

East SIG Report – September 2018

The September meeting opened with M.C. **Paul Woolard** welcoming members, followed by Q&A conducted by **George Skarbek**.

Q: On returning from 5 weeks away I noticed the icons for my Chrome browser had changed. Concerned by this I uninstalled Chrome then reloaded the latest version. What surprised me was that all my previous bookmarks and settings returned when Chrome was reinstalled. It's a worry when you think you've uninstalled something but your data remains.

A: When you uninstall a program most software will leave user data behind. The only way to delete all user data is to do a full install. This would overwrite everything on your computer including your Office, graphics, multimedia programs etc. To delete your user data, clear the browser and create a new user. Delete the original user, all its data and clear all the unused space.

In Windows, deleting a file does not really delete the file. Deleting a file only places a lower case sigma if front of the files directory entry and removes the allocation file. The allocation file tells other programs that this sector is used by such and such a program. Eventually the space will be overwritten, but it's possible to get some or the entire file back for more recent deletions.

Q: What's your opinion of opting in or opting out of the medical database that the Government has setup?

A: My personal opinion is that my medical information might help me in a medical emergency so the benefits far outweigh the risk. How easy it is to get into and how safe it is I don't know.

Q: What VPN do you recommend? Is NordVPN any good?

A: NordVPN has been getting very good reviews for a very long time, so I don't think you could go wrong with it. There are free ones but usually they come with limitations. Data per month is limited and some throttle back download speed to give their paying customers better band width. If that's good enough for you try a free VPN. However I don't think you would go wrong with NordVPN. Use Google and search "best VPN" for reviews.

By registering for a 2 year plan an audience members paid US\$3.99/ month + GST which is around half the normal price for NordVPN.

Opera browser includes a free VPN but needs to be turned on. Once turned on it stays on.

George is unimpressed with Opera as a browser and suggests a good browser and a free VPN is a better option.

Q: I've just received a letter from NBN telling me they're going to put a box on my house in the next 3 months. I only use about a gigabyte a month, I don't download any movies, so what speed plan should I be looking at?

A: My first piece of advice is to haggle with the sellers. Ask to have extras to be included in the price, such as free landline, phone rental or a 50 plan at the 25 price. If you don't do that you'll pay more than you should.

If the NBN are placing a box on your house that implies your NBN will be hfc. The contractors will install the box where it's easiest for them, which may not be the best future location for you. They won't even knock on your door so you'll need to be on the lookout and tell them where you want the box located.

Q: Do you think if we have a change in Government the NBN will go back to fibre to the home?

A: That's something you'll have to ask the new government.

The next presentation was by **Stuart Bedford** titled “YouTube Gems”. Stuart downloads all his YouTube videos to his computer first so he can watch them without ads. He uses a program called *youtube-dl* to download his videos which can be obtained from the website <https://rg3.github.io/youtube-dl/>. Stuart then used *youtube-dl* to demonstrate how to download videos on his Linux based notebook computer. A Windows executable is available for Windows users also from the above site.

With the current volcanic eruptions occurring in Hawaii Stuart thought it would be fascinating to see what it was like now compared to when he visited Hawaii before the eruptions. Searching YouTube revealed current videos taken at the same sites as his still photographs and the differences were dramatic. Another still photograph of a small waterfall revealed a completely different view when in flood. This is another use many would not have thought to use YouTube for.

After viewing the Hawaii videos Stuart played a very interesting YouTube video explaining the computer systems used in the Apollo 11 moon mission. There were 4 computers employed in Apollo 11 for getting men to the moon and back, all having a fraction of the computing power of today’s smartphones. This video by Curious Droid can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ULGi3UkgW30> and should be recommended viewing if you’re interested in the history of computing.

Stuart concluded by playing a light hearted video from Linus Tech Tips on “What Data Does Windows 10 Send to Microsoft?” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XZiSiEwKSYc>

After the break **Dave Botherway** gave a presentation titled "Inside your PC - What's Happening?" Dave’s talk was broken down into 3 areas, user input, hardware and monitoring software.

Major user interactions that can cause bottlenecks include:

- Ignoring or delaying software updates
- Not using anti-virus software
- Opening unsolicited emails
- Browsing dubious websites
- Downloading & installing dubious applications
- Trying things you know may be risky.

Hardware bottlenecks

- CPU - get a CPU that’s faster or with more cores.
- Memory – get more memory (RAM) to reduce paging
- Disk I/O – Use a SSD or use multiple drives
- Graphics processor – Use a faster graphics card, a card with more memory or replace on-board graphics with a graphic card.
- Comms link – get a faster internet link (ADSL2 or a faster NBN package)
- Keyboard / mouse – train yourself to use keyboard shortcuts.

Software Tools to monitor bottlenecks

- Windows Task manager
- Coolbeans – Not updated for years but still works with Windows 10.
- Privacy tools – oo-ShutUp10 or Privacy Repairer

Dave then proceeded to demonstrate the software tools mentioned above.

Neil Muller