

DATA LINE



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Meetings
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www.scvpcg.org

Wednesday, August 10, 2011

At the 6:00 Member2Member session we'll see what the scanners can do that we talked about in July. Microsoft is working on their new operating system, Windows 8 and we'll take a "first look at the Windows 8 interface." The video has had almost 5 million views.

In This Issue

- 2 Save Money on Telephone Costs
- 3 File Types: What are they? And why should we care?
- 5 Software Review: Collectorz.com Book Collector Pro
- 11 Secure Your Wireless - OR ELSE!
- 14 The Tip Corner - August 2011
- 16 The Lighter Side
- 17 Review: Corel VideoStudio Pro X4
- 18 Smart Computing Tips
- 19 July Meeting Recap
- 20 2011/2012 Officers Application Membership Benefits Around Town

7:00 pm - Corel's VideoStudio Pro X4 -- a powerful, creative and easy way to take your video footage from shoot to show—fast.

Today's popular videos aren't like the old home videos where you pointed the camera at your subject and just let it run. Today's videos are fast-paced, short segments blended together with smooth transitions to keep the viewer interested. Make a movie, and then share it anywhere—on iPhone®, mobile device, disc, your favorite website or your TV.

Corel will present a webinar on Introduction to video editing with their VideoStudio Pro X4. As photography has skyrocketed in the digital age, so has digital video. Video cameras are everywhere. Your cell phone has a camera and most likely can also capture video. One of the top sites on the Internet is YouTube.com, which gets 24 hours of video uploaded to its site every minute.

Thanks to Corel for providing us with a copy for the raffle.



Save Money on Telephone Costs

Written by **Sandy Berger, Compu-KISS**

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Many of us remember when we all paid a monthly fee to the telephone company for our landline and paid exorbitant rates for long distance service. If you had friends or relatives living far away, those monthly bills could really add up. You may even remember that when a call from afar would come in, the person who answered the phone would promptly announce that the call was "long distance" and the recipient of the call would rush over to the phone so the connection time would be kept as short as possible.



Thankfully, all of that is in the past. Technology has brought us many ways to keep in touch with friends, family, and business associates around the world quite inexpensively.

There are actually two different technologies that have greatly impacted our telephone-type communications. First is the emergence of cell phones. Today most of us are using cell phones for everyday communications. Since cell phones work on "minutes" rather than distance, you can basically call anywhere in the US more economically than you can with the old "long distance" service that the telephone companies provide. Each cell phone company offers somewhat unique features, but all are money-savers. For instance, some carriers allow you to call anyone else on that carrier at no charge. Some have special evening and weekend rates. Some allow you to list up to ten telephone numbers that you can call at any time with no charge.

Cell phone charges are generally much more expensive when you want to call overseas, but there is a great technological solution for that too. It is the second technology that has greatly impacted telephone-type communications. It is called VoIP, which stands for Voice Over Internet Protocol. VoIP uses the Internet to make telephone calls. Most of the major telephone and cable companies now offer some sort of "Internet" calling packages. Other companies like Vonage and Net2Phone have made a splash in this industry.

VoIP allows you to use your broadband Internet connection to make phone calls. VoIP service through a major carrier often offers additional features that you not generally offered through a regular telephone service plan. With a VoIP plan from a telephone or cable company you can often get voicemail, call forwarding, caller ID, and 3-way conference calling at no extra cost. Some VoIP providers also offer online account management, online voice mail, detailed call logging, and call-forwarding.

You can also use VoIP with any "telephone-type" company involved. You simply use your computer to make calls. Skype is one of the most popular services of this type. And the price is right. Making Skype calls from computer to computer is totally free. If you hook up two



computers that have webcams, you can make video calls where you can see and talk with someone at the same time. You can also call from your computer to landlines and mobile numbers in the US and Canada for \$2.99 a month. If you don't want to be tied to the computer, you can purchase a Skype telephone that uses your computer to call, while you talk on a traditional-type telephone

handset. You can also access Skype from many mobile phones. This lets you to place calls without adding to your minutes. There are many Skype competitors like GoogleTalk, Yahoo Messenger, and iCall.

There are also other unique VoIP solutions. You may have seen magicJack advertised on late night TV. It is a small device that plugs into the USB port on your computer. With magicJack you get your own telephone number. You can make calls right from the computer screen or you can attach a regular telephone to the device and use it to make free phone calls in the US and Canada. I have a set of wireless phones attached to the magicJack that allows me to make and receive calls anywhere in the house. If a friend or relative also has a magicJack, you can make free calls to them even if they are one the other side of the world. magicJack costs about \$40 for the device and first year of service and \$20 a year for service after that. It's pretty useful and inexpensive.



By the way, if you have a land-line telephone number that you want to keep, you can move it (port it) over to a mobile phone. magicJack says that starting this August you will also be able to use your old telephone number with the magicJack, as well. So you don't even have to give up your old number to use the new technologies.

Whether you use a cell phone or a VoIP solution, you should realize that VoIP call may not be perfect. Cell phones sometimes drop calls and have areas where you can get service. Services like magicJack and Skype are dependent on your broadband Internet connection. So if you connection speed is good, the call will be excellent, but if your Internet slows down, you may get a poorer call quality. Yet, both of these solutions will save you money and you may find, like me that occasional slight inconvenience is worth the cost savings. I gave up both my business and personal land line almost two years ago. I now rely on my cell phones, Skype, and magicJack. I am saving a bundle and enjoying every minute.

File Types: What are they? And why should we care?

By Phil Sorrentino, President, Sarasota PCUG, Florida

August 2011 issue, Sarasota PC Monitor

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Understanding File Types is the key to successfully organizing and using your computer files and folders. The File Type is the extension to the file name (the characters after the period). Unfortunately, File Types are hidden when you first startup your computer Operating System.

I've always thought this was odd because knowing the type of a file can help explain what is going on, or at least what can be done with that particular file. (Because the file type can be changed using the Rename option, I suspect this was done to prevent a user from renaming the file type and possibly making that file un-useable.) Without the file type, confusion can arise. Hiding the file type leads to the appearance that there are multiple files in a folder with the same file name. While actually, the file names are different because they have different file types. It is only the file type that shows them as two distinctly different files. File Types can be shown along with the first part of the file name. In XP and Windows 7, this is accomplished in the View tab of the Control Panel's Folder Options Applet. Just uncheck "Hide extensions for known file types".

Let's start with some very basic File Management concepts. Every file in a folder has to have a unique name. (Two files may have the same name, but they must reside in different folders.) The name has two parts, separated by a period. The part after the period is called the file type or file extension. Typically the file type is three or four characters, but it can be longer. The limit is tied into the overall size of the path of the file in question, but practically you will see file types of around three or four or five characters. If you Google "file types," you will be amazed at how many file types have been defined and you will also see some pretty long file types, like the following 8 character file type, ".debuglog." In these lists you will see all the familiar file types like .doc, .docx, .txt, .rtf, .xls, .jpg, .bmp, .gif, .mp3, .wav, .m3u, .wma, .avi, .mov, .mp4, .wmv, and so on.

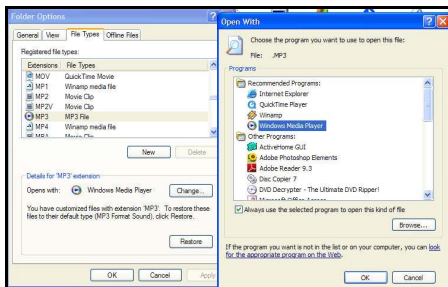
A few sentences ago I mentioned "path." The path is a unique description of where the file in question is located. Typically we think of a file's location as being in a particular folder, but the path is more general. The path starts out with the computer followed by the drive, then the folders in hierarchical order, leading down to the particular file. So the path to a picture of a group of cousins taken on July 4th, 2009, might look like: <\\Desktop2\D:Photos\Family\2009\FourthOfJulyPicnic\Cousins.jpg> where "Cousins.jpg" is a picture (or at least a .jpg file) in the "FourthOfJulyPicnic" folder, which is in the "2009" folder, which is in the "Family" folder, which is in the "Photos" folder on the "D:" drive of the "Desktop2" computer. (Note that the "\ " is used to separate components of the path. Similar to the way "/" is used to separate the components of an address on the internet.) So you see the path to every file must be unique, so that the file can be unambiguously found. This also explains why we can have two files, with the same name and extension, exist in different folders. The path would be different, not by the file name and extension, but by one of the folder components. So, when all is said and done, the file type is part of a file's name that makes that file unique.

But that is only part of the story. The file type is really a definition of all of the data that is held within the file. (It defines in great detail just what every bit and byte in the file means.) And this is where Files and Applications come together, or where they become "associated". File Association links a file type with an Application. An Application knows how to handle a particular file type because of the file type definition. Fortunately, we, the users, don't have to know anything about the details of the file type, only that a particular file type can be used with a particular Application. So if a correct association is made, the Application will handle the file in the expected fashion. If an incorrect association is made, the results will be undetermined.

Many applications can handle many different file types. For example, Windows Media Player can use a whole host of audio and video file types, such as wma, mp3, m3u, aiff, wmv, avi, mpg, mpeg, mpv2. Sometimes when you install a new application, the application will

automatically associate with the file types that it knows how to use. This may not be the associations that you originally wanted. Some Applications are much more polite, and ask if you want them to associate with certain file types. If associations happen automatically, you can end up with different applications being used to handle a particular file type. For example, you could end up with “Real Player” playing your music that you originally had Windows Media Player associated with.

The Operating System provides a capability to review and establish the associations. Each operating System is a little different. In XP it is provided in the File Types tab of the Folder Options, Control Panel, as shown in the graphic example that follows. (The example shows the .mp3 file type chosen for a change (on the left) and the Recommended and Other Programs (Applications) selections (on the right.) In Windows 7 (and Vista) it is part of the Default Files Control Panel (Associate a file type or protocol with a program).



Associations can easily be changed, but be very careful. Only use the Recommended Programs. If another program is used, the results may be undetermined and may even damage the file in question. But this is the way you can get things back to the way you want. You can get your music back to being played by your player of choice, or your videos back to being played by Windows Media Player, or your .bmp graphics files back to being displayed with the Paint application.

So, we care about File Types because they help to uniquely define a file's name and location, and their definitions enable applications to determine how to handle the contents of the file. These are two very big jobs for a seemingly very small (and often hidden) aspect of the Windows Operating System.

Software Review: Collectorz.com Book Collector Pro
By Tanya and Mark Mattson, Computer Users of Erie, PA
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I am going to start off with an Excellent rating for not only the Book Collector software, but for the content and design of the Collectorz.com site all together.

I had searched for (and found) a book cataloging software application that would do what I needed. Loved it, but it was obsolete and no longer being supported or developed by the author. So I started on the hunt for a new one.

I came across the Colletorz.com Book Collector. It had what I wanted and so much more. I was looking for an easy way to catalog not only the CUE library but ours at home as well. And with simply typing in the ISBN or scanning the bar code, it is good to go. Yes you do need a barcode scanner to make that feature work, but it is an extra way of inputting your books...NOT the only way.

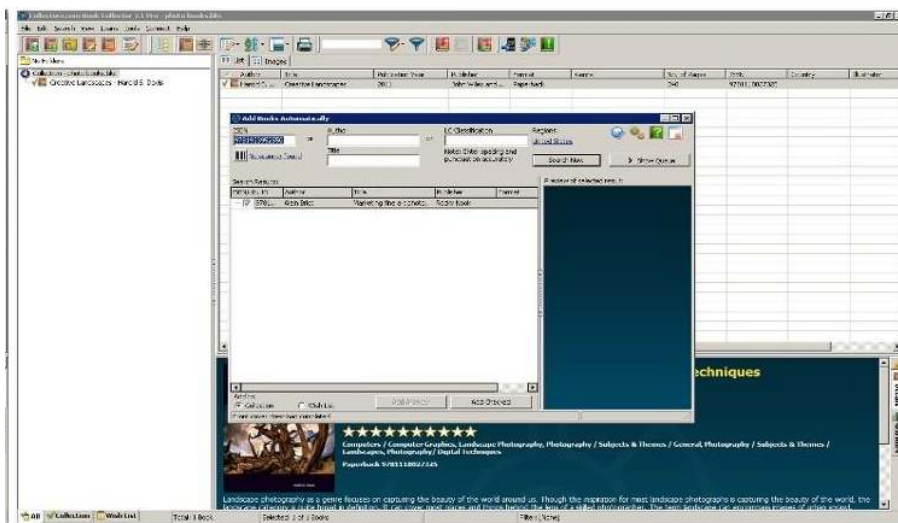
First I want to give you a screen shot from their site -



The first thing one notices is that they offer so much more. Music, movie, book, comic, game, mp3, and photo collector applications. All their programs are Windows friendly, and several - Music, Movie, Book and Comic Collector - are also Mac compatible. This is always a big plus for me; I get annoyed at the software companies that cater to one system or the other. Just adds so much confusion. And since I know our members have PC and Mac systems all around, it is great to be able to do a software review that can benefit everyone.

So how does it work? Well there is a free trial, and once downloaded and installed it is easy to begin. You can just type (or scan) the ISBNs of your books. Or you can enter the author and title - either way it will

auto-download book details and the cover art, and load all this information into the program's database fields for you.



Screen capture of ISBN entry page, adding new book

This is not just a catalog of files. Once entered you can sort and search, you can browse the database (your book inventory - or collection) by Author, Title, Publisher, etc. Grouping books by Genres or Author into folders is another handy feature built in to the program.

Export your data in various formats, including to you iPad, iPhone, and Android devices. Won't be at the book store rummaging around for that scrap of paper that in some weird shorthand I made up to tell me what I have and don't have in my library. Printing is also an option.

What I found to be one of the nicest features was their trial. Not a 15 day limit, but 100 book entries. Try it out for a spin, and see that it is a win. Be aware, however, that the TRIAL version is actually the PRO version...all features are available for you to try out. If you purchase only the Standard edition license, those features listed as being in the PRO version will no longer function. Please remember this when purchasing.

Catalog customization options are available in either Edition. One can edit a books' details. There is a collection status field; is a title on your wish-list, for sale, already owned, or out on loan. You can flag any number of titles with such custom information tags.



Book data editing window

Installation and System Requirements

Book Collector is available direct from the publisher's website at www.collectorz.com. Click on the Book Collector tab at the top to go to the proper page. There you will find the link to download a trial version, or to go to their online store to purchase a license.

The program is delivered via direct download. You are emailed a link to the download location, where you save the file to your system. It is a small download, only 5.5 MB in size...so it will download fairly quickly.

There is also the option to have it delivered via physical shipment of a CD for an extra \$9.95. If you wish the CD to be shipped, be sure to select this option during purchase.

The disc comes in a DVD-style case, with the program logo on the cover.

For those downloading the program, the file is a self-extractor; double-click on it to start the installation procedure. Installation is simple and straight-forward; select the default options, and you're ready to go in a matter of about a minute.

As this review was based on a download version, we can only assume that the CD will auto-run when inserted in your computer drive, starting the installer automatically. However, we could not test this out. But as that is the way modern programs are set up, it is likely to be the case.

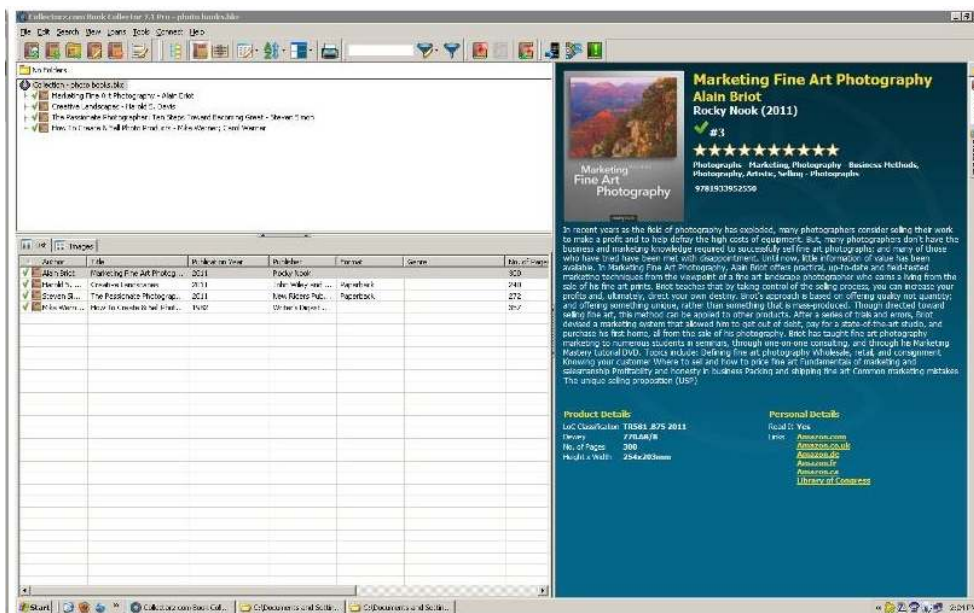
The program appears to use very little of your system resources. In fact, I couldn't find any listed system requirements on their website, other than the operating systems supported. For Windows, it needs Windows 2000, XP, Vista, or Windows 7. For Mac users, you need at least OS-X v10.4 or higher, up to and including Lion.

Please note that you will also need an active Internet connection, to enable auto-downloading of your book details and cover images.

There are several localized translations for the Windows platform besides English, but the Mac version is English-only. Also, when you go to the store page to purchase, if you are buying a Mac license, be sure to use the link at the top right of the store page to go to the Mac order area...otherwise, you'll be getting a Windows license.

Book Collector can be purchased in two versions: a Standard Edition for \$29.95, and a Pro Edition for larger collections priced at \$49.95. Remember that the trial version is actually the full Pro version. Many Pro-only features will NOT be available if you only purchase the Standard edition.

As indicated before, there are a ton of options available for you to work with your book data. You can sort your database by any field, do custom searches, and more. You even have the ability to save custom searches as presets for future use - saving you time in recreating them later.



Alternate main window layout

The default view of the program can be changed, either to one of several available presets, or you can go all out and create custom templates, to change the look of the interface to fit your taste.

One feature that is available is the ability to use a barcode scanner to input the ISBN numbers on your books. This will vastly speed up the process of cataloging your collection, especially those with hundreds or thousands of titles.

Collectorz.com sells several barcode scanners that they've tested to work with the software. They are listed on the store page for your convenience. One such unit is the Cuecat scanner. It lists for \$19.95 in their store. BUT, if you're like me and like to haunt Radio Shack stores, about 10 years ago or so they gave away these units with their yearly catalog. I still have mine, and will be hooking it up to try out in the near future. The only thing is, I think it's an RS-232 model, and I'll need an RS232-to-USB adapter to connect it to my system.

Speed up your cataloging with one of our barcode scanners
All three scanners are directly available from stock and come with a 1-year guarantee.

<p>Cuecat Swiping Scanner US \$19.95</p> 	<p>Opticon C37 CCD Scanner US \$99.95</p> 	<p>Opticon OPN-2001 Laser Scanner with Memory US \$139.95</p> 
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scan by swiping the CueCat's 'nose' across barcodes.• For PC & Mac, USB, Plug & Play, no drivers needed.• more info	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scan barcodes efficiently by pointing a wide CCD scanning window from a small distance.• For PC & Mac, USB, Plug & Play, no drivers needed.• more info	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scan barcodes by pointing a powerful laser beam.• Wireless batch scanning, memory for 10,000 barcodes.• For PC & Mac, connects & charges via USB.• Not compatible with Connect• more info

Barcode scanners available from Collectorz.com

Are you one that lets others borrow your books? Then this program will also benefit you. The PRO version also has a Lending system built-in, giving you the ability to track the titles you lend to friends and family. You can enter names, dates, and other information such as notes, to help ensure you get your treasured books back.

You even have options for printing and exporting lists of your collection, to such formats as HTML and XML. Allowing you to publish to your website for all to see. But exporting is only in the PRO version.

The only area that MAY bother you to some extent, is the way that the dimensions of the book are shown. As this is a European company that designed Book Collector, they use the metric system for measurements. Thus, the length and width are shown in millimeters, not inches. There also is no option available to switch it to the inch system we in the States use.

However, this really shouldn't be a deal breaker for you when considering the program as a whole. It actually is more accurate, as some books published here use some weird measurements...I've seen books listed as 9.6" on a side. Measuring something like that on your inches ruler will give you fits. Metric measurements are more precise for this. If you really need inch measurements, be patient; the developer has indicated that an option to select inch measurements is on their To-Do list for a future revision, so it WILL be an available option at some point.

Currency fields use the OS default location to set the currency field to match your location. Thus, for US users, it uses the \$ as we are all used to. If it shows something different, better check your system settings!

There is a LOT more that can be published here on this program. However, it would most likely fill up the rest of the available space doing so. If you want some really in-depth information and looks at Book Collector, be sure to go to the website and look at all related pages.

There is an online manual there, giving you details on all functions and features. Many topics also have short video tutorials or demos embedded in them, to give you a better grasp of a certain concept. A really well done and designed document. Unfortunately, there is no way it can be printed at this time...but it is always online, ready and waiting if you need it.

There is also a Help / FAQ page, with many standard questions and answers set forth. There are many there that you may not think of when first checking out the program...but the questions I was thinking of were there, and answered to my satisfaction (such as 'What if my book doesn't have an ISBN number?').

It's obvious that the majority of this review has concentrated on print books being cataloged. But never fear, if you're moving to eBooks or audio books, they too can be added to the database, to ensure you have a complete listing of all your reading materials. Adding these types of media is as easy as scanning the folders they reside in on your hard drives. Once the basic catalog information is imported from the scan, you can use the Update function to retrieve the full information from the online Collectorz.com database.

If books are not the collection manager that is being looked for - Check out their site www.collectorz.com - tabs on the top will direct you to Music, Movie, Book, Comic, Game, Mp3 and Photo Collector applications.

This program is not just for "collections" which one associates with first editions and rare books, it is an inventory, a database, a cataloging system, that is easy and fun to use.

So check them out - we all know the holidays are right around the corner, this would make a nice gift for yourself, or someone that has a collection, be it books, games, or movies. And organization goes along way - to make less hectic lives. And less stress. (I hate it when I buy two, [and yes once, but only once three] of the same book or even movie).

For as simple as it is designed to use, this is an amazingly powerful piece of software. It already holds promise of organizing our home book collection, helping us avoid duplications of titles,

and to plan which ones we'd like to add. For the price, it is a bargain. But it is worth a lot more just for the time and effort savings it brings to your life.

Two thumbs up from both of us.

Definitely a 'Must-Have'.

Secure Your Wireless - OR ELSE!

By Ira Wilsker, Member, Golden Triangle PC Club, TX;

Columnist, The Examiner, Beaumont, TX;

Radio Show Host, Mondays, 6-7pm CT, KLVI.com

iwilsker (at) sbcglobal.com

WEBSITES:

http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20110424/ap_on_hi_te/us_wi-fi_warning

http://www.wi-fi.org/files/kc_25_Five Steps to Creating a Wireless Network.pdf

<http://windowssecrets.com/comp/050526/#story1>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wi-Fi_Protected_Access

http://news.cnet.com/8301-19518_3-20030160-238.html

http://www.wi-fi.org/knowledge_center/kc-fivestepsforcreatingwirelessnetwork

Many times in this column I have warned readers about the risks of having an unsecured wireless or "Wi-Fi" network. Similar warning have been written here about the risks of using Wi-Fi in hotels, airports, restaurants, and other quasi-public places where miscreants can intercept your wireless signal and gain access to what is on your computer. Some time ago I mentioned how a neighbor whose own broadband connection was out, surreptitiously used another neighbor's Wi-Fi without his consent or knowledge while waiting for repair.

The news media has been rife with stories about how bad guys and other crooks have broken into inadequately protected wireless networks and stolen information, committed identity theft, downloaded child pornography, planted malware and spyware on the computer, and committed other heinous acts, all made possible because the owner of the wireless network did not take proper precautions to harden his system from attack and intrusion. In a recent AP news story, "NY case underscores Wi-Fi privacy dangers" (April 24, 2011, by Carolyn Thompson), one Buffalo, NY resident learned the hard way. "Lying on his family room floor with assault weapons trained on him, shouts of "pedophile!" and "pornographer!" stinging like his fresh cuts and bruises, the Buffalo homeowner didn't need long to figure out the reason for the early morning wake-up call from a swarm of federal agents. That new wireless router. He'd gotten fed up trying to set a password. Someone must have used his Internet connection, he thought. "We know who you are! You downloaded thousands of images at 11:30 last night," the man's lawyer, Barry Covert, recounted the agents saying. They referred to a screen name, "Doldrum." ... Law

enforcement officials say the case is a cautionary tale. Their advice: Password-protect your wireless router. ... Within three days, investigators determined the homeowner had been telling the truth: If someone was downloading child pornography through his wireless signal, it wasn't him. About a week later, agents arrested a 25-year-old neighbor and charged him with distribution of child pornography."

The Buffalo case is far more common than people realize. In a recent Sarasota, FL, case, " (A Sarasota resident) ... got a similar visit from the FBI last year after someone on a boat docked in a marina outside his building used a potato chip can as an antenna to boost his wireless signal and download an astounding 10 million images of child porn."

These originally accused individuals might not have been guilty of a criminal act, but they were guilty of not properly securing their home wireless networks, thus unknowingly allowing others to use their broadband internet connections for illicit purposes. Virtually all wireless routers manufactured in the last several years have integral security features available, but many users do not implement these features because they feel that it is too complicated, or that the default settings are adequate. That type of blissful ignorance can lead to a lot of trouble, as reflected by the news story above. Older 802.11b wireless routers attempted to provide some security by implementing an encryption protocol called "WEP" (Wired Equivalent Privacy), which was promptly cracked, and readily available hacker utilities can breach WEP security keys in a matter of seconds, rendering the wireless network security null, and allowing unrestricted access to the home network. There was an interim upgraded protocol, Dynamic WEP, which changed the security key every few minutes, but the currently available hacker utilities can easily breach D-WEP in a matter of seconds. The introduction of the faster 802.11g, and the recent 802.11n standards provide much improved security. These newer standards incorporate an much improved Wi-Fi Protected Access 2 (WPA-2) encryption, which while not totally impervious to attack, does significantly harden a home wireless network, making unauthorized intrusion much more difficult. WPA-2 has been around since 2004, and became mandatory on all new standardized Wi-Fi routers in 2006. While WPA-2 encryption provides much improved security, the major flaw is that since it typically requires users to configure it, which many do not, many users leave the barn door open to attack.

The trade association representing the Wi-Fi manufacturers, the Wi-Fi Alliance, has published simple instruction on how to secure a wireless network at home or at work. These instructions are available online at <http://bit.ly/ocFb0m> with a PDF file detailing the process

available at www.wi-fi.org/files/kc_25_Five Steps to Creating a Wireless Network.pdf. The five steps listed by the Wi-Fi Alliance are: Planning, Equipment Selection, Set Up, Adding Wi-Fi to

Wi-Fi Alliance



Five Steps to Creating a Wireless Network

Can I set up a Wi-Fi network?

Setting up a wireless network is easier than you might think. Whether you are setting up a Wi-Fi network for you home, or for the office, you don't have to be a tech guru to handle the job. That is why the Wi-Fi Alliance has created this easy-to-follow, step-by-step plan to creating your own wireless network. Simply follow the five steps outlined below and you will be on your way to experiencing the freedom of Wi-Fi.

Five steps to setting up your Wi-Fi network:

- [Step 1 — Planning](#)
- [Step 2 — Equipment Selection](#)
- [Step 3 — Set Up](#)
- [Step 4 — Adding Wi-Fi to Desktop Computers](#)
- [Step 5 — Security](#)

Desktop Computers, and Security. While an appropriate first step, many users do not really do any Wi-Fi planning, instead using the wireless router provided by their internet service provider, or purchased at a big-box store. Fortunately, most wireless routers available today, especially if they are Wi-Fi certified by the Wi-Fi Alliance, are capable of handling any reasonable networking needs; the "g" standard is adequate for normal household data needs, while the newer and faster "n" standard may be capable of the wireless distribution of TV grade video around the house. One common trap that many purchasers of wireless networks fall into, is that they over-buy, and purchase a Wi-Fi router that is much faster than anything that may be in their home in the foreseeable future; 802.11g has a theoretical maximum raw speed of 54 Mbit/s (really about 19 Mbit/s net throughput), and 802.11n has a theoretical maximum raw speed of 600 Mbit/s (actual throughput is much lower). If used primarily to wirelessly link computers to the internet, the "weakest link in the chain" is often the internet connection itself, which is typically far below the speed capability of the Wi-Fi, thus wasting a lot of potential capacity. Now that video streaming from the likes of Netflix is becoming more common, and HD TV and DVDs can be wirelessly streamed around the house, the faster 802.11n may be appropriate.

It is imperative that whatever Wi-Fi equipment is provided or purchased, that the security features provided by the manufacturer are properly implemented. While each maker may have a different procedure to follow in setting up the security of its products, the basics are fairly similar. One of the most important features to implement is the data encryption, which will make your signal unintelligible by unauthorized users. The newer wireless routers offer WPA-2 encryption, which may require a "key" or phrase to decrypt; do not use anything simple like your name, address, or birth date, as they may be easily guessed by a hacker; instead use a random alpha-numeric key (random letters and numbers) to create a key that will be difficult for others to guess. Almost all wireless routers require a password for access, and by default incorporate a default password. Immediately, change your default password to something that others could not likely guess, such as another random alpha-numeric sequence. Users should be aware that if they do not change the default password to their wireless routers, they may be easy to crack, as many makers use the word "default" as the default password, and there are online directories of default passwords sorted by manufacturer. Since it is often easy to remotely determine the brand and model number of a wireless router, and many users never change the factory default, the network is prone to intrusion. With a complex password, unauthorized users will not likely be able to access or modify your settings.

Almost all wireless routers transmit a SSID, or Service Set Identifier, such that it is easy for other wireless devices to locate the network. According to the Wi-Fi Alliance, "All access points ship with a wireless beacon signal so that wireless PCs can more easily find them. In effect, the signal is shouting, I'm here! Log on!" By turning off the SSID, the network is effectively closed to outsiders, as it becomes somewhat invisible to them.

By default, most wireless routers or access points have a default network name, typically the manufacturer's name and model number, making the network vulnerable in several ways. If possible, change the network name to something that cannot be readily tracked back to you; do not use your name, street address, company name, or other personally identifiable name, but instead use a pseudonym or random alpha-numeric name.

The location of the wireless router in the home or business will have a significant effect on the ability of others on the outside to intercept your radio signal. If the wireless network is intended for use within the house, then locate the wireless router or access point away from windows and open doors; the more hard material between the router and the data thief, the less likely it is for him to intercept your signal.

Many better wireless routers and access points offer a "MAC (Medium Access Control) Control Table", where the unique MAC address of each authorized computer or device can be included in an Access Control List (ACL). By implementing this feature, only the devices with the listed MAC addresses can access your network, and unauthorized computers and devices not included in the ACL list will be blocked from access; this is an effective way of restricting unauthorized access to your network.

There may be some other security features offered by some manufacturers, but these are the most common, and often offer substantial compatibility among the different hardware types likely encountered. Implement as a rule that whatever security features are offered by your hardware that they should be fully implemented to the level of maximum protection. Failure to do so may result in unauthorized access to your network; and the FBI may be knocking on your door too.

Ira Wilsker is the Director of the Management Development Program at Lamar Institute of Technology, in Beaumont, TX. He also hosts a weekly radio talk show on computer topics on KLVI News Talk AM560, and writes a weekly technology column for the Examiner newspaper <www.theexaminer.com>. Ira is also a police officer who specializes in cybercrime, and has lectured internationally in computer crime and security.

The Tip Corner - August 2011

By Bill Sheff, Novice SIG Coordinator, Lehigh Valley Computer Group, PA
August 2011 issue, The LVCG Journal
www.lvcg.org / nsheff (at) aol.com

Windows 7

Just got Windows 7? Notice something missing? Well if you want to see a list of what happened to those programs you liked in XP or Vista here is a simple way to find out. Open Help and Support then type "What happened" in the search box. Windows will give you lots of results for the query, such as: What happened to the NetBEUIprotocol?, What happened to ActiveSync?, What happened to Sticky Notes?, What happened to Windows Calendar?, What happened to the Run as command?, What happened to the Quick Launch toolbar?" and many more.

Say you picked the "What happened to the Run command?" This is what you get: "The Run command no longer appears on the Start menu in this version of Windows. The search box that appears on the Start menu provides much of the same functionality as the Run

command. However, the Run command is still available if you prefer to use it. You can even add it to the Start menu for easier access.

To add the Run command to the Start menu Click to open Taskbar and Start Menu Properties. Click the Start Menu tab, and then click Customize. In the list of Start menu options, select the Run command check box, and then click OK. The Run command will be displayed on the right side of the Start menu.

Tip: You can also access the Run command by pressing the Windows logo key +R. Check it out."

Google Images

A while ago Google switched over to a different display method for their images. If you want to turn it off and go back to the original, here's what you do: Scroll to the very bottom of your Google image search and click on Switch to basic version. If you want to go back to the regular way, simply scroll back to the bottom and click Switch to standard version.

System Tools

Just for a little review, there are a bunch of very useful programs in the System Tools folder. To get to them you access the System Tools by going to All Programs | Tools. When you open the folder in XP you can find the following programs:

?CHARACTER MAP, which allows you to copy and paste letters and symbols from other fonts into your document without switching fonts.

?DISK CLEANUP, which frees up space on your hard drive by eliminating unused and temporary files.

?DISK DEFRAGMENTER (Defrag), which speeds up your computer by reassigning or eliminating stray bits of data.

?FILES AND SETTINGS TRANSFER WIZARD, for transferring files and data from one drive to another.

?INTERNET EXPLORER (NO ADD-ONS), which allows you to access the internet without any Explorer addons interfering with it.

?SCHEDULED TASKS, which allows you to schedule a specific time to run updater, defrag, and other system programs.

?SYSTEM INFORMATION, which tells you the basic ram, processor, etc., of your system.

?SYSTEM RESTORE, which will restore your Windows system to an earlier time.

In Vista and Win 7 you can find all of the above and more. Check it out.

Templates

A template is a prepared form or pattern within various programs such as document and spreadsheet programs. They allow a user to develop a form that allows for easy entry and automatically formats and calculates data.

If you are a user of the Microsoft Office suite you are probably aware of them as Microsoft makes mention of templates and even has a folder of them within their suite.

But are you aware that there are literally hundreds located on the internet? But that is not all. There are even templates designed for the free suite put out by Open Office. Just Google open office templates and find body mass calculators, ovulation schedules time cards, shift scheduling and so much more.

You do not have to reinvent the wheel every time you sit at your computer. One little caveat though, these are usually presented by users and sometimes do not cover all you would like to find in a template. But do not lose heart, once downloaded you can continue to tweak the form until it does what you want the way you want it.

The Lighter Side

Bucky Milam is a master of the fine arts, with an emphasis on the cool and casual. He is the recipient of numerous awards for his painting and graphic design, which has been displayed at the Dallas Museum of Fine Arts, the Museum of Modern Art, the Chicago Art Institute, and the London and Tokyo Museums of Fine Art. A trumpet virtuoso, he performs widely in clubs throughout the region and is a recognized composer of jazz and classical music for brass.

Bucky comes to computing as an accidental tourist. His peculiar perspective is of the visual media and the image they project of our civilization and culture. You can find his musings in each monthly issue of dacs.doc.



(Danbury Area Computer Society)

Select a Paragraph

- ! Triple-click anywhere within the paragraph.
 - ! Move the mouse pointer to the left of the first character in any line of the paragraph you want to select. The mouse pointer turns into an arrow pointing up and right. Doubleclick the mouse, and the paragraph is selected.
 - ! Click anywhere in the paragraph and Press the F8 key until the paragraph is selected.
 - ! Press Ctrl+Up Arrow (which moves the insertion point to the beginning of the paragraph) and then press Ctrl+Shift+Down Arrow.
-

Corel VideoStudio Pro X4

A software review by Sharon Rump, Member, Sarasota PCUG, Florida
May 2011 issue, Sarasota PCUG Monitor
www.spcug.org / [pcugedit \(at\) verizon.net](mailto:pcugedit@verizon.net)



Having a new video camera is really exciting. Having new software to work with the video files is also exciting as well as frustrating. So much to learn! I know what the program is capable of doing because I have read all of the information on the internet prior to the release of VideoStudio Pro X4 and was excited to start the process of loading and learning.

When I opened the box I was pleasantly surprised to see a User Guide. There are so few programs that come with only online manuals. I really like when I have a manual that I can page through as I go and use as a ready reference. Although the Guide is small, it is packed full of content which starts with explaining the complete interface of the program and pointing out where everything is and what it does. Then it moves on to actually creating your first video and how easy it can be.

One of the neat things that are a feature of this program is the Instant Templates section that has some video templates you can import into the timeline and then substitute your own content and it is already to view with the preset features including transitions, audio and editable text. When you do make your own video from scratch and use all of the different transitions and other effects available, you can also save that work as a template that you can later import and have all the work that you did on your project available to just add new content and save a lot of the work that you did on the original effort.

There is a Corel Guide button on the top right that opens a window with lots of helpful information. There are tutorials available that show how to use the various tools available under a “Learn” tab. The “Do More” section allows you to download new styles, fonts, music and templates. Some of the content that is available is a free download and some are offerings by other companies that work well with Corel VideoStudio Pro. You can also check for updates in this area to make sure that you always have the most current version of the program.

The interface of the program is completely customizable and you can resize the various areas of the workspace to suit your needs. The preview window is on the upper left as in other programs that I have used. Next to that is an area that lists folders that you have created with the video and picture information so that you can keep everything organized. The files aren’t actually moved to these folders, just information as to the path to the actual content. I find this so much better than having everything all bunched together from various projects that you have worked on.

There are many new features in this version of Corel VideoStudio Pro including “stop motion animation”, “time lapse photography”, the ability to create high definition projects and even 3D



movies which you can view with the included glasses that come in the box of the version that I have. I have not had an opportunity to try that out yet but think it sounds like a lot of fun.

After you have your project completed using all of the help and guides available, you are ready to share it with others. There are lots of ways to create your project including CD, DVD and Blu-Ray.

You can also create a file that can be uploaded to sites such as YouTube, Facebook or Flickr. There are a lot of menu templates that will make moving through your show easy and fun. I felt that the rendering time was much faster than other programs that I have used and soon I was able to burn my finished project and share with others.

Corel is one of the few large companies that continue to support user groups like ours. I was fortunate to see a presentation of the previous version of this software at the FACUG conference earlier this year and the presenter did such a good job it made us want to run out immediately and get a copy. Corel provides a large variety of software at very reasonable prices. The street price for this software is \$99 and well worth the price. I know it will be my choice for creating lots of fun and interesting videos to share with family and friends.



Smart Computing Tips

www.smartcomputing.com

Quick Copying in Excel

When copying constants or formulas into an adjacent cell in Microsoft Excel, there's a quick way to copy one column to another. Select the first cell in the column you want to create; enter the appropriate value, such as =A1 to copy data from the A column; and move your mouse pointer to the bottom right-hand corner of the cell. When the pointer changes into a plus (+) sign, double-click your mouse and Excel will copy the corresponding constants or formulas into the column.

Easy & Effective Passwords

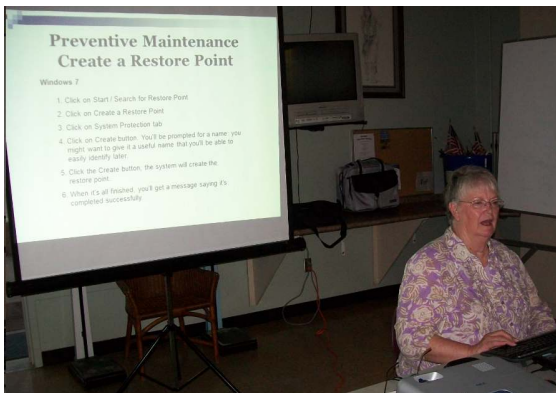
You likely know the importance of using a secure password that hackers can't easily guess. You probably also know the importance of not writing that password down and leaving it someplace where it can be easily found and used to gain access to your data. To that end, creating a password that's easy to remember and secure isn't that difficult using some creativity and clues based on something close to your heart. For example, using a birthday, such as 4-10-1965, in combination with a favorite song title, such as "Purple Rain," you can scramble the numbers and words to create a password that reads something such as 4rain10purple1965.

July Meeting Recap

The 6:00 pm session featured John Metcalf & Judy Taylour talking about many types of scanners on the market: models, prices, and information that may help you select the best for your needs. We were going to demo the scanners but Judy forgot them at home. We'll get to see what they can do this month.



Dave Metcalf gets the wireless connectivity to work!



At the 7:00 meeting we learned that our computers need to be tuned-up because, over time, they get bogged down and perform poorly. We learned how to revitalize our computers and get them back to peak operating performance.

And, the winners were..... Kathy Kazmer - wine; John Metcalf - PriceGrabber luggage tag, canned air, computer cleaner, Verbatim Digi Clean Pad, Cyber Clean; Agnes Chaney - Prime Film Scanner (thanks to Ted Kircher for donating it); Bonnie Hood - Windows 7 Book and pen.



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The SCV Computer Club is dedicated to supporting the needs of its members and to the exchange of information about computers, peripherals, services, hardware and software through meetings, its web page, and the distribution of this newsletter.

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