



THE WYSIWYG



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September 2017

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STERLING HEIGHTS COMPUTER CLUB

PO Box 385

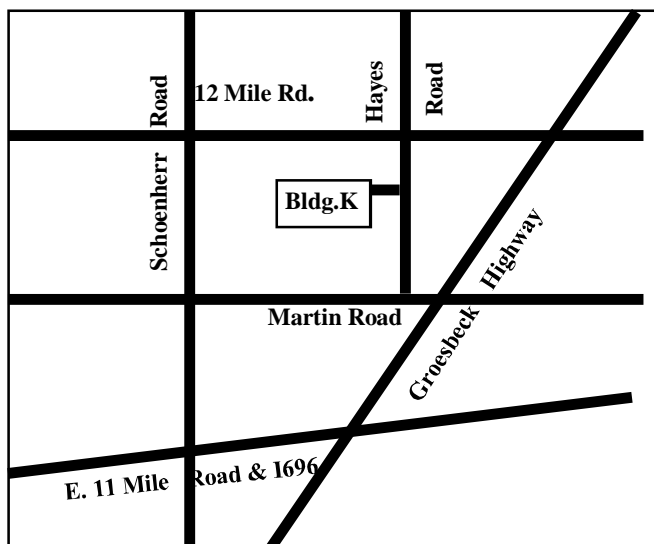
Sterling Heights, MI 48311-0385

MAIN MEETING: TUESDAY SEPT 5

6:30 PM

**Macomb Community College
South Campus**

**14500 E 12 Mile Road, Warren
John Lewis Community Center (Building K)
[Second floor - left from steps or elevator]**



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This Month's Main Meeting Topic:
"Pi-Hole: A Black Hole for Internet Advertisements"
 presented by member
Mike Bader

Club Officer Elections are in November. Members should consider running for office. Officer duties will be outlined in the October WYSIWYG.

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	open
MS Publisher	Rick Kucejko
MS Word	Rick Schummer
Spreadsheets	Rick Schummer

SHCC Coordinators:

Associate Editor	Rick Schummer
Door prizes	Don VanSyckel
Greeter for visitors	Jim Waldrop
Newsletter publisher	Rick Kucejko
Program Coordinator	Mike Bader
Publicity	Patrick Little
Resource People	open
Welcome & check-in desk	Jim Waldrop
Web Site	Don VanSyckel
Web Watch column	Paul Baecker

2017 SHCC Officers

President: Mike Bader
 V. President: Don VanSyckel
 Treasurer: Bernie DeFazio
 Secretary: Rick Kucejko

Four Month Meeting Schedule:

SEPTEMBER 2017

- 5 - SHCC - "Pi-Hole: A Black Hole for Internet Advertisements " by member Mike Bader
- 6 - COMP meeting
- 10 - SEMCO meeting

NOVEMBER 2017

- 7 - SHCC - Main Meeting
- 1 - COMP meeting
- 12- SEMCO meeting

DECEMBER 2017

- 5 - SHCC - Main Meeting
- 6 - COMP meeting
- 10- SEMCO meeting

OCTOBER 2017

- 3 - SHCC - Main Meeting
- 4 - COMP meeting
- 8 - SEMCO meeting

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, MI (810) 982-1187
 Web Page: http://www.bwcomp.org
 Reciprocating: Yes

South Eastern Michigan Computer Organization (SEMCO) (new location)

Time: 2nd Sunday at 1:15PM
 Place: Bloomfield Township Library, 1099 Lone Pine Rd., Bloomfield Hills, MI 48302
 Web page: http://www.semco.org
 Reciprocating: Yes

Royal Oak Computer Club

Time: Every Wednesday at 12:30
 Place: Mahany/Meineger Senior Community Center 3
 500 Marais Ave. Royal Oak, MI 48073
 248-246-3900
 Reciprocating: No

Contact Information:

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Jack Vander-Schrier (Call Jack after noon)	586-739-5952	jvanders@comcast.net

Newsletter submissions are due 10 days before the club meeting, but the earlier the better. They should be sent to : newsletter@SterlingHeightsComputerClub.org

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The President's Pen by Don VanSyckel



Summer's over and it's back to the normal routine. We'll see you the day after Labor Day at MCC South Campus, our normal meeting location. We've signed up with the school for another year, through June 2018. Every year the room cost goes up. If anyone has ideas for next September, let me know. We need seating for 50 people, Internet, projector, good parking, stability on the part of the facility, and hours that support our needs.

On a brighter note, we held our second SHCC Gab Fest in August. We considered having it at a park and using a pavilion but between getting reservations, hauling the food and drink from the cars, and the cost of the pavilion, we choose to have it at my house, plus the bathroom is closer. Everyone had a good time and we ran over the time but this was not an issue. The weather this summer has been great and on the Saturday of the Gab Fest the weather was perfect. Topics gabbed about did include some computer topics but many others were covered. We munched on typical picnic fare and were surprised by gourmet Japanese ice cream treats.

Another club business note is SHCC membership has been declining. I believe there are a number of reasons, the biggest of which is although there are many more computers out there than there used to be, many people don't do much with their PC beyond surfing the net and viewing a few pictures. Regardless of the reason, SHCC membership is reaching the point where the dues will not cover expenses. This is not an issue yet because we do have a little cushion in the bank, but at some point we have to 1) cut costs (room rent is the largest), 2) increase income (more members), or 3) raise dues, or some combination of the three. Currently, we need 70 to 75 members to break even. The two

things we have direct control over is room cost (to a point) and dues. If anyone has any ideas, contact one of the officers.

The fall meetings are shaping up to be very good. In September SHCC member Mike Bader is presenting "Pi-Hole: A Black Hole for Internet Advertisements", in October the presenter just canceled when I confirmed the presentation title, and in November we are inviting Mr. Richard Tapaninen of Micro Center to return and tell us about "What's Hot for the Holidays". Mark your calendar.



Presenters Wanted

The officers invite any member to make a presentation at the main meeting.

If there is some software you have been using and think others may be interested as well, or there is a computer topic you would like to present to other members, please call or e-mail Don VanSyckel. Making presentations is not that difficult. The hour goes by before you know it and there is always enough material to cover in a software package so that the hour is easy to fill.

If there is a topic you are interested in or something you would like demonstrated, please see any of the officers. They are always interested in what the members would like to see.



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

Last Month's Meeting

Last month, meeting month that is, Mr. Stanley Luke of Best Buy Madison Heights presented "HDTV, Current Technologies And Features". Interesting and informative sums it up nicely. When you are in Best Buy, ask for Mr. Luke. one presentation you needed.



VISIT THE SHCC WEB SITE:
<http://www.SterlingHeightsComputerClub.org>

Door Prizes

Door prize drawings are held at regular club meetings. The winner's circle for June included:

Walter Jendhoff won a wireless mouse

Mike Bader won a pack of DVD-Rs

Martee Held won a Sony tool kit

Ed Zarembo won 4 CR2032 batteries

Paul Manning won a pack of CD/ DVD carrying cases

Don Hjelle won a power strip

Pat Little won 4 CR2032 batteries

Tom Miller won an LED light

Richard Katnik won a pack of DVD-Rs

Frances Poliuto won a USB cord

Phil Reynaud won a pack of CD/DVD carrying cases



Four Options For XP Die-hards

From the Ask Leo Newsletter
<https://askleo.com>

Q: For PCs I still use XP. This is for several reasons (real or imagined) — I hate going to W10 and don't plan to do so ever if I can. I hate the "upgraded" versions of Microsoft Office. They are ever more clumsy and harder to use. And — worst of all, they are not backward and forward compatible. I'm retired, but in my prior life I was involved with computers used in military air defense systems. If we had delivered software to the military with the software problems that Microsoft delivers to the public I think I would have been fired prior to the first delivery.

I am at a loss for what to do for my next upgrade. Shall I go to W7, suffer with W10, evolve to Linux, retire and let my brain rot — or what? I do not have an answer and soon I will have too many XP issues to progress further. (I spend a couple of hours a day investing in the market.)

Do you have any thoughts on this? Your thinking would be valuable to me.

A: I have thoughts a'plenty. You're not alone in your situation. There are plenty of XP die-hards who are reluctant (to put it politely) to use anything else.

What's right for you, however, still comes back to you, and what you're willing to endure.

That being said, I'll rule out brain-rot right from the start. This is a wonderful opportunity for just the opposite, in my opinion.

Option 1: Stay with XP

Many people are simply opting to stay with Windows XP. It meets their needs, they're comfortable with it,

they know how to drive it, and their machines support it.

If there's a problem at all, it's simply that "meets their needs" stands a good chance of changing over time.

New hardware probably won't support XP.

New applications probably won't support it.

Updates for existing applications are slowly dropping support for it — either explicitly, by not running on XP at all, or passively, by no longer updating the software running on XP.

Application software updates are also getting larger, increasing demands on the capacity of machines being used. This typically manifests as a machine just getting slower over time.

And, of course, the boogeyman that we keep hearing about again and again: if a security issue is found in Windows XP, it will not be fixed. You're totally on your own when it comes to keeping yourself safe and secure.

So, if you're not planning on any new hardware or software, are OK with the updates for the applications you do have, and are satisfied you can handle your own security, staying with Windows XP may not be unreasonable. The threatened XP "Armageddon" (or [XPocalypse](#), as some termed it) when support came to an end never came to pass.

Option 2: Upgrade to 7

Windows 7 was fairly popular; it had, and has, a large base of happy users. It was different than Windows XP in some ways, but

ultimately was the most popular version of Windows after XP. (We treat Vista as if it didn't happen.)

Once again, many people who choose to stay with Windows 7 feel that it meets their needs, they're comfortable with it, they know how to drive it, and their machines support it.

The issues with Windows 7 are the same as with Windows XP; it's just that the time frame is different. You have a little more breathing room.

New hardware generally supports it, and new applications almost certainly do.

Applications continue to be updated on and for Windows 7. While the updates are getting larger, *most* machines running Windows 7 are newer, and generally have more room to accommodate that growth.

And when it comes to security, Windows 7 will continue to be supported into January of 2020.

If you want the smallest upgrade from Windows XP in terms of the changes in user experience, upgrading to Windows 7 would be it.

But its days are numbered.

Option 3: Upgrade to 10

Windows 10 has had an admittedly rough start. Initially, it ran into potholes not as much for its technology as for the heavy-handed approach Microsoft took to getting it on the machines of Windows 7 and 8 users. (Once again, we'll treat 8 as if it didn't happen.) Subsequently, an assortment of technical issues impacting a generally small subset of users, as well as some design decisions (such as removing granular control over updates) have proven to be relatively controversial.

Nonetheless, Windows 10 is a solid operating system for most. I use it myself on several machines — old,

new, and virtual – and have done so since it came out, without incident.

The biggest issue for new adopters of Windows 10 tends to be resistance to user interface changes, including everything from the new Start menu to the changing division between “apps” and “applications” and migration towards the former. Windows 10 represents the biggest change to Windows XP that is still Windows.

Option 4: Switch to Linux

Switching to Linux is certainly an option.

Chances are your existing hardware will work. In fact, Linux is often the most viable option for extending the life of older PCs for which Windows and Windows applications have simply gotten too large. Distributions like [Lubuntu](#) and others are specifically designed with smaller footprints in mind.

You may also find the default user interfaces in most Linux distributions to be very XP-like, with a standard hierarchical start menu (no tiles), a familiar file manager, and so on.

Here’s the catch: your Windows software will not run in Linux¹. For every program you care to use, you’ll need to find a Linux alternative. In some cases, it’ll be simple: Firefox and Thunderbird, for example, have Linux versions, and are often even pre-installed. In some cases, it depends on your specific needs. There are several Linux alternatives to Microsoft Office, such as [Open Office](#), [Libre Office](#), [Abiword](#), and others. Unfortunately, the best you can say is that they’re “mostly” compatible – they tend to operate a little differently, and while you can exchange documents with Microsoft Office users, it’s unlikely they’ll look exactly the same.

In the worst case, you may find that there is no Linux alternative for

software you currently run on Windows.

Particularly for those who use their computers primarily for browsing the web and exchanging email, Linux can be a workable alternative.

My Recommendation

If you want to stick with Windows, my advice is simple: suck it up and move to Windows 10. Sorry to be brutal about it, but I keep running into people who were at first extremely reluctant to move away from XP but who now happily use Windows 10. The only thing that stood in their way was their own willingness to consider the move and accept the changes that go with it. I’m not claiming it’s easy, or that Microsoft couldn’t have handled it better, but it is what it is. Windows 10 is a good operating system, and will be around for years to come.

There are things to make the transition easier. One I would recommend is [Classic Shell](#). This will address the single most common complaint about Windows 10: it’ll allow you to get your Windows XP-style start menu back. It also provides several other tweaks to ease the transition.

If you can’t consider Windows 10 but want to remain supported, I’d

seriously consider Linux. [Linux Mint](#) is the distribution I’d have you evaluate. Do keep in mind the caveats above about needing alternatives for Windows applications. Similarly, if you think you’ll be dodging updates, think again. In my experience, my Linux distributions are actually updated *more* frequently than Windows. On top of that, support ends more quickly – Windows is supported for ten years, while most “long term support” releases of Linux are supported for only five.

A word about Office

The original question included the comment that newer versions of Microsoft Office “are not backward and forward compatible”.

Depending on what’s meant by that, it’s not true. Newer versions of Office can open all older documents, and there are add-ons for older versions of Office to open the newer “x” file formats (docx, xlsx, and so on).

Perhaps more relevant is that you may not need to use Office at all. The alternatives I mentioned earlier are generally available for Windows. Switching to one of them might make your life a little less frustrating.

This article is republished, with permission, from the [Ask Leo! Newsletter](#).



All That Glitters Is Not Chrome

by [Greg Skalka](#), Under the Computer Hood UG, CA
[www.uchug.org](#) [president@uchug.org](#)

I love my Chromebook. It’s a very handy thing to have when you want some information off the Internet quickly. I don’t have a smart phone, so the Chromebook is what I go to when I want to know the locations, hours or phone number of a business, what traffic or weather conditions are like or the answer to any other search question. I keep my Acer Chromebook 11 on our kitchen table so it is available for instant

use. It is small and light, yet has an 11.6” screen and a full keyboard, so I find it much more useful (and usable) than a tablet.

When I bought my Chromebook over a year ago, I thought I understood the limitations it had in needing to be connected to the Internet for most uses, and its limited storage and processing power. It has exceeded my initial expectations and I find I often use it nearly as

much as my Windows 7 laptop. I love that it boots in about ten seconds, has a very long battery life and is very portable, so I find I'm taking it more and more in situations where I'd otherwise take my 14" laptop. In spite of its advantages, I do still continue to find new annoying shortcomings in the Chrome OS, and difficulties figuring out how to perform a particular task or change a setting. Though I've come up with work-arounds for some of its limitations, my Chromebook still has enough tarnish spots in its capabilities that I doubt it will ever be a complete substitute for my laptop.

I own a lot of computing devices. I probably have more than most people, though I'm sure there are some out there that have more. I admit I am hanging on to some devices that have not been used in many years (that is another story), but there are in my household almost a dozen that I myself have used at least once in the last year. Most run Windows (two laptops, three desktops and a PDA). I don't feel I'm closed-minded, though, as I do have an Android tablet, an iPad mini (iOS) and two Chrome OS devices (Chromebook and Chromebit). I've nothing against Linux, but you don't normally find it in stores on new devices, and I've not yet found a compelling reason to install it on one of my existing devices.

From this, you would probably assume (correctly) that I use Windows most of the time. You could say I was "raised" on Windows, so I tend to judge, for good or bad, all other computing user interfaces with Windows as a reference. As an electrical engineer, I spend most of my work days working on documents, spreadsheets and designs, using software running on Windows PCs, with the traditional keyboard and mouse user interface. I've grown accustomed to the features, capabilities and limitations of Windows on reasonably-powerful Intel-based computers, typically with lots of memory and storage. In spite of the (often unfortunate) changes to the Windows user interface over many

years and versions, I usually find it easier to adapt to the next thing Microsoft throws at me than something coming from a seemingly completely different mindset, like iOS or Android.

I was able to figure out how to get around on the web pretty easily on the Chromebook. The OS is based heavily on the Chrome browser, which I use most of the time at work. Though I could get a Bluetooth mouse to use with my Chromebook, the touchpad has unique features that allow me to do almost everything easily. I don't notice any real difference in the Chromebook's ability to serve web pages as compared to my i5-processor-equipped Win7 laptop with IE; processing power is not a big factor in traversing the web.

A main point of contention for me in all non-Windows devices I've used is the file manager. I'm so used to the Windows File Manager that everything else seems alien. The Files app in Chrome is fairly similar, but I only recently found the way to see how much space is available on a drive (it is under "Settings" when looking at that drive). I still don't know if iOS even has a file manager; I have photos on my iPad that I have yet to figure out how to copy off.

My Chromebook uses at least half of its 16G of SSD memory for the OS and apps, and it says even the remaining memory is subject to use by the system. I bought a 128GB USB3 Flash drive to use with the Chromebook, which seems to work great. It would have been more useful if the Chromebook's SD memory slot were the type that keeps the memory card totally inside the body of the Chromebook; unfortunately, the SD card sticks out and is at risk for damage or breaking off.

In addition to saving and editing files in Google Docs on the Chromebook, Microsoft Office files can often be edited in "Office Compatibility Mode". This works even

when working offline (no Internet connection), and allows me to take my Chromebook to meetings to take notes, or write newsletter articles on it while riding in the car. It appears to be compatible only with the most recent Microsoft Office file formats. I've had good luck with Word documents, and can edit PowerPoint slides, but I had issues the one time I tried editing an Excel spreadsheet. If I plan on taking notes or editing files offline somewhere, I always test opening the file I'm planning to edit before I leave home.

One unnerving feature of the Office Compatibility Mode is its lack of a "save" feature in the menu. The first time I opened a Word file to edit, I made a few test changes and then closed the document. Fortunately, the changes were present when I opened it again, but I still didn't fully trust it. I finally noticed that it saves each keystroke of change back to the file as it goes; as I would press a key to add a letter, the access light on the external USB Flash drive would flash. While this saving method ensures you don't lose changes, it does wear out the Flash drive's solid-state memory faster in writing to the drive so many times.

Chrome OS is compatible with an extensive list of file types, including most office, media and image files. It can open .pdf files as well as handle compressed files like .zip and .rar. I did recently find out that Windows Media Video (.wmv) files cannot be opened by a Chrome OS device. I had created a photo slide show for my dad's 80th birthday, with the result being a .wmv video. While I did find one app that vaguely mentioned allowing .wmv files to be viewed, most of the search results for this problem suggested converting the video to a supported file type. In the end, I used my Win7 laptop to play the file.

Even files that are supported by Chrome can have problems if a lot of hardware horsepower is needed. I have an auto dashcam that rec-

ords video in HD as .mp4 files. I can connect the dashcam through USB to my Win7 laptop, which can easily play the video files stored on its memory card. There might be a few slight glitches, but playback appears pretty smooth. If I connect the dashcam to my Chromebook, it can play the video files, but it takes a long time to process before they initially start playing, and the playback is very jerky.

The Chrome OS has its own web store, but since it does not have a large following, there are not that many offerings as compared to the Android app store. There are a couple of VPN apps, but the VPN service I subscribe to, Private Internet Access, does not appear to support the Chrome OS at this time. I was surprised to see that TeamViewer was available as a Chrome app. I've looked through the apps offered a number of times, but have yet to find one I wanted to install at the time.

Chrome OS is also not supported that well by third-party hardware vendors. The Patriot Aero external Wi-Fi hard drive I tried to demonstrate earlier this year has apps to support its use with Android and iOS devices, but they don't have one for the Chrome OS. I have some Western Digital My Passport USB3 external hard drives, which can be set up to use password protection and data encryption. My Chromebook can see and use the drives that are not protected, but cannot use a drive that has protection / encryption enabled, as the program on the drive that is used to enable and disable protection is not compatible with Chrome. The universal in Universal Serial Bus only applies if there is no additional software required.

Printing is another problem issue for Chromebooks, as printers would need drivers. I've not seen any printers that advertise supporting Chrome OS devices. Google claims printing can be done using Google Cloud Print.

I've read some about it, but have not yet been able to figure it out. It is made more confusing by Google having a Chrome browser and a Chrome OS. So far, I've settled for taking my files to a Windows PC to print.

Chromebooks offer a lot of promise for speedy and simple computing, but they don't always fully deliver on everything a user might want to do. I love my Chromebook and will continue to use it, but it

appears it can't do everything I need. I guess I won't be giving up my Windows computers anytime soon and will continue to use it, but it appears it can't do everything I need. I guess I won't be giving up my Windows computers anytime soon.

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



Can I Really Get Malware By Just Looking At Email?

From the Ask Leo Newsletter

It used to be that simply viewing a malformed email could allow a virus to spread. Thankfully, that's no longer the case with modern mail programs.

New malware appears every day, and it seems like hackers constantly get smarter and craftier.

In the past, asking if your machine could become infected with malware by just reading your email would get laughs from the geeks in the crowd. "Of course not!" they would giggle.

Then came Outlook. Not only could opening an email infect your machine, but for a while, you didn't even have to be around to have it happen.

And the geeks stopped giggling.

For a while.

Fortunately, today things are different.

Of HTML, DHTML, and JavaScript

HTML is the "language" of the web. It's the way web pages are encoded and described to your

browser so it can display the web pages as the designer intended.

DHTML, for Dynamic HTML, and JavaScript, a programming language, added something HTML didn't have by itself: the ability to *do* things. By "things," I mean actions as simple as turning this portion of this sentence red when you move your mouse over it to interactive games you can play in your browser.

Your browser, and the HTML that was displayed in it, became a platform for computer programs.

Then along came email.

HTML email

Email used to be plain-text only, and much of it still is.

But someone had a bright idea: what if we made email more flexible and gave it all of the richness of HTML formatting? In HTML-formatted email, words can be **bold** or underlined, we can insert images, and much much more.

Email could be as "pretty" and complex as a magazine page.

Since many email programs simply used the same code as the web browser, email messages could also now *do things*.

Then along came malware.



Malware in email

If email could “do things,” like run small programs within the window in which they were being viewed, it didn’t take long for hackers to start writing malware that not only took advantage of that, but also exploited other vulnerabilities those programs could access.

Vulnerabilities that allowed them to infect your machine with more malware...

...simply because you opened your email and looked at it.

Before it got better, it got worse.

Then, along came Outlook.

The Preview Pane’s Role

I say “Outlook,” but in reality, any email program that offered what we now call a “preview pane” was vulnerable. Outlook was simply one of the earliest and most popular.

The scary scenario worked like this:

- You left your email program open on a view of your inbox with the preview pane showing.
- You had the “most recent” email selected; its contents were in the preview pane.

- You left.
- You got new email. Outlook dutifully kept the selection at the most recent, and updated to select the newly arrived message. As a result, it also updated the contents of the preview pane with the contents of the new message.
- If the new message contained malware that infiltrated by trying to execute JavaScript, that malware would run and infect your machine.

Your email program “looked” at a message and your machine was infected. You weren’t even there.

Fortunately, that didn’t last long.

Modern email programs and sites don’t do that

Needless to say, that possibility was fixed quickly.

The most dramatic fix is that JavaScript, and almost all other scripting used to allow an email message to “do something”, no longer works. Period. For good or for evil, you can’t put scripting into an email message and expect it to work.

Along the way, the vulnerabilities related to email-based exploits² have also been getting fixed, regularly and quickly.

Additionally, images aren’t even displayed by default by most email programs anymore (for reasons related to spam, but it also increases your security with respect to malware). Today’s situation is very, very different.

Today, you cannot get infected by just looking

Opening an email is safe to do.

Having your preview pane open is a safe thing to do, even if you’re not around.

Email programs and email services now no longer allow the things that once upon a time made looking at an email risky.

However...

You CAN get infected if...

The one thing missing from the discussion above is: attachments.

The ability to attach an arbitrary file to an email message actually predates HTML-formatted email. It remains a convenient way to transfer a file from one place to another.

Unfortunately, the word “arbitrary” is appropriate. *Any* file can be attached to an email, including programs that infect your machine with malware.

That’s why one of the admonitions relating to internet safety is to *never open an attachment you’re not expecting* and that you don’t know for certain is safe.

You **can** get infected by just looking at the contents of an attachment.

Email safety rules

So, let’s review the rules for safe email:

- Keep your versions of Windows, your browser, and your email program up to date with the latest patches. If a vulnerability is discovered, you want it to be fixed as soon as possible so as to keep things as safe as possible.
- Run appropriate anti-malware software to help keep your system clean.
- Keep your anti-malware software up to date, and most importantly, allow it to keep its databases of malware information as up to date as possible as well.

- Never open an attachment unless you expect it, you're *positive* you know what it is, and you trust the sender.

Never click on a link in an email message unless you're *positive*

you know where it's going, and you trust the sender.

This article is republished, with permission, from the Ask Leo! Newsletter.



New Programs And Devices

by Dick Maybach, Member, Brookdale Computer Users' Group, NJ
www.bcug.com n2nd@att.net

Computer programs can be complex and learning to use a new one can be difficult and frustrating.

Further, many hardware devices contain processors, making it easy for designers to add features that can make them equally complex. My primary operating system is Linux, and I like to explore new applications. These are usually free, and there are often several for every task, usually with drastically different approaches. I also love such gadgets as digital cameras and pocket GPS navigators. As a result, I am continually trying to master new programs and devices and have worked out some methods of doing this.

There are many barriers that make the task difficult.

- Every designer has a different idea of how a program or device should work, and trying to use a new one the same way you used an old one can be counter-productive. Sometimes, the most difficult part is unlearning what you think you know, especially for experienced users who may feel they should be able to figure out new software and hardware by instinct.
- Different products can use different vocabularies – for example “uploading” sometime means importing information into an application, and sometimes exporting it.
-

- Except for a handful of very popular applications, good tutorial books don't exist. This is especially so for Linux, OS X, and many cameras.

- The number of brick-and-mortar bookstores is decreasing, and those remaining are continually decreasing the shelf space for technical books. Software is frequently updated, meaning that books quickly become outdated and public libraries can't keep up. As a result, it is difficult to find useful information by browsing books.

- Information on the Internet is fragmented, poorly organized, and often wrong.

- Tech writers seem to fixate on tasks that don't interest me – they go into elaborate detail on things I never do and skip over those I perform almost every day.

- User interfaces are frequently not well designed, and not all products have useful help features.

- Purchased software and hardware usually includes only a small printed pamphlet, containing mostly legal disclaimers in several languages and labeled “Getting Started Guide,” or something similar. Many people assume this is the manual and never look at the real manual, which resides

on an included CD-ROM or the vendor's website.

- I have found several ineffective techniques.
- Calling a friend – while this is occasionally appropriate, you will soon run out of friends if you overuse it, and some friends have more confidence than expertise.
- Taking random screen shots – unless you organize these and add comments as soon as you take them, you just end up with directories full of useless graphics.
- Handwritten notes – unless you organize these you end up with stacks or useless paper.
- Working by analogy from similar products – every program is different, and few are clones. New ones appear because their developers felt previous ones had fundamental shortcomings; few are just old ones with bug fixes.
- Using a new program to work with valuable data – making a mistake here could mean you lose the data.

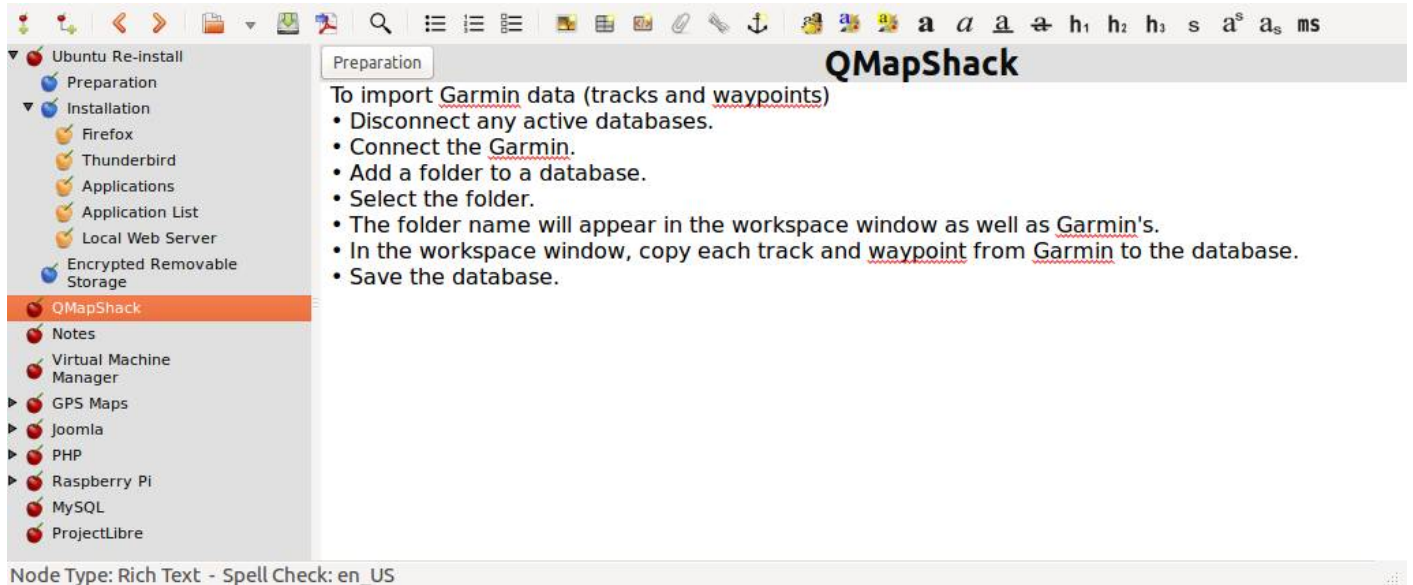
Before you install the software or turn on the device, gather the available information about it that appears useful, including: the full manual (if only an on-line version is available, get its URL) and not just the getting started guide, reviews (which frequently provide helpful overviews), and Internet articles (or their URLs). If this is software, make a complete backup of your computer. This is important if you downloaded the software, especially for Windows users. Linux users can install new software on a virtual machine, which isolates any problems. Read the reviews and articles you gathered and at least the introduction and installation sections of the manual. Create a sandbox in which to experiment. This can be as sim-

ple as a directory with a few files you will manipulate with the new software, or as complex as a virtual machine. Set up means of recording notes. I use CherryTree, <http://www.giuspen.com/cherrytree/> which is free, but available only for Linux and Windows; Mac users can find equivalents [athttp://alternativeto.net/software/cherrytree/?platform=mac](http://alternativeto.net/software/cherrytree/?platform=mac).

file or URL on your desktop, and open your notes program. As a result, you may have three open windows on your desktop, the manual, the notes program, and the new software. You may have less if you have a full printed manual or if you are working with new hardware. Follow the instructions to install the program or set up the hardware, making notes as need-

as you use the program or device). A complex program may require several of these. They need not be polished, after all no one but you will ever see them, but they should be complete enough to guide you days or weeks in the future.

Every time you use the software or device, open the notes, as you will



Screen 1 (above) shows my complete CherryTree notes on QMapShack after an hour or so of use. (This is a mapping program that works with a GPS.) As you can see, these fit on a single page, and at this point I had a lot yet to do.

Screen 1. Initial CherryTree notes on QmapShack.

By contrast, Screen 2 (top of the next [page]) shows a portion of my notes on installing Ubuntu Linux, which have been refined for several years. Note from the outline view in the left panel that these now extend over several pages. I modify these notes again with every new installation.

Screen 2. CherryTree Notes on Ubuntu Linux.

Now you're ready to begin. Open the manual, or equivalently open its

ed. (Do this as soon as you perform the action. Don't wait until the end of the session.) Work your way through the manual, making notes about what you do, especially if something surprises you or works differently than you expected. On the first pass, cover only the basics and skip over those features that don't interest you. At this point you're looking for only the features that you are likely to use initially. Take screen shots as appropriate and include them in the notes (although I seldom find this necessary). Note especially any configuration changes and the locations of the files used. Repeat this until you don't have to refer to the manual, but only your notes.

By now, you should have captured the features that are important to you. I often find that my notes fall into two areas, configuration and work-flow (the process you follow

want to revise and augment them as you correct early misinterpretations and learn more. This is especially important for things you use infrequently.

Your notes should contain everything you need; that is, you shouldn't have to rely on any other material to use the program or device they cover. This should include:

- the URLs of any on-line material, such as manuals, reviews, tutorials, and newsletters,
- the supplier's Website,
- configuration data at install time,
- work-flows,
- contents of configuration and profile files, and
- annotated screen-shots.

Preparation

Backup and save the Firefox bookmarks and Thunderbird address list, although they should be saved in the Firefox configuration directory. Record the Firefox, [LibreOffice](#), and Thunderbird add-ons.

Export and save the [gpg](#) public key using Seahorse. Export the [gpg](#) private key with `gpg --export-secret-keys --armor --output private-key.asc`.

Create a list of all the programs installed since the original installation. (This requires [aptitude](#), which won't appear in the generated list.)

```
cat /var/log/installer/initial-status.gz | gzip -d | grep '^Package:' | awk '{ print $2}' > tmp.txt && aptitude search -F %p '-i!~M' | awk '{ print $1}' | grep -v -F -f tmp.txt > packages.txt && rm tmp.txt
```

This creates `packages.txt` in the current directory. Binary packages usually install to their own directory in `/opt`, so a listing of the contents of `/opt` will cover this. ([Calibre](#) seems to be the only example.)

```
ls -l /opt > binary_packages.txt
```

Save `/etc/apt/sources.list` and the contents of the directory `/etc/apt/sources.list.d` as the latter has all the [ppa](#) sources.

Save `/etc/fstab`.

Before doing the install, remove the external backup disk. This will make it necessary to edit `fstab` so that it's mounted at `bootup`.

Run the command

```
df > df_output
```

to record the mount points. This [doesn't](#) show everything though. Also use [gparted](#) to record for each partition the partition, its file system, its label, and its size. Print this so it's available during the install.

Node Type: Rich Text - Spell Check: en_US

Place a copy of these notes on all the PCs with which you will use the program or device. For example, if you take a laptop on vacation, it should have the notes for your camera. Consider making such notes for your operating system, your complex applications, and your hardware, including peripherals. Without them, such jobs as reinstalling an operating system will take far too long and may require several attempts. You will find that they make using and maintaining

complex products much easier and maintaining them far less frustrating, especially for those you don't use every day.

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



Surf the Internet
Android: Yes
iPad: Yes
Windows Tablet: Yes

Use Sites that Require Flash Player:
Android: No
iPad: No
Windows Tablet: Yes

Play Games
Android: Yes (With apps downloaded from Google Play store)
iPad: Yes (With apps downloaded from Apple App store)
Windows Tablet: Yes (With apps downloaded from Windows store. If tablet model has enough computing power you can also download PC games. Windows 10 tablets will allow you to stream games from an Xbox One.)

Use Office Programs
Android: Yes (several office suites available including MS Office apps)

Tablet Checklist: What Can It Do?

by Melanie Birnbom, CVC Computer Club
www.cvcomputerclub.com rnborn@yahoo.com

Q: A frequent question I get from users is: "What can a tablet actually do? Is it just for playing games?"

That is why I've put this checklist together using the three main operating systems for tablets: Android, iOS (found on iPads), and Windows.

This does not include the now discontinued Windows RT operating system.

Read and Write E-mail
Android: Yes
iPad: Yes
Windows Table: Yes

iPad: Yes (multiple office suites available as well as MS Office apps)

Windows Tablet: Yes (multiple office suites available and Microsoft Office apps. Users can also run the full desktop version of Office.)

Print

All three tablets will allow you to print from selected apps with compatible wireless printers.

Listen to Music

Android: You can stream from services like Pandora, Spotify, and Amazon as well keep digital copies of music on your tablet.

iPad: Designed to work especially well with iTunes; you can also stream using apps for services like Pandora and Spotify.

Windows Tablet: Works with streaming services and Groove Music.

Stream Movies

All three operating systems will allow you to watch services like Netflix or Hulu, as well as view videos on websites. (If the videos require Flash Player, only a Windows tablet will work.)

eBooks

All three tablets will allow you to download apps for reading eBooks including Kindle and Nook books.

Use Facebook and other Social Media

All three tablets will allow you to use a Facebook app.

Make Video Calls

All three tablets allow you to use Skype and other services for video calls and programs like Messenger for video or audio chats in addition to text chatting. Almost every tablet has a built-in front-facing camera.

Use a Keyboard

Nearly any tablet will allow you to connect with a keyboard (usually via Bluetooth). There are keyboard cases available for carrying convenience. Make sure you get the compatible keyboard for your tablet. If it is a case, make sure it is the right size.

Use a Mouse

Only Windows tablets are compatible with using a mouse and it is a fairly simple process to pair a Bluetooth mouse.

Use Desktop Versions of Programs

Only Windows tablets can run full desktop versions of programs.

Access Cloud Storage

All three tablets will allow you access cloud storage.

Use Low Quality Image Mode to Send Messages from iPhone with Less Data

<http://osxdaily.com/2016/11/29/use-low-quality-image-mode-iphone-messages>

Password Recovery stores passwords and recovers them when you forget them

www.idownloadblog.com/2016/11/09/passwordrecovery

How to Record iPhone Phone Calls the Easy Way

<http://osxdaily.com/2016/11/02/record-iphone-calls-voicemail>

The 10 Best Wireless Routers of 2016

www.techradar.com/news/networking/routers-storage/best-router-9-top-wireless-routers-on-test-1090523

How to Use Safari Split View on iPad for Side-By-Side Web Browsing

<http://osxdaily.com/2016/12/07/use-safari-split-view-ipad>

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

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SHCC Emergency Cancellation

Sterling Heights Computer Club meets at Macomb Community College (MCC). We will meet if MCC is open and will not if MCC is closed. MCC closure is announced with other school closings on many local TV and radio stations and on their web site. 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. If your email is broken, call an officer; don't leave a message, call another officer if you don't talk to someone live. It is your responsibility to keep the email address you have listed with SHCC current.

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Mac Tips

by **Ernie Cox, GVR Computer Club, AZ**
<http://www.ccgvaz.org> ecoxjr@cox.net

How to Mark and Share a Maps Location from iPhone
osxdaily.com/2017/03/04/mark-share-maps-location-iphone

How to Show GPS Coordinates on iPhone
osxdaily.com/2017/02/26/show-gps-coordinates-iphone

Siri Not Working on iPhone or iPad? How to Fix Siri & Troubleshoot Problems
osxdaily.com/2017/03/02/siri-not

[working-iphone-ipad-fix](#)
 How to Change the Email Address Linked to Your Apple ID Account
appleinsider.com/articles/17/02/27/how-to-change-the-email-address-linked-to-your-apple-id-account

How to use Siri to remember where you parked your car
www.idownloadblog.com/2016/11/30/how-to-use-siri-to-remember-where-you-parked-your-car

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. Club members are encouraged to submit favorite sites (a description is optional) to the e-address noted above, for inclusion in a future WYSIWYG issue. Also check the SHCC web site (“Web Page Reviews”) for previous gems.

How to make Android faster: What works, and what doesn't.

<http://www.makeuseof.com/tag/android-faster-works/>

How to play Blu-Ray on Linux.

<https://www.maketecheasier.com/play-blu-ray-on-linux>

Varieties of seven different solitaire games.

<http://www.solitairebliss.com>

Is Google tracking you? Here's how to find out everything the search giant knows about you.

<http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/my-activity-how-find-out-everything-that-google-knows-about-you-1568458>

Search engine DuckDuckGo.com CEO Gabriel Weinberg discusses the state of online privacy affecting all Internet users.

<https://www.bestvpn.com/gabriel-weinberg-duckduckgo-ceo-interview/>

10 useful 'locate' command practical examples for Linux newbies.

<http://www.tecmint.com/linux-locate-command-practical-examples/>

What is hard drive cache and what does it do?

<https://www.pcmec.com/article/what-is-hard-drive-cache-and-what-does-it-do/>

Beware the Driver Update scam --- pop-ups that 'warn' you that your computer's drivers are out of date.

http://www.askbobrankin.com/beware_the_driver_update_scam.html

How important are surge protectors for PCs? (Note: Many so-called 'power strips' do not contain any surge protection and seriously fail to protect your delicate computer and TV and stereo equipment.)

<https://www.maketecheasier.com/how-important-are-surge-protectors-for-pcs/>

5 common VPN myths you shouldn't believe.

<https://www.maketecheasier.com/vpn-myths-you-shouldnt-believe/>

How to get the most out of Google Maps.

<http://www.lifehacker.com/how-to-make-the-most-of-google-maps-1793442153>

Tips for keeping strangers off your Wi-Fi network.

<http://www.popsci.com/how-to-keep-other-people-off-your-wi-fi-network>

Site offers articles and videos to inspire women (men, too) to live a more healthy and fulfilling life, covering fitness, nutrition, weight loss, and wellness to get you into your best possible shape. Perhaps start with their "ultimate guide to fitness" (search the site for it).

<http://www.fitnessgoals.com>

This tool illustrates the tough budget trade-offs involved in order to promote an informed conversation on how we can set a sustainable fiscal course. Think you can fix the National debt and build a responsible Federal budget??? Give it a try!

<http://www.crfb.org/debtfixer/>

Find out the actual size of things. (Enter your monitor's screen size first.) Use the 'browse' and 'tags' options to search for things to display.

<http://www.pective.com>

What's the difference between 'RAM' and 'storage'?

<https://www.backblaze.com/blog/whats-diff-ram-vs-storage/>

Kaspersky's stellar antivirus software finally goes free.

<http://www.pcworld.com/article/3211055/security/kaspersky-announces-free-antivirus-program.html>

How to low-level format (or zero-fill) your hard disk.

<https://www.maketecheasier.com/low-level-format-zero-fill-hard-disk/>

With this \$7 malware, anyone can be a hacker for cheap.

<http://www.techrepublic.com/article/with-this-7-malware-anyone-can-be-a-hacker-for-cheap>

'Hard disk drive' versus 'solid state drive': What's the difference?

<https://www.backblaze.com/blog/hdd-versus-ssd-whats-the-diff/>

How to block ads in Windows 10. (4-min. video)

<http://www.pcworld.com/video/72098/how-to-block-ads-in-windows-10>

8 uses for old wireless routers.

<http://www.wi-fiplanet.com/tutorials/article.php/3832576>

How to create fillable forms with Microsoft Word (several versions).

<https://www.howtogeek.com/203892/how-to-create-fillable-forms-with-ms-word-2010/>

Why would I buy a 1-amp USB charger instead of a 2.1-amp charger?

<https://www.quora.com/Why-would-I-buy-a-1-amp-USB-charger-instead-of-a-2-1-amp-charger>

Google now knows when its users go to the store and buy stuff.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-switch/wp/2017/05/23/google-now-knows-when-you-are-at-a-cash-register-and-how-much-you-are-spending/>

Find saved Wi-Fi password on Android.

<http://www.freenetdownload.com/find-saved-wifi-password-on-android/>

Ways to scan a document using your phone or tablet camera.

<https://www.howtogeek.com/209951/the-best-ways-to-scan-a-document-using-your-phone-or-tablet/>

How to customize File Explorer's Quick Access Toolbar in Windows 10.

<https://www.howtogeek.com/236626/how-to-customize-file-explorers-quick-access-toolbar-in-windows-10/>

'Megabits' vs. 'megabytes': What's the difference?

<https://www.maketecheasier.com/megabits-vs-megabytes-whats-the-difference/>

Listen to, and control, a short-wave receiver located at an amateur radio club in the Netherlands.

<http://websdr.ewi.utwente.nl:8901/>

AutoCAD 360 --- free app that lets you view, create, edit and share CAD drawings using a web browser or mobile device. (Need to create an account, but you can use an anonymous identity.)

<https://client.autocad360.com>

View over 400,000 works of art at the **New York Metropolitan Museum of Art** as high-resolution images. Many can be downloaded.

<http://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection>

Mahjong game with over 150 layouts.

<https://www.themahjong.com>

NOTE: Many of the links in the digital newsletter connect to the Internet if clicked. For those that do not, copy and paste the link into your Internet browser.

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 this column on our club web site. They are arranged into various key word categories to help locate a specific site.

