PATACS Posts

Newsletter of the Potomac Area Technology and Computer Society

Apple, Google, & Microsoft Create Technology Ecosystems
By Sandy Berger, CompuKISS www.compukiss.com   sandy (at) compukiss.com

Today's technology is being separated into ecosystems. Will you buy into Apple's ecosystem? Google's Ecosystem? Amazon's? or Microsoft's? Or perhaps you have already bought into one or the other without even knowing it? This is a must read for anyone making purchasing a piece of digital equipment or software.

Not only has technology changed over the last few years, but the way we use technology has also changed. There used to be two main camps when it came to technology: PC and Mac. These were built around the two competing computers systems, Microsoft's Windows PC operating system and Apple's Mac operating system. Software was written specifically for each of these systems, so you couldn't use PC software on a Mac or Mac software on a PC. When you bought a computer, you pretty much bought into one of these two types of computers. The PCs and Apple battled it out for years with PC garnering more than 90% of the market and Apple never getting out of single digits.

Now, however, things have completely changed. With the introduction of the iPhone and the iPad, Apple has soared in popularity. Other large companies have become technology powerhouses. Google with their Android operating system and Amazon have both entered the fray, while Microsoft is struggling to keep up.

Previously we were only talking about computers, but now we are talking about smartphones, tablets, and cloud computing. We are talking about entire ecosystems. The choices are mind-boggling. Each of the above mentioned companies is trying to get you to buy into their ecosystem. Each is pretty much proprietary. That means that for the most part, they are incompatible.

Right now, Apple has the largest ecosystem (I call it an ecosystem because it is an entire network or environment where one thing is dependent on another.) Apple's iPhone and iPads run on the iOS operating system. These devices run apps, which are like mini software programs that are purchased from the iTunes App store. There are currently more than 500,000 in Apple's App store. Some are free, but many are sold for a fee. These can only be used on Apple devices. If you switch to a Google Android phone or tablet, you cannot use the Apple products that you may have already purchased. You have to repurchase them from the Android Marketplace that has apps similar to those found in the Apple iTunes store.

This ecosystem also extends to storage and services in the cloud (think Internet). Apple has announced a cloud service, called iCloud that lets you store infor-

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Happy Holidays

Useful Bits & Pieces December 2012
By Lorrin R. Garson, PATACS

Windows Keyboard Shortcuts

Using shortcuts rather than "mousing and clicking" can significantly increase your productivity.

As a well-known example, "CTRL+C" means while holding down the control key, press the letter "C" to copy the highlighted object into memory (aka buffer). Many shortcuts apply to the Windows operating system and Microsoft Office (aka MS Office or just Office) as well as other applications. The keyboard shortcuts described below focus on Microsoft Windows 7 and Microsoft Office 2010, but many, if not most, apply to earlier versions of Windows, Microsoft Office and older applications

Some of the shortcuts may initially seem awkward, but with practice they become automatic if not intuitive. You won't remember all of these, but try those that look promising, jot them down and practice—a dozen or so will soon become second nature to you.

Keyboard Shortcut	Word	PowerPoint	Excel	Action
CTRL-Q	x	x		In Word: Text in current paragraph left and right justified. In PowerPoint "quit" or close the file
CTRL-E	x	x		Text in current paragraph centered [toggle in Word]
CTRL-R	x	x		Text in current paragraph right justified, ragged left [toggle in Word]
CTRL+L	x	x	x	Text in current paragraph left justified, ragged right [toggle in Word] Create a table in Excel
CTRL+B	x	x	x	Bold highlighted text [toggle]
CTRL+I	x	x	x	Italicize highlighted text [toggle]
CTRL+U	x	x	x	Underline highlighted text [toggle]
CTRL+=	x	x		Subscript highlighted text [toggle]
CTRL+Shift++	x	x		Superscript highlighted text [toggle]
CTRL+D	x			In Word brings up the Font window. In Excel replaces contents of the current cell with the contents of above cell.
CTRL+Shift+>	x			Increases font size of highlighted text
CTRL+Shift+<	x			Decreases font size of highlighted text
CTRL+]	x			Increase font of highlighted text by 1 point
CTRL+[	x			Decrease font of highlighted text by 1 point
END	x	x	x	Moves cursor to end of line
HOME	x	x	x	Moves cursor to beginning of line
CTRL-A	x	x	x	In Word and Excel highlight the entire document. In PowerPoint highlight the entire slide.
SHIFT+F7	x	x	x	Displays the Thesaurus window
CTRL-N	x	x	x	Open a new blank window (new document)

Keyboard Shortcut	Action
CTRL+C	Copies highlighted object into buffer
CTRL+V	Saves contents of buffer to cursor location
CTRL+S	Saves the current document/file
CTRL+X	Copies highlighted objected into buffer and deletes the highlighted object
CTRL+Z	Undoes most recent actions, i.e., undo
CTRL-P	Print the current file/document
F1	Displays "Help" for the current application
PrtScn	Captures current screen into buffer

Keyboard Shortcut Orb is on taskbar	Action
Orb+L	Locks computer or switch users
Orb+M	Display desktop. Minimizes current windows and reverts them to Taskbar
Orb+Shift+M	Restores minimized windows
Orb+D	Display desktop. Minimizes current windows and reverts them to Taskbar [toggle]
Orb+Up Arrow	Maximizes current window (full display)
Orb+Down Arrow	Normalizes current window or closes window to Taskbar
Orb+Right Arrow	Positions current window on the right or "normalizes" current window
Orb+Left Arrow	Positions current window on the left or "normalizes" current window
Orb+Shift+Up Arrow	Stretches current window to top and bottom of screen
Orb+Shift+Down Arrow	Returns current window to normal display/position
Orb+Home	Minimizes all but current (active) window [toggle]
Orb+Spacebar	Display desktop without minimizing open windows (Aero Peek)
Orb+E	Opens Windows Explorer with "computer" (not Windows Internet Explorer) Equivalent to Start [left-click] Computer
Orb+F	Opens search window for locating files and folders
Orb +G	Cycles through Gadgets (if installed). Microsoft advises Windows Sidebar and Gadgets be disables (see https://technet.microsoft.com/en-us/security/advisory/2719662 and http://support.microsoft.com/kb/2719662.
Orb+PAUSE	Display basic computer information
Orb+TAB	Display and toggle through applications and windows (Aero)
Orb+ALT+TAB	Display and toggle through applications and windows (Aero)
Orb+P	Offers choice of presentation display modes
Orb+R	Opens the Run dialog box
Orb+U	Opens "Ease of Access Center"

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By Ira Wilsker

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Since I was old enough to hold a book, I have been an avid reader. Our living room and all of the bedrooms in my house have at least one wall covered by a filled bookshelf. All of my children were brought up with a love of books and reading, a love that has been passed on to their children. On a regular basis I purchase books for myself and my family from the local bookstores, as well as online sources such as Amazon and Better World Books (my personal favorite). For the past few years I have been supplementing my physical book purchases with digital book purchases, purchasing titles that can be read on my computers or smartphone.

In past columns I had written about the vast libraries of free books available from Google (books.google.com), and Project Gutenberg (www.gutenberg.org). While there is obviously some redundancy and overlap in titles between all of the resources, I have been downloading or viewing online countless free books from other resources including the Open Library, and the free libraries available from Amazon for its Kindle reader and Barnes and Noble for its Nook reader.

The Open Library (OpenLibrary.org) has an extensive library of well over a million ebooks available (precisely 1,191,271 ebooks available as I type this). Registration on the site is required for access, but registration is free and very easy; no personal information is required to register. The Open Library offers much more than just free ebooks, it also offers other interest-

ing services to its members. Open Library has over a million titles labeled with a green, open book "Read Icon" which indicates that the titles with that icon are available to all for free. An orange lock "Daisy Icon" indicates over 250,000 modern ebooks available in the "Protected DAISY" format for the " U.S. print-disabled community". A green book "Borrow Icon" indicates any of the 10,000 titles that indicate a book that can be borrowed by anyone from the Open Library, limited to one copy at a time, for up to two weeks. This same "Borrow Icon" also indicates books that may be available to be lent to other libraries.

The Open Library is fully searchable with a variety of available search options. I did a simple search limited to ebooks of the word "nursing" and had 1,842 hits. The default display sorts the results by relevance, but the display can also be sorted by "Most Editions", "First Published" , or "Most Recent". The results were about evenly split with titles displaying the "Read Icon" indicating that the book is available to anyone to read, or a "Daisy Icon" (yellow lock) indicating that those titles are restricted to the "U.S. print-disabled community". Being especially fond of antique books, I selected a readable version of "The Nurse", written by Luigi Tansillo, and first published in 1800. Clicking on the title opened the menu displaying the available options for this particular book. For "The Nurse" there were several options presented. Being somewhat ethnocentric, I selected the 3rd edition published in English in 1804, rather than the 2nd edition published in Italian in 1800. I first selected the "Read Online" option, which opened a web based reader; this displayed images of each page of the book, along with simple and intuitive controls. One helpful feature was a speaker icon on the top-right corner of the display, which would read each page using a computerized speech synthesis, much like a traditional audio book. Other options available included the ability to download the book in a wide selection of digital formats including PDF, plain text, DAISY, ePub, DjVu, MOBI, and "Send to Kindle". With over a million other free ebook titles available in a variety of formats, there is likely to be something available for everybody.

It is hard to watch TV, read a magazine, or listen to the radio without hearing an advertisement for Amazon's Kindle or Barnes and Noble's Nook series of digital e-readers. While those tablet-like digital devices are enormously popular, both Amazon (tinyurl.com/9yeuuan) and Barnes and Noble (www.barnesandnoble.com/u/nook-mobile-apps/379003593) offer a wide assortment of free apps (applications) for almost all computers and smart devices including PCs, MACs, iPhones, iPads, Android smart phones and tablets, and a variety of other devices. On my Android smartphone and all of my PCs, I have downloaded and installed (free) both the Amazon Kindle and Barnes and Noble Nook apps. While I can purchase millions of titles with either the Kindle or Nook apps, it is worthwhile to know that both Amazon and Barnes and Nobel offer a large library of free books and other publications for download! As I type this, I currently have about 100 free books already downloaded to my smartphone, an available personable library to keep me occupied and entertained for many hours.

Amazon has an extensive library of over 60,000 free Kindle formatted ebooks available for download (tinyurl.com/FreeKindleBooks101912); while most are permanently available once downloaded, Kindle also offers a free "lending library" of thousands of other titles for its "Amazon Prime" members. Many other websites, such as Open Library, also offer many of their collection of free titles in Kindle format. The website FreeStuffTimes.com recently published a listing of its 99 favorite free Kindle ebooks available from Amazon; this listing is available at freestufftimes.com/99-free-kindle-ebook-downloads .

Barnes and Noble's Nook e-reader is offering Amazon's Kindle some stiff competition in the e-reader market place. Barnes and Noble offers free versions of the Nook reader for almost all platforms and operating systems (www.barnesandnoble.com/u/nook-mobile-apps/379003593), including a variety of tablets (iPad, Android, and "NOOK Kids for iPad"), smartphones (iPhone, iPod Touch, Android), computers (Windows and MAC), and a "NOOK for Web" which can be used in any internet web browser. Barnes and Noble offers its nook users a huge assortment of free ebooks and Nook apps (barnesandnoble.com/u/Free-eBooks/379003078); while many of the available books are full versions, many others are listed as "Special Free Previews" which only include a limited number of chapters

rather than an entire book. As I type this, Barnes and Noble is offering 1,842,036 free ebooks (full editions), free apps for the Nook, and "Special Free Previews". One tip that I use to find the free Nook ebooks of personal interest is to select a category in the "Nook Books" directory, and then sort by price, with the lowest prices first — the free Nook ebooks rise to the top of the list.

With millions of free ebooks available in a variety of formats that can be viewed on almost all modern computers, tablets, and smart devices, there is no valid reason why we cannot be a more literate and educated society. These free ebooks are readily available, so please take advantage of the knowledge and entertainment that they may provide.

[*PATACS Ed. Note:* For more free Kindle books — See under Kindle Store — Kindle Books — Best Sellers — a changing list of "top sellers" both paid and free in a variety of genres. *BJ*]

A district manager from the franchise happened to be in the building the same night as one of our meetings. He promised it would get fixed. A few months later, when it was not, we contacted him again. He actually fired the 3rd party and hired someone else. We now have WiFi and he has happy customers, who were about to go elsewhere.

Merely offering free Wi-Fi to customers is not enough. Having it work consistently gets you repeat and happy customers. At a minimum, every shift manager should know how to reset a router, if they receive complaints. Certainly they should show the customer a concern and see that it get repaired by doing a follow up. It's called training.

I also carry an extension cord and strip in my car, in case there is but one outlet and it needs to be shared, or it is not near an open table.

Linux and Open Source News
By Geof Goodrum, PATACS linux(at)patacs.org

Recycling Home Electronics

As you prepare for Holiday shopping, you may find yourself with various electronic devices that are due for replacement. Several communities and companies in our area accept and recycle (or "eCycle") or reuse electronic devices and parts.

The national source for information on eCycling is the US Government's Environmental Protection Agency's web site at http://www.epa.gov/ecycling/ . The left side of the web page has a link for "Where You Live" with state-by-state guides to electronics recycling programs. The "Where Can I Donate ..." link has information on a number of national programs, including companies like Best Buy, Hewlett-Packard and Dell that have eCycling programs. Best Buy stores accept many items such as used inkjet cartridges, cell phones, and rechargeable batteries (http://www.bestbuy.com/ , "Recycle Your Old Products" under "Services"), regardless of where it was purchased. Dell provides a variety of eCycling services, including partnerships with Goodwill Industries and Staples, as well as a mail-back of electronics as a free option with the online purchase of a new Dell system (http://content.dell.com/us/en/corp/dell-environment-recycling). Users of Apple devices can find more information on recycling and trade-in offers at http://www.apple.com/recycling/ .

Virginia residents can find information about local community eCycling programs at http://www.deq.state.va.us/Programs/LandProtectionRevitalization/RecyclingandLitterPreventionPrograms/ElectronicsRecycling.aspx . The City of Alexandria accepts electronics for recycling every Saturday and Monday at the 3224 Colvin Street drop-off site at no charge to residents (http://alexandriava.gov/tes/solidwaste/info/default.aspx?id=19206). Similarly, Fairfax County residents can drop off a variety of electronic equipment, including cell phones, batteries, printers and PCs, at no charge — http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/recycling/mat-comp).

The EPA site links to Maryland's eCycling site (http://www.mde.state.md.us/programs/Land/RecyclingandOperationsprogram/SpecialProjects/Pages/programs/landprograms/recycling/specialprojects/ecycling.aspx), which, in turn, links to local community programs.

Note that you should "sanitize" any storage medium before disposing of it. Even modern digital copy machines for office use may contain hard disks with stored images of sensitive documents like medical records and tax returns. The Virginia site referenced above provides some useful links, and your user group can provide assistance.

'Tis the Season to Call Customer Support

Online shopping has a lot of advantages – no long lines, online comparison shopping, more stock available – but a big downside is finding a person to talk to when you have questions or problems with an order or item. This can be particularly difficult for retailers that don't have local stores that you can visit or return items to. Often, the phone number for "e-tailers" are difficult to find, or the phone menu systems are mazes with no easy access to live help.

Below are websites that list the support phone numbers and can help you quickly navigate customer support telephone systems to reach a live person for help.

- ✓ http://contacthelp.com/
- ✓ http://gethuman.com/
- ✓ http://www.nophonetrees.com/

Featured Linux Software of the Month December 2012

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

- **Clementine – v1.1**
  http://www.clementine-player.org/
  Free GNU General Public License source code and executable packages for Debian/Ubuntu and Fedora.
  Clementine is a multi-platform (Windows, Mac OS X and Linux) music player. It is inspired by Amarok 1.4, focusing on a fast and easy-to-use interface for searching and playing your music. Features include: Search and play your local music library; Play audio CDs; Listen to Internet radio from Spotify, Grooveshark, Last.fm, SomaFM, Magnatune, Jamendo, SKY.fm, Digitally Imported, JAZZRADIO.com, Soundcloud, and Icecast; Search and play songs you've uploaded to Google Drive; Create smart playlists and dynamic playlists; Tabbed playlists, import and export M3U, XSPF, PLS and ASX; CUE sheet support; Visualizations from projectM; Lyrics and artist biographies and photos; Transcode music into MP3, Ogg Vorbis, Ogg Speex, FLAC or AAC; Edit tags on MP3 and OGG files, organize your music; Fetch missing tags from MusicBrainz; Discover and download Podcasts; Download missing album cover art from Last.fm and Amazon; Native desktop notifications on Linux (libnotify) and Mac OS X (Growl); Remote control using a Wii Remote, MPRIS or the command-line; Copy music to your iPod, iPhone, MTP or mass-storage USB player; Queue manager; Show nearby concerts for an artist using the Songkick API.

- **Knotter – v0.8.**
  http://www.knotdraw.org/
  Free GNU General Public License source code and executable packages for Debian/Ubuntu and Fedora/OpenSUSe by Mattia Basaglia. Knotter is a highly configurable interlace designer. Interlace patterns are a kind of design historically used as a decorations in many places and by different cultures (some examples are Celtic knotworks and Islamic interlaces). Knotter aims to allow its user to design such patterns in an intuitive way and to provide easy ways to integrate the result into external general-purpose graphic software. For this purpose, designs created within Knotter can be saved in a custom human-readable format and exported as Scalable Vector Graphics and in a wide number of raster image formats.

- **moneyGuru** – v2.6.1
  http://www.hardcoded.net/moneyguru/
  Free Revised BSD License source code and executable packages for Ubuntu by . moneyGuru is a personal finance management application. It allows you to evaluate your financial situation so that you can make informed (and thus better) decisions. Most finance applications have the same goal, but moneyGuru's difference is in the way it achieves it. Rather than having reports which you have to configure (or find out which pre-configured report is the right one), your important financial data (net worth, profit) is constantly up-to-date and "in your face". This allows you to constantly make informed decision rather than doing so periodically. moneyGuru can import QIF, OFX, QFX and CSV files and can export to QIF and CSV.

- **ZShaolin – v0.5**
  http://www.dyne.org/software/zshaolin/
  Free GNU General Public License source code by jaromil et al (executable app for purchase on Google Play). ZShaolin installs a small and powerful scriptable shell environment on your Android device. It comes with applications to edit images, audio, and video using batch scripts one can write and upload; FFMpeg, ImageMagick, Sox, Oggz, Lua, GNU awk, sed, grep, and of course zsh. This release fixes usage of ImageMagick and lets busybox applications connect to the network. The ZShaolin keyboard service has been removed, and the authors now recommend using a real keyboard. Wipe has been included for secure (unrecoverable) deletion of files. Several improvements and cleanups have been made to the build system.

- **Kernel Source – v3.6.4**
  http://www.kernel.org/
  Free GNU General Public License source code for all platforms by the Linux community.

Document Your Life with Photo-Graphic Memory

By Phil Sorrentino, Member, Sarasota PCUG, Florida
September 2012 issue, PC Monitor www.spcug.org pcugedit (at) verizon.net

A photographic memory is probably something we all would like. And, just think, you can have at least the effect of a photographic memory just by using your camera and your computer to document your activities… your life.

It is amazing how much paper we collect along the way. Most of it goes neatly into file folders and then those folders go neatly into multi-draw filing cases or boxes. Before you know it you have multiple multi-draw filing cases in the den, the home office and/or the bedroom closet. Have you ever looked at the pile of paper you have collected over these many years? It's not a pretty picture. Now there are some things that we just have to hang on to, like licenses, automobile registrations, titles of any sort, and certain special papers that might have an emotional or historical attachment. But the rest of the pile might be eliminated or at least pared down. (And how about old tax forms? How many years do you have to keep the paper? Or is an electronic copy good enough for taxes paid 10 years ago?)

What I'm suggesting is that with your computer, and a scanner and a camera, you can probably cut the paper you need to save down to a very manageable size, and even eliminate some of those storage cases. The scanner is really the key here. The camera is for unusually large items, or those things that just can't be copied on a flat-bed scanner. Consider this, review the contents of some of those folders and if you need to know that something occurred, and is relevant, like an award you were given from your last employment. If you have not looked at it since you received it, then you can probably scan it in and throw away the original. I know how difficult this will be for some people, but after a little practice it will get a lot easier. (A very important thing here is that you have adequate "backup" to guarantee that you will never lose the scanned in files. If you don't have adequate backup, which means multiple copies of the data files of the scanned objects, than this is not going to be a good idea. So before you commit to this, make sure you have a good backup plan in place. Make sure that you can guarantee at least two if not three copies of the scanned in files. The first two cop-

ies could be two external or portable disk drives and the third might be on DVD or a flash memory device.) Once the backup plan is in place and you are really using it, the fun begins. Gather your papers, separate the ones that you have to keep and make a pile of those that can be shredded after they are scanned. Do you really need those greeting cards you received 15 years ago?

In order to make sure that you can retrieve any of these "documents", it is good to establish a naming convention before you start to scan the paper documents; after all, it is no use to have all the data if you can't access it quickly. As you collect your scanned documents, you will be creating a database. Two popular ways of organizing your database are 1- by date, and 2- by event. If every file that you want to keep has a name starting with "yyyy-mm-dd" and is followed by a descriptive name, then when the digital files are put in a digital folder, they will organize in a chronological fashion. yyyy represents the year, like 2011, mm represents the numerical value of the month like 04 for April, and dd represents the day of the month like 01 for April 1. (For some databases only the year and month may be adequate.) Now, when you go looking for a document, all you have to know is the date associated with the item, and you can just look in the chronological order to find it. Let's say that if you scanned in an award that you received in June 1976, then you would look in the area of 1976-06, to find that document. Windows Explorer makes it easy to find scanned documents because it shows a thumbnail photo of the file, while you are searching for the file. This is especially helpful because a scanned file is usually saved as a .jpg file, a picture file.

If you do use this naming convention, then you can organize your folders to represent either years (or groups of years), or events. If you choose to be completely chronological, then the folders will be named 1970, 1971, 1972,… you get the idea. Then you could put the 1970s folders into a folder named 1970s, and you could do the same with all other decades. If you choose to organize around events, then the folders

might have names like "awards", "house info", "car info", "career",.. – really, any collection of events or things that makes sense to you and any others who will use the database.

Besides your scanned in documents, you can include photos from your digital camera. If you use the same naming convention with your photos, then you can mix them in with the documents and they all will organize in chronological order. Sometimes that makes a lot of sense when you have both pictures and documents that are part of the same event. This combination sometimes helps tell the complete story of the activities of the specific event.

Another way to organize your database is to organize your folders around event; then you might name your folders "birthdays", "anniversaries", "parties", "weddings",… you get this idea too. So these would represent those types of events throughout the years. The fact that the files are chronologically named means they would organize chronologically inside the folders, making it easy to find a specific event within an event folder. And you can mix the two types of database folders. You could have your basic folders chronologically named, but inside a year you might have a series of events like "a vacation trip to the Grand Canyon" where the pictures from the trip would show what you saw and the documents you collected like maps and brochures from the particular destinations. As long as each file is chronologically named, the files will organize in a way that will make it easy for you to find a specific document, or group of pictures.

Not only do you save storage space, but once your pictures and documents are in your database, they are immediately available because they are literally at your finger tips (if your fingers are on the keyboard). I bet you'll be able to impress your friends how fast you can find those awards you received from your first employer. Of course there are always a few items that just can't be committed to electronic files and there are always a few pictures of the grandchildren that just must be made into an 8 by 10 for the wall. But, just think, with a lot of those paper documents shredded, and all of your photos committed to digital files, you won't need all of that paper and picture storage. It will probably free up some valuable storage space and maybe you can even make a few bucks by selling those filing cabinets.

Wi-Fi On The Road

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Vice President, Central FL Computer Society
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In the past, finding free Wi-Fi away from home was difficult, if not impossible. However, most of the fast food restaurants and many other locations now make Wi-Fi available. If that is true, and it is, that should be the end of my article.

However, in a recent column by a local newspaper, there is a growing issue of quality of that Wi-Fi. I have found McDonalds' connections consistently good. It has the AT&T name and their hotspots seem to be maintained.

I recently stopped at a Burger King, which had a sign advertising Free Wi-Fi. After I ordered my food and sat down, I could not find their hotspot. When I approached the employees, including the shift manager, my response was, "Oh, it doesn't always work." I guess this was one of those times.

While I was there, I noticed a man who was bringing in his laptop and a printer to use the Wi-Fi to send a report to his boss. He set up on the floor as there was not a table near the electrical outlet.

Once he was set up, he also approached the employees about getting on line, without any more help than I had received. I told him where the nearest McDonalds' was located.

That brings me to my point. While many of these restaurants have Wi-Fi, the quality or the consistency of it working is not always reliable. To compound that, one of my friends pointed out that he recently stopped at a McDonalds, only to discover that his laptop battery was dead, and that particular location had no electrical outlets. The manager stated that they may be doing a remodel of the location and hopefully they will add some outlets.

Our computer user group has some meetings at a couple of local Denny's Restaurants, which also advertise inside & out that they have free Wi-Fi. One of our special interest groups meets at one Denny's every month and has been doing so for several years. For several months we could no longer use their Wi-Fi, if it were available at all. The manager kept telling us that a third party took care of it and she reported it.

Closing The Door On Facebook

By Linda Gonse, Editor/Webmaster, ORCOPUG (Orange County PCUG), California
April 2012 issue, Nibbles 'n Bits www.orcopug.org editor (at) orcopug.org

So, you have been reading about more privacy concerns in Facebook. You have decided to close your account. But, unless you are aware of what this means and how to go about it, you may not actually close the account.

You should be aware, too, that you are not going to erase your existence in Facebook when you do close your account. Some people have the mistaken idea that after quitting Facebook their data will get old and vanish.

Know the facts. Familiarize yourself with Facebook's policies before you take steps to end your relationship.

There are two methods of closing a Facebook account. You can either deactivate your account or you can delete it. If you deactivate it, your account is closed immediately. Your information is saved as you left it in the event that you may want to return to it someday.

What's more, if you log into Facebook within 14 days of deactivating your account, it is automatically reactivated!

Deletion is another thing. Not so easy.

What does Facebook say about deleting the account?

If you do not think you will use Facebook again and would like your account deleted, keep in mind that you will not be able to reactivate your account or retrieve any of the content or information you have added. **If you would like your account permanently deleted with no option for recovery, log in to your account and then submit your request here.**

Prior to taking this option, you should delete any information you wouldn't be comfortable leaving behind. Note, too, that you are only submitting a request. The request goes into the system where it is regarded as a pending deletion request. Then what happens?

Once you have submitted a request to permanently delete your account, no further action is required on your end. [Our] system delays the deletion process in case you change your mind and no longer want to permanently delete your account. Note that logging in to your account again will undo a pending deletion request.

Once your account is permanently deleted, there is no way to undo this action. You will not be able to reactivate the account or retrieve any of the content or information you have added to it. (Source page: http://on.fb.me/HiYHzI)

You'll note that it does not say how long the deletion process is delayed, only that it will be.

Eventually, the account gets deleted. But, what actually happens when your account is permanently deleted? Here's what Facebook says. (The emphasis is mine.)

- **You will not be able to regain access to your account again.** (This should not be a surprise. That is the idea, right?)

- **MOST personally identifiable information associated with it is removed** from [our] database. This includes information like your email address, mailing address, and IM screen name. **SOME personally identifiable information MAY REMAIN,** such as your name if you sent a message to someone else.

- **Copies of SOME material (photos, notes, etc.) MAY REMAIN in our servers** for technical reasons, but this material is disassociated from any personal identifiers and completely inaccessible to other people using Facebook. (Source page: http://on.fb.me/HE95ab)

Armed with this information and lowered expectations, you are now ready to close the door on Facebook.

How To Find Twitter's Hidden Options

By Linda Gonse, Editor/Webmaster, ORCOPUG (Orange County PCUG), California
April 2012 issue, Nibbles 'n Bits www.orcopug.org editor (at) orcopug.org

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More people are using the Twitter social networking site and finding out that they like the mini-blog that allows them 140 characters to say whatever they want to say. But, there is more to Twitter than tweeting (posting a comment).

A new Twitter user might not realize there are options that are hidden, unless a user knows how to find them hiding in plain sight.

For instance, hovering over a tweet will reveal links that might not be found anywhere else.

What's more, depending on the type of tweet the hidden options will be different.

For instance, if I am just looking at my tweet on the page and not hovering the cursor over it, I only see the time or date when it was written in the upper right-hand corner.
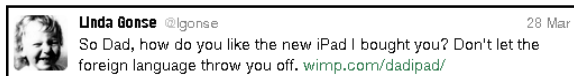
If I hover my cursor over the tweet, however, hyperlinked options — Reply, Delete, Favorite, Open — appear on the same line as my name at the top of the tweet, but in the right corner in green text.

I can click on Reply to the person who posted the tweet. I can Delete the tweet. This option is only available to the person whose tweet is posted. In other words, only I will see the Delete link for my tweets. And, only I can delete my tweets. I can mark it as a Favorite—it won't be cycled out of my timeline, but parked in a permanent area on my Profile page for favorite tweets when I want to reference it again. Finally, I can Open the tweet to read replies that others have had to this specific tweet.

If I hover my cursor over someone else's tweet the options are Reply, Retweet, Favorite, and Open. There's no Delete.

Clicking on the Open hyperlink allows the tweet to expand when other tweets are associated with it. The expanded tweet will also reveal if other people have favorited your tweet or retweeted it.

This is a recent innovation at Twitter. It is now possible to view your tweets in a thread, including replies to another person in their open threads. It is very convenient to view the conversations that are revealed, because there may be several hours, or sometimes days, between a tweet being posted and replies to it.

The Open link automatically changes to a Close link. You can collapse all the tweets again, except the original tweet, when you have finished reading them.

"Santa, do you tweet or text your replies?"

(Continued from page 1)

mation on Apple's servers and access it from any Internet-connected device. Amazon, Microsoft, and Google also have cloud storage systems available. Since many of Microsoft's followers use Microsoft Office, Google has also developed a set of programs that are the equivalent of Microsoft Office programs, but that can be stored in the cloud and used from any Internet-connected device.

These companies make money from their hardware and their App sales. They give you a basic amount of cloud storage for free, but if you need more storage, there is a charge. You can see why so many companies are battling for supremacy of their ecosystem. It is very profitable.

Each of the current ecosystems is expanding. Apple not only has the software in its App store, but they also have the hardware in their iPhone, iPad devices and Mac computers. Apple recently announced their new cloud storage system and an App store for their Mac computers. Their new Lion operating system which is used for their Mac computers is so similar to the iOS operating system that you have to wonder just how soon the Mac computer and the Apple iPhone and iPads will share an operating system. When that happens, they will have added another component to their ecosystem.

Microsoft is a slightly different story. They don't manufacture smartphones or tablets, but they have a new mobile operating system called Windows Phone 7, which runs on hardware from other manufacturers. Microsoft has an App Marketplace like Apple and Google. They also have cloud storage. The phones that run the Microsoft operating system shine at running Microsoft office programs like Word and Excel. This is a part of their ecosystem. I expect that when Microsoft comes out with Windows 8, it will also be able to run on tablets, so we will soon see tablets running Microsoft software and apps.

Amazon has developed their own app store filled with Android apps. They also have a cloud storage system called Amazon Cloud Drive. They are already into the hardware business with their Kindle e-reader, and I expect that they will soon release a tablet to compete with the Apple iPad.

Blackberry and HP have both entered this competition with operating systems, hardware, and app stores of their own.

It's not that you cannot mix products. For instance, my husband has an Android phone, while we also own an iPad. He obviously can use both, but to do so, he had to learn two different operating systems. On top of that, if he wants to have a certain app on both his phone and our tablet, we may have to purchase it twice, buying a copy for his phone from the Android Marketplace and buying a copy for our tablet from the iTunes store. So not only is it easier to stay within one ecosystem, it is also more economical.

Knowing about these ecosystems may make purchasing a tablet or a new smartphone a little more complicated, because besides assessing the qualities of the hardware, you also have to stop and think about the ecosystem you are buying into. Yet, the number of large companies involved in this rivalry and the constant changes, additions, and improvements they make to their line-ups makes this a very exciting time in the history of technology.

"Dear Santa, Droid or iPhone...It doesn't matter."

(Continued from page 13)

processes or programs running in the background. If your computer has suddenly become slower, it may be compromised by malware or spyware, or you may be experiencing a denial-of-service attack (see Recognizing and Avoiding Spyware http://www.us-cert.gov/cas/tips/ST04-016.html and Understanding Denial-of-Service Attacks for more information http://www.us-cert.gov/cas/tips/ST04-015.html).

Debunking Some Common Myths About Online Security

By Mindi McDowell
Security Tip (ST06-002) US-CERT US Computer Emergency Readiness Team www.us-cert.gov

Here are some common myths that may influence your online security practices. Knowing the truth will allow you to make better decisions about how to protect yourself.

How are these myths established?

There is no one cause for these myths. They may have been formed because of a lack of information, an assumption, knowledge of a specific case that was then generalized, or some other source. As with any myth, they are passed from one individual to another, usually because they seem legitimate enough to be true.

Why is it important to know the truth?

While believing these myths may not present a direct threat, they may cause you to be more lax about your security habits. If you are not diligent about protecting yourself, you may be more likely to become a victim of an attack.

What are some common myths, and what is the truth behind them?

- **Myth**: Anti-virus software and firewalls are 100% effective.

- **Truth**: Anti-virus software and firewalls are important elements to protecting your information (see Understanding Anti-Virus Software and Understanding Firewalls for more information http://www.us-cert.gov/cas/tips/ST04-005.html). However, neither of these elements are guaranteed to protect you from an attack. Combining these technologies with good security habits is the best way to reduce your risk.

- **Myth**: Once software is installed on your computer, you do not have to worry about it anymore.

- **Truth**: Vendors may release updated versions of software to address problems or fix vulnerabilities (see Understanding Patches for more information http://www.us-cert.gov/cas/tips/ST04-006.html). You should install the updates as soon as possible;

some software even offers the option to obtain updates automatically. Making sure that you have the latest virus definitions for your anti-virus software is especially important.

- **Myth**: There is nothing important on your machine, so you do not need to protect it.

- **Truth**: Your opinion about what is important may differ from an attacker's opinion. If you have personal or financial data on your computer, attackers may be able to collect it and use it for their own financial gain. Even if you do not store that kind of information on your computer, an attacker who can gain control of your computer may be able to use it in attacks against other people (see Understanding Denial-of-Service Attacks at http://www.us-cert.gov/cas/tips/ST04-015.html and Understanding Hidden Threats: Rootkits and Botnets for more information http://www.us-cert.gov/cas/tips/ST06-001.html).

- **Myth**: Attackers only target people with money.

- **Truth**: Anyone can become a victim of identity theft. Attackers look for the biggest reward for the least amount of effort, so they typically target databases that store information about many people. If your information happens to be in the database, it could be collected and used for malicious purposes. It is important to pay attention to your credit information so that you can minimize any potential damage (see Preventing and Responding to Identity Theft for more information http://www.us-cert.gov/cas/tips/ST05-019.html .

- **Myth**: When computers slow down, it means that they are old and should be replaced.

- **Truth**: It is possible that running newer or larger software programs on an older computer could lead to slow performance, but you may just need to replace or upgrade a particular component (memory, operating system, CD or DVD drive, etc.). Another possibility is that there are other

PATACS Annual Financial Report, Fiscal Year 2012

By Paul Howard, Treasurer

PATACS's fiscal year concluded on September 30th. With a positive cash flow of $1193.81, the group is in excellent financial condition. This report consolidates predecessor groups' (WACUG and NCTCUG) operations from 10/1/2011, as well as the merged PATACS operations from 5/19/2012.

Donations, either directly as contributions made with dues payments, or through donations at Pizza SIG, are vital to the fiscal soundness of the group. Member generosity accounts for thirty-four percent of our income. Donations received were $51 more than in FY 2011. Amazon commissions via our website links were $91.96

Member donations were received this year from: Harvey, Howard, M. Johnson, Leggett, Lowe, Mabudian Mikosinski, Pafford, Porter, Schmidt, M. Smith,Throneburg, Walsh, Wenri,and Willard.

Pizza SIGs were sponsored by Jim Brueggeman, Blair Jones, and twice by Jon Mabudian. Pizza SIG donors include Brueggeman, Fraser, Fujii, Garson, Goldberg, Grotenstein, Howard, K. Johnson, Mabudian, Mikosinski, Robinson, Sacks, Schmidt, Walsh, Wenri, and Vestrich.

PATACS is financially sound because of prudent planning and fiscal restraint during the 34 years of its history. Membership stands at 103. Our "rainy day fund" was established many years ago, and has grown to four CD accounts held for future needs. Because of the low return on CD accounts, three accounts will soon be consolidated into an interest-bearing checking account, offering a higher rate. We'd have to commit to CD terms of four years or longer to better the checking rate.

Our account balances at the close of the fiscal year (September 30th) were: Checking Account $3700.28; Interest Checking - $6173.67; CD accounts: $5019.30.

This Annual Treasurer's Financial Report for Fiscal Year 2012 has been approved by the Board of Directors of PATACS. The account balances noted above are based on on-line and email queries of our banks – statements for all accounts as of the 9/30/2012 close

of the fiscal year have not yet been received. On that basis, the balances and the Cash Flow Report below are certified as correct.

Paul Howard, Treasurer

James Rhodes, President

The "organizational documents" area of our web site contains additional information about the user group's financial operations, including prior years' Financial Reports for comparison purposes

PATACS Cash Flow Report FY '12: 10/1/11 - 9/30/12	
Revenues	
Pizza SIG Cash Donations	870.00
Donations by Check	655.00
Total Donations	**$1,525.00**
Membership Dues	2610.00
Interest Income	21.97
Misc. Revenues	322.51
Total Revenues	**$4,479.48**
Expenses	
Insurance - Liability & Personal Prop.	375.00
Legal - VA Corporation & Filing Fees	75.00
APCUG Dues, Check & Dep Slip Printing	189.85
Administrative Postage	17.60
Donation – Friends of OLLI	250.00
Total Administrative	**$907.45**
M'bership / PR – Printing, Hospitality	**$88.33**
Door Prizes	100.84
DSL Svc-6 Mos due to Carlin Hall repair	257.94
Carlin Hall Clean-Out Expenses	92.00
Webinar Services Expenses	53.94
Web Cams (Joint purchase w/ OPCUG)	135.00
Meetings & Other Svcs	**$639.72**
Newsletter Postage & Assembly	490.79
Newsletter Printing	1055.46
Total Newsletter	**$1546.25**
Web Site - Hosting	**$104.00**
Total Expenses	**$3,285.75**
Results from Operations	**$1193.81**
Prepared 10/11/2012	

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Posts is an official publication of the Potomac Area Technology and Computer Society (PATACS), a Virginia membership corporation. PATACS is a tax exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Contributions are gratefully received and tax deductible.

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E-mail article submissions and reprint requests to editor(at)patacs.org

Membership Policy

Membership dues are $25.00 (U.S.Funds) per year, with a $15 surcharge for international mail. Membership in PATACS includes membership in all SIGs, access to the software libraries, and subscription to the Posts published 12 times per year in print by US Mail and PDF download by Internet. Applications may be obtained at any club meeting, by downloading from the website, by calling one of the officers or board members, or by writing to the club. A sample newsletter, membership application and related information may be obtained by enclosing $2 (for US addresses only) and mailing your request to the membership address. Please do not send cash by mail. Payment and applications may also be submitted at any meeting, or mail to: PATACS Membership, 4628 Valerie CT, Annandale VA 22003-3940

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If you are moving

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

Thank You!

Obituary

Neal Grotenstein, PATACS director, died from a sudden heart attack while cycling on Saturday, October 27th. Services were held on November 1st. Neal was an avid bicyclist. A long-time member of the Potomac Pedalers Touring Club, he received their Lifetime Achievement Award for his long service and friendship. Neal served as a mentor in the robotics pogram of McKinley Technology High School in Washington, DC. Neal was extraordinarily helpful in his role as a member of the Joint House Committee for the Fairfax PATACS / OPCUG meetings, arranging refreshments for special events, and helping with meeting tear-down activities, and served as a vendor liaison for the group. He is survived by an aunt, cousins, and his friend Barbara Good.

Microcenter Clinics

See http://microcenter.com/site/stores/instore-clinics.aspx for the latest news on these free clinics.

PATACS Meeting Information

**Call 703-370-7649 for meeting announcements
visit web site at http://www.patacs.org/**

Arlington Meetings
(temporary location January 2013
please check website)

Walter Reed Community Center
2909 S. 16th St, Arlington VA 22203
http://www.patacs.org/arlingtonmeetings.html

General Meeting
1st Wednesday (12/5) 7pm

Internet Special Interest Group (SIG)
4th Wednesday (26) 7pm

Board of Directors
3rd Monday (17) 7pm

Fairfax Meetings
(with OLLI PC User Group)

Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI)
4210 Roberts Road, Fairfax VA 22032
http://www.patacs.org/fairfaxmeetings.html

General Meeting
3rd Saturday (15) 12:30pm — PC Clinic

Online-Only Webinar using Skype
2nd Wednesday (12) 7-9pm
http://www.patacs.org/webinarpat.html

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First Class

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