



# MUG Monitor **Extra!**

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## iPod Replacement

by **Sandy Berger, CompuKISS, [www.compukiss.com](http://www.compukiss.com)**

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Too many technology stories are sad tales of aggravation and obsolescence. So today I'm going to tell you a story about a digital device with a happy ending.

About 2 years ago, I decided to purchase an iPod. After shopping around, I found that the iPod nano was selling for \$149 just about everywhere. However, the Sam's Club in Cary had it for \$138.77. So why pay more? When I made the Sam's Club purchase, the store clerk offered me a service policy, which I immediately rejected. When he asked why I wasn't interested, I told him that I had learned from past experience that most of these insurance policies were a waste of money because they were expensive and didn't cover the problems that I might actually have with the item.

He assured me that this policy was different. For just \$14.88, I could get a 3-year policy that gave me a new iPod for most anything that went wrong with my iPod, including a battery that ran out of juice. My husband suggested that since I am a heavy-duty iPod user, I should go ahead and purchase the policy. Since I use my iPod in the car and at home in a dock every day, I was fairly sure that the iPod battery would give out before the 3-year deadline, so it seemed like a logical move. I purchased the policy. Yet all the time I was wondering if the clerk was just a

good salesman or the policy was really that good.

Last month, I found an answer to that question. My iPod started acting weirdly. It was completely freezing up. No matter what button I pressed, it gave no response. Although I had encountered problems like this with computers, I was surprised to find my iPod acting just like a Windows computer. In the computer world, we call it the blue screen of death. I don't know if it has a name on the iPod, but it turned out to be a similar type of aggravation.

At first it didn't seem like much of a problem, because Apple had a solution. Just turn the Hold button on and off a few times, then press and hold the Menu button and the center of the scroll wheel at the same time. Hold them down for about 10 seconds until the Apple icon appears on the screen. This worked great, restoring the iPod immediately, without losing any of my audio programs and music. Unfortunately, the freezes became more and more frequent. I was having to perform this reset 4 or 5 times a day, so it became a real pain.

It was time to go back to Sam's Club, but I agonized with that. How could I show them the problem since it happened only sporadically? My discomfort turned to glee when the Sam's Club clerk didn't

even try to duplicate the problem. She asked me for the receipt and earbuds and charging cord that came with the iPod. Once I produced those, she promptly refunded the price of the iPod plus the price of the insurance policy. I could have just kept the refund, but instead I headed over to the electronic aisle to pick out a replacement.

My old model iPod was no longer available, but I was also pleasantly surprised to find that the new models were selling for exactly the same price I had paid for the older model. On top of that, the new iPod nanos had twice as much memory, larger screens, and the ability to play videos. This was turning out to be really good! For exactly the same price, I was able to purchase a new, more capable iPod with a new 3-year insurance policy.

Talk about a happy ending.... I am now enjoying watching video podcasts on my new iPod in addition to using it for audio podcasts and music. If anything happens to it in the next 3 years, I can get another replacement. While I don't usually purchase insurance policies for digital equipment, this one turned out to be a real winner.

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# Make Your Wireless Network Safe

by **Marjie Tucker, Editor, Mountain Computer User Group,  
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Wireless networks are becoming more and more popular, but they do add some additional security risks. You need to spend a little extra time to ensure that your data and your identity are secure.

## ***What are the Risks?***

Because wireless networks don't require a cable between the computer and your Internet connection, it's relatively easy for someone else to use your Internet connection for free, to hijack your messages, or to sneak into your computer and view or steal your data.

## ***So What Should I Do?***

There are several important steps that you should follow to protect yourself and your computer:

- 1 Don't use a default password on your wireless equipment. Most networking devices are pre-configured by the manufacturer with a simple password to simplify the setup process. This is the password that allows you to access the router configuration. These "default" passwords are well known by anyone who has used a similar device and they are available online, eroding any protection they might have provided. Check the instructions that came with your device and immediately change the password.

Remember that the best passwords contain both upper and lowercase letters as well as numbers. And, always shy away from passwords that can be easily guessed by your friends—

such as the names of your children or your dog.

Experts suggest using a poem to derive a "pass phrase." You merely take a line from a poem or poem title and use the first letter of each word. For example, using the poem "Mary had a little lamb" you would use the letters from the first line—Mary had a little lamb; its fleece was white as snow—mhallifwwas. Add at least one uppercase letter by capitalizing the M for Mary—Mhallifwwas. Next add at least one number by changing some of the letters to numbers, such as making the first letters for little and lamb into 1s. Now we have a phrase (Mha11ifwwas) that is reasonably secure and very easy to remember.

- 2 Restrict your network to only your computers. Every computer device has an embedded address on it called a media access control (MAC) address. Wireless access points and routers can be configured to exclude all other MAC addresses.
- 3 Encrypt the data on your network. Encryption prevents outsiders from viewing your transmissions. There are two methods of ensuring that your information is adequately protected, Wired Equivalent Privacy (WEP) and Wi-Fi Protected Access (WPA). Because WEP has several security issues associated with it,

WPA is considered the more effective method, if it is supported by your equipment. However, since this is another area where a secure password is important, you should use a passphrase like I described in item #1.

- 4 Choose a unique SSID. Your equipment may have a default name that identifies your network, called an SSID. Be sure to setup a unique name and, if possible, avoid broadcasting that name. That will make it harder for outsiders to find your network.
- 5 Install a firewall for your network. Microsoft Vista and XP both provide a firewall that is designed to protect your computer, but your network itself will be safer with its own firewall. A host-based firewall is easy to obtain (some of them are free over the Internet) and can be installed directly onto your wireless device.
- 6 Install and regularly update both anti-virus and anti-spyware software. You can keep attackers at bay with these protective programs. However, remember to update both of them on a regular basis. New viruses and spyware attacks are being developed daily, so your software must be updated to be effective.

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# Computune-Up

by **Berry F. Phillips**, member of the **Computer Club of Oklahoma City**, [www.ccokc.org](http://www.ccokc.org)

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Do you want your computer to run faster and increase your productivity? Of course; if you have major problems, you will need to contact your manufacturer and/or professional technical support. Many of those costly major problems can be prevented by doing "computune-ups" yourself. Yes, you can do it even without being a computer geek! My thanks to Microsoft for some of the information in this article.

## "Computune-up" (Software)

1. Clean up your desktop! If you have not used a program for a year, or one that you never use that came bundled with your system, why not delete it? You will get more space on your hard drive in return.
2. Clean up your system tray to the left of time on your Taskbar! When you remove icons from your system tray that you rarely use, it will speed up your system since your computer has to locate those programs whenever you boot up. I love a little freeware program called *Code Stuff Starter* that shows you what is running and lets you easily turn those programs on or off.
3. Defragment your computer and your registry, which will make your system run faster by consolidating fragments on your hard drive and registry. I use freeware programs like SmartDefrag and Auslogics' Registry Defrag, and there are others available on the Internet.
4. Check your memory. The more programs you have running, the more demand on your system memory (RAM). Adding more memory to your system will increase speed and is very easy to do without paying for expensive technical support. You can do it with minimal instruction, or have a technically-oriented friend or club

member do it, since it only takes a few minutes to replace.

5. Keep your operating system updated, and run utilities weekly! I strongly suggest you download needed freeware software for your system from "46 best ever freeware programs" ([www.techsupportalert.com](http://www.techsupportalert.com)), thoroughly tested and rated with commentary.

## "Computune-up" (Hardware)

1. Make sure your computer is unplugged before cleaning and not plugged in until your system is dry after cleaning!
2. Make sure you have the following tools available: a screwdriver, can of compressed air (available from a computer store), cotton swabs (not balls), rubbing alcohol, paper towels or anti-static cloths (available from a computer store), and water.
3. Clean the inside of your computer case! Using a screwdriver, remove the side of the case opposite your motherboard. Touch as little as possible inside the computer, keeping fingers away from cards and cords due to static electricity. Blow air around all the components and along the bottom of the case, keeping the nozzle four inches away from your machine. Blow air into the power supply and into the fan from the back of your computer case. Blow air into the floppy disk and CD drives. Wipe the inside cover with a lightly moistened cloth before replacing it using your screwdriver. Clean every three months if your computer is on the floor or in an especially dirty environment. Clean approximately every six to eight months in a normal environment.
4. Clean the outside of the case! Run a cotton swab dipped in rubbing alcohol around all the openings on the back of

your case, giving them one swipe with a dampened swab and one with a dry swab. Clean the remaining outside of your system. Do this whenever you clean the inside of your system.

5. Clean the mouse by taking out the screws and going inside with an alcohol swab. If there is a rubber ball, clean it with water, and let it dry. Then clean the outside of the mouse. Many mouse problems are simply caused by a dirty mouse.

6. Clean the keyboard! Turn it upside down and gently shake it and most of the crumbs and dust will fall out. Blow air in and around the keys. Take an alcohol dampened cotton swab and clean the top and sides of the keys. Do this monthly; your keyboard gets very dirty and can even spread germs. If you have a laptop, follow the same procedure but take extra care with your machine.

7. Clean the monitor with a moistened paper towel or a soft lint-free cloth. (You can purchase monitor cleaning products from a computer store). Don't spray liquid directly on the screen, but spray on the cloth. Wipe the screen gently to remove dust and fingerprints. (Never touch the back of the monitor). I suggest you purchase a special cleaning solution from a computer store for laptop computers.

If you have finished your "computune-up," you are on your way to being transformed into a computer geek! Do not be alarmed, for the "geeks shall inherit the Earth!" Bill Gates, chief geek and founder of Microsoft Corporation, has already made it; he is the role model for the rest of us!

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# Get Ready for XP and Vista Service Packs

by George Whitesell, a member of the Sarastoa PCUG, Florida, [www.spcug.org](http://www.spcug.org)

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Service Pack 1 for Windows Vista and Service Pack 3 for Windows XP are going to be released soon, perhaps even by the time you are reading this. I recommend not being one of the first on your block to install either of the new service packs. Let others discover any problems with the installation of the final versions of the Service Packs!

What are service packs? They are a compilation of all critical updates released since the initial release of an operating system or since the last service pack. They often contain new features or enhancements as well. Service Pack 2 for Windows XP contained a number of security improvements and was arguably the most significant Service pack ever released. I think it was only because of the negative publicity Microsoft was receiving over weak security that led them to release it as a free Service Pack and not "Windows XP Second Edition" which they would have charged us for. You will not see any major changes or additions to XP in Service Pack 3, but you will still want to install it. Service Pack 1 for Vista is reported to have sped up some aspects of the operating system.

There is an article at [support.microsoft.com/kb/935796](http://support.microsoft.com/kb/935796) listing 11 programs that are blocked, do not run, or have a "loss of functionality" after the installation of Service Pack 1 for Vista. Three of the programs listed are ZoneAlarm, BitDefender AntiVirus or Internet Security and the New York Times Reader. Check the list before you install the service pack. Personally I will wait at least one week (maybe more) to make sure there are not any

other problems that are affected by the final release of either new service pack. If you have been installing all Microsoft updates as they were released, you already have most of the service pack installed.

### *Here are some general guidelines for the installation of any service pack:*

- 1 Run complete scans of your computer for viruses and spyware. A majority of the problems people encountered while installing Windows XP Service Pack 2 were caused by viruses and/or spyware on their computer. Service packs replace or update a number of system files. You want to make sure your computer is free of any malware.
- 2 Fix any hardware or software problems. If you are experiencing frequent lockups or system crashes, or extremely slow performance, resolve those problems before trying to install a service pack. Many people assume the installation of a service pack will clear up problems they may be experiencing. This usually is not the case. This is another frequent cause of service pack installations failing or causing more problems.
- 3 Create a System Restore point. If you found any viruses or spyware, delete all of your old Restore Points and then create a new one. If you have a problem and use a System Restore point prior to the time you removed any viruses or spyware, guess what happens? That's right; you reload the viruses and/or spyware! Instructions on deleting System Restore points are at the end of this article.

- 4 If you installed a beta version of a service pack, uninstall that version before you install the final service pack.
- 5 *Never* attempt to abort the installation of a service pack (or any program). If you have started the installation and then decide you do not want to continue, allow the installation to complete; reboot the computer; and then uninstall the service pack (or program).

### *Follow the steps below if you need (or want) to delete all System Restore points:*

#### **Windows XP**

- 1 Click the Start Button.
- 2 From the Start menu click Control panel.
- 3 Click on "Switch to Classic View" in the upper left portion of the Control Panel window.
- 4 In Control Panel double-click the "System" Icon.
- 5 Click the "System Restore" tab.
- 6 Check the box next to "Turn off System Restore on all drives."
- 7 Click "Apply" at the bottom right corner.
- 8 Click "Yes" in the warning box asking if you want to turn off system restore.
- 9 Click "OK" and close all windows.
- 10 Reboot the computer to clear all System Restore points.

(see *Windows SPs* on page 6)

# Hewie's Views and Reviews for May 2008

by Hewie Poplock, Vice President, Operations,  
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Welcome to this issue of Hewie's Views & Reviews. Be sure to visit Hewie's Favorites at [www.hewie.net](http://www.hewie.net).

## ***My upgrade to Microsoft Vista SP1***

I have been anticipating the first service pack for my two Vista computers. It was recently released, but quickly retracted due to some installation problems. It's now available through the standard Windows Update Service. A couple of weeks ago, I spent the several hours backing up my main system to prepare to upgrade to Service Pack 1.

I installed all of the current updates, which should be done prior to upgrading. Once I did that, I checked Windows Update, and SP1 was not listed. After searching Microsoft's Knowledgebase, I discovered that Vista checks your system and if there are potential problems with drivers, it will not be available. There were so many warnings to check all of your hardware and software for SP1 compatibility before downloading a generic version, that I decided not to try updating.

Then the Windows Update Service had 11 updates. The day after installing all of them, I had the notice that Service Pack 1 was ready to download and install. Once again I backed up the entire system. I then activated the update. A message stated that this could take an hour or more. It downloaded about a 65 MB file, and started the install. Then it had to reboot to complete the installation. While shutting down, the screen said it was completing Part 1 of three parts, then came the second. It then shut down and rebooted to a black screen. I could see the hard drive light pounding away on the drive.

The black screen never became a screen, but after a while, I noticed a Vista Logo and a graphic that I recognized as part of the screensaver that came up when Vista was waiting for a user to sign in. When I moved the mouse, it went back to just a plain black screen for several minutes, and then the logo showed. I was convinced it was at the log-in screen and waiting for my input. However, I only saw the dark screen.

Since I added an ATI graphics card to the system to support 2 screens, I figured that perhaps the video driver was confused. When I unscrewed one of the monitors and plugged it back in, I saw the sign-in screen, then it faded to black. I decided that it was either safe to reboot or time to restore from my backup.

I shut off the computer and turned it back on. It came up with the log-in screen. When I logged in, I got a scrambled screen, with items where I did not expect them to be, but workable enough for me to get to the ATI Control Center. Once there, I made some changes and I was good to go.

While my update to Vista SP1 worked, the problems that I had could have been unfixable for the novice or a person with little patience. So much for an idiot-proof operating system. Next I have to try the update on my laptop. I wonder what problems await me there. Oh, and I don't know what I gained by updating. I will check on that and get back to you with that information.

## ***New additions to Hewie's Favorites***

There are more new sites this issue, because we skipped a month.

**Farecast**, [www.farecast.com](http://www.farecast.com)—Search multiple travel sites, compare airline prices, search out travel deals, and receive free fare predictions

**Evolution of Security**, [www.tsa.gov/blog/](http://www.tsa.gov/blog/)—TSA has opened their own blog

**CrunchBase**, [www.crunchbase.com](http://www.crunchbase.com)—Free directory of technology companies, people, and investors that anyone can edit

**Speed Trap**, [njection.com/speedtrap/](http://njection.com/speedtrap/)—Mashup (Web application hybrid) that combines Microsoft Live Maps and the ability to pinpoint and review speed traps located anywhere on the planet

**Topper Search**, [www.toppersearch.com](http://www.toppersearch.com)—Uses your unique preferences and builds a model that represents your tastes or intent.

**PDFescape**, [www.pdfescape.com](http://www.pdfescape.com)—Online PDF Reader, Editor, Form Filler, Form Designer, Solution

**TubeMogul**, [www.tubemogul.com](http://www.tubemogul.com)—Free service that provides a single point for deploying uploads to the top video sharing sites, and powerful analytics on who, what, and how videos are being viewed

**MLBroadcast**, [www.mlbroadcast.com](http://www.mlbroadcast.com)—Real Estate Listing Broadcast Syndication Via Video Podcasting and Video Sharing Sites

**Buzzillions**, [www.buzzillions.com](http://www.buzzillions.com)—Find the right product for you! Read the most credible product reviews from Verified Buyers about Digital Cameras, Sporting Goods, Appliances,

(see *Hewie* on page 6)

(*Windows SPs—continued from page 4*)

11 To re-enable system restore, repeat the above steps; this time removing the check in the box next to “Turn off System Restore on all drives.”

12 Reboot Again.

### **Windows Vista**

1 Click the Start Button.

2 From the Start menu click Control panel.

3 Click on “Classic View” in the upper left portion of the Control Panel window

4 In Control Panel double-click the “System” Icon.

5 On the left of the System Properties window you will see a list of Tasks, click on the “System protection” link.

6 Click “Continue” on the ‘User Account Control’ box if it appears.

7 In the System protection window, remove the checkmark for the drive you want to disable system restore on. A message will now appear asking: “Are you sure you want to turn System restore off.”

8 Press the “Turn System Restore Off” button. System Restore will now be turned off permanently on that particular drive.

9 Click “OK” and close all windows.

10 Reboot the computer to clear all System Restore points.

To re-enable system restore, repeat the above steps, but click the box next to the drive you require system restore to monitor (a check will appear in the box), then click the Apply button, and system restore will resume monitoring the drive.

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(*Hewie—continued from page 5*)

Men’s and Women’s Shoes, Toys and Video Games, and more.

**FARK.com**, [www.fark.com](http://www.fark.com)—Fark has news about anything and everything posted by users

**filehippo.com**, [www.filehippo.com](http://www.filehippo.com)—Fast downloads of the latest free software

**OVGuide Online Video Guide**, [www.ovguide.com/movies-tv.html](http://www.ovguide.com/movies-tv.html)—OVGuide is the ultimate free online video portal and search engine to the best movies, tv shows and all other video content on the web. Free Movies, Videos, TV Shows, Video Games.

**VirusTotal**, [www.virustotal.com](http://www.virustotal.com)—Free virus and malware online scan service

**Newspond**, [www.newspond.com](http://www.newspond.com)—Hub for the latest tech, science, and gaming news. Articles are found and sorted electronically by real-time global popularity

**NutritionData**, [www.nutritiondata.com](http://www.nutritiondata.com)—Comprehensive nutrition analysis

**Global Incident Map**, [www.globalincidentmap.com/](http://www.globalincidentmap.com/)

**home.php**—Displays Terrorist Acts, Suspicious Activity, and General Terrorism News

**LiarCard**, [www.liarcard.com](http://www.liarcard.com)—Spy technology instantly detects lies your subjects voice.

**Silobreaker**, [www.silobreaker.com](http://www.silobreaker.com)—Online search service & insight for news and current events

**Animoto**, [animoto.com](http://animoto.com)—Music videos for your images and pictures

**AnyClient**, [www.anyclient.com/index.html](http://www.anyclient.com/index.html)—Free No-Install FTP, FTPS, SFTP and WebDAV Client

**PictureTrail**, [www.picturetrail.com](http://www.picturetrail.com)—PictureTrail is an online photo sharing and image hosting website.

**FACEinHOLE**, [faceinhole.com/home.asp](http://faceinhole.com/home.asp)—Who do you want to be today? Select a scenario, upload and adjust a photo or use your webcam

**Adobe Photoshop CS3 A-Z**, [www.photoshop-a-z.com](http://www.photoshop-a-z.com)—Website dedicated to the book *Adobe Photoshop CS3 A-Z Tools and Features*. Illustrated ready-to-use reference.

**In Pictures Tutorials**, [www.inpics.net](http://www.inpics.net)—Free online tutorials based on pictures, not words.

They’re the easiest way to learn computer subjects

**Unix Toolbox**, [cb.vu/unixtoolbox.shtml](http://cb.vu/unixtoolbox.shtml)—Collection of Unix/Linux/BSD commands and tasks which are useful for IT work or for advanced users

**htm2pdf**, [www.htm2pdf.co.uk](http://www.htm2pdf.co.uk)—Convert webpages directly from your browser. All you need to do is drag the link to your bookmarks toolbar and save the page as PDF

**BarCampOrlandoGroups**, [barcamp.org/BarCampOrlandoGroups](http://barcamp.org/BarCampOrlandoGroups)—Related local groups and meet-ups

**CommonCraft Show**, [www.commoncraft.com/show](http://www.commoncraft.com/show)—Explanations In Plain English

**Dimdim**, [www.dimdim.com](http://www.dimdim.com)—Free Online Meetings, Training, Desktop Sharing

Please share these newsletters with your friends. To subscribe, send a blank messages to [hewie\\_favorites-subscribe@yahoo.com](mailto:hewie_favorites-subscribe@yahoo.com) or sign up at the website at [www.hewie.net](http://www.hewie.net).

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# Review: Roxio Easy Media Creator Suite v.10

by John Roy, President, The PC Users Group of Connecticut, [www.tpcup-ct.org](http://www.tpcup-ct.org)

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Roxio, a division and brand of Sonic Solutions, has been a leader in burning software for many years. I personally have used the product since it was distributed by Adaptec several years ago. The CD/DVD burning software today far exceeds the basic functions that existed in those early days. Roxio Easy Media Creator (EMC) will accomplish so much more than the basic burning tasks and is now a full-featured suite.

Doing this review has allowed me to explore and appreciate the many applications within this suite. Because EMC is so comprehensive, I will provide an overview in this article but follow up with more details in future issues of our newsletter.

Before I start boasting about some of these neat applications, I must discuss some installation issues. The product would not install on my primary computer! After trying several times to install under various scenarios, I checked for possible solutions using Roxio's web product support and also their user forum. None of those sources provided any clues, so I connected with technical phone support. I was quite surprised that the wait time was very small and the technician was professional and extremely competent. Unfortunately, after almost two hours of phone support, the problem was not solved.

The tech support effort involved major system modifications, including deletion of all files associated with my original EMC version 9, my Nero burner software, a

complete registry purge line by line of anything remotely associated with or influenced by Roxio software, removal of all anti-virus software and firewalls, elimination of all startup files except system essentials, and running registry clean utilities. Nothing worked! A trouble report was left open, but I never received any further calls. In their users forum I did find one other person with the exact same problem and no solution.

Fortunately, I have a couple of other computers at my house, so I tried installing the version 10 on both an older desktop and on my primary laptop system. The install went smoothly on both of those systems. So until I get a chance to rebuild my primary desktop, I won't know if I can ever use the latest version on it. On a side note, before trying to install EMC version 10, I had version 9 successfully working. After all the system changes, I could no longer load my EMC version 9. So now I struggled with that problem for a few days. Once again not finding any online solutions, I contacted a phone support tech who was able to direct me to a download utility that cleared the problem and allowed me to once again install version 9.

While the above debacle was frustrating, don't let it deter you from considering the purchase of this capable applications suite. So let's look at why you should consider owning this product.

Once you get past the install, you will see a super clean interface with applications divided into seven

primary areas; Audio, Data and Backup, Copy, Media and Devices, Photo, Video, and Tools. Each application provides another set of choices. Audio has 13, Data and Backup has 5, Copy has 5, Media and Devices has 2, Photo has 9, Video has 11, and Tools has 8. Now that is a huge chest of applications at your disposal. If you were to purchase each primary application separately, it would cost you a few hundred dollars. This package sells for about \$100, but if you watch for sales you can buy it for much less.

When you think of Roxio and burning software, the primary reason most people purchase the product is for those tools. The Copy and Data and Backup modules take care of those basic requirements along with some other goodies. For anyone familiar with an older version, you will find the original Creator Classic still there, but spruced up. That old standby is quite the workhorse. You select the type and size of disc you want to burn, and it will keep you updated on available space as you move files or folders you want to burn into a holding area. Once your files and folders are selected, you can burn your CD/DVD directly or make an image for later burning. Of course, you have advanced options to define the type of disc, speed, copies, etc. You can also make a bootable or multimedia disc and go directly to creating disc labels of your burn project.

The backup module provides capability to be selective of the files you want backed up or restored and at

(see *Roxio* on page 9)

# Bookmarks Page

by **Hank Pearson, Treasurer and Webmaster, ASCII**  
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Wouldn't it be nice if you could view a searchable webpage of bookmarks for your favorite websites? You can, but why?

## ***Find Bookmarks with Forgotten Names***

One reason to view your bookmarks as a webpage (as an alternative to looking in a menu) is to be able to find sites when you can't remember the first word in the name.

Let's say you have a Firefox bookmark named Carbonite Online Backup, and you can't remember Carbonite but you know you are looking for the word Backup. On your Bookmarks page (which you will soon learn how to view), you can easily search for "Backup."

You are using Firefox, aren't you? If you haven't discovered Firefox, download it from Mozilla ([www.mozilla.com](http://www.mozilla.com)). It's free, fast, and secure. Make Firefox your default browser.

## ***View Bookmark Descriptions & Tags***

Another reason for a bookmarks page is to give you plenty of room to view (and find) descriptions of your bookmarks. You will learn how to add tags to improve your searches.

## ***Zoom In and Out***

A third reason to display your bookmarks on a webpage is to allow you to zoom the text in and out so you can see it clearly. To zoom any webpage, press Ctrl+Plus or Ctrl+Minus, using the numeric keypad.

## ***DIY for Fun and Learning***

So, how do you display your bookmarks as a webpage? You could download a tool to do the work for

you, or download a tool to search bookmarks. But it's easy enough to DIY (Do It Yourself). It's interesting, fun, and educational. Are you just using your computer to perform certain tasks, or do you also enjoy learning by experimenting? If you like to learn, this tip is for you.

## ***Find the Bookmarks File***

You don't need to create a bookmarks webpage. It already exists on your own hard drive! The name of the file is simply bookmarks.html. Press Win+F to find it. (While holding down the Windows key (next to Alt), press F, for Find.) In the left window pane, click *All Files and Folders*. In *All or part of the file name*, type 'bookmarks.html' (without quotes). Click *Search*.

If you get multiple results, it's easy to determine which bookmarks.html file to use. It's the newest one. In the View menu (of your Search Results window), click *Details*. In the right window pane, click the Date Modified column header (to sort the list). The file you are interested in has the newest date and time (for a file with the Type shown as *Firefox Document*).

## ***Bookmark the Bookmarks File***

Double-click that newest *bookmarks.html* Firefox Document to open it in Firefox. Press Ctrl+D to bookmark the bookmarks.html file. In the Name field, insert a hyphen (-) at the beginning (to name the bookmark '-Bookmarks'), so this new bookmark will appear at the top of the list.

Now, with your Bookmarks page displayed, press F5 to refresh the view. (F5 is a common shortcut key for Refresh.) Surprise! The new -

Bookmarks bookmark is at the bottom, not the top. Let's address that. (This is Firefox 2.0.0.11. Future versions might vary.)

## ***Create Another Top Bookmark***

First, create another bookmark that will be displayed at the top. For example, open Google.com, press Ctrl+D, and name the bookmark -Google (starting with a hyphen).

## ***Sort Your Bookmarks***

Now, in the Bookmarks menu, right click any bookmark, and click Sort by Name. Look in the Bookmarks menu to confirm that the bookmarks are indeed sorted. Note the two bookmarks that begin with hyphen (-) at the top of the menu.

Look at your Bookmarks page again, and press F5 to Refresh. The new bookmarks are still at the bottom.

## ***Rearrange Your Bookmarks***

To force Firefox to rearrange your bookmarks page, move a bookmark in the menu. In the Bookmarks menu, drag, for example, either new bookmark that starts with a hyphen up or down to precede or follow the other bookmark that starts with a hyphen. (Having two hyphen-prefixed bookmarks lets you rearrange those two at the top without rearranging the other bookmarks.) Press Escape to close the menu.

Refresh your Bookmarks page with F5. The bookmarks on the webpage are now arranged as shown in the Bookmarks menu. (Do you need to refresh three times? No, we simply demonstrated that the bookmarks.html file is rearranged when you move a bookmark in the menu.)

(see *Bookmarks* on page 9)

*(Bookmarks—continued from page 8)*

### **Finding Bookmarks on the Page**

When you are viewing your Bookmarks webpage, press Ctrl+F for Find. Type Backup, for example, and press Escape (to close the Find toolbar). To find the next occurrence of Backup, press F3. (F3 is a common shortcut key for Find Again.) When you find the desired bookmark (link), click it (or Ctrl+click to open the site in a new tab). (Or press Enter, or Ctrl+Enter to open the site in a new tab.)

### **Add Descriptions and Tags**

To add or change descriptions of your bookmarks, in the Bookmarks menu, right-click the bookmark you want to edit, and click Properties. In the Description field, type anything (including your own tags) that might help you find your bookmark and remember what it is for. After clicking OK and pressing F5 (for Refresh), you will see your new Description in the Bookmarks page.

### **Make Changes through the Menu**

Now that you know where bookmarks.html is located, you might be tempted to edit it directly with a text editor. Mozilla warns that it is automatically generated, so do not edit it, as your changes would be lost. Make your changes through the Bookmarks menu.

Displaying your Bookmarks as a webpage is a start in discovering many more tips and tricks related to Firefox.

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*(Roxio—continued from page 7)*

what frequency. If you want more powerful options, then you will be provided an upgrade link. A range of backup devices and media, including Blu-ray discs and HD DVD discs, are supported. Large files can be automatically spanned across multiple discs as required.

The Audio module provides thirteen selections that cover just about everything you could possibly want to do with audio. All the expected tools are there to rip CDs into MP3 files or create audio CDs from other formats. You can make custom CDs with fades, effects and mixing. Tools are there to edit song information and to do batch conversions to formats of your choice. One module allows you to instantly capture any audio playing on your computer, including streaming radio. There is one utility "Convert LPs and Tapes" that I was especially enthused about. At our meeting we have had the question of how to convert LPs and Tapes asked many times in the past. While there are several methods to accomplish this, Roxio EMC has made it easy and crystal clear with this application. So for those of you that have a desire to do this, you should give Roxio EMC serious consideration.

The Photo application contains a full-featured photo suite with powerful editing, effects and touchup tools. It is complete with all the ancillary things you want to do with photos, such as creating slide-shows, panoramas, albums, greeting cards, calendars and layout templates. You can quickly optimize a group of photos for sending email.

The Video application is a full-featured suite for importing, editing, customizing and exporting video into various formats. Included is CinePlayer, a full-featured video player. The features are similar to those found in Pinnacle Studio or Adobe Premier. While some of Roxio EMC tools are not as robust as the leaders, you will find some tools not available in the others. Although it may not be as flexible as the standalone programs, it will be easier for the novice. If you are a true video buff, then even if you own other video software, you will also want to have EMC in your software chest.

The smallest standalone module is Media Manager, which enables users to easily browse, manage, share and protect their media files. The final application module is Tools. This module is used for creating disc labels, obtaining drive information, erasing discs, creating virtual disk drives and a few other assorted utilities. Roxio EMC is Vista compatible and includes gadgets for doing things directly from the desktop.

I'm certain most computer users will find enough applications on Roxio Easy Media Creator to make the investment worthwhile. If this review has captured your interest, pay a visit to Roxio's website at www.roxio.com. They have some great videos that will demonstrate these neat features.

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