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When Outlook Dies, Windows Live Mail Lives

By Jo Graziade, Leader, Word Processing Workshop, Brookdale Computer Users Group, New Jersey March 2011 Issue, Bug Bytes <http://bcug.com> gio520 (at) gmail.com
All screenshots: Jo Graziade

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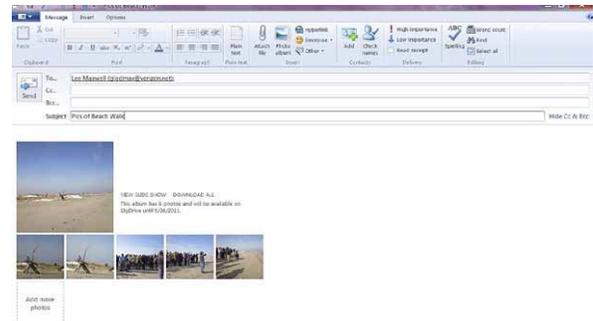
I had been using and enjoying the features of Microsoft Outlook 2007 since 2007, never imagining that one fine day I would log in only to see a message saying something to the effect that Outlook was in use and that I had to close a “pst” file, or face the consequences. In fact, MS Outlook simply stopped. I was unable to move appointments, open an email, or do anything that I was accustomed to in order to make my activities on the computer enjoyable and efficient.

I was pleasantly surprised. I use Gmail but only for the convenience of having an online calendar and email program that I could access from any computer. As far as WLM, I would say the only real inconvenience is the loss of my Outlook calendar, but I can manage using the online Google calendar whenever I’m on my desktop.

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For lack of a better option, I decided to turn to Windows Live Mail (WLM), a part of the Windows Live Essentials suite that was already installed on my system along with my favorite photo management program and even my antivirus app.

Since this was already present, I didn’t have to do much, except launch it. It happily grabbed my mail downloads from Gmail and politely asked me if I wanted it to be the default email program. I said “Yes!”



Screenshot of Windows Live Mail showing message window with attached photo images.



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Discovering Windows 7 – Part 14

by Neil Stahfest – Tacoma Area PC User Group

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Do you have trouble seeing the text on your computer's display? New computer displays come in a wide range of sizes. Twenty years ago an 800 pixel by 600 pixel display was considered to be pretty high resolution. Modern LCD displays are available in a number of sizes that can range from 1024 by 600 pixels to 1920 by 1080 pixels. By default Windows attempts to match your computer's display setting to the number of pixels in the display to give you the sharpest image possible. Sometimes, particularly if you have a very large display, the text may look too small.

Sometimes, however, your display settings may get changed. If you attach a different display or a projector to your computer may change your settings. When you change back to your original display things may look "different" (icons in new locations and bigger or smaller, text larger or smaller).

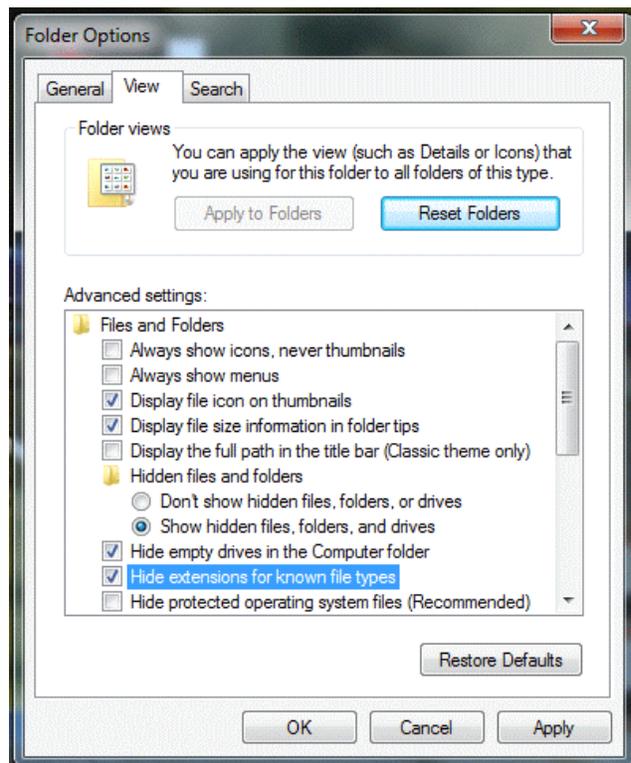
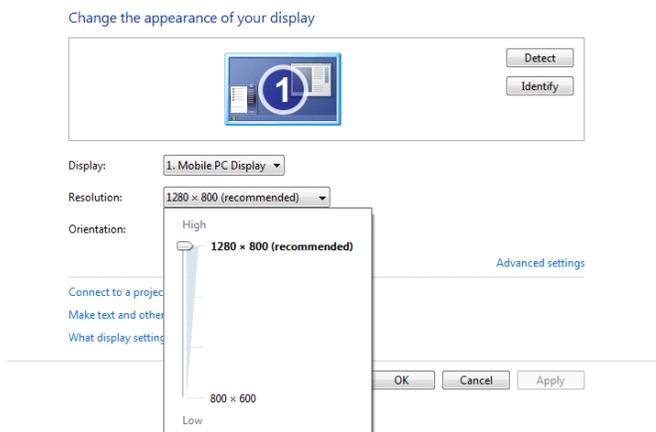
Windows 7 makes it easy to check and change your display settings. Just click on the Windows **Start** button and then the **Control Panel**. Under **Appearance and Personalization**, click on **Adjust screen resolution**. This will produce a window like the one shown here which lets you change the appearance of your display. What we want to look at is the button next to **Resolution**. As shown, when you click on it a small window with slider appears which shows you the range of settings available to you.

Now that we've "conquered" the subject of video settings, let's talk about file extensions. File extensions

are a group of letters at the end of a file name that identifies the type of file for the programs in your computer. For example, if I had a picture on my computer it might be named **cat.jpg**. The name of the file is **cat** and the extension **.jpg** identifies it as a picture file for the Windows Photo Viewer program, as well as other programs that I might have for viewing pictures. Through the magic of Windows, you don't have to specify a particular program to open or view a file. In our example, just double-clicking on **cat.jpg** will start the right program so I can see the picture of a cat.

I have a new laptop computer. It came with Microsoft Word 2010 on it. My old computer has Word 2003 on it. When you create a document with Word 2010, Word places a file extension of **.docx** on it. If you create a document using Word 2003 it has a file extension of **.doc**. Why? Because Microsoft changed something in the way it formats document file with Word 2010. Word 2010 can

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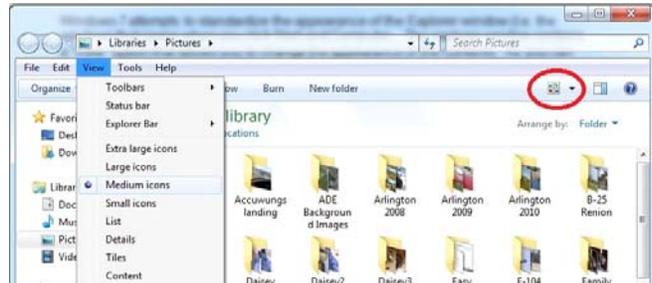
Discovering Windows 7 – Part 15

by Neil Stahfest – Tacoma Area PC User Group

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When you click on “Start” and then “Computer” Windows 7 opens the Windows Explorer which lets you look at files and folders on your computer. Windows 7 contains five basic Windows Explorer formats; Documents, Music, Pictures, Videos and General Items. This displays each of these types of information in its own unique way.

The explorer window contains a “View” option that allows you to change the appearance of the contents. You can do this through the menu bar “View” option as shown or by clicking on the “View” button (circled in red). As you can see in the illustration, you can have large, medium or small icons; lists of files; file details showing content information or tiles that display thumbnail views of the contents. If you’ve used Windows for a while you’ve probably used this feature to make searching for pictures or some documents easier. The downside of this is that some of your folders will look different from the others. This isn’t necessarily bad but maybe you would like all of your folders of the same type to look the same. There is an easy way to do this.



To start, you need to open an Explorer Window. You can do this many ways such as with a taskbar shortcut, desktop shortcut, or a Start menu link to Computer, Documents, or Pictures. Now look for the “Menu bar” (marked in blue). The first time I tried this I discovered that I had changed the layout of my Picture folder and didn’t have one. If you don’t have a “Menu bar”, click on “Organize” (marked in orange), then “Layout” and place a check mark next to “Menu bar” by clicking there.

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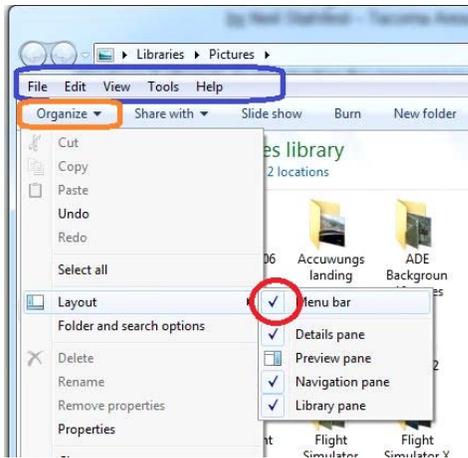
(Continued from page 2)

read .doc files created by Word 2003 but Word 2003 cannot read Word 2010 documents with a .docx file extension. For people like me that use Word 2003 on one computer and Word 2010 on another computer, it means that I can’t read documents created on the new computer on my old computer. Fortunately Microsoft has provided a solution. It lets me save documents created with Word 2010 with the format used by Word 2003 (with a .doc file extension) so I work with the same document on both computers.

Now we get to Part 2 of my problem. By default Windows 7, as well as other versions of Windows, hides file extensions. This means that by just looking at the name of a document, I can’t tell if it was saved as a .doc or .docx file. In older versions of Windows there was a way to unhide file extensions. I did that years ago on my old computer, it was something to do with “folder options” but I no longer remember how I did it. It doesn’t matter. I want to unhide file extensions on my computer with Windows 7. As it turns out, this is very easy.

Start by clicking on the Windows 7 Start Button. In the Search Box that appears above it, type “folder options”. In the window that appears above the Search Box we’ll see “Folder Options”. We can also see that it is located in the Control Panel, but that isn’t important right now. Just by double-clicking on “Folder Options” gets us to the Folder Options window. Which is what we want. If we click on the view tab (as shown in the illustration) we see a list of Advanced settings, including one that says “Hide extensions for known file types”. Notice the check mark in the box next to it. Click on the box to uncheck it and click “OK” to unhide file extensions.

While we’re here in the Folder Options window, notice that there are a lot of other options. I’ll leave it to you to explore them. Just remember, if you mess things up, just click on the “Reset Folders” button to restore everything to the default settings.

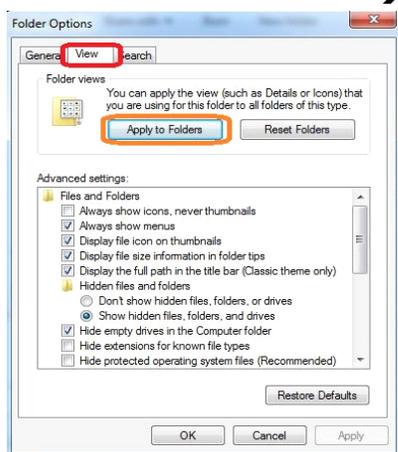


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So, now that you have a “Menu bar”, click on “View” and set the appearance of the folder to the way you want all of your folders to look. I like medium icons but that’s just me. Experiment and choose your own favorite. Having selected medium icons, or something else, we can select more options.

With “View” still selected on the menu bar (Figure 2), scroll down to “Sort by” and decide how you want your folders sorted. I picked by name and in ascending order but there are other choices. We are almost done.

Everything we’ve done so far applies to only the current folder. It is possible that you have other folders in the same group (i.e. Pictures) that will not have changed. To change all of the folders of the same type all you need to do is click on “Tools” on the menu bar (Figure 2) and select “Folder options” in the menu that appears. In the “Folder options” window (Figure 3), click on the view tab and then click on the “Apply to Folders” button. You can also click on the “Reset folders” button to restore your folders to the default settings. Finally, click on the “OK” button to apply your changes. →→



Smartphones, Part 2 Control and Interaction

By Phil Sorrentino, President, Sarasota Personal Computer Users Group, Inc., FL March 2011 issue, Sarasota PC Monitor
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The smartphone doesn’t have a mouse to let you push a pointer around the screen, so then, how do you control the interaction? The smartphone has a touch-sensitive screen which interprets movement of a finger (or fingers) on the screen. A whole new set of “gestures” or touch controls have been developed. Some of the new gestures are the “flick,” and the “pinch”. The flick is done with one finger and its quick movement indicates the intended operation, like turning a page. A pinch is done with two fingers and is typically used to enlarge or shrink something on the screen. Mostly, you use your finger to point to things that you want done. Another gesture or interaction is to “Select an Icon” for movement. To do this, you Touch and Hold the Icon. After holding it for a second or two, the App will be selected and you will receive feedback. On the Droid2, the feedback is called haptic feedback, which means you get a slight vibration on the touch-sensitive screen. On the iPhone, the icons on the page begin to wiggle. →→

Notice there are “Advanced settings” available in this window. Among the numerous options shown here, you’ll find “Hide extensions for known file types”. By default this box is checked. I prefer to see file types such as the different kinds of pictures files (.jpg, .bmp, .gif, etc.). I find it useful when selecting picture editing files, but that’s just the way I work. There are other options her, the important thing to remember is that if you don’t like the results you can easily go back. In a worst case situation, just click on the “Restore Defaults” button to restore all “Advanced settings” to the default.

Applications or Apps are what you use to get things done. Some common and very useful Apps are Contacts, Calendar, Places, Maps, Mail (Yahoo or Google), Notes, Time & Date, and Browser. There are also Apps for YouTube, Skype and Kindle. The Kindle App turns your smartphone into a reader that has access to the Kindle (Amazon) library of books, many of which are free.

There seems to be an App for almost anything that you would like to do with your smartphone. (If you don't find an App for something you want to do with your phone, maybe you can invent one. There is always some software programmer willing to take on an interesting challenge.) In addition to Apps, there are a myriad of games available for the smartphone, many of which are free. For android devices, Apps and games are found at the Android Market. (iTunes is used by the iPhone.)

The Market is an App that comes with the phone. To get something from the Android Market, just touch the Market App Icon and you will immediately be at the front door of the Market. Here you can choose from Apps or Games or a selection that is presented on the opening screen. If you choose Apps, you can then choose to review all Apps or only the Free Apps. (The same is true for Games.) Once you find an App or game you are interested in you just touch it and if it is free, it will be downloaded to your smartphone. If there is a cost, you will have to set up an account so that your credit card can be charged. Most of the Apps that are not free are under \$10.

All of the Apps on your smartphone are installed and available in an All Apps area, which slides out onto the current home screen. (Android devices have multiple homescreens.) On the Droid2 this area is accessed by pressing an Icon at the lower-center of the display screen.

So after you have decided how to use your home screens, you can put an App there by finding it in the All Apps area and then Touch and Hold the desired App icon. When the App is selected and ready to be placed, you will get feedback and the App will appear on the home screen that was below the All Apps area. Apps can be moved between home screens by Touch and Hold-ing the App and waiting for the feedback, then moving the App in the direction of the home screen that will be the new home screen for the App.

On Android phones, an App can be deleted from a home screen, but not from the All Apps area, by Touch and Holding the Icon and then moving it to a red trash can that appears at the bottom center of the display.

When you want to use an App, you just touch it and it starts to perform. You will see the Icon spring into action, attempting to provide its functionality. Once started, other options may be available from a menu by touching the Menu button. (On the Droid2, the Menu is in the lower left, below the display screen). For example, if you touch a Contacts App, it will display your list of contacts. When you find the contact of interest, a touch will display all the information relating to that contact. Touching the Menu button gives you options to Delete or Edit the contact.

With all these Apps and a pretty small screen it would be nice to be able to organize your Apps; so, unlike most computers, the Droid2 has 7 home (display) screens, arranged horizontally. You expose another home screen by flicking your finger on the touch-sensitive home screen in the direction of the screen desired. For example if you are on home screen #4, the middle home screen, and you want to go to home screen #3, you would flick to the right. To go to home screen #5, you would flick to the left. Multiple home screens make it easy for you to organize your Apps. Apps that you think work together can be collected on a particular home screen. You could have a home screen for entertainment, one for work, one for family, another for sports. Any organization of Apps that makes sense to you would be appropriate.

This only scratches the surface of the features, interface techniques, and usefulness of a smartphone. Future articles will concentrate on some of the more interesting features, but I think you will now agree that:

Smartphone == PDA + (not so smart) phone.



Acronis True Image Home 2011

Software Review by Dr Herb Goldstein – Sarasota PC Users Group – www.spcug.org

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Nightmares can come in abundant varieties, but the day you turn on your computer and nothing happens you are in for a whole new meaning of the word. As your heart sinks somewhere around the level of your shoes, visions of years of accumulated files, data, and software flash before your eyes as the sudden realization that maybe it's all gone nauseatingly sinks in. Are we talking about a rare occurrence? Unfortunately, it's a lot more common than you might think. Computers and their component hard drives are, after all, man-made electronic devices that are subject to an enormous variety of glitches. Preparing yourself for the inevitable day they visit you is the name of the game called *BACKUP!*

Yes, decent backup software used regularly needs to be the very first thing installed on your computer after its operating system! To do otherwise is an invitation to the disaster that time alone will inevitably visit upon you!

Backup software comes in a variety of types but it is commonly recognized that "imaging" is the most complete and accurate. Only imaging produces a byte-for-byte true reproduction of the contents of your original hard drive. Leading popularity today in the world of imaging backup software today is Acronis True Image Home 2011. My True Image backups have on at least 5 occasions for me over the years restored dead computers/hard drives to full functionality from an otherwise total loss. A veritable electronic lifesaver!

Acronis True Image Home 2011 is currently available for free trial download at acronis.com. [*NCTCUG Ed. Note: 2012 version is now available.*] You are urged to try it and put it through its paces before purchasing. Some careful reading and using is necessary to employ it properly. In addition, it comes with a "Swiss-army knife" of extra utilities that greatly increase its functionality when properly used. Acronis offers enough trial time for you to familiarize yourself with the software.

To use True Image Home 2011 most effectively you should setup a regular schedule of automatic backups. Personally, I have elected to perform a full backup every 14 days implemented with a regular differential backup daily. Regular scheduled differential or incremental backups take hardly any time at all and can keep your backups current on a daily (or whatever interval you elect) basis. It is essentially a simple "set it and forget it" automatic procedure. Once your backups have been created, you can easily restore any part or all of it as necessary. Although you can elect to backup only your email or other specific data files, it is highly recommended that you backup your entire hard drive which allows you to restore its entirety or individual files as necessary.

Your backups should be placed on an external USB-connected hard drive of more than adequate size to accommodate them. Such drives are readily available today at relatively modest expense. For safety's sake, you can also easily disconnect and store them at a different location from your computer if you so desire.

If you were to use True Image Home 2011 only for routine backups and restores it would be worth its entire cost, but its passel of new and improved utilities make it an easily worthwhile investment.

Predefined backup schemes designed for specific user needs — from a disk space-efficient scheme suitable for users with limited backup storage capabilities to a scheme for those users who need higher security for their data and system. The program offers different backup schemes for disk and file type backups. You just select a scheme and the program automatically manages your backups. In addition, you can create a custom backup scheme which will exactly suit your needs.

Check points: The Acronis Backup Explorer timeline shows Windows and software installation and update dates. Moving your mouse over a check point opens a balloon with information about the

update or software. With check points you can check the changes to your system and recover the system to a specific backed up state.

A **Non-Stop Backup** feature automatically creates incremental backups every five minutes, allowing users to roll back their system, files, and folders to any point in time. In addition, you can now use the Acronis Secure Zone as Nonstop Backup storage. This may be desirable for notebook users with a single hard disk drive, however it defeats the purpose of keeping your backup separate and apart from your current hard drive in case it fails.

A **Try-And-Decide** feature allows temporary trial installation of new software which permits you to consequently completely eliminate it before any system changes are made.

Acronis Online Backup permits offsite continuous backup online to an Internet location.

A new and attractive graphical interface makes for easier program manipulation. Windows 7 is fully supported in all program aspects. A Plus Pack option, which allows you to restore your PC to dissimilar hardware regardless of make, model, or installed components, or to a virtual machine.

While the software contains a “cloning” feature to copy your hard drive contents to a new drive, you are advised instead to restore a backup image of your old drive to a new one. The cloning feature can get somewhat “sticky” and is best avoided.

An **Erase** feature allows to completely and permanently erase the contents of your hard drive. This is a must for safety sake before disposing of a hard drive.

Automatic update notification. By default, True Image Home 2011 will automatically inquire about the availability of a program update at every program start. When an update is available, Acronis True Image Home 2011 will offer to download and install it. You can also check for availability of updates manually through the Help menu. This current highly useful feature makes updating a much easier and more convenient process.

New **Backup Explorer.** Now you can use the Acronis Backup Explorer’s time line for exploring not only

Acronis Nonstop Backup and Acronis Online Backup contents, but contents of all other backups as well. Clicking My Backups in the main window will show all your backups on the time line. In addition, you can start recovery of disks and partitions right from the time line.

Enhanced scheduler. The completely redesigned scheduler makes scheduling much easier. In addition, it now allows you to wake up the sleeping/hibernating computer to perform a backup. The “At system shutdown” and “At user logoff” options are now available to users of Windows Vista and Windows 7.

Drag & Drop functionality. You can recover backed up files by dragging them from Acronis Time Explorer to your Desktop or a folder of your choice. In addition, you can create shortcuts for backups by dragging their boxes from the My backups area on the main screen to your Desktop. This will allow you to run a backup by simply double-clicking on its shortcut. You can also create shortcuts for frequently used Acronis tools by dragging their icons from the Start menu to the Desktop.

Integration with Windows 7 Control Panel. True Image Home 2011 replaces Windows Backup in the Backup and Restore item. The Backup and Restore window will show the Nonstop Backup and your oldest disk or partition backup. You will be able to recover the backed up data, refresh the backups, and pause/start Nonstop Backup directly from the Control Panel.

Over a period of many years, SPCUG has been served by our backup guru and Acronis representative, Gene Barlow and his wife Linda. They have provided us with backup presentations, advice and assistance and Acronis software at substantial discount. You can purchase this excellent product from Gene for about half the normal list price by going to his secure web site at www.ugr.com. Use the following order code (UGTI2011) when placing an order to get the discount price of \$29.

[NCTCUG Ed. Note: Acronis True Image Home 2012:
(List Price: \$50) User Group Price (on CD): \$25+S&H
(List Price: \$50) User Group Price (download): \$25]

TrueCrypt

Review by John Langill, Newsletter Co-editor, Southern Tier Personal Computing Club, NY
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Free open-source data encryption software for Windows 7/Vista/XP, Mac OS X, and Linux

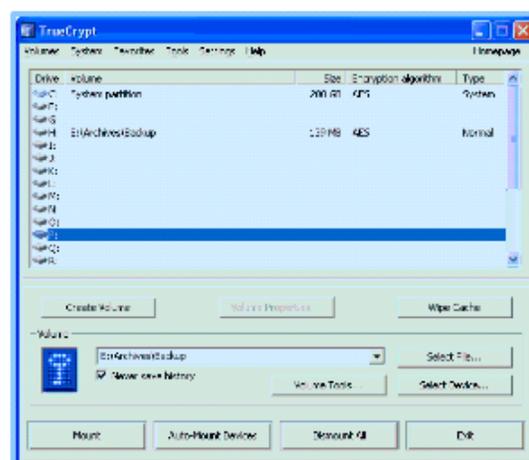
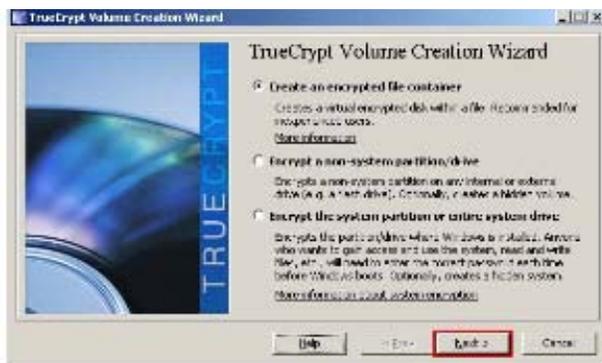
The May 2011 issue of *Rare Bits* contained an article by Dick Maybach titled "Cloud Computing" in which he pointed out the necessity of securing your data via encryption when it "...is stored on the same disks, uses the same memory, and passes through the same processors as everybody else's." And I recall Dave Bilcik voicing a similar warning at the May meeting and also mentioning the program TrueCrypt. It just so happens that I am currently using TrueCrypt and I believe it to be very satisfactory solution whether you need relatively modest security or very tight and sophisticated protection.

TrueCrypt is a software system for establishing and maintaining an on-the-fly-encrypted volume (data storage device). "On-the-fly" encryption means that data is automatically encrypted or decrypted right before it is loaded or saved, without any user intervention. The entire file system is encrypted; e.g., filenames, folder-names, contents of every file, free space, meta-data, etc. No data stored on an encrypted volume can be read (decrypted) without using the correct password and/or key file(s), or correct encryption keys.

I'm not sure how unique TrueCrypt's approach is but I was nevertheless intrigued by it. The first step is to create a "container;" otherwise known as a TrueCrypt "encrypted volume." To my mind, this is somewhat like obtaining a safety-deposit box at a bank.

TrueCrypt provides a "wizard" to assist with the task. As at a bank where safety-deposit boxes of various sizes can be rented, the encrypted volume can be created to have as much capacity as you need. For example, it can be a specific portion of a hard-disk, or an entire flash drive or other storage device. Unlike a safety-deposit box, however, you hold the only key... so you need to remember and protect it. And, into the container (the volume) you can store any number of files. If the capacity of the volume is exceeded, you simply create a bigger container.

One of the interesting facets of a TrueCrypt volume is that it has most of the characteristics of an ordinary file. That is, the volume can be moved or copied within the storage areas of a given PC, or to a different PC. The name of the volume can be changed; and the volume can be included in routine backups. It can be transmitted across the Internet; and even into the wild-blue yonder, if you're so inclined. And, even if you have no intention of salting "the cloud" with your personal data, what about that minuscule 8- or 32GB flash-drive you carry around in your pocket. The smaller they get, the easier they are to lose. Wouldn't it be reassuring to have made it an encrypted volume so that whoever finds it won't have an easy time of it when they try to discover the contents of your personal data?



The downside of the file-like characteristics is that, like any file, an encrypted volume can also be deleted and all its content lost (...thank goodness for the Recycle Bin). That would be very bad if done unwittingly. But that's why we do back-ups! Yes? Once a TrueCrypt volume is mounted, the data files it contains can be copied to and from the volume just like they are copied to or from any normal disk; for example, by simple drag-and-drop operations.

Files are automatically decrypted on-the-fly in RAM (Random Access Memory) while they are being read or copied from an encrypted TrueCrypt volume. Similarly, files that are being written or copied to a TrueCrypt volume are automatically encrypted on-the-fly in RAM right before they are written to the volume. Note, however, this does not mean the whole file that is to be encrypted/decrypted must reside in RAM before it can be encrypted/decrypted. That is, there are no extra RAM requirements for TrueCrypt. The following paragraph explains how this is accomplished.

Let's suppose that there is an .avi video file stored on a TrueCrypt volume; that is, the entire video file is encrypted. The user provides the correct password and/or key file and mounts (opens) the TrueCrypt volume. When the user double-clicks the icon of the video file, the operating system launches the application associated with the file type — typically a media player. The media player then begins loading a small initial portion of the video file from the TrueCrypt-encrypted volume to RAM in order to play it. While the portion is being loaded, TrueCrypt is automatically decrypting it in RAM. The decrypted portion of the video in RAM is then played by the media player. While this portion is being played, the media player begins loading next small portion of the video file from the TrueCrypt-encrypted volume to RAM and the process repeats. This process is called “on-the-fly” encryption/decryption and it works for all file types, not just for video files. The process also ensures minimal impact on processing performance.

Note that TrueCrypt never saves any decrypted data to a disk – it only stores it temporarily in RAM. Even when the volume is mounted, data stored in the volume remains encrypted. When you restart Windows or turn off your computer, the volume will be automatically dismantled and files stored in it will be inaccessible and encrypted. Even when power is suddenly interrupted (i.e., without a proper system shut-down),

files stored in the volume are inaccessible and encrypted. To make them accessible again, you have to mount the volume by providing the correct password and/or key file.

Of course, as with any unintended power interruption or shut-down, unsaved changes to files are lost because re-encryption of changes occurs only when files are saved to the volume in a normal fashion.

I've only touched on a few of the main facets of TrueCrypt. In addition, TrueCrypt offers a choice of encryption algorithms from which you can select one that will give the degree of security you feel you need. This and other aspects of TrueCrypt are fully documented in an excellent User Guide. The latest version of the free software, Release 7.0a, can be downloaded from the product's home Website at <http://www.truecrypt.org>, as well as from CNET's <http://www.download.com>, and other sites on the Web.

The User Guide PDF and a more detailed description of TrueCrypt can be found at the product's home web-site.

TrueCrypt is one free program that is, in my opinion, an exception to my general perception of the breed. Of course, the developers gratefully accept donations. In this case, I think they are well deserved.



HONOR OUR VETS

Microsoft Security Essentials

By Brian K. Lewis, PhD, Member, Sarasota PCUG, Florida

April 2011 issue, The Monitor www.spcug.org [bwsail at yahoo.com](mailto:bwsail@yahoo.com)

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Over the years, ever since my first encounter with a computer virus in 1987, I have used a number of anti-virus applications along with firewall software. As the Internet grew in the late '90s I had to add anti-parasite software and other anti-malware applications to the protection arsenal. Some of this software was free; others were very expensive both to purchase and to maintain. Some used tremendous amounts of computer resources which slowed down the overall operation of the computer. The cost in money and/or resources wasn't necessarily directly related to the usefulness of the application. However such protection was probably a necessary evil to prevent problems on my computer from the "invaders" that existed then and now on the Internet.

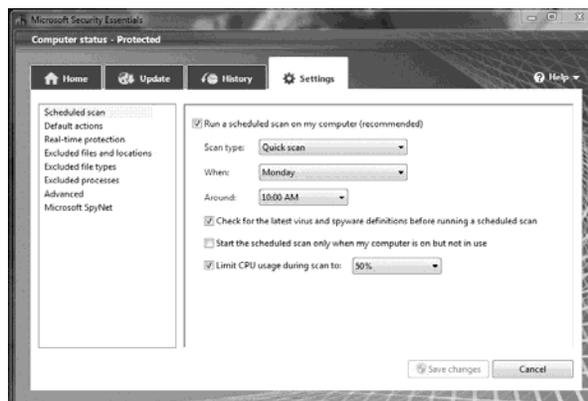
Most anti-malware applications seem to be growing in size as each manufacturer tries to "cover all the bases". Unfortunately with the increase in size and coverage comes an increase in complexity. Now Microsoft has released an improved version of their Security Essentials (MSE) software that is easier for the user to install and operate. This application protects your computer against viruses, spyware, worms, trojans and other malicious software. In addition it is an easy to install FREE download from Microsoft. The only catch is that you must have a legal copy of Windows on your computer. The installation program does a check for Genuine Windows validation. The software runs on XP, Vista and Win 7 operating systems (OS). However, I have only been using it on Win7.

It does sound like it must be a resource hog to be able to carry out all of these functions. But the testing results I have seen show minimal effect on overall computer operation. Yes, there is reduction in the speed of processing web pages, e-mail, etc., when using the real-time protection. But compared to other software carrying out the same functions, the difference in speed is insignificant and really wouldn't be noticed by most users. The only place where MSE seems to fall down is on hard disk scans. There I have seen reports of initial complete scanning taking 8 – 24 hours!

I have done both a Quick Scan and a Full scan of my hard drive, about 50 GB of data on a 140 GB partition. The Quick Scan was done in less than 2 minutes. The full scan took about 25 minutes. So from my perspective, on my system, the scanning time is not excessive. I have used other malware checkers that have taken over an hour to accomplish a complete scan on the same drive.

If you want to install this application, the first step is to download MSE from Microsoft's web site (http://www.microsoft.com/security_essentials/?mkt=en-u). This page has the download link for the msi file which can be run automatically after downloading by selecting "Run" instead of "Save". If you have questions about the installation Microsoft has a video showing all the steps involved. Once the installation is complete the opening screen shows the current status of your protection and the date of the last update for the malware definitions. It also shows you the settings related to scanning your hard drive. From this page you can do a manual scan of your drive. The Update tab on the top of the page takes you to a page where you can manually update the malware definitions. MSE will automatically download updates when you are running Windows and are connected to the Internet. However, it may not occur immediately on connection. So if it has been some time since you connected to the Internet you may want to manually download the definitions.

The settings page, shown in the [first] figure, is one where you can mostly accept the default values. One

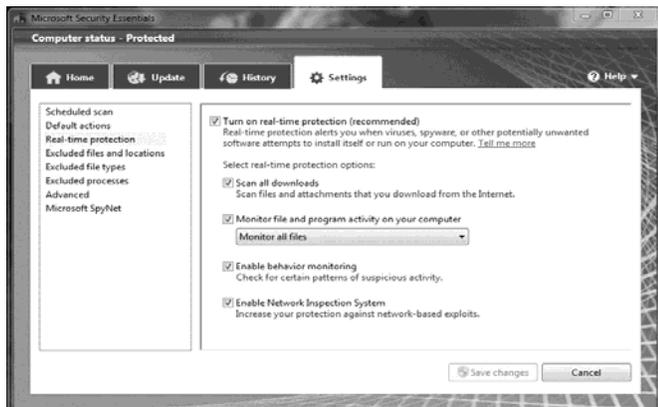


you will probably want to change is the timing of the automatic scan. MSE defaults to midnight on one day, Sunday I think. You will probably want to change this to a time when you know that your computer will be turned on.

The list on the left of the window shows the additional settings categories for MSE. The “default actions” relate to what should be done with any malware detected. The various categories of default actions run from low threat to severe. In all cases I have set mine to remove the malware. If in doubt as to the effect on your computer you can set the lower threat levels to be quarantined. If you wish to later remove a quarantined item, you can do so from the history page. Select “Quarantined items” and you will then be allowed to remove all or individual items. You can also select to restore an item, but this is not likely to be a good idea. Read the description of the what the malware’s actions are carefully before deciding to restore it.

[The] next figure shows you the protection being provided by MSE. In most cases it is best to leave the default settings so you will get the best protection. You will note the category for behavior monitoring. This allows MSE scan for possible malware that is not in its definitions list. This is referred to as the “heuristic” programming of the software. Any application that seems to be altering the functioning of the operating system, such as a rootkit, should be flagged by this function. This is the only way that any anti-malware application can attempt to stay ahead of the malware writers who are always coming up with new, more complex schemes for infiltrating your computer.

I hope you can see from this quick review of MSE, that it is designed to provide a simple user interface for a complete protection package. Now more tech-savvy computer users might want more control over their anti-malware protection, but for most users, I think this is a good fit and the price is right. →→



Cyber Security Notes

By Blair Jones, NCTCUG



From http://www.dhs.gov/files/programs/gc_1158611596104.shtm

“October 2011 marks the eighth annual National Cyber Security Awareness Month sponsored by the Department of Homeland Security in cooperation with the National Cyber Security Alliance (NCSA) and the Multi-State Information Sharing and Analysis Center (MS-ISAC).”

Take a browse through the DHS site for some ideas and pointers on cyber security.

For a handy reading list to get you started on what you can do, see <http://www.us-cert.gov/cas/tips> where you can also sign up to get tips in your inbox.

See NCSA at <http://www.staysafeonline.org/>

For more ideas and suggestions, just do a web search for cyber security month 2011. There’s a lot of material out there to help you.



Happy, and *safe* computing,
and don’t forget —
backup...backup...backup!

As I mentioned earlier, I have been running MSE under Windows 7. This is Microsoft’s best operating system yet. I think this is demonstrated by the fact that the Win7 SP-1 has no really significant changes to the basic OS. Also, Win7 does seem to be more secure than earlier versions. So if you are still running Vista or WinXP, in my opinion, you should be seriously considering a change to Win7. At the very least, whatever OS you are running, be sure to practice “safe computing”.

This article is copyright © 2011 by Brian K. Lewis, PhD. All rights reserved. It is also published as PDF file on the Lewisfamilypubs.net website. Dr. Lewis is a former professor of physiology and has been working with personal computers for over 40 years. He may be contacted at bwsail@yahoo.com.

The Seventh Son of Windows: Customizing the Notification Area

By Lee Reynolds, Contributing Editor, Boca Raton Computer Society, FL February 2011 issue, Boca Bits www.brsc.org leetutor@exploringwindows.com

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Introduction

The "Notification Area" is that area on the right-hand side of the Taskbar where your system clock resides, and probably a large number of other icons. It used to be called, prior to Windows XP, the "system tray." Programs just love to install an icon there, to supposedly speed up access to their features. You doubtless have a lot of not very useful icons there, which can sometimes be removed by selecting an option or preference from the menus of the associated program. And in XP and Vista, you can right click the Taskbar, select Properties from the context menu that scrolls out, click on the Notification Area tab, and then perform various operations in order to "hide inactive icons."

Windows 7 Default

This situation has improved a lot in Windows 7. By default, there are only four icons that will appear in your Windows 7 taskbar notification area:

- ✓ The Sound icon (so you can adjust the volume of your speakers or mute them)
- ✓ The Network icon (so you can perform maintenance tasks concerning your network connection)
- ✓ The Battery icon (if you're running Windows 7 on a laptop) to tell you how much charge is remaining to your pc's battery or whether it's charging if you are running your laptop plugged into a wall outlet
- ✓ An icon connected with a new Control Panel applet called Action Center

Additional Icons

If you have any other icons in the Notification Area (such as one for your antivirus program, for example), they will usually be found by clicking the little upward-pointing carat to the left of the Action Center icon, which causes a small popup window to be shown. If

you want to see any of those icons in this popup window in your Notification Area instead, you can just drag them down there.

Windows 7 Action Center

The Action Center icon will normally handle all those notification messages coming from the system when some program thinks you need to take an action of some kind.

For example: download important updates from Microsoft Update, or perform a scan with Windows Defender, or download the most recent antivirus data, etc.

In Windows 7 there is now a new Control Panel applet called Notification Area Icons, which takes the place of the corresponding tab of Taskbar Properties in Windows Vista, XP, and previous versions.

When you go to that Control Panel applet, you will be shown a list of each of the Notification Area icons, and for each one you can use the "list box" next to it to choose one of three possible settings:

- ✓ Show icon and notifications
- ✓ Hide icon and notifications
- ✓ Show only notifications



Windows Lab: Security Software

By Randy N. Ridge, member of the Tech Team, Cajun Clickers Computer Club, Louisiana
February 2011 issue, Cajun Clickers Computer News www.clickers.org [ccnewsletter \(at\) cox.net](mailto:ccnewsletter@cox.net)

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Déjà vu All Over Again

Yes, I'm writing the same article again. Why you ask? It's because we don't seem to learn from our past mistakes. I'm writing with six computers around me infected with various forms of Viruses, Trojans, and Malware. If your computer is running really slow, or suddenly you can't connect to the Internet, or you get popups saying you have viruses which can be removed if you send money, then you need to read this article. With the expansion of social networking, web surfing, malicious emails, and free music download sites, there are any number of places for the attacks to take place. So what can you do? Well here is what you need:

Security Software- no matter what you do online, you need protection. Most commercial security software covers antivirus, firewall, parental controls, and antispyware. These programs can usually be installed on up to 3 computers, and have a small fee to add additional licenses. You can also go the free route. Many Internet Providers such as AT&T, Cox, and Eatel provide free security software. Go to your provider's webpage and any free software should be listed. There are also free antivirus programs such as AntiVir, Avast, and AVG. My favorite place to get these programs is at: www.filehippo.com

Filehippo offers the latest versions which are easy to find. If you try to get the free version from the company's website, it's usually buried deep and hard to find.

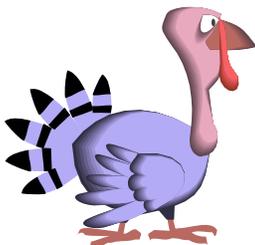
Antispyware — the security suites and Antivirus programs now have built in antispyware.

One program is not enough; you need to be proactive. My favorite program is MalwareBytes which is one of the best spyware and malware cleaners I have used. You can download it at Filehippo. I suggest that you install it, update it, and run it every couple of days. Other good programs are Spybot Search and Destroy, Ad-Aware, and SuperAntiSpyware.

Remember one rule though; you can install multiple antiSpyware programs but you can only have one antivirus program running.

Firewalls — these programs protect you from being attacked via your Internet connection. From Windows XP on, there has been a firewall built into the operating system, but it was weak at best. Newer versions of Windows are better, but there are still weaknesses. You can also get firewalls at Filehippo. You will have to train a good Firewall to let it know what you want it to allow in and out. This can tell you if there is some malware on your computer that wants to phone home.

The main thing you need to do is get adequate protection and make sure you keep it up-to-date. If your security software is out of date, it won't protect you. You must be suspicious of any email, and careful about what links you click on the Internet. If it looks too good to be true, it probably is.



(Continued from page 1)

First Impressions

When you first use WLM, you are obligated to establish a connection with your ISP (Internet Service Provider). Since I use Gmail/Verizon/Hotmail/Yahoo, I can add these by going to the accounts Tab, clicking on the Email icon and adding an account. Since I sync everything on Gmail's server, there is no need to do this. In fact, it gets kind of confusing when lots of email accounts are listed, at least for me. So I stick to my Gmail account and things have been going smoothly.

Tabs and Ribbons

Cosmetically, the interface is clean, uncluttered and easy to understand. You start with a Quick Access Toolbar and tabbed ribbons familiar to those of us using current MS Office apps. The tabs are: Home/Folders/View and Accounts. Let's take a peek at each.

The Home tab is where you compose, create Photo emails, mark as junk, and for those Calendar challenged like me, an opportunity to add a message to that calendar. This may be the workaround I need. Anything to save typing! You will see a sign-in request on the right side. You don't have to be a member of Hotmail or Windows Live or sign in. I do so under my Hotmail name, as this allows the computer to sync and recognize my name on many other sites, such as Facebook, Windows Live Mesh, and others too tedious to mention here. I am a social networker, and am comfortable with such arrangements, but you don't have to subscribe to these. The email program will still work for you, happily. I really like the Photo email option. In the example shown above, notice how the pictures I chose are inserted as an album, and also that a picture tools and a photo album tools ribbon is provided. Even though that may be considered overkill on Microsoft's part, it is still handy in case you want to do a bit more work before sending your pictures out.



Screenshot of Home ribbon

Washington Area Computer User Group

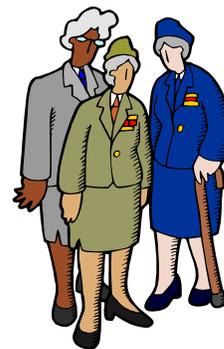
WACUG Meeting will be held on November 19, 2011 from 12:30 to 3:30 pm. WACUG will hold joint meetings with OPCUG [www.olligmu.org/~opcug/] Meetings will be held at the **Osher Lifelong Learning Institute** [www.olligmu.edu/] at George Mason University, 4210 Roberts Road, Fairfax, VA, known as the Tallwood Campus.

Topics

November 19: Free Software

You do not need to be a member to attend. For more information on WAC meetings and events, call the WAC AnswerLine (voice) at (703) 370-7649. Also see WAC's Web Site at

<http://www.wacug.org/>



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Screenshot of View ribbon

Also useful is the View ribbon. Here you can change the layout of your screen. My favorite button here is the Account color – among others, you can change your theme to Fuchsia or Smoke. Other colors you can use are Lime or Twilight. Someone must have had a sense of humor when they wrote this app. But you can use a different color for multiple accounts, so there is a reason for this virtual rainbow.

The Accounts ribbon is one I hardly go to.

Anything here is handled elsewhere. In fact, IMAP folders or Newsgroup is a bit beyond what I need in my email program, so I leave these alone.



Screenshot of Accounts ribbon

Summing Up

In using WLM, there is little to worry about. It will download your messages, keep your appointments once you enter them, and handle your contacts. In fact, it handles contacts only too well. I was happy to see that it has the uncanny ability to find and list my Facebook contacts as well as the ones imported from MS Outlook. It won't list their emails or any unavailable information, but it does three things I like. It gives me a picture of the friend from their Facebook

profile, a link to their online Facebook page, and whether they are currently there.

(Continued on page 16)

NCTCUG Information

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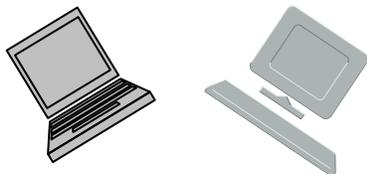
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All officer terms expire 2012

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Article Submissions

Articles, helpful hints, and other items of interest to readers of the NCTCUG Journal are always welcome and will be published as soon as possible after submission. Priority is given to members' contributions. Articles may be submitted in MS Word (.doc) or Rich Text Format (.rtf) or plain unformatted text (C/R only at end of paragraphs, no indents preferred) via email to the editor nctcugj@verizon.net

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COMPUCENTER BBS

Is no longer in operation. It has been replaced by the 'compucenter' mailing list at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/compucenter/>

If you are moving

Please send your change of address to the club address as soon as possible to avoid missing issues.

Thank You!

(Continued from page 15)

So even if I'm not online, I can quickly get to their page and see what my fellow networkers are up to. LinkedIn also seems to be important enough to be included in this feature.

No Calendar Sync

A quick mention of the Calendar – since it does not sync with Google calendar, unless I have a lot of time to re-enter my appointments, Google will have to be my source of information. I have read recently that Yahoo Mail will sync with WLM and Google, but have not had the time to really investigate this. With the way that the Internet is combining profiles and individuals' information, it would just be one more intertwining of online information. Perhaps in time there will be a better way to do this.

I will miss MS Outlook. But I will not miss the fact that one fine day it just stopped working, gave me strange error messages, and was unwilling to be reinstalled properly. I know that there are always more options, and WLM is a fine option. Being downloaded from the Internet, it is always up to date and free. Try it if you want to use a local email program with lots of features and an uncomplicated interface.

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November 2011

1st Wed. (11/2)
7 p.m. General Meeting

2nd Wed. (11/9)
**Online-Only Webinar using Skype
for information see club page at
<http://www.nctcug.org/webinarsig.html>**

4th Wed (11/23)
7 p.m. Internet SIG

3rd Monday (11/21)
7 p.m. Board of Directors



Meetings are at **Carlin Hall**, 5711 S. 4th St.,
Arlington VA: East off of Carlin Springs Rd, just
south of Arlington Blvd/Route 50. See website for
directions to post-meeting pizza gathering.



First Class