

# PATACS Posts



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## Useful Bits & Pieces

by Lorrin R. Garson

Columnist, Potomac Area Technology and Computer Society

### Microsoft Surface Tablets

On Monday, June 18<sup>th</sup>, Microsoft announced that it would offer two tablets called "Surface Tablets" to compete with the iPad. Initially Surface Tablets will be available in two models, the RT and Pro Version. The RT is expected to go on sale October or November of this year, when Windows 8 is released, and the Pro Version about three months later. Are these devices tablets, laptops or Ultrabooks? Hum... yes, maybe...



The RT model will use Windows RT as the operating system and the other, the Pro, will

have the full Windows 8 OS. RT resembles Windows Phone and uses low power processors whereas the Pro Version will run on a traditional Intel CPU (Core i5 Ivy-Bridge?). Gleaned from various sources, these tablets will have some of the following features, some of which may be speculative:

- A built-in keyboard
- Touch screen
- Wi-Fi only
- 10.6" Full HD ClearType display, 16:9 aspect ratio
- Magnesium case with built-in stand
- USB port

Depending on the model:

- Battery capacity 6-12 hours
- 32 or 64GB (RT model); 64 or 128GB (Pro Version)
- 0.37" or 0.53" thick
- Weight 1.49 or 1.99 lbs.
- Office Home and Student 2013 edition

Information lacking includes price, screen resolution, camera, specific release date and manufacturer.

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1. See <http://www.microsoft.com/surface/> for information from Microsoft.
2. See <http://pinterest.com/pin/117797346474105582/> for a 47-minute announcement (demonstration) by Steve Ballmer and colleagues.
3. See <http://www.businessweek.com/articles/2012-06-19/why-microsofts-surface-tablet-should-shame-the-pc-industry> for an article in Bloomberg Businessweek entitled, “Why Microsoft’s Surface Tablet Shames the PC Industry.” Microsoft’s PR event announcement is described.
4. See [http://reviews.cnet.com/8301-33642\\_7-57456140-292/microsofts-surface-tablet-vs-the-ipad-seven-challenges/](http://reviews.cnet.com/8301-33642_7-57456140-292/microsofts-surface-tablet-vs-the-ipad-seven-challenges/) for an article from c/net entitled, “Microsoft’s Surface tablet vs. the iPad: Seven challenges”.
5. See <http://money.cnn.com/2012/06/18/technology/microsoft-surface-tablet/index.htm> for an article from CNNMoney entitled, “Hands on with Microsoft’s Surface tablet”.
6. See [http://www.computerworld.com/s/article/9228343/Microsoft\\_Surface\\_tablets\\_may\\_not\\_match\\_iPad\\_battery\\_life](http://www.computerworld.com/s/article/9228343/Microsoft_Surface_tablets_may_not_match_iPad_battery_life) for an article from Computerworld entitled, “Microsoft Surface tablets may not match iPad battery life”.

### Krebs on Security

Interested in a wide variety of computer security issues? Take a look at <http://krebsonsecurity.com/>. For example, if you use Secunia PSI, you may not want to update to version 3.0. To quote from this site, “However, I had trouble with the program [Secunia PSI version 3] after installing it on my test machine—a Windows 7 64-bit machine with 8 GB of memory. The program seemed to get stuck on scanning for updates, and for an excruciating eight minutes or so the software sucked up most of my machine’s available memory and

processing power. The only way I could get my system back to normal was to reboot the system.

### Ditto Clipboard Manager

Almost everyone is familiar with the sequence CTRL-C/CTRL-V, i.e., copy an object into “the buffer” and paste it into some location. However, there are times when you may want to copy several different objects into buffers and be able to paste them into multiple locations. Ditto to the rescue! Ditto can be downloaded (free) from SourceForge at <http://ditto-cp.sourceforge.net/>. To quote from this site “Ditto is an extension to the standard windows clipboard. It saves each item placed on the clipboard allowing you access to any of those items at a later time. Ditto allows you to save any type of information that can be put on the clipboard, text, images, html, custom formats...” It takes a little practice and effort to use Ditto, so read “Getting Started” at [http://ditto-cp.sourceforge.net/Help/DittoGettingStarted.htm#\\_Toc84105232](http://ditto-cp.sourceforge.net/Help/DittoGettingStarted.htm#_Toc84105232). A word of caution, if you copy sensitive information like passwords (using CTRL-C) into Ditto, they remain available to anyone until you delete that entry or the capacity of Ditto is exceeded. Nevertheless, Ditto is a very productive tool.

### Recent Places

You are probably familiar with “Recent Items” in “Start” in Windows 7, which provides ready access to items you have recently worked with. However “Recent Places” can be equally useful for going back to folders you have recently accessed. To make “Recent Places” readily available, do the following:

1. Right-click on the Start button and left-click on “Open Windows Explorer”. Park that window on the right side of your display.
2. In the left column of that window you will see “Recent Places”. Left-click and hold on “Recent Places” and drag and drop it to the “Start” orb on the “Taskbar”

From this point on if you left-click on the “Start” orb, you will see “Recent Places” displayed at the top of the list and left-clicking on “Recent

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Places” will display those places you recently accessed.

### Wireless Network Watcher

Do you know if someone is poaching on your wireless network? Do you have a mooching neighbor or something more threatening? This small application scans your wireless network and reports all the devices on your network (including hard-wired devices), their MAC addresses, IP addresses, etc. At first blush some devices may appear to be foreign to you, but referring to the Network Map section of a recently generated report from BelArc Advisor (see [http://www.belarc.com/free\\_download.html](http://www.belarc.com/free_download.html)) can help you determine whether that “strange” device is yours. Wireless Network Watcher, version 1.47, can be downloaded from [http://www.nirsoft.net/utills/wireless\\_network\\_watcher.html](http://www.nirsoft.net/utills/wireless_network_watcher.html). The software is stored (default) in C:\Program Files (x86)\NirSoft\Wireless Network Watcher. The name of the executable is WNetWatcher.exe. See <http://www.appsandoranges.com/app/2815/wireless-network-watcher> for applications similar to Wireless Network Watcher, which include NetWorx, NetLimiter, BitMeter II, BitMeter OS, and NetSpeedMonitor.

### The End of Microsoft Windows Home Server

Not many use Windows Home Server (WHS), but I am sad to see its demise (see <http://www.mswhs.com/2012/07/windows-home-server-as-a-standalone-product-is-dead/>). However, aficionados of WHS will be able to replace it with Microsoft Server 2012 Essentials, which will be more costly and complex, but almost certainly more robust and with greater functionality. Support for WHS will continue until 2016. For more information, see <http://www.wegotsserved.com/2012/07/05/microsoft-draws-windows-home-server-era-close/>.



## Linux and Open Source News

by Geof Goodrum

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### The UEFI Challenge

Microsoft collaborated with PC hardware vendors to implement a more secure boot process, which Microsoft requires for Windows 8 certification. The secure boot capability is part of Unified Extensible Firmware Interface (UEFI), which is designed to eliminate memory, processor, graphic and storage hardware constraints in the legacy Basic Input Output System (BIOS) found on older PCs (see <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/UEFI>). With UEFI secure boot enabled, the PC hardware will only boot operating systems that provide a digital key authorized by the PC vendor.

Matthew Garret states in his blog (<http://mjg59.dreamwidth.org/12368.html>):

Most hardware you'll be able to buy towards the end of the year will be Windows 8 certified. That means that it'll be carrying a set of secure boot keys, and if it comes with Windows 8 pre-installed then secure boot will be enabled by default. This set of keys isn't absolutely fixed and will probably vary between manufacturers, but anything with a Windows logo will carry the Microsoft key.

While PC system vendors decide whether the secure boot feature can be disabled and what keys to recognize, there is a significant risk that vendors will ship systems that make the secure boot feature difficult or impossible to disable and with keys for Microsoft OS only (Note that Microsoft mandates secure boot cannot be disabled for ARM-processor systems—mostly tablets and smartphones—running Windows 8), making it difficult or impossible for users to install and use Open Source operating systems like GNU/Linux or Android. Microsoft controls the key.

Matthew Garret first brought attention to this issue in September 2011 (<http://mjg59.dreamwidth.org/5552.html>). Microsoft deflected responsibility to the PC

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system vendors (<http://blogs.msdn.com/b/b8/archive/2011/09/22/protecting-the-pre-os-environment-with-uefi.aspx>) and claim "At the end of the day, the customer is in control of their PC", but this is deliberately obtuse. GNU/Linux publishers Red Hat, Inc and Canonical, Inc posted a white paper about Secure Boot's impact on GNU/Linux at <http://blog.canonical.com/2011/10/28/white-paper-secure-boot-impact-on-linux/>, including recommendations to PC vendors on how to ensure that the customer truly retains control over their PC.

The issue will affect personal systems like laptops, desktops, tablets and smartphones. Business server-class systems are unlikely to be an issue as a significant portion of these run Open Source Operating Systems and vendors would be foolish to exclude them (see <https://therealmadhatter.wordpress.com/2010/11/06/server-operating-system-market-share->

[lies-lies-and-more-lies/](#) for reasons why market share is difficult to document).

GNU/Linux distribution publishers are looking for solutions. Fedora paid Verisign \$99 to obtain a digital key signed by Microsoft; upcoming release Fedora 18 will be able to run on Windows 8 certified PCs. While pragmatic, many balk at letting Microsoft control their fate. Canonical, Ltd, publishers of Ubuntu, took a different path and are working with PC vendors to recognize digital keys from Canonical and be "Ubuntu certified." The Linux community has been working with UEFI tools from Intel to understand secure boot better (see OpenSUSE 12.1 example at [http://en.opensuse.org/openSUSE:UEFI\\_Secure\\_boot\\_using\\_qemu-kvm](http://en.opensuse.org/openSUSE:UEFI_Secure_boot_using_qemu-kvm)). However, secure boot under UEFI will be a challenge for small non-commercial GNU/Linux distributions, including utility LiveCDs such as Knoppix, Parted Magic, SystemRescueCD.

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Below: Risk Global Map



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If you are thinking about buying a new PC, be aware of UEFI and the implications of secure boot, and whether you are surrendering control to Microsoft and the PC vendor.

For more information and a petition campaign for users to have control over software on their digital devices, see the Free Software Foundation's web site <https://www.fsf.org/campaigns/secure-boot-vs-restricted-boot>.

### Featured Linux Software of the Month: August-September 2012

The software described below can be downloaded at the links provided or copied onto a USB flash drive at the PATACS Fairfax meeting. However, please check the online package management tool included with your GNU/Linux distribution first, as installation is often just a click away.

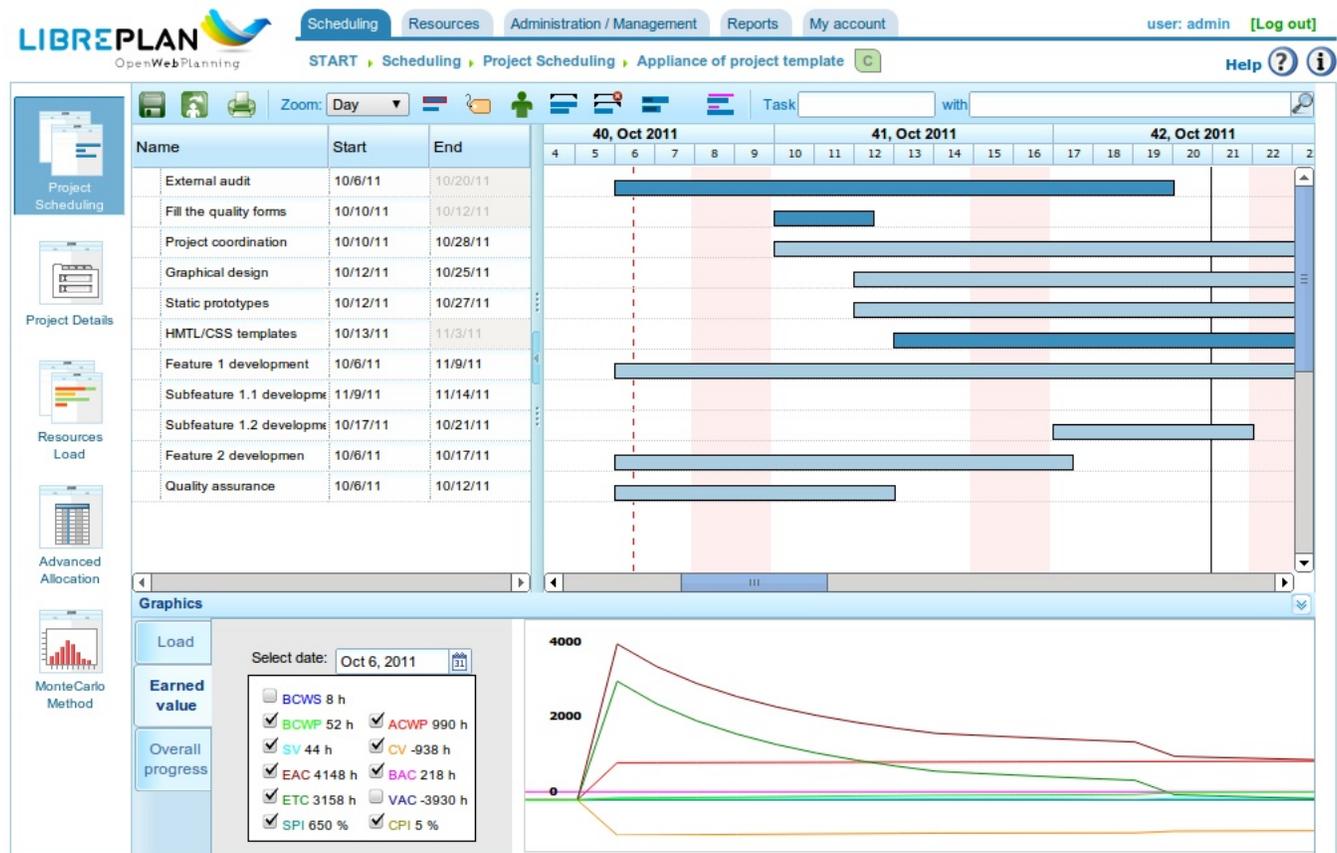
**Burp** – v1.3.10. <http://burp.grke.net/>. Free GNU Affero General Public License source code and executable packages for Ubuntu/Debian by

Graham Keeling. Burp is a network backup and restore program for Linux (server and client) and Microsoft Windows (client) systems. It uses librsync in order to save network traffic and to save on the amount of space that is used by each backup. BURP features backup scheduling and multiple retention periods, storage data deduplication, e-mail notifications, network rate limiting, and encryption. It also uses VSS (Volume Shadow Copy Service) to make snapshots when backing up Windows computers. Source and executable are available for Windows systems, as are instructions for “bare metal” restore of Windows 7 systems.

**LibrePlan** – v1.3. <http://www.libreplan.com/>. Free GNU Affero General Public License source code and executable packages for Ubuntu/Debian, Fedora, and OpenSUSE by Igalia. LibrePlan is a Web application for project planning, monitoring, and control. It is a collaborative tool to plan, monitor, and control projects and has a rich Web interface that

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### Below: LibrePlan Project Management



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provides a desktop-like user experience. All team members can take part in the planning, which makes it possible to have real-time planning. It was designed for a scenario where multiple projects and resources interact to carry out the work inside a company. It makes it possible to communicate with other company tools, providing a wide set of Web services to import and export data. This release features resource binding to users, monthly timesheets, a project dashboard, expenses, permission enhancements, currency support, work breakdown structure (WBS) setting up behavior, outsourcing improvements, concurrent usage improvements, a revamped menu, more languages supported, and timesheet search window enhancements.

**Risk** (aka Domination) – v1.1.1.0.

<http://domination.sourceforge.net/>. Free GNU General Public License Java source code and executable by Yura Mamyryn. Domination is a turn-based strategy game similar to the board game of Risk. It has many features, including single and network play, and a map editor. Over 300 user created maps are available in the Domination in-game MapStore, with new maps added almost every day. This release features better support for high resolution maps in the game and the map editor. Runs on all platforms (including Android) with Java 1.4 or later and graphic interface.

**Kernel Source** – v3.4.6. <http://www.kernel.org/>. Free GNU General Public License source code for all platforms by the Linux community.



## Microsoft Warns “Kill Desktop Gadgets Now!”

by Ira Wilsker

WEBSITES:

<https://technet.microsoft.com/en-us/security/advisory/2719662>  
<http://support.microsoft.com/kb/2719662>  
<http://windows.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/downloads/personalize/gadgets>  
<http://widgets.yahoo.com>  
<http://windowssecrets.com/top-story/kill-those-vista-and-win7-gadgets-now/>  
<https://www.techsupportalert.com/content/web-browser-windows-desktop-gadget.htm>  
<http://go.microsoft.com/?linkid=9813057> Fix It Utility - Kills Microsoft gadgets  
<http://go.microsoft.com/?linkid=9813056> Fix It Utility - Allows Microsoft gadgets  
<https://www.blackhat.com/html/bh-us-12/bh-us-12-briefings.html#Shkatov>

Ever since I purchased a new Vista-64 computer several years ago, I have enjoyed using several of Microsoft’s desktop gadgets and Yahoo!’s desktop widgets. In recent years I have written several columns here in the Examiner extolling the joys of widgets and gadgets, and where to find them. For those who may not be aware of the vernacular, widgets and gadgets are small utilities that can be placed on a Windows or Mac desktop and provide the user with current information of some kind. Yahoo! offered over 6000 free widgets, and Microsoft offered thousands of gadgets. According to Yahoo!, “Yahoo! Desktop Widgets brought your favorite information from across the web right to your desktop in the form of “widgets” or apps. Yahoo! Desktop Widgets enabled you to get all your personalized updates in one place, neatly organized along the main screen of your Windows® or Mac® computer. The Desktop Widget Gallery website included over 6,000 widgets to choose from across news, sports, entertainment, travel, music, games, photos, videos, travel and more!” Microsoft gadgets were very similar to Yahoo!’s, but obviously intended for Windows computers. Generally, widgets and

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gadgets are loaded when the computer is booted, and appear on the desktop on a full-time basis.

I have widgets (Yahoo!) and gadgets (Microsoft) currently running on all of my computers, some are the same on all computers, and some are different, depending on the intended use of that particular computer. On my desktop PC, running Windows 7-64, I have several widgets and gadgets that I frequently utilize. Probably the widget that I utilize more than any other is the excellent Yahoo! widget “TV Navigator”, which displays continuously updated localized TV listings, and is fully customizable for TV provider (cable, satellite, off the air, etc.), favorite shows, integration with various calendar and reminder utilities, and other useful features. I also have a Wunderground gadget that displays current local weather conditions and forecasts, a gadget that shows the ever changing daily deals from my favorite “deal of the day” websites, a gadget that provides a near real-time display of current stock quotes and news, and a gadget that displays the real-time workload on each of the cores of my quad-core CPU chip as well as memory utilization. While I currently have all of these gadgets and widgets running on my desktop, and continue to use them and enjoy them, I will probably have to digitally kill them in the next few days.

At the Black Hat USA 2012 hackers conference, there will be a public presentation by two hacker experts on how to take over a computer running gadgets, and this exploit will become instantly available to anyone. According to the Black Hat program website ([www.blackhat.com/html/bh-us-12/bh-us-12-briefings.html#Shkatov](http://www.blackhat.com/html/bh-us-12/bh-us-12-briefings.html#Shkatov)), “We have you by the Gadgets, July 26; We will be talking about the windows gadget platform and what the nastiness that can be done with it, how are gadgets made, how are they distributed and more importantly their weaknesses. Gadgets are comprised of JS, CSS and HTML and are applications that the Windows operating system has embedded by default. As a result there are a number of interesting attack vectors that are interesting to explore and take advantage of. We will be talking about our research into creating

malicious gadgets, misappropriating legitimate gadgets and the sorts of flaws we have found in published gadgets.”

Gadgets and widgets use a type of push technology, which allows content providers to continuously send data to your desktop. While the technology is proven and well established, with countless millions of users, the same push technology used by the providers has been discovered by hackers, crackers, and other miscreants, allowing them to directly access a computer with widgets and gadgets installed and running. A simple analogy would be something akin to listening to your kids playing in the front yard, and having the door open; with the door open, you can hear the kids, and watch them as desired, but while your front door is open, burglars can enter your house and steal your possessions. In a simplistic way, that is the problem with widgets and gadgets; since our firewalls and other protective barrier software allow the widgets to receive data via this open door, miscreants and crooks may now be coming in as well through that open door. Microsoft, in security advisory 2719662 dated July 10, 2012, “Vulnerabilities in Gadgets Could Allow Remote Code Execution” is warning users to kill any widgets and gadgets that may be running, and possibly never run them again. This advisory and related knowledgebase apply to all computers running Windows 7 or Windows Vista ([support.microsoft.com/kb/2719662](http://support.microsoft.com/kb/2719662)). Microsoft has shut down its extensive library of gadgets, and no longer allows any to be downloaded from Microsoft, but several third parties still offer gadgets for download.

According to Microsoft, “An attacker who successfully exploited a Gadget vulnerability could run arbitrary code in the context of the current user. If the current user is logged on with administrative user rights, an attacker could take complete control of the affected system. An attacker could then install programs; view, change, or delete data; or create new accounts with full user rights. Users whose accounts are configured to have fewer user rights on the system could be less impacted than users who

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operate with administrative user rights.” In order to kill all of the gadgets (from Microsoft or third parties) that may be running on a PC, and prevent them and any others from ever again loading (unless explicitly re-enabled by the user). Microsoft has released a free “FIX IT” utility ([go.microsoft.com/?linkid=9813057](http://go.microsoft.com/?linkid=9813057)) that can stop any of the Microsoft gadgets (and sidebars) that may be running on a Windows 7 or Vista computer, and prevent any gadgets from ever loading, thus closing and locking the door. If at some future date, the user wants to re-allow gadgets for some reason, another “FIX IT” utility ([go.microsoft.com/?linkid=9813056](http://go.microsoft.com/?linkid=9813056)) can resurrect the gadgets. Individual gadgets can be uninstalled by right clicking on an empty spot on the desktop, clicking on “Gadgets” and then right clicking on a gadget, and selecting “Uninstall”.

Yahoo! has also taken down its extensive library of widgets, and no longer allows any of the widgets to be downloaded. To stop any Yahoo! widgets from loading (if you are using any) simply stop the Yahoo! Widgets control utility from loading when the computer boots by using any startup manager or Microsoft’s built-in Msconfig utility to stop the widgets from loading by unchecking the box adjacent to “Yahoo! Widgets” in the list of startup programs. Msconfig can be accessed by clicking on start - run - type “`msconfig`” (without the quotes) - OK, and then clicking on the “Startup” tab. Stopping the widgets utility from loading will block the “push access” via that route. For maximum security, the widget utility itself can be uninstalled by going to the system utility “Add / Remove Programs” and uninstalling the Yahoo! Widget utility. Once uninstalled, it possibly may never be able to be reinstalled, as Yahoo! no longer offers it for download.

In the informational blog, “Windows Secrets” ([windowssecrets.com/top-story/kill-those-vista-and-win7-gadgets-now](http://windowssecrets.com/top-story/kill-those-vista-and-win7-gadgets-now)), Woody Leonhard warns, “What you need to do before next Thursday (July 26) ... Microsoft invented a poison pill, disguised as a fixit in MS Support article 2719962. You’ll find two Fix it buttons halfway down the page: one to disable the Sidebar and gadgets, and

another to enable them (which might be useful if Microsoft provides an actual patch for the vulnerability). ... Do it now, while you’re thinking about it. The fixit doesn’t take much time, but a system reboot is required to enable it. Warn your friends: this could turn into something nasty very quickly.” I will be killing all of my widgets and gadgets because it is only a matter of (short) time that the bad guys will be attacking computers with this vulnerability, if they are not already doing so. I will shed a tear, because I will really miss my pet widgets and gadgets that I have become so attached to. RIP my dear widgets and gadgets; you will sorely be missed by those of us who have enjoyed your companionship for so many years. Goodbye widgets; goodbye, gadgets.



## Too Scared to Buy Anything Online?

by Lee Seidman

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November 2011 issue, The Help Key

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Lots of consumers find purchasing goods online intimidating; news reports of identity theft, online piracy, and privacy concerns only deteriorates people’s confidence in buying things on the Internet. Using free software tools combined with some education and common sense is all one needs to build to become a savvy and safe e-consumer.

The secure e-consumer first needs to recognize when a web site represents a reputable merchant. Using online reviews from [epinions.com](http://epinions.com), [bizrate.com](http://bizrate.com), [resellerratings.com](http://resellerratings.com), or even just a search on Google will help one gauge a vendor’s trustworthiness based on the experiences of others. Peruse the commentary and read what people say and how they rate their transactions with that supplier; what may initially be perceived as a negative review may be little more than someone griping about something irrelevant or inconsequential (like it was delivered a day later than expected, which may be the responsibility of the transporting

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service instead). If there appears to be a pattern of complaints about a particular vendor, it is sensible to take that into account before ordering anything.



In the above example, we are “window shopping” on a popular technology vendor web site called newegg.com. Note what the address bar reads at the top: http://www.newegg.com. This means the site offers no security presently; no sensitive information is being exchanged at this time.

When we decide on an item to procure, most web sites (like newegg.com) will request for the purchaser to sign in (some sites will offer an opt-out area for this, but many do not). IF YOU CREATE AN ACCOUNT ON THESE SITES, DO NOT USE THE SAME PASSWORD AS YOU WOULD USE TO ACCESS YOUR E-MAIL. Note the address bar has now changed to read https:// and a lock appears in the browser as well (at least with Internet Explorer).



Clicking on that lock reveals information about the web site and its security.



This tells the consumer that this web site has been verified as who they say they are and that the connection is encrypted (we are no longer just “window shopping”). VeriSign and a handful of other similar companies are the Internet’s certificate authorities (CA), which substantiate the identities of companies on the web. By viewing the certificate (which is how the web browser on your computer knows to trust the web site it is displaying), you can see its validity and when it expires. Once that certificate expires, your web browser will alert you that the site is no longer trusted as it once was (this should rarely happen with the big-name sites). Note that web sites that request any form of identification (like logging into a webmail, bank, or paystub account) or financial transaction should use https:// and certificates.

When it comes time to actually buy an item online, a credit card offers the best peace of mind available. Most of the major credit card companies offer “zero liability protection” for unauthorized purchases (read the fine lines carefully, MasterCard states on its web site that one’s account must be “in good standing,” the consumer “exercised reasonable care in safeguarding” the card from unauthorized use, and that there must not be more than two unauthorized events reported in the past twelve months). While the legal verbiage may present a chill, many issuers offer temporary credit card numbers specifically for use online (Citigroup calls their “Virtual Credit Card” while Bank of America markets it as “ShopSafe”). These

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temporary credit card numbers expire quickly or have whatever transaction limit you wish to assign. When it is time to purchase an item from an online merchant, open another web browser, log into your credit card issuer's web site, and look for the section to open the tool for a virtual credit card.

This virtual card number appears and functions as an authentic credit card to the vendor; its purpose is to keep its use limited to that particular transaction and to keep your actual credit card number a secret from that vendor. If the virtual credit card is compromised by an unscrupulous third party, it is not as much of an intrusion into one's financial existence as if the actual credit card number was used (there is no need to replace a credit card, change accounts, etc.) Using this tool satisfies the card issuer's requirement for "exercising reasonable care in safeguarding" the authentic credit number, limits the amount of uses it can be tried (usually just once), and makes online shopping less frightening. The web may present dangers, but using your savvy skills and online tools should take the fear out of shopping!



## Buying a New Computer—Things to think about (Part 1)

by Phil Sorrentino

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January 2012 issue, Sarasota PCUG Monitor

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The thought of a new computer is always very exciting, whether you are buying your first computer or replacing an aged one. If you are replacing one, you've probably been down this road before, but if this is your first computer there are many things to consider. Because there is such variety available, the first consideration might be the manufacturer. This decision is usually driven by past experience or knowledgeable friend's advice. But typically it comes down to preference, similar to the decision to buy a car - Ford or Chevy?; they both

are good choices and they both will get you there. So, if you don't have a reason for a preference in computer manufacturer, stick with the big players, HP, DELL, Gateway, Sony, Toshiba, Lenovo, etc. Once the manufacturer is selected, go to their website and look at the various possibilities.

If you have decided on a manufacturer, the next high level decision is probably laptop or desktop. The laptop is portable and takes up very little room. However, the laptop is usually more expensive and is typically not expandable. (Usually, when you discard your laptop in the future, it will be the exact same configuration as when you bought it.) On the other hand, desktops are usually less expensive and are expandable because there are spare slots on the "motherboard" and extra drive bays for additional drives and/or other peripheral devices. Usually, the decision revolves around portability. If you are planning on using the computer at multiple locations, which could include Panera Bread, Starbucks, the airport or library, then a portable is definitely in your future. But if most of your computing is typically done from your home office or den, and/or you need a lot of permanent on-line storage, then the desktop might be a good choice.

Once you have decided on the manufacturer and made the laptop-desktop decision, the fun begins. Most of the rest of the decisions are very technical in nature, but have been summarized in a few technical parameters. The first one is CPU (Central Processing Unit), referred to as the brains of the computer, and sometimes simply called the "processor". Unfortunately, this decision is further complicated by the fact that there are two manufacturers of computer CPUs, Intel and AMD, and they use different ways of naming their products. But behind the names there is one basic decision. Older CPUs are "single core" and newer CPUs have "multiple cores." The number of "cores" or CPUs translates into processing power. This decision should probably be to go with one of the newer, multi-core CPUs. You could save a little money with the older single core, but as the need for more

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processing power increases with newer applications, the single processor may begin to feel like “it just isn’t fast enough.”

Multi-core processors, from Intel, start with the older “core duo,” followed by the “core 2 duo” and then the more current crop of multi-core processors which are simply named “Core i3,” “Core i5,” and “Core i7.” Current multi-core processors have 2, 4, or 8 processors packaged in the CPU chip. Recently, I’ve seen the term “second generation” added to some of these names, to indicate a newer design. AMD has a similar set of CPUs with names like “Phenom,” “Athlon,” “Athlon II,” “Athlon X2 Dual-Core,” and “Sempron.”

Comparing the Intel CPUs to the AMD CPUs can be a difficult task, and is probably best answered by a Google search for “Intel vs AMD” and then reading many of the various opinions. Hopefully, there is enough information found there to help you make up your mind. Both Intel and AMD produce quality products, so another way to solve this is to just select one of the manufacturers and then learn as much as possible about that one so you can continue on to select the best CPU, for you, within that manufacturer’s offerings.

Now that we’ve chosen a CPU manufacturer and maybe even the CPU core family name, e.g. Intel i5, the job is not quite done. Typically, there are further discriminators attached to the CPU family. Probably the most important is “clock rate,” or speed. This is indicated in GHz, or Gigahertz, which is a measurement of how fast the CPU is running. The higher the speed, the faster the processor is running and the higher the processing power, but unfortunately, the higher the power dissipation. It is probably a good decision to stay in the middle range of CPU speed, around 2 to 2.5 GHz. High speed is good, but if you are at the top end of the speed spectrum, which is around 3 to 4 GHz, then CPU cooling becomes a real issue. If the computer is running a very fast CPU, make sure there are adequate fans to remove the heat generated by the processor. Typically, you won’t be deciding

on the fans or how many fans, but make sure when you are using the computer that all the fans are operating and the vents are not obscured, and are not clogged by dust or animal hair.

The last thing to note when looking at the CPU is that they usually come in different versions within a family. The versions are indicated by a number. So, for example, an Intel CPU might be defined as Intel Core i5-520M (2.4GHz). The 520M indicates further technical details such as the size of the Cache (subject for a future article). Usually, as the number goes up, the processing power increases.

One thing to point out when discussing CPUs is the fact that CPUs come in two types, 32-bit and 64-bit. But this is probably not a deciding factor for most computer users. Both will do the job; the only thing that the CPU type leads to is the determination of how much RAM memory the processor can use. 32-bit machines will be limited to 4 GB (Gigabytes) of RAM, and a 64-bit machine will not. RAM memory will be discussed in part 2 of this article.

So far, we’ve discussed manufacturers, laptop vs. desktop, and looked at the CPU. Next month we’ll continue with some more considerations so that the computer you purchase will be exactly the one that will fulfill your desires, keeping in mind that what you hope to accomplish with this computer drives most of these decisions.



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## Word 2010 Screen Shots and Screen Clipping

by Lynn Page

Newsletter Editor/Webmaster

Crystal River Users Group, FL

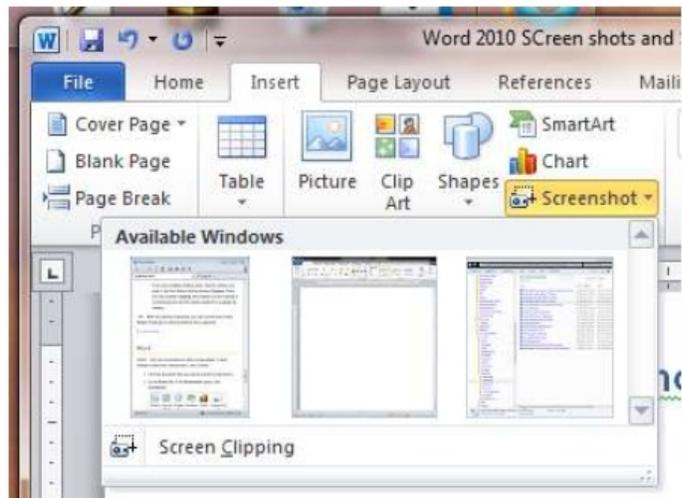
December 2011 issue, CRUG newsletter

www.crug.com

editor@crug.com

Windows 7 has the Snipping Tool, which is handy to capture all or part of the visible screen. Use it to capture a screen shot of any object on your screen, and then annotate, save, or share the image. These snips are great for illustrating what

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you're talking about. I use them all of the time in writing articles or class documents.

Office 2010 brings the ability to make screenshots or snips directly into Excel, Outlook, PowerPoint, and Word. Take a picture of all or part of the open windows. Clicking the Screenshot button lets you select and insert an entire program window or use the Screen Clipping tool to select part of the window. The windows must be open and not minimized to the taskbar to be captured. Both of Windows Snipping Tool and Office 2010's Screen Shots and Screen Clipping are valuable when trying to explain something seen on the computer screen.

### Capture a Screenshot within Word

The Screenshot tool is located in the Illustrations group on the Insert tab. Clicking the Screenshot icon opens a drop down preview with thumbnails of open windows that are 'behind' the Word document. Unfortunately you cannot capture from the current Word document and it is not among the thumbnails. Mousing over a thumbnail, opens a tooltip with the program name and document title. Select from the available screenshots to add a shot of the entire window to the document. The screenshot of the selected window will be automatically sized to the width of the document and pasted at the location of the insertion point.

### Screen Clipping in Word

To insert a clip of a part of an open window, choose Screen Clipping. If you have multiple windows open, the window to make the click from needs to be in front of other windows with the exception of the working Word document. So click on that window before clicking Screen Clipping in the working document.

After clicking Screen Clipping, the working Word document is minimized and only the windows behind it are available for clipping. The entire screen is opaque and greyed out. The pointer becomes a cross. With it press and hold the left mouse button while dragging to select the area of the screen to capture. The selection then shows through the opaqueness. When the mouse button is released the snip is pasted into the document.

### Windows Snipping Tool

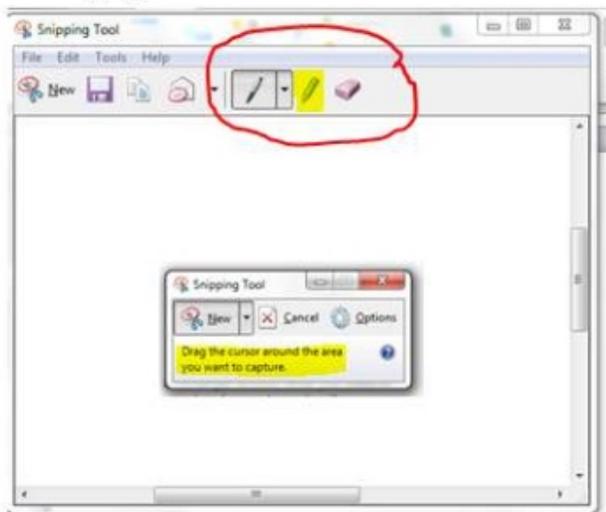
Since you cannot use the built in Office Screenshot tool to make screenshots of the working document the Windows Snipping tool is still a very valuable tool. To open the Snipping Tool, click the Start button and type snip in the search box. Click on Snipping Tool in the list. The default snip is rectangular. So position the mouse at one corner to be snipped, press the left mouse button and drag to the diagonal corner creating a rectangle to snip. When the mouse is released, the snip appears in the Snipping Tool window. To discard the current snip and create a new one click the New 'Scissors' button.

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## Annotating a Snip

It may be useful to highlight certain elements in the screen shot. With the Snipping tool you can draw a freehand circle, arrow or even write with the pen tool. Just click and drag on the screenshot. The standard pen is blue but I selected red and drew out a circle around the pen, highlighter and eraser tools. The Snipping Tool highlighter is yellow and can be used like a regular highlighter to bring attention to certain areas. The Eraser erases pen and highlighter markings but does not modify the original snip.



## Types of Snips

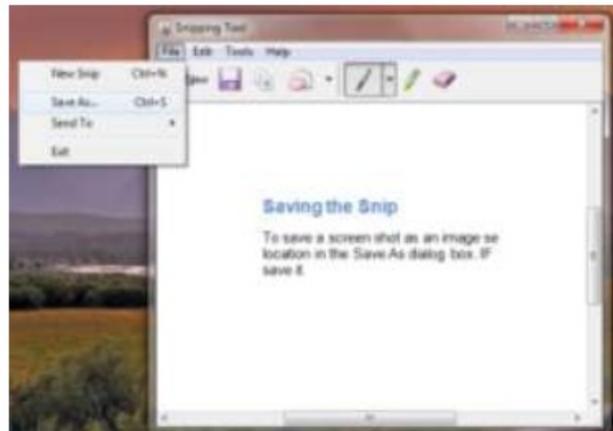
The default snip is Rectangular but Free-form, Window and Full-screen snips are available. To choose which snip to use, click the down arrow by the New button. To use the Free-form Snip draw a shape around an object on the screen with the scissors icon. When using the Window Snip to select a whole window, like an application window or dialog box, click in it with the hand icon. The Full-screen Snip automatically captures the entire screen.

Once a screen shot has been taken using the Snipping Tool, it's on the clipboard. So you can paste it straight into a Microsoft Word document or your Outlook email. The annotations added to the screen shot are included on the clipboard.

## Saving the Snip

To save a screen shot as an image, select Save As in the File drop down menu. Then in the Save As

dialog box type in a name for the image and specify a location for it to be saved. If you do not save the clip and close Snipping tool you will be prompted to save it. The File drop down menu also contains Send To. Click it to open your default email application and send the snip.



## Press Release: Google Book Search Case Threatens Librarians' Access to Information

Ignoring Fair Use Doctrine, Authors Guild Suit Tries to Block Valuable Resource

San Francisco, August 1, 2012 - The Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF) filed an amicus brief today urging a federal court to find that the fair use doctrine shelters Google's Book Search "snippet" project from copyright infringement claims from the Authors Guild. EFF was joined by three associations representing over 100,000 libraries, the Association of Research Libraries, the American Library Association, and the Association of College and Research Libraries.

For years, Google has been cooperating with libraries to digitize books for a searchable database available to the public. Google Book Search now includes over 12 million works that users can search for keywords. Results include titles, page numbers, and small snippets of text. Google Book Search has become an extraordinarily valuable tool for librarians, scholars, and amateur researchers of all kinds. For example, librarians surveyed about Google

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Book Search said the service can help them find valuable research sources inside their own libraries as well as lead them to rare books they can borrow from other institutions. Many librarians say that they have purchased new books for their collections after discovering them through using Google Book Search. However, the Authors Guild argues that its members are due compensation in exchange for their books being digitized and included in the database – even though blocking Google Book Search’s digitization wouldn’t bring any author any additional revenue.

“Google Book Search is a reference tool that helps people find books. It doesn’t take the place of sales,” said EFF Fellow Michael Barclay. “The fair use doctrine allows for services like Google Book Search – they cause no economic harm and serve the welfare of the public.”

The amicus brief filed today is part of EFF’s long involvement in Authors Guild v. Google. In 2009 EFF and a coalition of authors and publishers objected to a proposed broad settlement of the case that would have created a business for Google selling access to whole books, based on the failure of the settlement to protect the privacy of readers. A judge rejected that broad settlement last year. Now Google seeks approval of the more narrow search and snippet project, and EFF agrees that the fair use doctrine applies.

“Google Book Search is a digital update to the old card catalog that helps libraries, helps researchers, and ultimately helps authors reach their audiences,” said EFF Legal Director Cindy Cohn. “We hope the court protects Google Book Search—and the researchers and other readers who depend on it—from these meritless copyright claims.”

For the full amicus brief in Authors Guild v. Google:

<https://www.eff.org/document/amicus-brief-eff-and-library-associations>

Contact:

Cindy Cohn

Legal Director, Electronic Frontier Foundation  
cindy@eff.org

## Micro Center® In Store Clinics

by Neal Grotenstein

Vendor Liaison, Potomac Area Technology and Computer Society

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Micro Center stores host free events called “In Store Clinics.” The clinics cover a wide range of topics. All Micro Center store locations follow the same schedule of topics.

A link for store locations is at the top center of the home page, [www.microcenter.com](http://www.microcenter.com). For those in the Washington, D.C. area, the only store in Virginia is in the Pan Am Plaza at 3089 Nutley Street, Fairfax, VA 22031, phone (703) 204-8400, and the only store in Maryland is in the Federal Plaza at 1776 E. Jefferson #203, Rockville, MD 20852, phone (301) 692-2130.

Micro Center Clinics are held on most weekends, except during holidays. The same topic is usually presented on both Saturday and Sunday. Topics may change and clinics may be cancelled without notice. Please verify the schedule with the store before leaving and register online for e-mail updates ([http://www.microcenter.com/instore\\_clinic/sign\\_up.html](http://www.microcenter.com/instore_clinic/sign_up.html)).

Signing up in advance reserves a seat, recommended as space is limited. This can only be done at a store, either at the Tech Support or Customer Support area.

### August 2012 Schedule

Start Time is 2pm local unless otherwise stated.

Aug 11 & Aug 12: Microsoft Word Tips and Tricks

Aug 18 & Aug 19: Microsoft PowerPoint Tips and Tricks

Aug 25 & Aug 26: Windows Live Essentials

Sept 1 & Sept 2: NO CLINIC (Labor Day Weekend)

Notes from previous clinics are available online at

[http://www.microcenter.com/understand\\_tech/index.html](http://www.microcenter.com/understand_tech/index.html).

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# PATACS Meeting Information

Call (703) 370-7649 for meeting announcements or visit our web site at  
<http://www.patacs.org/>

**Free Admission — Bring a Friend!**

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## **Arlington Meetings**

(temporary location until January 2013)

Walter Reed Community Center  
2909 S. 16th Street, Arlington, VA 22203

<http://www.patacs.org/arlingtonmeetings.html>

### General Meeting

1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday (8/1, 9/5), 7 p.m. ET

### Internet Special Interest Group (SIG)

4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday (8/22, 9/26), 7 p.m. ET

### Board of Directors

3<sup>rd</sup> Monday (8/20, 9/17), 7 p.m. ET

## **Fairfax Meetings**

(with OLLI PC User Group)

Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI)  
4210 Roberts Road, Fairfax VA 22032

<http://www.patacs.org/fairfaxmeetings.html>

### General Meeting

3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday (8/18, 9/15), 12:30 p.m. ET

### **Online-Only Webinar using Skype™**

<http://www.patacs.org/webinarpat.html>

2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday (8/8, 9/12), 7-9 p.m. ET

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