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Wednesday 7th February

AGM 7PM

Election of Officers

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General Business

Just For a Laff From Newbie Club Insider

A man and his wife, now in their 60's, were celebrating their 40th wedding anniversary. On their special day a good fairy came to them and said that because they had been so good then each one of them could have one wish.

The wife wished for a trip around the world with her husband.

Whoosh! Immediately she had airline/cruise tickets in her hands.

The man wished for a female companion 30 years younger..

Whoosh...immediately he turned ninety!!!

General Information

Position	Name	After Hours / Business	Email
President	Judy Hall	6394 7358	president@lcg.org.au
Vice President	Glenn Gilpin	6330 1129	vicepresident@lcg.org.au
Treasurer	Iris Meek	6327 3162	treasurer@lcg.org.au
Secretary	Susan Armes	6395 1130	secretary@lcg.org.au
General Committee			
Library MAC	Ivan Turmine	6327 1825	maclibrary@lcg.org.au
Newstream Editor	Ron Baker	6326 5824	editor@lcg.org.au
Publicity & Promotion	Karia Wicks		publicity@lcg.org.au
Assistant Treasurer	Dennis Murray	6326 5284	Assistanttreasurer @lcg.org.au
PC Library	Julie Hjort	0418 295 058	pclibrary@lcg.org.au
Assistant PC Librarian	Judy Hall	6394 7358	committee@lcg.org.au
Public Officer	Judy Hall	6394 7358	publicofficer@lcg.org.au
OPEN Chair	Janet Headlam		open@lcg.org.au
WebMaster			webmaster@lcg.org.au
Web Editor	Reinhard Von Samorzewski	6327 1552	web@lcg.org.au
General Committee	Michael Armes	6395 1130	committee@lcg.org.au
	Robert Tierney	6344 6328	committee@lcg.org.au
	June Hazzlewood	6327 2562	committee@lcg.org.au

Ron's Ramblings

Microsoft are about to launch their latest version of Windows Code Named VISTA.

As usual we are hearing that it is the greatest thing since sliced bread. Those of us who have been around a while, (or should I say an age) have seen it before.

I have always been one of those foolhardy people that leap in as soon as a new version is released (Provided I don't have to pay for it!!!!).

My position as Editor has enabled me to test the new versions that Microsoft have sent to the Group.

Therefore I have progressed?? Through DOS 6.1, Widows 3.1, Windows 3.1 for Work Groups, Win 95 versions A & .B, Windows 98 and 98 SE, Millennium and XP. The only ones I didn't try on my own computer were NT and 2000.

To give the newer members of our Group an idea of the trauma that faced us in the changeover from 95 to 98, I have extended the Newsletter to reprint an article included in a 98 edition of the Newsletter.

I have also included a bit of history of the Group through the changes of name of the Newsletter.

It was a bit of a shock to find that I have been editor for at least ten years and possibly longer.

I am enjoying the job so much that if someone else wants the job they may have to wait awhile unless they can organise a putsch

Ron Baker

OPEN NEWSLETTER – FEBRUARY 2007

What's Happening at OPEN

FROM THE ASSISTANT EDITOR

Where does the time go? It doesn't seem that six weeks have passed since we ceased activities for 2006 but here we are with nearly one month of 2007 behind us.

Welcome back to OPEN and I hope that this year of computing studies and activities will be beneficial to you. I think we'll all be feeling our way for the first couple of weeks as we work out who will be available as tutors and how we can accommodate our members, old and new, into classes.

As you'll see in the timetable and special notices there will be additional graphics classes conducted, but as these are filling up quickly I'd suggest you put your name on the sheet 'ASAP'.

The first E-Learn course will be getting under way around the end of February so please contact a tutor if you are interested. E-Learn is covered in greater detail in the column to the right.

Please note that the **Annual General Meeting** of our parent organisation, the Launceston Computer Group, will be held on **Wednesday, February 7**, while OPEN's AGM will be one month later – on March 7.

Dennis Murray

Launceston Computer Annual General Meeting

Wednesday February 7th 2007

The main business will be the election of office-bearers for 2007, to present financial details, receive the Auditor's report and discuss any other business that may arise.

A general meeting/workshop will follow the AGM if time permits.

E-LEARN 2007

This year there will be two courses catering for around 12-14 'students' in each (*tentative dates shown below*)

Course 1 - March 5 to July 20

Course 2— August 6 to November 30

We are hoping this approach will provide more flexibility for those members who may have found that previous courses interfered with their holiday arrangements.

Although there will be some technical changes to the course structure students will still receive tuition in the basic subjects that have applied for the past few years.

Enrolments are expected to commence around the end of February—please check with your tutor for more details.

OPEN COMPUTING MEETING
Wednesday, February 7

At 1.00 pm

This will be a general meeting to discuss financial affairs and other matters affecting the day-to-day operations of OPEN.

Members are also asked to consider whether they might like to serve in a committee position for the coming year.

"IN CASE OF EMERGENCY"

At the October OPEN meeting it was decided to give members the option of providing the club with details of a contact person should some emergency situation arise e.g. a doctor, next-of-kin or family member. The info could be written on the back of your name-tag for instance. See your tutor for assistance.

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

The **Northern Tasmanian Camera Club** will hold its first Workshop session for 2007 on **Saturday**. **February 17.**

If you are interested in learning more about digital cameras and related subjects contact Kai Johnson on 6326 2358.

The **Friday afternoon Embroidery Group** will be resuming on **Friday, March 9, 2007.**

For details regarding the venue and time please contact Eleanor Horder.

OPEN NEWSLETTER – FEBRUARY 2007

Launceston Computer Group
SOFTWARE LIBRARY

Dated 1st February 2007

DISK 2000 - Your Library on Disk

Disk 2000 is now available. The change from a floppy disk to a CD has enabled us to include much more in the way of games, information and utilities. Existing members can upgrade to the new CD version for just $1.50 . Ask at the club or contact Judy via the e-mail address shown below. This disk is free of charge to all new members.

DISK COPY PRICES - CLUB MEMBERS *$1.00 per disk*

Disk Prices - Box of 25 = $12.00 Members Only

CD Prices – Box of 10 = $10.00 Members Only

Games CDs #2 and #3 are also available featuring games that are suited to Windows 98 and later.

AVAILABILITY OF LIBRARY

The Shareware Library is available in between meetings from the following person. Please telephone first to arrange a suitable time.

The library is also available at the venue - Studioworks most Wednesdays 9am to 3pm. Email: opencomputingtas@hotmail.com

Or contact Judy Hall

Email: jahall@intas.net.au

BASIC GRAPHICS FOR BEGINNERS
With Judy Hall and assistants

"Group 1"
Wednesday February 14, 9 am–12 noon

"Group 2"
Wednesday February 28, 1 pm–3.30 pm

Due to the popularity of the basic graphics classes in 2006 there will be two groups this year. Initially these classes will focus on general graphics topics—how to get images on to your computer, how to arrange them and what to do with them after that.

As this newsletter goes to press "Group 1" is full and there is only one place available in "Group 2". Check the class listings at the clubrooms or ring for details.

ADVANCED GRAPHICS
With Paint Shop Pro 7 and 8

Wednesday February 21 1 pm to 3.30 pm

There are still a few places available in this class which focuses on enhancing your photographs using a series of tutorials prepared by Judy Hall.

It is recommended that you should have completed a basic graphics course before attempting the Advanced class.

Numbers are limit to 8 people. Please check the notice-board or contact Judy for details.

The OPEN Newsletter is part of the Launceston Computer Group's publication "Newstream".

"Newstream" is distributed by E-mail each month, or alternatively can be viewed or downloaded as a PDF file from the LCG Web-site.

The next newsletter will be March 2006.

VENUE TELEPHONE NUMBER

Members can be contacted at the clubrooms **during class hours** by telephoning the number shown below.

Monday to Thursday 10am – 3pm

Friday 10am - noon

0413 698 610

FAMILY HISTORY ON-LINE

Classes resume on
February 14 - 1 pm to 3.30 pm

With the second monthly session on
February 28— 9.00 am to 12 noon

Over the past few months Judy has assembled additional resources to assist you in tracing your family ancestry.

Classes are limited to 8 people.

Contact Judy Hall at OPEN for more information.

A Friendly Reminder : Annual Membership Subscriptions were due on December 1, 2006. If you joined after September 1 you are financial until December 1, 2007. INDIVIDUALS $10 per annum COUPLES $15 per annum

OPEN Session Times
At Studioworks, 1 Pipeworks Rd, L'ton

Standard Sessions $4.00
[Some special tutorial materials may incur additional charges]

Monday	10 am –12	E-Learn & Beginners
	1 pm – 3 pm	**Basics and Beyond**
Tuesday	10 am –12	E-Learn & Beginners [all day]
	1 pm – 3 pm	**Mac [all day]**
Wednesday		Special sessions or Meetings
		As for mornings (see rosters)
Thursday	10 am –12	E-Learn & Beginners
	1 pm – 3 pm	E-Learn & Beginners
Friday	10 am –12	E-Learn & Beginners
2nd, 4th Fridays	1 pm – 3 pm	**Embroidery Group**
2nd or 3rd Saturday	10 am –12	**Camera Club**

OPEN NEWSLETTER – FEBRUARY 2007

SPECIAL WEDNESDAY SESSIONS
Please register on the sheets – numbers may be limited

Date	Time	Topic	Details
Monday January 29	10 am –12 pm 1 pm – 3pm	**Getting Started!**	Normal Classes resume for 2007
January 31	10 am – 12 pm 1 pm— 3.00 pm	**Questions and Answers**	Two sessions to provide answers to problems that may have arisen over the holiday break.
February 7	9 am – 12 noon	"Working Bee"	Printing of brochures and forms, and general duties around the clubrooms.
	1 pm onwards	**OPEN General Meeting**	General discussion on matters affecting OPEN.
	7 pm onwards	Annual General Meeting of Launceston Computer Group	Election of office-bearers, financial report etc to be followed by normal monthly workshop.
February 14	9 am – 12 noon	Basic Graphics Group 1 **CLASS FULL**	An introduction to basic graphics—how to get images on to your computer and how to enhance them.
	1 pm—3.30 pm	**Family History**	First session for 2007. Use our vast array of resources to trace your family history.
February 21	10 am—12 noon	Questions and Answers	Another opportunity to ask questions about all kinds of computing operations.
	1 pm— 3.30 pm	**Advanced Graphics PSP**	**Use the popular Paint Shop Pro programs to enhance your photographs.**
February 28	9 am—12 noon	Family History	Judy Hall helps you to find your family's origins and ancestry.
	1 pm—3.30 pm	**Basic Graphics Group 2 (1 place avbl)**	An introduction to basic graphics—how to get images on to your computer and how to enhance them.

OPEN NEWSLETTER – FEBRUARY 2007

TALES FROM THE VICTOR VAULT

First of all I would like to thank Dennis for looking after the VICTOR program while I had a very enjoyable yet wet and windy holiday in Burnie. Next I would like to wish all our members a Happy New Year and thank you to those people who sent us a Christmas card.

An issue came up over the holidays where someone who was not a member of the club rang up and asked for computer help. I would like to stress that the VICTOR program is **ONLY** for OPEN and LCG members. So to prevent any mis-understandings for new clients or clients who our volunteers have not met, to be able to access the service you will need to show your LCG-OPEN member's card that you receive when you join or renew your membership. At times we are very stretched as far as VICTOR volunteers are concerned so we do not want any members who are entitled to access the program to miss out.

Also a reminder to people who use **AVG**. If you have not upgraded from version 7.0 to 7.5 you will find that you will be without anti-virus cover. So please update or give the VICTOR hot-line a ring to get help in upgrading. There have been rumors floating around that AVG has to be paid for – that is only if you want the Professional version. **The free version is still** *free.*

VICTOR PHONE NUMBER 0408 174 235

During the holidays I cleaned up a friend's mum's computer that was riddled with problems due to a free greeting card web-site which kept coming up asking if you wanted to download a program called "Drive Cleaner". It was able to be fixed but be aware that when you go to some sites you may get splashed with signs that seem to be genuine Windows messages. They are becoming a lot harder to distinguish. Some try to lure you by saying (for example) you are the 1 millionth visitor to the site. **In all cases if you are not sure do not click.**

When you are reading or watching TV do you get bamboozled by computer jargon? Or you are not sure what you hear is correct? Well, the site of interest this month is one created by the Australian Government - it's called **stay smart online**. (*www.staysmartonline.gov.au.*) It has information on everything from securing your computer, smart transactions online, kids-safe online and everything in between.

Finally from myself and the VICTOR team we would ask that as the New Year begins please be patient with us if we make an appointment with you and it's not as quick as you like. Like most times of the year it's a hectic time and we need to get back into the swing of things.

We look forward to seeing you soon
Rob Tierney   VICTOR Co-coordinator.

APOLOGY

From the 'Christmas Co-coordinator' ... if members had difficulty contacting VICTOR over the Christmas break it was firstly because of my inability to handle the mobile phone, and ultimately that the VICTOR line stopped working completely. I could also blame T-shirt manufacturers who for some unknown reason have stopped including a breast pocket on their garments. That means the mobile phone is usually carried in the most inaccessible trousers pocket and nine times out of ten it will ring when one is in the most difficult of driving situations.

So please accept my apology, and you'll be glad to know that Rob Tierney is back at the helm of VICTOR ... **and the phone is working again!**

Dennis Murray

"YOUR DOCUMENTS"

After classes finish each year a group of committee members devote one day to making a complete back-up on DVD of all the members' documents from each of the computers. As this may involve some re-arranging of folders your documents may not be exactly in the same place as you left them. If they have been accidentally deleted somehow, there is a good chance they will be on the DVD.

There will be a slight change in the naming of folders in 2007, with each day being preceded by a number e.g. 1Monday, 2Tuesday, etc. This is so the days of the week run in the same order as on a calendar, and not alphabetically. Document folders should now be much easier to locate!

OPEN NEWSLETTER – FEBRUARY 2007

PICASA2 RE-VISITED

One of the benefits in helping people find solutions to their computing difficulties is that I acquire knowledge and skills that I can use myself or pass on to others.

The free graphics cataloguing program Picasa2 has been around for some time now but I'm continuing to find new uses for it.

Let's start with a simple overview of the program.

Picasa2 can detect all the graphics on your computer but it is best to exercise some control over it by selecting which folders you want it to include in the catalogue e.g. you probably wouldn't want it to display all of the 13,000-plus images in the Microsoft Publisher clip-art folder! If you add pictures to a folder Picasa2 will update it next time you start the program.

Picasa2 simplifies the Windows Explorer folder structure particularly in Windows 2000 and XP. For instance a sub-folder called **Den's Pictures** would be displayed as Den's Pictures. In Windows Explorer (or My Computer) the full name would be **Documents and Settings/Dennis/My Documents/My Pictures/Den's Pictures**. Phew!

One of Picasa2's really useful features is its capacity to downsize e-mail photo attachments. A friend has just acquired a new digital camera and has taken some photos that she wishes to e-mail to family members overseas. Each of the photos is over 2 Megabytes in size, would take quite a while to send through a dial-up connection and would be as big as the side of a barn when received.

When you select the photo (or photos) to be sent and click Picasa's E-mail button the program will find your default (standard) e-mail program, open a new message box and adjust the size of the photos to a more e-mail-friendly size (about 1/40th size). You then type in the e-mail address of the receiver and your message. *You can clear the self-promotion message that Picasa inserts if you wish!*

PICASA2 RE-VISITED (continued)

Another friend with a digital camera had been using Windows XP's Photo Wizard to print two 6x4 photos on a page but was finding that parts of some photos had been cropped to make them fit. We found that Picasa's Print Layout function has a 'Shrink To Fit' option that enables complete photos to be printed, although they are slightly smaller.

I learned from this exercise too! Previously I had been using another free program to re-size photos, print one on the top half of a sheet of photo paper and then turn the page upside down and put it back through the printer to print the second photo.

Dennis

TUTOR MEETINGS AND NEWS

Unfortunately in 2006 our Tutor Meetings were not well attended despite reducing the frequency to once every two months. Although it is

acknowledged that tutors commit a great deal of their time to OPEN it is important that we get

together occasionally to discuss topics such as changes in teaching procedures, technical changes, the E-Learn course etc.

I've heard on the grapevine that a couple of our long-time members are taking the plunge and joining the tutoring ranks this year. We are also continuing our efforts to recruit new volunteers and look forward to welcoming you all 'on board' over the coming months.

INTERNET EXPLORER 7 – FRIEND OR FOE?

In the December issue of the newsletter Rob and I both made mention of Internet Explorer 7, the

updated Microsoft browser that allows computer users to have several web-pages open at the same time. So far I've only seen a few computers with IE7 installed and the results are like 'chalk and cheese'.

I installed IE7 manually on the SERVER2 computer at OPEN and have had little trouble with it – apart from the fact that it thinks that our LCG mail-server is a security risk!

But the story was quite different with an acquaintance who 'allowed' IE7 to be installed as an Automatic Update downloaded from Microsoft. In fact he wasn't aware that he even had IE7. He only found out when he began having trouble with his e-mail and Internet connections and called me to find out what was causing the problems.

For some reason the automatic installation of IE7 changed the home-page to a Microsoft link that seems to end up in a 'black hole' in cyber-space. There is an option that is supposed to let you change the home-page but it didn't work – it kept reverting to the 'go.microsoft' link.

In this case it also resulted in the Internet and e-mail account name and password being rejected.

A 'Google' search reveals that a lot of people are having problems with IE7, and the most simple fix is to uninstall it. If you would really like a tabbed browser try Mozilla Firefox instead.
Dennis

REPORT FROM THE OPEN CHAIRPERSON
JANET HEADLAM

Once again I had pleasure in organising and hosting the OPEN Christmas Dinner. We had 36 participants for a very pleasant meal and get-together at the Lions Club venue in Merino Street, Kings Meadows.

All attending were given a ticket for the lucky draw with first prize being a timber cutting-board donated by Judy Hall from West Tamar Woodcrafts. The winner was Elizabeth Montgomery. A bottle of wine donated by myself was won by Aileen Renton.

Nobody missed out as there was a special 'Christmas peg' given to all attending as a memento to keep perhaps to hold a note to remind them of our resumption date – or whatever?

Watch our notice-boards and '"Newstream" editions each month for more social events in 2007. Would you like a BBQ with everyone contributing – say in March? Later in the year we will have our E-Learn Presentation evening with all welcome. Are there any other suggestions?

Don't forget classes resume on Monday, January 29 and our first meetings will be the following week (on the first Wednesday of each month as usual.) - the OPEN meetings start at 1 pm, We are always looking for newer people to help share the load with we 'old stalwarts' who try to run the club as best we can. If you like you can just sit in and not say a word, but the more numbers we get at our meetings the more likely it is that someone will come up with some good new ideas.

LCG meetings/workshops are held in the evenings following the OPEN meetings. A couple us of go 'over the road' for tea rather than travelling home and returning. The workshops may take the form of a special free lesson or there may be guest speaker, but an interesting night is assured and you won't be kept up too late!

OPEN CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT (cont'd)

Don't forget that we all belong to both OPEN and LCG and a number of committee positions overlap both entities. LCG is an incorporated body which is required for legal and financial purposes.

2006 saw our aggregate membership reach nearly 600 over OPEN's 5 years in operation, and it's great to seeing so many old friends renewing their Memberships – even if they can't come regularly. They will still get their "Newstream" by e-mail (if registered) to keep up with happenings.

Subscriptions are still only $10 per year, or $15 for couples, and due now. Most of this goes toward our Insurance costs, with any surplus going to our everyday expenses. OPEN is entirely member-funded apart from the major grants that we receive every few years. The wonderful Tas. Community Fund Grant we received in 2006 enabled us to upgrade our 'fleet' of computers and add other improved hardware items.

If you are unable to participate in classes this coming year please let someone on the committee know. You are welcome to rejoin later on for a refresher course or to call in at any time to say "Hello' and have a cuppa with us.

Remember also we have an ABSENTEE book for those who are going to be away for longer than a week or two. Knowing this information helps us to minimise waiting lists and organise tutor rosters – thank you.

Our volunteers do not pay for ordinary class times, and we can always use more help. Perhaps you may know a retired 'techy' needing an interest – to help with the hardware maintenance and network duties?

Janet Headlam

Beware of unexpected holiday gifts

By Susan Bradley

By now you've opened your presents and you're playing with your new tech toys — but don't let the Grinch spoil your holiday season.

Let's take a quick look at some flaws that Microsoft hasn't yet patched, and which people may use to try to scam you this season.

Unpatched issues to look out for Incidents.org recently published a recap

<http://WindowsSecrets.com/links/vx17f019h4n0d/f9b293h/?url=www.inci-dents.org%2Fdiary.php%3Fstoryid%3D1940%26isc%3D56bdbad9f85fa3427d43ec6bfdd4c389> of 10 security holes that Microsoft still hasn't patched as we enter the New Year. Some of these were publicly disclosed as long ago as Oct. 20, 2006.

One exploit, first disclosed on Oct. 24, involves ActiveX controls that can crash Internet Explorer and possibly infect a PC. This flaw is rated "critical" by the Internet Storm Center, but the recap does provide a workaround that advanced system admins can use to close the hole. No patch or update is yet available for beginning and intermediate users, unfortunately. (If you don't know how to "set a killbit," wait for a patch to be released.)

The other threats that are the most urgent are three "unspecified vulnerabilities" in Microsoft Word. These exploits, which can infect a PC even if Word macros are turned off, have led some firms with strict security policies to block all Word document attachments.

I believe that this policy is extreme at this time. The threats became known only this month, and I haven't seen widespread use of the three exploits. The reality with any e-mail attachment is that only attachments that you're expecting should be opened. If you're not ex-

(Continued from page 8)

pecting an attachment, don't open it. If in doubt, call or e-mail the sender to confirm.

Further details on eight of the unpatched security holes are provided in eEye Digital Security's Zero-Day Tracker <http://WindowsSecrets.com/links/vx17f019h4n0d/f8757ch/?url=research.eeye.com%2Fhtml%2Falerts%2Fzeroday%2Findex.html> - a Web page that links to complete descriptions of the problems.

The first Vista security issue? Last year at this time, we were all trying to protect against the Windows Metafile (WMF) vulnerability, which could infect you if you simply viewed a hacked image on a Web page. This issue was corrected by Microsoft in its first (out-of-cycle) patch of the year, MS06-001 <http://WindowsSecrets.com/links/vx17f019h4n0d/0a4857h/?url=www.microsoft.com%2Ftechnet%2Fsecurity%2FBulletin%2FMS06-001.mspx>.

This year, we're watching an issue that was discussed on the Microsoft Security Response Center blog <http://WindowsSecrets.com/links/vx17f019h4n0d/13d0ceh/?url=blogs.technet.com%2Fmsrc%2Farchive%2F2006%2F12%2F22%2Fnew-report-of-a-windows-vulnerability.aspx> on Dec. 22. This flaw allows a hacker to raise a Trojan horse's user-rights level, allowing the intruder to obtain administrative rights.

Determina had reported this issue to Microsoft earlier, but had withheld the details while awaiting an official patch. After the flaw became more widely known, the company reported it on Dec. 20 <http://WindowsSecrets.com/links/vx17f019h4n0d/f6433ah/?url=www.determina.com%2Fsecurity.research%2Fvulnerabilities%2Fcsrss-harderror.html>.

The bad news is that the problem affects Vista as well as Microsoft's older operating systems, including fully patched versions of Windows 2000, XP, and 2003. The good news is that the problem reportedly can't be used remotely to hack into your PC via the Internet - you must at least open an attachment, click OK on a dialog box to install a Trojan horse, or take some other action.

Hopefully, a patch for all affected systems will be released on Patch Tuesday, Jan. 9.

E-mails bear PowerPoints with Christmas surprise 'Tis the season for mailed Christmas newsletters that recap the family doings, from Billy's braces to

Mary's multiple awards. But it's also the season for pretend Christmas e-mails and other ways to wriggle bad things on to your system.

The latest example, which uses an infected PowerPoint file to display a "Christmas blessing," is illustrated by F-Secure <http://WindowsSecrets.com/links/vx17f019h4n0d/96c67ah/?url=www.f-secure.com%2Fweblog%2Farchives%2Farchive-122006.html%2300001058>.

This exploit was blocked by security bulletin MS06-012 <http://WindowsSecrets.com/links/vx17f019h4n0d/8e37c6h/?url=www.microsoft.com%2Ftechnet%2Fsecurity%2FBulletin%2FMS06-012.mspx>, released on Mar. 14, 2006. But not everyone has that patch installed. Also, most antivirus programs were slow in detecting and blocking the infected file, according to a test published on Dec. 24 <http://WindowsSecrets.com/links/vx17f019h4n0d/a17909h/?url=isc.sans.org%2Fdiary.php%3Fstoryid%3D1970> by the SANS Handler's Diary.

It's absurd that we need to guard ourselves against PowerPoint data files, which should be totally benign. But if your systems aren't fully patched, this Christmas blessing can infect you for the New Year.

From Windows Secrets 29th December 2006

Office For Mere Mortals Tutorial

TABLE OF CONTENTS BASICS

In this issue we'll look at the basic options for making a Table of Contents in a Word document.

It's very easy to do this in Word and it's not just for people who are making books, for it can be useful in any long document such as a contract. A table of contents can be there for 'in house' use while making the document, and later removed from the final version. It's a good way to see an overview of a long document and ensure that it's in a logical structure.

Finally it can be a way to jump to parts of the document if you don't like using the Document Map feature in Word.

This article with screen images and appendix is available on our web site

http://news.office-watch.com?165

PREPARING YOUR DOCUMENT

Before you make your Table of Contents (aka TOC) you need to setup your document with headings that will make up the TOC.

Word takes the text from paragraphs in nominated styles to make up the TOC. Normally you'll use the 'Heading 1', 'Heading 2' etc styles in Word to define the headings that you want to show in the Table of Contents.

That's the easy way however you can assign any paragraph style to a level in the TOC.

If you haven't already, go through your document applying Heading styles to heading and sub-headings.

MAKING A SIMPLE TOC

Once you've got some headings formatted in your document you can make a Table of Contents. The basics haven't changed much for many versions of Word. In Word 2003 you'll find it under Insert | Reference | Index and Tables | Table of Contents. Word 2007 has it under the 'References' tab on the ribbon.

If you just click OK you'll get a standard TOC showing headings from 'Heading 1', Heading 2' and Heading 3'.

Chances are you'll notice some anomalies in your initial TOC - headings missing or items that should not be there. Just go through your document and adjust the styles accordingly.

UPDATING A TOC

The Table of Contents is a Word field code - the Word 2003 default looks like this:

{ TOC \o "1-3" \h \z \u}

Press Alt+F9 to reveal the field codes in any Word document, press a second time to return to standard view.

Thankfully you should never need to worry about the field code parameters - the menu gives you access to all the options. However we've copied the TOC field parameters in the online version of this article if you're interested. http://news.office-watch.com?165

It's important to understand how the TOC works so that you know how to update it and when it is updated by Word.

As with any field, pressing F9 will update the field, but if you do that with a TOC you'll get the choice to:

* Update Page Numbers only

* Update entire table

The default is 'update Page Numbers only' which is fine if you've not changed or moved any headings and only added or removed text. This choice is faster but we generally avoid it because a change in the headings may be overlooked.

We prefer to use 'Update entire table' to ensure the TOC is fully up to date. It rarely takes a noticeable time to update even on a long document. Certainly it's a wise move to fully update the TOC before sending a document out.

Note: the use of the word 'Table' in the second option should not mislead you into thinking that the TOC is a Word table - it isn't

CHANGING THE TOC

Unless you dig into the details of the field codes, the way to change a Table of Contents is to replace it.

If you right-click in a TOC field and choose Edit Field you get the standard Field codes edit box, scroll down to TOC in the Field Names then click on the Table of Contents button.

Then make the changes you want and Word will replace the current TOC field with a new one.

THE TOC SETTINGS

Which brings us to the Table of Contents settings, there are a lot and we'll look at the main ones here.

The two preview panes show how the current settings will look in printed form or online. The term 'Web Preview' really means any non-paper form not just a HTML document.

Show Page Numbers: you can uncheck this option if your document is meant to be printed, for example our ebooks don't have page numbers in the TOC but do use the 'Use hyperlinks instead of page numbers' to make each TOC line clickable and jump to that chapter.

Right align page numbers tells Word to justify the page numbers on the right edge of the page while 'Tab Leader' indicates what character to use between the TOC entry and the page number (to guide a readers eye along the line).

Formatting can be done from the TOC styles in the current template or from some pre-defined options available in the drop-down list. You can refine the look of your TOC by choosing 'from template' then adjusting the TOC1, TOC2 etc styles via the Modify button (or the standard Styles dialog boxes or taskbars).

As we mentioned earlier, the TOC entries are normally taken from the Heading styles but if you click on the Options button you'll see there are other, er, options.

You can assign a TOC level to any style or use Outline levels instead of styles (which is why there's an option to enable the Outlining toolbar). Most of the time, you'll stick with the Heading styles.

You don't have to show all the levels of Heading in the TOC. For example you can have a document using Heading styles 1 to 9 but only display in the TOC the main headings. Do this from the 'Show Levels' settings. This means you can have many levels of headings and perhaps display all of them in drafts of the document then hide all but a few in the final document.

MULTI-LEVEL TOC

A table of contents doesn't have to use only main headings in the document, for it can have multiple levels just like a numbered or bulleted list.

For example a book could have these headings based on Heading 1 only:

* Akira Kurosawa
* Stanley Kubrick
* Preston Sturges

Changing the TOC settings to include 'Heading 2' would change the TOC to show the sections under each main heading.

* Akira Kurosawa
  o Seven Samurai
  o Rashomon
  o Yojimbo
* Stanley Kubrick
  o Paths of Glory
  o 2001, A Space Odyssey
  o Barry Lyndon
  o Full Metal Jacket
* Preston Sturges
  o Sullivan's Travels
  o Palm Beach Story

There's no need to create and remove Headings to do this, leave the document unchanged and just change the 'Show Levels' option in the TOC options dialog.

TOC WITHIN A CHAPTER

You might want to start each chapter with a summary of the sections within it, and this is possible but not as elegantly done in Word as you'd like.

In short, there's no way to directly make a TOC such as 'Level 2' but only until it reaches the next 'Level 1'. Instead you have to separately define the part of the document to make the TOC for then tell the TOC field to only summarize that area. That's done with the bookmark feature in Word.

Select the entire chapter or section you want the sub-TOC for and then define a bookmark for it using Insert | Bookmark.

Make a TOC in the usual way but change the levels to omit Level 1 (assuming that's the chapter heading) and only show Levels 2 and below as you wish.

Insert the TOC into your document (presumably under the main chapter heading). Word assumes you only want one TOC in a document and you'll get a message asking if you want to replace the existing TOC with the new one - in this case click No.

Finally you have to tell the TOC to only look at the chapter. There is no dialog box to do that, press Alt+F9 to reveal the field codes and add the \b switch followed by the name of the bookmark eg \b Kurosawa or \b Chapter1 etc. Eg { TOC \o "1-2" \h \z \u \b Kurosawa}

Press Alt+F9 again then F9 to update the entire TOC.

From Office For Mere Mortals #8.01

WHAT HAPPENS IF YOUR PRODUCT KEY IS STOLEN - PART 1

See this article online at <http://news.office-watch.com?191> This issue has the first part of a series on some concerns about Microsoft's anti-piracy measures as they apply to Microsoft Office 2007 and Windows Vista.

Both these products can be disabled by Microsoft after they have been initially activated - Windows Vista has that now and Office 2007 could have the 'kill switch' implemented at any time Microsoft wishes.

We're going to deal with these issues in-depth as Office Watch has done from time to time over the last decade. It's important to keep in mind that the problems we highlight probably won't happen to you, but even rare occurrences (in percentage terms) with MS Office will happen to many people. The level of concern is raised, not reduced, by the responses we've received from Microsoft.

SOFTWARE ACTIVATION - THEN AND NOW For Office 2000, XP and 2003 you need to 'activate' your software after installation. The technology works fine. In short, it links a particular computer to a software product key. Activation checks with Microsoft to see if the product key has been used before on other hardware. Depending on the license attached to that key (ie number of computers that software license was sold for) the software will be activated on that computer for ongoing use.

We're not concerned about the activation technology which, aside from some glitches and misunderstandings, works tolerably.

The important point is that once activated the software (Windows or Office) will continue to run even if Microsoft discovers later that the product key used was illegal. An invalid product key can stop you from getting later major updates and add-ins but the software itself will always work and there's nothing Microsoft can do about that.

Now - with Windows Vista and potentially Office 2007 that changes - the activation system will occasionally check if the product key is still 'legal'. If Microsoft decides that the product key for your software has been stolen and misused then your copy of Vista or possibly Office 2007 can be disabled remotely (after a warning period).

IF YOUR PRODUCT KEY IS STOLEN?

Disabling software is reasonable if you're using a stolen product key but what if you're the victim of theft?

In other words, what if your Vista or Office 2007 product key was stolen and used on other computers?

If that happens, eventually your legally purchased software could be disabled by Microsoft remotely.
As we'll see this can happen at any time, with no reason given and no proper recourse or avenue of appeal.

You could lose up to US$400 for Vista or US$680 for Office 2007 at the judgment of Microsoft - as a customer you'd have little idea of why your money has been lost.

All it takes is someone to merely take and use the product key for your Vista or Office 2007, and as we'll see that's absurdly easy.

Getting the software itself is a trivial matter - copies of the Office 2007 CD are already available for download from many unofficial sources. All that's needed is a stolen product key to activate the software.

Firstly let us give you some examples of what could happen:

WHAT COULD HAPPEN TO YOU You buy a copy of Windows Vista, install it and it's been running happily. Someone who has access to your computer, your desk or bookshelves, makes a copy of the 25 character product key, then uses it on their own computer or worse, makes it available to many other people.

That's not so farfetched - perhaps a friend of your children is using your computer and 'needs' a product key? Anyone who uses your computer

could do it, and that's not forgetting the sticker that has the product key in the first place - if that's left lying around your home or office it could be copied.

Corporate users are even more at risk, with copies of their licensed software on laptops and perhaps computers at home there has always been trouble with product keys 'escaping'. Microsoft acknowledges that this happens and says they 'work with customers' - which could mean anything and probably does.

Because enterprise product keys can apply to hundreds or thousands of installations the risk of misuse is greater. However we are concerned that the ability to disable software remotely can affect all customers - big and small. It's the small, retail and OEM customers who are more likely to be left with disabled software and with no recourse.

If the product key is used to activate on one unauthorized installation it may work (depending on the number of computer the key is valid for) but it means that you won't be able to use the additional activations you paid for (for example on a desktop and laptop computer or three installations with the 'Home and Student' license).

If the product key is published more widely (via email or on a web site), Microsoft can detect additional attempts to use that product key and could deem the product key as 'stolen'. Once that happens the 'kill switch' could severely reduce the features available on your copy of Vista or possibly Office 2007.

There seems no way for Microsoft to differentiate between the initial (and presumably legitimate user) of a software license and others who steal and misuse that product key. Everyone who uses that product key can have their software disabled.

Microsoft has the ability to 'disable' a legally purchased copy of Windows Vista at any time, even after activation - if they believe that the product key has been stolen and pirated. While Office 2007 lacks the ongoing 'kill switch' that's in Vista - the technology is there and Microsoft could start

disabling 'pirated' Office 2007's at any time.

SAFEGUARD YOUR PRODUCT KEY - HOW?

According to Microsoft it is the customer's responsibility to keep their product key secret. It's a comforting argument for Microsoft, for it imposes all the responsibility on the customer and absolves Microsoft of any blame.

But Microsoft doesn't make it easy for you to protect your product key - in fact Microsoft leaves an absurdly open door for thieves.

There are many pieces of software that will quickly reveal the Windows and Office product keys, anyone with access could download and run such a tool or carry it on a USB 'key'.

Product key disclosure software already exists for Vista and Office 2007, let alone for earlier versions of Windows and Office.

WHAT DOES MICROSOFT SAY?

We've tried to get a response from Microsoft but it has been difficult. The company is extremely reluctant to answer questions about their anti-piracy measures, even when it applies to legitimate customers.

For example, when we asked about the theft of product keys from retail customers we're told "we do not see those keys widely used in piracy or counterfeit". In other words since, in Microsoft's opinion it doesn't happen much so it's not a problem

From Office Watch #12.02

@ PRINTING EMAIL MESSAGES

@ See this article online at: http://news.office-watch.com?115

Printing email messages is something that we all do at various times, and in theory it should be as simple as clicking the Print icon in your email program – but what if the message won't print out properly?

Sometimes the printed version of an email message (or web page) comes out with strange formatting. Occasionally text disappears off the edge of the page. What can you do?

Emails with relatively simple and standard formatting should not be a problem but when the senders formatting is fancy or complex it's hard for your software to work out what to do. The original message is generally designed to be viewed on a screen and sometimes a screen with a particular width in mind, and so the conversion to a printed format probably wasn't even considered by the sender.

It's worth keeping in mind that printing problems are really caused by a complex interaction of the equipment you have; the email program, operating system, printer drivers, the printer and even the paper size that you use. These difficulties have been smoothed out over time, and with a recent version of Office, Windows XP and the latest printer drivers you should have less trouble than in the past.

If an email doesn't print out correctly, try selecting some or all of the text in the message, copy and paste it into a word-processor document (Word etc). This will give you more powerful printing and formatting options than in your email program. Word-processors have better control over the printing process and ensuring that the document appears on the printed page. A standard copy and paste should be sufficient but occasionally the new document is a horrible mess. If all you need is the text, use the 'Paste Special' option in Word to paste just the text (or use the 'Keep Text only' option after pasting in Word 2003 or 2007).

The paste option to 'Match Destination Formatting' might also work better than 'Keep Source Formatting'.

Similar advice applies to printing of web pages but Internet Explorer does have the option to print a part of a web page. Use your mouse to select the part of the web page you're interested in (most likely the article in the middle of the page) then choose File | Print then click the 'Selection' option. Many web sites (including ours) have a Print option on the web page.

@ DO YOU NEED TO PRINT AT ALL?

@ See this article online at: http://news.office-watch.com?116

I know this will seem like heresy to some readers (we're fully prepared for the emails from angry readers) but consider whether you need to print out that email at all?

Certainly there's a place for printing out a long message so you can read it at your leisure, but in many cases there's no real need to print it at all.

@ KEEPING MESSAGES

One choice is to simply keep the message in your Inbox as a read message. Most email programs can store many thousands of messages so there's no harm in keeping messages there. Some people have the habit of deleting emails immediately they are read, but that's not an efficient use of modern software.

An email 'Inbox' isn't like a paper-holding Inbox on an office desk which you had to clear out to keep ahead of the work. You can leave messages in an email Inbox as long as you like. Modern desktop search tools make finding old messages incredibly easy and fast (our Desktop Search Handbook http://shop.office-watch.com/dsh has a comprehensive look at the free tools available).

@Saving messages

If you want to keep some emails saved separate to your email storage, why not save them to your 'My Documents' or equivalent folder on your hard drive. Most email programs have an option 'Save As' to let you save a copy of the email.

The trick when saving an email to a separate document is to choose the right file format. You should choose a format that it is widely accepted and is indexed by desktop search programs. If the file your saved is indexed, it is must easier to find later.

For example to 'Save As' an email from Outlook gives you various options (depending on the version of Outlook you have).

- Text only (*.txt)
- Outlook Template (*.oft)
- Outlook Message Format (*.msg)
- Outlook Message Format – Unicode (*.msg)
- HTML (*.htm or *.html)

(Continued from page 14)

• MHT files (*.mht)

The 'Outlook' options are best avoided for long term storage – they are proprietary formats which may not be searchable or even readable by other programs.

Plain text is good but won't keep any of the formatting or images in the original message.

HTML is great for messages with no images – all the formatting of the original email will be retained. The format is open, invariably indexed by desktop search systems and can be opened by a wide range of programs. If the email message contains images when they are saved in a sub-folder which can be very messy.

MHT is a Microsoft format but very useful for saving messages which have images. A MHT file has the message, formatting and images all saved into a single file (instead of saved in separate files and folders with .HTM).

MHT files can be read by Internet Explorer and most desktop search programs (either natively or with a small add-on). It's our preferred option for saving emails.

The noticeably missing options from Save As in Outlook 2007 are options to save to a Word document, PDF or even Microsoft's own XPS format.

To save to a Word document you have to copy the entire message to a new Word document then save it from Word.

Save to PDF or XPS are available in other parts of Office 2007 (with a free download from Microsoft) but the Outlook team chose to skip it which is a pity. Both formats let you save to a compact and searchable form.

@ Postmarking your emails

@ See this article online at: http://news.office-watch.com?117

Outlook 2007 has introduced a feature which may help your outgoing messages be distinguished from spam.

There's a lot of talk about anti-spam measures but less talk about legitimate messages being mistaken for spam. When this happens your message might be overlooked in the receivers 'Junk' folder but at worst will be deleted by your email host with no warning to you or the sender.

Microsoft has talked about the 'Postmark' system for many years and it's good to see it finally implemented. When you send an email, Outlook does a short mathematical formula which takes up a small amount of computer resources and time for each email sent.

The option is on by default under the Outlook 2007 Junk E-mail options. Most people won't even notice any delay on their computer from using Postmark.

The time and resources used is tiny and unnoticeable for a single email or even a few hundred in a mail merge. But a spammer trying to send out millions of messages can't use 'Postmark' because making each Postmark slows down their computer – it can make sending out spam much less efficient.

Postmark isn't perfect, and spammers could still use the system if they have fast computers or are prepared to accept slower sending speeds in exchange for a greater likelihood of their messages bypassing spam filters. But it's a simple system that requires no additional work when you send an email.

From Email Essentials #4.20

NEWBIE CLUB TUTORIALS

Tutorial .."Dear Newbie Club, " Scandisk Or Defrag?

Note: This is NOT as techie as it sounds:-)

------- Dear Newbie Club .... I like to keep my hard drive clean and tidy to keep it from clogging up and slowing down. Is it important to run Scandisk first before I do a Defrag? -

------ Answer .... Running a Scan on your Hard drive first is suggested before you run defrag on your PC and here is why: When you run Scandisk on your computer, you are actually scanning the hard drive looking for problems or defects.

If or when the scan program finds a problem, it will try to fix it. Usually broken files are fixed. If the problem is a bad section of your hard drive, Scandisk will attempt to fix it, but in the event it cannot be fixed, that section of the drive will be marked so that the computer will not attempt to put information in that bad sector.

When you run defrag, all of the data on your PC is read by the computer and then put in order. Here's the important reason why the scandisk function should be run first ...

There comes a time when running the defrag that the program attempts to put those files back in order. If you have not run the scan and marked that bad sector as non-usable, the defrag process may try and put good files in that sector and it could be lost.

Running Scandisk before defrag will prevent this type of problem. Hope this helps.

Newbie Club Support

Tutorial ... "Can I use 2 Antivirus Programs?"

Running multiple virus protection programs at the same time can be detrimental to your computer. When there's more than one program running at the same time they can tend to work against one another and may leave you more vulnerable to viruses. It can also create problems in other areas because of conflicts with other programs you are running.

You can follow a few simple steps to make your PC safe again. If you are downloading or installing a newer version of your favourite anti virus program, save it to your desktop or 'my documents.

But you should first of all uninstall the older version for best results. Before you install the software, disconnect your PC from the internet and go to Start/'Control Panel'. In the 'Control Panel', choose the 'Add/Remove Programs' icon.

This is where you will un-install any old anti-virus programs. Re-boot your computer to get rid of any lingering files associated with your old program, and now you are ready to install the earlier saved file for your new anti-virus program.

If you already have 2 programs installed, then you should follow the steps to remove both programs and then re-install the new one.

Tutorial ... "Browser Tips"

These tips apply to Internet Explorer. When you're visiting a Web page ... 1. -------- Click a Link.

Hypertext links are usually underlined or coloured differently to non-hyper linked text. When clicked, a new page loads into the browser. You can see the page you'll be visiting if you hover the mouse pointer over the link, and look at the status bar (the lower edge) of your browser window. The URL appears there.

2. -------- Click an Image.

Many images on a web page are linked to other pages. This is called an image map.

3. -------- Open a Link in Another Window.

You don't have to let your browser do your thinking for you! If you don't want to leave the page you're on, just RIGHT click the link you're interested in, and click Open in New Window. Another browser instance opens and the page displays. Magic!

(Continued from page 16)

4. ------- Even More Magical.

Hold down your keyboard shift key while clicking on a link. A new browser window opens with the page displayed.

Tutorial ... "Download to a CD?"

There's no reason why you CAN'T do this... but there IS a reason why you should NOT.

When you download, Do NOT try to download directly to a CD-ROM or DVD. You should ALWAYS Download to your computer's C:drive.

Why? Your hard drive is MUCH faster than your DVD drive and it holds more data. Many of our customers have tried downloading our products directly on to a CD. We always tell them to download to their hard drive, or "C: drive" then to make a COPY of the program onto their CD.

And if you have a Floppy Disk drive, we only have one program that is small enough to fit on a floppy disk: Keyboard Magic. It is about half a megabyte in size... which means you could fit two of them on a floppy!

(See what Keyboard Magic is all about by visiting:
http://newbieclub.com/keyboard

CDs are usually created by going through your CD software that lets you "burn" a CD. We don't have tutorials on this process, as it differs greatly, depending on the manufacturer of the software and player you have installed.

We will have an in depth video on this in the New Newbie Club along with hundreds of others. But when it comes to downloading, just save the file to your computer's hard drive (C).

Then move it later. This will save you a lot of frustration! If you want to see a real quick tutorial on downloading...

check this page out: http://newbieclub.com/how2download.htm For a much more detailed explanation, visit this page:
http://newbieclub.com/download

WHAT HAPPENS IF YOUR PRODUCT KEY IS STOLEN - PART 2

See this article online at <http://news.office-watch.com?202> We continue our look at some concerns with product activation and disabling in Office 2007 and Vista. Last week <http://news.office-watch.com?191> we talked about how easy it is for your product key to be stolen and how your legally bought software could be disabled by Microsoft.

In this issue we look at some consequences of a stolen product key, noting the lack of a clear and open process by Microsoft to deal with disputes. We end with some ideas for what you can do, so you

WHAT'S HAPPENED TO MY PRODUCT KEY?

One problem with the activation process is there's no way for the customer to know how the product key / software license has been used. Microsoft keeps close records of each activation for a product key but withholds that information from the customer.

If your product key is stolen and attempts are made to use it, you (as the legitimate owner) aren't notified. You'll only find out if the product key is deactivated and even then you won't know why.

If you have an activation problem, Microsoft knows what has happened but won't tell the customer. It's possible the activation record could reveal details that would support a case that your product key was stolen (eg activation in another country) but Microsoft won't tell you.

Since you never see the activation history, you also can't check to see if your product key has been misused. Ideally the registered user could login to a special site, review their activation history and know when there's been improper use.

As it stands, you don't know there's a problem until you try to activate the software or Microsoft imposes their 'kill switch' on your legal software.

WHY HAS MY SOFTWARE BEEN KILLED?

So your product key was stolen, used and as a consequence, you start getting messages saying that your Windows Vista (or maybe Office 2007) is illegal - what can you do?

Good question and there's no good answer - presumably you'll phone Microsoft's call centre to ask for an explanation. That's where the situation gets messy - there's no clear path from Microsoft to deal with this situation.

The obligation falls on you to prove to Microsoft that you bought legally. That can be difficult because Microsoft has already decided that your product key has been used illegally by a number of people and it has no means of knowing whether anyone was a legitimate user of that product key, and it has no clear path for customers to prove otherwise. Microsoft's recommendations about documentation would not really help.

Since the product key isn't linked to you by name there is no way for you to prove that you are the legitimate owner of that product key.

Having an itemized receipt (as suggested by Microsoft) doesn't help because the product key isn't shown on a shop receipt. Microsoft could argue that a receipt is for any copy of Office or Vista - not necessarily the product key in question.

In the end all you can do is call, plead your case and hope for a sympathetic response.

Corporate or volume customers who are victims of product key theft might have some more power with Microsoft to negotiate a solution. But home or small business customers have no such leverage nor is there the vital link between the owner and the product key.

Microsoft argues there are 'few cases' but since there's no external checks of that statement, we only have Microsoft's word for that. It would be in Microsoft's direct interests to downplay the possibility.

THE TIME LAG BETWEEN THEFT AND DETECTION

With Microsoft holding all the software license and activation history it can be long time between the actual theft of your product key and when there are noticeable consequences.

This will deepen the mystery for you when you start seeing warnings that you have pirated software. The theft of your product key may have been weeks, months or years ago.

WHAT APPEAL PROCESS?

What if Microsoft disables your copy of Vista or Office 2007? You've tried to explain to Microsoft that you were the original purchaser but they won't believe you. How can you appeal?

You can't - there's no appeal process.

Microsoft's decision is final; you're a software thief, then you've lost that software license. You're expected to buy another copy of the software (and hope the same thing doesn't happen again).

You could try writing to Microsoft and presenting your case - but there's no disclosed path to do this. There is no name, title or address given to direct your letter. All you could do is write a letter and hope it arrives on a sympathetic desk - and not the desk of the people who refused you in the first place.

Certainly there's no proper external appeal process. We've long felt that Microsoft should appoint some external arbiters who could examine disputed cases and make recommendations in both specific cases and general practices.

Microsoft has always rejected the idea of outside examination of their

practices. Strangely they can't see that such a system would increase customer confidence and therefore sales. Instead it is seen as an intrusion with the implication that they are doing something wrong.

It would be in Microsoft's interests to implement an open system with proper appeal processes, before they are imposed from outsiders.

Not only does Microsoft 'hold all the cards' they also hold all the rules to the game. The company can change their proof requirements at any time because they are no publicly available. Since much of this is done over the phone there's also the real possibility of misinterpretation or even misrepresentation. It's not a stretch to envisage Microsoft staff (who assume you're a software pirate from the moment you call) being reluctant to change that view regardless of the evidence.

HOW YOU CAN PROTECT YOURSELF

After reading this, I'm sure some people will decide that there's insufficient 'security of tenure' in buying a Vista or Office 2007 license to warrant the high cost.

License problems and the possibility of Microsoft 'killing' your software probably isn't enough on its own to make you decide not to get the new versions, but combined with the cost and the usual changeover hassles these concerns might be enough to keep your money in your pocket.

While Microsoft fails to provide a clear path for customers who have their product key stolen there is no reliable method of guaranteeing your Vista or Office 2007 license is safe, but there are some things you can do:

- - Keep your paperwork. Save a copy of the itemized receipt for the software purchase with a copy of the product key (preferably a copy of the actual product key label).

- Know your license. Windows and Office software licenses vary in many ways, especially how many computers you can install the software on. It's a complicated thing and not always obvious to the purchaser. To save later trouble you should know the license terms from the start. We suspect many people have bought new copies of Office when they don't need to. Either they have misunderstood the nature of their license to use Office or the flexibility of the software activation system (which, despite flaws, is considerably more flexible that most people realize).

- - Track your activations. Microsoft tracks your software activations but keeps that info for themselves, therefore you should keep a record of when, where and on which computer you have activated Microsoft software. This will give you a firm basis to dispute Microsoft's version of events.

- - Protect your computer. Make sure that access at start-up and the screen-saver is password protected. This is good practice to protect all your personal data, not just product keys.

- - Protect your paperwork. Keep product keys out of easy reach. It's the product key that is vital to your ownership of Office or Vista, the CD / DVD isn't as important.

NO DE-ACTIVATION OPTION

One glaring omission from the Microsoft anti-piracy system is the option to register the 'de-activation' of Office on a particular computer.

There is no way to tell Microsoft when you uninstall Office from a computer, for example when you're transferring Office to a new computer. Microsoft only records attempts to activate Office, if they think you've tried to activate too often you'll have to deal with their call center staff to explain your situation. They only have your word that you've uninstalled Office before putting it on a new machine.

(Continued from page 19)

Surely it would be better for customers to have the option to 'de-activate' during the uninstall process? It would give the customer some support to a claim that their Office license isn't being misused.

Of course any 'de-activation' option could only be an indicator.

If a computer breaks down entirely, you might not have the ability to uninstall and notify Microsoft.
Despite this we feel the option to better trace your use of Office licenses should be an option.
From Office Watch #12.03

A SPANISH Teacher was explaining to her class that in Spanish, unlike English, nouns are designated as either masculine or feminine.

"House" for instance, is feminine: "la casa."

"Pencil," however, is masculine: "el lapiz."

A student asked, "What gender is 'computer'?" Instead of giving the answer, the teacher split the class into two groups, male and female, and asked them to decide for themselves whether "computer" should be a masculine or a feminine noun.

Each group was asked to give four reasons for its recommendation.

The men's group decided that "computer" should definitely be of the feminine gender ("la computadora")because:

1. No one but their creator understands their internal logic;

2. The native language they use to communicate with other computers is incomprehensible to everyone else;

3. Even the smallest mistakes are stored in long term memory for possible later retrieval; and

4. As soon as you make a commitment to one, you find yourself spending half your pay check on accessories for it.

(THIS GETS BETTER!)

The women's group, however, concluded that computers should be Masculine ("el computador") ,because:

1. In order to do anything with them, you have to turn them on;

2. They have a lot of data but still can't think for themselves;

3. They are supposed to help you solve problems, but half the time they ARE the problem; and

4. As soon as you commit to one, you realize that if you had waited a little longer, you could have gotten a better model.

 The women won.
Submitted by Robin W Member 244

On the eve of the introduction of Windows Vista it is perhaps time to look back at the introduction of Windows 98. This article was published in June 1998

This story was printed from ZDNet AnchorDesk

10 Reasons to Upgrade to Windows 98

Special Report

Ed Bott, Senior Contributing Editor

PC Computing

Thursday, March 26, 1998

On the surface, Windows 98 looks just like Windows 95 plus Internet Explorer 4.0. Under the covers, though, are some noteworthy improvements. We've got the lowdown on the top 10 reasons you should switch.

1. Smart Setup, Easy Upgrades:

The retail release of Windows 98 will roll up three years' worth of patches, bug fixes, updated drivers and enhanced features -- all on one CD.

2. Better Crash Protection:

The most noteworthy Windows 98 improvement in the stability category is the completely rewritten System Information utility. By gathering information from the Registry, from startup files and from running applications, it presents a complete picture of the current system configuration.

3. Reclaim Your Hard Drive:

At a nickel per megabyte, the disk space you'll recover by converting a typical 2GB drive to the FAT32 format will pay for a major chunk of the Windows 98 upgrade cost.

4. Your PC Will Run (Slightly) Faster:

Most of Win98's core components have been fine-tuned for performance: The swap file manages itself more intelligently. A built-in Registry Checker compacts the system Registry when needed. The memory management and cache modules are tuned to work optimally with FAT32's 4K clusters.

5. Hassle-Free Startup:

Windows 98 is far more helpful than Windows 95 when you have startup problems. A corrupt hardware driver can still keep your system from booting -- but only once thanks to the Automatic Skip Driver agent.

6. Runs Better on a Notebook:

Windows 98 gives you total control over your notebook's power consumption, and if your system is less than a year old you'll experience major benefits by upgrading.

7. Double Your Desktop Space:

Windows 98 includes a cool capability that can give you more viewable screen area for a fraction of the cost of a large-screen upgrade. Keep your 17-inch monitor, pop in a second PCI video adapter, plug in a second monitor and use both displays simultaneously.

8. Phone Smarts:

Look in the Windows 98 Control Panel and you'll find a Telephony icon, packed with nifty features designed to help your PC get along better with the telephone network.

9. Web TV on your PC:

Microsoft is integrating Web TV into Windows 98. Web TV for Windows works with the Windows Task Scheduler, allowing you to set reminders for shows you want to record.

10. Plug and Play Works (Finally):

Plug and Play is still imperfect, but it works much, much better in Windows 98 than ever before.

.Top 10 Reasons to Wait

After three years of development and more than a year of nonstop beta testing, you'd think Windows 98 would be practically perfect, right? Not exactly. We found plenty of old annoyances that linger in the new OS. And some of the new features deliver the sort of headaches that only Windows can create.

REASON 1: Setup Schizophrenia

To update Win98 components, should you use the Web-based Update Wizard? IE4's Active Setup? Or the Control Panel's Add/Remove Programs option? Windows 98 uses the three incompatible setup routines for different tasks. For corporate sites, it's a confusing mess.

REASON 2: Compression Catch-22

The good news: FAT32 makes efficient use of large disk partitions. The bad news: Microsoft's DriveSpace disk compression tools won't work on a FAT32 volume. Anyone upgrading from a compressed Windows 95 volume has every right to feel like they've been caught in a squeeze play.

REASON 3: Security Holes

Windows 98 offers only the most rudimentary network protection. If you want real security, bypass Windows 98 and head straight for NT. Whatever you do, don't cache vital passwords on Windows 95 or 98: We were able to crack Win98's flimsy encryption in seconds with tools we found on the Internet.

REASON 4: Hasta la Vista, Fax

Remember Microsoft Fax? Windows 95 included this free component along with the "universal in-box," Exchange. It was slow and monumentally buggy, and in Windows 98 it simply isn't there anymore. If you want to keep faxing, you'll have to stick with Windows 95 or pay for a copy of Outlook 98.

(Continued from page 21)

REASON 5: Helpless Help

There's a spiffy new HTML-based Help engine in Windows 98. Too bad you can't find any real answers there. Read it and weep--then order a subscription to Microsoft's TechNet, which offers the answers you really need-for $299 a year.

REASON 6: DOS Lives! (Barely) If you mastered the DOS prompt, you'll feel right at home with Windows 98's vintage MS-DOS Prompt window. NT 4.0 includes a slick command processor, but Win98's command line looks like something you'd see on Nick at Nite. A full-featured command line can be a power user's best friend; thank goodness for utilities like JP Software's 4DOS.

REASON 7: No Task Master

In theory, anyone who knows Visual Basic or JavaScript can write simple scripts that run directly from the Windows desktop. But you'll search Windows 98 in vain for any documentation of this feature. Want to automate basic Windows tasks? Unfortunately, the ancient MS-DOS batch language is still your only usable tool.

REASON 8: Missing Video Drivers

You'll read lots of hype about the new Win32 Driver Model, which lets Windows NT and Win98 share the same device drivers. These drivers should be less buggy and easier to develop than previous versions. So what about the most notorious drivers of all? Sorry, video hardware isn't included in the WDM.

REASON 9: Backup Blues

The reviewer's guide insists that the new Backup utility can rebuild the OS and restore the latest full backup with an Emergency Recover Diskette. But we found that the feature doesn't work. To restore a backup, you still have to reinstall Windows first.

REASON 10: It's the Ultimate Orphan

Microsoft admits this is the end of the line for Windows 9x. The successor to Win98 will almost certainly be based on the NT kernel, with a full 32-bit architecture and little need to be compatible with ancient hardware and DOS games. So if all roads lead to NT, why detour through Windows 98?

More Ron's Ramblings

I have been thinking back over the time I have been editor of the Newsletter and have found that I have been editor since 1997 at least.

To give ewer members a sense of the changes that have occurred over that period, an overview of the name changes that have taken place will reveal the history of the organisation to some extent.

When I joined I think in 1993 or thereabouts after retiring in 1992 we met in the Adult Education Centre in York Street on the first Friday of each month and the Newsletter was called "RESET". We moved to the On Line Centre in the Library about 2000 and changed to the first Wednesday in the Month to fit in with the Library. That year we merged the Group with LaMug (Launceston Macintosh User's Group) the Mac Group who as a Special Interest Group met at St Pat's on the First Tuesday of each Month.
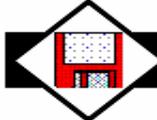
As Macs don't have a "RESET" key the name of the Newsletter didn't mean much to the Mac Users.

We held a competition to decide on a new name for the newsletter and a new logo for the Group.

In the mean time I produced a few editions with the name "WYSIWYG" or expanded "What You See Is What You Get".

"Newstream was the winning entry and the present logo was the winning entry. Unfortunately I have forgotten the names of the winners and the prizes.

Eventually we combined both PC & Mac meetings firstly at the On Line Centre then when OPEN joined us at Studio Works

RESET

The Newsletter of the

Launceston **Computer** Group, Inc.