PC UPDATE

Windows 8,
Windows 8,
Windows 8!
Can't you talk
about anything else?

Plus:
Photo Competition
Duelling Freeware
Surface Tablet

MELB PC
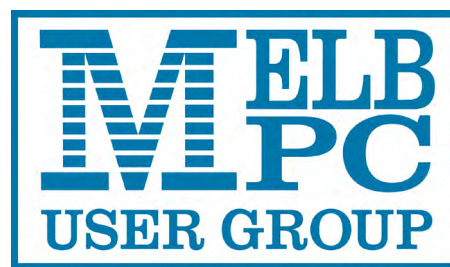USER GROUP

www.melbpc.org.au

THE PURPOSES OF THE GROUP are to conduct, on a non-profit basis, activities aimed at the effective utilisation of the personal computer and to endeavour to achieve such effective utilisation by means of:

- Advancing computer literacy
- Advancing the art and science of information processing through education and interchange of ideas
- Keeping members abreast of developments in computing and information technology and enabling members to exchange information and experience
- Representing computer users in public debate and by acting and speaking on their behalf where they would be affected by proposed legislation or other regulatory measures
- Providing a forum for the exchange of views among computer users and between computer users and the computer industry
- Co-operating supporting or joining with, or in, other organisations with similar purposes
- Undertaking other activities beneficial to the Group

In order to further its purposes the Group shall have the rights, powers and privileges of a natural person.

CONTENTS

Management Committee & Online Services

OFFICE, MEMBERSHIP, DELIVERIES
Suite 26, Level 1
479 Warrigal Road, Moorabbin VIC 3189 (9am-5pm)
Phone: (03) 9276 4000 Fax: (03) 9553 0475
Email: office@melbpc.org.au
Office Manager : Dianne Vogt
Office Staff: Sharon Williams and Erin D'Arcy

FIRST AID & INTERNET HELP LINE
(03) 9276 4088 (10am-3pm)
This line is answered only when a volunteer is available between 10am-3pm Monday to Friday. Outside these hours please leave a brief message and your membership details. An iHelp team member will call you back when available. Alternatively please refer to the Dial Help listing.

ONLINE SERVICES
Melb PC BBS	(4 lines, up to 28.8 kbps)	(03) 9553 0488
Internet Service	Melbourne Local Access	(03) 9697 4000
Intranet Service	Melbourne Local Access	(03) 9697 4004
Melb PC Home Page	http://www.melbpc.org.au	
Internet Services Page	http://www.melbpc.org.au/isp/	
Internet Help Service Page	http://ihelp.melbpc.org.au/helpdesk/iuser/index.asp	

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
committee@melbpc.org.au

President
Charles Wright   president@melbpc.org.au
Vice President
Don McKenzie   vicepresident@melbpc.org.au
Treasurer
Stephen Tidswell   treasurer@melbpc.org.au
Secretary
Ian Rankin   secretary@melbpc.org.au

Members
Cindy Perry   colouroz@optusnet.com.au
Harry Lewis   halewis@melbpc.asn.au
Jan Weiner   weijan@westnet.com.au
Jan Whitaker   jwhit@internode.on.net
Lance Lloyd   lance.melbpc@fastmail.fm
Roger Wragg   rdwragg@fastmail.fm
Sharman Grant   sharman@melbpc.org.au
Stewart Gruneklee   stewartg@melbpc.org.au

CONTRIBUTIONS
All authors must lodge a complete submission form (available from http://www.melbpc.org.au/pcupdate/authorrelease.htm) that confirms the article is previously unpublished and original content, and grants Melbourne PC User Group Incorporated the right to publish the article on one or more occasions on any medium, including print and the internet; the right to edit the article and permit republication by non-profit organisations. If this is not the first publication, the author must have re-publishing rights, and grant Melbourne PC User Group Incorporated the above rights.

SUBMISSIONS
Email your submissions as file attachments to editorpc@melbpc.org.au. Standard document formats are accepted (Eg .txt, .rtf, .doc, .docx). Please keep formatting to a minimum.
GRAPHICS
Accompanying graphics should be separate high-quality JPG or PNG attachments – NOT embedded in the document. Just indicate in the text where they should appear.
CLOSING DATE
PC Update magazine submission deadline is the end of the second week of the preceding month, unless other arrangements are made with the editor.

PC Update Editor's Report
December 2012

Katharine Shade

Testing testing testing this okay is working. I am writing this using the latest version of the Dragon NaturallySpeaking voice recognition program. I haven't done any training with [it] apart from the initial set up. The first time I encountered this program was at a computer fair in the early 90s. Back then you had to do a lot of training to get it [to a] decent level of accuracy. The program has come a long way since then. I'm not even using a microphone, I'm using my iPhone is [as] a microphone with [a] special free at [app] on it[.] it's connecting to the computer via my Wi-Fi network. So far so good despite the fact that I have tonsillitis so my speech is probably not all that clear.

It's taken me a while to start writing this as on [I'm] so used to the process of writing using a keyboard [and] monitor that this concept seems a little strange [–] it requires a different way of thinking.

I'm quite a fast typist but when I did a comparison test on the Dragon website I was blown away by the potential increase in speed.

It feels very strange to say my words allowed [aloud] rather than just thinking them in my head and letting my fingers type them. I also feel a bit of pressure to get the words out, a little bit like when I talk to an answering machine all voice mile [or voicemail] and I feel like I need to get all the words out in a rush without any pauses. Balls or arms of Mars.

Groups [oops] that should have been stumbles or booze and ours.

I think I'd better type that bit!

... without any pauses, stumbles or oohs and aahs.

Okay, back to typing. Have you tried Windows 8 yet? I've had a bit of a play with it in a computer shop, and it is just so different from what we are used to in a Windows operating system. I'm not sure I'd like to move away from a dedicated desktop operating system to a more generalised one which can be used on a variety of gadgets.

I understand the concept of trying to get some consistency across the platforms, which also utilises the particular features of each one (eg touch screen), but if it takes anything away from my desktop computer in terms of efficiency, ease of use or its actual functionality, I will not be impressed.

I'm an experienced computer user. Such a paradigm shift with Windows 8 will be very difficult for those computer users who struggle with the challenge of new software, let alone an operating system! ⏻

Dragon Naturally Speaking 12:
http://australia.nuance.com/dragon

ARE YOU BESET WITH SPAM?

Spam is all around us. Unseen angels shield us from most of it. But it also comes in waves, and some Melb PC email addresses have been inundated in recent weeks. Several members have commented.

Members using their Melb PC email addresses (@melbpc.org.au) have access to a spam-filtering tool that they can adjust to suit their own preferences. See: http://www.melbpc.org.au/faq/spamass.htm (More vigorous spam scores are now recommended.)

Our next issue of **PC Update** *will include more on this topic.*

Melb PC President's Report
December 2012

Charles Wright

There is no doubt that this year has been one of great turmoil for Melb PC. In many ways, however, the battle that we have waged to win back control of the club from those whose agenda was at odds with the majority of members has obscured the underlying issues.

In my opinion, 2012 will eventually look like a mere prelude to the war. I believe that 2013 will ultimately be viewed as the most challenging year in the club's history. This time, the enemy is not a small group of outsiders who saw Melb PC as a commercial opportunity. Now the enemy is, in many ways, ourselves: our planning and our procedures … the way we think; the way we communicate internally; the way we present ourselves externally; what we offer and how we deliver.

As our new treasurer, Stephen Tidswell says in his first monthly financial report, "[our] accounts confirm the picture of an organisation that is living beyond its means."

We have been living beyond our means for quite a long time now, apparently unwilling or unable to do anything to address falling membership; the lapse into a loss-making situation of our once highly profitable dial-up internet service; the on-going leakage – three years after fixing it was first identified as a top priority – of significant funds on the housing of our internet assets in rental accommodation in Burnley and unnecessary expenditures in other areas.

They are the most obvious problems, but there are many others.

On the face of it, the situation doesn't look too promising, but while it's very early in the piece, I think there are some positive signs for the group.

Firstly, I have been impressed by the new committee. It is both intelligent and energetic. We have already held a strategic workshop to sort our priorities, and we are moving ahead on several fronts.

In an address to that workshop, I made the following points:

We must ensure that our IDENTITY is clear and relevant. That includes deciding whether a "PC User Group" is likely to be compelling in an environment that is full of iPhones and iPads and Android devices, a world in which cheap "apps" have more cachet than even the best-known applications and social networking is both pervasive and powerful.

In my view, we can benefit from these trends. I am convinced that if we can develop good products and services, we can build a reputation and members will come.

I think we need to IDENTIFY opportunities and holes in the market. We need to INVESTIGATE what is happening around us.

How aware are we of the shifts and impending changes in the world of computers that are likely to present opportunities or challenges to our organisation?

Some examples I've been thinking about include the way mobile broadband has become increasingly important to so many users. Think about the many thousands of people who make long commutes from the country towns and outer metropolitan areas? So many of them are using their tablets and smartphones and conventional notebooks to read their email, conduct research on the web, watch footy videos from the AFL or perhaps read newspapers, magazines

and ebooks. Does that present an opportunity for us? Should we be thinking about trying to offer something to them?

Can we develop a strategy that uses YouTube and Facebook and Twitter to reach a new audience?

Have we thought about the fact that the two big players in the PC world are involved in profound rethinking?

With Windows 8, Microsoft is trying to capture the tablet/touch screen market. What implications does that have to a club which has such an historical identity with the desktop?

There is widespread ignorance about the difference between Windows 8 and Windows RT. Intel is developing the Clover Trail chip and pushing its Wi-Di technology that interfaces between mobile devices and TV sets. If the era of tablets is upon us, there will be a marked difference in the capabilities of tablets that run cut-down versions of software and those powered by Intel's Core CPUs … capable of doing everything that a notebook does, but with touch screens.

How many of us have seen the latest Intel ad, where someone standing on a train platform seems to be using a conventional notebook, then as she hops on the train closes the clamshell and switches to a touch screen on the other side?

I think we need to be much more aware of what is happening in the computer world so that we can seize opportunities and adjust our vision.

I've written recently on the president's blog at http://melbpcconduit.org.au about the priorities we agreed upon at the workshop.

One is a marketing campaign, aimed at giving the club a new public image, and a new name. We plan to conduct a competition among members for a new name. You will get more details shortly.

We have been running an online survey on attitudes to a printed version of PC Update. I'm pretty sure the committee is going to decide that we need to print some copies. The question will be

how many, and how much, if anything, we charge for them. With the club running at a loss, we can't afford to spend at least half the total membership fee printing PC Update.

Fortunately, a lot of respondents to the survey have indicated that they are quite happy with the downloadable PDF version, and we hope to save on postage by allowing members to pick up a copy at SIG meetings and monthly meetings. How we would police that, I don't know, but we would welcome any ideas.

We are also pushing ahead with finally moving our internet equipment to Moorabbin. While it will require a significant investment in equipment – the existing infrastructure is so old there are serious doubts about it re-starting if we switch it off and take it for a drive across Melbourne – in the long-run it will save money.

The new website is also a top priority. As I wrote on the blog, it is a massive task, but I want to see rapid progress. For most people, this is the public face of Melb PC, and it is old and tired and a poor advertisement for us.

You can read more about our plans on the blog. If you think you can contribute in any way, please let me know. ⏻

BREAKING NEWS

In the newsgroups, you will find long discussions about Windows 8. From the best price and where to buy, to installing, then managing its automatic update feature.

Computer questions are asked and puzzlements are solved at all hours (24/7) by the newsgroup community.

We have 14 newsgroups, each with a different emphasis. You can read some of the newsgroup conversations by logging into http://forum.melbpc.org.au/newsforum/ with your Melb PC username and password.

To read all of the newsgroups, and when you are ready to start a topic, join a conversation or ask for help, you can setup a newsreader utility on your computer. We will help you with this. Here's the place to start http://member.melbpc.org.au/~anywhere/

Melbourne PC User Group
2012 Committee Elections

The committee elections were held on Wednesday November 7, 2012. At the close of nominations there was only one candidate for each of the executive positions. Therefore the following are elected to the executive positions:

President	Charles Wright
Vice-President	Don McKenzie
Treasurer	Stephen Tidswell
Secretary	Ian Rankin

There were 11 candidates for the eight ordinary committee positions and a ballot was held. There were 356 valid postal votes. On election night, 156 voting papers were issued of which 140 valid votes were received by the close of voting. The results were:

Name	Number of Votes
Jan Weiner	474
Lance Lloyd	466
Sharman Grant	465
Jan Whitaker	461
Cindy Perry	449
Stewart Gruneklee	416
Roger Wragg	357
Harry Lewis	353
Ian Wright	205
Barry Atwood	174
James Cox	159

Therefore I declare Jan Weiner, Lance Lloyd, Sharman Grant, Jan Whitaker, Cindy Perry, Stewart Gruneklee, Roger Wragg and Harry Lewis duly elected to the committee.

I would like to thank all the candidates for their participation. It is encouraging to see enthusiasm returning to the running of the group. There will be sub-committees formed to assist the committee members and I hope many of you will volunteer for those sub-committees.

I would like to thank Dianne Vogt, Erin D'Arcy and Don McKenzie for their assistance.

John Swale
Returning Officer

Membership and Marketing Portfolio

Lance Lloyd
(lance.melbpc@fastmail.fm)

As one of your new committee, I am very pleased to be asked by the President, Charles Wright, and the committee, to look after the Membership and Marketing Portfolio for Melb PC.

It is very clear that the club must grow its membership base if it is to prosper and do so in the challenging times of changing computer use and platforms. To do this, we will develop a marketing plan which will document and enhance the aspects and services of the Melb PC which are valued by members. We are looking to establish a small sub-committee, so if you would like to contribute either as a member or just ideas which will help promote Melb PC, please contact me at lance.melbpc@fastmail.fm.

High on the agenda of the plan will be sprucing up our image and "offer" in terms of the look and feel of brochures, using welcome packages for new members and, where warranted, extending our services. We need to get the message out there of the benefits of Melb PC membership – we can do that by using our existing members to spread the word (we will provide you with some tools for that), using advertising (free or very cheap advertising mainly), and perhaps social media.

We need to run a survey with our members to discover whether our current benefits and services are known, valued, and used by existing members; what benefits or services can work well and which ones could be improved; and what initiatives members would like to see. So keep your eyes out on the club's website for the survey link.

WIN
THESE RAFFLE
PRIZES AT THE
MONTHLY MEETING

$2 Ticket
3 Tickets $5

MELB PC
USER GROUP

Melbourne PC User Group Monthly Meeting

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 5, at 7pm

Melb PC Headquarters

479 Warrigal Road, Moorabbin VIC 3189 (Corner Cochranes Rd)

- *Margaret Brown will further outline the great features available on her iPod.*

- *John Hall will provide an overview of what multimedia means for the home.*

- *George Skarbek will discuss what is important to consider when buying a computer to fit into the new home environment.*

These should give some inspiration to our members for Christmas!

SOUTH ROAD

KARKAROOK PARK

BUS 903

COCHRANES ROAD   PARKING

WARRIGAL ROAD

MELB PC USER GROUP

PARKING

BUS 903

BUNNINGS

SILKY EMPEROR RESTAURANT

BUS 903

KEYS ROAD

KINGSTON ROAD

Melway map 78 C8

Melb PC User Group Inc.
1st Floor, Unit 26, 479 Warrigal Road, Moorabbin, Victoria 3189

In the evening there is lift access to the 1st floor from the carpark.
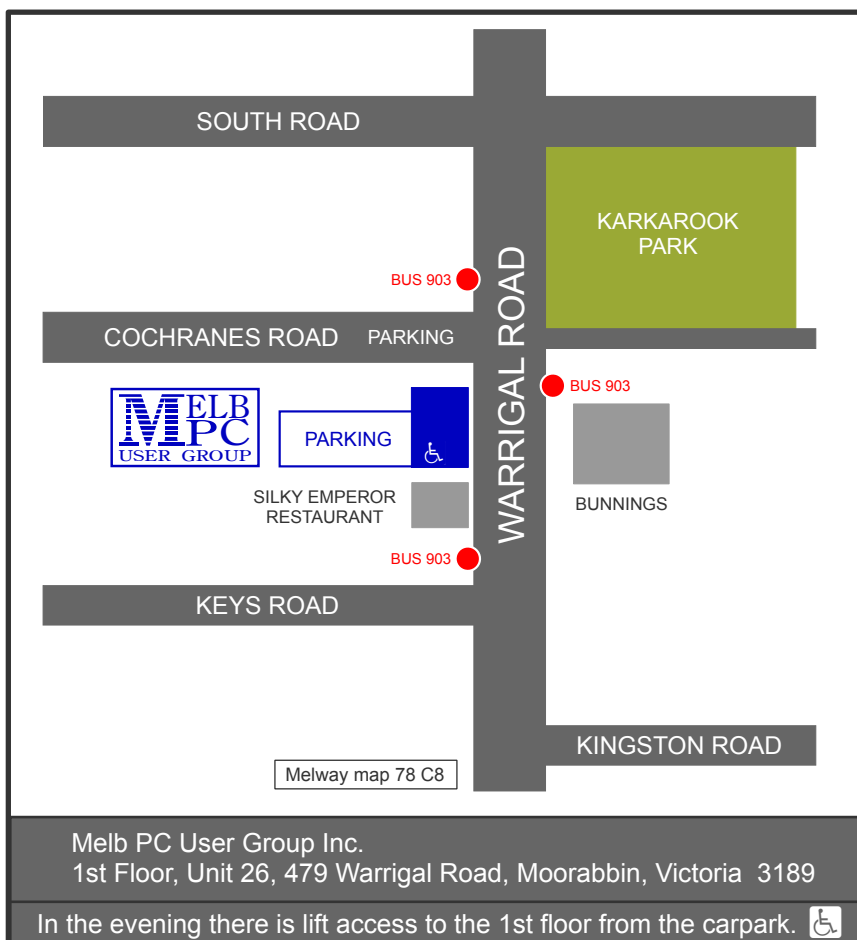
Public transport users can take Smart Bus 903 from several train stations. The closest are Mentone station on the Frankston Line (5 minutes away) and Oakleigh Station on the Pakenham/Cranbourne line (10 minutes).

Dear Editor,
Thank you for the latest November edition of *PC Update*. I find it getting better each edition and the freedom accorded by using pdf is starting to show. I note more articles are being presented in single column format and this is much easier to read. However, I currently read it on an iPad and the two-column format works quite well as one page fits on the screen.

I was very interested to read the article on InfoSelect. I too was an InfoSelect user for many years, going way back when, but I also found it becoming bloated with features that I really did not need, and updates were becoming expensive. I switched to Evernote for the same reasons that you mentioned.

An additional benefit for me is that I use Linux as my main internet PC with a Linux-equivalent Evernote viewer. I have an XP laptop, and now an iPad. Using the cloud it is easy to keep them in sync. The feature in Evernote that I use the most is the Firefox clipper add-on that puts selections into Evernote and preserves the active URL links to make it easy to find the original page again.

I also use Dropbox for documents. For example I download *PC Update*, put it in Dropbox and I then have the freedom to read it wherever I like on the iPad. Having to go to and sit at my PC to read *PC Update* was a real negative for me initially. Dropbox and the iPad give me freedom. I realise many may not have these benefits.

Thanks again for your commitment to Melb PC.

Denis Street

Dear Editor,
PC Update gets better and better. The writing is wonderfully clear, and I liked the pic of you and what appears to be bubble memory.

I was especially enchanted by your job descrip-
tion. Melb PC is indeed fortunate to have you and Charles working thusly.

The pic of the camera reminds me of my first camera; the self-timer involved a rock and the shutter release.

Did you notice how there were few if any complaints about the late November issue? I think that this reflects a certain amount of trust that you and Charles have built up.

Stephen Lake

Dear Editor,
Thanks for getting *PC Update* out on time each month and your article on Evernote of which I'm a big fan. The magazine is a delight to read and I've been downloading the high res version into my iPad and reading in GoodReader so I can annotate, highlight etc which works very well.

My iPad 2 is a bit slow to refresh on some of the graphics pages so next month I'll download two versions – hi and medium res to see if a lower res improves refresh rate.

Just a question on the mag – as it's named *PC Update* why is the footer showing Melbourne *PC Update*?

Barry Fredrickson

Ed (KS): Thanks Barry, well spotted. That's one more fix we can cross off the list!

Dear Editor,
Many thanks Katharine for the splendid graphics you assembled and arranged for the Windows 8 piece (November *PC Update*).

The whole issue is visually very attractive. Congratulations. (I have not got round to reading the words yet...)
Cheers,

Harry Lewis

Dear Editor,

Having been a newchum when computers first were introduced at work, I have well and truly done the hard yards. Not being particularly intelligent, I had to force myself through steep learning curves, both at work and later, at home.

My various career positions were supervisory, so the job of teacher and troubleshooter, analyst and oracle, fell upon my shoulders. It became my function to train personnel in the use of computers. I also had to diagnose faults, and if I was unable to fix the problems, I had to call in service people.

I treated these onerous tasks as a great challenge, and applied myself well, I thought. So much so, that problem-solving became second nature, and usually, my workplace often had the least service calls in the physical branch network.

Fast-forward to computers eventually being available for home use, and that was the start of a new ball-game. The only operating systems I knew at the start, were DOS and then later, Windows 3. That was okay, once you learned how to use them, it was pretty straightforward.

Well, we were in heaven, Windows seemed better and faster, and easier. Then, through all the releases of newer versions of Windows, we were slowly experiencing improvements, until today's Windows 7 appears to be quite efficient and extremely popular. I see no need to change to the latest Windows 8, but that's up to the individual.

Once you have operated computers for some time, you get impatient for better functions, and higher speed. Therefore, manufacturers and developers continually try to keep improving things, so that more and more want the product and the latest hardware and software. It's no accident that the software keeps leading the hardware!

One of the most important things you must have is some kind of anti-malware program/s on your system. I reckon I have tried just about all of them, and there has been quite a range. Some of the anti-virus programs can be very didactic, and require close attention during internet usage. Others can be easier to use, but may not be quite as effective as some.

An internet site which compared the top 10 anti-virus programs chose Norton Internet Security 2012 as the best. This is my favourite, as it achieves what I think is a good balance. It is easy to load, operate and to update, and it takes up little room on your system.

I occasionally use various other utilities and anti-malware programs, and these include CCleaner [see review, P.20], Malwarebytes, and the old faithful, Spybot.

Good password usage is another very important issue. I have had a 21-character email password cracked by a criminal organisation, and was later advised (indirectly) by ASIO and the FBI via my ISP!

I thank all the volunteers in our group who have done exemplary work in carrying on the necessary business of the club, and I would also volunteer, if I only had time! Oh well, maybe if I ever retire!

David Pym

BREAKING NEWS

"I am not a shoplifter" was the assurance of a newsgroup member, who wondered if she could remove a security tag mistakenly left on a garment purchased at DFO. Would she be forced to return to the store?

Find out by reading the newsgroups.

We have 14 newsgroups, each with a different emphasis. You can read some of the newsgroup conversations by logging into http://forum.melbpc.org.au/newsforum/ with your Melb PC username and password.

To read all of the newsgroups, and when you are ready to start a topic, join a conversation or ask for help, you can setup a newsreader utility on your computer. We will help you with this. Here's the place to start http://member.melbpc.org.au/~anywhere/

MELB PC USER GROUP

What's On In December 2012

JS12

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
30	**31** **Have A Question** **Post It On** http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~anywhere/	**Colour Codes** **Black:** SIG meetings held at Moorabbin. **Blue:** SIG meetings held at other locations. **Red:** Melb PC training courses. **Yellow Box:** No SIG meeting. Full details of "Special Interest Group" activities, meeting times and training course information in the magazine.				**1**
2	**3** Introduction to Quickbooks *(session 1 of 2)* Programming MS Excel with VBA 2003-07-10 *(Night session 1 of 3)* *Melb PC Committee*	**4** North East Genealogy *(10am - 12.45pm)* Introduction to MS Excel 2003-07-10 *(session 1 of 2)*	**5** **Monthly Meeting** **Moorabbin 7pm sharp** *and afterwards the* **WAFFLE SIG** Video Production *(Sony Vegas 10am)*	**6** AdobeVideo *(2pm)* Ballarat *(7.30pm - 9.45pm)* Sunbury Daytime *(New Users 9.30am)* Websites Made Easy with Joomla *(Night session 1 of 2)*	**7** Essendon *(Main Meeting 9.30am)* Multimedia (MHE) *(Wadham House 10am)* Build a Website with Dreamweaver *(session 1 of 2)*	**8** Making Money On The Internet *(10am - 12noon)* Microcontroller Workshop *(11am - 4pm)*
9 East Workshop *(10am - 2pm)* Beginners East *(10am - 12.30pm)* Genealogy *(1pm - 3.30pm)*	**10** Access *(6.30pm - 8.30pm)* Linux *(6.30pm - 9pm)* Peninsula *(New Users 4pm)* Wyndham *(General 7.30pm - 9.30pm)* Introduction to Quickbooks *(session 2 of 2)* Prog' MS Excel with VBA 2003-07-10 *(Night session 2 of 3)*	**11** Everything Apple *(2pm - 4pm)* WASINT *(10.30am - 12.30pm)* New Users East *Last & Final Meeting* *(7.30pm - 10pm)* Introduction to MS Excel 2003-07-10 *(session 2 of 2)*	**12** Communications *(7pm - 9.30pm)* Microcontroller *(7pm - 9.30pm)* East *(7.30pm - 10pm)*	**13** E-Book *(7pm - 9.30pm)* NeDay GIG *(Photography - Digital Imaging 10am)* Sunbury Daytime *(New Users 9.30am)* Websites Made Easy with Joomla *(Night session 2 of 2)*	**14** Casey PC *Foodstar Narre Warren 12 noon* Essendon *Christmas Function* Ripper *(Hardware Wadham House 10am)* Build a Website with Dreamweaver *(session 2 of 2)*	**15** Database Driven Websites with PHP and MySQL Level 2
16 MACE *(10am - 2pm)* Macedon Ranges *(Gisborne 2pm - 4pm)*	**17** Graphics & Music *Christmas Party and Open Day 6pm* Nth Subs Linux *(7.30pm - 9.30pm)* Peninsula *(Main Meeting 9.30am Graphics 12.30pm Genealogy 2.30pm)* Programming MS Excel with VBA 2003-07-10 *(Night session 3 of 3)*	**18** Windows Advanced *(Deploying and Managing Networks. Richmond 7pm)* Wyndham *(Multimedia 7.30pm)*	**19** Everything iPad / iPhone *(2pm – 4pm)* Android *(Ivanhoe 10am)* *Melb PC Marketing (sub-committee 7.30pm)*	**20** Music *(7.30pm - 9.30pm)* Bayside *Christmas BBQ* Sunbury Daytime *(General Meeting 9.30am)*	**21** Essendon *(Check website for meeting details. 9.30am)* Ripper *(Digital Photo W'shop Wadham House 10am)* *Melb PC office closed.*	**22** Microcontroller Workshop *(11am - 4pm)*
23 Web Design *(2pm - 4pm)*	**24** Peninsula *(New Users 4pm Add Music To Your Computer)* Video Inner East *(Balwyn 7pm - 9.30pm)*	**25** Programming *(6.30pm - 9pm)* North East *(Evening 7.30pm - 9.30pm)* Yarra Ranges *(Meeting 9.15am Workshop 11.30am)* *Public Holiday Christmas Day*	**26** Video Production *(Pinnacle 9.30am)* West *(7pm - 9.30pm)* *Public Holiday Boxing Day*	**27** Sunbury Daytime *(Maintenance 9.30am. Meeting also held on a 5th Thursday)* *Public Holiday*	**28** Retired and Interested Persons *(known as Ripper 10am)*	**29**

Melb PC office closed on Friday 21st December 2012, will re-open on Wednesday 2nd January 2013.

What's On In January 2013

MELB PC USER GROUP

JS12

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Have A Question **Post It On** http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~anywhere/		**1** North East Genealogy (10am - 12.45pm) *Public Holiday New Years Day*	**2** Video Production (Sony Vegas 10am) Melb PC office re-opens today	**3** AdobeVideo (2pm) Ballarat (7.30pm - 9.45pm) Sunbury Daytime (New Users 9.30am)	**4** Essendon (Main Meeting 9.30am) Multimedia (MHE) (Wadham House 10am)	**5**
6	**7**	**8** Everything Apple (2pm - 4pm) WASINT (10.30am - 12.30pm)	**9** Communications (7pm - 9.30pm) Microcontroller (7pm - 9.30pm) East (7.30pm - 10pm)	**10** E-Book (7pm - 9.30pm) NeDay GIG (Photography - Digital Imaging 10am) Sunbury Daytime (New Users 9.30am)	**11** Essendon (Open Forum 9.30am) Ripper (Hardware Wadham House 10am)	**12** Making Money On The Internet (10am - 12noon) Microcontroller Workshop (11am - 4pm) LAN-slide V3.0
13 LAN-slide V4.0 East Workshop (10am - 2pm)	**14** Access (6.30pm - 8.30pm) Linux (6.30pm - 9pm) Peninsula (New Users 4pm) Wyndham (General 7.30pm - 9.30pm) Video to DVD and DivX	**15** Windows Advanced (Deploying and Managing Networks. Richmond 7pm) Wyndham (Multimedia 7.30pm) Database Driven Websites with PHP and MySQL Level 1	**16** Everything iPad / iPhone (2pm – 4pm) Android (Ivanhoe 10am)	**17** Music (7.30pm - 9.30pm) Bayside (10am -12 noon) Sunbury Daytime (General Meeting 9.30am)	**18** Essendon (Check website for meeting details. 9.30am) Ripper (Digital Photo W'shop Wadham House 10am)	**19** Database Driven Websites with PHP and MySQL Level 1
20 MACE (10am - 2pm) Beginners East (10am - 12.30pm) Genealogy (1pm - 3.30pm) Macedon Ranges (Gisborne 2pm - 4pm)	**21** Graphics (7pm - 9.30pm) Nth Subs Linux (7.30pm - 9.30pm) Peninsula (Main Meeting 9.30am Graphics 12.30pm Genealogy 2.30pm) Video Editing with Corel VideoStudio	**22** Programming (6.30pm - 9pm) North East (Evening 7.30pm - 9.30pm) Yarra Ranges (Meeting 9.15am Workshop 11.30am) Home Networking with Windows XP and Windows 7	**23** Video Production (Pinnacle 9.30am) West (7pm - 9.30pm)	**24** Sunbury Daytime (Maintenance 9.30am. Meeting also held on a 5th Thursday)	**25** Retired and Interested Persons (known as Ripper 10am)	**26** Microcontroller Workshop (11am - 4pm) Database Driven Websites with PHP and MySQL Level 2 *Australia Day*
27 Web Design (2pm - 4pm)	**28** Peninsula (New Users 4pm Add Music To Your Computer) Video Inner East (Balwyn 7pm - 9.30pm) Vinyl and Cassette to CD and MP3 *Public Holiday Australia Day*	**29** Database Driven Websites with PHP and MySQL Level 2	**30**	**31**		

Colour Codes

Black: SIG meetings held at Moorabbin.
Blue: SIG meetings held at other locations.
Red: Melb PC training courses.
Yellow Box: No SIG meeting.

Full details of "Special Interest Group" activities, meeting times and training course information in the magazine.

With Terry Lane

There are three outstanding entries in the competition this month, each with a good claim to being the best.

The best of the best is Barb Water's "I'm Watching You!". This is Pulitzer winning photo journalism, capturing a single moment in the on-going drama of the Greek financial crisis. But what makes this picture special is the very tight cropping and the riot gear and the single face. With the cigarette! How lucky can you get? This photo captures in an instant an entire story. On top of which it is technically excellent. Superb.

George Skarbek's "Night Carriage" captures a common Melbourne subject which is also one of the most difficult to photograph satisfactorily. The golden rule of street photography is to check the background and get it right. How much righter can a background be than the Melbourne Town Hall, totally free of the usual clutter of cars, trucks and trams? And the fact that it is at night adds romance to the image. Also the differential focus, sharp on the carriage and blurred on the background, is sublime.

Vanessa Reynolds' untitled photo of moored yachts in a golden light is worth an honourable mention. It is a lovely photo that can benefit from a little editing. The horizon is not quite straight so the boats appear to be leaning forward. The colour saturation can be increased to enhance the golden glow. But most of all Vanessa needs a better camera. She is using what appears to be an old model Olympus and the image noise is conspicuous, particularly in the mottling on the blue hills.

For anyone wanting to explore the possibilities of photo editing without spending any money you can't do better than Photoscape (www.photoscape.org).

Photograph and win cash!
$$$

Each month, *PC Update* will publish the best digital photo submitted by a member.
The winning photographer will receive $100.
The judge is *The Age's* Imaging columnist, Terry Lane.

Winner, photo competition December 2012:
Barb Water: "I'm Watching You!"

HIGHLY COMMENDED ENTRIES

Previous Page

Top:

George Skarbek: "Night Carriage"

Bottom:

Vanessa Reynolds: untitled

This Page

Top:

Charles Adams: untitled

Right:

Vanessa Reynolds: untitled

My Life with Computers

By Annelore von Gizycki

I applied for and was accepted by Melbourne University as a comptometrist. They trained me for programming punch card machines and tabulators, which I enjoyed very much. But the job turned out to be very boring, so, as compensation, my employer offered me a course on the university computer, which at that time was the CSIRAC (now residing at the Melbourne Museum).

The programs had to be punched in machine language, one hole at a time on a 12-channel paper tape, and any mistakes were corrected by sticking a tiny bit of red sticky tape over the hole. When the program ran, you could see every instruction performing on a little screen. A few of us were not engineers and we did not know exactly what was happening. I told Dr Hirst that we were not mathematicians, so he always gave problems for mathematicians and non mathematicians.

While working at the uni in 1963, I met somebody with whom I had previously worked. He told me his firm was looking for a computer programmer. He asked, would I like to apply. I said "yes", passed the aptitude test at IBM and got the job as the only programmer at Cox Brothers. I REALLY enjoyed that.

IBM taught the staff of firms which had ordered computers and had to wait a long time for delivery. Our work was done at IBM. We had to book time, eg "point 2 of 1 hour" (12 minutes), any time day or night, to do our program testing. If you dropped something, that was the end.

There were always other people from other companies waiting for their turn, so we helped

each other, by putting up tapes etc. You got to know the few programmers who were working on computers at that time. We loved our jobs. We programmed in Assembler and patched online in machine language while the jobs were running.

My next computer job as analyst-programmer was at Olympic Tyre and Rubber Co. There was a small but very nice and clever group of programmers, we even got together a few weeks ago. Again, we were all very dedicated and loved our jobs, programming in Assembler and debugging using a memory dump and patching in machine language.

Later on compilers came in, which made it easier. I didn't like it, however, because if something went wrong it could be caused by the compiler. I don't mind fixing my own errors but not other people's.

It is so much easier in the modern computer world, with disk random access – we had to work out very complicated logic.

Programming is not any more the adventure which it used to be: It was new and exciting, nothing like anybody had done before. When we did our work at IBM etc, we met people from other installations. If something crashed we had to come in the middle of the night. Everybody helped everybody else, regardless of your employer. ⏻
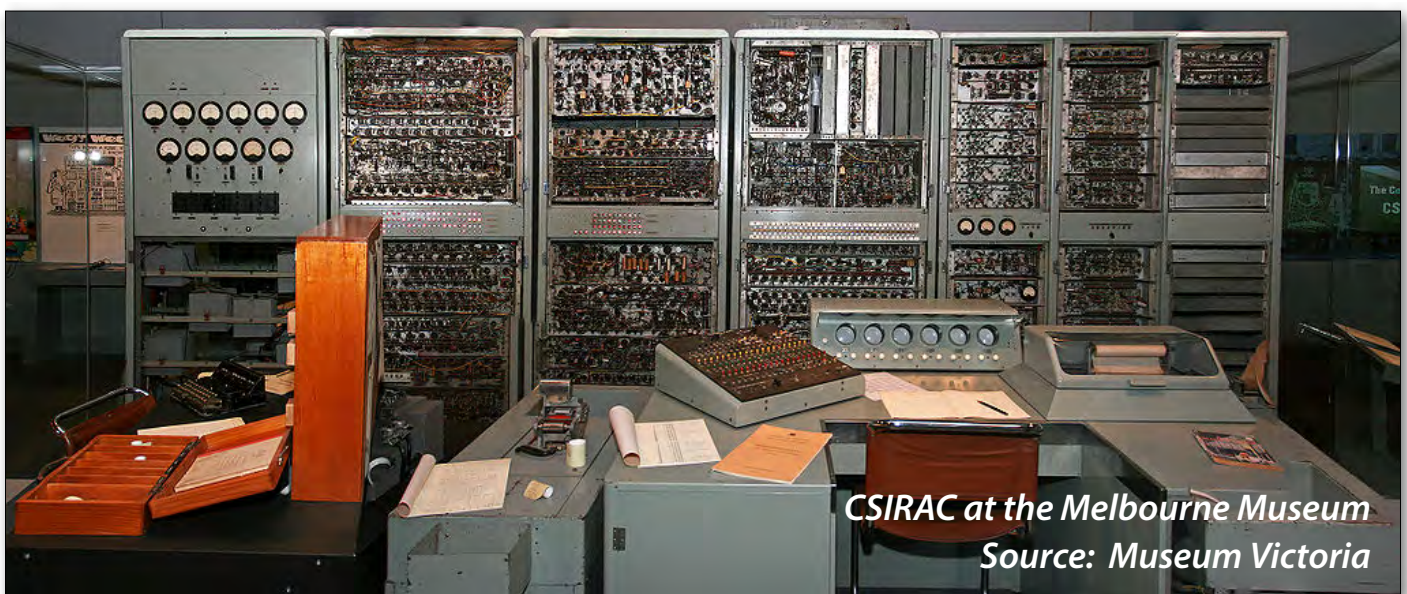

12-hole paper tape
Source: Museum Victoria

Source: Museum Victoria

A 12-hole paper tape reader used for loading programs (and data) into CSIRAC's memory, circa 1956. CSIRAC was one of the world's first electronic digital stored program computers and is the last of the first generation to still exist intact.


CSIRAC at the Melbourne Museum
Source: Museum Victoria

My Top 10 Freeware Programs

Lance Lloyd

Using PCs means getting to know the software which can make your everyday computing life a little easier! You can go out and purchase expensive proprietary software or you can go down the freeware/shareware route. Melbourne PC User Group offers a $5 monthly disc (see www.melbpc.org.au/monthcd/), which in my opinion is the best $60 I spend each year, aside from my Melb PC User Group membership, of course. These are my top 10 favourite free software programs.

1. MWSNAP (www.mirekw.com/winfreeware/mwsnap.html) is a program which allows you to copy a section of the screen and convert the image into a file (bmp, jpg or tiff) or just copy and paste into a document in a few clicks. It's one of my favourite programs because it is light on resources, works on any system and is so handy. I use it when report writing if I want to produce a quick image of a spreadsheet, photo or table. It is also great if you are having trouble with your PC and you want to explain to someone remotely the messages you are getting on your screen – just "snap" the whole or bit of the screen of concern and email the image file to your friend for help. It is more useful than the "Print Screen" function as it has all sorts of functionality, but particularly because it enables you to snap just part of the screen. I used MWSnap to produce the images in this article for instance.
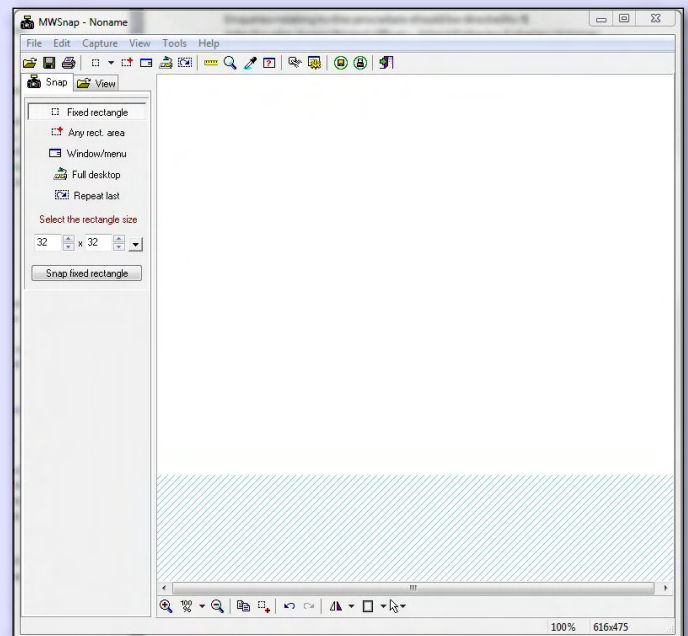
2. SKYPE (www.skype.com) is well known and the company provides free software in the hope you will purchase its paid services. Skype enables you to contact other users using video, voice or text communication, free across the globe. I use it every day to contact work colleagues, organise meetings, have teleconferences and transmit files. In fact, with a couple of close colleagues, I use it like they were in the same office and we are connected for most of the day asking each other questions and making the occasional joke (generally via text or voice). It is also good for keeping in touch with friends and relatives interstate and overseas – cheaper than phone calls!
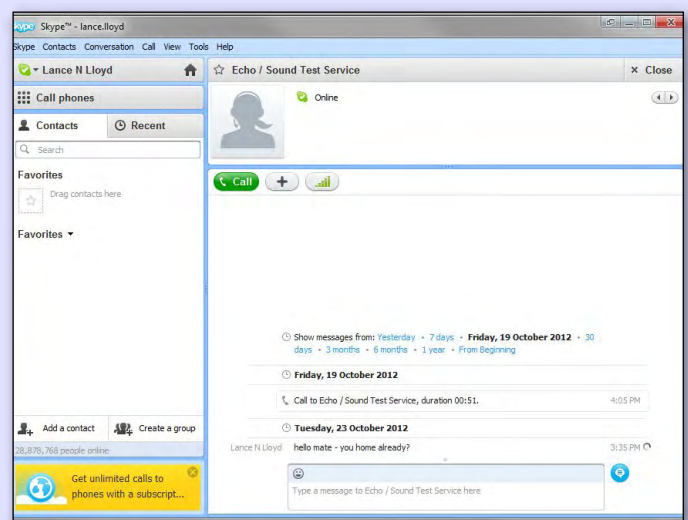
MY TOP 10 FREEWARE PROGRAMS

3. CCLEANER (www.piriform.com/ccleaner) is an excellent cleaning tool for your PC. It enables you to clean up the junk that surfing the internet, installing programs and editing documents might leave around. It enables you to clean up cookies and remove unnecessary files on your PC, potentially making it run faster. It is a program with a small footprint and is highly customisable but simple to use. There is an add-on, called CCEnhancer (http://singularlabs.com/software/ccenhancer/), which enables even more programs to be searched and cleaned. I like it because of its simplicity and the ease with which I can use the program for my weekly clean-up or whenever I strike a problem.
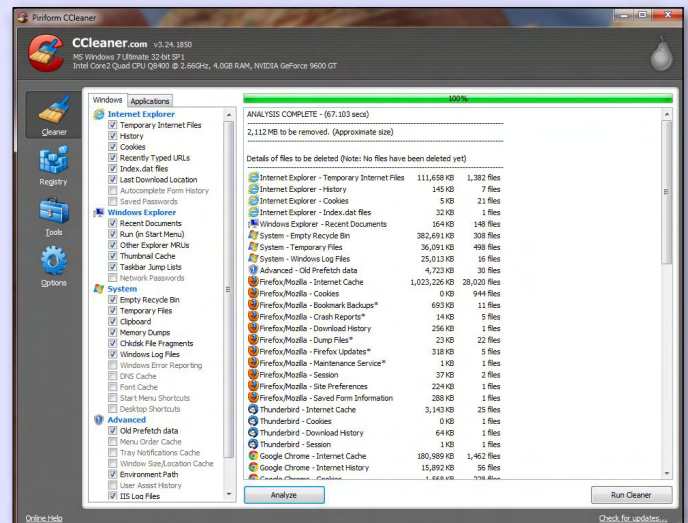
4. SPECCY (www.piriform.com/speccy) is another program from the Piriform suite which enables you to examine the components of your PC without pulling it apart. It does a bit more than "System Information" in Windows, providing more detail as well as the system health, operating temperatures of components etc. I like it as it's just such a useful tool when I'm looking under "the hood" of the PC, I get friends and relatives to run it to help me diagnose problems they are having or to provide them advice on replacement components etc.
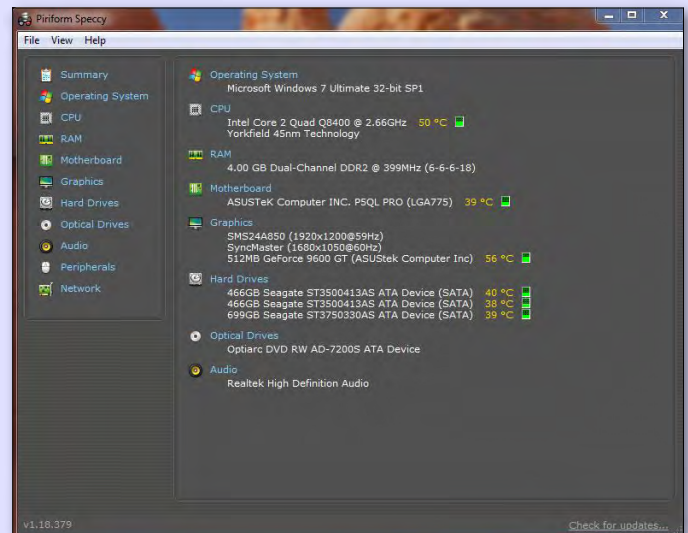
5. DEFRAGGLER (www.piriform.com/defraggler) is the third program in the Piriform suite and you use this, obviously, to defragment (defrag) your hard drive or individual files (a function not available in the Windows defrag tool). It is compact and portable, supporting both NTFS and FAT32 file systems. It's easy to use and very informative of the processes it's undertaking on your behalf, with quick defrag and automated modes. I use it regularly to tidy up hard drives and free up space.

6. RECUVA (www.piriform.com/recuva), the fourth Piriform program, is simply a brilliant little application which enables you to recover lost files on a SD card or USB stick, as well as your hard drive! Actually I didn't realise that it could be used quite as extensively as it can be, generally only using it in the past to recover lost files on my SD Cards and USB sticks. But they claim it can be used for your phone, iThingy or camera. Also it can be used to recover deleted email, lost MS Word files or files from formatted hard drives. In reverse, you can use it to wipe hard disks, so files cannot be recovered. This program has saved the family photo history more than once and now I have done some more research on it (for this article), I will be using other aspects of its functionality.

7. REVO UNINSTALLER (www.revouninstaller.com/start_freeware_download.html)
A program to uninstall software you have loaded and no longer want (or is malfunctioning). It provides more functionality than the Windows "add or remove programs" function, with the ability to do a thorough search of your PC for any remnant links or traces of the program and remove them. This will all count in the long term, so your PC doesn't fill up with junk. I find it very useful if a program is malfunctioning, as it allows me to remove it entirely and then re-install cleanly.

8. KAREN'S REPLICATOR (www.karenware.com/powertools/ptreplicator.asp) is my newest and perhaps my most favoured freeware program. This was a piece of software recommended to me by a Melb PC User Group Newsgroup member when my Seagate Backup software went on the blink. This program automatically backs up files, directories, even entire drives. Karen's Replicator will copy selected files from one drive/folder to another, for instance if you want to set an external hard drive to mirror the working sections of your PC's hard drive. Because source and destination folders can reside anywhere on your network you can even use it to back-up to another PC or a NAS unit on your network. The thing I really like about the program is that you can make copies of the selected drives every few minutes and it only copies the files that have been changed. An essential backup tool, but it also enables me to travel in the comfort of knowing my portable HDD has all the files I would ever need to work with while away. This software has outlived its author, Karen Kenworthy, who died two years ago.

MY TOP 10 FREEWARE PROGRAMS

9. MALWAREBYTES (www.malwarebytes.org) is a program to detect and remove all traces of malware including worms, trojans, rootkits, spyware, etc. The program has regular updates and as an adjunct to Microsoft Security Essentials (or another rated anti-virus package) will keep your PC pretty well protected while on the internet (along with your enabled firewall). Without these sorts of programs, I have read, a PC will only last 20 minutes without being infected if connected to the WWW. It's often the first thing I turn to if a relative or friend says they have a problem with their PC: Question 1 – are you running Malwarebytes? Question 2 – why not?
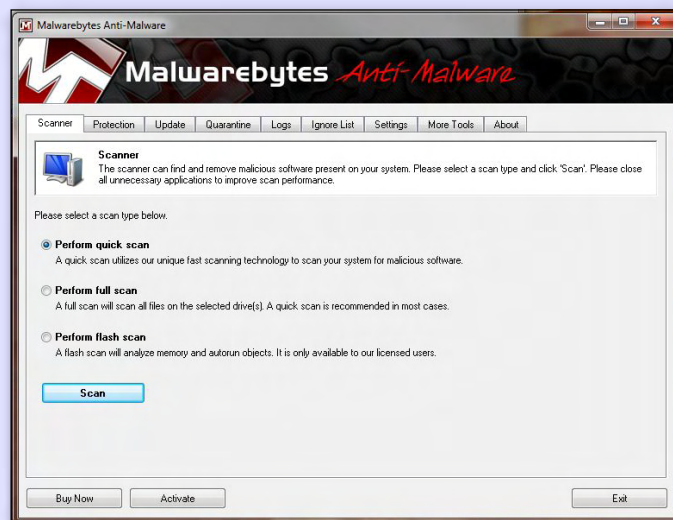
10. GOOGLE CHROME (or Mozilla Firefox [anything but Internet Explorer]) found at www.google.com/intl/en_uk/chrome/ is a portal into another world. Chrome is an alternative web browser which some would say has fewer security issues than Internet Explorer. So while Chrome is an application in its own right, it also allows seamless integration with other Google products. Of these, Google Search (www.google.com.au) is best known, but Gmail, Google maps, Google+, Google Drive, Google Hangouts and a myriad of plugins or add-ons are worth exploring to easily extend the top 10 into a top 20. Chrome lives on my laptop and is almost always open together with a variety of its add-ons or other products – Google Search and its specialist brother, Google Scholar, are frequently used. I am new to Chrome and am exploring all its capabilities such as Google Drive and Google Hangouts, the latter of which I have used for some meetings, but am yet to be convinced it's a replacement for Skype. One of my favourite things about Google Search is the ability to have Google Alert you every time a particular subject is mentioned on the web (see www.google.com/alerts) – a brilliant tool if you want to be updated on what's happening with something (for me, the Alert I have set up is for Raspberry Pi).
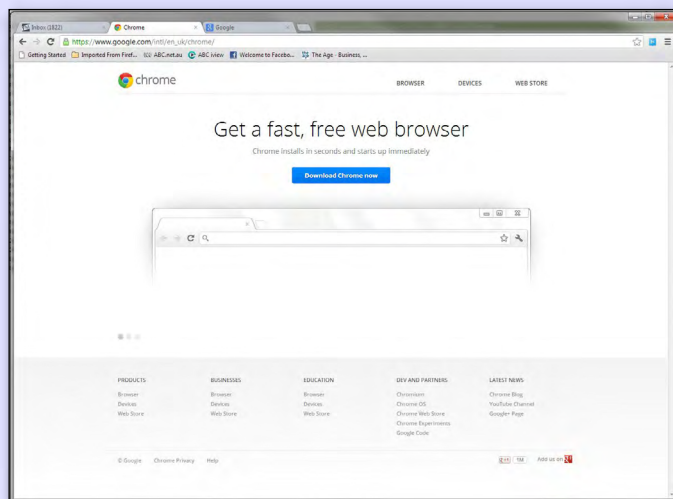
You may have a different top 10 or disagree with me, and if you do why not write your own article for *PC Update* and tell other members your top 10 and why they are so favoured? ⏻

My Top 20 Freeware Programs *(Part 1)*

Laurie Comerford

My list of favourites actually includes 20. I've listed 10 here, and in the next issue will list a further 10. I have omitted some favourites which I use and expect readers will be familiar with, eg IrfanView, Faststone Photo Resizer, Firefox, Chrome, Thunderbird, NeoDownloader, Open Office. Most of these programs remain on my hard disk after trying at least a few alternatives and I've kept these largely based on their reliability for my purposes and their simplicity of use.

Note also that the Melb PC monthly disk has a set of programs which are repeated every month. These could well represent Ian Rankin's "Favourite 10". Lastly, the order here is totally random.

1. VEIGNS NOTE-IT (http://www.veign.com/)

A sticky note program with both text and raster clipboard functions.

Licensing: Freeware for private use.

I use it: Nearly every time I use the computer.

Interface: The screen grab shows it all. I've made two screen grabs, one of the "About" dialog box and one of the interface squeezed into a small corner of the screen, and then pasted both into the program along with some text. Lastly I've selected some text and right mouse clicked to show the options.

Why I like it:

• Its ability to remain "On Top".
• Its ability to store screen grabs on a temporary basis.
• Its wide range of functionality, although I use very little of it.

Weaknesses:

• It does not have a "minimise to taskbar" option.
• The Veign website no longer mentions the software, however it is available on numerous download sites.

**The competition:** See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comparison_of_notetaking_software.

I found none of the several I tried other than Note-It had the ability to remain on top. This was essential for my purposes.

2. PS-PAD (http://www.pspad.com)

Text Editor with HTML and binary options. Lots of colour coding for various programming languages.

Licensing: Freeware.

Interface: It has more or less just an editing window
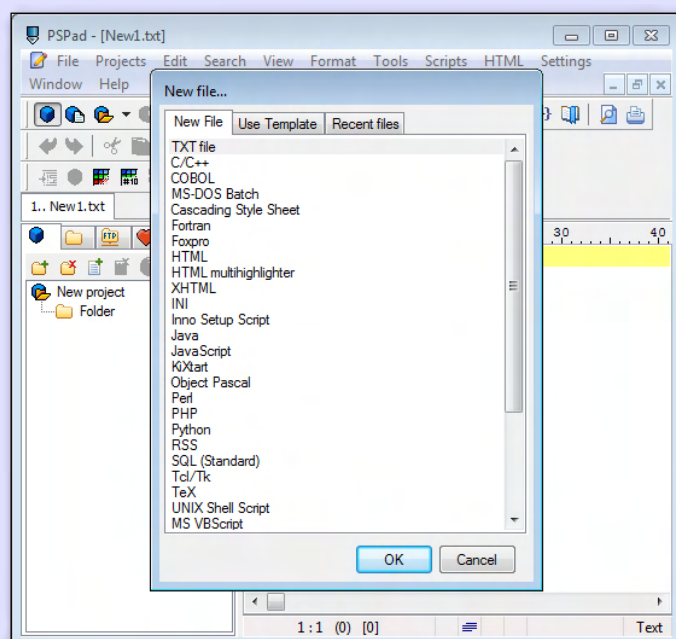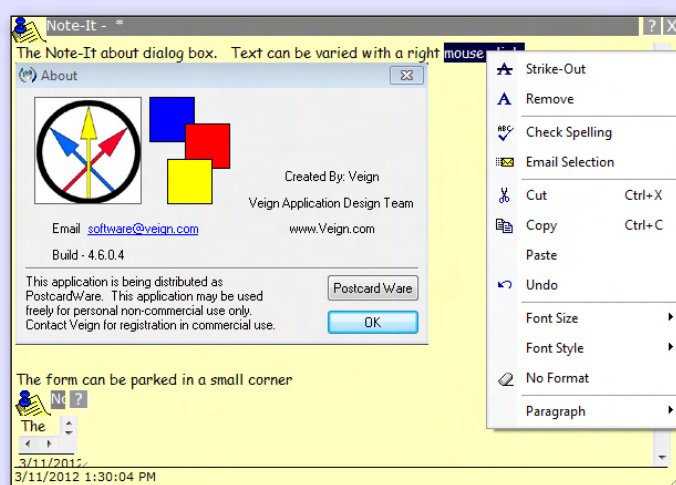
with a normal range of pull-down menus and toolbars. See the screen grab which also shows the text colouring options when creating a new file.

I use it: Most times I use the computer. Some days it's my major usage.

Why I like it: Been using it for years and have got used to it. I like its ability to create opening and closing pairs of characters such as brackets, only requiring you to type one of them. Also its file comparison tool.

Weaknesses: Spell checker needs setting up with a little care.

The competition: These are too numerous to mention. I tried several initially and adopted PSPad as the most satisfactory at that time.

3. WINDOWS 7 GODMODE (http://howto.cnet.com/8301-11310_39-10423985-285/understanding-windows-7s-godmode/)
Provides comprehensive, but more accessible access to the various settings of Windows.

Licensing: Part of Windows 7.

Interface: The interface is simply a folder inside Windows Explorer or other file manager application. Like other Windows folders it can be displayed with text or Icons.

Folder properties: Quite weird. There are 277 items listed as being in the folder, yet the folder size reports as zero!

Why I like it: It brings all the confusing-to-find features of the Windows Control Panel into one place.

Weaknesses: None observed.

The competition: None. It's a unique functionality.
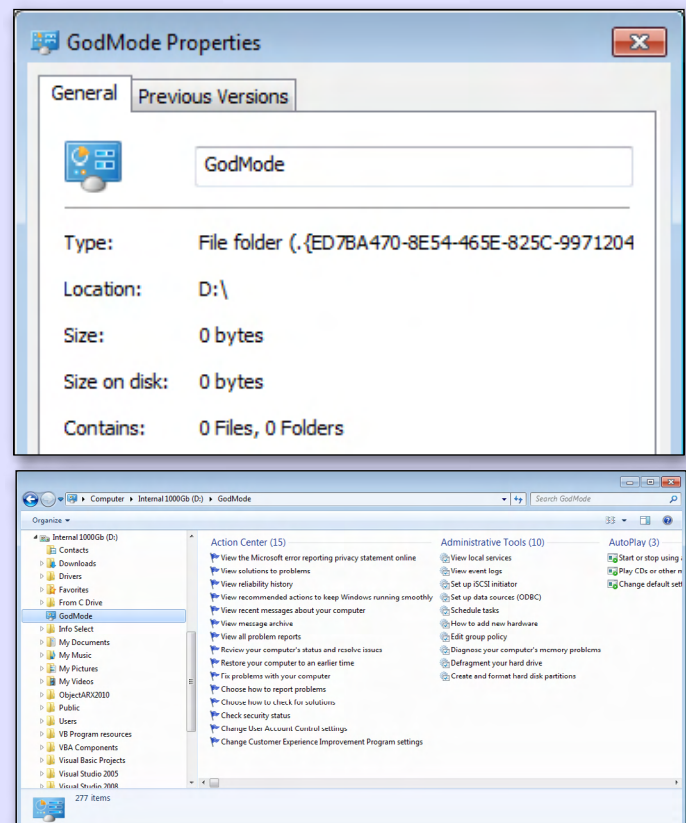
4. STARDOCK FENCES (http://www.stardock.com/products/fences)
It enables the user to group icons on the desktop. The capability includes a double click hide and show of all desktop icons.

Licensing: Free for personal use, more featured versions can be purchased.

I use it: All the time. It controls the appearance of my desktop.

Interface: The interface is the desktop. The screen grab indicates aspects of it.

Why I like it: I have lots of programs installed and in general like to use desktop shortcuts to open them. Stardock Fences enables me to group the programs and make them easier to find.

Weaknesses: None for its purpose.

The competition: I've never looked beyond the original Windows Desktop interface.
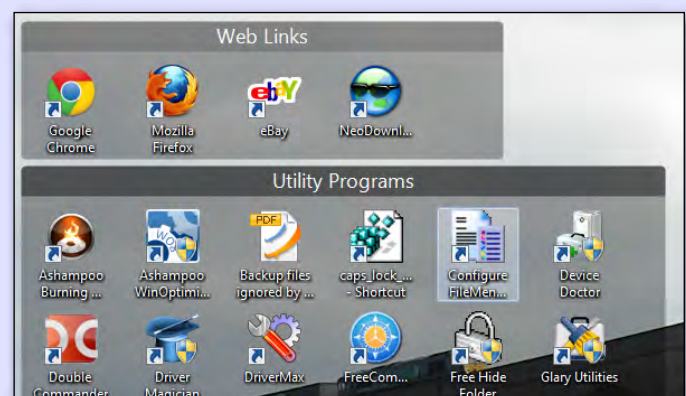
MY TOP 20 FREEWARE PROGRAMS

5. EVERYTHING (http://www.voidtools.com)

It is a very fast file searcher which can only search by name for files and folders.

Licensing: Freeware. Donations appreciated.

I use it: As needed, on average once a week.

Interface: The interface is simply a file-listing window with a text entry box for the file being searched for.

Why I like it: It's very quick to find all files matching the given file specification on the computer, regardless of location.

Weaknesses: Only searches for file or folder names.

The competition: Windows Explorer and numerous others. See http://www.techsupportalert.com/free-fast-file-search.htm for some comments. My "Everything.db" file is just under 3Mb in size, so really quite trivial.

6. 7ZIP (http://www.7-zip.org)

Creates and extracts from compressed files in a range of commonly-used formats including its own 7z format.

Licensing: Freeware open source.

I use it: I rarely use it for file compression, but often for unpacking archives. Occasionally I have sessions where I go through and archive folders with it.

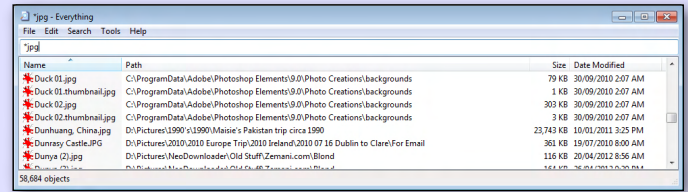**Why I like it:** Fast to use, good compression, can handle several compressed file formats including RAR. The program is available as a context item from the right click menu and I regularly use the "Unpack here" option.

Weaknesses: None obvious to me.

The competition: Lots. See http://file-compression-software-review.toptenreviews.com for some commercial options and http://www.top5freeware.com top-5-free-file-compression-software for freeware.

7. FILE MENU TOOLS (http://www.lopesoft.com/en/fmtools/info.html)
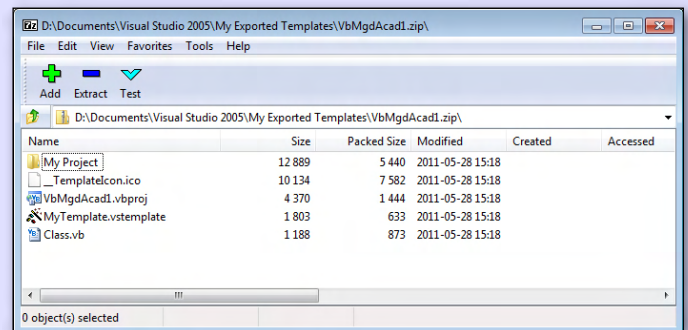
It adds a File menu tools sub menu to the right mouse click context menu and this menu contains a range of useful tools.

Licensing: Freeware – donations appreciated.

Settings Interface: See screenshot.

I use it: Several times a week.

Why I like it: It saves lots of typing. The multiple file re-namer is very useful, as is the Copy Path for a file, which copies the full filespec to the clipboard.

Weaknesses: None among the functions I've used.

The competition: I've never looked around for competition to this software, but have seen plenty of single-tool programs.

8. CALIBRE (http://calibre-ebook.com)

Provides access to DRM free ebooks and can convert between various relevant ebook formats.

Licensing: Freeware.

I use it: when I wish to do ebook-type things typically several times a year.

Why I like it: It does everything I want it to in terms of managing my ebooks.

Weaknesses: I haven't found any for my purposes.

The competition: http://www.ebook-software-guide.com and http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_E-book_software. Weirdly enough neither of these sites mentions Calibre.

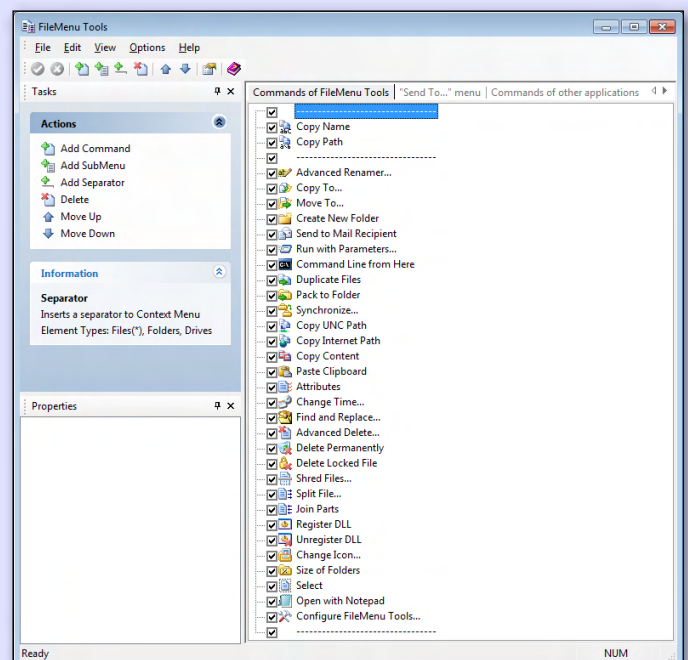## 9. TOPOCR (http://www.topocr.com)
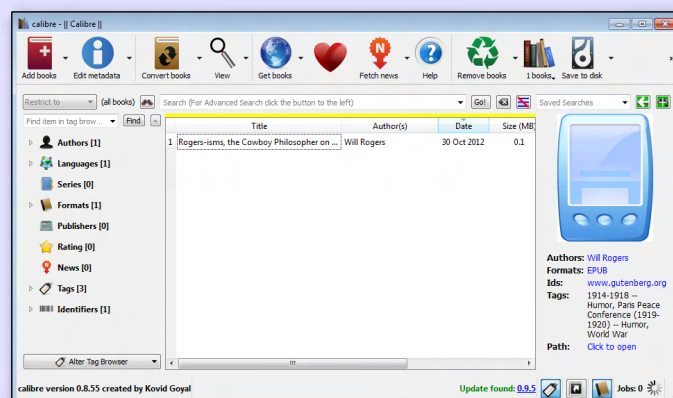
It does text recognition from JPG and a few other bitmap file formats.

Licensing: Freeware.

I use it: To save me typing. As can be seen from the screen grab its output is not 100%. However, more often than not the text recovered can be edited in Word more quickly than by doing original typing.

Why I like it: I don't like it all that much, but it's the best of the ones I tried.

Weaknesses: Makes too many mistakes and produces quite a bit of garbage.

The competition: http://www.makeuseof.com/tag/top-5-free-ocr-software-tools-to-convert-your-images-into-text-nb. This site provides an interesting read. It indicates some Microsoft tools which I need to try. OneNote is not Freeware, but it converted my first trial file perfectly. More experiments give worse results.

10. AUDACITY (http://audacity.sourceforge.net)
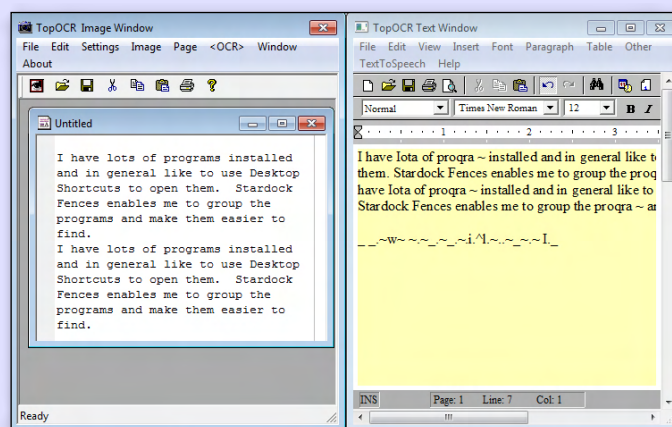
It enables all sorts of manipulation of sound files.

I use it: When I wish to do music type things.

Licensing: Freeware open source.

Why I like it: I used it to record all my LPs to digital format and to clean up many of the unwanted sounds from the records.

From the digital files I was able to make CD of MY favourite tracks, omitting many of the fill-in songs put on many LPs.

Weaknesses: Experts in this field would be better able to comment. The program did what I needed without any significant learning effort.

The competition: Wikipedia at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_free_software_for_audio lists numerous options. I only tried Audacity. ⏻
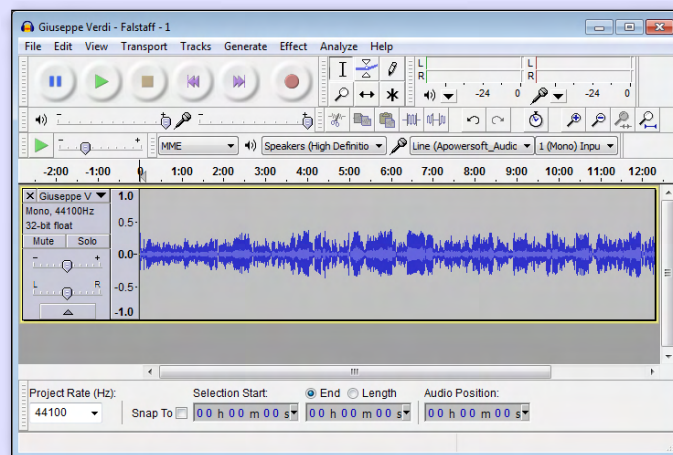
Downloading Programs

By Katharine Shade

Now that you have spotted those useful programs in the "Top 10" reviews and are setting off to download them, let's look at how to protect yourself from unwanted intruders.

Katharine Shade

Downloading programs from CNET and other well-regarded software aggregator sites is generally a safe process (in conjunction with your usual updated spyware/virus software), but there's a BIG catch you need to lookout for, particularly when a "helper" downloader program is part of the process.

Don't blithely click on the "Next" or "Okay" boxes without reading all the text and determining carefully what needs to be (un)selected/ticked/crossed. Unless of course, you don't mind if your browser is invaded by software so that you end up with, as per the example below: a toolbar added; default search provider changed; home page changed; new tab in browsers added; and software added to your browser which includes displaying ads as you browse.

It can also be an issue when installing software directly from a provider's site, particularly if it's shareware/freeware. Eg the latest Adobe Flash Player update also tries to install McAfee Security software.

If you do get stuck, Revo Uninstaller (www.revouninstaller.com/start_freeware_download.html) provides more functionality than Windows Add or Remove Programs.

Here's an example of how careful you need to be. These are screenshots from installing the inSSIDer software (recommended – see George Skarbek's Q&A this month), using CNET's download installer.

STEP 1
So far so good.
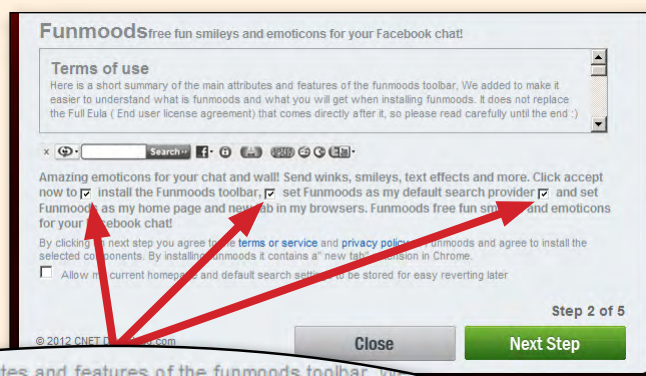
STEP 2a
Uh-oh... See how those three tiny little boxes have been pre-ticked for you? Get your magnifying glass out and untick those suckers.

Don't worry about the bottom one ("Allow my current homepage and default search settings to be stored for easy reverting later"), best not to allow it to do anything.

RETURN TO CONTENTS
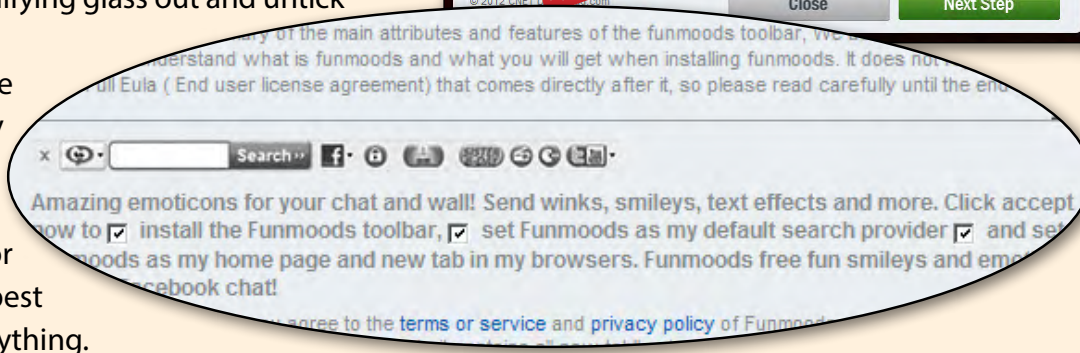
SOFTWARE INSTALLATION: DOWNLOADING
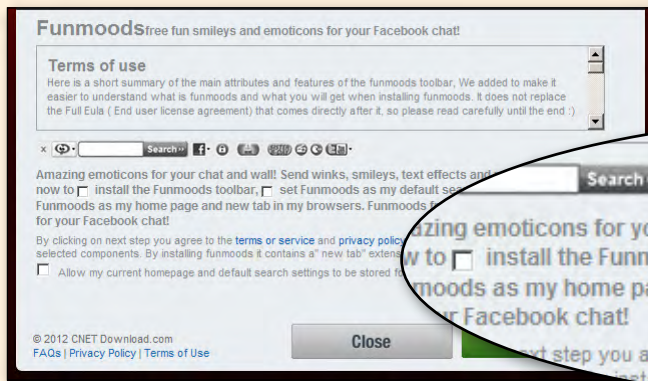
STEP 2b
All clear.
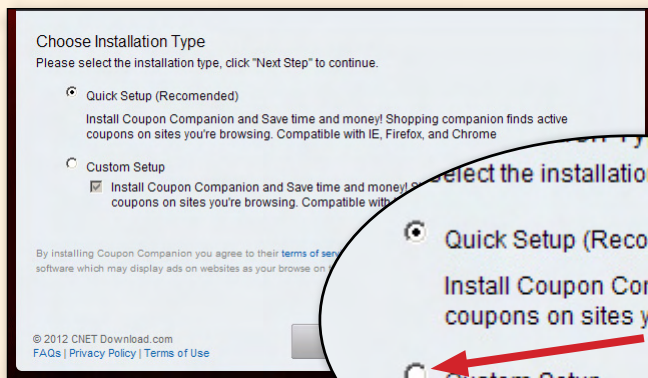
STEP 3a
Don't drop your guard, you're not out of danger yet! If you leave the default option "Quick Setup (Recommended)" selected, you're still going to get all the unwanted additional baggage. So you need to click the "Custom Setup" option.

STEP 3b
But wait, there's more! This won't actually prevent the "Coupon Companion" software being installed as there's another one of those sneaky little tick boxes that has been oh-so-helpfully pre-selected for you. Untick it.
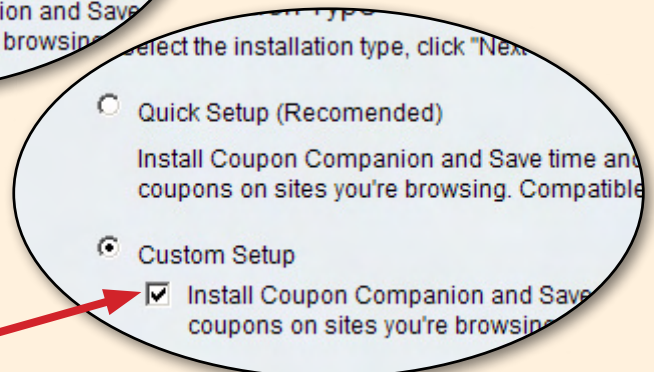
Here's how you want it to look:
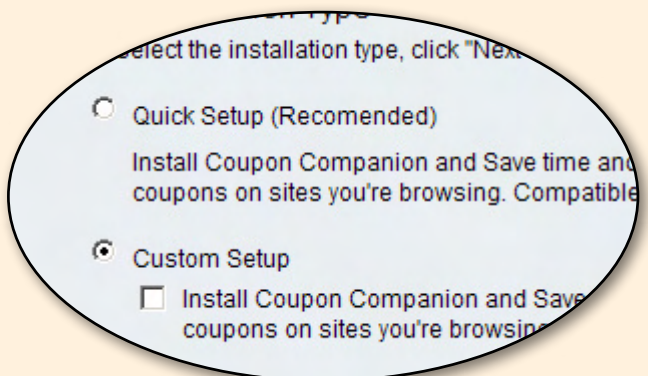
STEP 4
Phew, made it!

Selecting the Panasonic LX7
What do you need in a camera?

George Skarbek
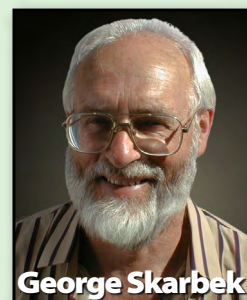
Today virtually everyone has a digital camera and many will have more than one. When deciding what camera to buy when either upgrading your old one or purchasing a new type of camera, you should ask yourself the following questions.

- What subject(s) will you photograph most often?
- What are the largest sized prints that you need?
- Do you want a compact pocket-sized camera or a DSLR (Digital Single Lens Reflex)?
- How would you rate your photography skills and are you keen to improve?
- What other cameras do you own and use?
- What is the maximum zoom that you need?
- Will you take mainly stills, movies or a mixture of both?
- How much are you prepared to spend?

If you considered these questions then you should be ready to narrow your selection to a few models and then you should read two or more reviews on each camera that you are considering.

Do NOT buy a camera just by numbers such as "This camera has X MP (Mega Pixels), X times Zoom and costs only $X". If it has lots of MP and a huge zoom and is cheap, it may mean that it has been compromised in all aspects. The lens may not be quite sharp in the corners, at full zoom it many not focus well and with a lot of MP and a lens that does not let in m uch light you may need bright light to get decent photos. No good for indoors. With lots of pixels on a small sensor, the light gathering ability of each pixel will be limited as they will be tiny.

I am an amateur photographer who enjoys taking photos and one of my cameras is a high-end DSLR. With just one lens the cost was over $5000 in Australia. It is *by far* the most expensive camera that I have purchased (I bought it under $4000 off-shore but with an Australian warranty). I use this a lot and love it. It has many great features but a couple of drawbacks, in addition to the cost. It is big and heavy, nearly two kilograms with the lens, and no ability to automatically focus on moving subjects when filming.

Small high-end cameras

My criterion for purchasing a new camera is that is must have many of the features of my DSLR. It must produce high quality pictures, have a manual mode, be able

shoot in RAW and be okay in low light. The essential criterion is that is must fit into my shirt pocket. When going to a restaurant with friends I do not want to lug the big DSLR. Similarly, the DSLR is not suitable in the cockpit of a small plane.

This narrowed my list to three cameras: Panasonic LX7, Canon's S110 and Sony's RX100. The Sony is a good camera, but the RRP is $800, so it was taken off my list.

LX7

After reading a few reviews, I settled for the Panasonic LX7. So far I have taken nearly 1000 photos and am very happy with it. It is a camera that does most things brilliantly in its Intelligent Auto mode, including scene selection, face detection, blur reduction, HDR (High Dynamic Range), and smart sharpening. In some difficult lighting conditions you can set the speed or aperture or go full manual. The focusing is very fast in all conditions that I used.

It comes with a very bright F1.4 lens which is eight times brighter than my good zoom lens on the DSLR (F4), allowing good photos to be taken indoors without having to use the flash. The Leica lens is very sharp indeed. The screen is very crisp and you can have an electronic level both horizontally and vertically displayed, plus other important information if you desire. This saves time straightening the horizon later in Photoshop or Faststone.

It has a very fast burst mode, with ability to shoot at 5.5 fps (frames per second) with continuous Auto Focus, 11 fps with focusing kept on the first frame shooting at the full 10 MP resolution, or up to 60 fps at 4 MP, which should be just okay for an A4 print without cropping.

It comes with many scene modes and a lot of customising that you can set to your own needs. The in-camera panorama is good and easy to use, and it also has a time lapse option. *[cont...]*
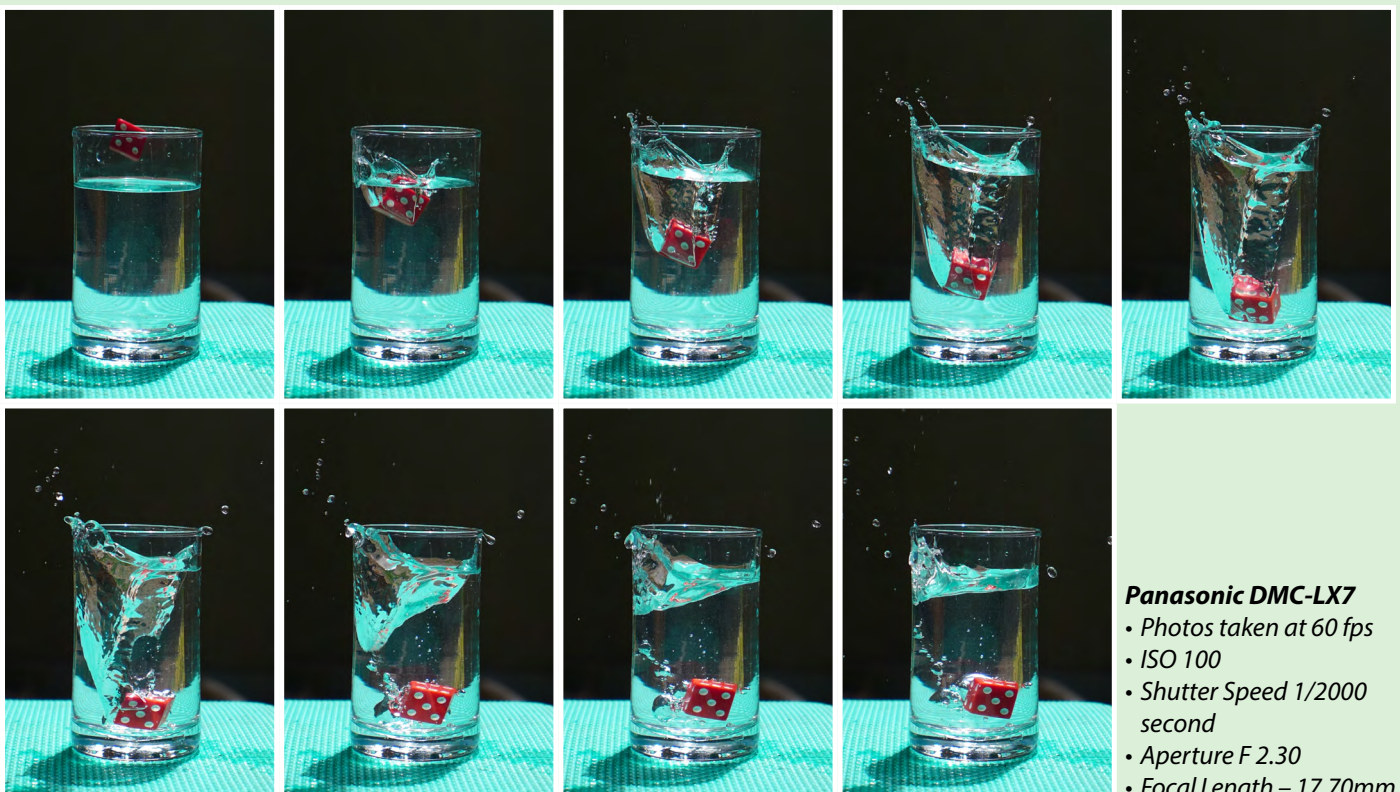
Panasonic DMC-LX7
- *Photos taken at 60 fps*
- *ISO 100*
- *Shutter Speed 1/2000 second*
- *Aperture F 2.30*
- *Focal Length – 17.70mm*

[Selecting the Panasonic LX7, cont.]

On some occasions where there is a great deal of variation in lighting, the HDR setting can create a good photo that otherwise would not be possible. The camera takes several photos at various exposures and then automatically combines these to obtain the high-lights and the best details in the very dark sections into a single photo. Situations where this should be used include taking photos inside a cathedral where if you expose for the stained glass windows the interior would be black. Exposing for the interior would make the bright windows washed out. Using flash inside a large space will not work as the range of the flash is only several meters. Similarly during a sunset with a spectacular sky and a foreground that is of interest. Exposing for either will destroy the other. Using the HDR setting is of great help in these cases.

Movie mode

Its movie mode is great. Full HD, stereo sound, auto focus on moving objects and the abil-ity to zoom and take stills while filming with image stabilization. A built-in neutral density filter allows for taking shots with limited depth of field to make the subject stand out well from the background.

Minor dislikes

Two minor niggles were that unlike the S110, it has a lens cap that must be manually removed, and the full manual is on the CD. To get the most out of it you need that manual which unfortunately does not explain a few aspects very well.

Where to look for reviews

Reviews of the LX7 from authorative websites can be found at:

http://www.photoreview.com.au/reviews/advanced-compact-cameras/fixed-lens/panasonic-lumix-dmc-lx7
http://www.dcresource.com/reviews/panasonic/dmc_lx7-review
http://www.dpreview.com/reviews/panasonic-lumix-dmc-lx7

All have reviews of the competing cameras.

At the time of writing, end of November, the LX7 is $599 at Ted's and $598 at JB-Hi Fi. At eGlobal, (http://www.eglobaldigitalcameras.com.au) where I purchased mine, it is $337 plus postage. It comes with an Australian warranty.

Why not use a phone?

In my opinion, anyone who has purchased a smart phone in the last year or two should not be considering the lower end of the digital camera range, except as a possible gift to a friend who does a bit of photography, who has a very old camera, and does not have a smart phone. This is because all smart phones take very good photos and movies that are as good as the lower end of compact cameras, or possibly even better.

The main disadvantage of using the phone for photography is the ergonomics. They are awkward to use and hold still. Also their flash, if there is one, is very weak and only good for a close portrait shot. Their main and huge advantage is that they are always in your pocket or handbag when you need to take that great shot.

Why buy a DSLR?

Why anyone want to spend $5k to $10k plus on a DSLR can be summarised in a few words: image quality, features and responsiveness. The size of the sensor in a full frame DSLR is over 25 times larger than in the LX7. This means the each pixel has far more light-gathering ability, which translates into a greater dynamic range and much lower noise at high ISO levels and the ISO settings can go to over 100,000, although this is not recommended for normal use. Much greater computing power in the these cameras mean that they can focus and measure the light in sixty different areas in a fraction of a second and have no perceptible shutter lag. The result is that these DSLRs produce better quality images in low light and also in high-contrast situations. Furthermore, if you have deep pockets, then you can purchase several high-quality lenses so that you do not have compromise the optics for any focal length.

Conclusion

For anyone thinking of purchasing a high-end compact camera, the LX7 should be on your short list. ⏻

Top
Using the program setting .

Bottom
Using the HDR setting.

(The Intelligent Auto setting is approximately in the middle of these two).

Microsoft Surface Tablet: Review

Adam Turner

Much more than an iPad clone, Microsoft's Surface is the missing link between tablets and PCs.

Microsoft is late to the consumer tablet party but its new Surface goes much further than Android's efforts to mimic Apple's iGadgets. It's true that the Surface runs the new Modern UI tablet-style touchscreen interface, which is also found on Windows 8 desktops, notebooks and smartphones. But underneath, the Surface actually runs Windows RT, a stripped-down version of Windows 8.

Windows RT is designed to run on mobile-friendly ARM processors rather than Intel and AMD's traditional x86 chips. While the ARM chip helps with mobile performance and battery life, it means you can't install your own desktop software on the Surface – only certified Modern UI apps downloaded from Microsoft's Windows Store. Don't underestimate the impact of this. If you're looking to install your own software such as Photoshop then this isn't the tablet for you. Perhaps wait for the Surface Pro, which will run a full version of Windows 8 on Intel hardware, or look for a third-party Windows 8 device.

Modern UI might come as a shock to the system, but with time you'll find that it can handle many of your day-to-day tasks. You've got access to touch-friendly versions of Internet Explorer, Mail, Skype, Calendar and Contacts. Along with these you'll find a range of content-focused apps such as Music, Photos, Videos, Games, Maps, News and Weather. Everything is tied together with Microsoft's cloud storage and syncing services.

To build on this the Windows Store offers a small but growing range of tablet-style apps – although mostly games at this point. The promise of running the same apps across your Windows 8 desktops, notebooks, tablets and smartphones – all
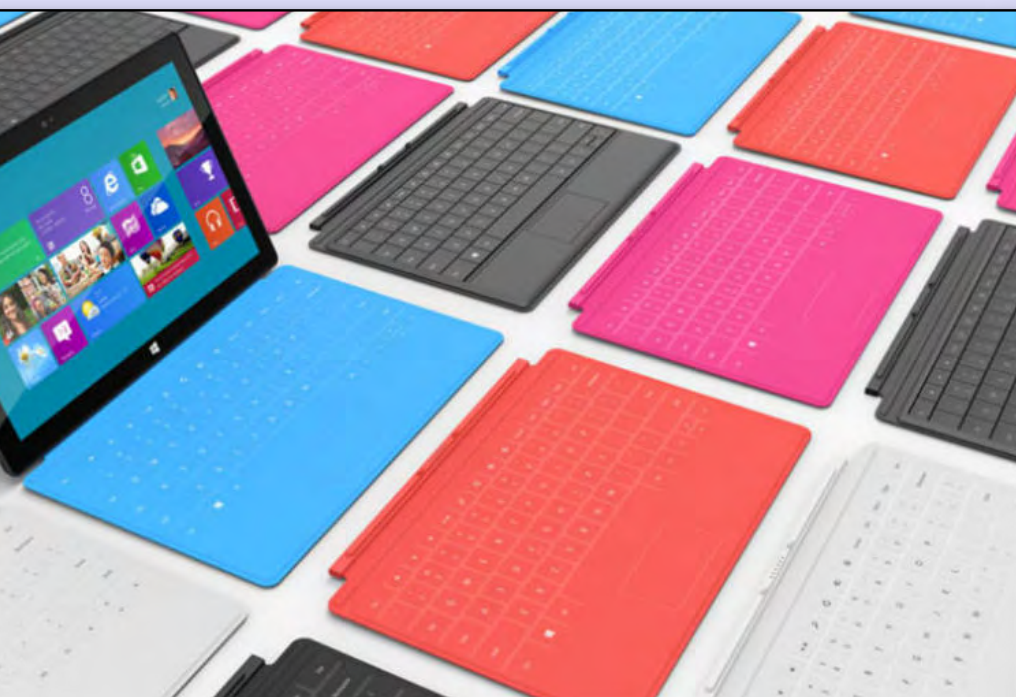
sporting Modern UI – is one of the platform's strengths, if you're prepared to give Modern UI a chance to grow on you.

Like the iPad's single home button, the Surface's one front button takes you back to the Modern UI home screen. As for the hardware, the Surface with its 10.6-inch display comes in slightly heavier and wider than the latest iPad. The beveled edges make the Surface comfortable to hold, although for periods of extended use it's harder on the wrists than Apple's petite new iPad Mini. Even the bulk of a full-sized 9.7-inch iPad, or an Android equivalent, would be less cumbersome than a Surface when employed as a couch-side tablet or a travel companion.

Admittedly at this point the Surface looks like an iPad or Android wannabe, but it has a few surprises in store. You can brush aside Modern UI to find the traditional Windows desktop, although it's missing the iconic Start menu. On the desktop you'll find pre-installed versions of the Office applications Word, Excel, PowerPoint and OneNote. They run like traditional desktop applications rather than in Modern UI. You can also split the screen to run a Modern UI app alongside the desktop, or else two Modern UI apps side-by-side.

Unfortunately there's no desktop mail client, such as Outlook Express, but you can flick back to the Modern UI Mail app. It supports several webmail services along with Exchange and IMAP but surprisingly not POP3 – an odd omission for a seemingly consumer-focused device.

With access to Office applications the Surface's full-sized USB2.0 port and micro-SDXC card slot become more enticing, complementing the 32GB or 64GB of onboard storage. The Surface also offers front and rear cameras along with a micro-HDMI video output, headphone jack, 802.11b/g/n Wi-Fi and Bluetooth 4.0. There's no Ethernet port or optical drive and no sign of 3G/4G mobile broadband models at this stage.

The Surface has one more impressive trick up its sleeve: a magnetic docking point for attaching an optional cover with a built-in keyboard. The $150 Type Cover features a slimline keyboard while the $119 Touch Cover simply has a touch-sensitive keyboard etched into the case. The Touch Cover feels rather odd at first as the keys don't move, but the soft material does yield slightly so it's not as harsh as typing on solid glass using the onscreen keyboard. You've also the option of using an external keyboard and mouse via USB or Bluetooth.

There's a kickstand in the back of the Surface which allows it to sit up on the table when you're watching a movie or typing a document, but unfortunately there's no way to adjust the angle of the screen. It's a minor limitation but could be a constant irritation, especially for people on the go.

The Surface is quite an impressive little bundle, but the big question is; where does it fit in the grand scheme of things? If you won't use the extra features compared to an Apple or Android tablet then they might make more practical alternatives. Yet if you will use the extra features then you might be frustrated with the limitations of Windows RT and prefer something running a full version of Windows 8. But if it's not too hot and not too cold then you might find Microsoft's Surface is just the tablet you've been waiting for. ⏻
$559 www.microsoft.com/Surface

Raspberry Pi Corner

by Lance Lloyd
lance.melbpc@fastmail.fm

There is hardly a day that goes by without another update for the fantastic palm-sized PC, the Raspberry Pi (RasPi), which I wrote about in the September 2012 edition of *PC Update*. The Raspberry Pi Foundation which developed the RasPi is very active and is constantly producing updates and innovations. Further, there is an emerging community supporting each other in our use of the RasPi.

The Foundation has announced a few of major innovations that users should be aware of:

1. The RasPi is now being made in the UK – actually at the Sony Factory in Wales (www.raspberrypi.org/archives/1925);
2. The RasPi now ships with double the RAM of the original (www.raspberrypi.org/archives/tag/ram). It now has 512MB RAM and it has the ability (using an updated firmware) to split the allocation between GPU and CPU depending on the uses you have for your RasPi; and
3. There is a new operating system – the RISC OS - www.raspberrypi.org/archives/2338 - which is free to Raspberry Pi users.

Orders through one supplier at least, Element 14, are now being delivered within a few days (one person reported a record delivery of 20 hours from order to deliver, mine took 36 hours!). I purchased a second RasPi device a few weeks ago and my son and I are fitting it out as a media centre using the software XBMC (http://xbmc.org) from Raspbmc (www.raspbmc.com/about/) or Open Elec (http://openelec.tv). I am still evaluating the options and will report the details in due course!

The internet resources you need to know about to help with your RasPi are:

www.raspberrypi.org
MagPi Magazine www.themagpi.com
GitHub http://quick2wire.com/articles/a-gentle-guide-to-git-and-github/
Baking Pi www.cl.cam.ac.uk/freshers/raspberrypi/tutorials/os/

I hope to write more updates and results on the success or otherwise of my projects with RasPi over time! ⏻

ADOBE VIDEO SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP
NEXT MEETING – THURSDAY, 6TH DECEMBER, 2012

1.30pm in the Main Room 2nd Floor, Melbourne PC Headquarters
479 Warrigal Road, Moorabbin (opposite Bunnings)

http://member.melbpc.org.au/~adobevideo/index.html

Roger Wragg will show us how to calibrate our monitors using the Spyder package.

We will review some of the unsolved problems from November and see if anyone has come up with solutions.

Remember, it may be difficult to address some problems without an example of your project and assets. Please, if appropriate, bring along a cut down version of your project using either the Project Manager or Project Archiver.

Kathy Rouse will also take a look at the basics of using the Adobe Organiser and/or Adobe Bridge to help video editing workflow.

Everything
iPad/iPhone

Convener:
Dick Johnson 9857 7362
E-mail to: applesig@melbpc.org.au
or everything-ipad@ausom.net.au

A joint venture between MelbPC and AUSOM. The emphasis will be on the Apple iPad and iPhone and helping people understand the iOS environment.

Next Meeting: December 19

2:00 pm Reading with the iPad
With Dick Johnson

- Reading newspapers on the iPad – The Age and The Australian
- Reading magazines on the iPad – New Scientist and the latest issue of Women's Weekly

- Going about buying a book for the iPad
- Going about buying a magazine subscription on the iPad
- Reading books on the iPad - using Apple's iBooks app and Amazon's Kindle app

3rd Wednesdays,
2:00 pm–4:00 pm (except January)
Moorabbin Interest Group Room
479 Warrigal Road, Moorabbin

Adobe Video Workshop   Report by Kathy Rouse

1 November
A total of 23 people attended our November meeting.

iPAD
Roger Wragg showed us some of the features of the iPad and recommended that anyone with a similar device download and read the manual to get up to speed. Roger showed how easy it was to connect to TVs and projectors using the supplied cables. The iPad could be particularly useful for enhancing presentations, with the ability to scroll and zoom with your fingers on the iPad screen.

Roger had also taken some high-definition movies with the iPad in .mov format which were very impressive. He converted one of the files to mpg2-hd format using Premiere Pro CS6. The file rendered relatively quickly and the result was excellent and could be viewed using media players that don't recognise the .mov format. We also saw how you could easily use the iPad to stream YouTube and other internet movies on your TV.

George Skarbek told us how he had done quite a bit of testing of the iPad and a similar Android device. As far as value for money and ease of use, he strongly recommends the Android. Not only is it more compatible with your PC, and cheaper to buy, but the open-source nature of Google's OS means there are plenty of fantastic free apps.

ADOBE PREMIERE ELEMENTS 11
We looked at some of the features of Adobe's latest version of Premiere Elements. Adobe has revamped the user interface and added a number of new features. Although it may take some getting used to, it seems to me a great improvement and I would recommend it if you are in the market for a video editor.

There are a number of reviews you can check online. Here is a link to a review on the PC Pro site – http://www.pcpro.co.uk/reviews/software/377164/adobe-premiere-elements-11

UPGRADING TO WINDOWS 8 OR WINDOWS 7
John Hall told us that until 31 January 2013, it could be cheaper to upgrade from Windows XP to Windows 8 Pro, rather than to Windows 7. The current deals are very attractive and John will be giving me more information on this, which I will pass on to you as soon as I have it.

REMOVING COLOUR CASTES FROM OUR VIDEOS
There are times when the white balance and overall colour of our videos is not right. Using PE11, we found a number of tools that you could use to improve the appearance of your clips. Most of these are also available in PE10. We found excellent options in the "Color (RGB)" adjustments effect. You could also try other adjustments such as "Temperature and Tint".

You can find useful information on how to adjust the colour in your clips in the program help files, on the Adobe forums, and on Adobe TV.

PROBLEMS USING FEATURES IN PREMIERE ELEMENTS 9
We had a number of video editing hitches being encountered by one of our members. Unfortunately not all of the problems were solved. If you have any ideas or solutions, I would appreciate it if you could send me an email. Some of the problems were as follows:

My Saved Effects Presets Keep Disappearing.
We didn't have a solution for this one.

Output To DVD, Titles Were Blurry And Video In General Was Flickering.
We didn't have a solution for this one. Please see my note below on bringing in a reduced version of your project and assets for us to demonstrate the problem at our workshops.

Selecting Clips In The Timeline
Using the Selection tool , do any of the following:

- To select a single clip, click the clip in the Timeline. If the clip is linked or grouped, clicking one clip selects the other linked or grouped clips.
- To select only the audio or video portion of linked clips, Alt-click the desired clip.
- To select a single clip within a group, Alt-click the desired clip.
- To select multiple clips, Shift-click each clip you want to select. (Shift-click a selected clip to deselect it.)
- To select sequential clips, drag a rectangle (marquee selection) that includes the clips you want to select.
- To add a range of clips to the current selection, Shift-drag a marquee around the clips.

Remove Applied Effects On More Than One Clip At Once.

We didn't have a solution for this one. However, I will suggest that if you want to clear ALL effects from multiple clips at once you can select the clips, right click and select the option to Remove Effects and choose All Effects, Video Effects or Audio Effects. This will remove all applied effects from selected clips at the one time.

How to Apply Transitions So That They Are Centred.

Notice, in the Timeline view, the little icon that indicates that the transition is being placed in the Centre of the cut when dragging. If you hold down Ctrl while dragging a transition, you will see the icon change which allows you to select Start At Cut, or End At Cut. When you drag to centre a transition, and there are no frames that have been trimmed from both clips, the transition will not centre and will need to be manually adjusted later which will result in repeated frames which may not look as professional. This should be avoided where possible.

Note: For problems that we could not sort out, such as poor output quality, it would be helpful to bring along a smaller version of your project for

us to play with at the next workshop. I suggested using the Project Manager which is the tool in Premiere Pro. In Premiere Elements this tool is called Project Archiver. This was a subject that I covered in our May workshop, which no-one, including myself, could apparently remember yesterday. For details on how to do this please refer to my May report or download the Tutorial titled Archiving Your Projects in Premiere Pro and Premiere Elements by Kathy Rouse which is in the right-hand side bar of our Tutorials page on our site (http://member.melbpc.org.au/~adobevideo/index.html). Just click on the Tutorials button at the top of the Home page.

NEXT MEETING – 6TH DECEMBER 2012

Roger Wragg will show us how to calibrate our monitors using the Spyder package.

We will review some of the unsolved problems above and see if anyone has come up with solutions. Remember, it may be difficult to address some problems without an example of your project and assets. Please, if appropriate, bring along a cut down version of your project using either the Project Manager or Project Archiver.

I will also take a look at how you can use the Adobe Organiser and/or Adobe Bridge to help video editing workflow.

BREAKING NEWS

"I want to transfer some photos to an SD micro card" was the request from a member. A solution was offered of course.

You can ask for help too in the newsgroups.

We have 14 newsgroups, each with a different emphasis. You can read some of the newsgroup conversations by logging into http://forum.melbpc.org.au/newsforum/ with your Melb PC username and password.

To read all of the newsgroups, and when you are ready to start a topic, join a conversation or ask for help, you can setup a newsreader utility on your computer. We will help you with this. Here's the place to start http://member.melbpc.org.au/~anywhere/

AASIG (Newsgroups)

Kevin Martin

In the past month the Anywhere Anytime SIG, the fashionable name for Melb PC Newsgroups, has covered a lot of ground, as it usually does, with members logging in to send comments and questions at just about every time of day. For example:

Much discussion was held over the ongoing subject of abuse to children by various groups, including, but not exclusive to the Catholic Church.

Discussion of whether or not Australia should be following the American Halloween, or is it a Scottish tradition?

Other topics included a wide range of subjects.

- Jean-Philippe Wispelaere, the son of the late Claude Wispelaere (a former Melb PC member who wrote prolifically in the newsgroups), was released from a US prison where he had been held on allegations of spying. He refused to return to Australia and instead went to Canada.
- Pitbull dogs.
- Germany causing problems in Poland when they produce too much energy from wind-power – it overwhelms the local electricity grid. Apparently the north-south cabling in Germany is too small, so it goes in to Poland, to be taken back into Germany further south and is creating problems in Poland.
- Air Koryo – the world's worst airline?
- Melb PC library news.
- Types of lenses in specs – help!
- Weird behaviour of staff in McDonald's drive through.
- The inevitable question – do speed cameras raise revenue?
- The Entertainers
- An example of where crime does pay.
- Science news – Dark Matter. Does it matter?
- More science – Dmitri Mendeleev and the Periodic Table. Pity it looks like a Tetris game!

- Rechargeable batteries – do the new ones give three times the life?
- The new Australian Garden at the Cranbourne Botanical Garden – an excellent job and worth the money.
- The famous US 11 foot 8 inch bridge and the trucks that try to fit underneath!
- Variations in chain store coffee.
- Lake Goldsmith Steam Rally.
- Psychotic people from around the world.
- Be safe – sex relations to stop AIDS.
- Mother accidentally gives lead poisoning to her daughter – by using a lead-based glass for storing breast milk.
- Credit card surcharges.
- Abortion circa 1960s – a despicable practice by the medical profession, when it was illegal.
- Aircraft Museum at Tullamarine.
- Pat Marley – continue to make good progress, Pat!
- Dandenong level-crossing smash – first passenger to die since 1920s. When is the government going to start eliminating railway crossings?
- More science – supernovas.
- Faxing over the internet?
- LTE vs 4G.
- Ringwood Pool backflip.
- Bonfire Blaze Chelsea Lifesavers Club club-rooms destroyed – 5/11/1955.

Of course the inevitable jokes and video links and much, much more.

If none of these subjects inspires you to read, or even better add your knowledge to the newsgroups, then start your own topic!

Access (Database) and Excel   *Craig Evans*

ACCESS TIPS

1. (All versions of Access.) From an Orders data-base, we want to extract the previous 7 days of Orders Received data. The OrderReceivedDate field is auto populated with the single line of code below behind the form.

   Me.OrderReceivedDate = Format(Now(), "dd/mm/yyyy")

The problem with Now() is that it includes the time with the date and therefore contains digits after the decimal. Eg Now() may be 09-Apr-2012 6pm = 41008.75 (as a decimal number). When Now() is converted to a Long number the number will be rounded up if the time is after midday. The function Date() is always midnight, so doesn't have a decimal, and when converted to a Long number the number doesn't round.

The format function is being used to force Access to store the date in Australian format instead of American. The other option is use Clng(), instead of Format(), to convert the Date() to a Long number. It is wise to do something to ensure you have the date stored appropriately.

Using Now() becomes a problem when we request a list of data "between Now() and Now()-7 days". Subtracting 7 days from the date 09-Apr-2012 6pm (41008.75) will return data between 02-Apr-2012 6:00:01pm (41001.7500116) and 09-Apr-2012 6:00:00pm (41001.75).

This represents a partial extract of 02-Apr-2012. If all of 02-Apr-2012 is desired the function Date() is required. This will return data from 02-Apr-2012 to 08-Apr-2012 inclusive (because it ignores the time of day).

2. (Access 2007) When one person is ticked, all people are showing a colour (Image 1a). We only want the person with the tick to show a colour.
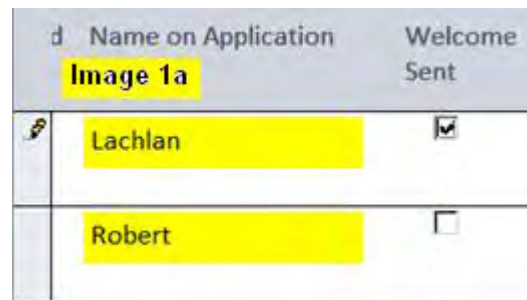
In Form View, right click the form's tab and select "Layout View" (Image 1b).
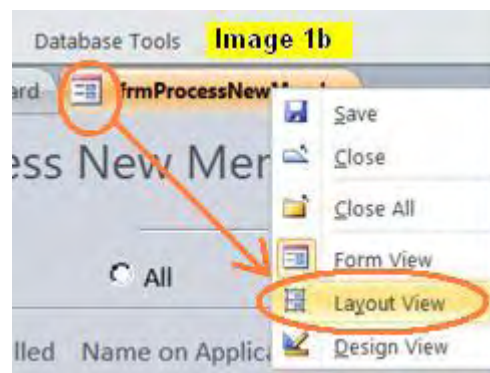
Left click the field(column) that you want to be showing a colour, ie the person's name (Image 1c)

From the menu select Format then Conditional Formatting (Image 1d).

Click New Rule (Image 1e).

Our formula will be Image 1f.
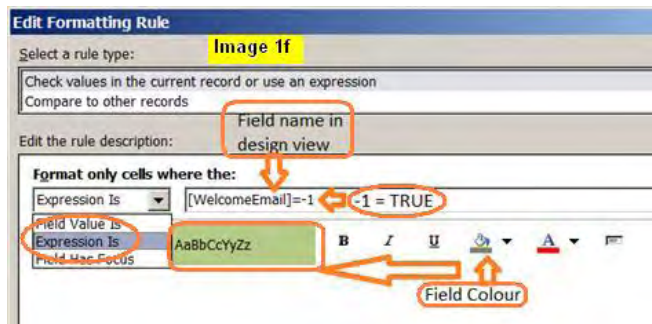
Click Ok until you return to the Form which should look like Image 1g.

BEAST Report (Beginners East)   *Report by Jean de Neef*

21 October 2012
The meeting opened in the usual way. Dave explained the new projector and lectern.

RECENT ACQUISITIONS
One member had bought a tablet reader for $28 from Officeworks, while Dave had acquired a Mini-PC for $42 – a very small one only about 4cm in length, the size of a USB drive.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS
A red shield icon remains in my system tray warning me that my computer protection is off, despite a full scan with MS Security Essentials finding no threats on the computer. Should I just ignore the warning?
Don't ignore it. Open MS Security Essentials and, if Real Time Protection is off, turn it on. Open the History tab to see what's been going on. If you see quarantined files, the info may or may not be correct, but being quarantined, you should be safe! MS Security Essentials turns itself off when updating – or can be purposely turned off by some viruses!
Decchecksetup.exe showed up on my PC. What is it?
Dave searched for this and found it's the Windows

XP video decoder check up utility. This utility checks if you have the codec (code/decode small program) for playing DVDs.
Thunderbird email asks if I wish to compact folders. What will happen if I do?
When you delete email, you leave blank spaces. Compacting will find the empty spaces and squeeze them up, creating more room. You can compact email yourself. In Outlook Express, go to Tools/Options/Maintenance. A word of caution: If you archive email, they will be compressed and placed in an archive folder. And Google seems to indicate that email can be lost through compacting. Thunderbird has a compressing function plus an archiving function.
How can email be hacked?
Dave demonstrated by first changing the properties of the sender (Beast) to a different name, then sending the message to himself. This is called spoofing, and you can get spoofed email from anybody. These messages try to entice you to click on a link in the email. Once you do this, the spoofers can copy a virus to your PC and, especially if you're using Win XP and don't have a firewall, they may get information such as your address book. Once they have this, they can send information to (and

supposedly from) anyone on that list. Another way they can collect addresses is from email to multiple recipients where the sender has not placed the addressees in the Bcc field.

Dave showed spoofed email purporting to be from his bank, Suncorp, Apple and ANZ.

Precautions you should take are: have an antivirus program and a firewall, and be cautious with suspicious looking email.

What do I need to take into consideration when buying a new PC?

Dave referred back to his PowerPoint Presentation of February 2011, entitled *Buying a PC?* There are three key questions to consider: What do I want to do with it? How portable do I need it to be? How much do I want to spend? For example, if you want the computer for emailing, web browsing, storing photos and storing music, you would need a minimal PC with a 250 GB hard drive. A low-end desktop would cost from $400 to $800. It's probably not worth buying secondhand, because there would be no warranty. Note that XP will no longer be supported after April 2014.

After the break there was some discussion about electing members for the new Melb PC committee.

PRESENTATION: WIN 7.5? WIN 8?

Dave advised that Windows 8 would be released on 26 October 2012, with other components being released on 25 and 29 October. Milestone versions of Windows previously released were: Win 1.0 in 1985, Win 95 in 1995, Win XP in 2001, Vista in 2007 and Win 7 in 2009.

There were versions for mobile phones and tablets as well as for PCs.

Mobile phones are usually under 4 inches in size and may have added specials such as GPS. There are also internet phones and smart phones.

Tablets and Notebooks are 7-10 inches in size and include Apple, Android, Linux and others. The MS Surface tablet will be launched on 29 October.

Phablets are devices between these (5-7 inches) and usually include a browser, phone, touch screen, camera, live tiles, hotmail, music, etc.

Dave then showed a video of the Nokia 710 as Windows 7.5 phone, using live tiles to dynamically display information.

So what's Windows 8?

It has live tiles and supports touch screens, but you can also use a mouse. Go to the top right hand corner of the screen to bring up various functions. For the new IE10, the toolbars are removed from the top of the screen to maximise screen display space, but you can go to the side or bottom of the screen if you want them back.

There is no Start button. If you want the Start button, you can get it back – but you don't need it. To find programs, you type two or three of the initial letters to bring up a list. For example, "sk" will bring up SkyDrive.

You don't need to close down programs – it will close some down itself if necessary.

To sign on, you can do so in the conventional way, or use the touch-screen/mouse for gestures, or use a pin number.

What's new and useful in Win 8?

- the active desktop
- cleaner apps – Explorer, IE 10, Task Manager
- better performance – quick start up, shutdown (using a new sleep mode)
- common user interface – phone/tablet/PC
- cloud integration via Skydrive – to sync info across PC, Table and Phone
- better security – MS Security Essentials now built in, renamed as Defender
- lower cost – prices expected to be released at launch

What's wrong with Win 8?

- a learning curve – e.g. no Start button
- will be preinstalled on new PCs from November 2012 – but can downgrade to Win 7
- no media centre – DVD player
- integration over three formats: mobile phone, tablet and PC
- enhanced security, stability

You can try it yourself with a 2.6 GB download (32 bit version) for a 90-day free trial.

Casey
Report by Con Lilley

November 2012

The meeting in November began at 12.30 pm with a short presentation by Jan Weiner on the best way of viewing PDF files since a question had been asked earlier about reading the *PC Update* monthly disk with special reference to the video section of the Monthly Meeting.

Most members found transition via the Index difficult to manage as well moving down a page which is only partially displayed if the font size is enlarged to make reading easy. The copying of text and the creation of PDF files was also covered. An interesting presentation was then made by Dianne Rae who uses Games as a form of mental exercise to maintain active brain function and slow the ageing process. It appears that many members play Solitaire on their laptops as a means of not only exercising the old Grey Matter but also improving dexterity with keys and the use of the mouse.

Casey Workshop
Report by Con Lilley

October 2012

For the October Meeting we had 15 or so present, including a couple of Mentors.

There were again some newcomers with their own laptops or notebooks who were interested in setting up and experimenting with the Web before committing themselves to signing up with an internet provider. There was some difficulty in connecting with the internet for some, which turned out to be a temporary overload of the system due to other users in the area, but this did not cause too much inconvenience since not all present at the workshop wanted to be connected to the Net at the same time. Priority was given to those actually wanting to download items.

There were some recurring problems which came under the general heading of systems taking too long to boot up or general sluggishness when running programs.

On analysis the problems again stemmed from having too many programs in Startup menus, as well as the presence of files no longer in use.

Members were encouraged to vote at the forthcoming AGM on Wednesday 7 November when two of the Casey members were candidates for the MELBPC Committee. The Casey Christmas breakup is at Foodstar on Friday 14 December and names and payments were taken at the meeting.

November

For the November Meeting we had 15 present, and it was good to see newcomers with their own laptops or notebooks. Some members had also brought along their iPads so the worktable was well-filled with a variety of equipment. Fortunately there were ample power sockets available.

There were some recurring problems which seem to be fairly standard for members when they first come along, but many seem to come along just to share experiences and the fellowship.

A general clearing up of unwanted files was, as usual, encouraged, and most problems were resolved on the day.

Congratulations were conveyed to Jan Weiner and Jan Whitaker, two hard working Casey members, who were successful in the November elections for the Melb PC Committee. In spite of heavy workloads outside the Melb PC Interest Groups, the two Jans have found time to take on these other commitments.

Those at the workshop who are conscious of the help they provide there, expressed the hope that they would not burn themselves out, but would be assisted by other members in the provision of

an interesting programme for 2013.

"Members helping Members" has a wider meaning than just providing tips on how to get your computer working again!

The Casey Christmas breakup is at Foodstar on Friday 14th December and names and payments were taken at the meeting.

Eastsig   *Report by Clive Chatfield*

November 2012

Paul welcomed six newcomers to the well-attended meeting before passing over to George for Q & A.

How can I find whether my phone, a Galaxy, has international roaming?

It depends on the carrier, the communication frequency and the phone model, and, if it doesn't receive the frequency used in the country, it will not work there, regardless of the carrier. If it's a recent Galaxy, it will be tri-band or even four-band which will work anywhere in the world, and the hardware side will work, but check with the carrier. Also beware: if you are in America or Europe and someone there rings you, they will be paying local call rates but you will be paying several dollars a minute.

How do I increase the number of pixels in a photo?

It requires specialised software based on fractals, such as Photoshop and Photoshop Elements or even the free programs such as IrfanView and Fastone. To increase, don't go from small to large in one step unless you are using dedicated and expensive software; instead, take several steps; the software interpolates between pixels and, while a single large increase will be badly pixelated, small increases allows it to interpolate gradually. The result often can be quite good,but not if the camera has low resolution because the program can't insert missing pixels; so don't expect a large picture if the original was taken with a phone.

Recently, when trying to print from WordPad, the printer runs but the result is a blank page. It has printed normally in the past and still does with other programs.

Try cut and paste into Notepad and print from there. Notepad is basic, has no properties and feeds direct, unformatted text to the printer. A suggestion is to check the colour setting in WordPad. Also, try cut and paste into Word or, if you don't have Word, Open Office Writer. This copies the selection complete with formatting. (Open Office is an very good and completely free open-source alternative to MS Office.)

As Windows 7 does not support Outlook Express, how do I copy saved email from an XP computer to a new Windows 7 computer?

Use Windows Live Mail with Windows 7. For email click the upper left corner of Windows Live Mail and, from the drop-down menu, click Import Messages. For addresses, click Contacts near the lower left corner; then click the drop-down arrow on Import and click Windows Address Book. With a network, Windows Live Mail can be pointed directly to the sources on the XP computer; otherwise, copy the address book, .wab and the email, *.dbx, files as separate sub-folders into a folder on a flash drive. Note that Windows Live Mail can become sluggish with anything more than about 4 to 5 MB of backed-up files.

Using Eudora for email, how do I open Winmail. dat attachments from a friend who uses Outlook?

This is a recognised problem. Three methods that could be used by the sender are outlined in Microsoft knowledge base kb/278061 (type winmail.dat into Google Search). For the recipient, use the freeware program, Winmail.dat Reader.

Use of WiFi for overseas banking.

WiFi is very risky. An internet cafe with wired internet is marginally less so but, while access may

be to a secure site, i.e., https://, while it is generally unlikely, there might be software such as a key logger on the cafe computer. The safest approach is log on and, as password cracking can take an appreciable time, carry out banking as quickly as possible and log off; then log on again for browsing where security in no longer a concern.

Following Q & A, Stewart Bedford gave a comprehensive presentation on setting up a wireless router to form a home network, covering the reasons for having such a network; the equipment that would use it, both for internet access and interaction within the network; the need for security, by WEP or, preferably, WPA2 encryption, because it is, in effect, a WiFi hotspot; access restriction by MAC (Media Access Control) address filtering; allocation of IP addresses to hardware items, and general configuration, much of which can be left as the default settings.

After the break, to help with deciding on topics for future presentations, Frank Maher made a brief survey of owners of smart phones, tablets and ultrabooks or laptops, and their operating systems.

Paul then handed over to Dave Botherway, who introduced Jan Whitaker from Casey Interest Group, at the same time taking the opportunity to congratulate both Jan and Cindy Perry on their election to the Melb PC Committee.

Jan's subject was

"An Introduction to Google Goodies," a tour of some of the features Google has added to the search engine.

There are two versions, Google.com and Google.com.au, which are becoming more and more diverse. Jan showed the difference between these and gave a general, comprehensive and much appreciated demonstration of the versatility of Google Chrome.

Dave closed the meeting with a reminder that East's Christmas barbecue will precede the December meeting, details of which will appear in the next newsletter. He also reported that the increased door charge (from 1 to 2 dollars) has enabled the purchase of not only a new and much improved projector, but also a new wide-screen which will replace the (identical) screen used at tonight's meeting. A badly-needed improved sound system will follow when sufficient funds become available.

Making Money on the Internet   *Report by Paul Hemsworth*

November 2012

On this, our last gathering for this year, our convenor spoke about the difficulty of finding presenters to speak to our group. This is mainly due to the specialised nature of our topic. Because of this he asked if members felt it was worthwhile to continue into next year. It was almost unanimously agreed that we should continue. Members felt that the meetings were a valuable forum for leaning from each other by pooling our own resources.

Changes to Google's algorithms is a recurring theme of our discussions. Many people have suffered dramatic losses of traffic due to the latest changes related to backlinks. Previously all backlinks were a plus, or at worst of no value. Since the

Panda update, poor quality or irrelevant backlinks are a minus and so can detract from a ranking.

Google Webmaster Tools has introduced a "Disavow Backlinks" tool. This is a notification from a site owner to Google that a particular backlink in not to be considered when the site is being ranked. Google stresses that this tool is only to be used after all other avenues of having backlinks removed have failed. As such it will only be used by a small minority of site owners.

As a flow-on from this there now is talk of "Natural" SEO (Search Engine Optimising). Natural SEO is a return to the old ways of providing value for visitors in the form of good content etc. It means getting away from bought backlinks, regur-

gitated content and other shonky ways of trying to improve ranking. We watched a short video from Market Samurai which explained this approach. It suggested that instead of outsourcing content via Elance or similar sites the process could be out-sourced using a "virtual assistant" to reduce time needed.

Discussing Elance afterwards it was suggested that many respondents to these sites have au-tomated replies which promise the world. One suggested way to get around this is to ask three questions in the request for quotation. The questions can be completely irrelevant e.g. "What break-fast cereal do you eat?" If they are not answered it is an indication of an automated reply. At the very least it indicates that the respondent doesn't heed requests.

Forums are very useful in that content has to be written only once but can then be used many times. HootSuite for instance automatically publishes to MySpace, Facebook, LinkedIn and other Social Media as, and when, directed. Basic HootSuite is available free or as a paid version with more features.

Dragon Dictate was suggested as a tool for those who wish to write content for blogs etc but have minimal typing skills. It claims 98% accuracy.

Another member demonstrated how to post a message with photo on Twitter.

Finally we were given a run-though of Google+ as used by a member in his business. This is a big topic and because of time restraints he was able only to skim the whole process.

He started from the very beginning setting up a profile. With an already prepared article he showed how the G+ button linked to his website and other profiles.

Although analysis of his hits revealed that only 2% originated from G+ compared with 50% from LinkedIn, these visitors stayed longer and perused more pages. In other words they were better qualified. He suggested that Google Webmaster Tools, Google Analytics and Bing Webmaster were essential to understanding what was happening with visitors to his website. Also he cautioned that Google Analytics only produces statistics for the pages it is on.

It appears that G+ is a response to Facebook.

Northern Suburbs Linux   *Report by Paul Addis*

October 2012

The meeting opened with another edition of *Linux News*. The first part briefly traced recent Linux developments. Linux is the largest example of collaborative development, with some 8,000 developers from 800 organisations contributing code or contributing in other ways. There are now approximately 15 million lines of code in Linux. Changes to the kernel are organised as "patches", which have to be tested and approved – ultimately by the chief developer – before incorporation into the kernel. A new version of the kernel is released each 2-3 months, and will typically contain around 10,000 patches.

The second item concerned Ubuntu and its

changed financing model. Now the Ubuntu down-load page contains a request for the downloader to make a contribution to Ubuntu to help with financing future releases and the maintenance of current ones. The final item was a pitch on a device called Lamp Cloud, a lamp that shows the time and changes colours automatically. A sort-of Lava Lamp that runs Linux, the mind boggles!

Then came the fourth in David Hatton's informa-tive CLI Corners. This month's session was about the "tar" and "gzip" commands, and included the solution to last month's puzzle. The notes of this month's CLI Corner and the puzzles can be found on our website at http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~nslig/

Only a couple of additions to the repository this month. Don't forget to bring a USB key to the next meeting if you want any of the repository items – the details for each month's updates are also on our website.

After a brief question and answer session, the social break was taken so that discussion could continue without having to take into account a speaker at the front of the room.

Rob Brown (Welcome back, Rob) provided the main presentation of the evening, the subject being the Raspberry Pi credit card-sized computer.

The device is being developed and marketed by a foundation, and was introduced in February 2012 with an expectation of selling around 10,000 units, mainly with the aim of helping children to learn about computers in a low-cost way.

Around half a million have been sold so far, after the technically-minded members of the community became aware of it. Sales continue apace, with numerous somewhat similar devices coming onto the market.

One of the neat inclusions to Raspberry Pi is a set of general purpose input/output pins called GPIO. These can be programmed individually, making it work as a programmable controller. There are legions of projects documented on the internet for the Raspberry PI to do such things as control of robots, acting as a wireless router, running a drum set or being a Bluetooth/wireless music player. Rob is using his as a media centre, and briefly demonstrated the setup for that task.

The audience really appreciated Rob's time and effort, and several people wanted to spend time with him discussing the device (or should it be called a machine?) and his use of it.

November 2012
Quite a few additions to the repository this month, listed below:
- Libre Office 3.6.3;
- Puppy Linux 5.4.1 – Precise Puppy;
- VirtualBox 4.2.4;

- Clonezila 2.0.0.34-x686;
- Gparted 14.0.2;
- Parted Magic 2012.10.10;
- System Restore CD x86-3.1.0;
- Ubuntu 12.10 32 and 64 bit;
- Kubuntu 12.10 32 and 64 bit;
- NAS4Free 9.1.0.1.4.57 32 and 64 bit.

If you want a copy of any repository item, please remember to bring a USB memory stick or USB hard disk to the next meeting.

We have been able to secure the Watsonia meeting room for most of the 2013 meetings, the first exception being January. The library suggested an alternative date, but it was too early in the month for our purposes. As a consequence, there will be no meetings in December 2012 or January 2013. The next group meeting will be on the third Monday of February 2013 (February 18th). Any changes will be posted on the SIG website at http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~nslig/

Nick Vespo was not able to be at the meeting, but nonetheless a Linux video was shown at the start of the meeting. Thanks for the links Nick. The main video was of a Raspberry Pi Foundation person talking about the device and promoting its capabilities. The later part of the long presentation was not shown, because it became very technical. That was followed by a brief segment showing Linus Torvalds discussing Secure Boot and its likely impact on Linux. The net of the discussion seemed to be that secure boot is desirable, but the way it is implemented may not be good for Linux distributions and users.

For the CLI Corner session, David Hatton discussed Midnight Commander. This is a text-based program similar to other "Commander" programs, such as Norton Commander and Total Commander. At base, it is a two-pane file manager whose execution is started from a terminal such as xterm. The program lists the functions that can be performed via function keys near the bottom of its window. But it should be noted that if Midnight Commander (MC) is started from Gnome

Terminal, MC will not get the F10 key: instead, Gnome will intercept F10 and not interpret it as a "close program" request for MC.

MC has many capabilities beyond those shown as function key commands, and some of these were demonstrated. There was no quiz question for this month, but if there had been one, it might have been along the lines of "find a file-related function that MC cannot do".

There being no significant questions posed via email or at the meeting, attendees enjoyed a pleasant social break – the last of the year for the group. After beverages had been drunk, biscuits consumed and much conversation indulged in, it was time for the main session of the evening.

David Hatton gave one of his much-appreciated Random Bytes sessions. For those members who run Windows as well as Linux, David drew attention to magazine articles claiming to have "fixed Windows 8". In fact one of the fixes is to allow the use of the MIT licensed free and Open Source (FOSS) ClassicShell. Many Windows 8 users have very much missed the classic Start menu, and will be grateful for its re-appearance.

David then re-booted his machine into Bodhi Linux to show the Enlightenment desktop (the E17 version). Bodhi is another "minimal" Linux, with just enough features etc. for the user to get going. Additional programs can be downloaded and installed from the repositories.

Enlightenment (E17) is also lightweight and fast in operation, even on relatively old equipment using elaborate desktop graphical widgets and decorations. The developers claim that it does not compete with Gnome or KDE, but is a new way of visualising the desktop. E17 is currently still in development, with the full release due on 21st December 2012.

The backup program rdiff-backup was also briefly covered. Basically, the program backs up one directory to another, possibly over a network. Also, it is more than a simple backup/restore program: it has the ability to track changed files over time. The idea is to combine the best features of mirrors and incremental backups. A very useful addition to the Linux armoury.

The evening was a successful conclusion to the Northern Suburbs Linux SIG's year.

Newsgroups

See Anywhere, Anytime SIG.

Yarra Ranges   *Report by John Sapsford*

October 2012
We had 17 members in attendance. Shane Mason acted as convener in Bryan Paten's absence.

We discussed new software and hardware that members had acquired during the previous month:

Peter reported his purchase of a Toshiba external 1Tb USB 3.0 hard drive for $90. John bought a watch tool on eBay for $5.95. It opens the back of a watch to replace the batteries. The battery bought from Jaycar cost $1.95. A local jeweler wanted $18.50 to replace a watch battery.

We had a discussion about Windows 8 released this month. A few members had tried the Consumer Preview.

Dave Botherway may be able to give a presentation and demonstration of Windows 8 at the November meeting.

Harold demonstrated Diagram Designer from Meesoft. A copy of the program is available on the

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP REPORTS

Melb PC Monthly disc for December 2011.

Shane gave a demonstration of the Lenox hardware for converting vinyl records and cassettes into MP3 digital files. It saves the file to a USB stick or Micro SD card.

For more information about digital sound refer to Australian Personal Computer August 2012 "Introduction to Digital Sound" workshop.

After morning tea we discussed Firefox Extensions, in particular the Video Download Helper. It downloads Flash or MPEG-4 format video files.

We looked at some recent videos from the internet. Of particular interest were the Corning Glass videos "A Day Made Of Glass" and "How They Do It in China"about building a hotel in China.

"John's Background Switcher" for Windows XP was demonstrated. It uses your personal photos to create a changing wallpaper show. The timing of the changes can be adjusted.

We discussed the Oracle "Virtual Box" and Microsoft "Steady State" programs.

Members had some interesting computer problems. One dealt with computer processes.

November 2012

The meeting started at 9.15 am with 16 members in attendance. Bryan welcomed everyone and in particular, our Guest Speaker Dave Botherway. Bryan reminded everyone about the final year meeting and Christmas lunch on December 18th. We also decided to have our first meeting for 2013 on Tuesday January 22nd.

Dave Botherway was introduced and he gave the members a PowerPoint presentation covering all aspects of Windows 8.

Windows 8 is designed to give a similar interface on Windows Phone, Windows Surface, netbooks and desktop computers.

FEATURES:
- No "Start" button: the "Metro" has a display of tiles which are automatically updated.
- You can easily switch between "Metro" and

the Desktop.
- Microsoft Explorer has a ribbon.
- Microsoft Internet Explorer 10 is easier to use with tabs. Improved and quicker start-up and sign-out.
- Uses fewer resources than Windows 7.

WHAT'S NEW?
- An Active Desktop.
- Cleaner Applications and better performance.
- A common uses interface. Cloud integration synchronized across three platforms.
- Improved security and lower costs. At present an upgrade costs around $39.95 until the end of January 2013.

DISADVANTAGES:
- A learning curve to understand the new interface. No "Start" button.
- No Media Centre. Free download only until the end of January 2013.
- Microsoft Internet Explorer Version 10 is different.
- Upgrading from Windows XP may be difficult.

REACTIONS:
- Performance is better.
- Security is improved.

VERSIONS:
- Windows RT (Surface Tablet)
- Windows 8 Professional includes encryption.
- Lower priced upgrades until the end of January 2013.
- Microsoft has a downloadable program called 'Upgrade Assistant' (5.2 MB) to check your current system before upgrading.
- A 90-day free trial version is available as a download from the Microsoft web site. It is still available.

After morning tea there was our usual question

and answer session.

Topics included: Touch screens for Windows 8, a discussion about the future of the PC User Group monthly magazine. And the potential value of Gizmos' freeware.

Bryan mentioned a recent article in *The Age's* Green Guide about Windows 8, written by Charles Wright.

The meeting, which was very informative, closed at 11.40 am. This was followed by the usual Workshop session.

The next meeting and Christmas lunch will be at Japara House, Montrose on 18th December at 9.15 am.

BREAKING NEWS

Mention was made of (our president) Charles Wright's quarterly article in the The Age "Green Guide" and his recommended components for a new computer. A member wondered where you would take the components for assembling.

*Our Melb PC committee must have been reading the newsgroups. They are considering offering a club workshop solution for "build your own computer" activities.

We have 14 newsgroups, each with a different emphasis. You can read some of the newsgroup conversations by logging into http://forum.melbpc.org.au/newsforum/ with your Melb PC username and password.

To read all of the newsgroups, and when you are ready to start a topic, join a conversation or ask for help, you can setup a newsreader utility on your computer. We will help you with this. Here's the place to start http://member.melbpc.org.au/~anywhere/

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK?
Check the Calendar on pages 12-13.

IS THERE A SIG NEAR YOU?
Any suburb
Anywhere, Anytime
Avondale Heights
Essendon
Ballarat
Ballarat
Balwyn
Video Inner East
Brighton
Bayside
Camberwell
New Users East
Footscray
West
Gisborne
Macedon Ranges
Hampton Park
Casey
Hoppers Crossing
Wyndham

Ivanhoe
North East, North East Android, North East Daytime & Photography/Digital Imaging, North East Genealogy
Montrose
Yarra Ranges SIG & Workshop
Mornington
Peninsula
Mount Waverley
East Workshop,
Multimedia Home Entertainment
Sunbury
Sunbury
Watsonia
Northern Suburbs Linux
Vermont South
Beginners East, East, Genealogy
Moorabbin
Access, Adobe Video, Communications, E-Book, Everything Apple, Graphics/Animation, Linux & Open Source, MACE, Making Money on the Internet, Microcontroller, Microcontroller Workshop, Music, Programming, Retired and Interested Persons, WAFFLE, WASINT, Website Design, Windows Advanced

TRAINING SCHEDULE DEC 2012 – FEB 2013

Enquiries: Patrick Brennan 0432 032 388
To book any course, visit: melbpc.org.au/training and pay by Credit Card via
PREFECT SYSTEMS (our authorised booking agency), using links provided.

Date session 1	Date session 2	Date session 3	Course name	Start time	End time	Trainer
Sat 1st Dec 212			Video Editing with Corel VideoStudio	9:30 AM	4:30 PM	Patrick Brennan
Mon 3rd Dec 212	Mon 10th Dec 212		Introduction to Quickbooks	9:30 AM	4:30 PM	Cathy Fanning
Mon 3rd Dec 212	Mon 10th Dec 212	Mon 17th Dec 212	Programming Microsoft Excel with VBA 2003 2007 210 – Night	6:30 PM	9:30 PM	Peter Harvest
Tue 4th Dec 212	Tue 11th Dec 212		Introduction to Microsoft Excel 2003 2007 210	9:30 AM	4:30 PM	Peter Harvest
Thu 6th Dec 212	Thu 13th Dec 212		Websites Made Easy with Joomla – Night	6:30 PM	9:30 PM	Mohan Gupta
Fri 7th Dec 212	Fri 14th Dec 212		Build a Website with Dreamweaver	9:30 AM	4:30 PM	Kenn Tetley
Sat 15th Dec 212			Database driven websites with PHP and MySQL Level 2	9:00 AM	4:30 PM	Patrick Brennan
Mon 14th Jan 213			Video to DVD and DivX	9:30 AM	12:45 PM	Patrick Brennan
Tue 15th Jan 213			Database driven websites with PHP and MySQL Level 1	9:30 AM	4:30 PM	Patrick Brennan
Sat 19th Jan 213			Database driven websites with PHP and MySQL Level 1	9:30 AM	4:30 PM	Patrick Brennan
Mon 21st Jan 213			Video Editing with Corel VideoStudio	9:30 AM	4:30 PM	Patrick Brennan
Tue 22nd Jan 213			Home Networking with Windows XP and Windows 7	9:30 AM	4:30 PM	Patrick Brennan
Sat 26th Jan 213			Database driven websites with PHP and MySQL Level 2	9:00 AM	4:30 PM	Patrick Brennan
Mon 28th Jan 213			Vinyl and Cassette to CD and MP3	9:00 AM	1:30 PM	Patrick Brennan
Tue 29th Jan 213			Database driven websites with PHP and MySQL Level 2	9:00 AM	4:30 PM	Patrick Brennan

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP DETAILS

SIGS ARE THE LIFEBLOOD OF MELBOURNE PC USER GROUP

Groups of members with specific interests meet regularly to discuss and indulge their interests in a wide range of topics.

This is where Melb PC membership really pays off and you gain all the benefits. Enhance your computer knowledge and widen your circle of friends to include others who have similar interests and very often, similar problems to solve.

Attending a SIG and meeting other members not only helps to enhance your knowledge and understanding of the specific topic. Often you will see presentations by visiting experts and the value of that is clear to all.

All members are most welcome. This is part of your Melb PC membership, so feel free to contact any of the conveners listed here. Ask them about future meetings; ask them about the format of their meetings and anything else you need in order to get started.

ACCESS (DATABASE) AND EXCEL

access@melbpc.org.au

http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~access/

2nd Monday 6.30pm-8.30pm (except January)
Moorabbin Interest Group Room.
Craig Evans Craig_Evans@racv.com.au

The Access SIG provides an environment in which people can help each other to improve their skills with Microsoft Access. At each meeting there are presentations by members that are designed to cover the scope of Access during a year. Q&A segments are held at each meeting. Members may also address questions to the SIG mailing list and receive opinions for possible solutions.

ADOBE VIDEO

adobevideo@melbpc.org.au

http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~adobevideo/

1st Thursday, 2.00pm-4.00pm (except January)
Moorabbin Interest Group Room.
Kathy Rouse 9580 6386

The Adobe Video SIG is aimed at videographers, from beginners to the more experienced, wishing to edit and enhance their home videos using Adobe software. The group has lively interactive presentations from various members using the video editing programs Premiere Pro and Premiere Elements. The workshop also includes tips and techniques, shared by the members, on the use of other Adobe software such as Photoshop, Illustrator and After Effects.

ANYWHERE, ANYTIME (NEWSGROUPS)

anywhere@melbpc.org.au

http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~anywhere/

Time 24/7 location as you choose. Kevin Martin (evening only) 9723 5997 or 0407 343 162

The Anywhere, Anytime SIG provides a 24-hour, 7-day-a-week and always-easily-accessed place for all members of the Melb PC User Group to read and write comments, to ask questions on computing or non-computing topics, to receive replies from other Club members and to read their exchanges between each other.

BALLARAT

ballarat@melbpc.org.au

1st Thursday 7.30pm-9.45pm Midlands Golf Club Heinz Lane Ballarat. Alan Pittard 5339 4235

Ballarat is a general purpose SIG. Usually we have no specific topic; it suits everyone at present to let the meeting run in a direction that is topical

on the night. From time to time we have a guest speaker/presenter on something of particular interest to us at the time but free form seems the norm at present.

BAYSIDE

bayside@melbpc.org.au

http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~bayside/

3rd Thursday 10.00am-12 noon St Stephens Church Hall Cnr Cochrane Street & North Road Brighton. Beginners' subgroup meets 12 noon-1.00pm after the main meeting. John Morris 9583 4095 Graham Ackland 9589 6229

BEGINNERS EAST

beast@melbpc.org.au

3rd Sunday 10am-12.30pm (January to November) and 2nd Sunday 10am-12.30pm (December) Vermont South Community Centre Karobran Drive Vermont South Melway 62 G7. Dave Botherway

The East Beginners Group demonstrates how to set up and maintain a computer, how to run software, scan documents, process images, sort out error messages, etc. All procedures are repeated (slowly) until members feel confident with the new knowledge.

CASEY

casey@melbpc.org.au

http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~casey/

2nd Friday of month 12.30pm-3.00pm (except January public holidays)

Hampton Park Community House: 16-20 Stuart Ave. Hampton Park Melway 96 E8. Jan Weiner 9560 6924 Phillip Roche 9796 2384
Casey offers a friendly, social atmosphere where our members learn from, support, encourage and help each other on computer and communications topics. The Hampton Park meeting is based on presentations and Q&A.

CASEY WORKSHOP

casey@melbpc.org.au

http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~casey/

4th Friday of month 10am-12.30pm

Hampton Park Community House: 16-20 Stuart Ave. Hampton Park Melway 96 E8. Jan Weiner 9560 6924 Phillip Roche 9796 2384

Please bring your Laptop or your complete PC if you need assistance. Windows 7 help will be available. Wi-Fi updating is possible using the Internet available on-site. It Notify Jan Weiner, weijan@melbpc.org.au or Phone: 9560 6924, of your intention to attend.

COMMUNICATIONS

comms@melbpc.org.au

2nd Wednesday 7.00pm-9.30pm (except January) Moorabbin Interest Group Room. Philip Lew 9822 2998 BH

The Communications SIG focuses on all aspects of computer connectivity. Topics include modem communications (BBS and internet dialup); Client/Server software, HTML and other internet related topics. We also cover topics on Computer Networking (LANs and WANs) and other relevant general telecommunications issues of interest to the well-connected PC user.

E-BOOK

ebook@melbpc.org.au

2nd Thursday (except January) 7.00pm Melbourne PC User Group Meeting Rooms. Dennis Fieldhouse 9557 6847 Keith Younger 0414 945 791

The E-Book SIG is a forum for the sharing of information, experiences and ideas relating to the broad field of ebooks and e-readers. At present the range of ebook readers is rapidly expanding and costs are falling, yielding great scope for reviews and performance comparisons. Purchase of ebooks and the software for this purpose is worthy of study as are the various programs for manipulating and editing of text.

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP DETAILS

EAST

east@melbpc.org.au

http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~east/

2nd Wednesday 7.30pm-10.00pm (except January) Vermont South Community House Karobran Drive Vermont South Melway 62 G7. Paul Woolard 9877 1059 Ian Dewhurst 0438 480 500

At East we provide an entertaining and informative session covering a range of computer topics for all levels, some from invited speakers and some from our own members. George Skarbek hosts the popular Q&A segment.

EAST WORKSHOP

eastwsh@melbpc.org.au

http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~eastwsh

2nd Sunday 10.00am-4.00pm Wadham House 52 Wadham Parade Mt Waverley rear of Library Melway 61 E12. Ken Gubbins 9898 5478 Jeff Webster 9897 1037

The East Workshop is hands-on, practical, interactive and runs on "Show me how, and I'll do it with your assistance". We handle "how to upgrade", "software doesn't run", "slow computer", "no sound", "no video" problems, and more. Bring your computer.

ESSENDON

essendon@melbpc.org.au

http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~essendon

1st 2nd and 3rd Fridays 9:30am-12 noon (except January) Nancye Kirchner Neighbourhood Centre Doyle Street Avondale Heights Melway 27 D6. John Guegan 9317 7114

Provides assistance with computer skills including word processing, spreadsheets, digital photography, music applications, computer maintenance and product reviews. 1st Friday – Main meeting. 2nd Friday – New Users. 3rd Friday – Advanced Users.

EVERYTHING APPLE

applesig@melbpc.org.au
or everythingapple@ausom.net.au

*2nd Tuesday 2:00 pm-4:00 pm (except January) Moorabbin Interest Group Room.
Susan Jensen 9885 7060 Damian Vuleta 9509 9992*

President: Ivan Radywonik

Email: president@ausom.net.au

A new SIG and the first joint venture between Melb PC and AUSOM. The emphasis is on Apple iDevices (iPod, iPhone, iPad, AppleTV, Time Capsule, Airport Extreme etc.) and helping people understand the Mac environment.

GENEALOGY

geneast@melbpc.org.au

3rd Sunday 1.00pm-4.00pm (January to November) 2nd Sunday 1.00pm-4.00 (December) Vermont South Community Centre Karobran Drive Vermont South Melway 62 G7. Robert Swindley

The Genealogy SIG is for those beginning genealogy and for those who are advanced but need more computer knowledge to move ahead. Members' trials, tribulations and expertise are openly discussed and freely shared in this self-help group.

GRAPHICS/ANIMATION

graphics@melbpc.org.au

http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~graphics

3rd Monday 7.30pm-9.30pm Moorabbin Interest Group Room. Convener: Yahya Abdal-Aziz, Co-convener: Roger Wragg

The Graphics SIG explores everything to do with computer graphics, software and hardware. Topics discussed include paint programs, drawing, animation, graphic programming, fractals, printing, scanning, fonts, design, illustration and better photography. Bring along your questions and problems. Visitors are always welcome.

IHELP

ihelp@melbpc.org.au

http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~ihelp

Approximately 6 monthly, 7.00pm till 9.00pm, Moorabbin Meeting Room

Convener: Rotational. The current leader can be determined from the office.

The function of iHelp is a group of "Users helping Users"whose main role is to sort out internet or General PC problems so that members can get a full featured online experience. Services include Telephone First Aid, Email Help and Internet Help. Volunteers with patience and Computer experience are always welcome.

LINUX & OPEN SOURCE

linux@melbpc.org.au

http://member.melbpc.org.au/~linux
2nd Monday 7.00pm-9.30pm (except January) Moorabbin Meeting Room. James Cox (9885 5503)

The SIG is a Linux-based group exploring Linux at various levels from beginner to advanced, including server-based solutions. It also looks at open source applications for platforms that include Linux, BSD, Mac and Windows. We aim to have a mix of Q&A, demonstrations and workshops. Presentations will mostly be oriented towards demonstrating an application from the open source world and will include topics of interest to both beginners and those with some experience. We intend to hold Workshops to help users at all levels. On meeting days there is a help workshop before the main meeting, 3.00pm-5.00pm, with one on one, hands on, informal training. Ringing to book is preferred but not essential.

MACE (MELBOURNE ATARI COMPUTER ENTHUSIASTS)

mace@melbpc.org.au

3rd Sunday 10.00am-2.00pm Moorabbin Meeting Room. Andrew Boschan 5426 1917 AH Roger Davies

9879 1109 Enquiries 0500 818 448

The Atari SIG is dedicated to the joy of Atari. The SIG is fast, furious and action-packed. We welcome all owners and former owners (we know you are out there) to visit us and join in the fun; it's a soul thing!

MACEDON RANGES

mrgpc@melbpc.org.au

*3rd Sunday 2.00pm-4.00pm Further Education Centre 18 Hamilton St Gisborne.
John Hunter 0406 868 226*

The Macedon Ranges members range from beginners to technicians and have a common interest in computers, with the sole aim of sharing knowledge and experiences, and helping each other. The SIG is a general-purpose group that is free-flowing and may or may not have a specific subject to discuss at the meeting. There are times a special guest is invited to speak on a particular subject that has been requested by a group member. At other times there may be special instruction and demonstrations on particular software or hardware. Members can also bring along any hardware they are having problems with for the group to try and resolve.

MAKING MONEY ON THE INTERNET

amsig@melbpc.org.au

http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~amsig

2nd Saturday 10.00 am-12 noon (except December and January) Moorabbin Meeting Room. George Skarbek 9561 6362 Paul Hemsworth 9337 4947

Affiliate Marketing (AM) is a way to make money from one's websites by placing links to merchants and taking a commission when someone buys through such links. This SIG covers the basics of building websites (but limited to AM purposes), time-saving tools, and available programs. Members are encouraged to share their experiences and the occasional hot tip at the SIG.

MICROCONTROLLER

micro@melbpc.org.au

2nd Wednesday 7.00pm-9.30pm (except January)
Moorabbin Interest Group Room. Philip Lew
0428 567 019 John Hollow 0417 031 164

Microcontrollers are small cheap computer-chips with measurement or sense inputs (e.g. temperature, door-open) and control outputs (e.g. displays, motor control), i.e. all combinations of analog & digital, inputs & outputs. They need very few other components to function, and are in many products (e.g. cameras, cars, toys). Our group is for people to develop microcontroller projects (including the software-programming) – gadgets for fun and more serious purposes. We make machines, using microcontrollers and other electronics, to do things. We cater for all levels of knowledge, novice to experienced – users helping users.

MICROCONTROLLER WORKSHOP

microws@melbpc.org.au

2nd Saturday 11:00 am-4:00pm (except January)
4th Saturday 11:00 am-4:00pm (except December)
Moorabbin Interest Group Room. Robert Brown,
Geoff Lethbridge, John Shirt

The Saturday Workshop is a "Creative Space": a space to express your creativity. This workshop is under construction. Its development depends on those who are involved and their interests. The workshops are centred around, but not limited to, microcontrollers. If you are looking for a space that facilitates sharing of ideas and support, a place where you can express your creativity, then this SIG could be what you are looking for. The Workshop is an informal SIG, a place to work on your project, start a new project, or join a group project.

MULTIMEDIA HOME ENTERTAINMENT

multimed@melbpc.org.au

http://www.melbpc.org.au
1st Friday 10.00am-12 noon (except January)
Wadham House 52 Wadham Parade Mt Waverley
Melway 61 E12. John Hall 9803 2731 Kelvin Cording
9438 1047

The aim of the interest group is to assist members in the installation and operation of PC-based hardware and software to run and maintain Multimedia Home Entertainment systems. This would include such things as Personal Video Recorders (PVRs), Media Servers (including Windows Home Server), internet streaming of video and audio, Sony PS3 and Windows X-Box home entertainment systems, and home networking and storage systems for playback of video and audio. Attendees are welcome from beginners to expert level. Members are encouraged to bring their own equipment to gain hands-on experience in setup and/or maintenance.

MUSIC

music@melbpc.org.au

http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~music

3rd Thursday 7.30pm-9.30pm Moorabbin Interest
Group Room. Convener: Yahya Abdal-Aziz,
Co-Convener: David Godfred

The Music SIG is for members who like to make or listen to music. Bring along your creations, questions and problems. Visitors are always welcome.

NEW USERS EAST

newuser@melbpc.org.au

http://groups.melbpc.org.au~newuser

2nd Tuesday 7.30pm-10pm (except January)
St Mark's Anglican Church Hall Cnr Bourke &
Canterbury Roads Camberwell Melway 45 J10. Peter
Newby 0431 838 295

New Users East caters for the needs of prospective and new computer users, new members having

machine operating or system problems, and those new members wishing to increase their understanding of their equipment.

NEWSGROUPS

See Anywhere, Anytime SIG.

NORTH EAST

neast@melbpc.org.au

http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~neast

4th Tuesday 7.30pm-9.30pm (except December)
Uniting Church Hall 19 Seddon Street Ivanhoe
Melway 31 F8. John Grant 9467 2709 AH; Choi Lai

NORTH EAST ANDROID

lampshir@melbpc.org.au

3rd Wednesday 10.00am to 12:00pm (except January)
Uniting Church Hall 19 Seddon Street Ivanhoe, parking at the rear, Melway 31 F8. Colin Lampshire 9857 5372 or 0413 640 408 Kelvin Cording 9438 1047

The Android Interest Group provides the opportunity for members to learn how the new rapidly emerging Android Operating System can be used to operate, control, and maintain applications (apps) on compatible mobile devices such as computer tablets and smartphones. All aspects of both hardware and software are considered with a learning experience based on friendly discussions, presentations, and demonstrations to suit both novice and experienced computer users.

NORTH EAST DAYTIME & PHOTOGRAPHY/DIGITAL IMAGING

neday@melbpc.org.au

2nd Thursday 10.00am-12:15pm (except January)
Uniting Church Hall 19 Seddon Street Ivanhoe, parking at the rear, Melway 31 F8. Colin Lampshire 9857 5372

We aim to interest and assist all levels of computer users, from beginners to the more experienced. Our General Interest Group meetings feature reviews of

useful software and computer add-ons, with plenty of time to assist with members computer problems.
   Every alternate month we specialise in issues relating to Photography/Digital Imaging.

NORTH EAST GENEALOGY

negen@melbpc.org.au

http://member.melbpc.org.au/~negen/

1st Tuesday 10.00am-12.45pm (except January)
Uniting Church Hall 19 Seddon St Ivanhoe.
Allan Medforth 9410 9034; Vilma Stargatt.

Now recognized as an important support for members helping members with genealogy and computer skills. A good social atmosphere supported by excellent facilities

NORTHERN SUBURBS LINUX

nslig@melbpc.org.au

http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~nslig

3rd Monday 7.30pm to 9.30pm (except December)
Community Meeting Room Watsonia Library
Ibbotson St Watsonia Melway 20 E4. David Hatton,
Stephen Davidson

The Northern Suburbs Linux SIG provides a focus for members living in the northern suburbs who are interested in learning more about using Linux in day-to-day computing tasks. Meeting topics are influenced by the regular attendees; beginners and visitors are most welcome. For SIG news and last minute updates please see our Web pages.

PENINSULA

pennsula@melbpc.org.au

http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~pennsula

Lindsay Wiles 9775 3069 Terry Said 5975 0327
Main meetings 1st Monday-7.00pm (except January)
3rd Monday-9.30am (except December) Mornington
Information Centre 320 Main St Mornington.

New Users Subgroup 2nd and 4th Mondays-4.00pm
(except school holidays) Mornington Secondary
College Nepean Highway Mornington

Graphics Subgroup 3rd Monday 12.30pm Mornington Information Centre 320 Main St Mornington

Genealogy Subgroup 3rd Monday 2.30pm Mornington Information Centre 320 Main St Mornington

PROGRAMMING

program@melbpc.org.au

http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~program

4th Tuesday 6.30 pm-9.00 pm Moorabbin Meeting Room. Mohan Gupta 0421 214 081 Roger Plant 0403 789 593

Tell us about programs you are writing, wrote in the past, or give ideas for interesting programs to write. We'll walkthrough the process of writing programs, from user interface design to code cutting and testing. Different programming languages, techniques and tools will be showcased as well as scripts, plugins, extensions, markups, compilers, databases, hopefully something for beginners and pros alike.

RETIRED & INTERESTED PERSONS

ripper@melbpc.org.au

http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~ripper

4th (not last) Friday 10am-12 noon Moorabbin Interest Group Room. Ken Thomas 9884 5309

This general interest group has subgroups Graphics and Digital Imaging and New Users meeting at 9am before the main meeting. The Windows subgroup meets for a further hour from 12 noon after the main meeting.

The Hardware subgroup meets at 10am on the 2nd Friday of each month, at Wadham House, 52 Wadham Pde. Mount Waverly, Melway 61:E-12 (except Jan).
The Photoshop subgroup meets at 10am at Wadham House on the third Fri of the month.

SUNBURY

sunbury@melbpc.org.au

http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~sunbury

Every Thursday 9.30am-12 noon Sunbury Senior Citizens Centre (back room) 8 O'Shannassy Street Sunbury Melway 382 E4. Kevin Day 9744 2514 Kevin Hale 9740 5786
1st Thursday – New users, but everyone welcome
2nd Thursday – Maintenance, problems discussed, sometimes solved
3rd Thursday – Main meeting, demos, presentations etc.
4th Thursday – Linux, a new experience
5th Thursday – (when there is one) Maintenance

VIDEO INNER EAST

4th Monday (except December) 7.00pm-9.30pm Balwyn Library Meeting Room 336 Whitehorse Road Balwyn. Richard Balsillie 9809 4116

The group covers all aspects of production and related photo and image editing techniques.

WAFFLE
(WINE & FINE FOOD LOVERS EVENT)

trado@melbpc.org.au)

1st Wednesday from 9.40pm following the Monthly Meeting at Moorabbin (except January)

Budget supper get together – BYO (wine) or buy. Patrons are welcome even if only for coffee.

At La Casetta 1066 Centre Rd, Corner of Eskay Rd Sth Oakleigh. Melway 78:G-2. Patrons are welcome even if only for coffee. Tom Rado 9807 4072

How-to-get-there sketch maps are available at the Monthly Meeting.

WASINT
(WEB & SOFTWARE INVESTMENT TOOLS)

wasint@melbpc.org.au

http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~wasint

2nd Tuesday, 10:30am-12.30pm (except January)

Moorabbin Meeting Room. Richard Solly

Become more confident in the use of Web and software tools as part of your financial life. Join others, both at the monthly meeting and through the online Web board to share favourite sites and information sources in the exploding field of online financial information.

WEBSITE DESIGN

webdesign@melbpc.org.au

http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~webdesign

4rd Sunday 2:00pm-4.00pm (except December and January) Moorabbin Interest Group Room. Fleur Stephens 0407 330 963
The aim of the Website Design SIG is to help members build and manage their own websites. So if you are creating, managing or designing a website and need some help, drop in. Visitors welcome.

WEST

west@melbpc.org.au

http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~west
4th Wednesday 7.00pm-9.00pm (except December)
Footscray YMC Essex Street Footscray Melway 41 J3.
Tony Bajoras 9306 8595 AH Ernie McCarthy 9365 5159

WINDOWS ADVANCED

winpro@melbpc.org.au

3rd Tuesday 7.00pm (except December) Moorabbin Interest Group Room. John Bade 9326 8340 BH

Our Group aims to provide a forum for system/network administrators and advanced users. The primary focus is Windows and related products. Typical topics include security, servers and networking.

WYNDHAM

wynd@melbpc.org.au
http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~wynd

Room 3 Central Park Community Centre Lonsdale Circuit off Franklin Blvd. Hoppers Crossing Melway

206 J1. Chris Hughes 9731 0891; John Healey
General: 2nd Monday 7.30-9.30pm (except January)
Multi-Media: 3rd Tuesday 7.30pm-9.30pm (except December & January)
General: This general interest group exists to provide local information and support to the South-West Region of outer Melbourne. There will be Q&A Sessions and coverage of PC Hardware and Software issues. There will be a supper break with time for informal discussion.

Multi-Media: With the convergence of both video and still photography and the attendant add-ons, this Interest Group will cater for the media aspects of PC technology. This will include video & photo manipulation and production, animation, presentation, sound & music, illustration, 3D, and various associated add-ons and plug-ins. We will also have visiting presenters and demonstrations to show us the possibilities of what can be achieved.

YARRA RANGES & WORKSHOP

yrig@melbpc.org.au
http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~yrig

4th Tuesday (except December) Meeting Starts 9.15am
followed by the hands-on Workshop.
Japara Community House, 13r Leith Road Montrose
Melway 52 D7.
Bryan Paten 0429 430 640 Shane Mason 9733 5390

The Interest Group meets to provide general information and support to members in the Outer East Region of Melbourne. There will be Q&A sessions and coverage of PC Hardware and Software issues, with time for informal discussion. From time to time we will have visiting presenters and demonstrations. The Workshop will cater for the members who experience problems with their computers or programs. Extended answers can be given to questions that need clarification. Alternatively, come along to help other members or just to enjoy the companionship.

Melb PC User Group Inc.
479 Warrigal Road
MOORABBIN, Vic, 3189
Phone (03) 9276 4000

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Title	First Name	Initial	Last Name

Address		B/H Phone	A/H Phone

Suburb	State	Post Code	Mobile Number	Job Title

Email Address

Annual Membership Fees

Individuals	$65 each	$ ....
Students* / Pensioners^	$50 each	$ ....
Additional Family Members (excludes relatives or friends)	$12 each	$ ....
	Total	$ ....

How did you hear about Melb PC User Group?

PC Update ☐   Swap Meet ☐   Friend ☐   Radio ☐

Other ....

Introduced By .... No. ....

Additional Family Members

Name .... Signature ....

Name .... Signature ....

*Students must attach a photocopy of their student card or letter from their educational institution confirming full time student status. ^Pensioners must attach a photocopy showing both sides of their Centrelink Pension Concession Card. Change of family member(s) must be notified in writting to the club secretary.
I hereby apply for membership of Melbourne PC User Group Inc. (A0003293V) and agree to abide by its rules while I remain a member.

Signature

Date ..../........./.........

Payment Details / Credit Card Authority

Payment Details

Total Payment $ ....

☐ Cheque attached, payable to Melbourne PC User Group Inc. (A0003293V)

Debit Card ☐   Credit Card ☐   Visa ☐   Mastercard ☐   Expiry ☐☐/☐☐

☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐

Name On Card

Signature   Date ..../........./.........

MELBOURNE PC USER GROUP INC.

Suite 26, Level 1, 479 Warrigal Road
MOORABBIN, VIC 3189 Australia
Phone (03) 9276 4000
Email: office@melbpc.org.au
Web: www.melbpc.org.au

APPLICATION FOR MOBILE BROADBAND

MAXIMUM 2GB PER MONTH WITH NO EXCESS CHARGE, RENEWED 19TH EVERY MONTH
(Optus Business Mobile Broadband)

Membership Number .... Melb PC ☐   AUSOM ☐

Name ....

Address ....

....

....Post Code ....
[Residential address only. NO P.O. BOX ADDRESS]

Phone ....B/H .... A/H

Mobile ....Email...

12-Month contract (2GB download per month) $210.00 p.a.

(select one option)

1. Optus Platinum USB Modem (E367), (SIMs and aerials included in price)   ☐

2. Micro SIM to suit iPad/Tablets (no modem required)   ☐

3. Optus 3G Mini Wi-Fi Huawei Modem E586 (Portable Hotspot)   ☐
Connects up to 5 devices at once. Includes rechargeable battery and USB cable.

Signature ....

Pay by: Cheque ☐   Cash ☐   Credit Card ☐

Credit Card Number .... Expiry Date ....
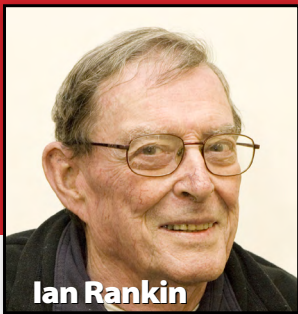
December 2012 Monthly Disc

All programs on the Monthly Disc are free except where shown otherwise. The Monthly Video is of the November 2012 Monthly Meeting.

Ian Rankin

Desktop

Mousotron – Ver: 8.0
Mousotron is a mouse and keyboard activity monitor and keeps statistics of your mileage. It's like an odometer or tripometer for your mouse cursor. It calculates just how far your mouse cursor has travelled on your screen and how many times the mouse buttons were clicked. Also the number of keystrokes on your keyboard are counted.

Digital Imaging

EQH Image Tool – Ver: 2.2
Easy, quick and handy (EQH). This is an application designed with those criteria in mind. Whether you want to grab an image from your browser, capture an area of your screen, paste an image from clipboard, drag an image file from Explorer or simply load an image, this application does it all.

PC Image Editor – Ver: 5.0
PC Image Editor is a free graphics editor with many of the features of a professional product. You can edit images from a variety of formats; it contains an extremely user-friendly interface enabling you to work intuitively.

Toolwiz Pretty Photo – Ver: 1.4.0.0
Toolwiz Pretty Photo is a free image editor. With this free tool, you can modify your photos and make them look better with only few clicks. Not only does it include more then 30 professional image filters, it also supports Image Resize, Flip, Crop, Rotate, Layers, add Shadow, add Frame and so on.

Disk Tools

Folder Size – Ver: 2.8.0.0
Folder Size will analyse your hard drives and display the file and folder sizes so that you can easily check the distribution of your disk space.

Email

MailStore Home – Ver: 7.1
Over the years, email can become scattered among different computers, programs and mailboxes. With MailStore Home you can bring order into this chaos by creating a single central archive for all messages.

OutlookAddressBookView – Ver: 1.21
OutlookAddressBookView is a simple utility that displays the details of all recipients stored in the address books of Microsoft Outlook. For every recipient entry, the following information is displayed: Email Address, Display Name, Address Type (MS-Exchange or SMTP), Street Address, Phone Number, Created Time, Modified Time (Works only with address books of Exchange server), and more...

Entertainment

EvilLyrics – Ver: 0.1.91
Automatically searches for lyrics as your song is played in your player.

Games

Gliderman Returns – Ver: 1.0
Our fantastic caped hero Gliderman is back for another stellar adventure! Gliderman's quest is to turn all the blue blocks into green ones. Help him achieve this goal as he avoids danger using his amazing gliding abilities and his unlimited supply of bombs.

Home/Office

Accounts and Budget Freeware – Ver: 6.0.4
From CNet – We review a lot of personal finance software, and to be frank, most of it is pretty bad; such programs tend to have terrible, confusing interfaces and a decided lack of important features. Accounts and Budget Free is a happy exception to this trend. Although the program doesn't compare to the big-name financial software that dominates the marketplace, it's definitely a good choice for users who want a decent program without having to spend money to get it.

Dictionary .NET – Ver: 5.4.4664
Dictionary .NET is a tiny, easy and smart multilingual dictionary translating from/to 52 languages using Google´s services.

SCARM – Ver: 0.9.17
SCARM is a freeware program for simplified design of scaled railway model layouts and modelling of miniature model track routes. It has a lightweight and intuitive user interface, 3D view and many other cool functions and features.

Internet

IPNetInfo – Ver: 1.4
IPNetInfo is a small utility that enables you to easily find all available information about an IP address: the owner of the IP address, the country/state name, IP addresses range and contact information (address, phone, fax, and email).

Networx – Ver: 5.2.5
NetWorx is a simple and free yet powerful tool that helps you objectively evaluate your bandwidth situation. You can use it to collect bandwidth usage data and measure the speed of your internet or any other network connection.

WifiInfoView – Ver: 1.05
WifiInfoView scans the wireless networks in your area and displays extensive information about them, including: Network Name (SSID), MAC Address, PHY Type (802.11g or 802.11n), RSSI, Signal Quality, Frequency, Channel Number, Maximum Speed, Company Name, Router Model and Router Name (Only for routers that provides this information), and more.

Multi Media

idoo Free DVD Ripper – Ver: 5.0
idoo DVD Ripper Free is freeware and the best free DVD ripping tool for all Windows 8/7/Vista/XP users. It supports almost all the video formats, including ripping DVD to AVI, WMV, MP4, MOV, MKV, MPEG and more, converts DVD movies to a hard drive, extracts background music to MP3, etc.

Mobile Media Converter – Ver: 1.7.5
The Mobile Media Converter is a free video and audio converter for converting between popular desktop media formats like MP3, Windows Media Audio (wma), Ogg Vorbis Audio (ogg), Wave Audio (wav), MPEG video, AVI, Windows Media Video (wmv), Flash Video (flv), QuickTime Video (mov) and commonly used mobile device/phone formats like AMR audio (amr) and 3GP video.

NextPVR – Ver: 2.5.9
NextPVR is a free Personal Video Recorder (PVR) and Media Centre application for Microsoft Windows. At its heart lies the Electronic Programme Guide from where you can watch (and pause) live TV and schedule your favourite shows for later viewing.

PDF

doPDF – Ver: 7.3.387
doPDF is a free PDF converter for both personal and commercial use. Using doPDF you can create searchable PDF files by selecting the "Print" command from virtually any application. With one click you can convert your Microsoft Excel, Word or PowerPoint documents or your email and favourite websites to PDF files.

PDF-XChange Viewer – Ver: 2.5.206

Those wishing to view/modify or perform simple editing and even OCR image-based PDF files on their Windows PCs now have a FREE pdf reader alternative to the Adobe Reader! The PDF-XChange Viewer is smaller, faster and more feature rich than any other FREE PDF Reader/ PDF Viewer/ PDF Editor available.

Programming

Simple Solver – Ver: 4.4.3

Tutors and students of logic and computer programming will find this application for minimising, simplifying and reducing Boolean equations and digital logic circuits a handy box of tools for increasing understanding.

Security

Lazesoft Windows Key Finder – Ver: 1.1

Do you need to reinstall, but have lost your Windows or Office product key? This program will find and show your Windows 2000, XP, 2003, Vista, 2008, 7 product key and all version of Microsoft Office product key.

Toolwiz BSafe – Ver : 1.6.0.0

Toolwiz BSafe is an easy-to-use personal encryption system, enabling professional and novice users to effectively protect their precious data. By simply entering the right password, a user

mounts and opens a virtual safe and works with it like a regular drive.

Utilities

Advanced SystemCare Free – Ver: 6.0.7.160 Final

Advanced SystemCare 5 is a comprehensive PC care utility that takes a one-click approach to help protect, repair and optimise your computer. It cleans, repairs registry and makes the PC run like a brand new one with enhanced "Turbo Boost", an advanced technology in optimising PC.

Argus Boot Accelerator – Ver: 1.0.02

Argus Boot Accelerator speeds up your boot process by managing your startup programs. Usually Windows would start all of them at the same time during the boot process, demanding data from your hard disk faster than it can deliver them. Argus Boot Accelerator will start them sequentially.

ASAP Utilities – Ver: 4.8.5

ASAP Utilities is the product of many time-saving features and additions for Excel. The extensive features are the result of years of experience and development, combined with the feedback from many respected users at different levels of experience.

EaseUS CleanGenius – Ver: 3.0.5

Do computer problems let you down? If you are struggling with computer error after computer error, it can be enormously frustrating. If you are tired of the sluggish computer operation and slow load times, we recommend FREE software – EaseUS CleanGenius to help you.

EaseUS Data Recovery Wizard Free Edition – Ver: 5.6.1

Free and powerful data recovery software to recover up to 1GB of data. It solves many data loss problems – recover files emptied from Recycle Bin, or lost due to software crash, formatted or damaged hard drive, virus attack, lost partition and other unknown reasons.

FileTypesMan – Ver: 1.62

FileTypesMan is an alternative to the "File Types" tab in the "Folder Options" of Windows. It displays the list of all file extensions and types registered on your computer. For each file type, the following information is displayed: Type Name, Description, MIME Type, Perceived Type, Flags, Browser Flags, and more.

GPU-Z – Ver: 0.6.5

GPU-Z is a lightweight utility designed to give you information about your video card and GPU.

RealVNC Free – Ver: 5.0.3
VNC is remote access and control software for a mix of Windows, Mac, UNIX and Linux computers. With a simple peer-to-peer architecture, no agents or centralized servers are required.

ServiWin – Ver: 1.5
ServiWin utility displays the list of installed drivers and services on your system. For some of them, additional useful information is displayed: file description, version, product name, and company that created the driver file.

ShellExView – Ver: 1.76
Shell Extensions are in-process COM objects which extend the abilities of Windows operating system. Most shell extensions are automatically installed by the operating system, but there are also many other applications that install additional shell extension components.

Sysinternals DebugView – Ver: 4.8
DebugView is an application that enables you to monitor debug output on your local system, or any computer on the network that you can reach via TCP/IP. It is capable of displaying both kernel-mode and Win32 debug output, so you don't need a debugger to catch the debug output your applications or device drivers generate, nor do you need to modify your applications or drivers to use non-standard debug output APIs.

USBDeview – Ver: 2.16
USBDeview is a small utility that lists all USB devices currently connected to your computer, as well as all USB devices that you have previously used.

Wise Care 365 – Ver: 2.02.148
Wise Care 365 is a bundle of important registry, disk, and other system utilities for your PC. Easy to use and effective, Wise Care 365 is a good solution to improve your PC's performance.

Wise JetSearch – Ver: 1.22
Wise JetSearch is a free local file search tool which supports both NTFS and FAT drives. It's a fast freeware alternative to Windows Search and Search Everything.

Z-Cron – Ver: 4.9
As reviewed by CNet: "You can rely on Z-Cron as a robust scheduler that can handle not only shutting down the computer, but launching programs, leaving reminder notes, and cleaning directories. Similar to the Unix Cron scheduler, and far more powerful than the native Windows task scheduler, Z-Cron is an aggressive sergeant-at-arms, able to tell your computer what to do and when to do it.

Video

4k Video Downloader – Ver: 2.5
4k Video Downloader enables you to download video from YouTube in the highest quality, as fast as possible, to save on your computer. If you want to get video on iPad, iPhone and other devices, these options are also available.

ActivePresenter – Ver: 3.6
As reviewed by CNet: "Atomi's ActivePresenter captures and saves onscreen video and images and audio narration, but that's just the start of what it does. Another way to describe it is, a free tool for creating e-learning materials, manuals, presentations, screencasts, and demonstrations for training, education, business presentations, customer support, and similar applications

EasyBrake – Ver: 0.9.9.4
EasyBrake makes conversion of videos to MP4 or MKV easier than ever. EasyBrake uses the engine of HandBrake which is well-known and regarded.

Updates

Ad-Aware A.E. 9.5; Adobe Reader 10.0; Agent 6.0; Avant Browser 2011.Build 30 Firefox 9.0; Foxit 5.0.2; Irfan View 4.3; Opera 11.5; Paint.Net 3.5.8; Slim Browser 6.00 Spybot 1.6; Thunderbird 9.0; Winzip 15.5; XnView 1.9

GEORGE SKARBEK brings us answers to some curly questions.

REGISTRY CLEANERS

Q: What is your opinion of Registry Cleaners and which one would you recommend?

A: My recommendation is that next time a snake oil salesman knocks on your door offering snake oil and a registry cleaner, you buy both. Then, either pour some of the snake oil on the computer, or install the registry cleaner, as both will have the same effect on performance.

The reason why registry cleaners have been receiving a lot of advertising, even by well-known companies, is because the large majority of computer users do not understand what a registry is or what it does.

Many know that it is an important part of Windows and that they should not touch it. The first part is correct, the second part is not.

Using a registry editor, Regedit, will allow you to find, modify or delete some items. However, as there is no Save button – because all changes are immediately implemented – and the fact that there is no Undo, many users are reluctant to use Regedit.

If you decide to use Regedit then be very careful when deleting trees, that is the main "folder" and the "sub-folders" (see screenshot below). Editing the data on the right-hand side of the screen is quite safe.

The Windows registry consists of several binary databases. It stores configuration settings, hardware and software options for the operating system itself and for most of the application programs on the computer. The registry cleaners look for inconsistencies, but mainly concentrate on finding and removing entries in the database to programs that no longer exist.

The registry is several hundred megabytes in size, so removing even a few thousand entries is unlikely to reduce its size by even one percent.

As for the performance improvement, even if your registry cleaner removed 1000 entries it will not be able to be measured. This is because

George Skarbek
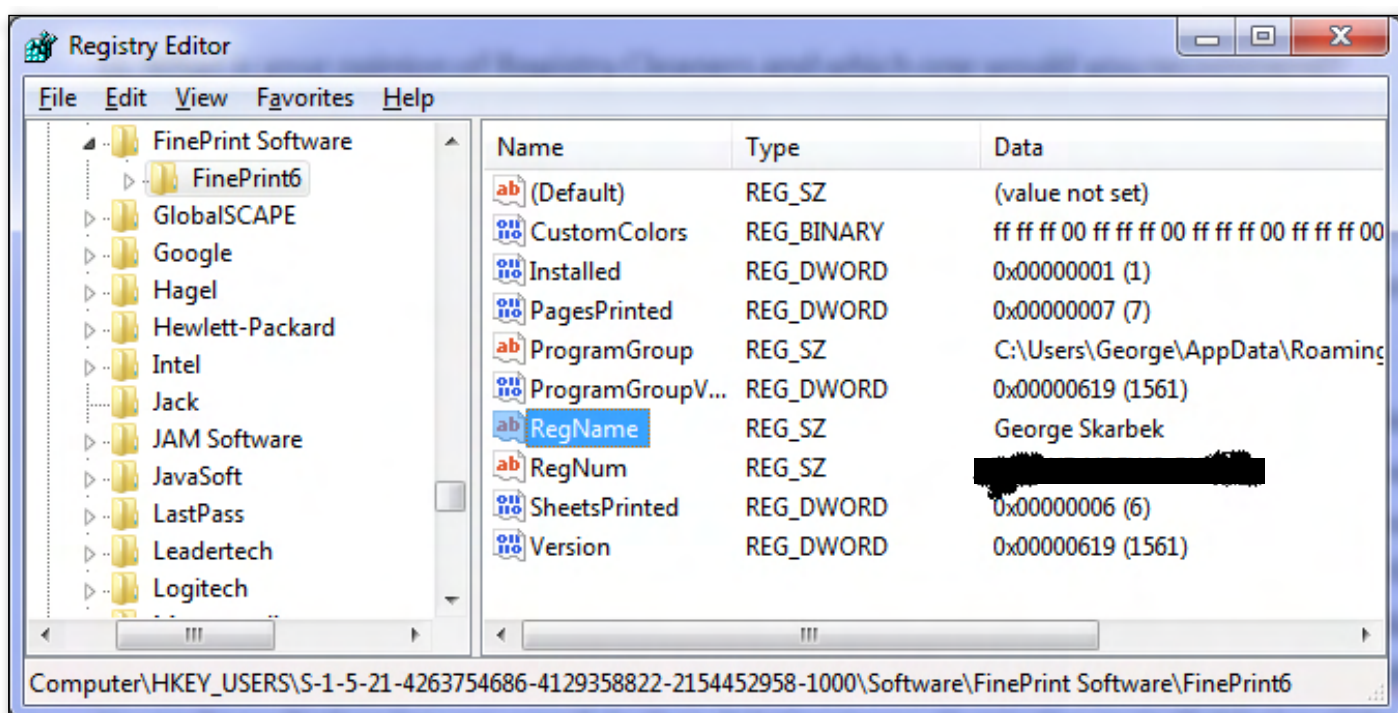
these databases are very efficiently indexed and a program needing to find a registry entry does not have to read the entire file to find it. The index will take it immediately to the exact point in the appropriate database.

This is similar to using a database of every person in Australia. For example, if you wish to find details on a "Mr Zygmunt," the entire 22+ million records will not be read sequentially but instead the index entry will point immediately to the appropriate record. If there are several thousand people who have permanently left Australia or died still in the database, it will make no difference to the overall speed of finding Mr Zygmunt.

The same principle applies to redundant entries in the registry database.

I have performed a couple of tests using a registry cleaner by taking accurate benchmarks before and after running the registry cleaner. Despite one claiming to have fixed 1030 "errors," there was absolutely no difference in any of the benchmarks. Other experienced users have come up with the same results.

So, because it is almost certain you will not obtain any performance improvement, and at most you will have a tiny reduction in the size of the registry but risk the chance of something going wrong, my strong suggestion is that you forget about using a registry cleaner.

STARTING OUTLOOK AUTOMATICALLY

Q: I want to make Microsoft Outlook start on bootup. I have checked my MSCONFIG file in Start, Run and it is not there. Can you please tell me how I get it there?

A: Locate the file called Outlook.exe on your hard disk. The location varies depending on the version of Windows and Office. For Office 2007 on Windows 7 it will be in C:\Program Files\ Microsoft Office\Office12. If you are using another version of Windows, then use the Find, or

Search to search all files on the hard drive.

The excellent small program called Everything from www.voidtools.com is very good a finding all files on all hard drives on your computer.

Then create a shortcut which you place on the desktop. Now move it into: C:\ProgramData\Microsoft\Windows\Start Menu\Programs if you are running Windows 7 or C:\Documents and Settings\Your Name\Start Menu\Programs\Startup if you are running XP. Now Outlook will start when you boot up the computer.

WI-FI BROWSING

Q: I prefer to use Wi-Fi to connect my computer to the internet as I do not have to run an Ethernet cable around my room. Occasionally when I am browsing some web pages take a relatively long time to load. Is this due to the Wi-Fi or other factors? Would a direct Ethernet link be faster?

A: The answer can be yes or no and I will give you some guidelines to allow you to find out. Firstly, Wi-Fi should not be slower, because a good ADSL+ speed is 10 mbps (Mega bits per second) while your Wi-Fi will be 54 or even over 100 mbps depending on your router. So in theory the limiting factor is the speed from you ISP. However, as most users know, theory and practice are not always the same.

Wi-Fi is affected by a number of things. The main factors are: distance from the computer to the router; obstacles between the computer and the router, such as brick walls or steel plates; interference from other Wi-Fi signals; and to a lesser extent the orientation of the antenna in the router.

As you are in the same room, the attenuation of signal due to distance is not a factor, nor are the brick walls. But a steel plate may be a factor if you have a desktop computer and the antenna is in the back of the computer, facing away from

[Q&A cont.]

the router. The metal case of the computer and the internal components such as the hard drives will mean a significant reduction in your signal strength.

If your neighbour(s) also use Wi-Fi on the same channel as you then their interference will reduce your Wi-Fi transfer speed. Looking just at the signal strength is not enough. You must start by loading some Wi-Fi scanning software to investigate further.

The free program InSSIDer is an excellent tool for this job as it will show all networks visible in your area and what their and your frequencies are used, and track all signal strengths over time.

See: http://download.cnet.com/inSSIDer/3000-18508_4-10848357.html for the InSSIDer software.

If some overlap occurs then just change the router channel to a free area. As different manufacturers have varying menus you should consult your manual for detailed instructions. No changes will be required on the computer.

If you found no problems with the Wi-Fi setup but you're still experiencing delays with pages loading, this could be caused by congestion on the Internet. Perhaps limited bandwidth on your ISP's network or a similar problem on the host computers, where the pages originate.
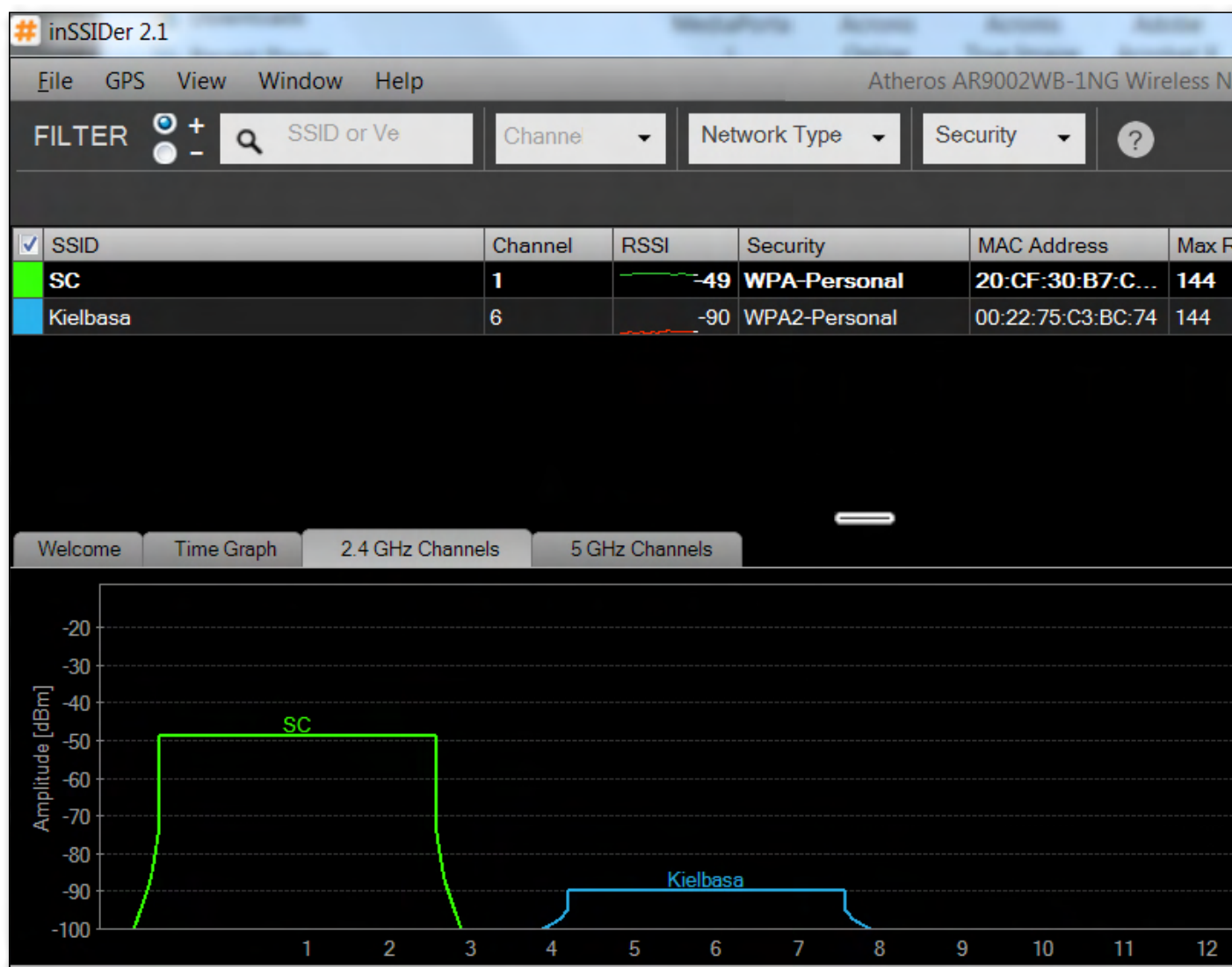
UPGRADE FROM WINDOWS XP TO WINDOWS 8

Q: Our trusty desktop computer runs on Windows XP Pro. I noticed recently a supplier offering Windows 8 upgrade for $48.72. Do you believe this is a sensible purchase?

A: Generally I do not advise users to upgrade the operating system as there is very little to be gained and a bit to lose – apart from the time and cost in performing the upgrade.

For most users the operating system is not important but your applications are. Upgrading the operating system will not make your applications run faster. You will not receive mail faster, Word will not run any better etc.

Also, some hardware such as older printers and scanners may not work, and additional costs will be involved.

Some very old programs, including some games that you may have had for a couple of decades, may not work.

Upgrading to Windows 8 will involve a lot of learning as well as possibly having to purchase some new hardware.

However, at some point there will come a time when some applications that you need will not run on an old operating system, and an upgrade will be required. Windows XP has now been superseded by four generations and some security vulnerabilities in XP may not be fully addressed. Windows 8 is considerably more secure, boots faster and will run on old computers that run XP.

Currently the upgrade from XP to Windows 8 operating system is not expensive and may be worth considering, but the upgrade will not keep any of your programs, only your data, so you will have to re-install all your software, set up your email account(s), reconfigure and apply any patches to the software that you install, download and install upgrades etc. Also, I would do a full backup just in case before starting.

In my opinion Windows 8 is more suited for the tablets with touch screens than it is for a desktop computer. Also, the number of apps available for Windows 8 is tiny compared to the number available for the Apple or for the Android operating systems. But the number of apps available should increase rapidly.

If your current computer is getting old and you are planning to purchase a new computer in the next 12 months, then it may be better to wait and to purchase Windows 8 with the new computer.

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS
Registration for SIG emailing lists

As a part of updating our membership database, we are putting together a centralised subscription listing of members' interests in the Special Interest Groups. This will allow the SIG leaders to easily contact interested members directly, whether it be for meeting details, useful information or anything else SIG-related.

You can register with as many SIGs as you wish. Some won't be utilising this information just yet, but may do so in the future! SIG subscriptions can be updated at any time, and all correspondence will have the required opt-out information.

Note that if you're already on a SIG mailing list, we'd still like you to register via this online web form to ensure our records are current.

Please go to: **http://ccedesign.com.au/melbpc/melbpc-landing-page.html**

Everything Apple

Convener:
Susan Jensen 9885 7060

Assistant Convener:
Damian Vuleta 9509 9992

E-mail to: applesig@melbpc.org.au
or everything-apple@ausom.net.au

A joint venture between MelbPC and AUSOM. The emphasis will be on Apple iDevices (iPod, iPhone, iPad, AppleTV, Time Capsule Airport Extreme) and helping people understand the Mac environment.
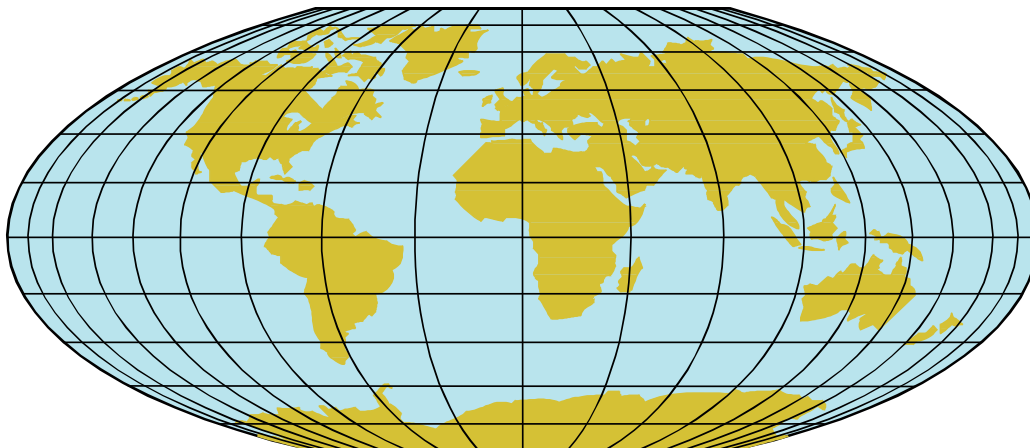
Next Meeting: December 11

2:00 pm
Travelling overseas with an iPad
Presented by Patrick Bravard

Patrick outlines the basic equipment to carry with the iPad, compare the best way to connect with OS telephone companies, and present a handful of apps that make life easy. There will be a 10-minute break at 2:00 and time for questions afterwards.

2nd Tuesdays, 2:00 pm–4:00 pm (except January)
Moorabbin Interest Group Room
479 Warrigal Road, Moorabbin