

Nybbles & Bytes



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The Presidents Desk -

By Lee Gerber:



It's the end of July and I'm sitting in a cool breeze after a morning rain. No, I'm still in the Cleveland area waiting for global warming not in some remote area of the planet.

I hope everyone has taken advantage of Christmas in July. What a great deal! Now all you need to do is start working on that list of electronic gifts for Christmas in December.

Please remember to use our Forum for all your questions and computer related problems. What a great benefit for our members. Check out the NEOPC Web site regularly for updates and additions. Have you all checked the cool wood carvings in the presenting BBS PowerPoint show?

Hope to see you all on the 12th for our own Dennis Lewis' presentation on "Downloading and Recording Music".

Letter from the Editor -

David A. Vydra



You may have noticed that I made a few changes in the July Newsletter. Or, perhaps not! In any event, one of the changes was to use a two column format for all of the pages other than the first and last. Had there been some positive feed-back, this format would have been continued. However, as there was at least one negative response and no positive responses, we will return to the full page spread format.

The other change was to add a table for upcoming General Meeting presentations. I am sure that this will enable you to set your schedule for the "for sure" meetings you will not want to miss. The schedule only reflects presentations that are currently verified. However, be sure to check this list as circumstances may require cancellations or changes.

Oh! By the way, have you downloaded and installed the out-of-band patch that was issued on July 28th by Microsoft? If you have, great! If you have not, please do so. Some very large holes are fixed in a follow-up to the regular patch Tuesday earlier this month. Would you believe, that in large part, this is the result of someone either inadvertently adding an "&" or not removing it from the code for an application function.



Through the Gates:

Enter to the Trove of Bills Treasures and Travails

A monthly column dedicated to revealing some of the unknown or lesser known features or foibles of the Microsoft line of products.

By: David A. Vydra

Microsoft is readying its next major release of the Windows operating system. After months of demos, early testing, beta releases, and finally announced launch plans, here's what you can expect in an upgrade.

When is Windows 7 coming out?

Windows 7, the next major operating system (OS) release from Microsoft after Vista, will be officially available on October 22. The first beta of the OS was released in February and a Release Candidate (RC) followed in May. The beta version has expired, while the RC will remain a free download until August 15.

How many versions of Windows 7 will there be?

Six different editions of Windows 7 will be available: OEM, Home Basic, Home Premium, Professional, Enterprise and Ultimate. You won't however see in the shops all of the above editions. Marketing efforts will be concentrated only on the Home Premium and Professional editions.

Windows 7 does not include an e-mail program. Windows Live Mail is now the successor to Windows Mail and is available free.

What's in each edition of Windows 7?

Microsoft said that features of all edition of Windows 7 would be stored on machines, regardless of which edition the user has purchased. Using the Windows Anytime Upgrade tool, users can unlock more features within the OS.

Choose the Windows 7 edition that is best for you:

Most systems purchased at retail will have either Window 7 Home Basic or Windows 7 Home Premium. The options will primarily depend on usage and cost factors. We will only detail the differences between the three primary versions. The main difference between Windows 7 Professional and Ultimate is the ability to use BitLocker and AppLocker in cases where a TPM module is installed on the system board.



Windows 7 Home Premium



Windows 7 Professional



Windows 7 Ultimate

Features:

Make the things you do every day easier with improved desktop navigation.



Start programs faster and more easily, and quickly find the documents you use most often.



Make your web experience faster, easier and safer than ever with Internet Explorer 8.



Watch, pause, rewind, and record TV on your PC.



Easily create a home network and connect your PCs to a printer with HomeGroup.



Run many Windows XP productivity programs in Windows XP Mode.



Connect to company networks easily and more securely with Domain Join.



Recover your data easily with automatic backup to your home and business network.



Help protect data on your PC and portable storage devices against loss or theft with BitLocker.



Work in the language of your choice and switch between any of 35 languages.



How much will it cost me to upgrade to Windows 7?

Upgrades are available for Windows XP and Vista users. Windows XP users will have to do a clean install. Moving from a 32-bit version of Windows to a 64-bit one will require a clean install as well. A Home Premium Upgrade version will cost \$119.99 and a Professional Upgrade will be \$199.99. These are available today. The same pricing is expected after October 22 when Windows 7 will be available to everyone. Windows 7 Ultimate Upgrade will cost \$299.99.

Standalone versions of Windows 7 Home Premium will cost \$199.99, Professional Edition \$299.99 and Ultimate Edition \$319.99.

What are the minimum hardware requirements for Windows 7?

Microsoft says Windows 7 is designed to run well on PCs that meet the recommended system requirements for Windows Vista. *Before you upgrade to Windows 7, be sure to compare your PC's specifications with the Windows 7 system requirements as follows:*

- 1GHz or faster 32-bit (x86) or 64-bit (x64) processor
- 1GB RAM (32-bit) / 2GB RAM (64-bit)
- 16GB available disk space (32-bit) / 20GB (64-bit)
- DirectX 9 graphics processor with WDDM 1.0 or higher driver

What if I buy a computer with Vista between now and October 22?

Microsoft said that customers who will buy a new a new Windows Vista machine between now and October 22 would get free upgrades to their respective versions of Windows 7. The offer is available for Home Premium, Professional and Ultimate editions. *Computers shipped with Windows Vista Home Basic will not be eligible for an upgrade.* The offer runs until January 2010. After Windows 7 is launched on October 22, most new machines will be shipped with the new OS.

Portions of this column may have been garnered from several publicly available sources, verified and edited for content. Where an article is used in its entirety without editing, the author and source are acknowledged.

Members Podium -

All Members



A Tip of the cap!

Submitted by: David Vydra

Initially, I was not going to submit an article this month. However, as this column is supposedly for members to expound upon electronics that have been kind to them as well as those which have done them wrong, I thought that perhaps we should also include people in the mix. It would be best to restrict the person(s) to members and/or local area residents. Of course, no politics or rock bands!

So! A Tip of the Cap to James McIntyre! Many of you know Jim from the General Meetings where he and Carol Romano rule over the goodies at the refreshment table. What many do not know is; Jim does a lot for the membership and the club as a whole, albeit, in the background. Jim expends a great deal of effort to bring speakers and topics to the General Meeting. Last month, the current schedule of speakers was added to the newsletter. What you see there is a result of the work from the desk of James McIntyre. **A Tip of the cap!**

Another thing that Jim does is to scour the internet for items that may be of need or interest to our membership. Jim will then email it to me for posting either in the Newsletter or on the NEOPC web site. I review and research all of them. Some, we have already covered in the past. Some are already in current production or being prepared for use. Recently, Jim sent me two emails which, after I had researched them, I fluffed aside as unimportant. Yet, as I thought about the messages in depth, the realization evolved that there was something we could learn from them. *The principle lesson is constant vigilance.*

The first was a message Jim received from a friend that had discovered the email was a phishing message. The person involved caught on to what was received because the message contained an error. Many of the phishing emails have errors. But, as time passes, they get better and better at construction. This person was fortunate to have realized exactly what had been received. We can no longer rely on errors in construction or spelling to clue us. We have to rely on common sense and links. Common sense tells us that if we don't have an account with that institution it is unlikely they would be sending us an email. If we do have an account, it is a good idea to register with them online. If a message is important, it will be either posted to your account online or mailed and never emailed except to alert you to a specific message. Which, you would then look at by going to your account through normal login procedures and not, I repeat, not through a link in the email.

It is very important to learn how to spot potential problems with "links". In an email, hover on the link and read what the tip says. If there is no tip, delete, delete, delete. Let's say that the link is for Old Crow Bank and it says "My Account" or "Read this Message". By you Hovering on the link you see; <http://www.oldcrowbank.com/index.asp>. This is likely good but, still not a good idea to use it. Perhaps it should read *htm* and not *asp*. On the other hand, you hover on the link and it says; (Read carefully) <http://www.oldcrowbank.gotcha.com/myspiderwebrocks.htm>. Well, click on it and guess where you are going! On web pages the link scenario is slightly different. While hovering on a link a tip may pop-up, which, in the case of well written pages, may clue you with additional information. Seldom will they include an entire web link. These you will see at the bottom of the browser window. Look before you leap! Same rules as explained in the email links apply. By now you should all be very aware of the pitfalls and we should not need to revisit this topic. I hope.

Then, Jim received an email from a friend telling him about this great method used to prevent the hijacking of their address book by worms or Trojans. The explanation goes on to state the simplicity and method. It is something like this: Open your address book and insert a new address. The name should be AAAAAAAAA with the email address being; aaaaaaaa@aaa.aaa. The premise is; when the worm tries to send out its message, this address will fail. Whereupon, the worm gives up. A similar method was to place a null address at the top of the address book list by just creating a name using 00000! Again, when the worm attempted to propagate it found the first address as unusable and would once more fail and give up. Both of these methods may have worked in 1995 when worms or Trojans were in their infancy. However, I highly doubt it. Even the earliest versions were adept at culling address books and batch blasting their message. They could send messages using your email address or selecting one from your book as the "fall guy". Heck, they never knew or cared if even one or more address failed. The "Mail Daemon" message would be sent to you or the said fall guy. As an example: You have a friend named Aaron Able. His email is aaable@compuserve.com. Compuserve has ceased operations (which it recently did). Over the years, Compuserve was absorbed by Netcom which was in turn absorbed by someone else which was eventually absorbed by Mindspring. So, Aaron was forced to change his email address to using Mindspring. You add this new address to your address book. However, you neglect to remove the Compuserve address listing. With Aaron at the top of your list with two entries the worm will use both. If the scenario of using AAAAAAAAA were viable, the first (Compuserve) address would fail and the worm would quit. It does not happen this way as was explained previously. Thus, both the 00000! and the AAAAAAAAA scenarios are continuing "Hoaxes". They have been around for many years. They will likely be with us for many more years. Using either would entail a false sense of security which will certainly encourage laxness and provide an easy means of propagation. The lesson here is to not take quick and easy solutions at face value.

Trojans and worms evolve with increasing capability every day. Today, the best of them do not start with your address book. They may not even use it. What they are capable of can be mind numbing. Many current Trojans/worms will send out a spider to cull your files for email addresses. They gather any they can find in your documents and send them to their host. They no longer propagate themselves by using your computer. The host will do this, as well as offer the lists they accumulate for sale to spammers and phishers. Always maintain your anti-malware application in their most up to date condition.

A Tip of the cap!



Coming Events

August 2009

Event_Date	Event
08/11	NORTHEAST OHIO PC CLUB ***MORNING FUNDAMENTALS SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP*** (SIG). FAIRVIEW PARK SENIOR CENTER 9:30 - 11:30AM. FUNDAMENTALS OF COMPUTER USE - OPEN FORUM - ANY AND ALL TOPICS DISCUSSED - BRING A QUESTION, BRING A TOPIC - GUESTS ALWAYS WELCOME - ALWAYS COFFEE. ALWAYS FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC. SECOND TUESDAY OF THE MONTH.
08/12	NORTHEAST OHIO PC CLUB (NEOPC)-GENERAL MEETING, PORTER PUBLIC LIBRARY, 27333 CENTER RIDGE ROAD, WESTLAKE, OH. 6:30PM-SOCIAL (PASTRIES AND BEVERAGES); 7:00PM-CLUB ANNOUNCEMENTS; 7:15PM-MAIN PROGRAM "DOWNLOADING AND RECORDING MUSIC" BY DENNIS LEWIS. DENNIS'S TALK INCLUDES IPOD'S, MP3'S AND AUDIOSYSTEMS.
08/25	NORTHEAST OHIO PC CLUB ***EVENING FUNDAMENTALS SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP*** (SIG). FAIRVIEW PARK LIBRARY (LOWER LEVEL) 7:00 - 8:30PM. FUNDAMENTALS OF COMPUTER USE - OPEN FORUM - ANY AND ALL TOPICS DISCUSSED - BRING A QUESTION, BRING A TOPIC - GUESTS ALWAYS WELCOME - FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC. FOURTH TUESDAY OF THE MONTH.
08/25	▶▶ FINAL DAY TO SUBMIT YOUR ARTICLE FOR INCLUSION IN THE NEXT "MEMBERS PODIUM" COLUMN FOR THE AUGUST, 2009 ISSUE OF NYBBLES & BYTES. BE SURE TO SEND YOUR ARTICLE TO INFO@NEOPC.NET AND INCLUDE THE PHRASE "MEMBERS PODIUM" IN THE SUBJECT LINE.

NEOPC- General Meeting - Scheduled Presentations :

<u>Date</u>	<u>Programs</u>
August 12	"Downloading and Recording Music" By Dennis Lewis. Dennis's talk includes discussion on Ipod, MP3, and audio systems.
September 9	"Digital Photography" by Todd Johnson. Todd's talk includes current software for Windows XP and Vista Operating Systems.
October 14	"Kindle and Ebook" By Shawn Walsh. Shawn's talk on the use of Kindle e-reader for ebooks.
November 11	"Genealogy" by John Dailey. John's talk includes a discussion of CAGG and GCGS Groups.
December 9	"How to Buy a Computer" by Tony Kurkov. Tony's talk is timely right before Christmas 2009.
<u>Proposed Programs:</u>	
January 2010	"2009 Income Tax Updates" by Ian Abbott. Ian's talk will help with Income tax preparation.
February 2010	"Skype" by Bruce Brockman/ YANTOTC. Bruce's talk includes the use of computers for communications for local and long distance phone calls.