Launceston Computer Group INCORPORATED

NEWSTREAM

The Journal of the Launceston Computer Group Inc
ABN 41 451 764 376

Volume 3 Issue 5
June 2004

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Next Meeting
Wednesday
2nd June 2004
Committee 6 PM
Beginners 7.30 PM
General 8 PM

Newstream Articles

Deadline : 10 Days before Meeting
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Membership

Single $10, Family $15 (Includes Email edition Newstream)
Printed & Posted Newsletter $20 extra

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General Information

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Ron's Ramblings

Well I don't know whether we are going to have a Computer Show or not. I feel that time has run out for us to have the Show on 7th August.

There doesn't seem to be much support from members other than Judy, Glenn, and to a lesser extent myself. Judy has been unwell and I have had a sprained ankle which has limited my endeavours to obtain exhibitors. But that doesn't excuse the fact that I haven't been more diligent in asking people.

What is the opinion of members (Not just Committee Members) about the Show. It is a lot of work to get done in a very short time. If we put on a Show, it must have Exhibitors. Some of the newer Computer Stores in Town do not appear enthusiastic about a Show, but some of the previous exhibitors are.

Talking about Members contributions to the Show planning, brings me to another topic. Hopefully members are entertained by the articles in this Newsletter, but if you have a topic that you want discussed, send an email to edtor@lcg.org.au, and I will try to find information on the Web or in the ezines I receive.

Do members want features such as "Letters to the Editor"? I hope also that Members know that they can advertise in the Newsletter items for Sale or wanted to buy. Maybe members could advertise functions for organisations to which they belong other than LCG (including OPEN)

Don't forget!!! The AGM is coming up soon, and all positions will become vacant (including Editor of the Newsletter). While Committee members will probably renominate, new blood on the Committee and in executive positions is essential for the Group to grow and not stagnate.

In some organisations (for example National Seniors Association) it is not permitted for anyone to hold the same position for more than 5 years, This ensures that office bearers do not become hidebound and that new outlooks are continually being brought to the positions.

Ron Baker
Editor

NEWSTREAM

OPEN NEWSLETTER - JUNE 2004

Launceston Computer Group

SOFTWARE LIBRARY

Dated 1st June 2004

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 - CLUB MEMBERS *$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 Phone 6344 5686

Flat 2, 115 Penquite Road, Newstead **Email:** jhjort@intas.net.au

Monthly Workshops

Graphics – 16th Jun

Next class

PSP7 – Using Paint Shop Pro

Wednesday 16th Jun

1pm – 3.30pm

$6.50 fee - Numbers limited to 8 please register on noticeboard or call

Judy 63947358 or 0428 947358.

Family History Online

Next Classes

Wednesday 9th Jun *1pm–3.30pm* &

Tuesday 29th Jun *9pm – 12pm*

$4.00 fee Numbers limited to 8 people

Please register on noticeboard

Microsoft Publisher

Next Class

Thursday 10th Jun - 3pm to 5pm

Please register on noticeboard – Fee $4.00

Class sizes limited.

Visual Labels & Supermail

These two companion programs are very basic and easy to use for creating labels for your favourite jam jars or printing an envelope or even keeping a list for Christmas Cards.

Wednesday 23rd Jun – 1 to 3.30pm

Please register on noticeboard

Fee $6.50 Includes both programs.

OPEN Meeting

Wednesday 2nd Jun.

A special meeting for all members of OPEN. We need your help. If you can lend a hand with helping at the venue or doing small jobs please come.

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

OPEN Session Times

All sessions are held at the venue at

Studioworks, 1 Pipeworks Rd, L'ton

Standard Sessions (All sessions $4.00)

Monday	9am – 12	Beginners
Monday	1pm – 3pm	2nd Step
Tuesday	9am – 12	PC & Mac
Tuesday	1pm – 3pm	Beginners
Wednesday	9am –12	Beginners
Wednesday	2pm – 4pm	2nd Step
Thursday	1pm - 3pm	PC & Mac

TAFE eLearn Sessions

(All sessions $4.00)

Monday	9am - 12	eLearn
Thursday	9am – 12	eLearn
Thursday	1pm - 3pm	eLearn
Friday	9am - 12	eLearn

Started 15 March 2004 – All classes now full

Special JUNE Sessions

Wednesday **2nd Jun**	1pm on	**OPEN Meeting** & Tutor Tutorial
Wednesday **2nd Jun**	7pm on	**LCG** Monthly Meeting
Thursday **10th Jun**	3 – 5	**MS Publisher**
Wednesday **9th Jun**	1 – 3	**Family History**
Wednesday **16th Jun**	1 – 3	**Graphics**
Tuesday **22 Jun**	9–12	**Family History**
Wednesday **23rd Jun**	1 -- 3	**Visual Labels**
Wednesday **30 Jun**	1 – 3	**Print Artist**

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What's Happening at OPEN

OPEN Monthly Meetings

Open Meeting 2nd Jun 2004 at 1.00

Our regular monthly meeting to deal with all the affairs of OPEN. If you have any ideas please come to the meeting and discuss them with everyone.

Bulk Buy Booklets

The books have now arrived. Have you got yours.

Volunteer Certificates

These were handed out to June Hazzlewood, Chris Ralph, Fran Cox and Judy Hall for over 500 hours of voluntary service in the last year. Open Computing voluntary hours this year topped 5000 hours.

Many thanks to all those people who volunteer their time to help at OPEN. Without your help we would not be viable.

Volunteer Hours

A decision was taken at the last meeting to ask volunteers to note their work hours in the day book each session. This information will be collated regularly for use in grant applications and volunteer awards.

Waiting Lists

A waiting list has been drawn up in the back of the daybook. Please enter the names and preferred sessions and contact numbers in the list.

MS Publisher Class

This class has been moved to Thursday after the eLearn class, from 3 pm to 5 pm.

Fee Alteration - $2 sessions

Anyone attending a second class within the same week can now pay $4.00 for the first session and $2 for each subsequent session.

Please Note: Special fee excludes sessions where special fees apply ie Graphics.

Cleaning of the Venue

We have finally secured a cleaner who will tackle the job of cleaning the rest room and the main computer room twice a month.

Hooray.

Northern Tas. Camera Club

Will now be meeting at the OPEN Rooms once a month with the first meeting.

Saturday Jun 12th

If you are interesed in modifying your photographs this may be of interest to you.

You will need to join the club.

Printing Costs

With the purchase of the new printer we now have photographic quality printing available to all students. At this time the cost of printing will remain the same but may be reviewed in the future. **Current costs are:**

Photocopying	20c per page
Printing to Kyocera Printer	20c per page
Printing black & white text to Canon	20c per page
Printing text and graphics to Canon	40c per page
Printing cards or full page graphics	$1.00 per page

Print Artist – Special Class

Wednesday 30th June 2004

1 – 3.30

Free Copy of Newsletter

Don't forget to submit your email address if you wish to receive the LCG/OPEN newsletter via email. If you have not yet received the newsletter via email tell your tutor.

Special Monthly Meetings

Launceston Computer Group Inc.

1st Wednesday of the month

Wednesday 5th May 2004

Evening 7.30pm – 10pm

Shareware

Supermail

Supermail is a handy little program, which is a companion to Visual Labels. It allows you to create a database of names, addresses and phone numbers and easily print them to envelopes or labels. The information can be filtered easily to print only the desired records and setting up the labels uses the same interface as Visual Labels. This program is shareware.

Disk# >>> 3575 <<<Category>>>UT for WIN/W98<<<

Supermail v2.2h 32bit

SuperMail for Windows, v2.2h - 32-bit version for Windows 95/98. This mailing list program allows you to maintain an unlimited number of records. It prints labels, envelopes, letters, and reports. Complete set of mailing list management tools, including duplicate checker.Maintain an unlimited number of name/address records. ·Maintain an unlimited number of separate mailing lists. ·Print on all standard Avery mailing labels. ·Print on any size envelope, including return address. ·Create form letters & merge your names/ addresses into letters ·Print hard copy reports.

Back to the roots

Richard Cobbett delves into the software archives in search of some of the unforgettable treasures currently being brought back to life

You can never go back. That's what they say, and when faced with the constant movement of the PC world, it's hard to imagine working any other way. It's certainly true that the majority of modern applications are light-years ahead of their predecessors, and the thought of permanently eschewing Windows XP for the original Windows would be enough to put the wind up even the most hardcore PC user.

How far have we come in twenty-plus years? Unless you only ever work in one window at a time, do all your work in Write and consider looking at a clock the height of excitement, it's hard to understate the changes that have taken place.

But let's try some different names; Zork, The Secret of Monkey Island, Ultima, and Space Invaders. These are the kind of names that not only call for a certain amount of hushed reverence, but are often still believed to be the pinnacle of their individual craft.

Questionable as such claims may be, many a programmer has sat down in an attempt to recapture the sense of magic from those early games, but with little success.

Just take that old classic Pacman. Everybody knows that it's a little head in a maze, eating pills and running away from the evil ghosts. Fewer are aware of the point in a level when the red ghost will start speeding up, or how many times the game's in-built pressure valve will blow and scatter the enemies to the far corners of the screen to give a panic-stricken player a chance to get their breath back.

Even going back this far, there's an element of craft in the computing world that goes beyond a nostalgic glimpse at an old product; the level of detail that goes into some of them is simply jaw dropping. Regardless of how and why the past returns to the present, it's certainly worth putting the future on temporary hold.

The games we played "ScummVM's purpose is to allow various classic 2D adventure games to run on a bunch of modern systems," explains James 'Ender' Brown. Ender is one of the leading developers on the project, which is undoubtedly the most famous of its kind.

It all started with a simple problem. Lucasfilm Entertainment Corporation, later renamed LucasArts, was originally founded as George Lucas' games division. Its earlier adventure games, including Loom, The Secret of Monkey Island, Day of the Tentacle, and Sam and Max Hit The Road are deservedly beloved around the world, but there's a catch. Games from that era are very hard to get running on modern systems.

It can be an incompatibility with Windows XP, it can be soundcards that were never intended to run under DOS, it can be custom memory managers written in a day when people had to juggle conventional memory and its extended kin, or even the fact that not everybody uses Windows. What do you do if you want to play Day of the Tentacle under Linux, on your PDA or even – pause for dramatic shudder – on a Mac?

Put simply, ScummVM doesn't just remake the games themselves, but takes their original data files and wraps them in an environment capable of playing them. You can increase the low-resolution images, pipe the sound through any card that your operating system supports, and play the old classics from start to finish. It's a fully open-source project, with plenty of ports for various computer systems, and you can find it at www.scummvm.org.

Who's interested? Almost everybody. As Ender says, "We've had feedback, bug reports and donations from tens of thousands of people. We also have a huge international flavour, with thousands of users in almost every country from England to America, Australia, Germany, Italy, France and Japan."

Sadly, one important member has never signed up as a fan – LucasArts itself. The project really shot into the headlines after LucasArts came to the mistaken conclusion that ScummVM was illegally distributing its games archive, and called in the lawyers. In practice, you have to get the game files elsewhere – searching for existing copies on eBay. Luckily, as is often the way, this animosity would seem to have stemmed from a snap decision, and for now, it appears that the company has decided to ignore the project. Ender is quick to point out that "We have received some words of support and acknowledgement from various people who actually worked on these games, for which we are grateful", and this attitude is mirrored in other similar projects, such as the Ultima VII game engine Exult, which carries the blessing of series creator Richard 'Lord British' Garriott.

Rise of the not-emulators Projects like ScummVM and Exult offer plenty of immediate attraction, as a result of their directly appealing subject matter, but the trend is not restricted to classic games. The Linux application Wine (www. winehq.com) attempts to do something similar for the entire Windows platform. It's not an emulator – the very name stands for 'Wine Is Not an Emulator'. It's not a straight virtual machine like VMWare or Win4Lin – which will happily run almost anything, but still requires you to have a licence for the operating system that you want to run it on. Instead, it's a compatibility layer. It sits between Linux and the Windows application, re-implementing the Windows API and converting its instructions into penguin-friendly equivalents. One of the most interesting things about Wine is just how long it has been around. The original version came out in 1993 as a way of running Windows 3.1 applications under Linux, and it has been in development ever since. The main branch is the most famous, coming with most modern distributions and enabling many applications to run straight from the desktop as if they were native Linux software. More focused spin-offs have also been released, notably Crossover Office (www.codeweavers.com) for the Microsoft Office suite and WineX (www.transgaming.com) for games. Unlike ScummVM, and despite acting as a none-too-subtle way of attacking Microsoft on its own turf, it has oddly received little attention from the lawyers. The closest it got to a tussle came in mid-2003, when Microsoft leaned on the editor of FoxTalk magazine to prevent him speaking

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about using its software on the emulator. This finally resulted in the semi-explanation, that while running the software itself was innocuous enough, creating applications to run with it was iffy enough to call in the lawyers. Finally, much as LucasArts went silent, the issue faded from view, with an embarrassed cough from the powers that be.

Ghost of a shell While everybody has at least one trusted application that they wouldn't be without, it's not very common to see entire communities rise to seize the reigns. When a company dies, or its product lines are discontinued, most programs find themselves on a slip slide ride to transient eBay fame or dusty obscurity. There are some exceptions, and the growth of the Internet has made it exceptionally easy for like-minded enthusiasts to get together. The Blender project is one of the biggest recent successes. Blender was, and remains, a 3D modelling and animation tool, and was created by Dutch company Not A Number. The company folded in October 2001, taking Blender with it. Frankly, almost nobody outside its community had ever heard of it – and it was certainly never spoken of in the same breath as 3D Studio, Maya and friends. Nevertheless, the community set itself the task of buying the software and all rights associated with it – raising the necessary $100,000 in just seven weeks – and promptly open-sourcing it to the world via the GPL. Since then, the Blender community has grown steadily, earning worldwide attention, plenty of support sites and many a stunning rendered image. Importantly however, it's not simply individual applications that foster this level of attention. Operating systems can easily turn into tooth-and-claw matches, and it's hard to think of many more contentious classic systems than OS/2. This was originally fated to be the IBM-PC's principal operating system, back in the days when IBM was automatically inserted into the term. It was the fighting between it and Microsoft that ultimately paved the way for Windows to seize control. OS/2's last real attempt to make up for lost ground came in 1996 in the shape of OS/2 Warp 4, with advanced features such as speech recognition, a working Java Virtual Machine and OpenGL support available right out of the box. These days, OS/2 is definitely a niche market, but one that its supporters will vehemently defend. "For the people who use it, OS/2 simply does what they want in the way they want to do it," explains Sid Gale, Chairman of the OS/2 UK Users Group (www. warp.in-uk.net). "It's not a gamers' platform, and it lacks advanced multimedia facilities (like video editing), but for office tasks, email, web browsing and as a server platform, it's excellent. OS/2 licences probably number in the many hundreds of thousands (Sun has estimated 20 million), many of them in corporate use in the finance sector, and there is still OS/2 development going on. IBM still maintains it (a fixpack was released a few weeks ago), although a subscription is needed for support." It's not hard to find admirers if you know where to look. There's a regular e-zine available at www.os2 ezine.com, bursting archives of software, including the OS/2 Supersite at www.os2ss.com, and even companies that specialise in OS/2 development – such as Innotek (www.innotek.de), last seen porting across the open source Open Office.org suite.

As we pull inexorably into the new millennium, it would be great to see more individuals and companies engaging in more of this form of retrospective gazing. Like all good archaeology, there are many reasons to do so. Why restrict yourself to simply looking at what did happen, instead of what could have happened. For instance, what would computers have been like if we'd never moved towards windowed layouts? We're so used to the desktop metaphor for controlling our computers that anything else – everything from 3D environments to old fashioned command-line interfaces – now feels uncomfortable and over-complicated. You never know when you might find the perfect answer lying out there in the mists of time, and perhaps still going strong in an unexplored corner of Internet obscurity.

Richard This article first appeared in PC Plus Issue 215 - May 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.

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Back to the roots

Most remake projects are firmly unofficial, existing in a legal grey area. But there are exceptions, in the shape of companies actively trying to keep their works alive. Revolution, creator of the Broken Sword adventure series, is one of the most high-profile, initially working with the ScummVM team to build support for its classic Beneath A Steel Sky, and then actively releasing it as freeware so that everybody would be able to enjoy it without trawling on eBay or resorting to 'abandonware' sites.

James Ender explains: "We've been in touch with a few other companies and people, hoping to make a similar deal and preserve some of the best comedy and plain fun of the last decade. ScummVM 0.6.0 will include support for another classic adventure game that we also hope to freeware – Flight of the Amazon Queen. It's not unknown for companies to actively look to the past, be it for promotion or just historical interest. By far the most ambitious is The Ur-Quan Masters – a modern remake of the space strategy classic Star Control 2.

Years after release, the original creators openly released all the rights they could get their hands on, including art assets, the core game code, and the 3DO console version's speech. They then gathered together a team to rebuild and relaunch the project via Sourceforge (http://sc2.sourceforge.net/). "This is more of a digitally remastered edition than a remake," comments Michael Martin from the core development team. "We haven't really had any obstacles in our programming, just a very large list of things that need to be done to make it truly work the way we want. The most challenging aspect of this is usually the deciphering of the 10-year-old code, and the biggest design challenge is to stay as faithful as possible to the original experience, whilst also offering a user-interface model that's still in keeping with modern design principles."

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The abandonware principle Abandonware serves a historical purpose rather than just serving people who want to get free games.

PC Plus investigates... Abandonware is an interesting concept. It refers to the distribution of older software that's no longer supported or distributed by its creator – abandoned, in other words – via the web. Legally speaking, this is against the law. Software doesn't lose its copyright status simply because it's no longer sold, and if the creators don't Cobbett want it to be available, that's that. The catch is that many of the actual authors have long since parted company from their original companies, teams have fragmented, licences bought and traded, and it doesn't take long for software to simply disappear forever. The key difference between abandonware and more traditional pirated software, such as 'warez', is that abandonware serves historical interest, rather than people who just want to get free games.

One of the most famous sites is the Home of the Underdogs, which specialises in celebrating the games that didn't receive their due credit upon release, and it's worth noting that any game that they find for sale – even if it's just through an obscure distributor – is taken down from the FTP site.

There are certainly valid reasons why companies wouldn't want their old material distributed. The original Grand Theft Auto may date back to 1997, but only last year, Rockstar Games was able to re-release it. LucasArts may have no plans to create a new Maniac Mansion game, but it still has great success every time it releases a compilation pack. Despite these examples, it would be good to see more companies providing this kind of gift to their fans.

Newbie Club Tutorial

Tutorial..... "Copying Pictures Off A Web Page"

"Hey that's a nice picture - I think I'll have that".

Downloading - or copying - a picture from a Web page, is easy. Yeah right. Everything's easy once you know how!

So, when you spot a picture or graphic you fancy ...

Right-click on it.

>From the menu box that pops up ...

Left click on 'Save Image As' or 'Save Picture As'

A window pops up ...

In the 'Save In' box, drop down the menu and locate the folder on your hard drive where you want to save it to ...

Give it a name in the 'File Name' box - or leave the name already in there.

Click 'Save'.

Done!

I told you it was easy. All you have to do now is find it afterwards:-)

Hmmmm.

Of course, I should have advised that you make a note of where you saved it to. Some people have a folder called 'My Pictures'. But you can save it wherever you wish.

CAUTION!

You can't just copy anyone's picture and think you own it. Most graphics and pictures are copyright. But there are many sites you can go to that offer Copyright Free images.

Just try your favourite search engine and type in 'Free Images'

Tutorial
Mail Merge in MSWord 2002

If you do not have the Task Pane Open:

Select **View**

Select **Task Pane**

With the Task Pane Open:

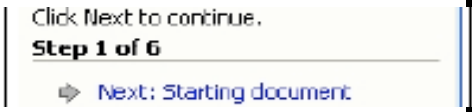
Click on the Down Arrow

Select Mail Merge to display Mail Merge Options

Mail Merge -- Step 1 of 6 - Select Document Type

In the **Mail Merge** task pane, click **Letters**. This will allow you to send letters to a group of people and personalize the results of the letter that each person receives.

Click **Next: Starting Document –** at the Bottom of the Task Pane



Step 2 of 6: Select Starting Document

Choose one of the following three options:

Use Current document: Use the currently open document as your main document.

Start from a template: Select one of the ready-to-use mail merge templates.

Start from existing document: Open an existing document to use as your mail merge main document.

Click **Next: Select recipients –** at the Bottom of the Task Pane

Step 3 of 6: Select Recipients

Open or create a data source. Use one of the following methods to attach the main document to the data source.

Method 1: If You Are Typing the Names and Addresses for the First Time

To create a new database, follow these steps:

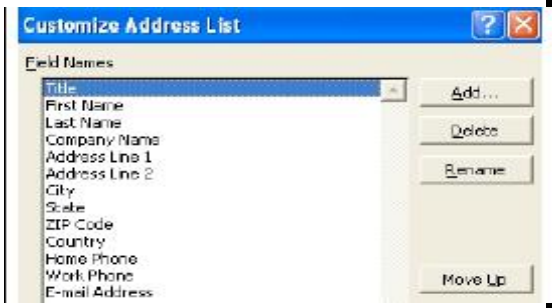
In the Mail Merge task pane, click **Next: Select Recipients**.

Click **Type a new list**.

Click **Create**.

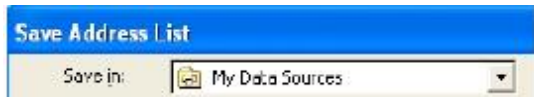
The **New Address List** dialog box appears.

You can **Customize** the database by changing fields. You can add, delete, rename, and reorder the merge fields. This will make data entry easier.



In this dialog box, enter the information for each record. If there is no information for a particular field, leave the box blank. By default, Word skips blank fields, so the merge is not affected if blank entries are in the data form. After you type the information for a record, click **New Entry** to move to the next record.

After all the entries have been added, Mouse Click the Close button in the lower right corner of the Address List Window. You will be prompted to name the file and it will automatically save in:



After you click close, the Data Base will be displayed so you can sort the records, set the queries, etc. Mouse Click Close before you move to the next step.

Save the main document.

When you save the main document at this point, you are also saving the data source and attaching it to the main document.

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Type the name that you want to give your main document, and then click **Save**.

Click **Next: Write your letter** to finish setting up your letter.

The **Mail Merge Toolbar** is displayed along with the Word Toolbars at the top of the Window.

Method 2: If You Are Using an Existing Data Source

You can think of a data source as a table. Each column in the data source corresponds to a category of information, or data field — for example, first name, last name, street address, and postal code.

The name of each data field is listed in the first row of cells, which is called the header record.

Each subsequent row contains one data record, which is a complete set of related information — for example, the name and address of a single recipient.

When you complete the merge, individual recipient information is mapped to the fields you included in your main document. To use an existing data source, follow these steps:

In the **Mail Merge** task pane, click **Use an existing list**.

In the **Use an existing list** section, click **Browse**.

In the **Select Data Source** dialog box, select the file that contains the variable information that you want to use, and then click **Open**. Word displays the **Mail Merge Recipients** dialog box. You can sort and edit your data if you want to.

Click **OK** to return to the main document.

Save the main document.

Type the name that you want to give your main document, and then click **Save**.

Method 3: If You Are Using Names from an Outlook Contact List

To use an Outlook Contact List, follow these steps:

In the Mail Merge task pane, click **Next: Select Recipients**.

Click **Select from Outlook Contacts**.

In the **Select from Outlook Contacts** section, click **Choose from Outlook Contacts**.

In the **Select Contacts List Folder** dialog box, select the Outlook Contacts folder that you want, and then click **OK**.

The **Mail Merge Recipients** dialog box is displayed.

Click **OK** to return to the main document.

Step 4 of 6: Write Your Letter

In this step, you set up your main document.

Type or add any text and graphics that you want to include in your letter.

Add the field codes where you want the variable information to appear.

The **More Items…** Selection will display the Merge Codes. Make sure your cursor is where you want to insert the information from your data source before you click **More Items…**

In the **Insert Merge Field** dialog box, click the merge field that you want to use, and then click **Insert**.

NOTE: You can insert all of your fields and then go back and add any spaces or punctuation.

Or, you can insert one field at a time, close the **Insert Merge Fields** dialog box, add any spaces or punctuation that you want, and then repeat this step for each additional merge field that you want to insert. You can also format (apply bold or italic formatting to) the merge fields, just like regular text.

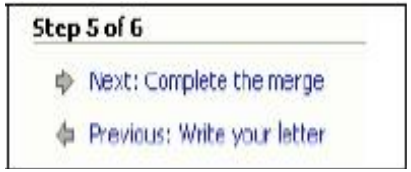
When you finish editing the main document, click **Save** or **Save As**

(Continued on page 10)

(Continued from page 9)

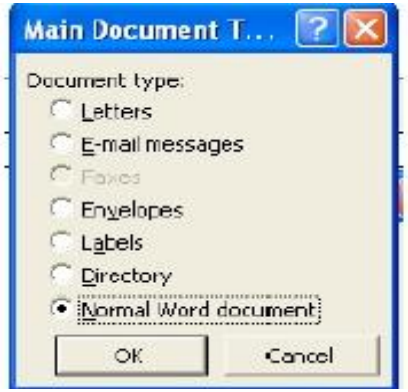
on the **File** menu. Name the file, and then click **Save**.
Click **Next: Preview your letters**.

Step 5 of 6: Preview Your Letters
This step allows you to preview your merged data, one letter at a time. You can also make changes to your recipient list or personalize individual letters.



Click **Next: Complete the merge**
Step 6 of 6: Complete the Merge
This step merges the variable information with the form letter. You can output the merge result by using either of the following options:
Print: Select this option to send the merged document directly to the printer. (***NOT RECOMMENDED***)
Edit individual letters: Select this option to display the merged document on your screen.
When you click **Edit individual letters**, the **Merge to New document** dialog box appears. In the **Merge to New document** dialog box, you can choose which records to merge. When you click **OK**, the documents are merged to a new Word document. To print the file, click **Print** on the **File** menu.
Restore a mail merge main document to a regular document
By removing the associated data source from a main document, you can convert it to a regular document.
1. Open the main document from which you want to remove the data source
2. Display the **Mail Merge** toolbar (If it isn't already displayed)
   Select Tools
   Letters and Mailings
   Show Mail Merge Toolbar
3. Click **Main Document Setup** icon

4. Click **Normal Word Document**



Barbara R. Wills © 2002
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Toilet Seats Cleaner than Keyboards

Australian IT

Keyboards, computer mice and telephone dials are more infested with microbes than toilet seats, according to a new study.
The University of Arizona study study recommends that office work stations be regularly disinfected since they can on average contain 400 times as many germs as a toilet seat, said Charles Gerba, a University of Arizona microbiologist.
According to the study, telephones harboured up to 25,127 germs per square inch, keyboards 3,295 and computer mice 1,676. The average office contains 20,961 germs per square inch.
"Desks are really bacteria cafeterias," Mr Gerba said. "They are breakfast bars, lunch tables and everything else, as we spend more hours at the office."
"When someone is infected with a cold or flu bug, the surfaces they touch during the day become germ transfer points because some cold and flu viruses can survive on surfaces for up to 72 hours," he added. "An office can become an incubator." US health officials last month warned about the dissemination of germs during the flu season.
And just for once we can't blame Apple, IBM, Microsoft, … - Ed.
ACT Apple May 2004

Things To Ponder

1. Can you cry under water?
2. When I was young we used to go "skinny dipping," now I just "chunky dunk."
3. How important does a person have to be before they are considered assassinated instead of just murdered?
4. If money doesn't grow on trees then why do banks have branches?
5. Why do you have to "put your two cents in"... but it's only a penny for your thoughts"? Where's that extra penny going to?
6. Once you're in heaven, do you get stuck wearing the clothes you were buried in for eternity?
7. Why does a round pizza come in a square box?
8. How is it that we put man on the moon before we figured out it would be a good idea to put wheels on luggage?
9. Why is it that people say they "slept like a baby" when babies wakeup like every two hours?
10. If a deaf person has to go to court, is it still called a hearing?
11. Why are you IN a movie, but you are ON TV?
12. Why do people pay to go up tall buildings and then put money in binoculars to look at things on the ground?
13. How come we choose from just two people for President and fifty for Miss America?
14. If a 000 operator has a heart attack, whom does he/she call?
15. I signed up for an exercise class and was told to wear loose-fitting clothing. If I HAD any loose-fitting clothing, I wouldn't have signed up in the first place!
16. Wouldn't it be nice if whenever we messed up our life we could simply press 'Ctrl Alt Delete' and start all over?
17. Stress is when you wake up screaming and then you realize you haven't fallen asleep yet.
18. Just remember...if the world didn't suck, we'd all fall off.
19 Why is it that our children can't read a Bible in school, but they can in prison?
20. If raising children was going to be easy, it never would have started with something called labour!
21. Brain cells come and brain cells go, but fat cells live forever.

Timesaving Printer Setups

If you have a colour printer, you probably print photos in colour but use black-and-white mode to save ink when printing text-only documents. Making that switch involves traipsing through a series of windows by mouse. You click the *Properties* button next to the Name drop-down list in your application's Printer dialog box, then select the necessary tabs and settings, then click *OK* to return to the Print dialog, and finally issue the command to print. Even more cumbersome is going to the Printers folder (*Start>Settings>Printers*), right-clicking a printer there, and choosing *Properties* before you can get to and open a print dialog box.

Reader Warren Broglie offers a tip to help you avoid spending a lot of time clicking and digging through dialog-box options: Create a separate printer icon for each type of print job.

Choose *Start>Settings>Printers* to open the Printers folder. Double-click the *Add Printer* icon to start the Add Printer Wizard. (In Windows 2000, confirm that the proper port is selected.) Click *Next*, and navigate through the wizard panels as if you were reinstalling your existing printer, repeating the choices you made when you first installed it. Once the wizard recognises that you're installing a printer already set up on your system, it will ask whether to keep the existing printer driver or install a new one. Click *Keep existing driver (recommended)* and then *Next.* On the subsequent screen, type a name for the new printer icon-for example, My Colour Settings (see FIGURE 2). This screen lets you make the named printer the default one. Click *Next*, and follow the remaining prompts to finish the wizard.

Now you have two icons for the same printer. Right-click the one you called *My Colour Settings*, and choose *Properties* (or press <Alt> and double-click the icon). Change the settings to suit your preferences for colour printing. When you're done, close that Properties dialog box and open the Properties dialog box for the original printer icon. Adjust its settings to handle another printing chore, such as black-and-white printing. When you're done, press <F2> and rename the icon something descriptive, like My Black-and-White Settings. Then press <Enter>. When you've named both icons properly, right-click the one whose settings you use more often and choose *Set as default*, if that option isn't already selected. Now close the Printers window.

The next time you need to print, open the Print dialog box in your application. In most cases, the dialog box will have a drop-down list of the printers that are set up on your system. Select the more appropriate printer for the task at hand-for example, My Colour Settings set any other desired print settings, and click *OK*.

By Scott Dunn

How to get ahead of advertisers

Don't just sit there complaining about those maddening pop-ups. It's time to fight for your right to privacy.

There are many reasons why you may despise banner advertising in your browser window. For a start, there are the badly-designed ones that can result in monstrous delays when opening a page. All the content you want to see has downloaded, but you can't see it until the advert has been transferred and displayed as well.

Infuriating yes, but what about when an advert appears in a separately-spawned infant window; the dreaded 'pop-up', or worse, the 'pop-under', which is concealed beneath the open window until you close it? Next time your browsing slows to a crawl, don't immediately blame the connection; minimise the browser window and make sure there aren't a flock of pop-unders eating up system resources instead.

If that wasn't bad enough, there's the added problem of 'spyware'. Also known as 'adware', these are parasitical applications that stealthily install alongside a 'free' or 'ad-sponsored' utility that you've downloaded. Although some will announce themselves in the small print of the free use license you agree to (without often reading), others don't bother with even this formality. What they all have in common is that you don't want them on your PC invading your privacy. Most will be tied in to the banner advertising that comes as part of the 'sponsoring' deal, doing the usual ad tracking and click-trail compiling.

Doing a little bit of 'googling' before downloading and installing that latest tempting bit of free software is always a good idea. If there's spyware involved, the community generally not only know about it, but will also be talking about it. Focus your search at groups.google.com and you'll quickly tap into any such conversations. It's also a good idea to regularly scan your PC for any spyware that might have sidestepped your defences already. While there are countless applications that will do this, some are actually spyware installers in disguise, others are as a good as useless, and the vast majority I've not heard of, let alone tried.

Because of this, I'll follow the personal recommendation route – which happens to concur with popular opinion online – and suggest the use of either AdAware (www.lavasoftusa.com) or Spybot S&D (www.safer-networking.org). Both spyware scanners will scan for existing applications and remove them for you. I tend to use AdAware as my primary scanner, which is run three times a week here, with Spybot (the S&D stands for Search and Destroy, rather sadly) running once each week to catch anything that gets missed. Their developers update frequently in order to catch all the latest threats. But if you think that installing these will solve all your unwanted advertising problems, think again.

Pop-up idol Online advertising is here to stay. The commercialisation of the Internet has seen to that and, let's be honest, it isn't actually that bad a thing. After all, without advertising revenue there would be much less free content, or at least much less free 'quality' content. The truth is that everyone needs to turn a buck or three to survive, and that's as true on the web as it is on the high street. Unfortunately, some people want to make more money than others, and so it was with the banner advertising industry. Not content with serving up their adverts to millions of eyeballs every day across the planet, or rather, not content with the relatively poor response (known in the trade as the click-through rate), they decided that the static and most certainly not in-yer-face banner ads of the day had to change.

This is where all the trouble really started. First we were treated to flashing banner ads, then full-on animated ones, with download times getting increasingly longer. Allegedly, the user wouldn't mind; connection rates are getting faster, so they'll never notice. The reality was that we did notice and we did mind, and we did something about it. We started to develop utilities that blocked banner ads, and soon enough they were all the rage. You could choose to have the ad replaced with a blank the same size, so that the page formatting wasn't changed, or you could strip the ad out before the download to save time and so on.

The consequence of this was that the ad serving businesses needed to produce ever more intrusive technologies to get our attention and serve the interests of those who advertised with them. The most hated example of this has to be the infamous pop-up advert, and more recently its evil twin, the pop-under. Instead of a simple banner forming part of the page you're looking at, a pop-up spawns a new browser window or frame in which to do its stuff – or more truthfully, several; pop-ups rarely come alone these days. Thankfully, we, as in the web-using community, have managed to keep on top of the problem, and there are now not only numerous pop-up stopper applications, but the facility is built into software firewalls and even browser clients.

With the advent of broadband connectivity for the masses (assuming your mass falls into a BT 'economically viable' area, of course) the pop-up problem is less one of download speed, and increasingly the double whammy of intrusion and annoyance. Either way, most of us don't like them. Here's a quick selection of tools to rid you of the things. Firstly, you could try an alternative web browser client – there's more to the world wide web than Internet Explorer (shock horror, hold the front page, Microsoft doesn't own the Internet yet). If you want to maintain the maximum Internet Explorer (IE) compatibility, then use something that wraps around the IE page-rendering core such as NetCaptor (www.netcaptor.com), which has a built in pop-up stopper called popupcaptor. Opera (www.opera.com) gives you a number of pop-up choices, and you can either allow all, refuse all, refuse unrequested pop-ups only, or open all in the background.

Why anyone would actively want to create pop-unders is beyond me. Netscape (www.netscape.com) has the neat idea of letting you allow or suppress pop-ups, but with an exception list in either case, so you could allow pop-ups with the exception of sites known to be abusive in this regard, or suppress them all, apart from particular sites where you need the facility. In my opinion, it's the open source (surprise surprise) Mozilla Firefox (www.mozilla.org/products/firefox) that deals with intrusive advertising the best. This standalone

client uses a system of extensions to add the functionality that you want, rather than taking the Internet Explorer bloatware approach, and throwing loads of stuff you don't want at you anyway. This means that in addition to built-in pop-up blocking (with exceptions list) you can choose extensions such as AdBlock (adblock. mozdev.org), which will filter banner ads at source and can be toggled quickly with a shortcut key combo. Alternatively, how about the to-die-for 'Flash Click to View' extension (ted. mielczarek.org/code/Mozilla), which replaces any Flash content with a blank box containing just the words 'Flash [click to play]'. If you want to download and see the Flash, click it, otherwise you're left in peace. This is particularly helpful now that advertising is using Flash to create highly intrusive 'multimedia event adverts' that literally float across the browser window on top of the content you actually want to see. Internet Explorer users who don't want to change browser can download one of the numerous pop-up stopper utilities, perhaps the best known being Pop-Up Stopper (www. panicware.com) and PopUpCop (www.popupcop.com).

However, my favourite route for Internet Explorer 5.5 or later is to install the Google Toolbar (toolbar.google.com) which brings one-click Google searching onto a browser toolbar and includes a very efficient pop-up blocker as standard. Web bugs Banners aren't only annoying, they can also compromise your privacy – although we must point out that the vast majority most certainly do not. Having said that, the very fact that a minority may abuse the system is reason enough to warrant a tough response from the client user community. The most common privacy abuse is aided by the use of web bugs, essentially 1 pixel GIFs that exploits a cookie's vulnerability. Cookies are generally innocuous enough, small text files generated by a remote web site and stored locally on your PC that essentially act as an ID tag. These are used to aid automated log-ons, and site personalisation, help to keep track of your site visits and so on. However, a third-party cookie – that is one that originates from a different site to the one you're actually visiting – when associated with a banner ad, can rather cleverly track your browsing habits and help the marketing droids build a better profile of you. They would say that this is for your own benefit, as it means banner advertising can be better targeted to meet your interests. But I say that I'm not interested in any banner advertising and it's an abuse of my privacy. So whichever browser I happen to use I configure it to refuse third-party cookies, and I haven't had any negative consequence yet. But unfortunately, a web bug deposited on your PC bypasses such cookie filtering. The bug is simply a 1-by-1 pixel graphic, either the same colour as the web page background or positioned off screen. It's served up by a remote site so that the server gets to know your IP address, the URL of the page you're visiting, when you 'viewed' the bug, what browser you used and so on. This isn't overly worrying, but they can also link with cookies already on your PC if they originate from the same remote server. This is where it gets interesting – if both happen to come from a company serving up banner ads, then it doesn't take a genius to see that by combining massive cookie distribution and web bugs, you, or rather they, end up with a pretty good profile of your browsing habits.

Throw in the fact that a web bug can be used within HTML email messages, and all of a sudden your privacy isn't so private after all. So how do you combat these things? Well, for a start, privacy laws, data protection legislation, and so on go some way to help put the use of web bugs on the back foot. This doesn't mean that they're not being used by some folk, but I always like to err on the side of paranoia. You can check the HTML source for any page you visit and look for IMG tags which match up with cookies stored on your PC, which have HEIGHT and WIDTH values of 1 and load from a remote server Alternatively, IE users can install Bugnosis (www.bugnosis.org). This Active-X utility works with IE 5+, and provides detail about what's really going on in the background when you load a page. Web jacking Also known as 'Homepage Hijacking', this isn't a new phenomena. Indeed, with my 'New Media Consultant' hat on I've been advising clients on how to avoid the problem for many years now. It's another example of how assault methodologies seem to have a life cycle of their own. Once a problem has hit the media, the problem dies down and folk slowly start becoming complacent again. Almost parasitical in nature, those who would wish your data harm know when your defences have reached a low enough point to attack again, and so it goes on – and on. One of the most common jacking traits forces a browser client to use a specific proprietary search page, rather than Google or whatever the user actually asks for, but there are numerous more sinister aims. For example, you get taken to a porn site when you fire your browser up, the action of connecting to that one site then spawns window after window of other sites with yet more porn. The only way out is to kill the browser process, often by taking the three-finger salute route ([Ctrl]+[Alt]+[Del]) and using Task Manager. The hijacker gains financially from your misery because they get paid by the sites that pop up, who are in turn paid by their advertisers for getting the adverts in front of thousands, often millions more pairs of eyes. Perhaps the most insidious hijacker is the one who hijacks so as to install a Trojan on your PC, thus allowing even more control over your resources and access to your data.

These often exploit unpatched vulnerabilities (such as scriptlet.typelib/Eyedog) in browsers like Internet Explorer 5, and enable an unsigned applet permission to both create and use ActiveX controls, for example. The result of this could be a 'dialler' installation which takes over when you connect to the Internet and leaves you with a premium line phone bill to pay. There are many solutions for this problem, but as prevention is always the best defence, start off by making sure that your system is up-to-date on Microsoft patches. Do this by running Windows Update and letting it do its stuff, and by being aware of every click you make while online. Right Click Reflex (RCR) is a syndrome that I've noticed, and a term I've coined, which can be best expressed as the more dialogue boxes that appear on our screens, the less time we take to read what they say, and eventually RCR kicks in and we just click the 'yes' option to everything. But

(Continued on page 14)

don't fall into this habit, otherwise you'll almost certainly become a hijack victim. OK, sermon over, now what about if you're already a victim and you need to get control back? First, try a search of your system for the .hta files that Windows Scripting Host uses on system startup. These tell Internet Explorer what the default homepage should be and what actions should be taken when you fire it up. Move the files to a temp folder, change your browser defaults to whatever 'you' want, restart, and see if things are back to normal. If they are, you can safely delete those .hta files. Deleting the 'hosts' file has the same effect, but again you need to be sure there's nothing in there you should be keeping first. That's the simple option. In a worst-case scenario, you may have to track down and eliminate an executable that's run when you start your PC, and which no end of Registry fishing or .hta homicide will cure. In the case of such a 'malware' installation, you'll have to track down the precise executable and zap it and its associated files. Sometimes this can be all but impossible, when a Registry-run key is used to add the malware keys to the Registry at start-up for example. The best advice is to delete nothing until you know exactly what you're dealing with. In order to determine this, go to www.spyware info. com/~merijn/ and download the Hijack This utility. Follow the instructions to run this and produce a log file. Visit www.spywareinfo.com and post the details in the relevant forums, where those who really know what they're talking about will decipher the information and provide you with the right answers with regard to deleting Registry keys and files.

The crux of the issue It doesn't take a genius to work out that there are two driving forces fueling the inappropriate advertising debacle – greed and sloppiness. There's greed from the advertisers and marketing firms who are out to make as much money as possible, whilst the laxity lays with both Microsoft, for leaving too many holes in their Internet applications and operating systems, and the end user, for not bothering to fill these holes as the patches become available. At least the release of the Windows XP Service Pack 2, scheduled for this Summer, is a step in the right direction. Internet Explorer will catch up with the competition by providing built in pop-up blocking from the toolbar by way of a simple 'click to configure' button. Similar protection will be offered against what has become known as the 'drive-by download', where downloads are triggered in the background as you browse a rogue web site. The updated IE downloads will need user permission by way of following links that get listed below the toolbar. A step in the right direction – yes. A final solution – no. The truth is that neither the law nor Microsoft can thwart the spammers – only we can. Until 'we' start to be proactive in the defence of our privacy, I doubt we'll make much of a difference either. Davey Winder

This article first appeared in PC Plus Issue 215 - May 2004

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Shoot the messenger

Head for your firewall configuration screen to stay one step ahead of those crafty spammers. Spammers know how to exploit technological loopholes to their full extent. Take as an example the amount of random words within spam messages. Not a word processor gone mad, but rather a 'dictionary cluster bomb' approach to confuse spam filters relying on high percentages of keywords within the body text to identify spam. By diluting this concentration with a mass of random but 'legitimate' text, the spam filter gets fooled.

The most technically impressive, and annoying mass advertising technique remains Windows Messenger Service Spam. Remote Procedure Call (RPC) spam exploits a little used Windows OS service that handles such things as UPS system alert distribution to ensure each desktop knows the system is about to close whatever they might be doing at the time. Don't confuse this with the Windows Messenger instant messaging chat client, they're completely different things.

For your average home user with a single desktop machine or a small home network, the chances are that they'll never have encountered an RPC message box, until the first time they get spammed. Then an alert box appears on the top of their screen, often claiming that their security has been compromised and offering to sell the solution. Many will fall for this or assume that they've been infected with a Trojan or virus of some kind. Traditional spam filtering methods won't catch these, as they bypass email security by landing straight on the desktop. Even many firewalls are scuppered because they don't block the right ports by default.

To kill messenger spam, my advice is not to follow the herd by turning the messenger service off. That's the sledgehammer and nut approach, and there are usually long-lasting consequences. So don't mess with the OS; instead fire up your firewall configuration screen and block incoming traffic to port 135.

PUNS FOR INTELLECTUALS

1. Two vultures boarded a plane, each carrying two dead raccoons. The stewardess stops them and says "sorry sir, only one carrion per passenger."

2. NASA recently sent a number of Holsteins into orbit for experimental purposes. They called it the herd shot round the world.

3. Two boll weevils grew up in N Carolina. One took off to Hollywood and became a rich star. The other stayed in Carolina and never amounted to much-and naturally became known as the lesser of two weevils.

4. Two Eskimos in a kayak were chilly, so they started a fire, which sank the craft, proving the old adage you can't have your Kayak and heat it too.

5. A three-legged dog walks into an old west saloon, slides up to the bar and announces "I'm looking for the man who shot my paw."

6. Did you hear about the Buddhist who went to the dentist, and refused to take Novocain? He wanted to transcend dental medication.

7. A group of chess enthusiasts checked into a hotel, and met in the lobby where they were discussing their recent victories in Chess tournaments. The hotel manager came out of the office after an hour, and asked them to disperse. He couldn't stand chess nuts boasting in an open foyer.

8. A women has twins, gives them up for adoption. One goes to an Egyptian family and is named "Ahmal" The other is sent to a Spanish family and is named "Juan". Years later, Juan sends his birth mother a picture of himself. Upon receiving the picture, she tells her husband she wishes she also had a picture of Ahmal. He replies, "They're twins for Petes sake!!" If you've seen Juan, you've seen Ahmal.

9. A group of friars opened a florist shop to help with their belfry payments. Everyone liked to buy flowers from the Men of God, So their business flourished. A rival florist became upset that his Business was suffering because people felt compelled to buy from the Friars, so he asked the Friars to cut back hours or close down. The Friars refused. The florist went to them and begged that they shut down. Again they refused. So the florist then hired Hugh McTaggert, the biggest meanest thug in town. He went to the Friars' shop, beat them up, destroyed their flowers, trashed their shop, and said that if they didn't close, he'd be back. Well, totally terrified, the Friars closed up shop and hid in their rooms. This proved that Hugh, and only Hugh, can prevent florist friars.

10. Mahatma Gandhi, as you know, walked barefoot his whole life, which created an impressive set of calluses on his feet. He also Ate very little, which made him frail, and with his odd diet, he suffered From very bad breath. This made him ... what? (This is so bad it's good...) a super-callused fragile mystic hexed by halitosis.

11. And finally... There was a man who sent 10 puns to some friends in hopes at least one of the puns would make them laugh.

Unfortunately, no pun in ten did!

A brief history of computing... 'I wish to God these calculations had been executed by steam!'

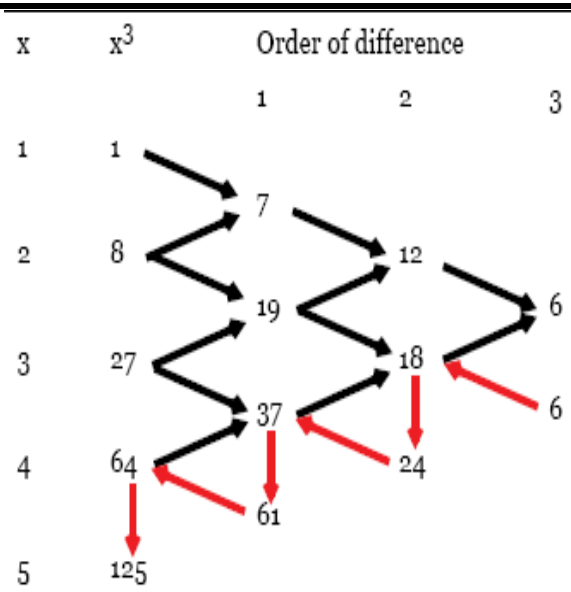
The engines of Mr Babbage

Peter Carter

For several centuries commerce, engineering and navigation relied on books of tables to aid calculations. Those tables were calculated by people, often by referring to other tables. It was a tedious process, fraught with error at every stage, and errors in navigation tables, for instance, could, and did, lead to disaster. It was errors in tables that led Charles Babbage, mathematician, engineer, politician, writer, inventor cryptographer, founder of scientific organisations... into a task that was to consume many years and much money. But it was an effort that did not lead to a successful conclusion, at least, not for nearly a century. Babbage determined to design and build a machine to calculate tables by the method of differences (hence the name, Difference Engine). In fact he was not the first to think of it: there is evidence that one JH Müller, a German army officer had devised, but had not built, such a machine. Babbage realised that calculating tables involved consistent progressions. He proposed to use the method of constant differences, a process that could be performed by gears and levers, and by 1822 he had produced a working model, a six-digit calculator

- ***Charles Babbage (1791–1871), in a daguerrotype taken about 1847***

To understand the method of differences, consider the calculation of cubes of numbers. First, subtract the cube of 1 (1) from the cube of 2 (8). The result, 7, is the first order of difference. Then subtract the cube of 2 from the cube of 3 (27) and the answer (19) is another first order difference. To find the second order difference, subtract 7 from 19, giving 12. The third order difference comes from further subtraction. Once the table (or machine) has been set up with its initial values, it can then calculate cubes by adding differences: shown by the red arrows. Having shown that the basic ideas were sound, Babbage realised that he would need lots of money to produce a practical machine, with its thousands of parts, built to a precision that was almost unheard of in the early 19th century. He sought, and received, funds from the British government. Much of that money was spent on developing new tools to produce parts to the necessary tolerances. After six years he needed more money, and received it. By now, disputes were starting with Clement, the engineer, and the arguments were to continue, hampering progress. After 19 years, with only an incomplete machine, the project was officially halted. Inspired by Babbage, the Swedish father and son team of Pehr and Edvard Scheutz designed and built their own difference machine, or Tabulating Machine as they called it. It was not as powerful as Babbage's design (four orders of difference instead of six), and not particularly reliable, but



it worked. The British government bought one, and used it to generate tables for the insurance industry

Meanwhile, Babbage had moved on to a new, more advanced concept: the Analytical Engine. This was to occupy him for the rest of his life, and he wrote thousands of pages of notes, hundreds of engineering drawings and charts showing how the machine was to operate it. Unlike the Difference Engine which simply calculated tables one step at a time, the Analytical Engine was to be programmable, capable of a range of calculating tasks, many of which would require logical decisions. The Analytical Engine was to be a computer. Today, we think of memory, the CPU, and mass storage. To Babbage, memory was the *store*, where numbers were kept on cogs on 50 primary axles. The CPU was the *mill*, with nine axles for multiplication and division, and two axles for the accumulators storing results. To program the machine, Babbage planned to use punch cards, like those already in use in Jacquard looms. (Herman Hollerith was to use punched cards in his system for the 1890 US census, and punched cards continued to be used in computing until well into the 20th century. (Hollerith's company, the Tabulating Machine Company, eventually evolved into International Business Machines.)) Much of what we know about programming the Analytical Engine comes from the pen of Augusta Ada Byron, Countess of Lovelace. A mathematician herself, she became friendly with Babbage, and translated a paper on the Analytical Engine that had been written by an Italian mathematician, expanding it with her own notes. Babbage toiled on,

Difference Engine No 1, in the Science Museum in London

eventually building a scaled-down version of the mill, and his son, Henry, also built experimental devices. But Babbage realised that he would never see the real Analytical Engine, that it could only be realised after he was gone. In fact, it was not until the 1940s that machines incorporating his seminal ideas appeared. In many instances, his ideas were re-invented. A good source of information on Babbage is the Science Museum in London, where the original machines and a working replica are on display: **<www.sciencemuseum. org.uk/on-line/babbage/>**. ***Above right: Portion of the Analytical Engine mill, including a printing device Right: A specimen piece of the Difference Engine, in the Powerhouse Museum in Sydney From AppleSauce* May 2004**

More Newbie Club Tutorials

Tutorial; ---- "404 Error - Page Not Available"

How many times have you clicked a link to visit a Website, and all that came up onto your screen was a page saying the requested page was not available. Or just simply '404 error'?

Many people assume that the page does not exist. Someone's made a typo. Some fool has messed up!

Well that's not always the case.

I know you're not interested in the techie reasons for this happening, but sometimes if you click 'Refresh', the page will load for you.

You'd be surprised at how often you'll be successful.

If that doesn't work, try returning later and see if it loads.

And sometimes you may find that a page is taking aaaaages to load. The bar in your taskbar is crawling across at a snail's pace, and you feel your eyes beginning to grow heavy and your chin slowly drops closer to your chest.

It is NOT recommended that you squirt lubricating oil into the back of your PC. However, the burning smell *will* keep you awake whilst you're staring at a black screen.

It's better to try clicking 'Stop' and refresh the page. Sometimes the page loads almost instantaneously.

Why? Coz it's technology, that's why:-)

Tutorial: "How To Change Font Size On Taskbar Buttons"

Would you like larger fonts on your taskbar buttons? Maybe you're a little short sighted, or just want to mess about a bit:-)

Here's how to do it...

1. Right click anywhere on your Desktop (not on an icon) and the context menu appears.
2. From the context menu, select Properties, and the Display Properties window appears.
3. Select the "Appearance" tab by clicking on it once.
4. Select the "Active Title Bar" from the "Item:" drop down list.
5. Adjust the font size, colour, bold, or italics using the selectors to the right of the font box.
6. Click Apply to see how things will look, then OK to put the Display Properties dialog box away.

Before closing the Display Properties window, you can save your setup as a "scheme". Click the "Save As..." button, and give you new setup a name. Then you can select it from the list you'll see under "Scheme:" next time you want to fiddle around a bit.

The Save As button will give you a "Save this colour scheme as" window... you may not have a colour scheme, but any changes you make will be called such. So they should have named this box "Save scheme as" instead of "Save colour scheme as"... but whatever. You get the point?

You can fiddle with any of the options in this window to create exactly the appearance you desire. Why limit yourself to the "out of the box" appearance of Windows? Go ahead... customize to your heart's content!

Tutorial; "A Newbie's Biggest Problem"

Last week I downloaded a program to my PC - and lost it! Yet I've downloaded so many times I've lost count. But it still happens - even to the most experienced of PC users. But usually because we momentarily lose concentration before we click the 'Download' button.

We get very few emails from customers having problems with our ebooks and courses, but by far the biggest cause of these problems lies in the downloading process. Sure it's easy to download. Click, click, and it's in your computer in no time. But where?. If you read this newsletter each week, you'll know how to find a file when it's lost. But when you *do* find it - why doesn't it open properly? HOW do you open it?

And as far as unzipping is concerned, what's a self extracting file? And why is WinZip so complicated? (That's why I mention every week that the UnZip Wizard is so Newbie-Friendly. You can get a 30 day No-Cost trial here http://newbieclub.com/wizard)

Yet downloading is *not* a difficult process, as long as you follow a couple of very basic rules. After that, you'll be downloading so much stuff your hard drive will choke:-)

So here goes. It may be better if you print this out or move it to a folder

named 'Downloading'. And if you want to practice downloading until it becomes second nature, then download some of the stuff in section 8 below. Do it once, then delete it. Do it again then delete it, until you can do it in your sleep.

Tutorial Pt 2 ... "How To Overcome A Newbie's Biggest Problem"

I'm not going to say you CAN'T do this... but I *am* saying you shouldn't do it.

When you download, don't try to download directly to a floppy disk, or to a CD-ROM. Download to your computer's C: drive.

Why?

Your hard drive is MUCH faster than your A: drive (floppy drive). And it holds a lot more than a little 1.44 megabyte floppy could ever think of holding.

Many of our customers have tried downloading our products to their floppy disks, or to a CD. I always tell them to download to their hard drive, or "C: drive" then to make a COPY of the program onto their CD.

We only have one program that is small enough to fit on a floppy disk: Keyboard Magic. It is about half a megabyte in size... which means you could fit two of them on a floppy! (See what Keyboard Magic is all about by visiting: http://newbieclub.com/keyboard

CDs are usually created by going through your CD software that lets you "burn" a CD. We don't have tutorials on this process, as it differs greatly, depending on the manufacturer of the software and player you have installed.

But when it comes to downloading, just save the file to your computer's hard drive. Then move it later. This will save you a lot of frustration!

Shutdown Problems In All OSes

Dear Fred: I need your help as I am unable to resolve this problem. The problem is every time when I shutdown my computer pentium III 733 mhz 512ram Windows ME, it does not shutdown properly and I have to press the shutdown button on the tower to shut it down.

So every time I switch on the computer the scan disk will scan for problems as I did not shut it down properly

So hoping you maybe able to help me on this and shall be eternally grateful if you will be able to resolve this problem for me.

Thanks ---

Lee Hee Yiow Shutdown problems can happen in any OS. They were (and sometimes still are) very common in Win9x: To try to keep everything orderly and intact, Windows wants to make sure that everything's properly closed and finished before shutting all the way down. But sometimes, a driver or piece of software won't "let go." In the case of drivers, the most common problem is when some system component is suspended to save power, but then can't wake up again to complete a normal shutdown. The shutdown process then stalls.

WinME started using new driver types, which reduced the problem, but didn't eliminate it completely. Win2K and XP encounter fewer still shutdown issues; but any OS--- including Linux--- can experience the problem.

There's lots of shutdown-problem help available:

Win98: http://www.google.com/search?q=windows+98+shutdown

WinME: http://www.google.com/search?q=windows+me+millennium+shutdown

Win2K: http://www.google.com/search?q=windows+2000+2k+shutdown

XP: http://www.google.com/search?q=windows+xp+shutdown

Linux: http://www.google.com/search?q=linux+shutdown+problem+hang

From LangaList 20/5/2004

Looking for Help With PageFile/Swapfile Sizes

Hello, I've been trying to figure out the best size for a page file and if I should use more then one on different drives. I currently have 512MB RAM but I'm a bit confused as to what size I should make the initial size and what should be the max size and how is the size calculated. I've heard that Microsoft calculates it at 1.5 times the amount of RAM so if I'm figuring this properly then my current size should be 512 times 1.5 equaling 768 and my Max size should be 768 times 1.5 equaling 1152. Is this proper or should it be different.

Thanks for any thoughts in this area of gray since my gray matter isn't handling it well. ---Dave

It's not you, Dave--- it's an area rife with confusion.

You didn't say which OS you're using. That's important because, with XP, Microsoft actually got it mostly right: You usually can just accept the system recommendations, which are pretty good. You can lock them in as fixed sizes if you wish, but the actual recommended and max sizes will be OK for most mainstream systems. The automatic suggestions do work less well on systems with large amounts of RAM--- say, over 1 GB. In those cases, you may want to rein in the size of the swapfile a bit. But for most normal systems, accepting the automatic sizing usually produces decent results. Also, see #7 in http://www.informationweek.com/story/IWK20011204S0009 for more info on XP's pagefile/swapfile options, including using multiple drives.

For other Windows, swapfile management gets somewhat fuzzier, but Dave's rule-of-thumb approach is probably fine.

Lots more info: XP: http://www.google.com/search?q=page+swap+file+xp 2000: http://www.google.com/search?q=page+swap+file+2000 WinME: http://www.google.com/search?q=page+swap+file+me+millennium Win98: http://www.google.com/search?q=page+swap+file+98

From LangaList 6/5/2004

Convert Your Setup Floppies To CD

This reader's question is specific to a couple sets of installation floppies, but the answer actually applies to just about *any* software you have on floppies: Usually, one of two methods will let you burn and use a new all-in-one setup CD for that software:

Trying to put windows for workgroups 3.1 on cd to be able to install from cd instead of the 8 disks. only don't know how to and make it work. How would I go about it. Also have the 23 disks for windows 95 and would like to setup from cd instead of the lengthy process of installing from floppies. And the reason for doing this is so I can try Microsoft's virtual pc [See "Microsoft's 'Virtual PC' Is Too Good Not To Check Out" at http://www.informationweek.com/story/showArticle.jhtml?articleID=18600449]. Still trying to figure how to install windows 3.1 from floppies into virtual pc and try out multiple operating systems in a virtual pc form, instead of multiple partitions on my pc. Any help In these two matters would be highly appreciated. Loyal member for approx 2 years. Sincerely Tony

I usually set it up two ways:

1) Make a separate folder for each floppy (eg disk1, disk2, disk3, etc) and copy the appropriate floppy contents into each folder. Make sure you copy all hidden files and folders, too.

2) Copy all the floppy contents into a single folder. There may be a few duplicate files scattered across the setup disks; let them overwrite each other.

Burn both versions, above, to a blank CD. Take a look at the contents of the #1 floppy, and see what the master setup file is: It's usually called "setup" or "install" or something equally obvious.

To use the CD, try starting the install from the #2 version first: Change to the directory with all the files in it, type (or click on) the name of the master setup file ("setup" or "install" or whatever) and let 'er rip. If that doesn't work, try pointing the setup at each separate folder in sequence; or switching to the "disk1" folder and triggering the setup from there.

From LangaList 8/5/2004