilize the commercial OpenDNS services. OpenDNS says that, “OpenDNS is the leading provider of free security and infrastructure services that make the Internet safer through integrated Web content filtering, anti-phishing and DNS. OpenDNS services enable consumers and network administrators to secure their networks from online threats, reduce costs and enforce Internet-use policies. OpenDNS is used today by millions of users and organizations around the world.” A comparison of the free and commercial OpenDNS services is available at <http://www.opendns.com/start>. The basic free service includes selectable web content filtering, phishing (identity theft) protection, defense against botnets, and can correct many “typo” errors which can protect the user from connecting to rogue websites with close web names. The paid service with additional features and protection is very reasonable at about \$10 per year for a family (5 computers), and \$5 per user per year for commercial (business) accounts. Special pricing is available for K-12 schools.

For those who would like to change their default DNS to OpenDNS, easy to follow instructions are provided by OpenDNS at use.opendns.com or the actual IP address of 208.69.38.205. OpenDNS is compatible with almost every operating system, and simple directions are provided for Mac OS X, Windows 7, Windows XP, Windows Vista, Generic Routers, Linksys Routers, Netgear Routers, and D-Link Routers. One warning; although OpenDNS is extremely reliable and trouble free, I strongly recommend that users write down their default ISP information,

before changing the DNS settings to OpenDNS or any other nameserver. It might also be a good practice to print the OpenDNS instructions just in case the current DNS used by your ISP becomes unavailable, and then you can easily switch to OpenDNS and probably be back online in seconds. Anyone can change his default DNS to OpenDNS by using 208.67.222.222 and 208.67.220.220 as his default DNS.

There are several excellent DNS available to the typical user, and Google is now offering DNS services to anyone who would like to use them with its Google Public DNS service <http://code.google.com/speed/public-dns>. With all of the necessary information online including benefits and setup instructions for almost every operating system code.google.com/speed/public-dns/docs/using.html, Google Public DNS may be a good choice instead of the default DNS provided by your ISP, and generally offers better security and protection from purloined websites, as well as better speed and general performance than the ISP provided DNS. Google Public DNS offers many of the same benefits of OpenDNS, including the integral enhanced security features. Google Public DNS uses the IP addresses of 8.8.8.8 and 8.8.4.4 which anyone can set as his default and freely use.

There are many other DNS available to users, and Google provides a free open-source utility it calls “Namebench” that can automatically test the available combinations of DNS from the user’s computer, and determine which ones provide the best overall performance for the specific user. This free utility is available from Google at <http://code.google.com/p/namebench>, and

runs on Windows, Mac OS X, and UNIX. I downloaded and ran the Windows version of Namebench from my Windows 7-64 computer, and in about five minutes Namebench tested hundreds of DNS combinations, and found a combination that was 31.8% faster than the DNS provided by my ISP. In my case, OpenDNS-2 (208.67.222.222) provided the fastest service, with Internet America FDDI-2 US (207.158.92.18) recommended by Namebench as my secondary DNS. Each user should run Namebench on his own computer to determine the best combination for his machine, as results will vary from machine to machine.

While all of this DNS business may sound complex, it is really very easy for users to change their DNS settings to a safer, more secure, and faster connection. While OpenDNS and Google Public DNS are both fast, excellent, and reliable, and either may be a good choice for a default DNS over the one provided by the ISP, I would recommend that Google's free Namebench be run to really determine which DNS combination is best for a particular computer. Since ISPs and the other providers of DNS services are subject to the rapid changes extant in the Internet, it would be a good idea to periodically rerun Namebench to verify that the currently selected DNS are still the best combination for your computer. Always remember to write down the current DNS settings before changing them, just in case you might ever want to go back to the original settings, but this is not likely with OpenDNS, Google Public DNS, and the results from Namebench.

WEBSITES:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Domain_Name_System>.

<<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Url>>.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/IP_address>.

<<http://www.opendns.com>>.

<<http://use.opendns.com>>.

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**LibreOffice—Another
Free Office Suite
By Ira Wilsker**

When most users think of an office suite, they think of the ubiquitous Microsoft Office. Dominant over its competitors, Microsoft Office has near universal acceptance in business and industry, as well as educational and home use. It is a Microsoft product, and has the panache' of Microsoft, but is among the most expensive of the office suites. Microsoft Office does not have a monopoly, although Microsoft and many software pundits and IT departments treat it as it does. There are some excellent competitors to Microsoft Office, including both commercial and freeware products. Corel, often better known for its excellent video and image editing software also is the publisher of WordPerfect Office X5; long time computer users and secretaries may remember when WordPerfect was the predominant word processor, but after a series of buyouts and mergers between such former powerhouses as WordPerfect Corporation, and Borland,

the WordPerfect Office X5 is the latest iteration in a long standing tradition of excellence that grew from just a word processor (the original WordPerfect) to a complete suite, including the former Borland Quattro Pro spreadsheet, both of which are still considered by many to be better at what they do than the more popular Microsoft products, Word and Excel. While both Microsoft Office and Corel WordPerfect Office X5 are excellent, and offer compatibility with each other as well as a similar appearance and command set, they are expensive. The full version of WordPerfect Office X5 retails for about \$250 (a “Professional” version is \$100 more), and Microsoft Office retails for \$280 (2010 Home & Business edition, with the 2010 Office Professional edition retailing for \$500; several other versions available at other prices), there are some excellent freeware alternatives to those products.

There are several freeware office suites available, that can be used by anyone without restrictions, and that includes personal, business, and educational use. In these tough economic times, with budgets shrinking and under stress, many students, families, corporations, colleges, and government agencies have switched from the expensive commercial suites (almost entirely Microsoft Office) to the free alternative suites. Most of the published reviews and commentaries indicate that users who switched from Microsoft Office to one of the major free office suites had no significant problems using the free software, as the basic view, toolbars, menus, and command sets are very similar. Most of the free office suites can read and write Microsoft Office files, including Word,

Excel, PowerPoint, and Access formats. OpenOffice <<http://openoffice.org>> is by far the best known and most widely used free office suite, with over 125 million copies downloaded. OpenOffice also has a portable version that can be installed to, and run from a flash drive, providing excellent portability, and the ability to edit, display, and present files from computers lacking OpenOffice; I carry the portable version of OpenOffice on my flash drive, and have used it frequently. OpenOffice will run on virtually any platform. including Windows, Linux, MAC, and others. Google Docs <<http://docs.google.com>> is generally available for free, has a large and loyal following, and can read and write most Microsoft Office formats (except Access), as well as convert most PDF files to text and images that can be manipulated with Google Docs. Google Docs has the advantage of accessibility wherever the Internet can be accessed, and includes a minimum of a gigabyte of free storage. GoogleDocs can be accessed from almost any computer with Internet access and a browser, regardless of operating system installed on the computer. Other free office suites are listed and rated the Gizmo community at <<http://www.techsupportalert.com/best-free-office-suite.htm>>.

Recently, I became aware of another interesting free office suite that has all of the “bells and whistles” of Microsoft Office, without the cost of the Microsoft product. This is the LibreOffice (“Libre” as in “free”) available for download from <<http://www.libreoffice.org/download>> (215Mb for the Windows version). According to its webpage, “LibreOffice is the free power-packed Open Source personal productivity suite for Windows, Macintosh and

Linux, that gives you six feature-rich applications for all your document production and data processing needs: Writer, Calc, Impress, Draw, Math and Base. Support and documentation is free from our large, dedicated community of users, contributors and developers.” After downloading it and trying it, it looked amazingly like the OpenOffice I already had installed, even down to similar names for each of the components. The reason for this is that LibreOffice is based on the open source code of OpenOffice, including the same version numbers (currently 3.3), even though LibreOffice was not even formed until late September, 2010. LibreOffice was created when a group of former OpenOffice employees started “The Document Foundation” to ensure the survival of the OpenOffice concept. According to Wikipedia <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Libreoffice>> the future of OpenOffice is in doubt since Oracle Corporation purchased Sun Microsystems, the primary sponsor of OpenOffice. Oracle has removed the leadership of OpenOffice, with some speculation that OpenOffice will be shut down, the same way that Oracle shut down OpenSolaris after an earlier buyout. Within a month after the takeover of Sun Microsystems by Oracle, “... October 2010, 33 developers left OpenOffice.org and moved to The Document Foundation to support LibreOffice.”

Just like OpenOffice, upon which it is based, LibreOffice will run on Linux, Unix, Mac OS X, BSD, and Windows, and is available for free installation on a computer or on a flash drive as a portable edition <<http://www.libreofficeportable.org>>. LibreOffice is complete as an office suite, and

offers the epitome of compatibility as it can read and write almost any word processor, spreadsheet, database, and presentation format, including all of the Microsoft Office formats, including the old “dot-three-letter” formats (.doc, .xls, .ppt, etc.) as well as the newer “dot-four-letter” formats of Office 2007 and Office 2010 (.docx, .xlsx, .pptx, etc.). In my experience, users who are familiar with Microsoft Office can instantly use LibreOffice and be equally competent with the free office suite. All of the LibreOffice components can also read and write all of the internationally standardized open-document formats, as well as the file formats used by many other proprietary products. All of the LibreOffice components can natively write (save) output in the popular PDF format. There are thousands of free templates and extensions available for LibreOffice that can be used as a basis for most projects.

Probably the most widely used office component is a word processor, and Writer is the word processor included in LibreOffice. It is full featured, and a direct competitor to Microsoft Word, including virtually all of the features of Word, without the expense. Writer can be used to create simple documents, or to produce sophisticated desktop publishing materials, books, magazines, resumes, and other documents. Writer supports embedded images and diagrams, and includes “... while-you-type auto-completion, auto-formatting and automatic spelling checking make difficult tasks easy (but are easy to disable if you prefer).” Writer has much the same look and feel of Word, and there is a near zero learning curve for Word users to become comfortable and productive with Writer.

For years I happily used Borland's Quattro as my spreadsheet, later importing my data into Excel when Borland ceased to exist. As an experiment, I imported some of both my old Excel .xls files, and my newer .xlsx files into the LibreOffice spreadsheet appropriately named "Calc," and they imported flawlessly. The menu or "ribbon" at the top of the Calc screen looked very familiar and close to Excel, and the command set was nearly identical. Calc is fully capable of doing what any other spreadsheet can do, and even has some intelligence built in that eases the implementation of commonly used functions. Calc can be totally adequate for filling almost all spreadsheet needs, and supports graphics, sounds, database functions, and all of the other features that people use in the expensive commercial competitors.

I do a lot of PowerPoint presentations, and sometimes share my presentations with my students and others. Often my cash-strapped students do not have PowerPoint (although Microsoft does have a free PowerPoint viewer available), and they have no way to edit my PowerPoint slides or create their own original presentations. Impress is the aptly named presentation utility included in LibreOffice, and can read and write all of the PowerPoint file formats, as well as most other formats used around the world. As with the other LibreOffice components, Impress can be quickly mastered by anyone familiar with PowerPoint, and virtually all of the features available in PowerPoint are available in Impress. One cute feature of Impress is that it can export (convert) presentations into the near universal Flash (.swf) format which can

be displayed in almost any browser as a video, or by almost any video player.

Draw is the LibreOffice drawing and charting tool. According to its website, "Draw lets you produce anything from a quick sketch to a complex plan, and gives you the means to communicate with graphics and diagrams. With a maximum page size of 300cm by 300cm (almost 10 feet x 10 feet), Draw is an excellent package for producing technical drawings, general posters, and much else." I am not graphically gifted, but I have used Draw to create an organizational chart and several flow charts, and it was easy to create professional looking output. Draw can import images and graphics in most formats, including BMP, GIF, JPEG, PNG, TIFF, and WMF, and can save the output in any open document format (universally compatible), and can also create Flash (.swf) presentations.

Many people create databases to track and analyze data, and LibreOffice offers Base as its database program. "With Base, you can seamlessly integrate your existing database structures into the other components of LibreOffice, or create an interface to use and administer your data as a stand-alone application. You can use imported and linked tables and queries from MySQL, PostgreSQL or Microsoft Access and many other data sources, or design your own with Base, to build powerful front-ends with sophisticated forms, reports and views. Support is built-in or easily addable for a very wide range of database products, notably the standardly-provided HSQL, MySQL, Adabas D, Microsoft Access and PostgreSQL." With power and compatibility like this, there may be no need for other expensive database programs.

Sometimes I have to create and display equations, and getting the formatting correct in a word processor is often difficult to nearly impossible. For this explicit purpose LibreOffice offers Math as a simple equation editor. Math can be run as a free standing program, or can be accessed from the other LibreOffice components as needed by simply clicking on INSERT - OBJECT - FORMULA. Math can be used to create, edit, and manipulate mathematical, chemical, electrical or scientific equations quickly in standard written notation. Math "... can include a wide range of elements, from fractions, terms with exponents and indices, integrals, and mathematical functions, to inequalities, systems of equations, and matrices." Math is easy to use with intuitive commands; for example, typing "1 over 2" creates the fraction one-half, which can be edited for size and format as desired, and then easily brought into any other LibreOffice component or printed.

I have always enjoyed using OpenOffice, and have written about it several times in the past. With uncertainty about its future, and the loss of much of its creative staff who went to The Document Foundation, LibreOffice may very well be the primary surviving, full featured office suite. For anyone who would like a comprehensive office suite without the expense of the Microsoft or Corel products, LibreOffice would be a wise choice. In the past, I have recommended OpenOffice to my students who need an office suite, but now I will be recommending LibreOffice.

WEBSITES:

<<http://www.libreoffice.org>>.
<<http://www.libreofficeportable.org>>.

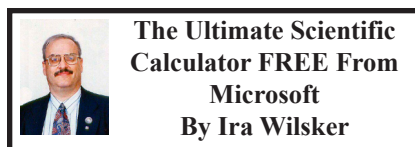
<<http://www.techsupportalert.com/best-free-office-suite.htm>>.

<<https://docs.google.com>>.

<<http://www.openoffice.org>>

<<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Libreoffice>>.

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Microsoft used to sell a program called Mathematics, which was aimed at students. It was a very capable product, able to solve equations, draw graphs, do calculus, and much more. Ideal for anyone involved with mathematics, science, engineering, physics, and so on.

So why do I say "used to sell"? Have they stopped producing it? No. They've merely stopped selling it, and are now giving it away! There's even a brand new version, 4.0, which was launched only last week.

You can get it from <<http://www.microsoft.com/education/products/student/math/default.aspx>>. It runs on all versions of Windows from XP onwards, and is available in both 32- and 64-bit flavours. The installer itself is an 18 Mb download, although you'll also need .NET Framework 3.5 SP1, which is another 53 Mb if you don't already have it.

If you're a student, or you need to do mathematical calculations in your work, then check out Microsoft Mathematics. And if you use Word or OneNote a lot, there's even a version which works as an add-on in those programs too.

SOURCE:

<http://www.techsupportalert.com/content/ultimate-scientific-calculator-microsoft-and-its-free.htm>>.

DIRECT DOWNLOAD:

<http://www.microsoft.com/education/products/student/math/default.aspx>>.

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Of Interest Links (OIL) By Fred Acerri

3-D Movies on Your Cell Phone

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2011/02/110211074747.htm>>.

Reconfigurable Supercomputing Outperforms Rivals in Important Science Applications

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2011/02/110215111813.htm>>.

Astronomers Suggest Crowdsourcing Letters to Aliens

<http://www.wired.com/wiredscience/2011/02/crowdsourced-seti/#>>.

US Secret Service moves Tiny Town to Virtual Tiny Town

<http://www.eurekalert.org/pub-releases/2011-02/udoh-uss021411.php>>.

Powerful new ways to electronically mine research may lead to scientific breakthroughs

<http://www.eurekalert.org/pub-releases/2011-02/uoc-pn021011.php>>.

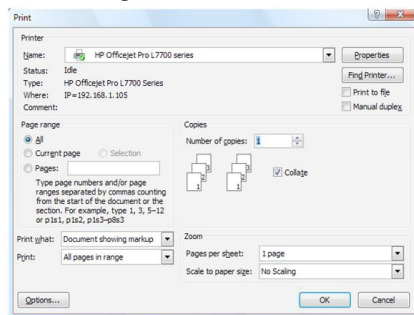
How much information is there in the world?

<http://www.eurekalert.org/pub-releases/2011-02/uosc-hmi020811.php>>.

Printing Odd or Even Pages By Sharon Parq Associates

There may be many times that you need to print either odd or even pages in a print job. For instance, you may want to put your pages through the printer twice so you can print on both sides. This is easy to do in Word by following these steps:

1. Press Ctrl+P. Word displays the Print dialog box.



The Print dialog box.

2. Adjust the printing settings as desired.

3. Using the Print drop-down list at the bottom of the dialog box, choose either Odd Pages or Even Pages, as desired. (Make sure you use the Print drop-down list, not the Print What drop-down list.)

4. Click on OK. Your document is printed.

The above steps work great in any version of Word up through Word 2007. If you are using Word 2010, then the Print dialog box was done away with. You should follow these steps, instead:

1. Press Ctrl+P. Word displays the File tab of the ribbon, with printing options visible in the tab.
2. Adjust the printing settings as desired.
3. Using the first drop-down list under the Settings heading, choose Only Print Odd Pages or Only Print Even Pages, as desired.
4. Click on Print. Your document is printed.

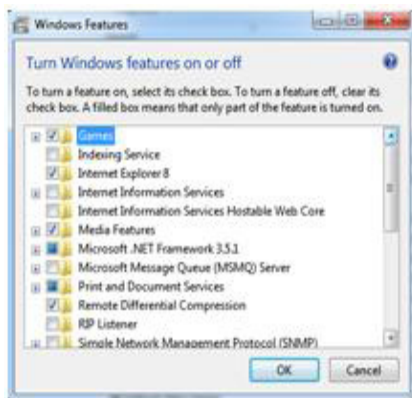
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You've Got Them. Why Not Use Them?
By Vinny La Bash

People configure their desktops in different ways for an all encompassing assortment of reasons. Most use the Windows defaults which are quite reasonable, but operate from a false assumption that “factory specifications” are enough. Windows has lots of useful features not included in the default settings which could have great benefits, but if one doesn’t know the features are there, one can never enjoy these prospective benefits.

Let’s start by opening the Control Panel and clicking on Programs. In the Programs and Features section click the Turn Windows Features on or off. A dialog box appears which will enable you to turn features on or off. (See illustration).



There’s probably much more here than you want, so let’s examine several features that you are more likely to use rather than the ones which require professional technical knowledge to be useful.

The Indexing Service got a bad reputation in Vista because it was annoyingly slow. There is no doubt that Vista was a resource hog so any service or utility that had additional requirements tended to bog down the system even further. Microsoft resolved the problem in Windows 7 by turning the Indexing Service off by default. That’s too bad because the utility can actually be very helpful in locating files and other content through flexible inquiries. Try it, you just may like it.

Internet Information Services (IIS) and Internet Information Services Hostable Web Core: You will not be held accountable if you don’t know what these tools do or if you choose to ignore them. IIS is mostly regarded as a major component of a server while the Hostable Web Core performs fewer functions and needs fewer resources. If you write web based applications or wish to experiment hosting a web site on your desktop, these tools may be essential.

Microsoft Message Queue Server: This utility has been around for years and most application developers have come to ignore it because it's not new. If you send and receive messages on a regular basis with people who are in remote locations on the planet, and have "iffy" connections, you now have a tool to build a message queue, store a message within it, and send it when the connection to the recipient is up and running. You can also create a similar structure for receiving messages. Using this tool effectively requires basic programming skills.

Simple Network Management Protocol (SNMP): Everyone who uses a computer on a regular basis should be concerned about unauthorized access to personal information or attempts to trick people into revealing information which should remain private. If you have a home network, wireless or not, SNMP gives you better control over devices on the network. You can configure hardware, troubleshoot more effectively, and in many cases even track down attempts to crack into your network. This tool requires a working knowledge of how a network operates.

Telnet Client: This is a great diagnostic tool if your e-mail client is acting strangely and normal diagnostics cannot resolve the problem. Turn it on when you need it, and turn it off when you're not using it as there are security issues with it.

These tools are not for everyone, especially those with little computing experience, but your level of knowledge shouldn't remain at the novice stage. Challenge yourself and you won't be like the guy who thinks he has twenty years of experience when in reality all

he has is one year of experience twenty times.

Vinny La Bash is a member of the Sarasota Personal Computer Users Group, Inc. E-mail: [vlabush \(at\) comcast.net](mailto:vlabush@comcast.net).

Permission to reprint is granted only to other non-profit computer user groups, provided proper credit is given to the author.

**Displaying a Hidden
First Column
By Sharon Parq Associates**

Excel makes it easy to hide and unhide columns. What isn't so easy is displaying a hidden column if that column is the left-most column in the worksheet. For instance, if you hide column A, Excel will dutifully follow out your instructions. If you later want to unhide column A, the solution isn't so obvious.

To unhide the left-most columns of a worksheet when they are hidden, follow these steps:

1. Press F5. Excel displays the Go To dialog box.
2. In the Reference field at the bottom of the dialog box, enter A1.



3. Click on OK. Cell A1 is now selected, even though you cannot see it on the screen.

4. Unhide the column. (In Excel 2007 or Excel 2010, display the Home tab of the ribbon and click Format | Hide & Unhide | Unhide Columns. In older versions of Excel choose Format | Column | Unhide.)

Another way to display the first column is to click on the header for column B, and then drag the mouse to the left. If you release the mouse button when the pointer is over the gray block that marks the intersection of the row and column headers (the blank gray block just above the row headers), then column B and everything to its left, including the hidden column A, are selected. You can then unhide the column.

A third method is even niftier, provided you have a good eye and a steady mouse pointer. If you move your mouse pointer into the column header area, and then slowly move it to the left, you notice that it turns into a double-headed arrow with a blank spot in the middle as you position the pointer over the small area immediately to the left of the column B header. This double-headed arrow is a bit difficult to describe; it looks most closely like the double-headed arrow that appears when you position the pointer over the dividing line between column headers. It is different, however, because instead of a black line dividing the double arrows, there are two black lines with a gap between them.

When your mouse pointer changes to this special double-headed arrow, all you have to do is right-click and choose Unhide. Your previously missing column A magically reappears.

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**35th Anniversary
Meeting in April
By Warner Mach**

The April 10 meeting (meeting after the upcoming March meeting) will be the 35th anniversary of SEMCO. We will have cake! We will have valuable door prizes! You can dust off some of that old gear and bring it in.

Our featured speaker will be Jim Rarus, senior patriarch of all things SEMCO. Additionally, we will have a multi-segment talk titled, “The Future is Now!”

The face of computing is a science-fiction development of what we started with in 1976. Some things were predictable and some things—like the Internet—were not.

In 1976 the concerns centered on Microsoft BASIC, the KIM-1, the Intel 8080, the Motorola 6800, and MOS Technology 6502 chip sets. The Apple 1 computer will soon appear. Programs were stored on cassette tape.

Now, in 2011, the Internet and social media dominate everything. Digital photos and videos are everywhere. You can buy computer media at the drugstore. Very realistic networked games (some in 3-D) exist. The IBM computer ‘Watson’ beat top competitors at Jeopardy.

How did we go from 1976 to 2011? What has been gained and what has been lost?

SEMCO Meeting Pictures



(Above): Ken Grunsberg of “Motor City Free Geek” discusses the need to recycle electronic waste. (Below) Tom Callow gives the news, moderates Q&A, and demonstrates the Apple iPad.



SEMCO Meeting Pictures



Member discussions during break period.





BOARD MEETING
2/13/2011
Carol Sanzi

Board Members Present

Vice President Richard Jackson, Treasurer Bette Gay, Secretary Carol Sanzi, SIG-IBM Chairman Tom Callow, SIG-Advanced Chairman Franz Breidenich, Publications Committee Chairman Warner Mach, SIG-Linux Cochairman Michael Rudas, and Members at Large Bob Clyne and Brian Brodsky. The board meeting was called to order at 12:11 p.m.

Old Business

Bette Gay reported that the current treasury amount equaled a total of \$9,685.81 with \$4,938.48 in the checking account and \$4,747.33 invested in three Certificates of Deposit. The membership currently is 76. It is time for William G. Agnew, Karl O. Anderson, Randy Kilgore, William Vollmer, and Steve Yuhasz to renew their memberships.

Bette Gay moved to cash a \$1,000 Certificate of Deposit and deposit it into the checking account. This action will maintain a \$5,000 balance in the checking account thus avoiding a \$15 monthly bank service charge. Brian Brodsky seconded the motion and it was carried.

Carol Sanzi moved to reimburse Richard Jackson \$8.13 for refreshment supplies and batteries. Tom Callow seconded the motion and it was carried.

SEMCO will be celebrating its 35th Anniversary in April. Warner Mach suggested having a presentation entitled, "The Future is Now." Michael Rudas and Warner Mach volunteered to each give a portion of the presentation.

They would like a few more volunteers to join them.

New Business

Bob Clyne moved to appoint Robert Clyne, Jerry Comptois, Stephen Cook, Roland Maki, and Morton Stocker to the Audit Committee. Franz Breidenich seconded the motion and it was carried.

Bob Clyne moved to adopt the 2011 budget as submitted. Tom Callow seconded the motion and it was carried.

Bob Clyne moved to adjourn at 12:28. Richard Jackson seconded the motion and it was carried.

Richard Jackson reopened the Board Meeting at 12:30.

Bob Clyne moved to send a Get-Well gift, not to exceed \$50, to Gary DeNise. Carol Sanzi will have a gift sent to Gary DeNise. Tom Callow seconded the motion and it was carried.

Richard Jackson moved to send a Get-Well gift, not to exceed \$50, to Betty MacKenzie. Carol Sanzi will have flowers sent. Tom Callow seconded the motion and it was carried.

Bob Clyne moved to adjourn at 12:35 p.m. Brian Brodsky seconded the motion and it was carried.



SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS (SIGS)



SIG-IBM
Tom Callow

March 13: 1:45 p.m. Video Editing: Greg Zonca of Mort Crim Communications will use ‘Adobe Premiere Pro’ to discuss “The Basics of Video Editing.” Mr. Zonca has done video editing for corporate communications, broadcast news, commercials, non-profits, music videos, documentaries, short films, and Internet media. He is, in addition, an award-winning video storyteller.



SIG-IBM
INTERMEDIATE
Warner Mach

March 13: 3:45 p.m. Apple iPad Part 2: SIG-IBM Chairman Tom Callow will continue his fascinating discussion and demonstration of Apple’s new tablet computer.

Pictures: Recent SEMCO Meetings: <<http://www.tinyurl.com/y8cm99e>>

Video: Recent SEMCO Meeting: <<http://www.tinyurl.com/363vnbd>>



SIG-ADVANCED
Franz Breidenich

March 15 (Tues): 5:30 p.m.: At the Madison Heights Library located at 240 West 13 Mile Rd. one block West of John R. The parking lot entrance is off Brush St. The lot and entrance to the library is located in the back of the library. Topic: General discussion.



SIG-LINUX
Michael Rudas
Mike Bader



March 22 (Tues): 6:45 p.m.: At Motor City Free Geek, 1511 Jarvis St. Suite #10, Ferndale, MI 48220. The building is on the Northwest corner of Wanda and Jarvis - The first traffic light south of 9 Mile, on Wanda. Topic: Mike Rudas will discuss, “Across The Digital Divide”—Bridging the Windows-Linux gap with cross-platform and substitute software.

April 2011 DATABUS DEADLINE (7th day after 2nd Sunday in month)
SEMCO Input and Members’ Ads—Deadline: Sun., Mar. 20, 11:59 p.m.
 Members’ personal ads are free. To mail, use Editor [address on Page 2](#); e-mail address: <warnermach@gmail.com>. PLEASE send to arrive sooner than deadline.
Business Ads - Deadline: Second Friday monthly. Contact Editor ([address Page 2](#)).

Warner Machwarnermach@gmail.com

(to post monthly computer group info)

**CALENDAR-OF-EVENTS
OTHER GROUPS****COMP (Computer Operators of Marysville & Port Huron)**

April 6, 7 p.m., (1st Wednesday) Jane Wheatly 810-982-1187 or Pam Raisanen
E-mail info: <compinfo@greatlakes.net>. Web: <<http://www.bwcomp.org>>.
Topic: Everything You Wanted to Know about HD TV but Were Afraid to Ask.

Focus: Hope IT User Group

1400 Oakman, Detroit, MI. 48238. Web info <<http://www.fhitug.org>>. See web site for details. Pre-registration required.

HUG (Holly User Group)

Groveland Twp. Fire Hall, 3085 Grange Hall Rd. & Dixie Hwy., Holly, MI. 48442.

MacGroup-Detroit

March 27, 3:00 p.m., Birmingham Temple, 28611 West 12 Mile Rd., Farmington Hills. Info: Terry White, <terry@macgroup.org> or 248-569-4933. <<http://www.macgroup.org>>. Topic: Learn How to Fix and Retouch Your Photos.

MacTechnics, (MAC User Group)

March 19, (3rd Saturday); See web site for meeting time and location. <<http://www.mactechnics.org>>. JoAnn Olson at 248-478-4300. Topic: TBA.

MDLUG (Metro Detroit Linux User Group)

March 12, 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>>. Topic: TBA.

Motor City Free Geek

Every Saturday 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. 1511 Jarvis St. Suite #10, Ferndale, MI 48220. <<http://www.motorcityfreegeek.net>>. E-mail: <MotorCityFreeGeek@gmail.com>. Recycling & Open Source.

MUG (Michigan User Group)

April 12, 6:00 p.m., (2nd Tuesday): Engineering Society of Detroit. 20700 Civic Center Drive, Suite 450, Southfield, MI 48076. <<http://www.mug.org>>. Topic: TBA.

Oak Park Computer Club

Every Fri., 10:15 a.m. at Oak Park Library, Oak Park Blvd. west of Coolidge.

Royal Oak Computer Club

Every Wed., 12:30 to 2:30 PM at Mahany/Meininger Senior Community Center, 3500 Marais Ave., Royal Oak, 48073. Near Crooks & 13 Mile. Guest speakers & regular monthly speakers. <<http://tinyurl.com/royaloakcc>>.

SHCC (Sterling Heights Computer Club)

April 5, 7:30 p.m. (1st Tues); 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 "The Free(dom) Alternative: Why even hard-core Windows users should learn about (and learn to love) Linux"

SEMCO and Meetup.com

SEMCO is now on Meetup.com. In order to show potential new attendees what a dynamic organization we are we encourage members to "RSVP." Go to <http://www.meetup.com> and type in your interest as "computers" and give your zip code. This should take you to the SEMCO entry. Press the "RSVP" tab and this will take you to the signup page (or login page if you have signed up previously). Signup as a meetup member and indicate whether you intend to come to the meeting (RSVP).

Note: Signing up as a meetup member is free and is not related to joining SEMCO as a paying member.

SEMCO

Serving the needs of professionals, hobbyists, novices, and prospective computer users since 1976.

- * Learn more about computing in an informal, non-academic setting.
- * Get honest answers to computer questions without commercial bias.
- * Meet and interact with other computer users. Personal and electronic networking.
- * Gain access to members willing to provide help in response to a phone call or e-mail
- * Receive monthly newsletter with informative articles.

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

Relational Database Programming: Lis

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@mich.com
Comptois, Jerry—248-651-2504, anytime.....	
Cook, Stephen—313-272-7594, eves.....	scook48227@ameritech.net
Lis, Bernie—248-669-0101, 10am-8pm.....	BerLLis@comcast.net
Vander-Schrier, Jack—586-739-7720, 12–8pm.....	jvanders@comcast.net
Yuhasz, Steve.....	Help@yuhasz.org



**SOUTHEASTERN MICHIGAN
COMPUTER ORGANIZATION, INC.**

SEMCO CALENDAR

**Engineering Society of Detroit
20700 Civic Center Dr., Suite 450, 4th Floor
Southfield, MI. 48076
42°29'7" N by 83°14'29" W**

March 13—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., Video Editing: Greg Zonca of Mort Crim Communications will use 'Adobe Premiere Pro' to discuss "The Basics of Video Editing." Mr. Zonca has done video editing for corporate communications, broadcast news, commercials, non-profits, music videos, documentaries, short films, and Internet media. He is, in addition, an award-winning video storyteller.

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

SIG-IBM Intermediate, 3:45 p.m., Apple iPad Part 2: SIG-IBM Chairman Tom Callow will continue his fascinating discussion and demonstration of Apple's new tablet computer.

SIG-ADVANCED, March 15 (Tues): 5:30 p.m.: At the Madison Heights Library located at 240 West 13 Mile Rd. one block West of John R. The parking lot entrance is off Brush St. The lot and entrance to the library is located in the back of the library. Topic: General discussion.

SIG-LINUX, March 22 (Tues): 6:45 p.m.: At Motor City Free Geek, 1511 Jarvis St. Suite #10, Ferndale, MI 48220. The building is on the Northwest corner of Wanda and Jarvis. Topic: Mike Rudas will discuss, "Across The Digital Divide"—Bridging the Windows-Linux gap with cross-platform and substitute software.

April 10—SEMCO Sunday

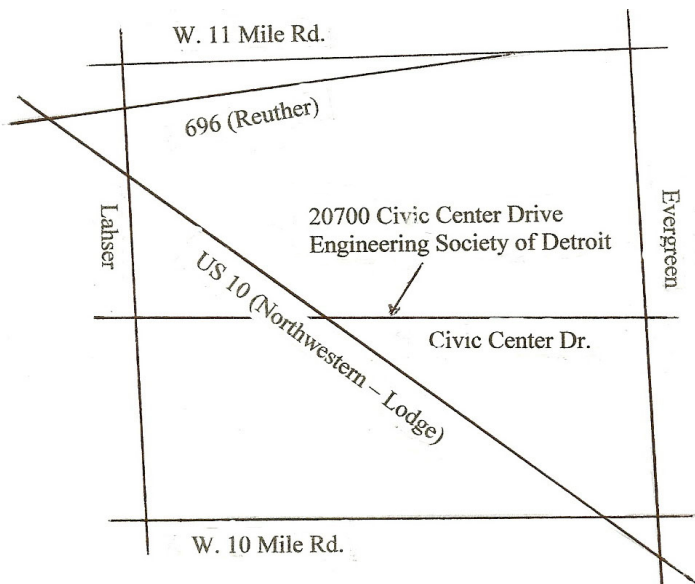
<http://www.semco.org>

PUBLIC INVITED

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

SEMCO Meetings at Engineering Society of Detroit
20700 Civic Center Drive, Suite 450, 4th Floor
Southfield MI 48076.

42°29'7" N by 83°14'29" W



From I-696 exit at Evergreen. Take Evergreen south to Civic Center Drive. Civic Center Drive is about halfway between I-696/Eleven Mile Rd. and 10 Mile Rd. Turn west, right if you are coming from the north, onto Civic Center Drive. Follow Civic Center Drive, watching the number signs on the right. When you get to the 20700 sign turn right, north, and follow the drive until you arrive at the southwest corner of the brown building with the Engineering Society of Detroit sign near the top. Turn right, east, and go past the front of the building. When you reach the end of the building, turn left, north and go to the back of the building and turn left, west, again. The parking lot will be on your right. The entrance is in the center of the building. Park in back of building. Enter the rear door. The ESD office is on the fourth floor.



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

SEMCO (future meetings)

March 13

April 10

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Helping People for the 21st Century**