



**INSIDE THIS ISSUE:**

<i>Committee Information</i>	Page 2
<i>Ron's Ramblings</i>	
<i>OPEN News</i>	Pages 3-4
<i>Carbon Copies –Email Essentials</i>	Pages 5-6
<i>Newbie Club Tutorial—Two Nutmegs</i>	Page 6
<i>Newbie Club Tutorials, Kwik Tips &amp; Geek Speak</i>	Pages 7-9
<i>More Email Essentials</i>	Page 10
<i>A Slew of Apple Software Updates</i>	Page 11
<i>AppleWorks Updates span Platforms</i>	
<i>Spammers get Smarter</i>	Page 12
<i>Test issues</i>	Page 13
<i>World's Easiest Quiz</i>	
<i>Email Saver XE</i>	
<i>Quiz Answers</i>	Page 14
<i>Fish Tales</i>	
<i>New Worm drawing Sobig Comparisons</i>	Page 15
<i>Cowboy Boots</i>	
<i>The Perfect Scan</i>	Pages 16-18
<i>Better Scanning</i>	Pages 18-19
<i>Gator Information Centre</i>	Page 20

**NEXT MEETING**

WEDNESDAY

4<sup>th</sup> February 2004

**Committee 6PM  
Beginners 7PM  
Tutorials 8PM**

**Working with  
Photo's and  
using Paint Shop  
Pro 7**



Newstream Articles

Deadline : 10 Days before Meeting

Editors Contacts:

Address: 8 Cadorna Street Mowbray Heights 7248

Phone 6326 5824

email address [editor@lcg.org.au](mailto:editor@lcg.org.au)

Correspondence

Address all Correspondence to:

Launceston Computer Group Inc

PO Box 548

Launceston 7250

Membership

**Single \$10, Family \$15 (Includes Email edition Newstream)**

**Printed & Posted Newsletter \$20 extra**

**Disclaimer:** *The articles in this newsletter may be reprinted as long as credit is given to the original author. Opinions expressed are those of the author & not necessarily the views of the Editor or the Group. Unless otherwise noted material is copyright 2004 for the Launceston Computer Group Inc.*

# General Information

Position	Name	After Hours / Business	Email
President	Glenn Gilpin	6330 1129	president@lcg.org.au
Vice President	Ivan Turmine	6327 1825	vicepresident@lcg.org.au
Treasurer	David Gray	6343 2514	treasurer@lcg.org.au
Secretary	John Frearson	6335 4802	secretary@lcg.org.au
<b><u>General Committee</u></b>			
Library MAC	Ivan Turmine	6327 1825	maclibrary@lcg.org.au
Newstream Editor	Ron Baker	6326 5824	editor@lcg.org.au
Publicity & Promotion	Judy Hall	6394 7358	publicity@lcg.org.au
Assistant Treasurer	Iris Meek	6327 3162	Assistanttreasurer@lcg.org.au
PC Library	Judy Hall Julie Hjort	6394 7358 6344 5686	pclibrary@lcg.org.au
Public Officer	Judy Hall	6394 7358	publicofficer@lcg.org.au
Meetings Chair	Ron Baker	6326 5824	committee@lcg.org.au
OPEN Chair	June Hazzlewood	6327 2562 0414 770 864	open@lcg.org.au
Linux Chair	David Gray	6343 2514	linux@lcg.org.au
WebMaster	Chris Ralph		webmaster@lcg.org.au
Web Editor	Reinhardt Von Samorzewski	6327 1552	web@lcg.org.au

## Ron's Ramblings.

Hi I hope everyone had a good Christmas & New year and is looking to the future.

I have arranged to get a registered version of Calendarscope 2.0 for review. If any one would like to try out this Calendar cum Personal Organiser see me at the Meeting or email me at editor@lcg.org.au and I will give you the downloaded programme and the Registration Key (Which is the longest Registration Key I have ever seen). Another program we have been asked to review is Articons 4.0 an icon production & management tool. I personally am not into that type of programme but I will arrange for a copy if anyone is interested Smart Whois 4.0 is another release for which a review has been requested. This is a method of obtaining information about an IP address, host name or domain. Any takers?

In this issue I have included two tutorials on Scanners & Scanning. The tutorial at our meeting on Photoshop will tie in nicely with these tutorials which also mention the Photoshop Programme. Because the Newstream has grown to 20 pages it has caused some members problems trying to read it on screen and to print out preferred topics.

It may be opportune at this time to point out that the print programmes of most printers/OS allow users to select either "all pages", "Current Page" or "page Numbered To ". This may solve the problem especially if the contents column on page 1 is used to select the required pages where the article is printed. There is no Profile in the Open part of the Newsletter so here is a special profile

**Profile:** No one New is standing for office in the Committee, is offering to write articles for the Newsletter and

## Launceston Computer Group SOFTWARE LIBRARY

Dated 1<sup>st</sup> February 2004

These small programs are some of the best programs currently in the shareware library.

### **DISK 1000 - Your Library on Disk**

Have you received your copy of Disk 1000? The disk holds a complete listing of programs available in our PC shareware library. This disk is free of charge to all new members.

**DISK COPY PRICES for CLUB MEMBERS ONLY \$1.00 per disk**

Disk Prices - Box of 25 = \$12.00 Members Only  
CD Prices - Box of 10 = \$10.00 Members Only  
Judy Hall, Shareware Librarian

### AVAILABILITY OF LIBRARY

The Shareware Library is available in-between meetings from the following people. Please telephone first to arrange a suitable time.

The library is also available at the venue - Studioworks most Wednesdays 9am to 3pm. Email: opencomputingtas@hotmail.com

#### LAUNCESTON

Julie Hjort  
Flat 2, 115 Penquite Road, Newstead Phone 6344

5686

Email: [jhjort@intas.net.au](mailto:jhjort@intas.net.au)

### Monthly Workshops **Graphics - 18 February** PSP7 and Scanning

Studioworks

**Wednesday 18 February 2004**  
**1pm - 3.30pm**

\$4.00 fee - Numbers limited to 8 please sign poster to register or call Judy 63947358 or 0428 947358.

### Family History Online

Studioworks

Next Classes

**Wednesday 11 February 2004**  
**1pm-3.30pm**

**AND**

**Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> February 2004**  
**9pm - 12pm**

\$4.00 fee Numbers limited to 7 people

### NOTE

**Session Price Increase:**  
**now \$4.00 per standard session**

## OPEN Computing - Session Times

All sessions are held at the venue at  
Studioworks, 1 Pipeworks Rd, L'ton

Monday	1pm - 3pm	Basic Word
Tuesday	9am - 12	PC & Mac
Tuesday	1pm - 3pm	Beginners
Wednesday	9am - 12	Beginners
Wednesday	2pm - 4pm	Second Step
Thursday	1pm - 3pm	PC & MAC
Thursday	1pm - 3pm	Second Step

**Standard Sessions** (All sessions \$4.00)

**TAFE eLearn Sessions** (All sessions \$4.00)

New Classes start March 2004 - Register Now

### Special February Classes

Wednesday 4 <sup>th</sup> February	From 1pm	OPEN Computer Club Meeting & Tutorial
Wednesday 4 <sup>th</sup> February	From 7pm	LCG Monthly Meeting
Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup> February	1 - 3.30	Family History Online
Thursday 12 <sup>th</sup> February	1 - 3.00	MS Publisher
Wednesday 18 <sup>th</sup> February	1 - 3.30	Graphics
Tuesday 24 <sup>th</sup> February	9am - 12	Family History
Wednesday 25 <sup>th</sup> February	1 - 3.30	Using WinZip

## What's Happening at OPEN

### OPEN Monthly Meetings

Next Meeting 4<sup>th</sup> February 2004 at 1pm

The monthly OPEN meeting will now be held on the first Wednesday of the month at the venue starting at 1pm.

### News for Tutors and Helpers

Those who attend the Open Monthly Meeting are in for a bonus. From February there will be an advanced workshop held after the meeting especially for the Tutor's and Helpers. Subjects by request.

(Continued on page 4)

*(Continued from page 3)***ELEARN STUDENTS**

The next eLearn class will start in March,

**REGISTER NOW.**

These classes will not go ahead if we do not get enough registrations. Before you can participate in the next Tafe eLearn class you will be required to complete a short course to determine your current skills.

**SECOND STEP CLASSES**

These classes are aimed at those people who have completed the beginner's courses and would like to learn more. They will take the form of individual subject classes and will change monthly so please check the notice boards for session times for these special classes.

These classes will also incorporate the monthly meeting, the graphics class and afternoon family history class.

**FAMILY HISTORY ONLINE**

New classes for family history are now available on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday afternoon and the fourth Tuesday morning of the month and will be up to three hours duration.

Rose Hodgeman has agreed to help with the Wednesday afternoon classes. Rose has a wealth of knowledge in family history and can help you draft your initial pedigree charts and information. She is also very familiar with Brother Keeper software.

**MS PUBLISHER CLASSES**

Ron Baker, editor of the LCG newsletter you are now reading has agreed to hold a class once a month for those people who wish to delve deeper into MS Publisher. These classes will be held on the second Thursday of each month from 1pm and will only continue if there is enough patronage.

**VENUE TELEPHONE NUMBER**

A Mobile Phone Number is now available to all those wishing to contact OPEN during working hours. The number is

**0413 698 610****Special Monthly Meetings****Launceston Computer Group Inc.**

1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of the month

**Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> February 2004**

Evening 7pm – 10pm

Featuring

**Working with Photo's and  
using Paint Shop Pro 7****Open Computer Club**

1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of the month

**Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> February 2004**

Afternoon from 1pm

Tutorial immediately after.

**Shareware in Library  
Revisited****Above & Beyond v3.97**

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS win 3.1

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Above & Beyond 3.97 - Excellent Windows PIM. You'll get more done and reach your goals sooner with Above & Beyond. This is the award winning program that harnesses the power of your PC to create dynamic schedules, a break- in time management. Includes pop-up alarms, address/phone book, speed-dialing, timers, workload balancing and mobile computing. Complete on-line user's guide. Built-in LAN support for shared and group scheduling.<ASP>

Last Updated >> 14/11/97 <<

**-Disk# >>> 3571 <<< Category >>> UT for W95 <<<**

**Reminders**

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS win95

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Reminders for Windows 95/NT is a small freeware program that provides a simple means of creating on-screen reminders for important events. Event reminders are triggered when the specified time and date occurs. Reminders can be created to trigger messages on a daily, weekly, monthly or annual basis. Reminders can also be used to run programs as scheduled events. Sound (WAV) files can be assigned to reminder messages as well. The sound file you select will be played when the specified vent is triggered.

Last Updated >> 14/11/97 <<

**Disk# >>> 3270 <<< Category >>> UT for W95 <<<**

**Weights & Measures**

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS win95

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

"Weights & Measures" allows you to convert values in the following six

categories: Weights, Linear Measure, Liquid Volume, Area Measure, Dry Volume, and Cubic Measure. There is also a "bonus" temperature converter at the lower left corner of the form. Select the radio button converting in the desired direction, enter a value in the edit box to the right, and then select the "Convert Temp" button.

Last Updated >> 14/11/97 <<

## Carbon copies

BCC. Blind carbon copy. It's a lovely throwback term in these days when typewriters have all but disappeared from offices. And it's a lovely little feature, all too often underused.

For those of you not of the typewriter generation, here's some background:

In olden days when people used typewriters instead of computers and keyboards, in order to create a copy of a missive they'd slide a sheet of carbon paper - inked on the back side - between two plain sheets of paper, stick all three in the typewriter, and hit the keys. Presto! An original and a *carbon copy* of that original would result.

By interleaving additional sheets of carbon paper and normal paper (and pressing harder on those old mechanical keys), you could create multiple carbon copies.

It was common practice to include not only the name of the addressee (who would receive the original copy) on the document, but also a CC list, indicating those who had received a carbon copy. The carbon copy was also known as a *courtesy copy*, as it was intended as a 'for your information only' courtesy to the recipients.

A blind carbon copy was simply a copy whose recipient was not noted in the CC list. Thus the BCC recipient would know the contents of the message and the list of people who had received it, but no-one else would know the BCCer was in the know, so to speak.

## Addressing email

The CC field in your email program is meant to be used in the same way as the old CC list. For regular email you send to a handful of others, this is the accepted way of using the address fields:

- Anyone to whom the email is directly addressed should be placed in the TO field.
- Anyone who is receiving the email for informational purposes should go in the CC field.
- In the BCC field stick anyone who needs to know the email has been sent but who doesn't need to be involved in any ongoing correspondence and whose knowledge of the email is a private or internal matter.

All recipients will be able to see the names included in the TO and CC fields, but names in the

BCC field will not appear in the email. If you respond using Reply To, your reply will go only to the original sender of the message. If you respond using Reply To All, your reply will go to everyone *except* those in the BCC list: The original sender, everyone in the TO list and everyone in the CC list.

## Responding to a CCed message

When you receive a message, you should always note how the original was addressed before responding:

- If you were blind CCed (you'll know either because the message header indicates this or it will show you are not included in the TO or CC list), *do not use se* Reply To All unless you want to 'blow your cover'. Use Reply to limit your response to the sender.
- If you were included in the TO or CC list and you want to respond to the sender only, use Reply.
- If you were included in the TO or CC list and you want to respond and keep all those CCed involved, use Reply To All.

## Undisclosed Recipients

There's another way to use BCC which not only preserves the privacy of your recipients, it also makes your emails more readable and professional. That is to use BCC whenever you send email to a large group of recipients or a small group who do not know one another.

For example, you can use BCC when sending out the identical email to a number of customers, or when forwarding one of those Internet jokes (if you *really* must) to every second person in your address book.

If you include all those recipients in the TO or CC fields, their names and addresses will be plastered at the top of the email for all to see. And when anyone replies to the message, that full list of recipients gets placed within the message. It's a little like blabbing about who was at last night's AA meeting: You just don't do it! As you never know quite where a message broadcast to dozens of people will end up, you could well be supplying people's email addresses to spam-

(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5)

mers or simply disclosing the address of someone who normally keeps the information private. So stick everyone in the BCC field and address the message to yourself. If you want, you can add a new entry to your address book called Undisclosed Recipients which uses your email address. Then, when you send an email, type 'Undisclosed Recipients' in the TO field while putting all other addresses in the BCC field. Using the BCC field with multiple recipients has the added advantage of minimising the workload on your email client: Instead of sending, say, 100 separate emails, you send a single email, a copy of which then goes to each of the 100 addressees. The one pitfall to watch for when using BCC is that some anti-spam filters look for multiple addressees in the BCC field as an indicator of spam. While you may be able to adjust your own spam filter to ensure BCCed email gets through to you, you have no way of knowing what's happening at the recipient's end. It's one of those things which drives me bats about spam and spam filters: Spam kneecaps many useful features, while all too many spam filters make assumptions which should be left up to the individual.

## @ Displaying the BCC field

In some email programs, including Outlook Express, the BCC field is not displayed by default. It's a simple matter to switch it on.

[Outlook Express]

Open a new message and select All Headers from the View Menu.

[Outlook]

Open a new message and from the View Menu select BCC field.

[Mozilla/Netscape]

Open a new message and in the address box click the down arrow symbol at the left to see a drop-down list which includes TO:, CC:, BCC: and several other options.

[Pegasus]

Open a new message and click the Special tab (or press F9), where you'll find a BCC box.

## @ Is the BCC list safe?

How safe is that BCC list from prying eyes? Could someone with a hex editor, for example, try to dig inside a received message and uncover

who was in the BCC list?

Fortunately, the answer is no. In fact, no mail server ever sees the BCC header. It is stripped out of the email before the message is sent, although there is one exception: If you fail to include anyone in the TO or CC fields and include only BCC recipients, some mail server programs will insert the BCC addresses into an 'Apparently-To' field in the header.

*From Woody's Email Essentials 1.11*

## Tutorial ... "Two Nutmegs"

Two problems commonly asked of us were answered in this newsletter last year.

Here they are again ...

Q: When I use 'Remove Programs' in 'My Computer', should I answer "Yes" or "No" to the question, "Do you want to remove a shared file?"

A: Shared files have the file extension ".DLL" on them. That means they're a Dynamic Linked Library file. All this means is the file in question can be used by different programs. A word processor and another program may share a DLL file. So removing that file may cause another program to malfunction.

You may have seen a message stating that a certain file cannot be found. That file is needed in order to open the program you're trying to use. Why is it missing? Could be that you removed it when you uninstalled another program.

The bottom line: If you aren't familiar with a filename, and you're asked if you want to delete it - DON'T. Just answer "No" to the question. The genie inside your PC will leave the file alone.

Q: Is it true that a lot of files in my Temp directory can slow down the startup process of Windows? And why are there files in that directory, anyway?

A: Yes, it's true. But there would have to be a lot of stuff there that was never deleted. Normally, programs use the Temp directory to store bits and pieces of themselves while work is going on. When you close the program, or an install of new software is complete, files that were stored in the Temp directory should be deleted automatically.

But this doesn't always happen.

Using Windows Explorer, open the Temp folder in the C:\Windows folder. Look at the dates on any files in that folder. If the dates are older than the last time you started your computer, you can safely delete them. Don't delete any file in the Temp folder that has today's date on it, unless you recognize the file.

*From Newbieclub Newsletter 12/12/2003*

## NEWBIECLUB TUTORIALS

### Tutorial ... "Memory Part 1"

Everything your PC does requires memory. This you may already know. And with increases in memory, a certain increase in speed follows. Why else would those advertisements trumpet the virtues of adding more Random Access Memory (RAM) to your computer? "Make it faster. Make it less prone to crashing. Proudly tell your friends you've got massive amounts of memory."

However, speed increases only to a point, which is right at about 32 megabytes. There's always something to get excited about if you keep one eye on the marketers.

RAM is called that because it can be randomly accessed. Brilliant, eh? Well, books have been written about the relationship between Windows and memory, so let's just say the more memory you have, the happier your computer will be. It's kind of true in life, too. If you had more memory, wouldn't you be happier?

RAM lives in a chip, but you can't eat it.

Actually, RAM chips are made of silicon, metal and plastic. Cute little gizmos they are, and they reside on your main board (or motherboard as it's commonly referred to).

### Tutorial ... "Memory Part 2"

RAM chips are lightning fast. As an analogy, your hard drive is the tortoise and RAM is the hare. However, unlike the story, your hard drive will never win the memory access speed race. Normally, programs just sit on your hard drive. When you click your favorite word processing icon, data has to dash off to the confines of memory lane, where it fills little registers (think of pigeonhole-like locations) in memory. It's all more complex than this, but we're not studying for a computer science class, are we?

Windows 98/95 both work so much better with at least 64 megabytes of RAM installed. XP works best with at least 256 - 512 is better. Give yourself room to roam with a memory upgrade. More memory, more room to rumble. But not necessarily any increase in the speed you see things appear on the screen.

Speaking of upgrades, you'll need to find out what kind of memory your computer uses. Check your computer manual. Look in Yellow Pages. No luck? Call your computer maker, or check your computer manuals. Still no luck? Call any

RAM manufacturer's toll free order number, and tell the sales rep your make and model. He'll consult his own resources, and be able to steer you in the right direction.

Here's an overview list of memory types for your edification:

**DRAM Dynamic RAM.** Found in older systems and usually require adding two chips at a time. Comes in 30 pin modules.

**EDORAM Extended Data Output RAM.** Used by earlier Pentium computers. Usually requires adding memory chips in pairs. Comes in 72 pin modules.

**SDRAM Synchronous Dynamic RAM.** Pentium II or faster computers need this. Add one chip at a time if you want. Comes in 168 pin modules. Speed is measured in Megahertz instead of nanoseconds.

### Tutorial ... "Memory Part 3"

How old is an "older system" anyway?

By computing terms, it could be as ancient as three years old. This stuff changes rapidly, but that doesn't mean you have to stay on the cutting edge. All you need to do is grab a nerdish type and ask questions. Or any computer sales person will do.

It's best to keep the same memory speeds together. Which brings up the concept of RAM speed. RAM is measured in nanoseconds. The measurement is actually the speed with which RAM can store and 'unstore' data.

The easiest way to deal with a RAM upgrade is locate a memory dealer, call them up and give your computer model to them. They'll take it from there. It couldn't be easier.

If you don't know what kind of computer you have (special built, gift, no-name on the box, whatever) then you may have to have someone actually look inside. Any shop that's going to sell you RAM will tell you what kind it takes.

You can put faster rated RAM in a slower computer and it won't speed it up. But you can't put slower rated RAM in a faster computer, because it won't work. The memory can't keep up with processing demands, so only buy RAM rated at the speed suggested by the manufacturer. Speed is measured in nanoseconds. That's one-billionth of a second. Fast RAM runs at 60 nanoseconds. Slow RAM runs at 100 nanoseconds. In the computer world, a difference

*(Continued on page 8)*

*(Continued from page 7)*

of 40 nanoseconds is pretty significant. SDRAM breaks the measurement rules, since it's rated in Megahertz (MHz). It has to match the speed of the motherboard's bus. Your computer dealer or salesperson can track this info for you. Think of the bus as a central path through your computer.

Everything in your computer communicates via this central pathway (bus), and at a set speed. Even though your processor may run at a particular speed, your system may only run at less than that. Data is crunched quickly, then is passed to your video card, modem, or hard drive at the speed of the bus.

All this talk of memory and chips and such has made me hungry. I think I'll take a break.

#### **KWIK Tip ... Adjusting Screen Font Size**

Ever visited a Website where the font is too small for comfort?

Is your eyesight not as good as it used to be? If you have a wheel mouse, and use Internet Explorer browser, you can adjust the size of the font in a flash.

Just hold down the Ctrl key and use your scroll wheel to adjust the font size up or down.

Easy peasy!

Alternatively spend some money on some new spectacles:-) .

#### **Kwik Tip .... "Listen to this Newsletter!"**

Technology is getting so advanced these days it's difficult to believe the changes that are taking place.

Text to Speech software is something I looked at a couple of years ago. Most of it was poor, and the good stuff was very expensive.

So I was a bit cynical when I tried out a trial download of the Text Aloud software.

Quite frankly I was amazed at how easily and clearly it read out newsletters, articles and web pages to me.

OK, it unfortunately also reads out the == characters used as dividers and stuff like that, but once you get used to how to use it properly - just a few minutes - it's amazing.

I used it to read out an ebook I had downloaded while I got on with some other work, and even though I have no problems with my eyesight, I'll be using it a LOT from now on.

You can download a trial at this URL ... [http://tncinfo.com/text\\_aloud.htm](http://tncinfo.com/text_aloud.htm)

Once you install it, open the help file and take it from there.

Isn't technology just wunnerful? ...

Sometimes:-)

#### **Tutorial; ----- "Computer Freezing?"**

Using standby mode, is supposed to save energy when your PC is unattended, and help your Monitor last longer.

How valuable this function is, I don't know.

However, this facility can cause problems, because sometimes when you try to bring back your 'normal' screen you find your PC is frozen. No mouse, no alt/ctrl/delete function ...

Zilch!

Then you have to switch off your computer (even that doesn't work sometimes), reboot and run scan disk, just to get back to where you were before you took time off for that cup of coffee.

If this has happened to you, the answer is to disable the standby mode. Here's how ...

RIGHT Click on a blank area of your desktop.

LEFT Click on Properties

Screen saver

Settings (or Power)

Check everything in there to 'Never'.

Click OK and OK again.

Job done.

Now you can have a cup of coffee with peace of mind:-)

#### **Geek - Speak Buster ... "Worms - Ughh!"**

Not the normal garden variety, or those little horrors that make your dog go scooting around the kitchen on his backside. These are Internet Worms. And far more dangerous than those slimy things that crawl around the flowers.

A worm is a self-replicating virus that does not alter files. Instead, it sets up its tent in your memory, and begins to duplicate itself.

Worms use parts of an operating system that are automatic and usually invisible to the user. It is common for worms to be noticed only when their uncontrolled replication consumes system resources, slowing or halting other tasks.

If your system is running slower and slower, maybe you have a worm. How would you find out? Run a virus scan. A great no-cost system I use is AVG anti-virus system. Get yours at <http://www.grisoft.com>

#### **Tutorial ... "Internet Jargon Translated"**

Learning something of the language you're

*(Continued on page 9)*

*(Continued from page 8)*

dealing with on the Net is a good thing. It's also the intelligent thing to do. Just as you'd learn a little of the language of a foreign country before visiting, picking up a bit of the lingo on the Net will serve you well. Here's a guide you can follow.

**Attachment** A file hooked to an e-mail message that gets sent to a recipient.

**Bandwidth** A measure of the amount of stuff that can get shoved through a limited transmission medium such as a cable or a phone line.

**Blind Courtesy (or carbon) Copy (bcc)** A copy of e-mail that gets sent to a recipient without the primary recipient's knowledge.

**Bounce** The error message you read when your mail gets returned as undeliverable. Also, what happens to email that can't be delivered, causing the "undeliverable" message that's sent to you by the postmaster.

**Filter** A part of your e-mail program that scans incoming messages for predefined character strings (also known as words or sentences). You can set up a filter to automatically delete e-mail from a particular address.

**Flame** An insulting, caustic, or otherwise unpleasant response. **Forward** To pass along a message to another e-mail address. Just don't forward already forwarded messages. They're no fun to receive or read.

**Mail Bomb** To send a huge message or groups of messages to an e-mail address, causing an explosive reaction from the recipient.

**Mailbox** The place on a mail serving computer where your e-mail is stored. You may create individual mailboxes in your email client to distribute your mail to as well.

**Postmaster** The person who gets to troubleshoot the mail server, and make sure everything is running smoothly.

**Sig Quote or Sig File** A quotation or closer message added to an e-mail message. Often used to promote a cause or business. Short for signature quote or signature file.

**Spam** Junk email. Unsolicited Commercial Email, or UCE. It's not wanted. It's not needed. And it's generally despised, unless sandwiched between 2 slices of bread!

### **Tutorial ... "Flame Related Jargon"**

**Flame Defined:** "To send an offensive email message or newsgroup posting, especially one

containing strong language and personal insults." **Asbestos Long Johns** What e-mailers put on before sending a message that they expect will get flamed. It's a psychological fact that e-mail has an effect on you.

**Burbler** Similar to a flame, except the burbler is considered to be an idiot. Or at least dumb, incompetent, or just ignorant.

**Dictionary flame** Criticizes someone for a misspelling or grammatical gaffe.

**Flame Bait** Usually extraordinarily provocative material designed to elicit a flaming response.

**Flamer** Generally, someone who flames frequently.

**Rave** An irritating flame in which the writer rambles on after the flame war has ended.

**Time For A Laff** An elderly gentleman was driving down the Freeway when his car phone rang.

It was his daughter who urgently warned him ... "Dad, Dad, I've just heard on the radio that a car is driving the wrong way along the Freeway. Please be careful."

"Why can't those reporters get their facts right?" he snapped back. "There's not just one - there's hundreds of them!"

### **Time For A Laff**

A man was mowing the grass in his front yard when his female neighbour came out of her house and went straight to her mailbox.

She opened it, slammed it shut and stormed back to her house.

5 minutes later she rushed to her mailbox, peered inside, screamed angrily and slammed it shut once more.

As she marched angrily back to her house the guy asked if there was something wrong.

"I'll say there is" she snapped back. My stupid computer keeps telling me ...

"You've got mail"

*From NewbieClub Newsletters*



## Leave the addressing till last

WEeEr S.H. sent in this useful tip:

*If I am writing a sensitive message that I'm taking time to get just right, I will purposely NOT fill in the To: address until it is really ready to send. It's way too easy to hit that Send button by mistake and once it goes... For things like employment offers or anything where a slip can have big repercussions, fill in the recipient at the end. The same goes for replies, too. I'll take out the recipient on replies that need thought.*

Maybe it's just my middle age sieve-brain syndrome, but I find this sort of technique very useful. Not only is it a good way to ensure the content of the email is just right before sending, but it also gives me a chance to catch other empty fields, such as a missing Subject line or a missing attachment.

In fact, forgetting to include a promised attachment is one of those email *faux pas* that can lead to a permanent dent in your reputation. Consider, for instance, the embarrassment of claiming "Here is my resume" or "Our final report is enclosed" and sending an attachment-less email. It's a remarkably easy thing to do, especially for high-volume emailers.

Apart from taking S.H.'s advice, you might want to check out Attach! from KMGI. This is an add-in for Microsoft Outlook 2000, 2002 and 2003. It scans each outgoing email for "trigger" words you define yourself and, if it finds one of those triggers but your email lacks an attachment, it pops up a warning.

So, for example, you might define the following triggers: attach, attached, enclose, enclosed, promised file, included, accompanying (and so on). Attach! will scan your outgoing email for any of those words or phrases. If it finds one on an email with no attachment, it will let you know. You can then choose to send the email without an attachment or add one or more files to the email before it is sent on its way.

For those of you who remember, this is a streamlined and vastly improved version of the first Outlook VBA program that Microsoft demonstrated when they finally included Visual Basic for Applications into Outlook.

There's a freeware version of Attach! which includes advertising, but if you're working to keep your professional reputation untarnished, you'll probably want to spend \$US9.95 on the ad-free version.

## Folders by keyboard

[Outlook Express/Outlook]

The folder list (known as the Navigation Pane in Outlook 2003) makes it easy to move around between mail folders and to drag and drop messages from one folder to another. But if you have a lot of folders, particularly a lot of nested folders, it's usually impossible to view all your folders at once in the list. That's especially the case if you have a small screen or low screen resolution. Instead of clicking your way down through the folder tree until you uncover your Personal \Travel\Europe\Greece 2004\Confirmations folder -- or whatever folder you have buried deep in your folder tree -- use the keyboard for quick access:

- Press Ctrl+Y to open the Go To Folder dialog.
- Navigate quickly by pressing the first character of a folder's name; press the same character repeatedly to cycle through folders which begin with the same letter.
- Use the right-arrow key or + key on the numeric keypad to expand collapsed parts of the folder tree (those preceded by a + sign); use the left-arrow key or - key on the numeric keypad to collapse expanded branches; use the up and down arrow keys to move up and down, the Home key to move to the top of the list, the End key to move to the bottom, and the PgUp and PgDn keys to move by intermediate jumps.
- Hit enter to open the highlighted folder.
- In Outlook 2003 you can quickly close or display the Navigation pane by pressing Alt+F1. In Outlook Express 6, close the Folder pane by clicking the X in its top-right corner; re-display it briefly by clicking the down arrow beside the folder's name in the title bar (above the message list); click the Push Pin to switch the folder display back on.

*From Woody's Email Essentials #2.01*

## A Slew of Apple Software Updates

by Adam C. Engst <ace@tidbits.com>

We weren't the only ones in a mad rush toward the end of the year, and some of Apple's engineers probably enjoyed their holiday breaks more after shipping a variety of updates. They include Mac OS X 10.3.2, iTunes 4.2, QuickTime 6.5, and Battery Update 1.1.

Most awaited of the updates is Mac OS X 10.3.2, which promises improved file sharing and directory services for mixed Mac and PC networks, more robust printing to PostScript printers, improved font management, updates to Mail and Address Book, and new ATI and Nvidia graphics drivers. Apple offers an expanded change list on the Web. Improvements in 10.3.1 and recent security updates are also bundled in for anyone who hasn't already gotten those. Unfortunately, Apple says nothing about the problems users experienced with FireWire 400 hard drives in Panther, merely reiterating the note from 10.3.1 that says users with FireWire 800 drives should still upgrade their drives' firmware. Mac OS X 10.3.2 is available in Software Update as a 38.2 MB download; it's also available separately as a 36.4 MB download.

<<http://docs.info.apple.com/article.html?artnum=25652>> <<http://www.info.apple.com/kbnum/n120288>>

iTunes 4.2 appears to be a fairly minor release, primarily adding support for signing into the iTunes Music Store from an AOL account. You can now view the iTunes Music Store in a separate window (useful for checking to make sure you don't already own a particular song), and iTunes 4.2 also reportedly features a number of performance improvements. iTunes 4.2 is a 6.4 MB download from Software Update; it requires Mac OS X 10.1.5 or later, with Mac OS X 10.2.4 or later necessary to share music. In related news, Apple and AOL announced that AOL members can now preview, purchase, and download songs available on AOL Music by clicking an iTunes button next to featured tracks, a move that can only help iTunes Music Store sales, which topped 25 million songs at the end of December.

<<http://www.apple.com/itunes/>> <<http://www.apple.com/pr/library/2003/dec/18aol.html>>  
<<http://www.apple.com/pr/library/2003/dec/15itunes.html>>

QuickTime 6.5, an 18.2 MB download from Software Update, enables creation and playback of 3GPP2 and AMC "mobile multimedia" formats, improves text track support and DV playback options, and enhances support for iMovie, iDVD, and Final Cut Pro. QuickTime 6.5 requires Mac OS X 10.2.5 or later.

<<http://www.apple.com/quicktime/>>

Lastly, owners of white iBooks and aluminum PowerBooks will see Battery Update 1.1 appear in Software Update as a 520K download (it's also available as a 160K standalone installer). Battery Update 1.1 claims to enhance the performance of the battery to ensure that full capacity is available. Some users on TidBITS Talk reported significantly increased fan activity after installing Battery Update 1.1 and Mac OS X 10.3.2; see the discussion on TidBITS Talk. If you download and install the update manually, it alerts you if it's not necessary for your computer; relying on Software Update is probably easiest.

<<http://docs.info.apple.com/article.html?artnum=120281>> <<http://db.tidbits.com/getbits.acgi?tlkthrd=2133>>

## AppleWorks Updates Span

**Platforms\*\*** -- Apple has released a trio of minor updates for AppleWorks, its integrated productivity software that includes word processor, spreadsheet, page layout, graphics, database, and presentation capabilities, as well as compatibility with Microsoft Office file formats. Three updates are available, depending on your operating system and version. AppleWorks 6.2.9 for Mac OS X adds support for mice with scroll wheels, improves printing, and enhances the reliability of the presentation environment.

AppleWorks 6.2.8 for Mac OS 8.1 through 9.x and the Mac OS X update resolve issues with Web-based templates and clip art on networks using proxy servers. AppleWorks 6.2.1 for Windows, as well as both of the Macintosh updates, improve the spreadsheet module.

All three updates, available for free to users of AppleWorks 6.0 or later for Macintosh or 6.1 or later for Windows, are available online. The Macintosh downloads are 16 MB, and the Windows download is 6 MB. [MHA]

<<http://www.apple.com/appleworks/update/>>

*From TidBits Magazine*

## Spammers Get Smarter

Dear Fred, I have been receiving the usual spam, but I have found that these mails at times contain 'secret' messages. The spam, if left-clicked on a blank area and dragged, reveals hidden text. Some spams contain clear text and at times random(?) letters and numbers appear, what goes?, who are these people and what are they doing? Many thanks for a great newsletter. ---Jeff (in Spain)

I've seen that too, Jeff. The text is sometimes gibberish, but other times is an actual letter or even a passage from a literary work. What's going on in all these cases is that the spammer is trying to overwhelm Bayesian filters by altering the context in which the spam trigger words appear.

Bayesian filters operate statistically; they compute the odds of any given email being spam by looking at the type and frequency of certain words and formatting conventions. Some combinations almost always indicate spam. For example, if the Latin name of a male body part appears many times in a short email, along with words associated with making a purchase, odds are it's spam. (This is actually a difficult subject to write about without using words and phrases that will trigger spam filters! <g>) But if that same Latin term appears infrequently in a long text that also contains the words "Michelangelo" and "David," odds are it's not spam, but a description of a statue.

So, spammers have started adding off-topic content to their emails to defeat statistical analysis. In the simplified example I'm using, if a spammer placed a long block of text on classical sculpture in an ad for some enlargement potion, a Bayesian filter might be tricked into letting the ad through, thinking it's not spam or that it's only "possible spam."

Still, because Bayesian filters are sensitive to context, they usually work pretty well, and remain our single best option in fighting spam. In contrast, blacklist-oriented filters are the worst choice because they're far too crude, often blocking entire ranges of IP addresses or even whole ISPs because of one or two spammers.

This is analogous to blocking all paper mail from all residents of, say, Texas because a couple Texans sent out some bad mail. While this broad block would stop the bad Texans, it also would be grotesquely unfair to the majority of totally innocent mail users in Texas.

But this kind of wholesale blocking is exactly what email blacklist/blocklists do. Any ISP, web host or mailing service of any size will have some small percentage of sleazeball spammers, and they deserve to be punished. But blacklist-oriented services punish the innocent along with the guilty by indiscriminately blocking all users of a given ISP, web host or mailing service. Blacklists are evil, and I can't wait for them

to go away.

A third anti-spam approach has some merit: It's "rule-based" filtering. It's far less flexible than Bayesian filtering, and has more false-positives, but actually is better at catching some kinds of disguised spam. For example, a rule-based filter could be set up to treat as spam any email that (1) mentions the Latin word for a male body part plus (2) the brand name for some enlargement potion and (3) contains instructions on making a purchase. The rule-based filter will work even if there's (say) a long block of text on classical sculpture appended to the email.

But rule-based filters are hard to maintain, and must be extremely complex to avoid a huge number of false positives. They're very hard to do well, and require a lot of intervention, where Bayesian filters can be more or less "set and forget." The filter watches what you mark as spam and non-spam, and automatically builds and updates its statistical rules.

If you can only use one tool, make it a Bayesian filter ( see <http://www.informationweek.com/story/IWK20021115S0018> ). But I've actually been getting excellent results with two-stage filtering: I use a highly-developed rule-based tool ( <http://www.spamassassin.org/> ) as the initial filter, and then follow with a Bayesian filter (the one built into the current Eudora; <http://www.eudora.com> ). It's still not perfect, but has reduced the spam in my inbox to a trickle, with a low percentage of false positives. All of this is occasioned by the article "E-Mail-- Hideously Unreliable," at <http://www.informationweek.com/story/showArticle.jhtml?articleID=17300016> . That article describes a test of almost 11,000 emails I sent to LangaList volunteers, in which some 40% of the attempted communications failed, with many of the utterly benign messages being eaten by hyperactive spam filters. Plus, at the end of that article, I also sum up the best-available techniques--- not only filters, but also methods of sending email--- to help you ensure successful deliveries, and minimize the chances that your emails will be lost. Odds are, if you're reading this newsletter, email is important to you. Please check out the article at <http://www.informationweek.com/story/showArticle.jhtml?articleID=17300016> so you'll know what we're all up against, and what you can do about it

From LangaList 15/1/2004

**Test Issues**

A number of readers took issue with the email test (described in full at <http://www.informationweek.com/story/showArticle.jhtml?articleID=17300016>) :

In my humble opinion, the message sent by Fred constitutes SPAM, and as such SHOULD have been deleted/ blocked. The message was from an unknown user and was of an irrelevant subject. E-mail is a communication tool and one would expect these messages to come from a source that you recognize, or with a subject line that is relevant to your interests/job spec.

I was expecting an email from Fred, not from Liam. I would have replied if it was from Fred. As far as I am concerned, my spam blocker worked perfectly. I don't expect to have to read an email (which is what SPAM email senders want you to do) to determine its validity, that should have been obvious from the sender/subject.

It seems to me that the results show that 40% of the emails were blocked/deleted successfully, and the 60% of the spam actually got through. ---Colin Campbell (via the Informationweek.Com chat board)

First, spam is unsolicited commercial email; and it's usually sent in bulk. This email was solicited--- the volunteers invited it. It contained no commercial message. It was not sent in bulk. Thus, it was not spam, by any normal definition.

And I had clearly stated "I won't tell the volunteers in advance what address the mail will come from or what the subject line will be.... "

Yes, if I'd carefully designed the mail so you'd know it was from me, and if I'd sent it from an already-known/whitelisted address, then it would have bypassed most filters. But what would that have proved?

I wanted all filtering--- both software and human--- to come into play because that's where I suspected most mail was being lost. Many people do indeed simply discard \*all\* unfamiliar email--- and that means that a lot of valid mail is getting trashed.

Think of it: If your filters (or you) treat unrecognized email as spam, than you will never hear from anyone you don't already know. You'll never be able to get any reply from any new web site you visit, or any new email service you sign up for. You won't hear from friends or coworkers who change email addresses, or who write to you from secondary accounts. In fact, you'll never be able to be contacted by \*anyone\* whom you haven't already heard from and approved. Surely that's NOT what you want. 8-)

But that is indeed how many people are using their filters: That's what I was trying to test by sending the test mail from an unknown address and with a generic subject line. And I believe that's why 40% of the test communications failed!

Other readers took issue with other parts of the test, but I still think it did what it set out to do: To examine the reliability of unanticipated or initial-contact non-spam emails from non-hostile but non-whitelisted senders: the kind of mail you might exchange with co-workers, friends, business associates, or customers whose addresses aren't already in your "approved senders" list.

But maybe I'm wrong.

*From LangaList 15/1/2004*

**World's Easiest Quiz!!**

Passing requires ONLY 4 correct answers!!!

- 1) How long did the Hundred Years War last?
- 2) Which country makes Panama hats?
- 3) From which animal do we get cat gut?
- 4) In which month do Russians celebrate the October Revolution?
- 5) What is a camel's hair brush made of?
- 6) The Canary Islands in the Pacific are named after what animal?
- 7) What was King George VI's first name?
- 8) What colour is a purple finch?
- 9) What country do Chinese gooseberries come from?
- 10) What is the colour of the black box in a commercial airplane?

All done?

Check your answers Next Page!

**EMAIL SAVER XE.**

Viruses, system crashes or power outages can destroy or corrupt the data in your e-mail software. Email Saver Xe is a backup utility which works with all popular e-mail clients including Microsoft Outlook, Outlook Express, Eudora, Netscape Messenger, IncrediMail and PocoMail. Safely archive your messages and backup your attachments, address book and contacts, users and accounts, message rules and filters, and other many settings and information. Transfer e-mail information from one computer to another for simple Windows upgrades and migrations. The automatic backup feature allows you to schedule regular unattended backups quietly in the background.

Download at

<http://esd.element5.com/product.html?productid=516942&languageid=1&affiliateid=73275>

*From Neat Net Tricks 15/1/2004*

## ANSWERS TO THE QUIZ:

1) How long did the Hundred Years War last?

Answer: 116 years

2) Which country makes Panama hats?

Answer: Ecuador

3) From which animal do we get cat gut?

Answer: Sheep and Horses

4) In which month do Russians celebrate the October Revolution?

Answer: In November

5) What is a camel's hair brush made of?

Answer: Squirrel fur

6) The Canary Islands in the Pacific are named after what animal?

Answer: Dogs

7) What was King George VI's first name?

Answer: Albert

8) What colour is a purple finch?

Answer: Crimson

9) What country do Chinese gooseberries come from?

Answer: New Zealand

10) What is the colour of the black box in a commercial airplane?

Answer: Orange, of course.

*From That Smart A'd Cousin of mine*

## FISH TALES

Far away in the tropical waters of the Caribbean, two prawns were swimming around in the sea - one called Justin and the other called Christian.

The prawns were constantly being harassed and threatened by sharks that inhabited the area.

Finally one day Justin said to Christian, "I'm fed up with being a prawn, I wish I was a shark, then I wouldn't have any worries about being eaten."

A large mysterious cod appeared and said, "Your wish is granted", And lo and behold, Justin

turned into a shark. Horrified, Christian immediately swam away, afraid of being eaten by his old mate.

Time passed (as it invariably does) and Justin found life as a Shark boring and lonely. All his old mates simply swam away whenever he came close to them. Justin didn't realise that his new

menacing appearance was the cause of his sad plight. While swimming alone one day he saw

the mysterious cod again and he thought perhaps the mysterious fish could change him back into a prawn. He approached the cod and begged to be

changed back, and, lo and behold, he found himself turned back into a prawn.

With tears of joy in his tiny little eyes Justin swam back to his friends and bought them all a cocktail. Looking around the gathering at the reef he realised he couldn't see his old pal.

"Where's Christian?" he asked. "He's at home, still distraught that his best friend changed sides to the enemy and became a shark", came the reply.

Eager to put things right again and end the mutual pain and torture, he set off to Christian's abode. As he opened the coral gate memories came flooding back. He banged on the door and shouted, "It's me, Justin, your old friend, come out and see me again."

Christian replied, "No way man, you'll eat me. You're now a shark, the enemy, and I'll not be tricked into being your dinner."

Justin cried back "No, I'm not. That was the old me. I've changed."

-----  
**"I've found Cod. I'm a prawn again Christian".**

*Yes it's from him again!! I'll have to stop putting Mac stuff in this letter!!!*

## New worm drawing Sobig comparisons

By Andrew Colley, ZDnet Australia 19 January 2004

Computer security experts fear a new worm -- Bagle-A -- which began spreading rapidly across Australian e-mail networks over the last five hours could be a rehearsal for a more concerted attack in coming week.

According to Daniel Zatz, security director for Computer Associates Australia, Bagle-A carries an expiry date, possibly indicating more robust versions of the worm could be slated for release soon.

According to Zatz, while Bagle-A is already successful, responsible for an alarming 80 percent jump in queries to CA's help desk and in virus submissions to rival computer security company Sophos, the current version of the worm contains bugs.

Comparing Bagle to the infamous Sobig virus which flooded global e-mail networks last year, Zatz fears that a more virulent version of new worm could appear soon. "One of our biggest concern is that if we look back a year ago at the Sobig variants, they all had drop-dead dates, and every time one hit that drop dead date a new variant came out; a new and improved variant of it," said Zatz.

Bagle-A is due to expire on the 28th of January, suggesting tuned variations of the worm could appear as early next week. Bagle-A's creators, like authors of many previous successful worms, have relied on the ignorance and curiosity of e-mail users for the worm's success.

The worm arrives in e-mail inboxes as a message containing few lines of text suggesting the e-mail may be from system administrator, as well as an executable attachment. When the attachment is activated by its receiver the worm then installs a program on the recipient computer that allows the worm to be e-mailed on to other users in the system's local address book.

The worm also attempts to installs a backdoor or Trojan on infected machines, listening for activity on port on 6777. Sean Richmond, support manager with anti-virus software vendor Sophos Australia and New Zealand, said the company was still examining the Trojan to see what else it was capable of. Given that most corporate email servers block transmission of executable attachments, CA's Zatz believes that home and medium-sized enterprise users are responsible for spreading the new worm.

Zatz could give no other explanation for the worm's apparent success than "pure curiosity" on the users' part. Another possible factor in the worm's success, Zatz said, was the fact the worm's creators programmed the worm to e-mail itself to handful of popular domains to evade swift detection by dominant Web enterprises such as Hotmail, MSN and a large Russian computer security agency. Richmond said favourable timing may help contain the Bagle. According to Richmond, Bagle's appearance in the Asia-Pacific region should give anti-virus companies adequate time to prepare software and procedures for US and European companies before they open for trading.

Users who suspect their computers may be infected with the virus should look for a file called bbeagle.exe in their Windows System directory. The file disguises itself with Microsoft familiar calculator icon.

## Cowboy Boots

Did you hear about the Texas teacher who was helping one of her kindergarten students put on his cowboy boots? He asked for help and she could see why.

Even with her pulling and him pushing, the little boots still didn't want to go on. Finally, when the second boot was on, she had worked up a sweat.

She almost cried when the little boy said, "Teacher, they're on the wrong feet." She looked and sure enough, they were. It wasn't any easier pulling the boots off than it was putting them on. She managed to keep her cool as together they worked to get the boots back on this time on the right feet.

He then announced, "These aren't my boots."

She bit her tongue rather than get right in his face and scream, "Why didn't you say so?" like she wanted to. And, once again she struggled to help him pull the ill-fitting boots off his little feet.

No sooner they got the boots off and he said, "They're my brother's boots. My Mom made me wear 'em."

Now she didn't know if she should laugh or cry. But, she mustered up the grace and courage she had left to wrestle the boots on his feet again. Helping him into his coat, she asked, "Now, where are your mittens?"

He said, "I stuffed 'em in the toes of my boots."



**Her trial starts next month**  
*Guess where this one came from !!*

## THE PERFECT SCAN

To choose the best scanner for the job and to get great results, you need more than a little know-how

Scanners may produce digital output, but they're largely analog devices. Component quality and engineering precision will have as big an impact on the quality of results as the electronics and software. To get the best from it, you need to get to know your scanner.

We explain the different types, their strengths, weaknesses and ways in which you can squeeze out that last ounce of quality.

**Your needs** Do you want to scan reflective originals (documents and prints) or transparencies (slides and negatives)? The plain fact is that a single scanner can't do both – not properly, anyway.

Flatbed scanners are very good at reflective originals, and even low-cost models offer higher resolution than the level of detail you're likely to find in any original you want to scan. Many models can also scan slides and negatives using transparency adaptors which are either optional extras or supplied with the scanner. So why buy a dedicated film scanner? It's a question of design and engineering. Technically, flatbed scanners can deliver resolutions as high as 2400dpi or 3200dpi, which is film scanner territory. In practice, however, cruder engineering and design restricts their defining power. A 3200dpi flatbed produces files as big as a 3200dpi film scanner, but the detail will be significantly softer, and that even applies to Epson's brand new Perfection, probably the best flatbed currently on the market.

Don't rule flatbeds out yet, though. A medium-format film scanner will cost you £2500+, while large-format photographers are restricted to professional drum-scanning bureaus. But flatbeds like the Perfection 3200 will also scan medium format and large-format film up to 5x4ins. With these larger film sizes, the quality compromises will be far less important because the enlargement factor when you make prints will be a lot lower.

**What are you scanning?** If you're scanning reflective originals, the first thing your scanner will need to know is whether it's dealing with a photographic print, a magazine page or a newspaper cutting. Manual colour settings will be self-evident – full-colour, greyscale and mono (1-bit), typically. Unfortunately, many simpler scanners in a misguided attempt at user-friendliness, disguise these options as document 'types', like 'colour photo', 'document', 'text' and so on. You may need to examine the manual to discover exactly what sort of file it's going to output and what colour/mono mode it's going to use when it does so.

There's another possible stumbling block. If you're scanning magazine pages, you'll almost certainly need to apply 'descreening' to counter the moiré effects you tend to get at certain scanning resolutions (100-300dpi), where the printed dot pattern interferes with the scanner's 'dots' (pixels). Most scanners offer an optional descreening filter which combats any interference effects and disguises the printed dot pattern to produce a more smooth-toned scan. The complicating factor is that some scanners offer a descreening function visibly, as a checkbox or menu option, while others – again, in a

misguided attempt at user-friendliness – wrap it up instead in a 'magazine' option on the list of items you might be wanting to scan. If your scanner doesn't appear to offer a descreening option, this is where you're most likely to find it.

**A question of scale** Make sure that you get the scanning resolution and scale right. It should be simple but isn't. The decision for documents is pretty straightforward – you're unlikely to want to change the scale, so you just pick an appropriate resolution. A 2400dpi scanner is a nice luxury, but even at a modest 150dpi the text in most documents is going to be perfectly legible. Scanning photos isn't so straightforward. Quite often you'll want to print a scanned photo larger than the original – or smaller. This is where you can easily get in a tangle over resolution and scaling. Different scanner drivers handle these two settings in different ways, so it's difficult to generalise over strategies.

It may be easier to look at it from another angle. No photographic print offers 'infinite' resolution. In practice, even good photo lab prints offer only about 300dpi-worth of resolution. In other words, you won't get any more detail out of them by scanning them at 600dpi – you'll just get bigger files. Here, the scanner makes a difference. A good scanner will produce a sharper 300dpi scan under these circumstances than a cheap one. There's a good argument for buying a 2400dpi scanner over a 1600dpi, even if you seldom scan beyond 300dpi, simply because the higher-quality components and engineering improve the quality throughout the scanning range, not just at the top end.

Try scanning photos at 600dpi by all means, but you're likely to find that a 300dpi scan at 100 per cent scaling (no enlargement or reduction) extracts as much definition from a print as it possesses. Should you need to print it larger, resize it in Photoshop or let your printer scale it. Either will do just as good a job as scanning at a higher resolution in the first place. If the detail's not there, don't bother chasing it.

**Levels and curves** Do you adjust levels and curves while scanning, or later in Photoshop? It's an important question, since all scanning software offers image adjustment options. There are two schools of thought here. One is that Photoshop is far more sophisticated and effective than any bundled TWAIN software and that it, or any mid-range image-editor will do a better job than your scanner. It's a tempting proposition, but it's not quite as simple as that. On a practical level, it may prove a lot quicker to adjust brightness, contrast and colour at the scanning stage rather than opening up the file later to do it in Photoshop.

There are arguments on a theoretical level, too. Firstly, scanners operate at a higher bit-depth than their final output files. All but high-end models produce 24-bit images (8 bits per channel). This is fine for scans which need little subsequent modification, but if you apply heavy tonal manipulation later, this can cause a degree of tonal separation, which results in colour banding or digital noise. Scanner manufacturers are seldom very clear about this particular aspect, but if you give them the benefit of the doubt and assume that tonal and colour adjustments are

*(Continued on page 17)*

(Continued from page 16)

applied before the 8-bit conversion, you should end up with a higher quality result by adjusting these parameters at the scanning stage. Secondly, it may well be that the scanning software is carefully attuned to the scanner's particular characteristics. The CanoScan FS2710 film scanner, for example, tends to need some curve adjustment in shadow areas to improve shadow detail rendition. Do this in Photoshop and you exaggerate the shadow noise which is characteristic of this particular scanner. Apply the same curve adjustment in the scanner software, though, and the noise is controlled far better.

**Saturation** Now's the time for saturation and sharpening adjustments. Untreated scans can look distinctly lifeless, though this tends to be more of an issue with cheaper scanners. Applying brightness, contrast, levels or curves can often restore colour too, so make sure you carry out these adjustments before increasing saturation. You may be loath to apply any sharpening at this point, on the assumption that a 2400dpi scanner (say) ought to be able to produce a razor-sharp 300dpi scan. It doesn't quite work like that, and any scanner you'll ever use will almost certainly need sharpening, either at the scanning stage or later on. Get used to it. In principle, the scanner's makers should know exactly how much and what sort of sharpening the scanner needs, so the built-in sharpen filter should be all the sharpening you require. In practice, higher-resolution files need different treatment to low-res ones, and you may find you need to apply some Unsharp Mask adjustments in Photoshop instead of, or as well as those applied by the scanning software. Scan previews are a hopeless guide to sharpening strength, since you're seeing the effect applied to a low-res screen image, not the high-res output file. You can only judge the results properly by examining final scan files.

**The specs** It's worth spending some time examining your scanner's documentation to make sure you understand what it can do, and how to make it do it. With experimentation you can learn your scanners strengths and weaknesses along with methods to exploit the former and get round the latter. Getting to know your scanner is one thing, getting to make sense of scanner specifications is quite another. See the box on scanner specs to find out what they're supposed to mean, what they really mean, and how they can help you make an informed choice when you're shopping for your next scanner.

#### **Flatbed versus films**

**Flatbeds** are engineered to scan large areas and their optics and drive mechanisms aren't ideally suited to the minute proportions of 35mm negatives and slides. Flatbeds simply can't match the definition of film scanners.

Flatbeds have fixed-focus optics – your originals need to lie on precisely the right plane to be in perfect focus. Better film scanners include hardware-based dust reduction systems which can eliminate tedious retouching with no visible quality loss. Few flatbeds offer this as yet (one notable exception being the CanoScan 9900F).

**Film scanners** generally scan slides and transparencies a lot faster than flatbeds with transparency adaptors. Film scanners offer higher dynamic range and cope better with high-contrast originals that flatbeds would render with

dense black shadows. Most film scanners offer adjustable 'exposure' options, which change the speed of scanning and enable the CCD to accumulate more image data from extra-dense or light originals.

What those specifications mean

**Optical resolution:** The only figure that counts.

Remember that reflective originals seldom need scanning beyond 300dpi, but that higher-resolution scanners produce crisper results at any resolution. For flatbeds with film adaptors, 2400dpi is the bare minimum.

**Interpolated resolution:** Marketing nonsense. At their maximum optical res, scanners are already up against their detail-recording limits. Interpolation just adds more 'empty' pixels and produces colossal files with no additional detail.

**Bit-depth:** In theory, the higher the bit-depth, the subtler and smoother the colour rendition. In practice, it's a calculated figure that makes no allowances for the scanner's engineering, CCD quality or signal-to-noise ratio.

**Dynamic range:** The higher the dynamic range, the better the scanner will cope with extreme contrast and density. In practice, the figure is often calculated from the bit-depth, and makes no allowances for signal-to-noise ratios which can render much shadow unusable in cheaper scanners.

**Scan speeds:** Sometimes quoted by makers as an indication of how fast you might be able to scan a text document, for example. Like maximum printer speeds, they're quoted under ideal circumstances and make no allowance for descreening filters or sharpening options.

**Interface options:** FireWire and USB 2.0 are both many times faster than USB 1.1, and are worth having – though arguably not worth paying a great deal extra for. The increased speed of more expensive scanners comes from their components and design as much as from faster interfaces. The final data transfer isn't the only bottleneck.

**16/48-bit output:** 16-bit files are useful for heavy tonal modifications with minimum image 'damage', but only a limited number of image-editors can handle 16-bit files. Of those that do, you'll find they're limited to certain editing functions only. With the right scanner and initial adjustments, 16-bit output is far from essential.

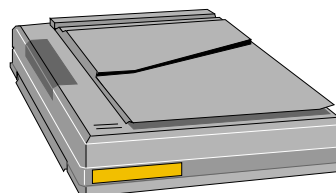
Rod Lawton

This article first appeared in PC Plus Issue 209 - December 2003

Please note that the information contained within this article is correct at the time of creation. Information may have changed since the appearance of this article in the magazine or website. Copyright Future Publishing Ltd  
Future Publishing Ltd, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW,

England. Tel: (+44) 01225 442244

Reproduction in whole or in part without written permission from Future Publishing is prohibited. This material is for personal use only.



## The right scanning steps in the right order

The first process in any scanning job should be the prescan/preview. (Film scanners with filmstrip holders can produce an index scan before this stage.) This produces a low-res on-screen scan that's fine for modifying colour balance. With heavy image modification, though, you may need to repeat the prescan to get an accurate preview.

Many scanners offer an Auto Crop function which creates a marquee around the image area. This can save time, but may not work properly if the original is slightly skewed. You might as well crop the shot at this stage rather than in Photoshop, because it'll produce a smaller scan file that's just that little bit easier to handle when editing. It's

easy to get in a tangle if you start trying to juggle resolution and image size. The easiest approach is to scan at an optical resolution that extracts all the detail in the original (roughly 300dpi in a print, 2700dpi for a negative) without scaling the image at all. This captures all useful detail, and you can worry about print size and res later.

Few flatbeds offer an 'exposure' setting, but it's an important tool in most film scanners. This copes with unduly dark slides, by slowing down the scanning head so that the CCD accumulates more light for better shadow penetration. In many film scanners you can adjust the exposure manually, though it's possible to do it automatically.

Photoshop may be powerful, but there are good arguments for carrying out tonal and colour adjustments using your scanning software. Here, a modest curve adjustment has lifted the shadow detail without clipping the highlights. This level of control is usually found only on photo-orientated scanners, though.

Regardless of resolution or price, all scanners produce slightly soft images. They all come with a sharpening function which may do a good job, though you're likely to need more sophisticated unsharp masking controls for higher-res images. The Minolta film scanner used here offers high-end controls. Otherwise, it's a job for your image-editor.

## BETTER SCANNING

Boosting the quality of your scans is part art and part science. Dan DiNicolò walks you through some tips to ensure better results

There's no question about it, having a scanner to play around with is good fun. While most scanners now include software with a range of different settings to make scanning easier, getting your scans to appear 'just right' can be a frustrating experience.

For example, if you've ever attempted to scan copy from a magazine or newspaper, you'll have no doubt run into the annoying dot pattern these scans seem to produce every time. While the default or basic settings can help, getting into the advanced settings of your software or image editing application can make a world of difference.

This month, we look at some simple but effective techniques that will help to improve the quality of your

### scans. Moiré patterns

Unlike a traditional photograph, images and text found in magazines and newspapers are printed using a half-tone pattern. While this isn't generally discernable to the human eye under normal reading conditions, look closely and you'll notice that the image is made up of a dot-like or crosshatch pattern. Unfortunately, this is most evident when you scan either of the above as traditional colour or greyscale photographs as it compromises the quality of the scan. This is normally referred to as a moiré pattern. The great news is that while moiré patterns represent a serious obstacle, most scanning software includes a simple and effective filter to tackle the problem.

Known as a descreen filter, it's often implemented as a checkbox or simple drop-down menu option in the advanced settings of the scanning software. There may even be an option in your scanning software to scan from a magazine, and this will automatically implement the descreen filter for you. While scanning an image using the descreen option will take longer, the results speak for themselves. In some cases, using the descreen filter alone won't completely remove the crosshatch or dotted pattern to a degree that you're satisfied with. If you find this to be the case, check out some of the tips in this article.

### Actuality

When attempting to determine the quality of a scanned image, you should always view it at its actual size. After scanning any image into your image editing application, that image will almost always appear in a mode that attempts to fit the entire image into the screen area.

Unfortunately, this preview can be misleading since the smaller size makes it hard to judge the impact of issues like moiré patterns. To gain a truer sense of the quality of a scan, it's imperative that you view the scanned image at its actual size. Simply use the settings found on the program menu, or by right-clicking with the magnifying glass tool selected. At the actual size you'll get a much better representation of the scan's quality.

### Blurring and sharpening

Image editing applications such as Adobe Photoshop include a variety of different filters that can be applied to help improve the quality of any image, including scanned ones. One popular technique to help minimise the impact of issues such as moiré patterns is to scan the image at double the resolution required, with the descreen filter on. You then resize the image to half the size and apply a filter known as the Unsharp Mask. Although its name might not suggest it, the Unsharp Mask is a filter used to restore the sharpness in an image, some of which may be lost after sampling an image to a smaller size.

If you've already scanned an image without the descreen option and you don't have the original hard copy, all is not lost. Another way to remove moiré patterns is to slightly blur the image, causing the dot or crosshatch pattern to blend more naturally. Applications like Photoshop include a variety of blur-related filters on the Filter menu, but one of the most popular is the Gaussian blur. Try using this on the full-sized image with the moiré pattern, then resize the image and apply the Unsharp Mask filter.

### Addition by subtraction

*(Continued on page 19)*

*(Continued from page 18)*

As outlined in the previous section, resizing (or resampling) an image to a smaller size can be an effective way to help improve the perceived quality of a scanned image, especially when combined with different filtering techniques such as blurring. To get the greatest benefit from the technique, make a point of scanning images at a higher resolution than you need, applying filters to help improve the quality of the scan and then resampling the image to a smaller size. Always try applying the Unsharp Filter on the reduced image to see whether the quality improves. Almost all image editing applications enable you to preserve the ratios associated with your images or specify a new size percentage. The Image Size dialog in Photoshop provides this in various measurements, along with resolution information.

When trying to determine the most appropriate resolution for your image, always keep your intended destination in mind. For example, if you're using scanned images for the web or on-screen displays, you don't need 300dpi resolution – something around 75 or 100dpi will suit your needs. If you're planning to reprint or enlarge your scans, you'll definitely need a higher resolution, typically in line with what the output printer will support. Viewing an image at its actual size or using the print preview function will give you a better sense of whether your current resolution is too high, low or just right. Going greyscale Most scanning software packages include a greyscale colour mode for scanning black and white images, whether from photographs, newspapers or magazines. Just as colour images from magazines and newspapers are impacted by moiré patterns, so are non-colour images, so be sure to use the descreen filter. Although most black and white images should be scanned in greyscale for the best results, certain exceptions apply. For example, many old photographs might use a sepia or brownish tone rather than true greys, so scan in colour to maintain this consistency. For cases where you want to convert a colour image to greyscale, scan the image in colour and then convert it to greyscale later using your image editing application. This will give you a greater degree of control with the filters you can apply to the image, and all image editing applications include the ability to convert images to greyscale. Having your master copies of scans in colour will ultimately give you more flexibility in the future too.

### **Photo imperfections**

One common issue encountered when scanning images is imperfections on the original image. Many programs include filters to compensate for this problem, which is often referred to as noise. Examples include speckles that appear randomly, dust marks or scratches on an original. If these imperfections aren't overwhelming, noise filters can solve the problem. Photoshop includes a variety of these, such as the Dust and Scratches, Despeckle and Median filters. In cases where a scan still doesn't seem true to form, try applying these filters individually.

### **Attack of the clones**

While filters may help with minor imperfections in images, larger or more serious ones must be corrected manually, especially in the case of older, creased photos. In these cases, you'll need to open the scan in your image editing

application and use the Clone tool, if one is available. This tool often appears as a rubber stamp icon and it enables you to copy small bits of a surrounding area and then use that 'image' as filler for the damaged areas. To get the best results with this tool, enlarge the image to many times its original size before trying to clone areas. This gives you a larger and more precise working space, and any minor touch-ups are unlikely to be visible once the image size is reduced again.

### **Judgement time**

Whether you're scanning photographs, copy from printed sources or just plain text, your own eyes are the best judge of quality. Choosing the correct type of scan in your scanning software is obviously the most critical initial consideration, but it's far from the only one, especially if you've got a decent image editing application on your PC. Play around with the various advanced settings of your scanner software in Preview mode, and when you have a preview that looks right to you, scan your image. If it's still not perfect, don't fret – try out some of the different filters outlined in the article until you find the settings that best meet your needs. With a little bit of trial and error, better scanning results are well within your reach.

### **Keep it clean**

Sometimes the most important tips are also the most basic. In this case, make sure you keep the surface of your scanner's glass clean. Over time, this surface gets messy and while it may not have the most noticeable impact on your photos, it can certainly have enough of one to require additional and time-consuming touch-ups later.

One obvious tip is to always keep the scanner's lid closed when it isn't in use. When the glass does need to be cleaned, your best bet is to use a mild glass cleaner, although some manufacturers recommend pure alcohol or a soap and water solution. Regardless, never pour or spray the solution onto the glass. Instead, wet a lint-free cloth with the solution and wipe the glass gently. Most importantly, be sure to completely unplug the unit prior to cleaning, and give it time to dry before plugging it back in.

Dan DiNicolò

This article first appeared in PC Plus Issue 211 - January 2004 Please note that the information contained within this article is correct at the time of creation. Information may have changed since the appearance of this article in the magazine or website. Copyright Future Publishing Ltd Future Publishing Ltd, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW, England. Tel: (+44) 01225 442244

Reproduction in whole or in part without written permission from Future Publishing is prohibited. This material is for personal use only.



## Gator Information Center

Gator--- which has just renamed itself to "Claria"--- is a advertising company that makes money primarily through banner ads and popups placed inside small software gizmos it distributes for free, as a way to get people to view its ads. Gator/Claria calls this "in-context behavioral advertising," but the common name for their software products is "adware." Gator/Claria was one of the very first companies in the adware business. Today, they are one of the most successful--- perhaps *\*the\** most successful--- adware companies going.

On the plus side, adware (from any company--- not just Gator/Claria) can be OK: You get "free" software, and the vendor makes some money off ads. But there are negatives. For example, lots of adware makes use of "phone home" components to update the embedded ads, and these components can be -- and sometimes have been--- used for snooping. That's why this kind of software is also often called "spyware." Not all adware is spyware, and not all phone-home components are used for snooping, but the potential for misuse is there.

There can be other problems. The phone-home elements consume bandwidth and may even trigger unwanted dial-outs on phone-based systems. They also often run as nearly-constant background tasks, even if the ad-supported software itself isn't active. Thus, the mere presence of adware on your system can eat up a *\*lot\** of CPU cycles and slow down your system, even when the main adware application isn't running.

Worse, some adware vendors use less-than-forthright installation processes. Sometimes, adware hides behind fake error messages designed to trick unwary users into thinking they're responding to a system message or a normal dialog box, when they're really accepting or triggering the installation of an adware package.

Some adware vendors also set things up so their software tries to auto-install when you merely visit a web page--- sometimes called a "drive-by download." You don't have to click on anything; simply viewing the web page will cause the adware to try to stuff itself into your system. You may not like hyperaggressive installation routines and downloads triggered by subterfuge--- I sure don't--- but these behaviors are often 100% legal. In fact, adware usually comes with enormous, carefully worded "click wrap" licenses that go into effect as soon as the software downloads--- even if you trigger the download by accident or in error.

These licenses usually spell out very clearly that the adware vendor has your permission to do whatever it is the adware package is designed for. This often means that you're agreeing to allow the ads to display; and agreeing to let the adware company monitor your actions. Exactly what monitoring of which actions is usually spelled out in the rest of the license terms and privacy statement.

Trouble is, many users aren't savvy enough to deflect these overly-aggressive and sometimes even deceptive installation routines; through uninformed choices or poor security practices, these users end up with adware on their systems that they really didn't want and never consciously chose. And almost no one wades through the full license agreements, which sometimes seem intentionally designed to

bury the most important terms under an avalanche of legal verbiage. But it *\*is\** legal verbiage: You may dislike the terms of the license, but if you download the software, you have agreed to those terms.

That kind of unwanted, invasive software spawned a whole new class of defensive products designed to protect your PC. In fact, "Ad-Aware" ( <http://www.langa.com/newsletters/2003/2003-11-10.htm#1> ) started out as a simple tool to alert you to the presence of unwanted adware on your system. Now, of course, it and its competitors such as Spybot Search and Destroy ( <http://www.safer-networking.org/> ) and Pest Patrol ( <http://www.pestpatrol.com> ) help guard against a whole range of threats. But they all lump adware in with overtly malicious software; they treat virtually all adware as inherently suspicious, to be checked out and possibly removed, ASAP.

Of course, not all adware is bad. As long as you know what you're getting, and as long as you consciously and overtly choose to download and install the software, and are OK with all the terms of its user agreement and with the tradeoffs involved in using the software, it's fine--- it's a valid choice you can make.

To that end, the folks at PC Pitstop just opened a "Gator Information Center" ( <http://www.pcpitstop.com/gator/> ) to help users understand the pros and cons using Gator/Claria software, which is perhaps the most widely distributed adware in the world.

It's worth mentioning that Gator is not happy with PC Pitstop--- Gator/Claria brought suit against PC Pitstop in September. (You can get details on the PitStop site.)

The PitStop information is definitely worth a look. For example, they've waded through the 20 pages and 6,000 words aggregated into the "Gator Advertising Information Network" software license to find some eye-opening items you're probably not aware of. They've pulled out some of the more interesting items into a little quiz you can take on <http://www.pcpitstop.com/gator/Quiz.asp> . For example, the quiz indicates that the Gator license forbids you to use tools like Ad-Aware, Spybot, or PestPatrol to remove Gator/Claria software!

(You can read the license yourself at [http://www.gainpublishing.com/help/app\\_privacy/app\\_ps\\_v51.html](http://www.gainpublishing.com/help/app_privacy/app_ps_v51.html) and on related pages. The license also clearly states that you're agreeing to let Gator/Claria collect certain data about you, including your first name, country, city, and five digit ZIP code, what software is on your personal computer, your software usage characteristics and preferences, information on some of the Web pages you view, and the amount of time spent at some Web sites; as well as other information....)

If you're using, or considering using, any Gator/Claria software (such as eWallet, DateManager, WeatherScope, or PrecisionTime), you ought to take a look at the PC Pitstop pages. In fact, although the PitStop pages are specific to Gator/Claria, they're worth reading for the general knowledge there as well.

Not all adware is bad. But you need to know the full scoop--- the downsides as well as the positives--- before you can make an informed decision, and the PC PitStop pages will help you do just that

*From LangaList 8/12/03*