THE WYSIWYG

March 2014 Volume 26, Issue 3

$3.00

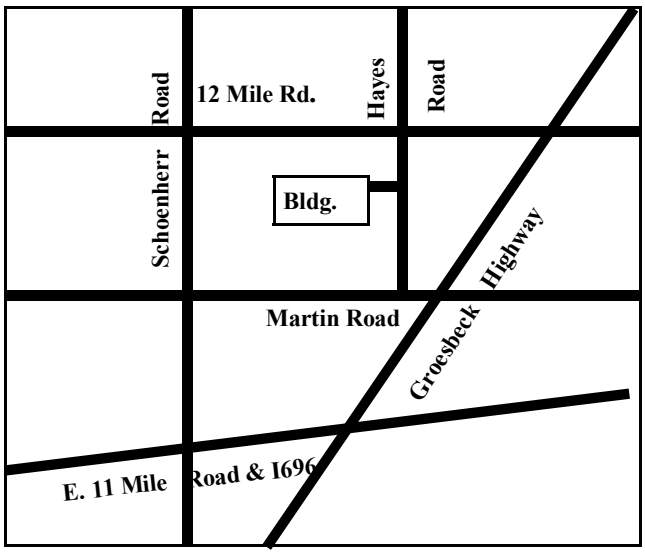
STERLING HEIGHTS COMPUTER CLUB

PO Box 385

Sterling Heights, MI 48311-0385

MAIN MEETING: TUESDAY MAR 4 7:30PM

Macomb Community College
South Campus
14500 E 12 Mile Road, Warren
John Lewis Community Center
(Building K)
(Enter from Hayes Road)



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If your e-mail or mail address changes, please e-mail: secretary@SterlingHeights ComputerClub.org

This Month's Main Meeting Topic:

The Meeting Topic Was Not Finalized At The Time Of Publication

SIG Meeting:

Tuesday, March 18
7:00 at the
Sterling Heights
Public Library

(The SIG will plan to meet every other month, at this location, if people continue to attend.)

Sterling Heights Public Library

The Sterling Heights Public Library, at 40255 Dodge Park Road, is located just south of Utica Road. A large sign reading "City Center" marks the driveway to the library and parking. The Programming Center, where the meeting is held, is just inside the front door of the library.

Guests and visitors are welcome. People can attend any SHCC meetings during two consecutive months before deciding to become a member or not. Meetings include the main meeting and SIG. July and August don't count since there is no main meeting. Membership includes admission to all SHCC functions and the newsletter. Membership is open to anyone. It is not limited to the residents of Sterling Heights.

DUES: $25/YEAR

CLUB ADDRESS: PO Box 385, Sterling Heights, MI 48311-0385
CLUB E-MAIL ADDRESS: Info@SterlingHeightsComputerClub.org
CLUB WEB PAGE: http://www.SterlingHeightsComputerClub.org

Resource People:

Family Tree	Rick Schummer
Firefox	Don VanSyckel
FoxPro	Rick Schummer
General Computer Questions	Jack Vander-Schrier
Hardware	John Rady
MS Publisher	Rick Kucejko
MS Word	Rick Schummer
Spreadsheets	Rick Schummer

2013 SHCC Officers

President: Don VanSyckel
V. President: Mike Bader
Secretary: Rick Kucejko
Treasurer: Paul Baecker

SHCC Coordinators:

Associate Editor	Rick Schummer
Door prizes	Sharon Patrick
Greeter for visitors	Lindell Beck
Newsletter publisher	Rick Kucejko
Windows SIG	Jack Vander-Schrier
Program Coordinator	Jerry Hess
Publicity	Patrick Little
Resource People	open
SIG	Jack Vander-Shrier
Welcome & check-in desk.	Jim Waldrop
Web Site	Don VanSyckel
Web Watch column	Paul Baecker

Four Month Meeting Schedule:

MARCH 2014
4 - SHCC– Main Meeting
5 - COMP meeting
9 - SEMCO meeting
18 - SIG meeting

APRIL 2014
1 - SHCC– Main Meeting
2 - COMP meeting
13- SEMCO meeting

MAY 2014
6 - SHCC– Main Meeting
7 - COMP meeting
11 - SEMCO meeting
? - SIG meeting

JUNE 2014
4 - SHCC– Main Meeting
5 - COMP meeting
9 - SEMCO meeting

The club does not meet in July and August

Other Computer Clubs:

As a member of SHCC, you can attend meetings of other clubs where we have reciprocating membership agreements, at no charge.

Computer Club of Marysville and Port Huron (COMP)
Time: 1st Wednesday, 7:00PM
Place: Mackenzie Bldg, Room 201, St Clair Community College, Clara E McKenzie Library-Science Building, 323 Erie St.
Port Huron, (810) 982-1187
Web Page: http://www.bwcomp.org
Reciprocating: Yes

South Eastern Michigan Computer Organization (SEMCO)
Time: 2nd Sunday at 1:30PM
Place: The Mahany/Meininger Senior Community Center, 3500 Marais Ave, Royal Oak, 48073
Web page: http://www.semco.org
Reciprocating: Yes

The OPC (Older Persons Commission) Computer Club
Time: Every Tuesday at 10:00
Place: OPC in Rochester
248-656-1403.
Web page: www.opcseniorcenter.org. go to "Activities - Programs", then to "OPC Computer Club" for club information.
No cost for residents to join or attend meetings. $150 fee for non-residents, (full facility usage) or $1 per meeting.
Reciprocating: No

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Newsletter submissions are due 10 days before the club meeting, but the earlier the better. They should be sent to :
WYSIWYG Publisher
5069 Fedora, Troy, MI 48098
OR at the e-mail addresses: newsletter@SterlingHeightsComputerClub.org

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The WYSIWYG was printed by STERLING PRINTING AND GRAPHICS, located at 35976 Mound, Sterling Heights, MI 48312.

The President's Pen

by Don VanSyckel

Wow March; Spring begins later this month. After all the snow this winter it'll be a welcome change. I'll see you at the meeting. Remember the PIG SIG before the meeting.

There is still concern and discussions about WinXP and Microsoft's scheduled stoppage of support for it. One question I've been asked is what will happen the day after support stops. The answer is nothing. Ask yourself, what happens the day after Microsoft releases an update now? The answer is nothing. WinXP is a stand alone operating system and it's functionality is not dependent upon anything else. So when Microsoft stops supporting it, it simply means that there will be no more updates. It will be frozen in time The debate goes on about how the hackers of the world will react. Has some hacker discovered a new way to invade WinXP and is saving the virus for after Microsoft support stops? Will so many people migrate their PCs off WinXP that it's no longer worthwhile trying to hack it? Will so many people remain on WinXP because if it ain't broke don't fix it, and Microsoft will rescind it's decision and extend WinXP support a while longer?

There have been three, count them, three Microsoft operating systems (OSs) since WinXP. First WinVista, then Win7, and finally Win8. Well actually Win8 finally goes to Win8.1 so possibly it's three and a half OSs since WinXP. So why are so many people still using WinXP? The answer is actually simple. WinXP works and people don't actually use any OS very much. By not very much I mean the percentage of time that people actually interact with the OS is very small. I realize that all the while you surf the internet the OS is supporting the communications between the network and the web browser but you, the person, is actually interacting with the web browser and the OS that the web browser sits on is of little concern.

One of the items I have not seen any information about is whether Microsoft will continue to operate the current WinXP update web site. For instance if you continue to use WinXP and have an issue with a hard drive and have to load WinXP on a new hard drive, will the web site be available to update WinXP with the current list of updates? The other problem that will occur is if you have any hardware issues and you install a new network interface card or a new video card. These new cards will not have device drivers for WinXP. So there will be more and more reasons to upgrade.

Basically any OS that works well and doesn't give you problems can reside on your PC for a long time, quietly and reliably doing it's job. This allows you to do useful things with your web browser, word processor, spread sheet, and photo management software.

I believe Microsoft could get people to upgrade more often or even every time if they approached things differently. Currently Microsoft redesigns the OS to the point where the experienced computer user has to relearn how to do most things. This is nonsense. In my opinion the new OS should allow you to do most things the same way you've been doing them. This way you could upgrade the OS with a minimal amount of fuss and muss. The new OS could have pop ups or some other method to alert users that there is a new alternate method of doing the particular process. As time goes on if some of the new ways are actually successful, they'll take over. You sort of ease users into it and lure them away from the old and into the new.

Having stated all the above, I plan to upgrade in a year or so. Unless Microsoft gets it's act together with Win8.2 or whatever they name their next attempt at getting it right, I'll put Win7 on my PCs. I already have Win8.1 on a PC that I haven't started to use yet because it's too difficult to use and I have no interest in wasting time learning it. So when the pressure builds up it'll be Win7 on everything.

SHCC Emergency Cancellation

The Sterling Heights Computer Club might find it necessary to cancel an event if the weather gets bad enough. All members of SHCC have an email address. One of the SHCC officers will send an email to the addresses SHCC has on file alerting members to the event cancellation. Decisions will not be made before 4:00 PM and decisions will be made by 6:00 PM for the regular 7:30 PM meetings. If weather is questionable an email confirming that the event is NOT cancelled might be sent, so please carefully read any SHCC announcement about events. If your email is broken, call an officer. Don't leave a message, but instead call another officer if you don't talk to someone live. It is your responsibility to keep the email you have listed with SHCC current.

Door Prizes

The SHCC offers door prizes at most regularly scheduled club meetings. In February the winner's circle included:

Richard Monk won a USB drive

Louise Manning won an i-Pad book

Virginia Chojnowski won a surge protector

Warner Mach won a USB optical mouse

Ralph Osinski won electronic scratchpad software

Apps For Windows 8: What Can They Do For Me?

by Phil Sorrentino, Past President Sarasota PC Users Group, FL
www.spcug.org philsorr@yahoo.com

Apps are what make Mobile devices - tablets and phones - so useful. So, what Apps should I have on my mobile device? Well, Microsoft has provided a starter set of Apps, at least for its tablets and laptops, as part of Windows 8. It is a basic set that allows a (new) user to immediately start taking advantage of their mobile device. Most of these Apps are general in nature, but other Apps, more specific to a task, are available (mostly for free) at the Microsoft Apps store. All of the Apps that you have heard of are there for the taking (downloading): Skype, Netflix, Angry Birds, SugarSync, etc.

Here is the collection of Apps that come with Windows 8, in a list prioritized by my particular feeling of usefulness. The first three may be all you will ever use.

1. Desktop - This tile, or App, gets you to Windows, as you knew it. All of the Windows 7 capabilities (with the exception of the old "Start" button) that you are comfortable with are here. If this is all you're looking for, click here and never come back.

2. Internet Explorer - A portal to the Internet, though the User Interface is a little different than you are used to. But, if all you want to do is surf the web, this can get the job done.

3. Store - This App connects you to the Microsoft Store where you can download all the Apps (and some other software programs) that can run on Windows 8.

The next few Apps are certainly useful, but you might find other Apps at the "Store" to satisfy your particular needs.

4. Calendar - A very simple calendar App to help you schedule and keep track of events.

5. Maps - A great way to view your surrounding geography. Input an address or point of interest and see it plotted on a map, with turn-by-turn directions, if needed.

6. SkyDrive - An App that connects you to Microsoft's portion of the "cloud." It provides 7GB of free on-line storage. It can be a central location for files you want to access from any of your computers and/or a good place to backup your important files. It can also be used to allow you to share big files with others.

7. Mail - A very basic Mail App that allows you to send and read your mail.

8. Messaging - An App that allows you to chat with your friends. If your friends use a different chat network, you'll probably want to download an App specifically for that network.

9. Photos - An App that helps organize and view all of your pictures. It collects and organizes pictures from folders and from the on-board camera.

10. Music - An App that lets you collect, organize, and listen to your favorite music. Music will also let you stream music for free. It also lets you get to Microsoft's new "Xbox Music" service. ("Xbox", seemingly, has nothing to do with the Xbox gaming system.)

11. Video - This App helps organize, and allows you to view, all your videos. It also provides an entrance to Microsoft's TV and movie stores.

12. Bing - Microsoft's search capability. Try to "Bing" something; if it's out there, Bing can find it. "Bing it on."

13. People - An App that provides a centralized Address Book for all of your cyber social acquaintances. A centralized place to keep all those email addresses, mailing addresses, social media names, phone numbers, and pictures.

14. Weather - This App provides a color weather map, including a five-day or hour-by-hour forecast for your location or a location of your choosing.

15. Finance - A "Finance News" App that includes stock market activity and financial news that can be customized to your own portfolio.

16. News - A News App that includes Sports, Finance, and Travel. This App combines articles from many websites like The New York Times and the Wall Street Journal. It scrolls horizontally and feels much like a newspaper.

17. Sports - A Sports magazine App that includes sports articles from many news sources.

18. Travel - A Travel magazine App. Travel articles from many news sources and pictures of Featured Destinations.

19. Games - An App that connects you to Microsoft's "Xbox Games on Windows" store.

20. Camera - An App to control the onboard camera. Good for video chats and creating photos for sharing.

The 20 Apps that are included can give a new Windows user a good idea of what Apps are, what they can accomplish, and how to basically con-

trol them. Smartphone and tablet users are probably more familiar with the whole App concept. Once you are familiar with the idea of Apps, you will probably want to go to the Microsoft App Store and get (install) Apps that might help you take advantage of your mobile device. When you get to the App store you will find that there are many categories and there are many Apps in each of those categories. Because computer software (read that as Desktop) has been around for almost 30 years, there are established standards like Microsoft Office for Office applications, Adobe Photoshop for photo activities, Acronis for backup, and Adobe for PDF readers. The world of Apps is very new and standards are only now being established. So, it is hard to put together a list of App standards, but from my recent experience let me leave you with a short list of some very good, free Apps to add to your collection. You might want to give some of them a try. To get to these Apps, click on the "Store" App on the start screen and you will be greeted by a display of Available Apps. Websites change, frequently, so things might be a little different by the time you read this, but currently, there are suggestions for "Top Paid", "Top Free", and "New Releases". Click on the category of your choice (Games, Entertainment, Photo, Sports, etc.) and see the available Apps.

A click on "Spotlight-Top Free" yields a list of the Spotlighted top 100 free Apps. In the list you will find:

- Skype - for video chatting
- YouTube player - for watching YouTube videos
- Netflix - for Movie streaming (if you have an account)
- Yahoo Mail - for Yahoo mail accounts
- CNN - for news and weather
- Google Search – if you prefer Google to Bing
- Microsoft Solitaire Collection - for Solitaire enthusiasts.

In addition to the Apps that are included in the major categories, you can also search for a particular App. This is done using the Search feature that is part of the Charms bar. To get to the Charms bar, click in the lower right corner of the screen. Search is the top icon, the one that looks like the magnifying glass. Click on it, and then type in the name of the App you are looking for. This will result in a search of the "Store" Apps. When, or if, you see the App listed, click on it and it will be available for installation. You might want to try the following Apps:

- Evernote - for note taking
- IMDB - for movie and TV information, and
- Dropbox - for an additional storage location in the cloud.

Microsoft's Store is a lot newer than the Google Playstore (Android) or the Apple iTunes store (iOS). If you are familiar with an App from either of those stores, you may find that that App is not available at the Microsoft store, yet. Check back in the future, it might be available then. Microsoft's App developers have had less time to create versions that work on the Windows 8 platform, but I'm sure they are working on them.

As you can see, Apps cover a lot of territory and can help you accomplish many things, from simple note taking to video chatting, and video entertainment. Apps turn your computer into all the things you expect from a modern digital programmable computer-your home PC.

This article has been obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups.

The Tip Corner

by Bill Sheff, Novice SIG Coordinator, Lehigh Valley Computer Group, PA
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Custom Installs

Remember the good old days when you loaded a new program by just clicking the recommended button? Don't do that anymore. When you are going to install a new program, or even an update, do not use the "normal" install. Always use the custom install button. Why? Let me tell you. Today they are figuring out how to cram more and more advertisements onto a screen, and within a program. When you click on the normal install button you will end up with extra tool bars and all sorts of other programs (search engines are one of them). By clicking on the custom button you will have the ability to unclick or decline to add the extra add-ons that lie beneath the recommended settings. So if you are wondering how all those extra tool bars and other pop-ups are appearing, installing the recommended settings is one of the reasons.

Digital Assets

If you have information stored online such as in YouTube, Gmail or even Picassa there is now a way to make sure it goes where you want it to go after you die. It is Google's Inactive Account Manager. This feature allows you to give your consent to transfer data such as stored emails, family photos, etc. to your executor or other designee. You should authorize your executor to work with such services as Facebook and Yahoo to transfer your stored information. Additionally, you can encrypt your passwords in programs such as Legacy Locker

and Planned Departure, but you will still need someone to ensure your assets go to the right place.

Flickr Improvements.
Flickr, the online photo sharer run by Yahoo has some new improvements. Here are some of what they are offering:

- High Resolution Image Sharing & Viewing – Files Up To 200 MB In Size.
- Video Sharing Up to 1 GB In Size
- One Terabyte Of Image & Video Storage Free
- New Updated Interface & Sharing Options
- Updated Android & iOS Apps

You can share photos with friends by sending them to your Flickr page, share photos on social media sites by clicking Share or sending direct links to your images via the "Grab The Link" function. You can download this program at Flickr.com.

Menu Folder
Here are a couple of ways to add the Tool Bar (File, Edit, View, etc.) on top.
In Vista and Win7 the top menu is disabled by default, but if you like it here is how to get them back. For a temporary fix, from within a folder just press the Alt key. Press Alt key again and it is gone. Temporarily is fine, but for a more permanent fix just open a windows folder (Start>Documents>AnyFolder), left-click on Organize. On the drop-down menu, left-click on Layout. A new menu will pop up. Move your Cursor to Menu Bar (it's at the top of the menu) and left-click to put a check by it. The menu bar pops up.

To disable the menu bar just do the reverse and when you click on Menu Bar it will remove the check mark.

And finally, just go to Control Panel> Folder Options > View. Then under Advanced Settings > Files and Folders> find "Always show menus", and click on that. Again to reverse that do the same instructions and unclick the : Always show menus."

Hard Drive Full
If your PC tells you your hard drive is almost full what can you do? A full hard drive can create a slow computer and ultimately a possible hard drive failure. You always have to have extra space on your hard drive for your operating system to temporarily move files around, use the hard drive as a memory cache and just to have some breathing room of about ten to fifteen percent. But sometimes a hard drive full indicator means something else. So here are three scenarios to review.

Number one is it is just too full. You can use clean-up, which can remove some unnecessary files, but usually this is not too significant. So, make sure your recycle bin is empty. Also, if you are doing backups on the same drive, that would create a full drive. Another option would be to get an external drive and put all your personal data such as pictures and documents onto it. This should free up quite a bit of storage.

Number two is that you've got a virus. Run a good anti-virus software to try and remove it. One variation fills up your hard drive as fast as you can empty it. A word of caution. If you get a pop-up that says "Your computer has a virus! Click here to fix it." DON'T! This usually will install a program on your computer. It might be just a commercial, or it could be a virus. Use your tried and true virus checker.

Finally, it could be that your hard drive is failing. Average life for a hard drive these days is seven, eight or even ten years. When a hard drive starts failing, it can throw off all kinds of incorrect and erroneous messages, including telling you it's full when it's not. One clue to this is if your computer wants to do a disk check every time that you boot up. If that's the case, then you probably have multiple failed sectors on your disk and it's time to replace it. If it's more than five years old, and nothing above works for you, you may consider replacing it anyway. In all of these situations backing up to an external drive might keep you from losing data. Drives are cheap. Pictures, programs and other data are irreplaceable. Okay, so here are some programs that will help you analyze your hard drive, thanks to:

HowToGeek.com (10 BEST FREE TOOLS TO ANALYZE HARD DRIVE SPACE ON YOUR WIN PC

TREEMAP HD - http://www.howtogeek.com/113012/10-best-free-tools-to-analyze-hard-drivespace-on-your-windows-pc/).

SpaceSniffer
SpaceSniffer is a portable, freeware program that helps you understand the structure of the folders and files on your hard drives. The Treemap visualization layout used by SpaceSniffer helps you to immediately visualize where big folders and files are placed on your devices. The area of each rectangle is proportional to that file's size. You can double-click on any item to see more detail. If you're searching for specific file types, such as all .jpg files, or for files older than a year, or any other condition, use the Filter field to limit the results to only those files. For help with how to use the filtering feature, select Filtering help from the Help menu.

WinDirStat
When WinDirStat starts, it reads the whole directory tree once and presents it in three useful views. The directory list, which resembles the tree view in Windows Explorer, displays on the upper left and is sorted by file/subtree size. The extension list is a legend that displays on the upper right and shows statistics about the different files types. The treemap takes up the bottom of the WinDirStat window. Each

colored rectangle represents a file or directory, and the rectangles are nested, representing subdirectories and files within the directories. The area of each rectangle is proportional to the size of the files or subtrees. The colors of the rectangles for files indicate the file extensions that correspond to the extension list.

TreeSize Free
TreeSize Free allows you to start the program normally or from the context menu for a folder or a drive. It shows you the size of the selected folder, including its subfolders. The tree is like Windows Explorer in that you can expand every subfolder within the selected folder or drive and drill down to the file level. The results are visible as TreeSize Free scans the selected folder or drive. You can download TreeSize Free as a portable program or as an installable file. To get the option on the context menu, you must download the installable file and install the program.

Disktective
Disktective is a free, portable utility that reports the real size of your directories and the distribution of the subdirectories and files inside them. You are asked to select a directory or drive when Disktective opens. The selected folder or drive is analyzed and a tree view displays on the left side of the window and a pie chart with percentages displays on the right. Because Disktective doesn't need to be installed, you can take it with you on a USB flash drive to analyze the flash drive or any Windows computer you come across.

DiskSavvy
DiskSavvy is a fast, easy-to-use disk space analyzer that allows you to analyze disk usage for your hard disks, network share drives, and NAS storage devices. The main window shows you the percentage of disk space used by each directory and file. You can also easily view pie charts or bar charts showing the results in graphical format.

DiskSavvy is available as a freeware version, a Pro version, and an Ultimate version, each successive version providing additional features. The freeware version allows for a maximum number of files of 500,000 and a maximum storage capacity of 2 TB. It has support for long filenames, Unicode filenames, and UNC network path names and allows you to copy, move, and delete files directly within the program.

JDiskReport
JDiskReport is another free tool that presents an analysis of the selected folder or drive as a pie chart, ring chart, bar chart, or in a detailed table. Click the Scan a file tree button (magnifying glass) on the toolbar to select a drive or folder and start the scan. The Folders tree view in the left pane presents a Windows Explorer-like tree allowing you to easily access all the subfolders in the selected folder or drive. Multiple tabs at the top of the right pane provide different ways to view the results of the scan. Each tab also has options at the bottom for additional different views. There are buttons on the toolbar that allow you to sort by size or name and to show the file size or number of files on the selected tab as appropriate.

GetFoldersize
For each folder in the selected folder or drive, GetFoldersize displays the total size for all the files in that folder or drive and the number of files and subfolders within the folder or drive. You can use GetFoldersize to scan an unlimited number of files and folders on internal and external hard drives, CDs and DVDs, and network share drives. It supports long file and folder names and Unicode characters and the ability to display the file size in bytes, kilobytes, megabytes, and gigabytes. GetFoldersize allows you to print the folder tree and to save the folder tree and information to a text file. GetFoldersize is available in a portable version, so you can carry it around with you on a USB flash drive or other external drive. However, if you install GetFoldersize, an option is added to the
context menu in Windows Explorer allowing you to start GetFoldersize and scan a folder by right clicking

RidNacs
RidNacs is a fast disk space analyzer that scans local drives, network drives, or a single directory and shows the results in a tree view with a bar chart displaying percentages. You can save the results of the scan in multiple formats (.txt, .csv, .html, or .xml). Files can be opened and deleted directly within RidNacs. During installation, you can choose to add an option to the Windows Explorer context menu that allows you to right-click on a folder or drive, open RidNacs, and start a scan on the selected folder or drive immediately. When you scan a folder, it's added to the list of Favorites under a list of available drives on your computer. You can also change the look of the bars on the bar chart with skins.

Scanner
Scanner uses an extended pie chart with concentric rings to display the usage of the space on your hard drive, external drive, network drive, etc. The outer segments of the rings represent deeper directory levels. Moving your mouse over a segment of the chart displays the full path at the top of the window and the size of the directory and the number of files in the directory below the path. Right -clicking on a segment provides additional options. The Zoom option allows you to zoom into the selected directory and is also available by clicking on the segment. You can also Open, Recycle (delete by moving to the Recycle Bin), and Remove and file or directory directly within Scanner.
Scanner comes with two .reg files that allow you to add Scanner to the Windows Explorer context menu and remove it again. It is a portable program and comes with two text files (one of them in English) that describes the usage of the program.

Free Disk Analyzer
Free Disk Analyzer displays a tree of all your drives on the left like Win-

dows Explorer, allowing you to drill down to deeper folders and files. The right side of the window displays all the subfolders and files in the currently selected folder or drive, the size and the percentage of disk space each subfolder and file uses. Free Disk Analyzer also displays your disk usage as a pie chart at the bottom of the right side of the window. Tabs at the bottom of the right side of the window allow you to view the contents of the selected folder or drive or view the largest files or largest folders. Click the column headings to sort by different criteria. You can also manage your files directly within the program and view, open, delete, copy, and move files the same as you would in Windows Explorer.

Finally, for additional ideas on how to regain hard disk space in Windows 7, see the HowToGeek article by Lori Kaufman about simple tips to reduce disk usage.

This article has been obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups.

What Would Change If I Were In Charge

by Jim Cerny, Director, Sarasota PC Users Group, FL
www.spcug.org jimcerny123@gmail.com

Yes I am a big fan of technology. I enjoy it. To me, my computer devices (including my tablet and phone) and the things they can do for me are totally amazing. Computers are also very complex. I believe the day has long past when one person can know everything about them. I certainly am not anywhere close to that. But having used computers for a number of years, I am still totally amazed at some of the design decisions that are made about these devices and the software (programs, apps) they use. Do the designers sit around a table and say "Ok, let's do it that way, the users will figure it out."? Does there ever seem a real reason why they do the things they do? Do they ever trial their designs with real people like us?

I don't mean to be rude -- maybe just a bit amusing. Here is my "top ten" list of the things I would change if I were in charge:

10. Computer buttons on a device would be a different color from the rest of the device. I would like to be able to clearly see the buttons or switches, especially as the devices get smaller and smaller.

9. When I move or copy a file from one place to another, I would have a pop-up box appear that says "You have successfully moved (or copied) file X to folder Y." That way I could catch a mistake if I dropped it into the wrong folder. If other users are so confident that they would never move something to the wrong place, they could turn off this feature.

8. When updating software, I would keep the most-used commands in the same place in the window. For example, when updating an email program, I would not move the "write" command box from one side of the screen to the other, nor change its color from blue to red, nor change the word "write" to "compose" or "create."

7. I would have the "help" searches recognize the words most users would enter in the "help" search, not just the words the program designers decided to acknowledge. Maybe the software uses the term "font color", but some people may search help for "letter color" or "text color.

6. Finding seldom used commands or options should be easier to find and not removed out of sight because I haven't used them lately.

5. All companies that take my money should have a live person whom I can talk to on the phone within a reasonable time.

4. Companies which use an automatic answering system (a computer voice that answers the phone and asks you questions, also known as a "phone robot") MUST make their own management employees call their own number and go through the same "telephone tree" that their customers go through. And they should all do it at least once every three months because they must "please listen carefully as our options have changed!"

3. If I give an answer to a telephone answering robot, I should not have to answer the same question again from a real person who finally gets on the line to help me.

2. When writing a new version of software, I would initially make it look like the old version and gradually help the user transition and learn as they use the new version.

And now (drum roll please) my number 1 thing I would change:

1. Company employees who finally help me on the phone should be knowledgeable of their own company's web page and the information on it! Yes, believe it or not, you can constantly negotiate totally different deals and prices in person, on the phone, and on the Internet – all with the same company.

Well, I guess no world is perfect. And I am sure you have your "top ten" list too. If any of you get a call from a company asking for your opinion on any of these things, please let me know. For some reason no one calls and asks me. Maybe it's because of my "telephone tree" answering message they have to listen to first.

This article has been obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups.

Web Tracking Is Monitoring Our Every Move

by Sandy Berger, CompuKISS
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Web tracking has gotten completely out of hand. The government is snooping on everything we do. On top of that, sharing of information between companies for advertising purposes has reached a level of alarming sophistication. Here's my story about what they do and how they do it.

Times have changed quickly in the Internet world. It used to be fun to visit a website and be presented with an ad about some new product or service that I found interesting. I fully realized that they chose what they presented to me by scanning the information that had been gathered about me from my previous Web searches and Web browsing, but it didn't really bother me.

Today, however, was an eye-opener for me. Today I realized just how invasive that Web tracking has become. This morning I looked at a skirt that was on sale at the J Jill website. During my browsing session I looked at the skirt several times.

Here's the eye-opener. That afternoon, I when I was doing some research, I was struck by the fact that the same skirt was featured in two prominent J Jill ads. These ads were on the Associated Press website, which had nothing to do with J Jill or with clothing.

In my morning shopping I also looked at some Web services. In the afternoon, I was shown ads for one of the Web services that I had looked at in the morning. Of course, the Website that showed me the ads had nothing to do with Web hosting.

This all has to do with advertising and the sharing of information. When you visit a website that website knows your IP address. It also has a record of the web browser you used, the time of your visit and what you looked at. All shopping sites do this. Search engines like Google also keep track of this type of information. In addition, they track everything you search for. They can also see which website you visit when you leave their website. Search engines, including Google, retain this information for some time.

When we are on the Internet, we are constantly being categorized, identified, and targeted. All of the data from multiple visits and multiple searches is congregated to give a pretty good representation of who you are. On top of that this information is shared by all of the search engine or website's advertising, marketing, and tracking partners and affiliates. That is how the skirt that I was looking at showed up on a totally unrelated website.

All of this is done in the name of advertising and it follows the American way of advertising. Remember when television transmissions were totally free, supported only by advertising? Well, although we pay for both the Internet service and the device that we use to access the Internet, many things on the Internet are free. These include programs and services like Internet browsers and search engines.

They offer us free stuff, but they either have direct ads or they have deals with others who are advertisers. They also use small, almost invisible single pixel graphic images called web beacons to scan computer and cookie log files to analyze people and to target purchasers. The information that they gather cannot identify us personally, but it can tell them a lot about our preferences, surfing habits, and purchasing behaviors.

I don't mind direct ads but unfortunately, the advertisers and their partners and affiliates have become more and more invasive. Technology is being used to predict and to affect consumer behavior. A few years ago, when a website said, "Welcome back, Sandy", it felt comforting to have the site recognize me. Now, however, the targeting is becoming so accurate that it feels artificial, intrusive, and even a bit eerie.

Add that to the fact that the American government has been gathering the telephone and Internet records of millions of citizens, and you will agree that WE HAVE A REAL PROBLEM!

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Last Month's Meeting

You missed a great presentation last month if you weren't there. Macomb County Reserve Deputy Jaime Martinez presented "Internet Safety: The New Threat Landscape and What YOU Should Know". This presentation had lots of do's and don't's of Internet usage and many other interesting items about the Internet.

If your e-mail or mail address changes, please e-mail: secretary@SterlingHeights ComputerClub.org

FOR SALE

The following are available for sale. All have been checked and refurbished by certified HP repair. Contact Don VanSyckel for details.

HP Laserjet 3055 multi-function (all-in-one)
HP Laserjet 5000GN wide format printer
HP Business Inkjet 2600 color (wide format)
HP Laserjet 5 new fuser/and gear train asm./toner
HP Laserjet 4 refurbed/new toner

WYSIWYG WEB WATCH (www)

by Paul Baecker webwatch@sterlingheightscomputerclub.org

This column attempts to locate sites containing valuable, amusing and free content, with no overbearing pressure to purchase anything. Send your favorite entertaining, helpful or just plain useless sites (a description is optional) to the e-address noted above, for inclusion in a future WYSIWYG issue.

Unique narrative portraits of prominent and up-and-coming music artists and bands, including full length concert videos and intimate interview sessions.
http://www.baeblemusic.com

Why don't you try this? News you can use, or that may just be entertaining – articles in technology, health, science, more.
http://www.whydontyoutrythis.com

Maryland high school website features a video jukebox with hits from the 50s and early 60s.
http://www.1959bhsmustangs.com/VideoJukebox.htm

Maryland high school website features old TV shows and videos.
http://www.1959bhsmustangs.com/OldTVShowsandVideos4.htm

Video of Detroit in 1961. (26 mins)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dUW5bqdKWew

You have finally run out of reasons not to back up your PC.
http://www.pcworld.com/article/2095481/if-we-show-you-how-to-back-up-your-pc-for-free-will-you-finally-do-it.html

Adjust the wild color designs by clicking anywhere with the mouse, or adjusting the slider bars in the upper left corner.
http://bestiario.org/research/eyecandy/

Avoid colliding with the red dots. Activate boosts by picking up the rare green dots. Move around a lot for points and stay alive.
http://www.sinuousgame.com

For some folks, a rain storm is a comforting background.
http://www.rainymood.com

Free visual workouts for no-equipment training routines for all fitness levels, training guide, workout manual, calorie calculator, stopwatch, more.
http://www.neilarey.com

Rolling Stone magazine has assembled their fifty favorite sketches from the Saturday Night Live TV program.
www.rollingstone.com/movies/pictures/50-greatest-saturday-night-live-sketches-of-all-time-20140203

Article suggesting that sitting all day is damaging your body and how to counteract it.
http://lifehacker.com/5879536/how-sitting-all-day-is-damaging-your-body-and-how-you-can-counteract-it

Free tool that will take any number of images, saved as separate GIF files, and create a single animated GIF from those images.
http://www.whitsoftdev.com/unfreez/

Easy way to ensure that your browsers and plugins are up-to-date with the latest security patches.
https://www.qualys.com/free-tools-trials/browsercheck/

POP vs. IMAP: What do they mean and which one should you use?
http://www.ilovefreesoftware.com/31/windows/pop-vs-imap.html

Converts your digital photos into art; from pencil sketches to watercolor or oil paintings, pen & ink drawings and cartoons.
http://www.fotosketcher.com

How to keep your Internet usage as private as possible [infographic].
http://socialmediatoday.com/socialbarrel/1765451/online-privacy-how-keep-your-internet-usage-private-infographic

Hungarian "Rarely Seen in History" site with rare photos and unique stories – use a translation website as necessary.
http://ritkanlathatotortenelem.blog.hu

Enter any website and this site determines its readability level.
http://juicystudio.com/services/readability.php#readingresults

Assists you in thoroughly searching all participating states to find your family's missing, lost, and unclaimed property, money and assets.
http://missingmoney.com

Is someone stealing your Wi-Fi connection? View list of all computers/devices that are currently connected to your network with this free tool.
http://www.nirsoft.net/utils/wireless_network_watcher.html

World Wide Web Column on the Club Web Site

Check out the WebPageReviews section on the club's web site. You can see past web sites reviewed in the column on our club web page. They are arranged into various key word categories to help locate a specific site.