

Next Meeting:

Using the Internet for Phone Service

presented by
Lizz Russell

Macon Community
Facilities Building
July 13th, 7 PM

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A Dual Monitor Setup—On the Cheap

by **Moe Norris, Member, Topeka PC Users Club, Kansas,**
www.topekapcusersclub.org

Have you dreamed of having two monitors sitting on your computer desk with all the added screen real estate which that would provide? But that would entail buying a second monitor, then replacing your computer's video card with a dual head model (and if you are using a laptop, forget about it)...all in all, an expensive project that your wallet (or your spouse) may not tolerate. But don't give up hope—there may be another solution.

Do you have two computers in the house? You need two—any two: desktop, notebook, or netbook. You can mix or match in any combination, and turn the second computer into a dual monitor for your primary machine. How? Through the magic of software.

What you need:

- Two computers running any 32-bit or 64-bit version of Windows from

2000 through 7 (you can mix or match).

- The two computers must be connected through a network that supports the TCP/IP protocol. (If you don't already have an ethernet or wireless LAN setup, you can connect the two computers directly using a crossover ethernet cable, Firewire cable, or a special USB-to-USB cable.)
- Forty dollars you can shake out of your piggy bank for a copy of *MaxiVista*, the magic software that makes the whole thing happen. (There are more expensive versions of *MaxiVista* with additional features, but you only need the \$40 version to enable the screen stretching.)

So how does it work? When you install *MaxiVista* on the primary computer, it creates a virtual video driver on that machine. This causes Windows to think that an additional monitor is installed. The contents of this virtual video card are compressed and transmitted to the secondary PC via any standard network

(see *MaxiVista* on page 3)



Figure 1



Figure 2



Macon Users Group Franklin, NC

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Monthly Meetings

MUG meets the second Tuesday of every month at 7 P.M. in the Macon County Community Facilities Building on Georgia Road (US 441 South).

MUG Monitor Staff

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www.maconusersgroup.org

Microsoft Security Essentials

by Lynn Page, Editor, Crystal River User
Group, Florida, www.crug.org

I have been using Windows Live OneCare for a couple of years on my laptop and have been very happy with it. OneCare is being discontinued next year and will not support Windows 7.

Microsoft Security Essentials is a real-time security anti-malware application. The main difference between Microsoft Security Essentials and OneCare is that Security Essentials only provides malware protection while OneCare contains additional applications including a firewall, backup, tune up, multi-pc management, simple Wi-Fi security configuration and simplified printer sharing.

With the upcoming discontinuation of OneCare, I loaded Microsoft Security Essentials, a free download from Microsoft, on my desktop to try it out. I still run a personal firewall and left one other anti-malware application on the computer. Security Essentials is designed to provide real-time anti-malware protection from threats including viruses, spyware, rootkits, Trojans, and other emerging threats in a single application.

The download of Microsoft Security Essentials is free and installation simple. The program is easy to use. As it does everything in the background. Automatic updates assure that your computer is protected by the latest available technology. Like OneCare, Security Essentials makes it easy to see if the computer is secure. The green icon means it's secure.

The Installation Wizard walks you through the installation which only took a few minutes. Its first step requires validation of your copy of Windows. Then you are instructed to remove any other antivirus or antispyware applications installed on the computer. There is even a link to tell you how to remove the applications. Based on Alfred's discussion at the October meeting, I expected this and had already uninstalled my antivirus application. Since the anti-malware program I have installed does not run in the background, I left it on the computer.

Microsoft Security Essentials runs efficiently in the background so you can use your computer without interruptions or long wait times. When completing the

(see *Security* on page 11)

Treasurer's Report

Lee Alexander

Balance forward (12/31/2009).....	460.25
Income.....	0.00
Expense.....	(244.48)
Balance.....	\$215.77

Lou's Views!

Google Dodges a Billion-Dollar Bullet

by Louis Vitale (aka 44RAILGUY)



When Google and Viacom, two of the largest players on the internet, go to court over YouTube, you know the stakes are high. What is at risk is the whole idea of uploading our videos and other content, so it can be shared with a few friends or the whole planet. I know that YouTube can be a colossal waste of time. But, like many other social networking sites, YouTube has changed the culture for the better.

Viacom would have none of it. It viewed any infringement of its precious copyrighted TV shows as a matter of criminal theft, and charged YouTube as the great enabler. It sued the big tube in the sky for over one billion dollars.

When YouTube started up, there was very little in the way of copyright protection. Any one could upload anything, from TV shows, music videos and concert performances, to movie clips. But soon The billionaire YouTube guys realized that they were on thin ice, and seriously started deleting copyrighted material once the once the illegal content was pointed out to them.

I personally have had two of my videos deleted because background music offended Warner Brothers. Once YouTube received notice that the "Pink Panther Theme" violated copyright laws, my video was deleted. The second time it happened, my uploaded video had been online less than 5 minutes. I saw the video disappear followed by an email telling me to cease and desist. Keep in mind, many millions of videos are uploaded daily to YouTube. They are very good at this.

The Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA) has a provision that is called "the Safe Harbor." It provides that online services are protected when they work cooperatively with copyright holders to help manage their rights online. But the fact that YouTube had been doing this did not satisfy Viacom. They wanted YouTube to pre-screen every video before it was posted.

To do that would, in effect, make YouTube or any social site the sole judge and jury for all uploaded content. Given the volume of content uploaded daily, that would

be an impossible task. Clearly that would put an end to most sites, and of course that is exactly what Viacom wanted—less competition.

The court ruled in Google's favor. In fact, the judge granted a summary judgment on behalf of Google, which means that this judge saw the law clearly on Google's side, and that the facts in the case were not in dispute. He made clear that as long as an online service quickly responds to a copyright violation, it is protected by the DMCA.

In a related story, Hulu announced a subscription service called Hulu Plus. Soon, for a \$10 a month fee you can get many of your major first-run TV shows streamed to your computer. Four major content producers, including NBC, Fox and Disney, have agreed to sell their programming over the internet.

I think the future of TV is on the internet. Soon cable and dish services and over-the-air TV will all face stiff competition from your broadband connection. And that Big Flat Screen TV will really just become a monitor.

(MaxiVista—continued from page 1)

connection and displayed by a separate MaxiVista viewer program on the second computer. Now you can spread the screen content across two monitors!

Figure 1 shows a dual monitor setup with a Photoshop image open for editing in the primary monitor, a 24" model running at a resolution of 1920×1200 pixels. The secondary monitor is a 15" laptop screen with a resolution of 1024×768 pixels.

Problem: The control panels cover a portion of the image that is being worked on.

Not to worry! Just move the panels to the secondary monitor (see *Figure 2*)...and *Voila!*

To see videos showing MaxiVista in action, go to www.maxivista.com/demo.htm.

If you would like to try out this program, a 14-day free trial can be downloaded from:

www.maxivista.com/download.htm. The free trial will allow you to make certain that it works well with your equipment—and decide whether you really want the program—before investing any cash. Have a second computer? Then give MaxiVista a try—it won't cost you a cent to find out if a dual monitor setup is for you!

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The Deals Guy

by Bob Click,
Greater Orlando Computer Users Group



How My Reimage Repair Went

Using Reimage to bring my computer back to its original condition was an experience. The first time I started the repair, it got deep into downloading over 770 files, and all of a sudden, my computer warned that the CPU was overheating. I didn't see any way to pause it, so I forced the computer to shut down. After a few days, I tried running Reimage again. It got almost all of the way though the downloading, but the session was interrupted for unknown reasons. When you start a Reimage Repair, it goes through examining your entire hard drive and operating system for viruses, malware, and all the bad stuff, as well as any corrupted files in your operating system, and replaces them with the correct ones.

A few days later, I gave it another try, and it went through the many downloads, which took well over an hour, but one of the problems I wanted repaired was the proper shutdown of my computer, which hadn't been happening. I had to finish the shutdown myself, so it failed to reboot when the repair was completed, which was necessary to finish the session, and I was left with a Reimage "we'll soon be finished" screen each time I started my computer.

I sent a message to Reimage tech support concerning the failed repair, and they responded telling me to run it again in safe mode. When I tried it in safe mode, it couldn't access the internet, so nothing could be done. Then they said it was necessary to schedule a remote session to attempt the repair from their end. A week later I had scheduled a remote session, and the tech sent me an email prior to the

scheduled time with a "LogMeIn" link to use for my session. Their tech worked over an hour and downloaded "autoruns" (Sysinternals) from the Microsoft website and installed it. Eventually the machine started shutting down saying it would be downloading 60 updates, but when it finished doing that, it failed to shut off. I never found out why all the updates, because I try to keep them up to date.

I received an email saying the session had been interrupted and I needed to reschedule a new session. I finally scheduled a new session a week later, and the tech worked almost two hours and finally told me he had decided that the failing shutdown was being caused by my firewall, Online Armor. When he disabled it, he could restart the computer successfully, but when it was activated, the restart failed because the computer failed to shut down. I was convinced and so far the shutdown is working and my firewall is disabled, so that's where I stand now. He suggested that reinstalling it might help. I'm not sure if I'll try that, but the peculiar part is that I have been using Online Armor successfully for over two years, but the problems started after I installed Internet Explorer 8 recently. What is the connection? Tonight, I noticed that I was unable to launch MS Access, so I'm wondering what's wrong with that now. It wants to install when I launch it.

Reimage is located in Israel, and the tech used perfect English in his sessions, which consisted of us communicating via LogMeIn. There is no telephone support. He was patient with my typing and sometimes had questions that he wanted answered in my own words.

During the session, he found Glary Utilities on my machine. I thought I had installed a full version downloaded from Giveawayoftheday.com, but I apparently had actually installed a trial. He asked if I would like him to install it for me and I readily agreed. How helpful is that! While the time duration for the repair was lengthy, I was satisfied to an extent. Not all of my problems were fixed, but my lack of adequate memory could be part of the problem. When I first built the computer, it was enough memory, but because of all the updates and other installed items, memory may be part of the problem. However, it uses RAMbus, which is very expensive.

How To Make Posters

I was visiting a friend the other day and he was enlarging some photos to be used as posters. I asked what he was using, and it's a free program called Easy Poster Printer that he read about. It's at www.gdsoftware.dk. He said it worked well for him. He made a beautiful poster while I watched. It was interesting how it divided the poster up into multiple pages so you could paste them together. That way you don't need to purchase one of those \$20,000 wide-carriage printers to make a large poster. If the above URL doesn't work, try tinyurl.com/253n4r4, which is at the PCWorld site.

How Is Your Flash Drive Working?

Browsing the results of a search the other day, I noticed H2testw (wareseker.com/free-h2testw-1.4/) and took a look. It's a test you can run to tell you that a flash drive does, or doesn't, work like it should. There are many places to download

(see *Deals Guy* on page 10)

Email Scams

by **Vinny La Bash, Regular Contributor,**
Sarasota Personal Computer Users Group, Inc., Florida, www.spcug.org

There are at least two dozen people in Nigeria that want to give me twelve million dollars. Imagine that! People are vigorously competing with each other to make me rich. You would think that after all the publicity over the last dozen years, everyone would know about the Nigerian scam. Head-hunters in New Guinea know about the Nigerian scheme. Lost tribes in the Amazon know about the Nigerian scheme. So why do the scammers keep doing it? Because people keep falling for it. Some folks want to believe, and nothing will stop them, no matter what evidence sits in front of them.

Email scams like the one that keeps flowing out of Nigeria can be downright dangerous. Not only have people been scammed out of money, but in a few instances have actually lost their lives. That is a high price to pay for credulity.

Most unsolicited commercial messages (SPAM) may be annoying, but they do little more than eat up some bandwidth. The originators don't want to harm you, just entice you to buy something. It's sometimes called online advertising.

As the internet evolves, so do the scammers. They have become more sophisticated at attempting to trick us out of our money, hand over personal information, reveal passwords, frighten us, or make us believe in something that isn't true.

For example, our current polarized political system has generated distrust of government in some places. A band of swindlers has used these sentiments to construct an email that "warns" you that the Department of Homeland Security and the FBI believe that you are involved in either

money laundering activities or somehow complicit in terrorist activity. Information like that, even if false, can make people uneasy.

Fortunately, the scammers have a solution. For the small sum of \$370, the Economic Financial Crimes Commission Chairman will send documentation certifying you as a proper upstanding citizen, thereby avoiding a messy prosecution and jail time. How could anyone pass that up? These government agencies must be terribly busy, and isn't it a great comfort to know that they can resolve important matters by email if you're willing to send them only a few hundred dollars?

Congratulations! You've won the lottery! There are many variations to this theme, but they all involve filling out a form before you can claim your prize. Don't forget to include your social security number, since they need to inform the IRS. What makes this scam so devious is that legitimate

lotteries really do need this information. One thing that should puzzle you is how could you possibly win a lottery you haven't entered?

Suppose you really did enter the contest or bought a lottery ticket, what then? Legitimate enterprises are aware of these scams and will almost always provide you with an alternate way of supplying the information. In other words, never be careless with personal information.

You receive an email informing you of a "problem" with your bank account. Strange, you don't recall doing business with the bank. All you have to do to resolve the "problem" is click on the provided link and supply information that the bank already knows if you are a customer.

Tens of thousands of people receive these messages. A few may actually be customers of the bank. Some,

(see *Scams* on page 6)

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Using Skype

by Mike Kearns, Member of the Computer Club of Green Valley, AZ. gvcc.apcug.org

Using free Skype software on your computer allows you to make calls over the internet to others who have the service. It's easy to download, and works with most, if not all, computers. Try this great way to keep in contact with your kids, grandchildren, siblings and close friends.

You need three things to make it happen:

- 1 A high-speed internet connection.
- 2 A webcam, and I recommend Logitech. You can buy a good camera (with install disk) at Wal-Mart for around \$50. Newer computers have webcams built in. Each camera requires some adjustments for brightness, contrast and sound, but they are usually easy to work with.
- 3 You need to download the free program by going to Google and typing "free Skype download." The PC version is 4.2, and the latest Mac version is 2.8.

When you download the program, you will be asked what Skype name you wish to use. You can choose any name you want. If you pick an unusual name, it is a good idea to let your Skype friends know, because Skype offers a directory to locate their users all over the world.

When you attempt the first contact with another Skype user, the person receiving the call has the option of accepting or rejecting the call. If you attempt to contact someone who doesn't know you, they can reject your call, similar to a spam blocker.

The webcam gives a nice picture of the person to whom you are talking

on the screen. Quick movements can distort the picture for a few seconds while the webcam is adjusting.

Skype includes a small window of each party at the bottom of the screens so you know what the other person is viewing. The quality of the picture is better if both parties have a good high-speed connection. Going from a dial-up connection to a high-speed connection can cause distortion in the video and also slows down the interaction.

It is best to set up a time with the person you will be calling so they have their Skype program open and ready to accept the video call. The person you are calling also has the option to accept the call with or without video. Once you are connected, you can talk as long as you want—there is no charge. You can make adjustments to see the person on full screen or half screen. I find that the image gets a little distorted on full screen, but overall it is still a good picture.

Another neat feature permits you to move a Netbook or laptop with the built-in camera around the room to show the person different items of interest in your home. The new, small Netbooks are especially useful because they are so portable and lightweight.

Skype can also be used as your telephone service by clicking on their Shop button. You set up a credit-card account with Skype to pay for the calls. Then you can make a phone call to a person's land line and talk to them through your computer.

I have noticed a few people using the new Netbooks as both a phone and video-calling service. They weigh only two pounds, and many women can

carry them in their purses. With Skype, you can make phone calls anywhere in the world, and the cost per minute will vary depending on where you are calling. I understand that overseas phone calls are very reasonable.

Keep in mind that Skype is not designed to be a replacement for your ordinary home phone, since you would not have your computer on all the time. Also, be aware that you cannot use Skype for emergency calling such as 911.

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(Scams—continued from page 5)

believing the email is real, click on the link and are taken to a bogus site. Any information provided won't be used to resolve any "problems," but instead be used to clean out your bank account.

There are so many scams out there perpetrated by email, it makes you want to give up in disgust. That would be understandable, if there were no way to protect yourself, but many people forget the obvious: **Use Common Sense.**

When you get an email that asks you to be part of a plot to move large amounts of money offshore to your bank account by doing business with people you don't know from a foreign country thousand of miles away, shouldn't that arouse your suspicions?

Any text message that turns out to be an image should be suspect. The only purpose for turning text into images is to defeat spam filters. Be on your guard.

(see Scams on page 7)

Google Voice, Free Long Distance

Reviewed by Hank Pearson, Webmaster, has served in many capacities including President, Treasurer, and Editor, ASCli (Arizona Society for Computer Information, Inc.), The ASCli Clipboard, October 2009, www.asciigroup.org

What is Google Voice?

A phone line? No

Instant messaging? No

A new Google telephone? No

A new wireless phone plan? No

VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol)? No

Is it totally free? Yes!

Free long distance? Yes!

Free phone number? Yes!

Intelligent forwarding? Yes!

More versatile voicemail? Yes!

And a lot more free features? Yes!

Do you have to be at a computer to use Google Voice? No. Use Google Voice from any phone. Google Voice is free, but you need an invitation.

Just Google "Google Voice invitation." When you receive your invitation, select a free phone number.

When someone calls your Google number, some or all of your phones can ring at once—your home phone, mobile phone, work phone, your cousin's phone where you are visiting. You can answer from any of them.

(Scams—continued from page 6)

The bad guys are very creative and always seem to be one step ahead of everyone else. The FBI provides a service for citizens to receive the latest information about online scams. For more information on e-scams, please visit the FBI's New *E-Scams and Warnings* webpage at www.fbi.gov/cyberinvest/escams.htm. Visit the site at least once a month to be aware of new and exciting ways scammers have to separate you from your money.

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You can organize your contacts into groups and let some contacts ring all your phones, others ring certain phones, others go straight to voicemail, and still others get blocked.

You can personalize your voicemail greeting for groups or even individuals.

You can listen to your voicemail from any phone or listen online, or receive email or SMS (texting) notification. You can read voicemail transcripts visually online, and see each word underlined as it is spoken by your callers.

When you are online, you can just click a contact to call local or long distance. Or you can call from any phone by dialing extra digits. You can call any number without setting up a contact. All calls to the contiguous 48 states are free! Check out the rates for other locations.

You can send, receive, and store SMS (texting) messages.

You can screen calls and record calls.

Similar to a mobile phone interface, you can review calls placed, received, missed, and so on.

Can you port your existing phone number? Officially, not quite yet. "We hope to offer this option in the near future." But a few people have been reported to have ported their numbers. News on this subject might change fast. To keep up with the latest stories, Google "Google Voice port existing number."

There's even more to Google Voice! And it's free!

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Windows 7 Tech Tips

by Brian K. Lewis, Ph.D., Regular Columnist.

Sarasota Personal Computer Users Group, Inc., Florida, www.spcug.org

Have you ever wanted or needed information about the hardware in your computer? Did you know that Windows 7 contains a command that can provide you with a list of your hardware components including memory information? It does and it is very easy to explore and to save to a file. There are other helpful little bits of information hidden in the recesses of Win7, so let's take some time to explore a few of them.

First let's check out the system information command. Go to Start and type **cmd** in the Search box, then press Enter. This will open a command window in which you can type **systeminfo**. Press Enter again and you will get a detailed profile of your computer. This list will include the processor, BIOS version, operating system and updates, both installed and available memory, and much more. In all, there are 32 categories of information provided by this command. You can scroll up and down through this information. Then, if you want to save this info to a disk file, type the command **systeminfo /FO CSV > systeminfo.csv**. This file will be saved in the directory shown at the beginning of the command line. So be sure you remember this location when you go to look for the file. A CSV file can be opened in a spreadsheet or a database program. Now you will have a ready reference for the components which make up your computer. It's not a bad idea to create this file and keep it for reference purposes.

Of course, if you are a frequent reader of Dr Herb's *Computer Buffet*, you would have seen references to *Belarc Advisor*. This free program gives you

a profile of all the hardware and software on your machine. It also highlights problem areas, such as non-working applications. The software information can be quite extensive. The last time I ran this application on a Windows machine, I had more than eight pages of information. Far more than I really wanted. The **systeminfo** command gives you a summary that is printable in one page.

There is another use for system information. If you type this "system information" command into the Start | Search box, it will bring up a list of applications before you finish typing. Select "System Information" from the list, and click on it. You now have a double-pane window with a tree of topics on the left and an information window on the right. The first item is a general summary of system information similar to the information we obtained in the command window. But there are other more detailed topics under the headings in the tree list. For example, hardware resources, components, and software environment. Under components you will find a very important topic—problem devices. Hopefully, at this point there will be nothing listed when you highlight this topic. But if there are, it can lead you to solutions for some of your hardware problems. Under software environment you will find a topic called Startups. This lists the applications that are loaded into memory when your computer starts. Always something worth knowing.

Another interesting item under Software Environment is Windows Error Reporting. This gives you a detailed list of applications that have "misfired" or produced system hang-ups. This can

be useful when you have problems with either Windows or third-party applications. All of the errors I found on my system were related to missing drivers that I had to install after installing Win7. Once that was completed, the errors disappeared. Yes, I said that with crossed fingers—no use asking for bad luck, right?

If you haven't backed up your computer recently, then you should try the backup built into Win7. In previous versions of Windows, the backup application provided by Microsoft was very slow, and some versions were very limited in the media to which they would write the backup file. It was also useless when you changed your Windows version, as the file formats in the backup file were not compatible with the newer version. In the Win7 help files, there is information on how to restore a backup made with Vista to Win7. So at least the latest versions should be compatible.

These latest versions of the backup applications are much faster than previous versions. To try the backup applications, open the Control Panel and select System Security, then *backup and restore*. Here you have several options. You can do a complete image of your hard drive, just back up your data, or make a system repair disk. If you did not get a Windows installation disk when you purchased your computer, then the first thing you should do is make a system repair disk. All you need for this is a blank CD, and then just follow the on-screen instructions.

The next step would be to make a complete image file, preferably on an

(see *Win7* on page 11)

A First Look at OpenOffice

by Lynn Page, Editor, Crystal River Users Group, Florida,
February 2010 Newsletter, www.crug.com

I have a new mini computer to use for internet access while traveling. I am used to having Microsoft Office for all of my computing needs, and would be lost without it or a similar application. I downloaded and installed OpenOffice.org. The OpenOffice suite has six applications: Writer, a word processor; Calc, a spreadsheet; Impress for presentations; Base, a database program; Math, an equation editor; and Draw, a graphics program. OpenOffice works with a wide variety of formats, including OpenDocument and Microsoft Office 2003 formats. So you can go back and forth between Office and OpenOffice without losing formatting. OpenOffice even exports files to PDF. And best of all, the entire suite is free.

I will be working more with Open Office as I use my new mini computer. So I will attempt to provide some of my experiences in the newsletter. For my first look I will see how well the suite of office applications handles opening and working with some of my Microsoft Office files and look a little more at some of the applications.

Writer

OpenOffice.org Writer looks and feels like Word 2003. It lets you produce word processing documents that include graphics, tables, and charts. You can save in a variety of formats, including the standardized OpenDocument (odt) format and Microsoft Word (doc) format. Although Writer doesn't have a *save as pdf* option as found in Word 2007, you can export the document to pdf. Conversely you can open and edit Word documents. This is really what I was looking for in OpenOffice.

I found Writer easy to use for simple documents, but had to go to Help for

some of the differences between it and Microsoft Office. I expected I would have adjustment issues, as Microsoft Word 2007 is my favorite and most used application. I have been using Office 2007 long enough that I am no longer completely comfortable with Word 2003.

Writer has all text Formatting tools you need, including basic styles and a format painter. I was glad to see spelling and grammar checking, and that I could display non-printing characters. Find and replace worked as expected. I did find that the auto-complete feature in Writer displayed a lot of words that I didn't expect. That is not a problem, because you just keep typing to ignore the auto-complete, or hit enter to accept.

Cropping a graphic is one feature that is different than I expected. Cropping is done through a dialog box by moving the edges in a measured distance. Not as convenient as using the crop handles I am used to, but still serviceable. Resizing a graphic is done by dragging the size handles and text wrapping is easily handled with a dialog box.

For one last look at Writer's compatibility with Word, I opened one of my Word 2007 documents. Open Office Writer opened the document and all formatting was intact. I did get a notice that the document was opening as read-only. I was able save the document in OpenOffice or Word 2003 format and then edit it.

Calc

Calc is the spreadsheet application in OpenOffice. It again looks and feels like Microsoft Excel 2003. It opened an old CRUG registration spread-

sheet generated in Excel 2003. All sheets of the spreadsheet, their relationships and all calculations worked well and all formatting was intact. I could simulate adding student registrants in classes, and calculations on all sheets were accurately recorded.

Styles and Formatting make it easy to apply cell formatting, including splitting or merging cells, and adding cell borders and backgrounds. Cell content is formatted as in Writer, and can even be freely rotated.

Although I haven't worked much with spreadsheets in the last couple of years, I found using the Formula Bar straightforward. The Sum function takes care of a lot of calculations, and the Function Wizard helps in choosing and using the other spreadsheet functions. I tried sorting in another of my spreadsheets and it worked well, correctly sorting data by a selected column while recognizing my column headings.

Spreadsheets can be saved in OpenDocument format, an XML-based format, or a variety of other formats, including Excel's xls format.

Impress

OpenOffice's presentation application Impress can open and modify Microsoft PowerPoint presentations, or create slide shows with the presentation wizard. Presentations can include charts, drawing objects, text, multimedia or other items. Animations and slide transitions make the on-screen presentation interesting and professional.

I opened and edited one of my PowerPoint presentations, made changes,

(see *OpenOffice* on page 10)

(Deals Guy—continued from page 4)
this test and it seems to have other uses, but H2testw 1.4 will test your Flash drive and tell you if there are any errors, and won't hurt your data.

Flash drives are a different type of storage that sometimes perplexes a user. There have been articles on how long they last, but since they are new technology, who really knows for sure? I've seen numbers stating their dependability, but do you count the times you use yours? It wouldn't hurt to check occasionally to see if a Flash drive is working as it should, because anything can fail at any time; especially when a user carries it in their pocket or hanging on their neck. After all, just reading the drive

(OpenOffice—continued from page 9)
saved it to Impress odp format, and ran the presentation. Impress looked and felt like PowerPoint while editing and running the presentation. The presentation had the template, smart art graphics, transitions, text formatting and digital images I used when generating it in PowerPoint 2007. I did note that some transitions appeared a little rougher but still ran.

When Impress is opened, the presentation wizard starts automatically. You choose to create a new blank presentation, use a template and let the wizard walk you through structuring the presentation, or open an existing presentation.

When creating an empty presentation, the Presentation Wizard walks through the steps of selecting a background, slide transitions, and speed of presentation if it is to be automatic. Not all of the backgrounds and transitions of PowerPoint are available, but there are enough to get by.

If you decide to create a presentation based on a template, the wizard lets you select a template based on the type of presentation and the output medium. For many of us, this is an

has little effect on it, but writing to it and bumping it against pocket items doesn't help. The product is free.

Help For Your Downloads

Downloading files can sometimes be a trying experience when things aren't going right, but here is a product that will help things along. FlashGet will help your download in many ways including the speed of the download. I'm told FlashGet is a popular download manager and it was suggested by a tech support person. It uses the MHT (Multi-server Hyper-threading Transportation) technique (OK, if they say so), supports various protocols, and has excellent document management features. FlashGet is freeware and said to be without any adware or spyware.

on-screen presentation, but Impress can also create output for overhead transparencies or hard copy. You then specify slide transitions. Then from the list of pages presented by the wizard, select those to be included in the presentation. Once the wizard creates the generic presentation, just add your information and tailor the presentation to your needs.

Base

The OpenOffice database application Base, unlike the other applications, is not directly compatible with Microsoft Access database files. With it you can create and manipulate tables, queries, forms and reports within the database. Since my intent with this first look at OpenOffice is to look at compatibility with my Microsoft Office files, I have not looked at Base. I will look at it at a future time.

Math

Math is OpenOffice.org's equation editor. It can be used for generating mathematical equations. I have not had the opportunity to use the application, but it can be used as an equation editor for text documents. Within Writer, the equation is treated as an object inside the document.

Their website also says they accept donations. Check their information at www.flashget.com.

Corel Deals

From time to time, special offers are sent out by the Corel people, and they usually expire before I can include them in my column. Perhaps you can get on their mailing list by calling their ordering number, 1-877-582-6735, to ask. (Mon- Fri, 9:00 am to 7:00 pm EST). Also, here is the URL (www.corel.com) for browsing.

That's it for this month. I'll have more new product announcements on my website (most not offering a discount). www.dealsguy.com. Bob (The Cheapskate) Click, bobclick@bellsouth.net. Editor's note: This column has been edited for space and content considerations.

Draw

I expected Draw to be similar to Paint, but that is not the case. It is a vector graphics editor, featuring connectors between the available shapes. I have not made any attempt at using Draw at this time.

Conclusions

OpenOffice.org's office suite offers an alternative to Microsoft Office or other office applications. As it is free, it can be a solution for someone not wanting to invest in purchasing a license for one of the software suites. For those, like me, who use Office but have an extra computer without Office installed, it offers a solution. The compatibility lets me copy my Word documents, Excel spreadsheets, and PowerPoint presentations to my mini. I can use and even edit my files in Writer, Calc or Impress, and then save in the previous Microsoft format to use again on my desktop or laptop. For those using OpenOffice as their only office suite, it lets them save in the Microsoft Office format or even as a pdf. This makes sharing files simple.

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(Win7—continued from page 8)

external drive. It's really not a good idea to put it on the same drive you are imaging even if it is a separate partition. Why? Because when the drive fails you won't be able to access the image file to restore anything to a new hard drive. Even if you do have a Windows installation disk, the repair disk plus the image file are a better solution for restoring Windows and your files after a drive failure. The image file you create will be more current than the original installation disk when it comes to Windows updates. It will also include the installation of all the applications you added after you purchased the system or upgraded to Win7. Once you have the repair disk and the image backup, you can start doing data backups, or you can create new image files periodically. There is no need to make image files unless you have added applications or made substantial changes to your system. Windows file backup can be set to run automatically to save your data files. It will also add new folders and files to the backup list when you create them. I would also recommend that this be saved to an external drive.

(Security—continued from page 2)

installation wizard, you have the opportunity to request a scan of your computer.

When finished, Microsoft Security Essentials starts and automatically checks for updates before running the requested scan. Since it is a new application, you will have to instruct your firewall to allow it to connect to the Internet.

Until the updates and initial scan are complete, Security Essentials shows the red warning that your computer is at risk. Once the scan is complete and any problems addressed, the computer status will be green, or protected.

The Security Essentials interface is tab-based. The Home tab displays

Do you have a need for a system to remember user names and passwords? Win7 has a credential manager that can be used for storing user names and passwords in an encrypted file. This application can be found in the Control Panel under User Accounts. If you can't find it, try searching within the Control Panel.

I frequently have a need to write down short notes or references to information I found on the internet or in other sources. This is where Sticky Notes comes in quite handy. You can run this application by typing "stikynot" in the Start | Search box and clicking on the program that shows in the popdown menu. Alternatively, you can go to All Programs | Accessories and click on Sticky Notes. These can be placed anywhere on your desktop. You can also pin the application to the taskbar so it will be readily available. Just right click on the menu item or one of the sticky notes and select "pin to taskbar."

If you want to see the minute-by-minute performance of your computer, try typing "resource monitor" in the Start | Search box.

the application's status. Note that real-time protection is on and definitions are up to date. Security Essentials performs scheduled scans, but you can select and run a manual scan from the Home tab. When running a system scan, select from Quick, Full, or Custom. I ran both a quick scan and then a full scan on my computer. If a threat is detected, Security Essentials changes to show the computer is at risk and that a threat has been detected. To remove a threat, click the Clean Computer button displayed on the Home tab.

The Settings tab provides control over the application. I saw no reason to make any changes from the default settings. The one thing you might want to change is the scan schedule. You can schedule a scan

The complete term will show up before you have completed typing and you can then click on the item. This brings up a window in which you can view the memory utilization, CPU utilization and other resources as you use your computer. It's a great way to see which applications are using the most memory.

By playing around with the Control Panel and other aspects of Windows 7, you can find many helpful built-in functions. You can also query the Help files. On my system, the Help response is much quicker than it was in Vista and XP. I also found that many subjects are better explained and more detailed. So if you are stuck on something, try the Help application that's on the Start menu. The more you play with Win7, the more you will find that may be useful.

Dr. Lewis is a former university and medical school professor of physiology. He has been working with personal computers for over thirty years, developing software and assembling systems. This article has been obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups; all other uses require the permission of the author at bwsail at yahoo.com.

by clicking the Change My Scan Schedule link on the Home window or on the Settings tab.

The History tab displays all Detected Items, Quarantined Items, and Allowed Items. Remove the history by clicking the Delete History button.

I haven't been running Microsoft Security Essentials long, but my experience with OneCare tells me it will work well and protect my computer from threats. I have already noticed that the computer runs faster during scans than with my previous software.

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PCmover

by George Harding, Treasurer, Tucson Computer Society, AZ, The Journal of the Tucson Computer Society, January 2010, www.aztcs.org

Laplink has had PCmover available for many years. Its purpose is to successfully transfer your data and programs from an old computer to a new one. The data part of the transfer is easy enough, in fact, Microsoft has an application called Easy Transfer that will do that part. However, to transfer the programs part is difficult. You usually have to install the original programs on the new computer, and then update them as necessary, which may take a long time.

The PCmover process has been adapted to include the tricky process of upgrading from XP to Windows 7. As you probably know, Microsoft requires you to do a “clean” install (format the hard drive, then install) if you are running XP, then reinstall and update all your programs. I tried the PCmover process in an update from XP to Window 7. Overall, I would say it was a remarkable success. Before you start doing an upgrade, it’s wise to run Microsoft’s Upgrade Advisor, available at Microsoft’s site.

The first step, of course, is to make at least one complete backup of your system—not just the data files, but the entire partition in which XP is running. Some tech people even advise making two complete backups and having them verified by the backup software.

The next step is to download and install PCmover. You can download it at www.laplink.com/PCmover. Once downloaded, you install it just like any other application. Laplink advises that you turn off any screen savers and power-saving settings. For laptops, keep the power plugged in. Your computer must stay awake during the entire procedure. They also recommend disabling anti-virus, spyware and similar applications, because they probably won’t be transferred correctly; you’ll have to reinstall them after the upgrade.

Next, you run PCmover. You will need a serial number in order to run the program, which you should get when you download the program. The next screen of the program shows several choices for method of migration. You should choose the Windows 7 Upgrade Assistant method.

You can choose to migrate all users or only chosen ones. You’ll usually choose all. Next, you’ll be presented with a list of all your hard drives and partitions. You’ll only want to migrate the partition/drive which has XP. Next you can exclude certain file types. You probably won’t want to transfer the listed types, but it won’t hurt anything if you do transfer them.

Next is a scan for applications. You’ll get a list of all the applications on your computer. I got 112 in my list. You may deselect any of these which you don’t want to migrate. I left them all checked.

The next step creates the list of applications you have chosen, and then asks you what name to give it and where to save it. You should save it on a different drive/partition from the one you are migrating, or on an external hard drive. You can give it any name you want. I called mine “upgrade.”

Now, PCmover creates the Moving Van, the file that contains all the info to be migrated, and saves it where you specified. This may be quite a large file. Mine was over 7 MB.

Now you upgrade to Windows 7 by selecting the Custom method. This will take a while, but your input will not be needed. Once complete, you reinstall PCmover on the upgraded computer, run it, find the Moving Van file and let PCmover migrate your applications and data. This transfer may take quite a while.

Tech Talk

by Lizz Russell

Would you like to use your high speed internet connection to make phone calls? Would you like to see people while you are talking to them on the phone?

The next meeting will be **All About Using the Internet for Phone Service.**

You may have heard about Magic Jack, Vonage or Skype. These are some of the systems that will be explained and demonstrated at the next meeting. In addition to showing the equipment, you will learn about the issues that come with phone service, such as how to get 9-1-1 and how to send a fax. It should be an interesting meeting.

As an added bonus, everyone that comes to the meeting will get to speak to someone on the other side of the room via video phone.

Using the Internet for Phone Service

Presented by Lizz Russell

7 PM, July 13th

When completed, you should have all your applications and data that you wanted migrated available and working in Windows 7. There may be some of your applications that do not work in Windows 7. I had a few, but the problem was with Windows 7, not PCmover.

I found this migration assistant to be easy to use and quite effective to migrate applications and files.

About PCmover

Vendor: Laplink, www.laplink.com. Price ranges from \$20 to \$60 for a single license.

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