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Next Meeting

Wednesday 7th

July 7.30 PM

Workshop

What's in the Box

A demonstration by Dennis Murray

This Demonstration is open to

OPEN students

Newstream Articles

Deadline : 10 Days before Meeting

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Membership

Single \$15, Family \$20 (Includes Email edition Newstream)

Printed & Posted Newsletter \$20 extra

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LCG Committee 2009/10

President: Barry Symons

Vice President: Janet Headlam

Minutes Secretary: Lorraine Rist

Treasurer: Iris Meek

Ass.

Treasurers: Karia Wicks

MAC Librarians: Ivan Turmine

PC Librarian: Julie Hjort

Ass.

PC Librarian: Judy Hall

Newstream Editor: Ron Baker

Publicity Officer: Iris Meek

Ass.

Publicity Officer: - open -

OPEN Co-ordinator: Robert Tierney

Webmaster/Content: Tom Olsen

Auditor: Ron Baker

OPEN Committee 2010-2011

Chairperson OPEN: Judy Hall *Chair all meetings of OPEN and ensure that they run smoothly*

Vice Chairperson OPEN: June Hazzlewood.

Chair meeting when the Chairperson is unavailable.

Secretary: Margaret Carrington

Handles all incoming and outgoing communications Responsible for the documentation and distribution of all meeting minutes

Assistant Secretary: - open -

Help the Secretary where necessary

Treasurer: Iris Meek *Responsible for all monies and banking*

Assistant Treasurer: .Karia Wicks *Help the Treasurer where necessary.*

Publicity Officer: Iris Meek. *Responsible for all advertising*

OPEN Co-ordinator: Robert Tierney. *Responsible for the smooth running of Centre on a daily basis*

Membership Co-coordinator: Karia Wicks.:

Keep Membership database up to date.

Beginners Project Co-ordinator: Eleanor Horder.

Tutor Co-ordinator: Eleanor Horder.. *Keep regular contact with Tutors to bring ideas and concerns to meetings*

Assistant Tutor Co-ordinators: David Renton.

Newsletter Editors Assistant: Iris Meek. *Collates and produces the OPEN Newsletter for inclusion in LCG monthly 'Newstream'*

Maintenance

Coordinator Judy Hall *Responsible for the maintenance and repairs to all computer equipment*

Co-ordinator of "VICTOR": Robert Tieney.

Webmaster/Content: Tom Olsen.

OPEN Committee: Marie Cleaver,

David Renton, Jenny Napier, Lorraine Rist, Janet Headlam

Launceston Computer Group

Minutes of meeting held June 2 at Studio Works 1 Pipeworks Rd Sth Launceston.

President Barry Symons opened the meeting at 7.15.

Present: B Symons, R Von Samerzewski, H Tavener, G Gilpin, D Murray, E Horder, L Horder, J Hall, C Hall, R Baker, I Meek and J Hjort.

Apologies: J Headlam, B and J Hazzlewood, T Olsen, P Hardy, L Rist, I Turmine.

Minutes of previous meeting read and confirmed as correct. Moved G Gilpin/ E Horder.

Business arising: Barry Symons will study the suggested shelving and follow up on same.

Noisy student: attended this week after a couple of weeks away; but was quite well behaved this time.

On the 64 bit operating system on the new computer; it is felt it should be retained as we should be keeping up with the latest technology. Judy Hall said it doesn't recognise some of the printers, but new printers will probably not be compatible with 32 bit systems. The majority felt it could be left as is for the present.

Ivan has not left any message re the Mac Software agreed to last meeting.

Correspondence: In: An email from Dennis Murray re cabling and alterations to computers.

A request for three old monitors.

ASCCA Newsletter.

Details of Volunteers cover from CGU via Armstrong's Insurance.

Out: Email to ASCCA asking if they could suggest a cheaper method of accessing Family History sites such as Ancestry.com and Findmypast. Moved Harvey Tavener/Ron Baker inward correspondence be received and outward endorsed. Car.

Financial Report: Copy with Minutes.

Moved Iris Meek/Dennis Murray.

General Business:

Ron Baker moved that Opportunistic Purchases made either prior to or following the purchase must be entered in the Order Book as they should be available for scrutiny. Seconded Glenn Gilpin. Car.

This follows an account from Tas. Printer Cartridge for an amount for cartridges which we cannot recall ordering or receiving, including a full set (4) of HP Cartridges and a new black cartridge for the Canon. The treasurer has not received invoices for those articles; only a statement.

Newstream: Ron had the newsletter out early. It is found on the website and can be copied in part or in full by members.

Barry Symons was asked to check the power cords on the heaters. Julie Hot has the same type heater and was told by an electrician that they must be on direct power points and not through power boards. The club is looking into this matter.

Market: Judy Hall will book a site for June 20 at Esk Market. Glenn, Julie and Ron to help. Iris to advertise in Examiner pages.

A card to be sent to Murette Lawson on the death from cancer of her husband Eddy.

Open had moved that following the sudden death of well loved regular student Alan Jones that his wishes for a private funeral be observed and the donation of \$50 to the Clifford Craig Medical Research group. This was topped up by a donation of \$5 from a member, Andrea White.

June Hazzlewood suggested at the OPEN meeting that the Speaker during Seniors Week be John Hosford. She will make the arrangements. Plans were made at OPEN for Seniors Week in October with the club receiving a Government Grant this year which will allow advertising etc. The Premier will be invited to attend. Open minutes will contain all relevant information, including the ASCCA Conference in Sydney.

Other speakers should be approached for future meetings..

A Tutors Meeting will be held June 16 10- noon. Lunch will be provided to thank the tutors for their contributions during the year.

Family History: The reason we have asked ASCCA for information re sites is the escalating cost of access. At present it will be in the vicinity of \$450 next time. A huge increase!

Next Meeting July 7 at 7 15 followed by speaker or workshop.

Meeting Closed 8.15.

Following this meeting, Barry Symons gave a very interesting and informative talk on Australian Currency. Thank you Barry!

erils of Junk Mail

Terry Stockdale has a wonderful weekly newsletter called Terry's Computer Tips. He recently addressed an issue that I know many of you are concerned with and I thought he would not mind if we excerpted a portion of it in SSN. The issue is junk mail and how the spammers operate. You can find Terry's newsletter here.
<http://www.terryscomputertips.com/>

The junk mail people often grab any address they can find to use as a From address. They often send their junk emails using the same From address that they use for the To address. That way, they think you're more like to open and read the email.

With spam, about the only thing you can be sure of is that the "From" address is not really where the email came from.

Many times, it's just an address they bought from some other spammer. Other times, they've hacked someone's email account or computer and are actually sending from their computer.

The only way to know for sure (assuming it's not your email address, as was the case with Roger) is to check the Email "headers" to see if the email originated really originated from a mailserver that you use.

The mail headers show each of the mailservers through which an email has passed - both by name and by IP address -- and at what time it transferred to and from that mailserver.

For example, if your email address was "example@aol.com" and your outbound email server for Internet email was something like smtp.aol.com, you look for that as the outbound mailserver in the headers.

If the headers show that the email started with some other mailserver -- say somewhere.example.com - then you know it really didn't come from your computer.

In answer to his final question "Have you any idea how I can stop this permanently ?", unfortunately, you can't.

From Sunbelt Software "Security News"

OPEN NEWSLETTER – July 2010

Coordinators Corner

Hello there,

I hope everyone is keeping as warm as they can, I think we need some fingerless gloves, for this cold weather while typing.

First of all I would like to thank everyone who contributed to our morning tea we had for Australia's Biggest Morning Tea for the cancer council. A total of \$176.50 was raised that was a great effort.

By the time this comes out OPEN will have reached a major milestone in its eight and a half year history we will have signed up our 1000th member. What a milestone, thank you to June Hazzlewood and those that got OPEN started. And thank you to those that keep it going. The plain fact is that it keeps going because of your support and continuing attendance and volunteering. There would be no OPEN without YOU.!

One thing I would like to bring up is about Microsoft and their continuing support of XP and Vista. There has been information floating around that Microsoft is not supporting these now. It is half true, on Microsoft's Home page support is being stopped from July 13th for those computers who only have XP service Pack 2 or earlier and machines that have Vista with no service packs at all.

People who have perfectly good machines are thinking they will

have to go out and buy Windows 7 it is not the case, when they stop making your programs compatible with XP that will be the time to change.

If you hear information about the computer sector do not take it as gospel, find out from someone who knows or even better go to the source of the rumor in this case Microsoft.

Last month Dennis gave a great talk on utilities that he uses for computing one that he showed us was startup control panel a very tiny program that allows you to turn off unwanted programs that open up when your computer starts up and run in the background.

It works very well up to XP just recently I tried to install it on a Vista machine and it would not work, the program that Vista users have for turning off programs is Windows defender. It is not one of my favorite programs for the fact that the program may not allow you to disable the program you want to stop on start up.

For experienced VISTA users do the following:

Click on start orb

In "search" type: system Configuration, then click on system configuration.

A dialogue box will appear click on the "startup" tab

Untick boxes that you do not want to start up.

NOTE IF YOU DO NOT KNOW WHAT IS SAFE TO UNTICK LEAVE ALONE.

When finished click "apply" to make sure process is finished properly then click ok.

Then the computer will ask you to restart computer for the settings to take effect click "restart".

I know that it is hard to try and explain something when a lot of us including myself are visual people. So if it is as clear as mud when you come into the centre come and bail me up and ask me to explain

Till next time

Happy Computing

Rob Tierney

Coordinator of OPEN.

THE VENUE TELEPHONE NUMBER

The club telephone is available during class hours.

6343 4928



OPEN NEWSLETTER – July 2010

Dennis Murray has kindly accepted a request to hold a “What’s in the Box” workshop at the next LCG Meeting July 7. Due to work commitments he cannot do a daytime workshop at this time, but all OPEN and LCG members who would like to see what is inside their computer will be made very welcome if they come along to this evening meeting.

Dennis will also open one of the computer boxes to show why regular maintenance is essential to get the most from your computer.

"Keeping your computer clean." is important. They can run hot or “run not” without proper maintenance.



VICTOR PHONE NUMBER



WEDNESDAY SPECIALS

June and July
 On line Shopping
 30 June
 10–noon
 Photo Books
 30 June

OPEN MEETING
 July 7

Have your say about what you believe is best for our club.

FAMILY HISTORY ON-LINE

July 14
 -
 1pm–3 pm

July 28
 -
 10.00–noon
 August 11-

Basic AND Graphics Work shops

Put name on Registration Sheet on cork board as numbers are limited.

The dates for the next classes are :

Graphics Workshop July 7 - 10 am to 12 .
 Basic Graphics July 14 – 10 am to 12 noon

LEVEL 2 & 3 GRAPHICS

With Paint Shop Pro 7 and 8

Wednesday 21 July— 1:00 pm to 3.00 pm

Continuation of lessons for those students who have already completed Basic Graphics classes. It involves more advanced features of the Paint

Learn how to fix torn corners, hide cracked surfaces, remove specks and spots and lighten or darken your precious family photos using PSP 7 and 8 in our special Graph-

OPEN Session Times
 At Studioworks, 1 Pipeworks Rd, L'ton
Standard Sessions \$5.00

OPEN NEWSLETTER – JULY 2010

Monday	10 am –12	General & Beginners
	1 pm – 3 pm	Beginners & PC Support
Tuesday	10 am –12	P C Support & Beginners + Mac
	1 pm – 3 pm	As above
	7 pm–9 pm	PC Support (Night Class)
Wednesday	10 am–noon	Special sessions or Meetings
	1.pm–3 pm	As for mornings (see rosters)
	3.30–5.30	P C Support
Thursday	10 am –12	General & Beginners
	1 pm – 3 pm	General & Beginners
	3.30–5.30	Absolute Beginners
Friday	10 am –12	General & Beginners
	1 pm–3 pm	Beginners

SPECIAL

Date	Time	Topic	Details
July 7	10 am–12 noon	Graphics Workshop	Reviewing Basic Graphics.
	1 pm–	OPEN Monthly Meeting	Help keep the club meaningful to all.
July 14	10 am–12 noon	Basic Graphics	A popular session to help understand Graphics
	1:00–3 pm	Family History	Study Family History On line or disk.
July 21	10 am–noon	OCR	Optical Character Recognition
	1 pm– 3.00	Level 2 and 3 Graphics	Advanced graphics techniques using the Paint Shop Pro 7 and 8 programs.
July 28	10 am –noon	Family History	On line or library of resources tracing history.
	1 pm–3.00	PSP X1	Advanced Graphics
August 4	10 am –noon	Graphics Workshop	The opportunity to back track over past works.
		OPEN Meeting	Your chance to air some ideas.

Some graphics classes require Tutorials

OPEN NEWSLETTER – JULY 2010

We keep saying it!

When my printer failed to act at my request I checked "everything" Ha Ha!
 The cartridges were full.
 There was no queue.
 The power was on and working.
 What was it?????
 I was about to phone my friendly computer helperand as I wheeled my chair around to phone I noticed it.....the USB lead was lying on the floor under the printer!
 What a fool...and what a laugh I would have caused.

The other one is "SAVE"

Having completed one of my columns, I deleted those not required.....and guess what?
 I accidentally deleted a whole "column" because I had failed to save it.

I was so disgusted I turned the computer off for the evening (as if it was to blame) and re-did the column next morning.
 Cheers
 Iris

The club keeps on hand some CD's, DVD's and USB's, also Game C D's and Family History Programs for members to purchase at excellent prices..

If you wish to receive the informative ASCCA newsletter, please let Iris know and it will be emailed to you each month as we receive it.

LCG-OPEN enjoys the privileges membership to ASCCA , along with other Senior IT groups offers, including excellent articles each month.

ASCCA's annual Competitions for Digital Photography, Creative Writing and Photo Story Video are open.

The entry forms are tabled near the front of the club rooms and may be copied by any member who wishes to enter one of the categories.

Please read the conditions carefully as ASCCA limits the amount of words, pictures or slides.

Winners are announced at the ASCCA AGM.

All entries must be in by 4 pm
Monday 30 August 2010.

To all Tutors who turned up for the recent Tutors Meeting and Pizza Lunch. This is the clubs small way of saying a big thank you for all you do during the year. Follow up meeting will be held at a later

OPEN NEWSLETTER – JULY 2010

Bill has found several more cartridges which he has offered to OPEN members.

Please check the box which is on the bookcase near the door.

You could be lucky. They are outdated Printer Cartridges, but are quite OK while they remain in sealed packets..

Members can purchase for just \$10, but must not open them before checking they are the correct fit.

The make or manufacturers number is on the box.,

Just check on the details of your home printer, then check the box and perhaps you'll find a great bargain.

Cheers
Iris

Graphics Workshops

7 July 10 – noon

4 August 10–noon

AIDA_375

is a small systems analyser program that can provide you with a wealth of information on what is

happening inside your computer—the temperature of your CPU, what programs and processes are running, how much memory is being used, the licence number of your operating system and much more.



Some of the happenings at OPEN which members may be interested in include improvements around the club rooms.

Barry Symons is making new shelving which, when completed, will get some of the folders and books (which are multiplying) into some sort of order.

You will find more printers and copiers around the room and we have recently received a small grant

which is being used to offset traveling expenses for some of the tutors. Pilot Light has been a great supporter of OPEN and we are grateful for their continued interest.

Mac tutors are looking to add new programs to the MAC bank, so their students wont be missing out.

Rob ran another successful "Biggest Morning Tea to raise much needed funds for Cancer Research.

OPEN COMPUTING
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD
2ND JUNE 2010
MEETING OPENED 1PM

PRESENT:

Judy Hall (Chair) Rob Tierney, Margaret Carrington, Karia Wicks, Sandra Viney, Eleanor Horder, Iris Meek, Andrea White, Maree Cleaver, Pauline Hardy, Bert and June Hazzlewood, Harvey Tavener, Bev Elmer, Tom Olsen

APOLOGIES: Janet Headlam

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:

Harvey Tavener moved the minutes be accepted.

Seconded by Sandra Viney

BUSINESS ARISING:

Eleanor said Lou didn't have any practical solution to the tidying up of cords and cables.

Rob said the decision to roll back the new computer to 32 bit was over ruled at LCG Meeting and that it was not going ahead now.

Dennis pointed out that in time we would need the 64 bit application in order to run new programs.

Rob demonstrated how to access the Volunteer Connect Tasmania website.

June has \$1,500 which is to be distributed to tutors to help toward compensation for travelling expenses.

A further \$500 is already in our bank account, which then totals \$2,000.

It was decided at National Council of Women that every tutor should receive \$25 and the remaining money be distributed according to mileage travelled.

June moved that this arrangement be accepted and it was seconded by Rob.

Disruptive member in LCG class has been asked to be quiet in class and that she should take her phone calls outside.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT:

Iris read the financial statement. The Tasmanian Printer Cartridge account is to be itemised and followed up.

Iris moved they be accepted.

Harvey seconded.

GENERAL BUSINESS:

Rob said Seniors Week grant of \$2,000 has been received and our ad of no more than 20 words is to be included in the Examiners lift out in September. The next meeting to arrange seniors' week is to be in July and the final one in September.

The Premier is to be invited to attend on the first day, Friday October 2nd and councillors to be invited to attend on Saturday 3rd.

Pauline wants hand outs for Probus members.

June is to contact ASSCA about the possibility of insurance cover for members over 75 years.

Iris printed ASSCA newsletter and Newstream.

(Continued on page 11)

(Continued from page 10)

Armstrong Insurance has been sending papers but we have not received them.

She is to check with Australia Post.

Iris read a very comprehensive list from Dennis of measures he is undertaking regarding the upgrading, replacing and maintenance work on our computers.

Thank you Dennis.

Tom suggested we reimburse him for the work he does and the hours of his own time he spends carrying out these tasks.

It was unanimously agreed that we forward him a check now for \$200 and every quarter to be reassessed.

Moved by Rob and seconded by Judy that this be accepted.

Eleanor mentioned the sad passing of Alan Jones and that his family was arranging a private funeral.

It was agreed that we send the Clifford Craig Foundation a donation of \$50 in lieu of flowers as requested.

Iris is to organise this and Karia is to supply a card for the family.

The tutors' meeting on Wednesday 16th June is to be followed by lunch.

Tom mentioned the renewing of our web hosting and that next year we should take out a 3 year subscription which would result in a considerable saving.

Rob moved we accept this proposal and it was seconded by Pauline.

Tom showed concern that the heater plugs become fairly warm when heaters are in use.

As Barry Symmons is an electrician, he is to be asked for his opinion on this matter.

June mentioned the ASSCA conference is to be held at the Powerhouse in Sydney on 8 – 9 September 2010.

A newsletter is coming out soon with further details if anyone is interested in going.

Help Wanted

Does anyone know how to cancel a bid on eBay?

Yesterday I put in a bid for a "cowboy outfit" and now it seems I'm only six minutes away from owning the Australian Government.

Quiz - Answers Further Down

A.This WWW extension ru belongs to which country?

1. Ukraine
2. Romania
3. Russia
4. Rwanda

B.The keyboard layout designed by Sholes is :

- 1.QWERTY
- 2.YUIOP
- 3.DVORAK
- 4.SHOESLAY

C. 'WYSIWYG' is a great little computer word. But what does it stand

for?

- 1.What Your System Is Winning You're Growing
- 2.World Youth Syndicate Internet Wide Yesterday Group

3.What You See Is What You Get

4.Where Your System Is Worded You Get

D.What does SSL stand for?

- 1.Superuser System Login
- 2.Secure System Login
- 3.System Socket Layer
- 4.Secure Socket Layer

E.The resolution of a printer is measured in

- 1.Megabits
- 2.Hz
- 3.Dots per inch (DPI)
- 4.Inches (diagonal)

F.What is BIOS an acronym for?

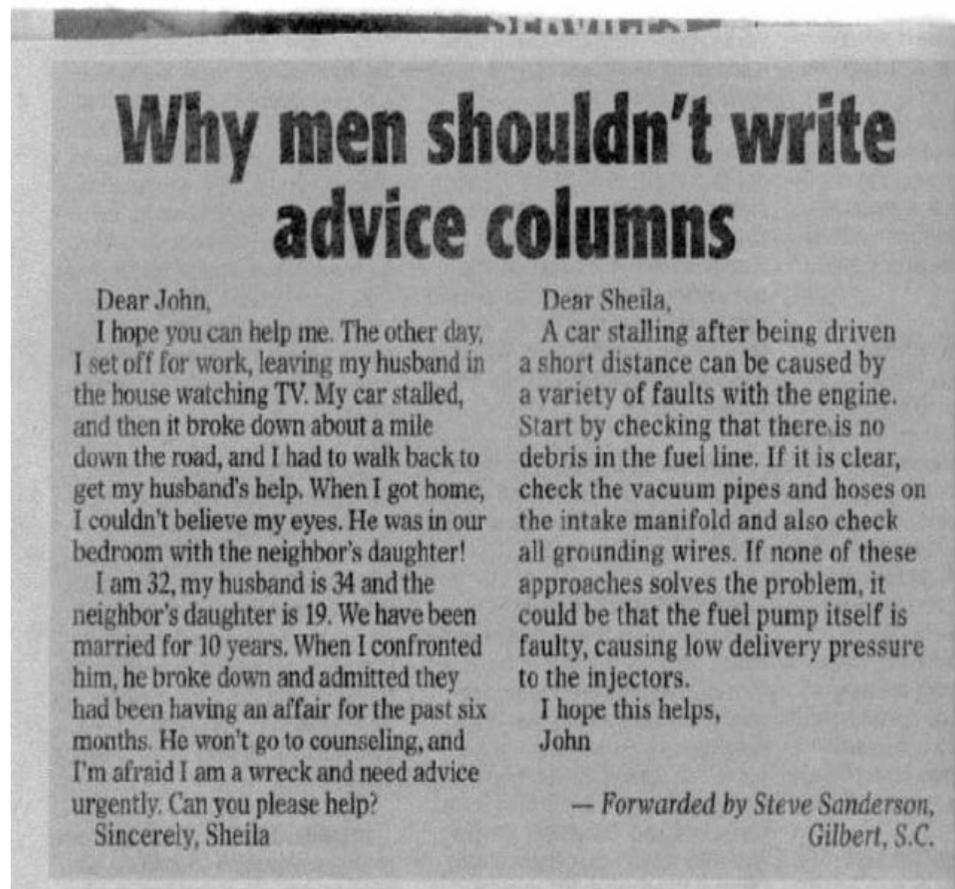
- 1.bootstrap initial operating system
- 2.basic input output start-up

(Continued from page 12)

3.boot initial operating startup

4.basic input output system

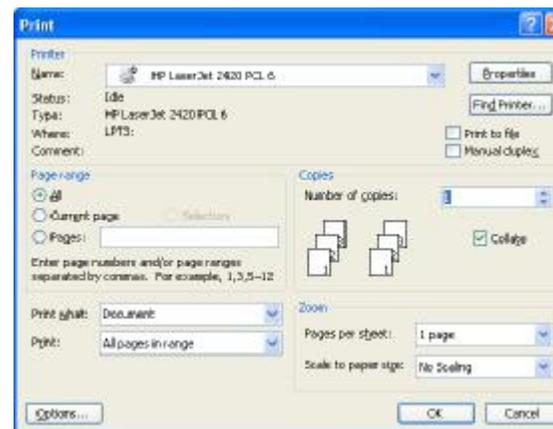
No Googling.



PRINTING MORE THAN ONE COPY

Microsoft Word gives you complete control over how it prints your document. If desired, you can print more than one copy of your document. To print to a file, follow these steps:

1. Choose Print from the File menu. You will see the Print dialog box. (To display the Print dialog box in Word 2007, click the Office button and then click Print.) A really quick way to display the Print dialog box is to simply press **Ctrl+P**.



The Print dialog box.

2. In the Copies box, indicate the number of copies you want to print.
3. In the Range box, specify what you want to print.
4. Check the status of the Collate option. (Select or clear the option based on whether you want the pages of each copy printed in order or not.)
5. Click on OK

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COUNTING CELLS WITH SPECIFIC CHARACTERS

Let's say that you have a Microsoft Excel worksheet that contains all the people who have ever worked in your department. Each name is prefaced by a single character that indicates the status of the person. For instance, if Fred Davis were retired, his name might show up as "RFred Davis". With quite a lot of these names in the worksheet, you may need a way to count those people with a specific status character.

The easiest way to accomplish this is to use the COUNTIF function. If, for instance, the status character is the letter R (for "retired"), and your range of names is in cells A5:A52, then you could use the following to determine which cells begin with the letter R:

```
=COUNTIF(A5:A52,"R*")
```

The formula works because the comparison value is R*, which means "the letter R followed by any other characters." Excel dutifully returns the count. To search for a different status character, simply replace R with the desired status character.

Obviously, if the asterisk has a special meaning in this usage, you can't search directly for an asterisk. Actually, there are three characters you cannot search for directly: the asterisk (*), the question mark (?) and the tilde (~). If you want to search for any of these characters, you must precede the character with the tilde. Thus, if you wanted to determine a count of names that had a question mark as a status code, you could use the following:

```
=COUNTIF(A5:A52,"~?*" )
```

An alternative to using COUNTIF is to create an array formula that is applied to every cell in the range. The following will do the trick very nicely:

```
=SUM((LEFT(A5:A52,1)="R")*1)
```

This must, of course, be entered as an array formula. This means that instead of pressing **ENTER** at the end of the formula, you would press **SHIFT+CTRL+ENTER**. The formula checks the left-most character of a cell, returning the value TRUE if it is R or FALSE if it is not. The multiplication is done to convert the TRUE/FALSE value to a number, either 1 for TRUE or 0 for FALSE. The SUM function returns the sum, or count, of all the cells that meet the criteria.

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Answers to the Newbie Club Quiz

A - 3

Russia

B - 1

QWERTY

C - 3

What You See Is What You Get

D - 2

Secure Socket Layer

E - 3

Dots per inch (DPI)

F -

basic input output system

Marriage

When a man steals your wife, there is no better revenge than to let him keep her.

Lee Majors

After marriage, husband and wife become two sides of a coin; they just can't face each other, but still they stay together.

Al Gore

By all means marry. If you get a good wife, you'll be happy. If you get a bad one, you'll become a philosopher. Socrates

Woman inspires us to great things, and prevents us from achieving them.

Mike Tyson

The great question... which I have not been able to answer... is, "What does a woman want?"

George Clooney

I had some words with my wife, and she had some paragraphs with me.

Bill Clinton

"Some people ask the secret of our long marriage. We take time to go to a restaurant two times a week. A little candlelight, dinner, soft music and dancing. She goes Tuesdays, I go Fridays."

George W. Bush

"I don't worry about terrorism. I was married for two years."

Rudy Giuliani

"There's a way of transferring funds that is even faster than electronic banking. It's called marriage."

Michael Jordan

"I've had bad luck with all my wives. The first one left me and the second one didn't." The third gave me more children!

Donald Trump

Two secrets to keep your marriage brimming

- 1. Whenever you're wrong, admit it,*
- 2. Whenever you're right, shut up.*

Shaquille O'Neal

The most effective way to remember your wife's birthday is to forget it once...

Kobe Bryant

You know what I did before I married? Anything I wanted to.

David Hasselhoff

My wife and I were happy for twenty years. Then we met.

Alec Baldwin

A good wife always forgives her husband when she's wrong.

Barack Obama

Marriage is the only war where one sleeps with the enemy.

Tommy Lee

A man inserted an 'ad' in the classifieds: "Wife wanted". Next day he received a hundred letters. They all said the same thing: "You can have mine."

Brad Pitt

First Guy (proudly): "My wife's an angel!"

Second Guy: "You're lucky, mine's still alive."

Jimmy Kimmel

"Honey, what happened to 'ladies first'?" Husband replies, "That's the reason why the world's a mess today, because a lady went first!"

David Letterman

"First there's the promise ring, then the engagement ring, then the wedding ring...soon after....comes Suffer...ing!"

Jay Leno

SkyDrive takes on the online-storage arena

By Michael Lasky



Office 2010 marked Microsoft's aggressive entrance into the cloud-computing arena, and Sky Drive is a key component of the company's move to online services.

Part of the new Windows Live service, SkyDrive offers generous — and free — online data storage and simple collaboration. But there are other cloud-based services that provide more features and better options.

With the price of external hard drives in free fall (based on cost-per-megabyte), storing data online could seem inconvenient at best and a threat to your data security at worst. But online-storage sites, both paid and free, offer two advantages attached external hard drives can't match: safe and secure **offsite** backups and anytime-anywhere file sharing. Images and documents stored online are accessible 24/7 to anyone with the right password ... anywhere there's an Internet connection.

Online storage is, in fact, more secure than the external hard drives sitting next to your PC. Unless you religiously lock these drives away, thieves and disgruntled employees could walk off with your entire customer list or business account files. Online storage sites typically use industry-standard backup systems for their storage and employ multiple levels of security including password protection, data encryption on their servers, and Secure Socket Layer encryption between your PC and the cloud.

Most online-storage services offer automated backups, which run unobtrusively in the background and have little or no effect on PC performance. The better services now connect to mobile devices such as iPhones, iPads, and Android devices — an excellent way to quickly back up and share photos and other mobile documents.

The drawbacks to online storage? You must have an active Internet connection, and the cost of data storage is higher than for the personal terabyte drives commonly available today. Free online storage ranges from about 8 to 25 GBs. Paid storage is based on a monthly subscription fee, and storage capacities are potentially unlimited. Also, file-transfer speed between your PC and online storage is much slower than to a local drive, especially for large files.

It's also possible that an online service could fold, locking you out of your storage vault for all time. But the chances of that happening, compared to odds that your

local backup drive will fail, are miniscule. In any case, the golden rule of backup still applies: never to store important files in one place.

If you cancel your fee-based storage account, most storage vendors' terms of service give them the right to delete your data. Check that any service you use has a one-month grace period after a cancellation, giving you time to remove your data.

I let my paid Mozy account lapse for a nearly a year. But in checking the account while researching this story, I was surprised to find I could still retrieve my files. It's obviously unwise to trust in lax enforcement, so be sure to remove or delete your online data before cancelling an account.

Microsoft's online storage complements Office

Microsoft may be late to the cloud-computing game, but it has arguably the most integrated suite of online apps, all collected under its Windows Live umbrella. (Google was way ahead of Microsoft with its online apps, but its suite has the typically Spartan Google interface.)

SkyDrive ([info page](#)) is the online-storage component of Windows Live, and every Live member gets 25GB of free space. That's considerably more than competing online-storage sites offer, though it's not an entirely empty vault. Everything you create with Windows Live apps (e-mail, photos, Word and Excel documents, calendaring data, and such) gets stored there. (See Figure 1.)



Figure 1. Windows Live SkyDrive's simple interface provides file storage, collaboration, and synchronization.

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Where some online-storage services, such as Mozy, focus on automated backups, SkyDrive is rather a place in the Internet cloud to store working files, share files with friends and colleagues, and keep important documents synchronized on your various computing devices.

Collaboration is one of SkyDrive's potential strengths. Invited participants can read, edit, and comment on documents such as spreadsheets and presentations in real time, using the online Office Live applications.

In practice, however, there might be a few kinks in the system. When I tried saving a local Office 2010 beta-edition document to my online storage, I received obtuse messages — and then Word crashed. Hopefully, this works better in the shipping edition of Office.

Next, I uploaded the file directly from my PC to SkyDrive and tried sharing it with a group of collaborators. Despite following SkyDrive's help instructions, I had difficulty sending the group an e-mail with a link to the file.

SkyDrive will support file synchronization between PCs as part of the new Windows Essentials which, Microsoft says, will be out **soon**. As with most online-storage services, you'll have to download a small app onto each machine to sync your files with other computers.

Drop files into a box and share them instantly

Dropbox.com gives away 2GB of storage for free, but the versatility of the site will likely lure you into spending the U.S. \$9.95-a-month to subscribe to 50GB of space. Dropbox's talents include file synching, sharing, and backup plus access to your documents via an iPhone, iPad, or Android phone. (We use Dropbox in the Windows Secrets office.)

Subscribers download a small app onto each of the PCs they are using; a Dropbox folder then appears on each desktop. Drag one file or a bunch of files to the Dropbox folder, where they're automatically stored in your online Dropbox vault. (The files are copied to online storage, not moved, so you always have a local copy of your files.)

Dropbox synchronizes files on every PC on which you've set up a Dropbox account. Make a change in a presentation on your desktop, and it will be automatically updated on your notebook. You always have the latest copy in all locations. Previous versions of documents are kept for 30 days by Dropbox, giving

you fail-safe undos. (See Figure 2.)



Figure 2. Place a Dropbox folder on your PC desktop, and all files in the folder are automatically backed up and synchronized on other PCs. You can even recover deleted files.

Within the Dropbox folder is a Public folder, and it works exactly as its name implies: you can share files placed in the Public folder with anyone. Each document can have its own Internet link. (You cannot, however, link to specific **folders** in the Public area.)

For true collaborations, you can create a shared folder allowing several people to work together on a set of files. Using an application that supports simultaneous editing, they can see each other's changes instantly.

Collaborate on documents in the cloud

Box.net is similar to Dropbox but has stronger collaboration tools. The free account gives you 1GB of storage, and no file can be over 25MB. Individuals can pay \$9.95 a month for 10GB of storage; business plans offer more features and, in many cases, unlimited storage. Maximum file size is 2GB.

Like Dropbox, Box.net lets you share files with anyone and almost any device that can read the files. You also can view previous versions of documents. Its Collaboration Folders mirror information across any number of Box.net accounts, so the changes you make to a folder's contents are instantly visible to your collaborators and vice-versa.

Box.net subscribers can conduct group meetings in live time with a discussions

thread. A workflow table links to documents and helps group members stay organized as they approve, review, or update files. (See Figure 3.)



Figure 3. Box.net's strong collaboration tools include update summaries that help keep projects on track.

One of Box.net's more-unusual features is its Profile folder, where you can share your full LinkedIn profile with others.

Make online and local backups simultaneously

Owned by multi national storage facilitator EMC, Mozy focuses primarily on backing up your data. And it does this task well. The service comes in two flavors: MozyHome for individuals and MozyPro for businesses.

Individuals can sign onto the free service and get 2GB of space or pay \$4.95 per month for unlimited storage. Mozy's strength lies in its flexible controls (see Figure 4), which let you set how and when it archives your data.

By default, the customizable software performs automatic backups in the

background or at preset times — all with little effect on your PC's performance. Mozy 2.0 also lets you throttle up faster backups at the cost of some system performance.

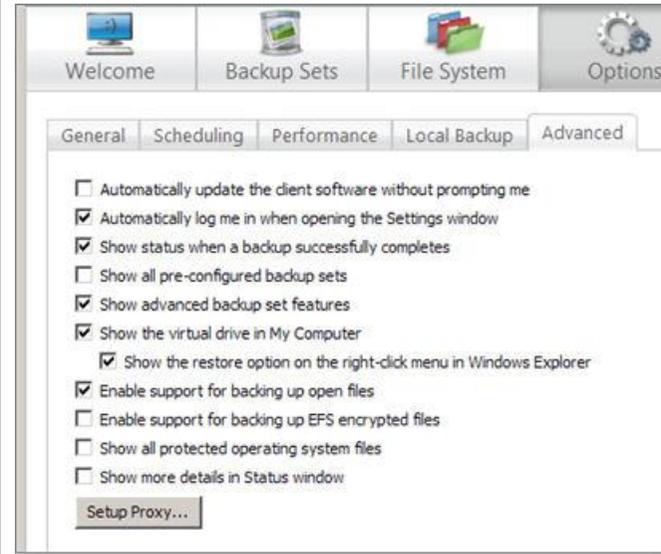


Figure 4. Mozy's strong focus on preserving your data includes controls for scheduling backups, adjusting backup speed, and fine-tuning the archiving process.

But the best feature in Mozy is its ability to simultaneously back up data to its servers to and a local external hard drive attached to your PC.

Mozy is designed to back up and restore your entire hard drive, but you can also cherry-pick selected files and folders to copy to the cloud.

Unlike SkyDrive, Dropbox, and Box.net, Mozy users cannot share files. Nor does it offer an easy way to view uploaded content. To do so, you must start a restore session, download the files you need, and then view them.

You then restore files either through the Mozy desktop software or via the Mozy online portal. The latter choice is a bit of a kludge: for each selected file, it e-mails you a link to a download page.

Using Task Manager to troubleshoot startup woes

By Fred Langa

Sometimes when trouble strikes, you have to choose between a simple brute-force fix and a more-complex but also more-informative surgical repair.

Reinstalling software is inelegant but usually works; using Windows' built-in tools can be quicker and less traumatic.

a A blank dialog box appears at every boot-up

Something is leaving an empty dialog box on reader William Bailey's desktop whenever he starts Windows.

"I recently had a failed update of my MS Office 2003 and had to reinstall Office. Now, when I boot my XP Pro PC, it opens a blank dialog box at the end of the boot process. "This happens after everything loads (including all my background programs), but before I open any other programs or my browser. I have run a virus scan and CCleaner. I just **X** out of the blank dialog box, and everything runs normally until the next boot. "How can I stop it? I can find no way to identify what program or service is causing this."

a William, the failed update is the likely culprit — it left something behind that's opening the empty dialog.

The 2002, XP, and 2003 editions of MS Office are known to leave behind something of a mess after failed installations. Consequently, Microsoft eventually published support article [290301](#), which includes the free Windows Installer Cleanup Utility download. The utility will help you remove the parts of a failed installation that might interfere with a clean reinstall.

So, William: The quick, blunt-force fix is to completely uninstall Office 2003, run the Windows Installer Cleanup Utility, reboot, and then reinstall Office from scratch. If the problem was indeed caused by the original failed install, this should give you a fresh and error-free start with Office.

If you'd prefer a less-drastic approach, you can delve more deeply into the problem. Start by letting your machine boot normally and fully. Leave the empty dialog box alone. When your system has finished booting, shut down any software that automatically started at boot. You want your system running, with the mystery dialog box shown, but otherwise as idle as possible.

Next, from an admin-level account, bring up Task Manager (Ctrl + Alt + Del), and click its Applications tab. If any applications are shown there, close them

one by one: if the empty dialog window closes when you kill a particular app, you've found the source of the problem.

If nothing's listed in Applications and the empty dialog is still visible, click over to the Task Manager's Processes tab. Enlarge the Task Manager window so you can see the full list of running processes. Check the **Show processes from all users** box. (See Figure 1.)

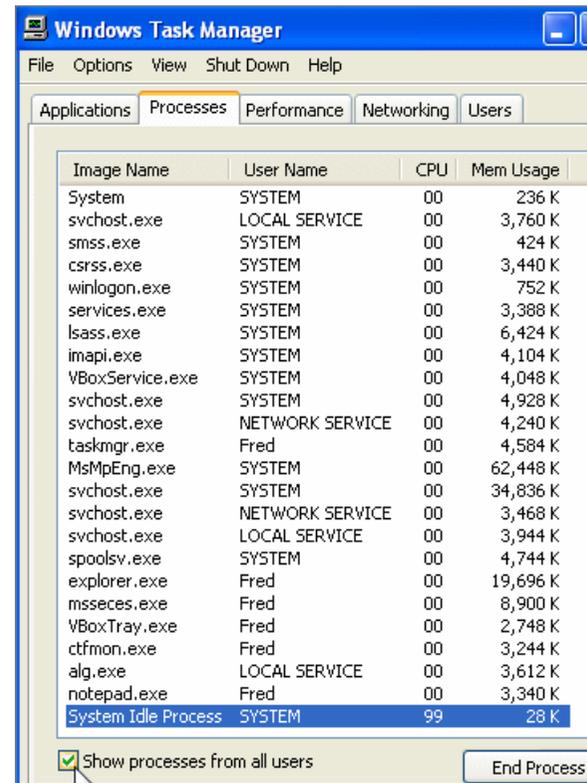


Figure 1. Task Manager lets you observe and control almost all the software currently running on your PC.

Note the names of the running processes. The easy way is with a screen grab: hit Print Screen to capture an image of the screen to your Windows clipboard. Open Paint or any graphics-editing tool, and paste the clipboard image into the

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app. You now have a visual record of everything that's running on your PC when the empty dialog is present.

Leaving Task Manager open, manually close the empty dialog box. One or more processes should disappear from the Task Manager list. Compare the new process list to the one in your screen-grab. Those processes that went away are probably associated with the mystery dialog.

With the names of those processes in hand, you should be able to track down the misbehaving app. Resources such as What-Process.com and ProcessLibrary.com can help.

Either technique — brute-force reinstall or careful analysis — should get that empty dialog off your screen for good!

How to identify truly duplicate files

Dario C. Aguilar is trying to make sense of a ton of duplicate files.

"After running a find-duplicate-files diagnostics tool, how do you determine which duplicate files to remove? I have never had the confidence to remove any file. Sometimes duplicate files seem to have different file names within the listing."

- ^a Two files are truly duplicates only if they have the same name, the same length (in bytes), and the same file-creation date and time. Even then, there are some technical reasons why two seemingly identical files might actually be different.

With that in mind, you'll have to sift through your duplicates and make judgment calls. For example, if you have two photos with the same name but with different file sizes, odds are good that the larger one is the original; the smaller file is usually an edited or recompressed/resized copy.

With identically named documents, the one with the latest file-creation date is usually the *live* copy.

There are many more file-identification shortcuts: files or folders with names that contain **temp**, **temporary**, or **tmp** are usually safe to delete. Likewise, duplicate files found in odd locations are probable candidates for the trash. (Why is a copy of a vacation photo in my MP3 collection?) Just be sure the file

is a duplicate and not a misplaced original. The trick is to apply logic to each file type and circumstance.

There's also a simpler and safer process: make a complete system backup, then freely delete any and all suspected duplicate files. If it turns out that one of the duplicates was really something you need, you can restore it from your backup files.

Worry-free file cleanups are just another of the many benefits of having good backups!

Win7 stymies XP-based custom repair/backup CD

Claus Wellendorf's XP-based recovery toolkit won't work on his Win7 setup. "I had a free and fully working backup-and-recovery system on my XP Home Edition PC. A boot CD based on Bart's-PE builder and loaded with a backup tool, among other things, worked to my satisfaction. "Now I have shifted my PC to Win7. I cannot find a solution similar to the one I had. The Bart-PE Builder Boot CD no longer works on my system. Do you have other solutions?"

- ^a Like you, I'm a major fan of the Bart's Preinstalled Environment do-it-yourself recovery CDs ([site](#)); they saved my bacon more than once on XP systems.

But Bart's and similar recovery tools rely on the fact that XP's different editions (Home, Professional, Business, and so forth.) shipped on different CDs.

In contrast, a standard retail Windows 7 DVD actually contains all the editions on one disc. Your license key activates only the specific edition you paid for.

This side-by-side setup greatly complicates the building of a custom recovery CD, and that's why Bart's and similar, older recovery tools no longer work — they're based on a Windows distribution method that Microsoft no longer uses.

Fortunately, Win7 is the first version of Windows that doesn't *need* third-party recovery apps — it has a good suite of backup and recovery tools built in. Check out my [May 27](#) column, "Use Windows System Restore with caution," for more information on how these tools work.

Bart's programs served you well, and they still work fine on XP. But now that you're using Win7, it's time to lay your Bart's CD to rest.

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I suggest a solemn burial with full-geek honors.

Keep the info on a lost flash drive secure

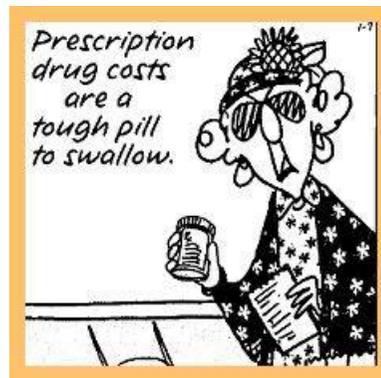
Patrick Qu writes:

"Like most people, I try to maintain good PC security. My system is well-protected through the regular home-based security suites, I back up regularly, and the home wireless network uses strong WPA. "However, the family got a surprise the other day when my son lost a memory stick at school. It contained copies of some of his work and (alas) some family information which, while not critical, I would have preferred stayed in the family. "So my question is, how to secure a memory stick and still maintain the flexibility that these devices provide. What would be ideal is a program which requests a password prior to opening the drive. Any advice on such a program?"

Perhaps the simplest answer is to use a free, open-source tool such as 7-Zip ([download site](#)) to compress, encrypt, and password-protect the files on the flash drive. If you save the encrypted files with a standard **.zip** file extension, almost any unzip tool that supports AES-256 encryption should be able to read the files.

You could also carry an unencrypted copy of the 7-Zip setup files on the flash drives and — if allowed — install 7-Zip on the computers where you'll use the flash drive.

A step up: use a free, open-source, whole-disk encryption tool like Truecrypt ([info page](#)). It's very secure, but you'll need to install the application on every machine that might be connected to the flash drive.



The Benevolent Scotsman

One afternoon a Scotsman was riding in his limousine when he saw two men along the roadside eating grass.

Disturbed, he ordered his driver to stop and he got out to investigate.

He asked one man, "Why are you eating grass?" "We don't have any money for food," the poor man replied.

"We have to eat grass." "Well, then, you can come with me to my house and I'll feed you," the Scotsman said.

"But sir, I have a wife and two children with me.

They are over there, under that tree." "Bring them along," the Scotsman replied.

Turning to the other poor man he stated, "You come with us, also." The second man, in a pitiful voice, then said, "But sir, I also have a wife and SIX children with me!" "Bring them all, as well," the Scotsman answered.

They all entered the car, which was no easy task, even for a car as large as the limousine was.

Once under way, one of the poor fellows turned to the Scotsman and said, "Sir, you are too kind..

Thank you for taking all of us with you." The Scotsman replied, "Glad to do it.

"You'll really love my place.

"The grass is almost a foot high"