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Next Meeting
Wednesday 7th September
2011
Combined Meeting
LCG-OPEN
2.15 PM after
OPEN Meeting

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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OPEN NEWSLETTER – September 2011

THEY ARE STILL OUT THERE!

Who? The scammers trying to part you from your money, and perhaps even worse they may be trying to get hold of your personal details such as bank account names, numbers and passwords.

The technique is called 'cold calling' and all the scammers need is a telephone book and the knowledge that ever-increasing numbers of people will have a computer in their homes or businesses.

They have no more idea of whether your computer is about to 'crash' than I have of what coloured pyjamas you will be wearing tonight. They simply play a percentage game—if they call enough phone numbers then eventually somebody will fall for their 'spiel'.

To gain control of your computer the scammers will first get you to log on to a web-page that they have prepared in advance. This web-page will contain numerous **bogus problems** and it is designed to convince you that the problems are located on your computer.

Having convinced you that your computer is riddled with viruses, spyware and all the curses known to modern computer users they then ask you if they can use a remote control program to assist you in removing the problems.

It is at this stage that the financial pressure may start to be applied— I have heard of amounts ranging from \$80 to \$250 being requested but the real problem is that the scammers will ask for your credit card details—**do not give it to them under any circumstances.** (continued)

THEY ARE STILL OUT THERE! (cont'd)

If this warning sounds like old news to you may be right, but despite variations of this scam having been around for 3-4 years there are still people being taken in. In the past month two of the people I assist with their computers have been caught out.

In one instance the scammers had uninstalled the anti-virus program which led to more than 200 real problems finding their way on to the computer, while in the other case the computer owner gave out credit card details. Fortunately in the latter case a family member recognised the scam and steps were taken to cancel the financial transaction and change credit card details.

If any of your family or friends is about to enter the world of the computing for the first time please make them aware that such scams exist.

Dennis Murray

PROBLEM REPORTING OPTIONS

When a problem occurs on your computer it is quite likely that an error message will be displayed on the monitor screen. Often these messages can be complex and trying to remember exactly what they say is difficult.

To provide 'technical people' with the best problem-solving information you can do a screen-print of the problem and paste it into a Word document . If the problem occurs in an area that can't be screen-printed why not use a digital

OPEN MONTHLY MEETING SEPTEMBER 7, 2010 1:00 pm

Please take this opportunity to have an input into the way the club operates into the future.

Do you have a suggestion for a new class topic?

Would you like to take on a small volunteering role to help with the club's day-to-day functions?

Are there ways in which we can provide better services to members?

LAUNCESTON COMPUTER GROUP



*SPECIAL COMBINED
MONTHLY MEETING WEDS.
SEPTEMBER 7 AT 2:15 pm*

Earlier this year it was decided to have combined OPEN and LCG meetings from time to time so that both of our club's interest groups could get together to discuss matters that affect both groups.

The LCG meeting for September will follow on at the completion of the OPEN meeting.

There will not be an evening Workshop Presentation for this month only.

OPEN NEWSLETTER – September 2011

Launceston Computer Group

29th August 2011

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.

AVAILABILITY OF LIBRARY

At present the Shareware Library is only available during the club's opening hours.

Speak to one of the tutors at the venue -
Studioworks, 1 Pipeworks Road, South L'ton.

Email: opencomputing@bigpond.com

OTHER CLUB RESOURCES

In addition to the 'physical' library OPEN and VICTOR may be able to provide members with a variety of freeware programs as an alternative to downloading from the Internet. Free anti-virus programs such as AVG can now be larger than 140 Megabytes and would take hours to download for someone who only had a dial-up Internet connection.

There are also quite a few video tutorials and ASCCA teaching material on our server and these can be quite helpful in explaining how certain programs and utilities work.

PLEASE NOTE THAT IN 2010 ALL OF JUDY'S MORNING CLASSES WILL START AT 10 AM AND NOT 9 AM AS IN PREVIOUS YEARS

FAMILY HISTORY ON-LINE

September 21 — 10 am to noon
September 28 — 10 am to noon

Judy Hall and the team will guide you through the processes required to research your ancestry.

New information is being added to our resources on an on-going basis to help you trace your family's origins. Contact the club for more information
Classes are limited to 8 people.

VICTOR PHONE NUMBER 0408 174 235

Contact the Coordinator Rob Tierney for assistance with computer problems at home
(Bookings are subject to availability of tutors.)

VENUE TELEPHONE NUMBER

Don't forget that the club telephone is available during class hours.



***** 6343 4928 *****

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

Monday to Friday 10am – 3pm
Tuesday evenings 7pm—9 pm

GRAPHICS

Please check the registration sheets at the club to find out if there are places available.

The dates for the next classes are :

Graphics Workshop September 7
10 am to 12 noon
Basic Graphics September 14
10 am to 12 noon

LEVEL 2 & 3 GRAPHICS

With Paint Shop Pro 7 and 8

Wednesday September 21 1:00 to 3.30 pm

Paint Shop Pro XI class on September 28

These classes are designed for people who have completed the Basic Graphics classes, and involves more advanced features of the Paint Shop Pro graphics programs.

OPEN Session Times

At Studioworks, 1 Pipeworks Rd, L'ton

Standard Sessions \$5.00

[Some special tutorial materials may incur additional charges]

OPEN NEWSLETTER – September 2011

SPECIAL WEDNESDAY SESSIONS

Please register on the sheets – numbers may be limited

Monday	10 am –12	General & Beginners
	1 pm – 3 pm	Basics and Beyond
Tuesday	10 am –12	O-Learn & Beginners [all day]
	1 pm – 3 pm	Mac [all day]
	7 pm–9 pm	Basics (Night Class)
Wednesday		Special sessions or Meetings
		As for mornings (see rosters)
Thursday	10 am –12	General & Beginners
	1 pm – 3 pm	General & Beginners
Friday	10 am –12	General & Beginners
Additional afternoon sessions as shown at right ———>		

Date	Time	Topic	Details
September 7	10 am–12 noon	Graphics Workshop	An extra session for members doing the Basic Graphics course.
	1 pm onwards	OPEN Monthly meeting	Have your input into how our club operates
	2:15 pm onwards	LCG Monthly Meeting	Combined OPEN-LCG Meeting
September 14	10 am–12 noon	Basic Graphics	A class for members learning Basic Graphics techniques.
	1 pm–3.30 pm	To be Advised	
September 21	10 am–12 noon	Family History	Use the Internet and our in-house CDs to trace your family history.
	1 pm–3.30 pm	Level 2 and 3 Graphics Class	Use Paint Shop Pro version 7 or 8 to perform advanced graphics tasks.
September 28	10 am–12 noon	Family History	
	1 pm–3.30 pm	Level 2 and 3 Graphics Class	Graphics using Paint Shop Pro 11
EXTRA AFTERNOON SESSIONS Classes for		Additional classes are being held on Monday, and Thursday afternoons from 3:30 pm to 5:30 pm and on Friday afternoon from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm.	

OPEN NEWSLETTER – September 2011

COORDINATORS CORNER

Hello everyone,

This month we are going to be looking at what's going to happen during Seniors Week this year—from Saturday October the 1st till Friday the 7th. And we would like as many of you as possible to participate in one form or other.

But before that, you are obviously reading this newsletter in one form or another, either from the LCG website or from a printed version obtained from the club. But now we can offer the O.P.E.N newsletter to be e-mailed directly to your inbox. This was done many years ago through 'Newstream' but unfortunately our editor Ron Baker had a lot of e-mails bouncing back due to incorrect addresses.

How do you get your name down for the newsletter to be e-mailed to you? Just ask the senior tutor of the day to have your name put on the new list.

SENIORS WEEK

Like last year there will be **no normal classes during Seniors Week**—instead we will have a series of special sessions with varied topics. See the table at the right of the page for all the details.

To begin with there will only be 10 places available to members each session - the rest will be allocated to non members. Closer to the day if it looks the visitor numbers will be low then more spaces will be available to members. **All sessions during senior's week are free.**

We have three sessions called **"Come and See"** and I envisage a few people doing some of their favourite activities such as card making, and photo enhancement (*just to name*) two to give people an idea of what we have to offer at the club.

continued —>

SENIORS WEEK *(continued)*

We will also need helpers to make seniors week run smoothly, such as hosts to meet and greet visitors and make them feel at home, and to help them fill out an expression of interest form if they wish to put their names down on the waiting list for classes.

Other people will be needed to help in the kitchen making sure the keeping the urn is topped up and to assist with washing up and other house-keeping tasks.

Also if there are people in other organisations that would like to take some pamphlets and posters to hand out that would be great. And if anyone in retirement villages is allowed to letter-box drop any possible assistance in that regard would be appreciated.

To round the week off on Friday night (October 7) between 6pm and 8pm why not come along to a party to celebrate O.P.E.N's 10th Birthday. Please bring a plate with something on it to share.

If you are interested in helping in Seniors Week please come and see me in at the centre or call me on 6343 4928 and leave your details.

Till next time
Happy computing
Rob :O)

Saturday	Oct 1	2 pm to 4 pm	Forum - various topics
Monday	Oct 3	10 am to noon	How to buy a computer
	Oct 3	1 pm to 3 pm	"Come and See"
Tuesday	Oct 4	10 am to 11 am 11:10 to	Kate Smith from Carers Tasmania Macintosh computers
	Oct 5	1 pm to 3 pm	Skype—phone calls via the Internet
Wednesday	Oct 5	10 am to noon	"Come and See"
	Oct 5	1 pm to 3 pm	"Come and See"
Thursday	Oct 6	10 am to noon	Internet Safety
	Oct 6	1 pm to 3 pm	Skype (2nd session)
Friday	Oct 7	10 am to noon	Tablet computers—Android and other funny
	Oct 7	1 pm to 3 pm	E-Bay for beginners (buying)
PARTY TIME	Oct 7	6 pm to 8 pm	Celebrate OPEN's 10th Birthday

L.C.G. Meeting : Wednesday 3rd August 2011

Meeting started at 7.30 with President Ivan Turmine in the chair.

Apologies: June and Bert Hazzlewood, Iris Meek, Julie Hjort, Tom Olsen, Ron Baker.

Minutes of last meeting: Accepted – moved Ted Bramich, 2nd Barry Symons.

Business arising: Judy said there is saving of money with new “Goliath“ printer. Doing back to back and very fast, and all are happy with its use.

Discussion on travelling re-imbursments and method of organising. Agreed this is best done by OPEN Committee only.

Next combined meeting is September 7th (Wednesday) after OPEN meeting 1pm - 2pm, but all welcome to this, and social meeting after, instead of our usual night LCG meeting. Notices to be in NEWSTREAM and given out in classes near the date. Please bring a plate of ‘goodies’. Lorraine to email Iris re NEWSTREAM. Moved Dennis, 2nd Harvey re combining these meetings.

October OPEN meeting will be on September 28th due to Seniors Week, but LCG meeting will be still held on evening of 1st Wednesday of October as usual.

Discussion on need for grant (as suggested by June at OPEN meeting) for new server, but Dennis explained not necessary. There are plenty of suitable items here, and speeds would not be affected.

Financial Report: Acceptance moved Lorraine, 2nd Ted.

The 10th Birthday of OPEN is being organized by Robert and Sandra V. for the Friday PM of last day of Seniors week, so plates of ‘goodies’ appreciated for this special activity also, please.

The Mac classes need to buy a new operating system – Lion. Moved to do - Lorraine, 2nd Reinhardt.

Dennis suggested taking a photograph of any screen messages, rather than trying to remember them, for checking or troubleshooting etc.

Meeting closed at 8.30 for chats and cuppas.

17 Ways to Speedup Windows 7

Windows 7 is specially engineered for speed. It is built to be fast. Faster than any of its preceding Windows Operating Systems. While it may be faster than Windows Vista by a good sized margin, many users remain unsatisfied by the speed of Windows 7. Even with a fully updated hardware installation of Windows 7 you could still be longing for more speed. We aim to make your Windows 7 system run faster than you could remember it ever being.

If you are looking for a little extra speed and a performance, please follow through this guide to get Windows 7 to turbo speed! This guide can really get you the performance and speed up to where you want it.

First, you should be aware of the minimum requirements needed to operate on Windows 7:

- 1.) 1GHz processor (32- or 64-bit)
- 2.) 16GB of available disk space
- 3.) 1GB of main memory total
- 4.) A DVD – R/W drive
- 5.) Support for DX9 graphics with 128MB of memory

Actually, the DX9 graphics card is not necessity because it is more for appearance features rather than performance features.

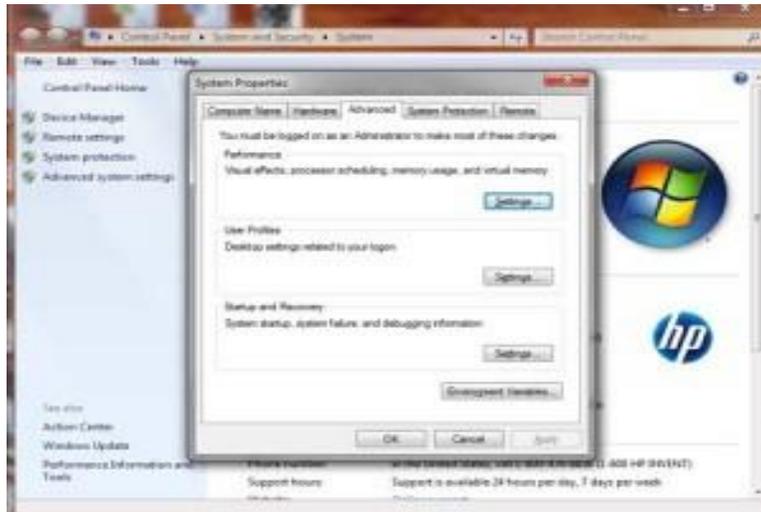
Let’s get straight into the guide so you can speed up that Windows 7 computer!

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1. Disable Any Unneeded Visual Effects

To begin, right-click on the Computer icon on your Desktop and select “Properties” from the menu that appears



Select “Advanced System Settings” from the left pane to view the System Properties Window

Click the “Advanced” tab along the top of that window, then click “Settings” listed under “Performance”. Select “Custom:” options from there.

In that window uncheck all the options and make sure that only the last 4 options are checked.

- Optionally you could only leave the last choices checked

Lastly, log off of your system and log back in for changes to take effect

Turning off the aero effects in Windows 7 is a good start but you get even better results when you turn off many of the other unwanted visual effects.

2. Turn off the User Account Control (UAC) Feature

Open the Control Panel and select “User Accounts and Family Safety” then

“User Account”.

Select the User Account Control Settings link

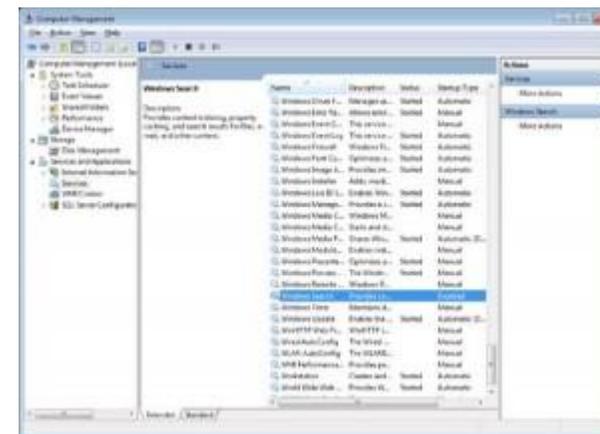
Simply click-and-drag the slider until it reaches “Never Notify”

Click “OK” and restart your computer for changes to take effect

The UAC feature in Windows 7 is found annoying by many users especially those that are daily users of their computer.

3. Disable Search Indexing Feature

Right-click the Computer icon on your Desktop and select “Manage” from the menu that appears



Select “Services and Applications” from the Computer Management Window and click “Services”

You will then see a list of services available – locate the Windows Search on that screen

Right-click “Windows Search” from that list and click “Properties”

The Windows Search Properties window will appear

Select “Disabled” from the drop-down menu for Startup Type

Click “Apply” and “OK”

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Now the startup feature for Search Indexing in Windows 7 has been disabled.

The Windows 7 Search Indexing feature was created so that the computer would keep records of the files that have previously been searched so items can be located quicker the next time you search them. This feature is really only useful if search for things very frequently and need them searched as fast as possible on your system after repeatedly requesting a search on that item.

If you only occasionally perform a system search for files, downloads, etc. then the Search Index Feature, especially when selected to run at system startup can eat away at memory and system resources without you even knowing it's running.

If you would like to disable the Search Indexing Feature all together in Windows 7 you can by setting the Search Indexing Service to "Manual". That is along with following the above steps under Disable Search Indexing Feature.

4. Disable Unwanted Services

A lot of the features and services offered with Windows 7 operating systems are not necessary for everyday use. There are some; however, that are necessary and not safe to be turned off or disabled. But things like the Print Spooler are only needed when printed a document or picture. This is something that you can safely turn off on a regular basis and then turn on when going to print something. Below are 10 more things in Windows 7 that you can safely disable.

Secondary Logon

Windows Error Reporting Service

Desktop Window Session Manager (leave on if you want aero effects)

TCP/IP NetBIOS Helper

Distributing Link Tracking Client

Offline Files

Diagnostic Policy Service

Protected Storage

IP Helper

Application Experience

Without these always running you can really improve the speed on your Windows 7 system.

5. Set Up the Ready Boost Service

You will need a USB/Highspeed Flash/Pendrive that is Ready Boost compatible in order to configure the Ready Boost feature.

After inserting the USB/Highspeed Flash/Pendrive open it by going to Computer and right-click it and select "Ready Boost" from the options

Check the "Use this Device" checkbox.

You can choose how much space on your USB/Highspeed Flash/Pendrive you would like used as RAM

Windows 7 offers the Ready Boost feature so that you can use your USB/Highspeed Flash/Pendrive as extra RAM. This one step improves the speed and performance by a good margin.

6. Disable the Sidebar

Right-click on the sidebar and click "Properties" from the menu

When the Properties window appears uncheck the box that says "Start Sidebar when Windows Starts"

Now the sidebar will not appear when you start your computer or log in to Windows. Disabling this feature will not only make your computer run faster in general but it will get you to a fast startup.

7. Turn off the Thumbnail Preview Feature

Open your Computer and select the "Organize" drop-down menu to select "Folder and Search Options"

In the Files and Folders section select the View tab and check the box

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showing “Always Show Icons, Never Thumbnails”.

Displaying thumbnails of folders rather than icons can take up more space and time than just icons. So turning off the thumbnail preview option saves you both!

8. Disable the Aero Theme

Right-click any space on your Desktop and select “Personalize” from the menu that appears

Open the Window Color tab

Uncheck the box that says “Enable Transparency” and then select “Open Classic Appearance Properties for More Options”

A new window will appear, select a Standard or Basic theme from it.
(Standard Windows 7 theme is a good choice)

If you are looking for aesthetics rather than performance you can keep the aero user interface. While it obviously adds luster to the appearance of things it also takes up a lot of space on the graphics and video cards. You can check this out yourself by viewing its memory consumption when aero theme is both on and off to see the difference.

9. Disable Aero Peek and Aero Snap

Go to your Control Panel of Windows 7 and double-click the “Ease of Access Center” icon.

Select “Make It Easier to Focus on Tasks” listed near the bottom

Uncheck the box that says “Prevent Windows from being automatically arranged when moved to the edge of the screen”

Right-click on the Windows 7 taskbar and click “Properties” from the menu that appears

Lastly, uncheck the box that says “User Aero Peek to Preview the Desktop”

Windows 7 has these new features designed to do things you already did in XP and Vista just in new ways. Aero Snap allows you to Maximize, Minimize and Resize your windows simply by dragging-and-dropping at

screen corners.

Aero Peek is pretty much the same as the “Show Desktop” icon from Windows XP and Windows Vista. It hides all of your windows to show a clean desktop and icons.

10. Disable Password Protection

Users that set up passwords to access their account in Windows 7 spend a few seconds every time they start up or log in to enter that password. If you are the only person who uses your computer my opinion is that you don't really need this feature. I opt for getting on my account quickly. When I previously had a password set and someone wanted on my computer I would just give out the password anyway so it was completely useless and took extra time to log in every day.

11. Disable Unwanted Startup Items

Open the Windows button and type “msconfig” in the Run option of the start menu and press Enter

This opens the System Configuration Utility window

Select the Startup tab and uncheck all items that you do not need to run automatically when the computer starts up

This can drastically improve startup time and even running time if you have had a lot of things running when your computer starts. This often happens automatically when several things have been downloaded and installed onto your computer.

12. Change your Power Plan to Maximum Performance

Open your Control Panel and double-click the “Power Options” icon

Scroll down to see the Show Additional Plans option and select “High Performance” power plan to activate it.

Further tweaking can be done to this by selecting the Advanced Settings

13. Turn off Unwanted Windows 7 Features

Open your Control Panel and select “Programs and Features”

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select the “Turn Windows features On or Off” from the left panel

Uncheck all of the features that you do not use

Restart your computer for the changes to take effect

There are several features that Windows 7 offers that many users don't need or use often so by disabling them you are making more room for running time on things you do use frequently.

14. Disable the Screen Saver and Wallpaper

Right-click any blank space on your Desktop and select “Personalize” from the menu that appears

Select the Screen Saver link

From the Screen Saver drop-down menu select “None” then select “Apply” then “OK”

Next click “Desktop Background”

From the Location drop-down menu select “Solid Colors” pick a color and click “OK”

It takes up memory to display wallpaper and screen savers and more memory means faster computer.

15. Disable Unwanted System Sounds

Open the Start Menu and type “mmsys.cpl” in the Run option

Locate the Sounds tab

Under “Sound Schemes” then choose “No Sounds”, click “Apply”, click “OK”

Optionally, you can keep some of your favorite sounds turned on and select which sounds to disable, but keep in mind that sounds played during startup, shutdown, logon, etc. take away from performance that could be utilized better elsewhere

16. Tweak your Registry

We have a couple of articles in our PC 911 blog that have a lot of information on how you can tweak your registry to improve the speed of your

computer!

17. Software to help Speed Up Windows 7

There are several software programs out there that you can use to maintain a nice, healthy system. Programs that update your hardware, programs that clear bugs, programs that clean registries and programs that remove potentially harmful information against you. Some of my favorites are listed below.

Reimage Total PC Repair Software

PC Registry Cleaner

PC Tweak Guide

Performing all of these tasks will get your Windows 7 computer running noticeably quicker! Feel free to share more tips to speed up your system in the comments below!

REPEATING ROWS FOR A TABLE FOOTER

When working with longer tables in a document, you may wonder if there were a way to repeat rows at the bottom of a table that spans multiple pages, the same way you can repeat rows at the top of a multi-page table. The short answer is that Word doesn't provide such a capability. If you are willing to experiment a bit, you can try to come up with a workaround that may do the trick for you.

What you want to do is create a document section that contains just your table, and then use the page footers to contain the rows you want repeated from the table. Follow these general steps:

1. Just before the start of your table, insert a continuous section break.
2. Do the same thing just after the end of your table.
3. Select the rows you want repeated at the bottom of the table and copy them to the Clipboard.
4. Choose View | Header and Footer to display the headers and footers of the document. (If you are using Word 2007 or Word 2010 display the Insert tab of the ribbon, click Footer in the Header & Footer group, and then click Edit Footer.)
5. Switch to the footer. (You don't need to do this in Word 2007 and Word 2010, since you are already editing the footer after step 4.)
6. Make sure that the Link to Previous option is turned off for the footer.
7. Select anything that already exists in the footer.
8. Press **CTRL+V** to paste the copied rows into the footer.
9. Use the controls on the Header and Footer toolbar or, in Word 2007 and Word 2010, the Design tab of the ribbon to advance to the next section. (You should be looking at the footer for the section following the section in which the table resides.)
10. Turn off the Link to Previous option for this footer.
11. Delete the table row from this section's footer.

12. Close the Header and Footer toolbar (click Close) or, in Word 2007 and Word 2010, click Close Header and Footer in the Close group.

You are now ready to place the final touches on your workaround. Position the insertion point somewhere in your table, then use the various tabs in the Page Setup dialog box to adjust the relationship between your table and the footer. You'll need to play with the settings on both the Margins and Layout tabs to position the rows in the page footer, and you'll want to make sure that the Apply To drop-down list applies the changes to only the current section (the one with the table in it).

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Understanding Manual Calculation

When you change a value in any cell of a worksheet, Excel automatically recalculates all the other formulas within the worksheet. This means that Excel is always up to date, based on any changes you may have performed. If you have an absolutely huge worksheet or a terribly slow computer (or both), then doing a calculation after every change can get very tedious. In these situations, you can actually spend more time waiting on Excel to finish calculating than you do on entering information.

The answer to this problem is to configure Excel so that all calculations are done manually. This is easy to do by following these steps:

1. Display the Excel Options dialog box. (In Excel 2007 click the Office button and then click Excel Options. In Excel 2010 display the File tab of the ribbon and then click Options.)
2. Click the Formulas area at the left of the dialog box. The Formulas area of the Excel Options dialog box.
3. In the Calculation Options section of the dialog box, make sure the Manual radio button is selected.
4. Click on OK. Now, Excel does not calculate your worksheet automatically. Instead, you must press F9 whenever you want to update the results displayed within your worksheet. Copyright © 2011 by Sharon Parq Associates, Inc. Reprinted by permission. Thousands of free Microsoft Excel tips can be found online at <http://excel.tips.net>.

Privacy smackdown: Facebook versus Google+

By Woody Leonhard



With Google+ rocketing to millions of users in record time, many people wonder whether the claims are true: is Google+ really that much better at defending your privacy than Facebook?

Facebook's rocky history with fluctuating privacy settings and a memorable, scummy, mud-slinging attempt to smear Google make it easy to jump to conclusions, warranted or not. Here's what you need to know.

In his July 21 Hot Tips [article](#) (paid content), Chris Murray talked about the ascendancy of Google+ and the way it's come to rival Facebook — even while it's still in beta testing. But the hottest topic in the Google+ vs. Facebook face-off remains **privacy**. Some reviewers seem to take Google+ privacy superiority as a given. Although I use (and actually like) Google+, I'm not at all convinced it's better than Facebook at privacy protection. If privacy concerns you — and it should — the facts may sway you to one or the other ... or neither.

Not so coincidentally, this issue of Windows Secrets Newsletter marks the inauguration of a new forum on the WS Lounge. We're starting an entirely new forum devoted to social networking — Facebook, Google+, LinkedIn, MySpace, for sure — but also Habbo, Qzone, Vkontakte, Bebo, Friendster, hi5, and Orkut. If you have a social-networking question, drop by the [site](#) and let's see whether we can come up with some answers.

No matter what they say, it's all about money

"Google makes more from advertising than all the nation's newspapers combined."

— James Gleick [article](#), "How Google dominates us," New York Review of Books.

Everybody loves a get-rich-quick story, with brash young heroes and mountains of cash.

In Google's case, it's the story of Stanford grad students Larry Page and Sergey

Brin, who started with the clever idea of ranking Web pages (PageRank). They then added an even cleverer idea for matching people with advertisements. Eventually, they iced the multibillion-dollar cake by figuring out how to sell the ads in a semisecret, perpetual auction ([AdWords](#)). The result? Thirty-two billion dollars in advertising revenue within the past year. Ads represent 97 percent of Google's revenue.

Advertisers bid on specific words or phrases. Google tries its best to show ads to people who are likely to click on them. If someone clicks on a link and goes to the advertiser's page, Google bills the advertiser. You probably knew that. But you might not know how much it costs for one click.

Right now, if an advertiser bids on the AdWord phrase **auto insurance price quotes** and someone clicks on a Google-generated link to the advertiser's site, the advertiser pays U.S. \$54.91. *For one click*. No, that isn't a typo. Bid on the phrase **consolidate graduate student loans**, get a click, and it'll cost \$44.28. **Alcohol rehab center** runs \$33.59. **Cord blood bank** goes for \$27.80. WordStream has an excellent [quick overview](#) of the way Google AdWords works, listing the going rate for top phrases.

Now you understand the motivation. Google scans everything — your Google+ entries, sure, but also the contents of all your inbound and outbound Gmail messages, your Google search history, everything it can put together — in the single-minded pursuit of an ad that will draw your click. (The leaked Microsoft internal video called "Gmail Man," posted on [YouTube](#), takes Google to task for scanning mail — but fails to mention that Microsoft scans Hotmail as well. But Microsoft is looking for spam and performing spell checks, not scanning to generate ads — yet.)

In some cases, Google can match the information to you, personally. In other cases, it has to make do with your IP address, which can change.

In a Gmail information video ([site](#)), Google assures everyone that it doesn't sell personally identifiable data, but it does sell aggregate data. And, according to a CNET [article](#), it's working on a data-exchange service to help website owners sell data about their specific users to potential advertisers. Eroding your privacy is worth money to all sorts of people.

The Facebook get-rich-quick story starts at Harvard with Mark Zuckerberg and a

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cast of characters immortalized (accurately or not) in the recent movie, "The Social Network." Facebook, being a privately held company, doesn't divulge much about its financial situation, but a [story](#) in The Wall Street Journal quotes a company insider stating that Facebook will hit \$2 billion in sales this year. Others estimate Facebook's 2011 ad revenue at closer to \$4 billion.

Unlike Google, Facebook draws an estimated 60 percent of its revenue from small advertisers, according to an AdAge [report](#). Unlike Google, Facebook ads don't appear within the context of a search. There are no AdWords, and clicks don't cost \$50 each. On the other hand, Facebook has direct access to a mountain of detailed demographics — all the data you've entered into your profile — and there's no question who you are when you're using Facebook (there's no IP-address ambiguity). Facebook also has the inside info on all those **Like** buttons you've clicked, both on and off the Facebook site. More than 10,000 websites add a Like button every day.

With huge sums of money chasing enormous databases, and users demanding some level of personal privacy, Facebook and Google have lots of incentive to convince you that each one's own privacy policies are better than the other's. But when it's mostly about money, the chances are high that neither is as concerned as you are about the consequences of posting embarrassing pictures to the wrong Google+ circle or embarrassing anecdotes accidentally ending up on millions of Facebook walls.

The supremacy of Google+ Circles — real or imagined?

The principal privacy argument *du jour* revolves around Google+ Circles. Google+ is built around circles — defined groups of contacts that make it easy to limit who sees your posts. Scott Mace covered this in detail in his July 6 Perimeter Scan [article](#). With Google Circles, it's easy to post pictures of the kids for the rest of the family to admire, while sparing coworkers the schmaltz. It's also easy to replicate Facebook-style broadcast posts that go out to everybody — family, friends, collaborators, and co-conspirators — as well as Twitter-like blasts that emanate to anyone who's asked to **follow**. In other words, Circles improves privacy by restricting access.

Facebook's analogous feature is Facebook Groups, which also limits access to posts — but with a distinctly different purpose and in a far less accessible way. If you've never used Facebook Groups, there's a reason why: they're stuck on the

left side of the screen, as you can see in Figure 1, and disappear when you click on your profile. While circles are well integrated into Google+, Facebook's groups feel like they're bolted on as an afterthought.



Figure 1. Facebook's groups sit on the left side of the Facebook screen.

You can start your own groups and control who joins a group, or you can leave it open for anyone to join. Facebook groups has one big advantage over Google+ Circles: anyone in the group can post to the group, with the post being visible to everyone else in the group.

Not so Google+ Circles. Each circle you create belongs only to you. You can post a message visible to one or more circles, and responses to that post are visible to other members of the circle. But people in the circle can't originate a post. They can't even see who else is in the circle. You can't even send a copy of a circle to someone else.

Every time you add a friend in Google+, you're prompted to assign him or her to a circle or circles. It's click-and-drag easy. Every time you post an entry, you're asked which circle or circles you want to receive the entry.

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By contrast, adding someone to a Facebook group involves opening up the group and, in some cases, typing a user ID.

Bottom line: Google+ Circles makes it much easier to limit who sees what you post. In that respect, it minimizes your chances of broadcasting something embarrassing. But it doesn't help a bit if you're concerned about privacy in general — if you're worried about adding another bit of advertising bait to Google's pile.

Don't ask which is better — ask which is worse

The way I figure it, with Web-based apps, unique features such as Google+ Circles have a half-life of about three months. I bet Facebook comes up with a Circles work-alike within the next six months, if not sooner. It took Facebook less than a month to come up with a feature that competes with Google+'s group video-chat feature, Hangouts. Granted, the Facebook app doesn't come close to Google's (as detailed in a TechCrunch [story](#)), but I bet within six months the features will look astonishingly similar.

On the flip side, Facebook's new facial-recognition technology will no doubt show up in Google+ soon, eroding our privacy that much further.

Don't expect any change in the corporate culture of either company. Both Facebook and Google have trampled their customers' privacy innumerable times. For Facebook, it seems to date back to those early days in that Harvard dorm room, as reported in a Business Insider [story](#). Google's privacy infractions defy shortlisting: from Street View snapping pics of dirty laundry ([The Sunday Times](#)), to swiped Wi-Fi transmissions ([The Register](#)), to Google Buzz's leaks of private contact information ([InformationWeek](#)), Google's privacy problems have kept a leg! on of attorneys employed in a dozen countries.

Both companies want you to believe that your data's safe with them. Both want you to believe that the other plays fast and loose with your private information. It's a nasty rivalry. Earlier this year, Facebook infamously hired a PR company (Los Angeles Times [article](#)) to sling mud at Google.

Which one's worse? It's probably a toss-up. Based on their demonstrated histories to date, I don't trust either organization.

Taking the social-media bull by the horns

With all that said, I am hooked on social media. Social networks have become part of my life, and I don't see any reasonable way to back out now.

I'll continue to use Google+ for posts destined for specific groups. But I'm going to lock down my privacy settings (YouTube how-to [video](#)) and double-check all of my circles.

I'll use Facebook to keep friends and family posted. But I'm going to follow Scott Mace's [advice](#) to restrict access to my Facebook account, then disable automatic face recognition (YouTube [video](#)).

And when I'm not specifically logged on to Facebook or any of the Google sites, I'm going to use a VPN to minimize my footprint with search engines and sites that might connect to a data-exchange service (which will then sell my private information when it becomes sufficiently lucrative). See my Nov. 4, 2010, [Top Story](#) for more on VPNs.

Using social networking has both benefits and costs. Make sure you understand the consequences of what you're doing — as well as the overwhelming pecuniary motives driving the industry.

Timely Warning

While I was away my Mobility Scooter was stolen from my neighbours garage where it had been stored for safe keeping.

After a month it was recovered in bad shape. I had taken the step of nominating the scooter as a specified item on my Insurance Policy so now I have a replacement the same as the previous one



By Fred Langa



GHOST eMAILS

Many things changed as Outlook Express and Hotmail evolved into Windows Live Mail — but some things stayed the same.

One annoyance that hung around is a database error that causes ghost e-mails, which won't easily go away.

a A clean up—and—compact fix for e-mail databases

Jake Gibbs is wrestling with a Windows Live Mail issue.

"My wife's laptop has Windows 7 installed. Her e-mail program is Windows Live Mail. "Recently, she discovered she was unable to delete some, but not all, of the messages in her Inbox. She gets a notice saying **The contents of this message cannot be found**. Most of the e-mails are several months old. "What can she do to delete them?"

a Sounds like the mail database got scrambled a bit. The usual way to fix this is to **clean up** and **compact** the database, a process that can eliminate erroneous entries and recover wasted space.

Figures 1 through 3 show you how in Windows Live Mail Version 2011:

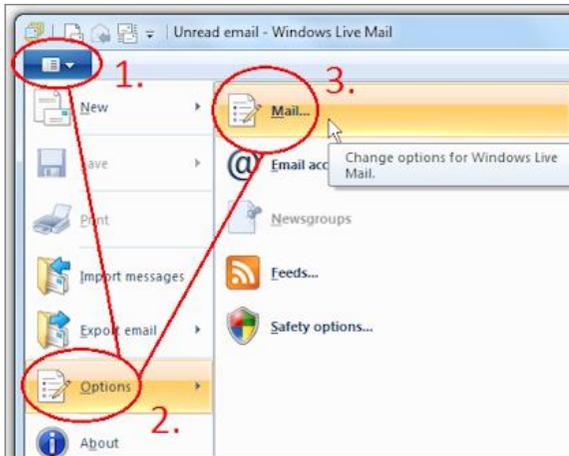


Figure 1. Click to pull down the menu, circled in red and labelled 1; select Options (within circle 2); click Mail (within circle 3).

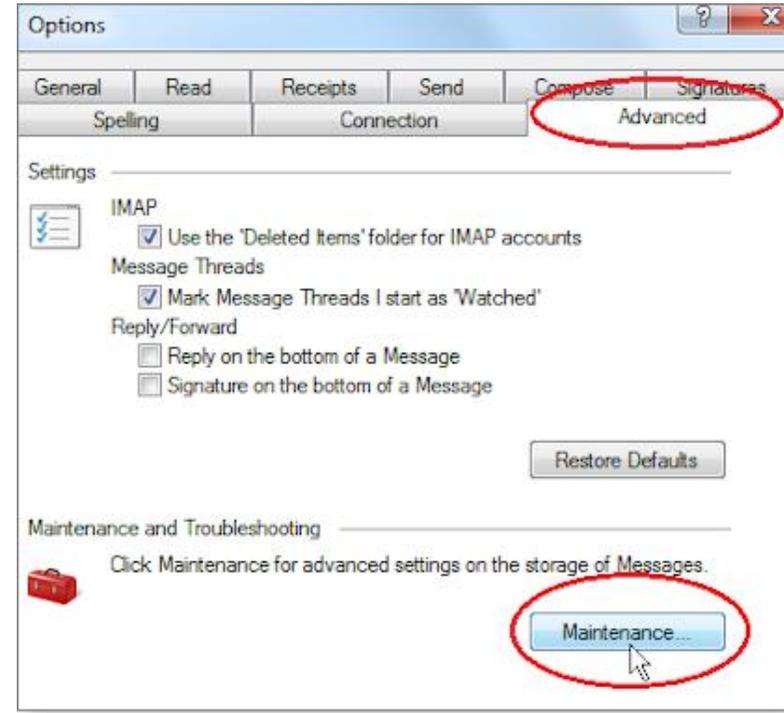


Figure 2. When the Options dialog opens, select the

Advanced tab (upper red circle) and then click the **Maintenance** button (lower circle).

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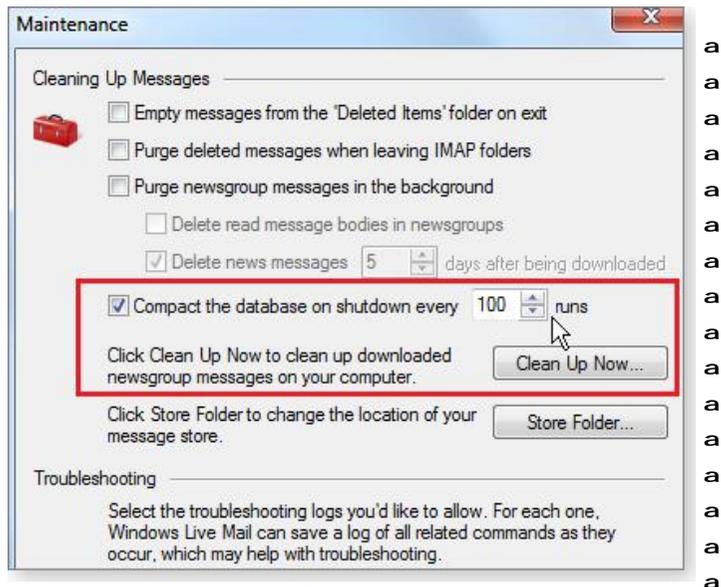


Figure 3. Click the *Clean Up Now* button (highlighted in the red box) and then set *Compact the database on shutdown every 100 runs* to a lower number — even every *one run*, if you wish.

That fixes most common errors in the Mail database. But more serious problems may force you to delete the current message store and let it rebuild from scratch. That process isn't as dire as it sounds, and it's explained on Microsoft's Windows Live Solution Center [page](#).

But with a skosh of luck, simple maintenance — cleanup and compacting — will do the job for you!

(For a general guide to Windows Mail, check out the Microsoft Help & How-to [page](#), "Windows Mail: Setting up an account from start to finish.")

Windows 7's automatic defragging failing

John Scofield's system won't finish a defrag.
"I need information on how to make sure my scheduler is automatically

defragging once a week. All attempts have resulted in errors."

- a** The heart of the Win7 defragger is a system service called **defragsvc**. If you've used any software that alters your system's services settings, it's possible that **defragsvc** has been disabled or its settings otherwise altered.

Boot-management and boot-speedup software are two common types of programs that alter service settings. Some third-party defragmentation tools also specifically target the built-in defragging service's settings.

You can see what's going on with **defragsvc** via Windows' Component Services Console.

If you're unfamiliar with using the console, TechNet's excellent "Configure how a service is started" [article](#) is a great place to get up to speed quickly.

Assuming you're comfortable with using the console, here's how to check the defragmenter service's status.

Enter **services.msc** into the Start menu's search box; the Component Services management console will open. (See Figure 4.)

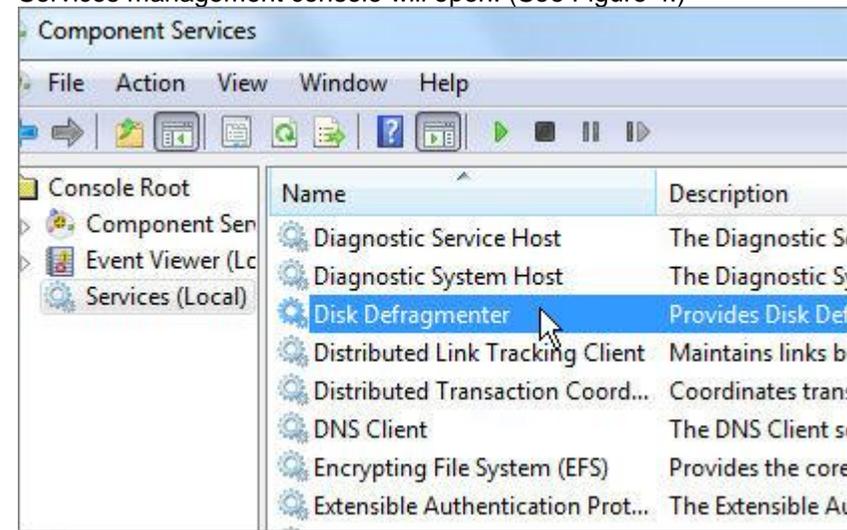


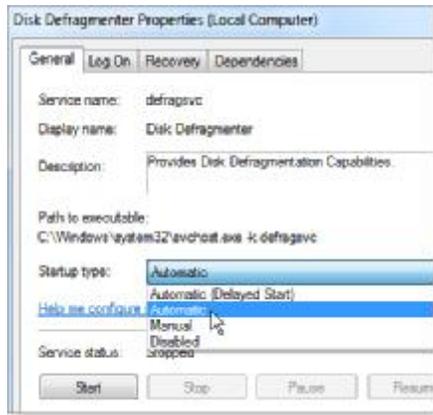
Figure 4. In the left-hand pane, select *Services (Local)*; then in the

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middle pane, navigate to the listing for *Disk Defragmenter*.

Next, right-click on Disk Defragmenter and select Properties. The dialog box shown in Figure 5 will open. Check that the **Startup type** is not set to



Disabled.

a **Figure 5. Check that the *defragsvc* app has not been disabled.**

Note that the bottom half of the same dialog box also lets you manually **Start**, **Stop**, **Pause**, and **Resume** the defragmentation service. In fact, many services listed in the console can be directly controlled this way via their right-click Properties — a handy trick to know when you're troubleshooting problems with services.

If nothing seems amiss with **defragsvc** itself, exit the console and check Task Scheduler to ensure that the scheduled Disk Defragmenter task is both present and enabled. (Need help with Task Scheduler? See this Microsoft TechNet [article](#).)

Those two steps correct most common problems. But if neither works, you'll need to dig a little deeper. See the TechNet [article](#), "Default settings for services," for lots more information on troubleshooting service events and errors.

Annoying audio feedback in Skype and chat

Hindy asks for help with a year-long problem.

"Hi Fred! There's a really irksome tech issue that I haven't been able to resolve, no matter what I've tried, for about a year — since I got my Win7 laptop. "There's a hideous audio feedback when I use Google chat, Skype, etc. "I would so appreciate it if you could help me please resolve this."

a Chat/telepathy audio feedback is often caused by either an incorrect setting that causes your microphone to listen to its own output or by having two microphones active at the same time.

The latter problem may not be obvious because the mic that's built into most laptops/notebooks/netbooks, etc., can be very hard to find — so tiny, you might not even realize it's there. If you also use a headset with its own mic (or any other plug-in mic), your system may be ripe for two-mic feedback.

Systems with only one mic can still experience feedback if the mic is too close to the speakers, if the speakers are simply too loud, or if the mic is set up to **listen** (the term Windows uses) to its own output.

The solution to all this is to mute (un-listen) or otherwise disable the feedback-producing mic. You can usually do this by opening Control Panel/Hardware and Sound/Manage Audio Devices. On the Recording tab, right-click the icon of the malfunctioning microphone. You can then disable it within the menu that appears. In a one-mic system, select Properties and then the Listen tab. Uncheck **Listen to this device**, if it's checked.

With only one properly controlled mic in use, you shouldn't experience further feedback.

How can you 'slipstream' Windows 7?

If you know what **slipstreaming** is, feel free to skip the next couple of paragraphs. For everyone else, the concept may need a little explanation. Slipstreaming is the technique of creating a new custom setup disc that combines the files on your original Setup disc with the files comprising the most recent Service Pack. This hybrid disc should work exactly as your original one did (including using your original product key), except that it will already contain the necessary Service Pack files.

The process of slipstreaming XP is easy and well defined. For example,

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see my Dec. 18, 2008, [article](#), "Slipstreaming simplifies Windows reinstalls." After he read my July 14 [article](#), "Win7's no-reformat, nondestructive reinstall," Wayne Maruna wondered about doing the same thing with Windows 7. "You wrote an article a while back on creating a slipstreamed XP install disc complete through SP3. I don't recall if you have written anything on using a pre-SP1 Windows 7 DVD to create a slipstreamed SP1 version. Can it be done?"

Yes, it can be done, but the process is both more complex and less necessary than it was with XP.

It's more complex because a Win7 setup DVD contains code that can be stitched together to create any version of Win7: Home, Pro, and Ultimate. (Your license key determines which version gets installed.) In contrast, a setup CD for, say, XP Pro contains only the setup files for XP Pro, period.

As for necessity, I used to be an advocate for always having a slipstreamed install disc on hand, against eventual certain need. But Win7's system-file protection works well, and the OS has so many levels of overlapping backup and recovery options, that I think most Win7 systems will never need nor benefit from having a slipstreamed disc available. So far, I haven't bothered to create a slipstreamed disc, and I don't plan to.

But that's me. If you want a slipstreamed disc and don't mind a little complexity along the way, there are various Windows 7—installation configuring tools you can use to create a slipstreamed Win7. RT Se7en Lite ([site](#)) is probably the most popular — so much so that several other sites have posted how-tos that walk you through using RT Se7en Lite to produce a custom Win7 install disc. For example, see the Into Windows [article](#), "How to slipstream Windows 7 SP1 into installation DVD ISO."

BTW: Wondering why this is called "slipstreaming?" In the bad old days, some vendors issued secret bug fixes by changing the master files at their CD duplicating plant. Without fanfare or announcement, the vendor simply began shipping the corrected software to new customers. Sometimes the vendor wouldn't even change the software's version number, which kept existing customers from asking for the updated version because officially, it didn't exist.

This addition of new code to an established product that was already "moving" in the marketplace was called **slipstreaming** because some vendors pictured themselves as dropping new code into the imaginary wake, or slipstream, of their rapidly moving software product. Really! Today's custom install discs aren't like that at all, but the old terminology lingers on.



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