



NIBBLES & BITS

Tuesday, August 8, 6:30 p.m. at the Hunt Branch Library, Fullerton — Bring a friend!

Enfish OneSpace to be presented at August meeting

by Linda Gonse

OneSpace, a new product from Enfish Technology, will be presented by Dave Diaz, Support Services Supervisor, at the August 8 meeting.

OneSpace provides “everything a you need in one convenient place,” by

Get ready for SWUG August 11–13

The 7th Annual Southwestern User Group Conference will be held three days, August 11–August 13, at the Hilton Hotel-Mission Valley in San Diego, California.

There will be workshops, vendor presentations, meals, refreshment breaks, prize drawings, and socializing among user group members from three or four states. Attendees will be given welcome bags and T-shirts.

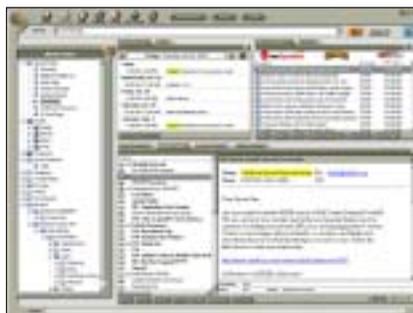
Register for \$40 until August 4, and \$50 from August 5 until the conference begins.

Vendors include: Microsoft, MGI, JASC, Peachpit Press, IDG, NetZero, spinway.com, PowerQuest, JR Inkjet, Adobe, PWM Insurance, Wizcom, Rogers Systems Specialist, Viagrafix, CardScan, Voice Pilot, LearnIt, and DataVIZ.

For a registration form and conference details go to www.swugconf.org, or write swugconf@usa.net.

Submitted by Tony Lake

compiling several windows on your PC into one screen to display calendar,



OneSpace has “everything in one convenient place.”

contacts, email, and the latest headlines. It “learns” about your interests and retrieves data from the Internet, your company network, or your hard drive.

OneSpace, a hybrid of an online service and installed software, incorporates new Intel software with advanced search capabilities.

Involved with computers since high school, Dave’s first job was in Technical Support—back when the Apple II was cutting-edge technology. Later, Dave worked for Davidson and Associates (makers of educational math software for children) as a Senior Technician.

Enfish Technology recruited him to help create its Support Services Team, and now he supervises it. He has been with Enfish since the company’s first products, Tracker Pro and OneSpace, were in beta versions.

“The most common question we get here in Tech support,” Dave said, “Is: ‘How do I...?’ The program is so versatile, there are several different ways to use it. We just try to understand what outcome the user wants and then work with them to reach that goal.”

Although it sounds expensive, OneSpace is absolutely FREE! The full 5.6 MB version is available for download at www.enfish.com.

Dave will be bringing OneSpace CDs with him to give away to group members after his presentation.

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*Award Winning
Newsletter*



Notepad

by Linda Gonse
editor@orcopug.org

I just got the scare of my life.

When I disconnected from the Internet one night this month, a new Comet Cursor shortcut and a system tray icon were on my computer's desktop! I'd seen the program offered earlier in a popup window while doing a Web search, but I closed the window—without clicking on anything.

I deleted the unexpected icons and shut down the computer for the night.

When I turned on my computer the next day, there was another Comet Cursor icon in my system tray! That's when I discovered Comet Cursor had muscled itself into my startup programs and into TWO places on my registered programs list! I didn't even know what this program was or that it had installed itself. It was scary.

It was scarier, too, since I keep Norton AntiVirus updated and enabled ALL the time. And, I keep ZoneAlarm running ALL the time. But, ZoneAlarm did not stop this program and Norton didn't detect it.

As I shutdown the CometCursor system tray icon, it offered to run free automatic web updates on itself! Angry and concerned about this infiltrator in my computer, I ran OptOut to test for spyware. But, it did not detect anything. I feared a virus infection.

Don Singleton, APCUG, suggested I ask for help at Steve Gibson's web forum, (the link is on <http://grc.com>). I received two replies.

Do you have Real Player or Real Jukebox? Comet Cursor comes bundled with those if you aren't wary. Also, don't know if you checked, but you will probably find CometCursor in Settings/Add Remove Programs—in which case you should blast it out of existence.

By the way, there is another one

called TimeSink with "tsadbot" in it. This would be located in Program Files and is also a spy app not caught by OptOut. Worth a look.

Try Ad-Aware (freeware) <http://www.lavasoft.de/free.html>. It also scans for Conducent and Comet Cursor, unlike the current OptOut, which only scans for Radiate.

It's (CometCursor)spyware.

After receiving the warnings that Comet Cursor was spyware, I killed it!

In case you are wondering, **spyware programs can and do install on our computers without our knowledge. They send information from our computers and are able to bring programs and information into our computers without our knowledge or permission.** (More about this at:

www.voiceofthepublic.com/IsYourFreewareSpyware.html and accs-net.com/tracker/. Also see page 7.)

I encourage you to download a 4K text file of blacklisted spyware at the www.lavasoft.de site and read it.

It was startling to see hundreds of programs on this list. Some are very well known, such as PKZip, Surf Saver, LapLink FTP, Rename-It, MP3 Downloader, Go!Zilla, RealPlayer, NetZip, and System Agent, among many, many others.

Program distributors include big names like: Lycos, ZDNet, Reuter's MoneyNet, Quote.com, Xoom, Win Site, StockSite (Go2Net), Cnet.com, Briefing.com, and Netdownload

Just because there are so many programs sneaking in with complete, unmonitored access to your computer and information, doesn't make spyware okay. And, just because there are so many respected and well-known companies involved in its distribution, doesn't make spyware acceptable.

Be aware of this deceitful trend in programs and don't allow it to continue. Don't allow your computer to be a fertile field for these repugnant programs to seed and harvest at will.

If you don't want to be vocal or protest to the manufacturers, dot-coms, politicians, and anyone else directly or indirectly involved, at least you can keep the spy programs out of your own computer.

Download and use Ad_Aware and check the blacklist for updates often. Don't buy spyware or download it. Don't promote it. And, above all, don't use it.

We must stop this deceptive and despicable invasion of our computers, our privacy, and our peace of mind—NOW!—before it's too late.



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The opinions expressed herein are the writers. They are not reflective of the Orange County IBM PC Users' Group position, and are not endorsed by inclusion in this newsletter.

Submit items to the newsletter editor at: editor@orcopug.org; or Linda Gonse, 22655 Valley Vista Circle, Wildomar, CA 92595-8334 (909) 245-0291.

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Letters to the editor

■ Speed Disk loop stopped

I noticed a problem with Norton Utilities 2000 when I tried to run SPEED DISK. I got the message "write detected" causing the Speed Disk program to go in a never-ending loop. I had an intuition the Microsoft Find Fast utility was causing the problem.

I opened Program Startup Folder and moved Microsoft Find Fast to a temporary folder and restarted Windows98. Then, I went back to SPEED DISK and everything worked normal. Speed Disk worked like a champ.

Rigo Muniz
rigo12@aol.com

■ Scanner tip modified

"Scanner trick," July issue, page 11, mentions you might have to reboot more than twice. This should not be. If you have to be reboot, make sure that the computer is first turned off—don't just come right back up. Let it wind down—about 15 to 20 seconds should do it. This will allow the SCSI or other controller to refresh. Then when starting your computer, press F8. A Windows menu should appear. Choose item 5 and go to the DOS prompt. If you have Norton Utilities run *ndd* by typing it into the prompt. If not, run *scandisk*. When these have completed scanning for errors, then type in *win* at

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Raffle winners walk away with 12 prizes in July

**PowerQuest
Lost & Found** Value \$49
Tony Lake Winner

**Kissco
Speed Surfer** Value \$29
Milton Gorham Winner

**Aladdin Systems
DragStrip** Value \$39
George Dedic Winner

**PowerQuest
Partition Magic** Value \$49
Joe Francis Winner

**Steve Gibson
Books** Value \$20
Helen Desmond Not Present
Duane Gifford Not Present
Joe Gionet Not Present
Bill La Mont Winner

**Lotus
SmartSuite T-shirt** Value \$5
Mike Lyons Winner

**Comdex
Spring 97 T-shirt** Value \$5
Art Bullis Not Present
Tony Lake Expired
Bloria Bearss Not Present
Lloyd Boutwell Winner

**Perfect Office
Mouse Pad** Value \$5
Daniel Cadish Winner

**Steve Gibson
Books** Value \$20
Linda Gonse Winner

**Linux One
OS beta** Value \$25
Lloyd Boutwell Prev. Winner
Dan Sheffield Not Present

Tony Lake Expired
Duane Gifford Not Present
Lloyd Harwood Not Present
Dean Kise Not Present
Leonard Prince Winner

**Wired
Encyclopedia** Value \$15
Lothar Loehr Not Present
Larry Klees Winner

**NeoBook
Authoring Sys.** Value \$19
Ike Black Winner

Submitted by Mike Lyons

New member and visitor welcomed at July meeting

One new member, **Elroy Schoppa**, La Habra; and one visitor, **Jim Swedlow** attended July's meeting. Jim, a member of Winners in Garden Grove, was just promoted to Chief Information Officer for Los Angeles County Social Services.

Nolan Cave also joined in July. Both of our new members were sponsored by **Tony Lake**. Welcome Elroy and Nolan. And, thank you, Tony!

*Submitted by Charlie Moore
and Linda Gonse*

Members' helpline

Windows '95-'98, Office 97

Windows 3.1, '95-'98, Office 97,
Office 2000, PageMaker, Internet

MS Office, Access, Win 3.1, MS-DOS

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Linda Gonse
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(909) 245-0291 eves. and wkends

Sharon Graham
shgraham@earthlink.net
(714) 533-6043 aft. 7a.m., bef. 10 p.m.

Please offer to help other members. Write: editor@orcopug.org.

Members' Renewal Dates

August 1 Gloria Bearss
Don Faisy
Stan Leese
Sid Liptz
September 1 Dwight Black
Bob Clark
Arnold Francis
Mervin Frank
Duane Gifford
Lloyd Harwood
Dave Tennant
October 1 Alan Jarrett
Larry Kleese
November 1 Randy Bremer
Bob Chenoweth
Helen Desmond

Submitted by Charlie Moore

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Add your new or updated e-mail address to the list! Write to the editor@orcopug.org.

Member goes on “voyage of discovery” at AARP site

by Alan Jarrett

The American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) has a remarkable website on the Internet. Two features which may interest members of ORCOPUG caught my attention: 1. Pages are very diversified, well written and load very quickly; 2. Pages on computers and the Internet are very informative at many levels of expertise and well presented. Why don't you come with me while we browse through the site. Then, if you wish, you can go there yourself to complete this voyage of discovery.

You will start by going to the Home Page at <http://www.aarp.org>. Go to the link: computers/the internet. There are links to: Features; News; Learning; Reviews; Discussions; Discounts; and More Web. Sample the repast by clicking on Learning; the page will scroll to six subcategories on this page: Expedition Internet; Quick Tips; How To's; FAQ's; Sandy's Glossary; and Safety Net. Each of these have one or more subcategories. There is interesting and useful information in each of these at levels ranging from rank beginner to expert.

Select any one of them, say Expedition Internet. At the top of the page you will notice four resources available for your expedition: Orientation, Itinerary, Library and Dial-up. Click on Itinerary for a table of contents for navigating the site. There are five voyages of discovery: Web Browser Basics; Introduction to E-mail; Finding Information; Multimedia on the Web; and Personal Web Page Design. Browse through one or more of them; each has four to nine subvoyages. Go back to Learning and browse through the remaining subcategories.

Go on your own voyage of discovery on the Internet. Keep the group informed by documenting your excursion with publication in Nibbles & Bits.

APCUG plans November conference in Las Vegas

The 15th Annual Fall Conference of The Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG) will be held in Las Vegas during Comdex Week and the weekend before, November 11 to November 15. Check <http://www.apcug.org/events/comdex/fall2000/> for more details. —LG

Members' Web Pages

Gloria Bearss—Great Dane Breeders

<http://www.angelfire.com/ca3/glenglo>

<http://www.angelfire.com/ca3/dragonisle>

Jim Brubaker—Discount Real Estate Services for Home Buyers and Sellers

<http://www.1homeseller.com>

Linda Gonse—PC Instruction, Newsletter and Web Page Design

<http://basicbytes.com>

Sharon Graham—Family Photos

<http://home.earthlink.net/~shgraham/>

Dan Sheffield—Educational CD-ROM Software

<http://www.act-4.com>

FREE Web listing for ORCOPUG members!

Add your Web address!

Send your information to editor@orcopug.org

The older you get, the tougher it is to lose weight, because by then your body and your fat are really good friends.

Submitted by Tony Lake



User Group discounts

Adobe offers special discount rate on magazine

by Louise Miller, Adobe User Group Rep

User Group members can now get a one-year subscription to Adobe magazine at a special discount rate of \$9.95 or lock-in this special rate for two years by paying \$19.90. That's nearly 50% off the regular subscription rate of \$18 a year. Plus, any current subscribers can renew for this same low price. We'll simply extend your subscription, regardless of your current expiration date.

Print out the special subscription form from www.adobe.com/support/usergroup/programs.html. User group members should fill out the form, indicate the group's name and submit the form with payment to: Adobe Magazine, Circulation Manager, 801 N. 34th Street, Seattle, WA 98103. Offer is valid only to User Group members in the United States and Canada.

User Group members only

Get low prices on computer magazines

Discount price list

	1 year	2 years	3 years
Computer Gaming World	\$14.95	\$28.95	\$41.95
Computer Shopper	\$17.97	\$33.95	\$48.95
Dr. Dobbs Journal	\$15.95	\$30.95	\$43.95
Family PC	\$8.95	\$16.95	\$24.95
Home Office Computing	\$9.50	\$16.50	\$24.50
Mac Home Journal	\$15.97	\$29.97	—
Mac World	\$12.95	\$24.95	\$35.95
Maximum PC	\$7.97	\$14.97	\$21.97
Microsoft System Journal	\$21.95	\$39.95	\$57.95
Mobile Computing	\$9.95	\$17.95	\$25.95
PC Computing	\$11.50	\$21.90	\$31.80
PC Portables	\$16.95	\$31.95	—
PC Magazine	\$25.97	\$48.95	\$68.95
PC World	\$14.95	\$27.95	\$40.95
Publish	\$17.95	\$33.95	\$48.95
Wired	\$13.97	\$25.97	—
Yahoo! Internet Life	\$13.95	\$25.95	\$37.95

Prices effective as of March 28, 2000

All orders *must* be accompanied by a check, cash or money order, payable to **Herb Goodman**. Send to: **Herb Goodman, 8295 Sunlake Drive, Boca Raton, FL 33496**. Call 561-488-4465 or email goodman@prodigy.net. Allow 10 to 12 weeks for your magazines to start. For renewals, send the address label from a current subscription.

Letters

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the prompt to start Windows again. This is the safest method to ensure that any temporary files are not corrupted and causing bad chains. Using this method I have NEVER had to reboot more than once during any crash.

Steve Polyanchek
www.anchek.com

■ Manitoba and Orange County—a connection

It's a small world.... this was in today's (July 21) Winnipeg Free Press, "Winnipeg Web site owner revolutionizing real estate listings offers 360-degree view of home's rooms."

If you go to the website <http://www.webview360.com> you will see the connection... (click on the state of California).

Looks like the fellow might be using the Pixaround technology.

Paul Stephen
editorpaul@wpcusrgrp.org

■ Your email could be searched by FBI

I have sent you the original article and then the response and follow up which was published today (July 20) in the Wall Street Journal (WSJ) regarding the FBI spying. Put together with the notice from Gibson about the Netscape and RealTime download software, it is interesting to see what security exists on the Internet.

Dave Musser
DMUSSER@worldnet.att.net

Read the WSJ excerpts, "FBI's system to covertly search e-mail raises legal issues, privacy concerns," on page 11; and, "The SERIOUS new spyware threat" on page 7. —LG

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Software review

PC-cillin is fast, versatile, effective

by Carl Westberg

I got to PC-cillin by a fortuitous acquisition. I had previously used McAfee. But, within six months after I had purchased a copy, they upgraded the software and discontinued providing updates of the “signature” catalog for the version that I had. I would have had to purchase a new version. That was a short “year” usage.

Next I used F-Prot which Fridrik Skulason provided free to individuals. This worked successfully and I was able to update the virus profiles or “signatures” until the Icelander apparently became tired of doing it for free.

I then acquired PC-cillin which I like better than either of the prior two. At that time, it was distributed by Touchstone and a mere connection to their BBS would yield an update to the file.



PC-cillin 2000 antivirus software blocks all kinds of viruses, malicious Java applets, ActiveX controls and web scripts that are lurking out on the Internet—just waiting to infiltrate your computer. Email, web browser, network server, floppy disk, or CD-ROM entry points are all covered by PC-cillin 2000.

The distribution and maintenance of the program and files went to Trend Micro who, in contrast to others, honored the original commitment to maintain the protection and upgraded as well as updated. What can I say other than this is practically unheard of.

Enough of my praise of the company. The program is equally good. It is fast, versatile and effective. In the time that I have used it I have never had a virus problem. I have had downloads “quarantined,” rendering them ineffective. This is a lot better than having your hard disk wiped out.

Updates are easy to get from their Internet site. Once you have registered and provided your email address you will receive virus alerts. A nice thing about theirs is that it is an advisement to update, not a pitch to upgrade.

If you don’t remember to scan any more than you remember to backup, you get help in the form of regular schedules, which you can modify, to do it for you. The default schedule seems to be intelligent and appropriate; that’s where I leave mine.

Whenever I boot up, the scan springs into action prior to loading Windows. If you run a multi-partition hard disk, you can specify which logical drives are scanned. This is very reassuring, especially for boot sector virus. The scan is fast and does not unduly lengthen the boot up process. Once a week, the whole mess will be scanned, just in case. As mentioned before, downloaded files are scanned on the way in and if a virus is discovered, the file is quarantined—put aside—so that it may do no harm.

This is not only the most long running economical virus protection

that I have found, but also the best.

Requirements: Windows 9x, 2000, NT. For updates: Internet Explorer 4.0 or higher. 24 MB RAM (32 MB recommended), 12 MB hard drive space. Cost: \$29.95. Free 30-day trial copy. See TrendMicro’s website at <http://www.antivirus.com/pc-cillin>.

Computer tip



Computers run faster without startup programs

by Alan Jarrett

Here is a little tip for slow computers in Win 98.

Right click on My Computer and click on Properties, Performance, and look at Resources. If you want to increase it, do the following:

1. Press Start button
2. Select Run
3. Type in *msconfig*, press OK
4. Click on Startup tab

You will see everything that runs in the background. Uncheck the boxes, but you MUST leave in SCAN REGISTRY. You can always toggle boxes back on later. Reboot. Then go back to Step 1 and see how much performance has been increased.

I started with 51% free resources and went to 86% after changing my startup list.

A SERIOUS new spyware threat... comes from a place you might not suspect!

The file download utilities from Real Networks, Netscape/AOL, and NetZip ARE spying on us, according to a report from Steve Gibson, Gibson Research

by Don Singleton
APCUG Director and Webmaster

NetZip's "Download Demon" was purchased by Real Networks and renamed "Real Download." then Netscape/AOL licensed it from Real and called it "Netscape Smart Download."

By watching the "packet traffic" flowing out of one of his machines while downloading a file through the Internet, Steve verified the rumors which you may have heard regarding these programs: All of these programs immediately tag your computer with a unique ID, after which EVERY SINGLE FILE you download from ANYWHERE on the Internet (even places that might not be anyone else's business) is immediately reported back to the program's source, along with your machine's unique ID and its unique Internet IP address.

This information allows them to compile and create a detailed "profile" about who you are based upon the web sites you visit and the files you have downloaded.

Perhaps you don't mind being watched and tracked as you move around the Internet... and having every file you download reported along with your unique ID and IP address. But the idea of this being done WITHOUT YOUR KNOWLEDGE, seems invasive to me in the extreme. And even if you carefully read the program's license, you might not be aware that this is going on or that "you agreed to it" when you accepted their terms!

More than 14 million people are already using the original NetZip Download Demon. NetZip knows the exact number, since every copy of their program "phones home" to report on what their users are doing! And I'm sure people are

downloading Real Network's ReadDownload and Netscape's SmartDownload like crazy.

A Class Action lawsuit was recently filed against Netscape/AOL because of this privacy invasion, so perhaps the PC industry will begin to receive the message that this sort of secret spying and profiling is not okay with the rest of us, even if it is buried within a lengthy license agreement. You decide.

And, of course, the next release of Steve Gibson's OptOut spyware detection and removal utility WILL consider



A popular Internet service used by 14 million people is tracking your computer use!

these programs to be dangerous, and warn its users of their presence in their

systems. But I wanted to be sure that you knew RIGHT AWAY what was going on, and that he had independently confirmed that this invasive file download and trackability really was occurring.

The Gibson Research web page, <http://grc.com/downloaders.htm> has the FULL STORY.

Also see news stories about the related lawsuit at: <http://www.zdnet.com/zdnn/stories/news/0,4586,2600180,00.html> and <http://www.wired.com/news/politics/0,1283,37435,00.html>. —LG

How to find and remove download spies

You can find and remove file download spies, "Netscape SmartDownload," "Real Download," and "NetZip Download Demon," through Windows' standard Add/Remove Programs feature. It is located in the Windows Control Panel.

Get into Device Manager with one click

Here's a secret tip for creating a shortcut to the Device Manager: Right-click on the Desktop and choose New/Shortcut. Type C:\WINDOWS\CONTROL.EXE SYSDM.CPL,,1 in the Command Line box and click on Next. Name it Device Manager (or another name of your choice), then click on the Finish button. Assign a new icon to the shortcut as you would any other. —Winmag.com

There cannot be a crisis this week; my schedule is already full.

Submitted by Tony Lake

Microsoft email bug—The Big One!

by T.J. Lee

FLASH! LATE BREAKING NEWS!

It's been reported that a bug has been discovered in Outlook and Outlook Express. Wait, this is news? Well, yes, because it looks like somebody has finally found out how to run malicious code on your Windows computer by simply sending you a message. You don't have to open the message, preview it, double-click on an attachment, nothing. Just receive the bloody thing.



T.J. Lee

A South American outfit called (get this...) the Underground Security Systems Research, or USSR for short supposedly discovered the bug and blew the whistle with Microsoft. This was back in early June. News leaked out but everyone agreed to keep it quiet until Microsoft could come up with a patch or patches.

But it's hard to keep the lid on this stuff and the news came out by way of an alert posted on the NTBugTraQ mailing list. So now the secret is out and everyone is scrambling.

It's a weird situation made more complicated since Microsoft has innovated the goulash of "integrated" code that blurs the natural separation of operating system and applications.

For whatever reason you want to ascribe to Microsoft, Internet Explorer has been hopelessly scrambled into the Windows operating system and it turns out that while Outlook is the application that leaves your computer vulnerable to destruction it is really the fault of Internet Explorer. Huh? Seems that IE has its hooks into all things Microsoft and some shared components are

at the heart of the problem.

Microsoft is burning the midnight oil to come up with a patch but for now here's what MS says will solve the problem:

- You're safe if you've installed the IE 5.01 Service Pack 1.
- You're safe if you're installed IE 5.5, except if you're running Windows 2000.
- If you are running Windows 2000 you have to install the Windows 2000 Service Pack 1 in order to (as MS phrases it) "upgrade the Outlook Express components."

Check out the official MS line on this at: <http://www.microsoft.com/technet/security/bulletin/MS00-043.asp>.

MS says they'll have a patch that won't require going the service pack install route or upgrading to IE 5.5 available shortly. (The patch was posted after this newsletter went out, <http://www.microsoft.com/windows/ie/download/critical/patch9.htm>. —LG)

Reprinted from The Naked PC, a free, online newsletter at <http://www.thenakedpc.com>. Lee's most recent book is "The Underground Guide to PCs." You can contact him at: tj_lee@TheNakedPC.com.

Letters

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■ Learning XML?

Here are three free XML tutorial sites: <http://www-4.ibm.com/software/developer/education/xmlintro/>, <http://hotwired.lycos.com/webmonkey/authoring/xml/>, and <http://www.msdn.microsoft.com/xml/tutorial/>

Mike Lyons
mike@orcopug.org

How to trick Word into using the correct quote

by Linda Gonse

Word automatically converts straight quote marks to smart quotes—the kind used by professional typesetters in advertisements, newspapers and magazines. Word is programmed to insert the correct "opening" and "closing" quote marks before and after words.

But, smart quotes won't work in some cases.

One example is when a quote mark is used to show a missing number. For example: *back in the '60s*. Properly, the apostrophe before the 60 indicates the omission of two digits, the 19 in 1960. For this reason, it should be a "closing" apostrophe, which curves to the right and looks like this: ' .

But, when Word inserts an apostrophe to the left of any letter it uses an opening apostrophe which curves to the left, like this ‘ . The typed phrase looks appears this way: *back in the ‘60s*.

To insert a closed apostrophe on the left side of a character, you need to trick Word.

First, type any character **before** you type the apostrophe. Now, type the apostrophe. Press the left arrow key and press Backspace to delete the temporary character. Press the right arrow key and type your numbers.

You can also insert the correct "closing apostrophe" by pressing the Alt key and holding it down while typing (on the number key pad) 0146 in sequence. Then, you can just continue typing in your data.

What if the Hokey-Pokey
is really what it's all about!

Ken's Korner



Honesty, accuracy: Keys to good product reviews

by Ken Fermoyle

After meeting notices and other club news, product reviews make up a major share of the content in most user group publications. Therefore, it's important—even critical—that they be done properly. Unfortunately, this isn't always the case.

In the 2½ years since I started my Ken's Korner column I've read at least 2,000 newsletters, sent to me by groups that use the articles. I don't pretend to read every single one cover to cover, but I do scan them all and I do read most of the interesting material, including reviews. Most are okay, some are very good, and some are terrible! The majority of them would be improved if reviewers followed a few simple rules.

Honesty is the only policy—Yes, you want to keep vendors happy so they will continue to support your group and the UG community as a whole, but your first obligation is to your fellow members. This means telling it like it is. If you find a flaw in the product, tell your readers about it.

- Be fair to readers & product—Don't blame the product for your shortcomings or those of your computer, however. If a software program runs slower than you'd like, maybe it's because your machine doesn't have enough RAM. Or perhaps you haven't configured things properly. You need to put things into context so readers can judge whether a flaw you report is inherent in the product or may be pilot error.
- Accuracy is vital - I've read many reviews in which the reviewers criticized a product with which I was familiar. It was obvious to me that the reviewer didn't understand it, had not read the manual or help page carefully, and had not sought help from a more experienced fellow member or the product's Tech Support before writing the review.
- Explain user benefits—Up front, preferably in the first paragraph, tell readers what the product is designed to do for them and how it can make their computing life easier. Be specific enough so they can determine whether or not the product would be useful for the type of computing they do most often.
- Specify system requirements—We all know that requirements listed a box aren't usually realistic. Sure, a graphics program may run with just 32MB or RAM, but it will make a snail's pace look speedy. Spell out exactly how your system is configured so readers can compare it to their own setups. This is part of being fair, Item 2 above.
- Balance subjectivity, objectivity—You're allowed to editorialize, but make it clear when you're giving a subjective opinion. ("This program was somewhat difficult for me to use because the interface is different from the XYZ software that I normally use" is a clearly-labeled subjective statement." "It took exactly 5.4 seconds to save to save a

5.6MB file to this disk" is clearly objective.)

- Check out tech support – Is there an 800 number? How long were you on hold before a real live techie was available? Is a manual furnished in the package? Is the manual helpful? (Hint: Lots of illustrations, including screen shots, and a very complete Index, with abundant cross-indexing are characteristics of a really good manual.) Remember the fairness factor, however, and check to see what experiences others have had with this vendor's tech support.
- Include relevant details – Give readers the suggested price, and user group discount, if one is offered. Add complete vendor contact information: address, phone & fax numbers (both sales & tech support), website URL, e-mail address

Your group may have its own set of product review guidelines. If not, it would be a good project for an editorial committee to undertake. Such guidelines should spell out minimum and maximum lengths, how a review should be delivered to the editor (usually on diskette or via e-mail), what file format should be used (plain ASCII text, Word, Rich Text Format, etc.) and other editorial requirements.

Correct grammar and spelling are certainly important, but don't let lack of writing experience stop you from doing reviews. Honesty, accuracy and fairness are more important than an occasional split infinitive or misspelling. Do a spell check, and you might want to have a third party check your opus for obvious goofs (An ex- or current English teacher would be great).

Those are the basics. Follow them and you will be a real asset to your

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A little of this, a little of that

Special to ORCOPUG

by Siles Bazerman

Congratulations to Winners on their fifth anniversary recently. No, it is not the anniversary of this column. It started in October 1995. The first article was about Microhelp Uninstaller. It was the first decent uninstall program for Windows 95 to be released. I then started writing about the recently released OS Windows 95. I had been running the beta for about six months prior to its release.

Well, five years later I am still running beta software. I have sworn off betas only about a dozen times, but it is so intriguing. Now its Windows Me, and for a change I am doing an absolutely clean install. This is something I have not done since Windows 3.0 (Yes, 3.0). After some 16 or 20 betas, including Windows 95, Windows 95 OSR2, Windows 98, Windows 98 SE, all Quarterdeck's programs starting in 1996, Datastorm's Procomm Plus, some Mijenix programs, and who remembers what else, my system is full of leftover bits and pieces that did not uninstall, or I was worried about deleting (shared files). These not only slow things down, but at times actually interfere with some programs running properly. Rather than hand edit my files and registry, I decided on a clean install of Windows Me.

I have two physical drives in HAL. The master is a 13G and the slave is a 5G. Using Partition Magic, I created a logical partition on the master, and sent D: to this partition. I reformatted the slave drive, made it an active partition. Now by toggling my BIOS, I can have either the master or slave drive running exclusively. It is not that I don't trust Boot Magic or System Commander or Select-It, but I have had MBR corruption using them in the past. I also wanted to eliminate one more possible source of possible problems. Since I would have to reboot anyway to switch, this only takes seconds longer.

This allows me to run normally in Windows 98 SE, while with a reboot I can run Windows Me and install each application and test it for problems at my convenience, with no time pressure. Are there problems? Of course, this is a Beta, even though it is Release Candidate 0. The problems are not with Windows Me but with third party applications that either do not conform to standard dll implementation or (more likely) do not have updated dlls available. No software or hardware, for that matter, company will release the upgrades based on a possibly changing beta. They will usually release them shortly after the OS is released. However, some will never release upgrades.

For example, my Agfa camera will download in both systems. In Windows 98, I can use a USB port for speedy downloads. In Windows Me I can only use a slower serial connection. The Agfa drivers are based on an older USB implementation not the newer one in Windows Me. My scanner works in both also, but the VistaScan program supplied with it runs only in Windows 98. It does not run, and is not needed in Windows Me. The only thing I had to go find was a scanner to printer copy program that worked in Windows Me. This meant searching the internet for a new one. I do expect to see new drivers for my camera, but doubt that VistaScan will be upgraded. At this point I have only about half of my 2 Gigs worth of applications loaded, but have already found several that are not needed as the necessary functions are already built in, or

loaded upon installing the hardware from the Windows Me CD. By the way, Barbie still runs on Windows 98 Gold or first edition with downloaded updates.

As some of you know, I recently installed ADSL. At that time I was told that I needed a separate NIC and could not run the DSL Modem through my network hub. When my modem was delivered by GTE, I did a very foolish thing. I READ the installation manual. There in nice neat pictures was a modem installed in a network on a hub. The modem comes with a crossover cable for direct connection to a NIC. I a hub you need a direct connect cable, so I bought one for \$4.95 for a 3 footer. My modem and hub are side by side on a wall about 2 inches apart, but 3 ft is as short as I could find. Now not only can both HAL and Barbie access the net, but they can do it simultaneously. In fact, they can access two different web sites at the same time.

Some of the recent questions I have been asked point out that it is time to revisit the topic of registry backup. Before you do **ANYTHING** to your registry **BACK IT UP**. How to back it up is the next question.

The first time you boot your computer up after midnight, a backup copy of the registry is saved. Actually five copies are saved, and the oldest overwritten. They are in the hidden folder *Sysbckup* and are labeled *rb00x.cab*. You can also run Regedit and export either the whole registry or only a key to work on, and can later import the changes. This works only in Windows.

To restore the registry, boot to DOS, either with a boot disk or by using the boot menu. At the C:> prompt type in *scan reg /restore*. A screen will come up and ask which of the backup registries you wish to restore. Don't go by the number, use the date as a guideline. Pick the one

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Peripherals



FBI's system to covertly search e-mail raises legal issues, privacy concerns

Search can scan millions of e-mails a second

The U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation is using a superfast system called Carnivore to covertly search e-mails for messages from criminal suspects.

Carnivore represents a new twist in the federal government's fight to sustain its snooping powers in the Internet age. But in employing the system, which can scan millions of e-mails a second, the FBI has upset privacy advocates and some in the computer industry. Experts say the system opens a thicket of unresolved legal issues and privacy concerns.

It was dubbed Carnivore by the FBI for its ability to get to "the meat" of what would otherwise be an enormous quantity of data.

Carnivore has disturbed many in the Internet industry because, when deployed, it must be hooked directly into Internet service providers' computer networks.

Mark Rasch, a former federal computer-crimes prosecutor, said the nature of the surveillance by Carnivore raises important privacy questions, since it analyzes part of every snippet of data traffic that flows past, if only to determine whether to record it for police.

Most of the criminal cases where the FBI used Carnivore in the past 18 months focused on the hunt for hackers, though it also was used in counter-terrorism and some drug-trafficking cases.

In a July 20 update, the Wall Street Journal reported the FBI rebutted that the system doesn't gobble up all passing e-mail in its search for the correspondence of a single suspect. "This device is blind to everything but the packet [of information] that it's set to retrieve," says Thomas Motta, an assistant general counsel for the FBI. "It's like a cop who can't see anything but a blue car on a highway."

*Excerpts from: The Wall Street Journal, July 11 & July 20
Submitted by Dave Musser*

Siles

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you know was working properly and follow the on screen instructions.

For those of you with shutdown problems I recommend checking out the troubleshooting procedures on James Eshelman's site <http://members.xoom.com/Khephra/a/shtdwnse.htm>. Best instructions available anywhere.

For information regarding Knowledge Base articles check out the site maintained by Atilla Szaba A.K.A Mrscary <http://members.bellatlantic.net/~mrscary/>.

For general information and troubleshooting look at Pete Forrest's <http://www.pcf Forrest.co.uk/>.

Siles Bazerman is Vice President of WINNERS, in Garden Grove. Write to him at siles.bazerman@gte.net or call (714) 897-2868 (after 9 a.m.).

Ken's Korner

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group when it comes to doing product reviews that are effective, readable and useful for readers.

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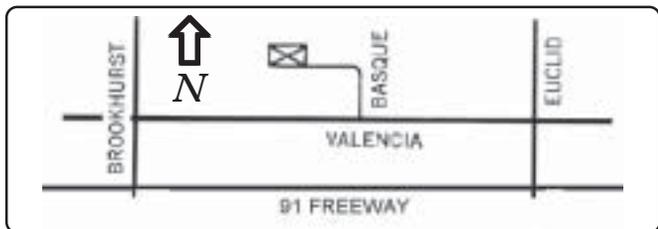
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“The User Group community plays an important role in educating computer users and reaching out to those who are new to technology. They are ideal testers of new products and serve as one of the most credible sources for product recommendations within their communities. Their feedback over the years have helped Adobe build industry-leading products. Adobe is committed to supporting the User Group community and maintaining long-term relationships with them.”

— Dr. Charles M. Geschke, President and Co-Chairman of the Board
Adobe Systems Incorporated

The Orange County IBM PC Users' Group regular meeting is scheduled for the second Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at the Hunt Library, 201 S. Basque Avenue, Fullerton, (714) 738-5364. For more information, call (714) 990-0580, or go to www.orcopug.org.



Directions: From the 91 Freeway, exit at either Euclid or Brookhurst Streets and go north. Turn onto Valencia Drive. Go to Basque Avenue and turn north. The Hunt Library is located at end of Basque. (Access only from Valencia).



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We need you!

Planning meetings are held the third Thursday of every month at 7 p.m. at Downey Savings & Loan, one block east of Harbor at Bastanchury in Fullerton. Everyone is welcome to attend and participate in planning future meetings and events.

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**EntisTechnology
 Onespace Demo**
 Tuesday, August 8
 6:30 p.m.
 Meeting is at NEW location
 See map on back panel

Computer users helping one another
 Orange County
 IBM PC Users' Group
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