

Orange Coast IBM PC User Group

README.DOC



October 2003

Newsletter

Volume 19.10

ALL MEETINGS ARE HELD IN THE COSTA MESA SENIOR CENTER 695 WEST 19TH STREET
AT THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF 19TH AND POMONA

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Intel Pentium 4 3.06GHZ
As Smart As You Are

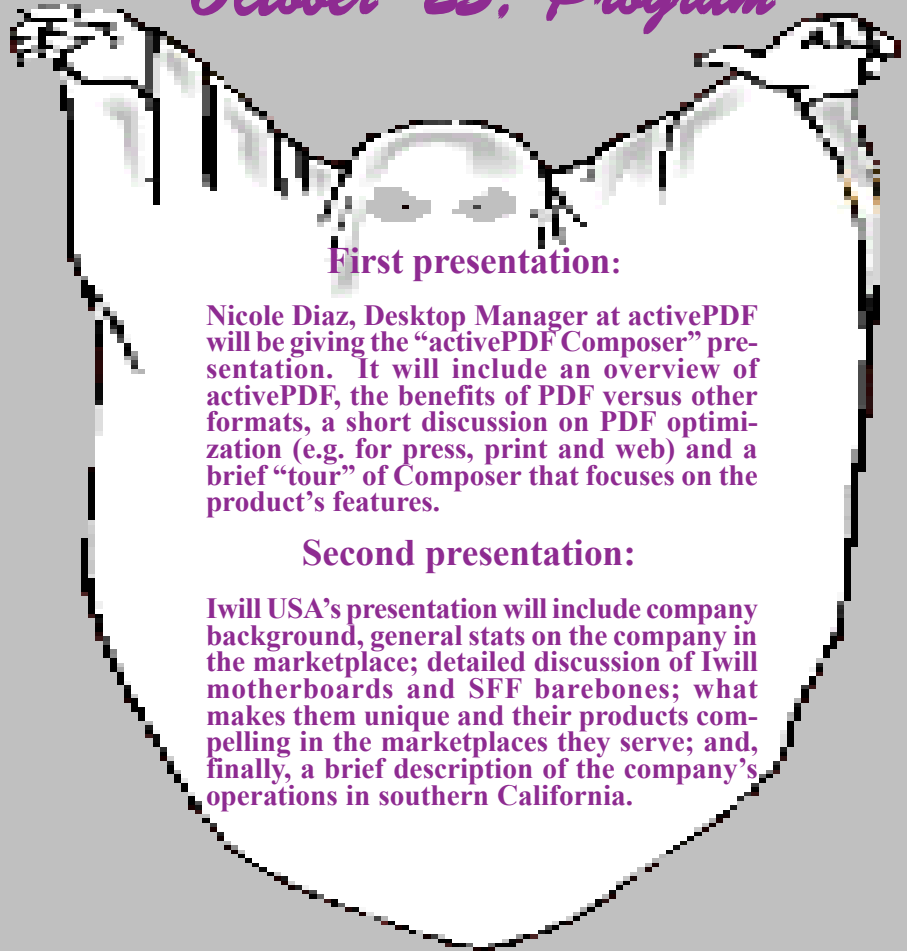
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October 25. Program



First presentation:

Nicole Diaz, Desktop Manager at activePDF will be giving the "activePDF Composer" presentation. It will include an overview of activePDF, the benefits of PDF versus other formats, a short discussion on PDF optimization (e.g. for press, print and web) and a brief "tour" of Composer that focuses on the product's features.

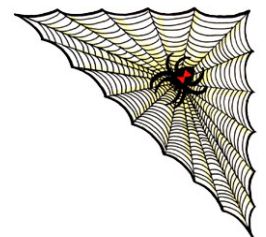
Second presentation:

Iwill USA's presentation will include company background, general stats on the company in the marketplace; detailed discussion of Iwill motherboards and SFF barebones; what makes them unique and their products compelling in the marketplaces they serve; and, finally, a brief description of the company's operations in southern California.



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Orange Coast IBM PC User Group
Costa Mesa Senior Center
695 West 19th Street
Costa Mesa Ca, 92627



General Meetings are held from 9:00AM to noon on:

25 October	2003
22 November	2003
20 December	2003
24 January	2004

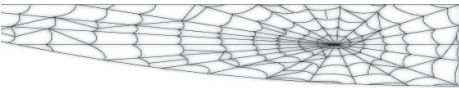
Meetings of the Executive Board will be held after the General Meeting

25 October	2003
22 November	2003
20 December	2003
24 January	2004

All OCIPUG members are welcome.

Special Interest Group (SIG) meetings are held monthly as follows:

1st Tuesday	7:00 PM - Internet
2nd Tuesday	7:00 PM - Hardware
3rd Tuesday	7:00 PM - Window's
4th Tuesday	7:00 PM - Digital Photo



General Meeting October 25, 2003



With activePDF Composer, you can easily create PDF files in a variety of ways. Select the Composer printer and simply 'print' your documents to PDF from virtually any Windows application. Composer's 'ToPDF' module streamlines the Postscript to PDF conversion process through robust drag-and-drop functionality - simply drop your files onto the desktop icon and conversion to PDF occurs automatically. The 'Send to PDF' feature enables you to right-click a PostScript file in Windows Explorer and instantly convert to PDF using activePDF Composer.

Additionally, tight integration with Microsoft Word and PowerPoint allows you to convert documents to PDF in one click with the easy-to-use activePDF Composer toolbar icon and menu options.



The Best Solution Provider for High-End PC's, IWILL was founded in April 1989, as an industry-leading manufacturer on the SCSI solution; and grew rapidly to be a professional high-end motherboard manufacturer in the past years. Following the management concept of "Innovation," "High Quality" and "Cost-Effectiveness," IWILL created a series of "First" solutions: RAID Motherboards, DDR Motherboards and Rambus Motherboards.

IWILL always insists on meeting the latest technology, the highest quality and the most effective demands. IWILL's products are sold in more than 45 countries and have won numerous awards from various media outlets.

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SCHEDULES AND REPORTS OF EVENTS

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP (SIG)

(All Special Interest Group (SIG) meetings are held at the Costa Mesa Senior Center on the southeast corner of 19th and Pomona at the times noted below.) The next SIG meeting will be:

2 October 2003

Internet / Web Publishing

1st Tuesday 7:00 PM
Michael Moore 714-535-0608
MichaelR_Moore@dslextreme.com

9 October 2003

Hardware -

2nd Tuesday, 7:00 PM
Ed Leckliter eleckliter@adelphia.net

16 October 2003

Windows

3rd Tuesday 7:00 PM
Robert Strader 949-646-11475
robert.strader@comcast.net

23 October 2003

Digital Cameras / Scanning -

4th Tuesday, 7:00PM
David Wintle 714-548-7994
allart@bacbell.net

6 November 2003

Internet / Web Publishing

1st Tuesday 7:00 PM
Michael Moore 714-535-0608
MichaelR_Moore@dslextreme

13 November 2003

Hardware

2nd Tuesday, 7:00 PM
Ed Leckliter eleckliter@adelphia.net



Sunday - November 30, 2003

“ 8:00am to 2:00pm”
ACP Giant Parking Lot
1310 E. Edinger Ave. (Grand & Edinger)
Santa Ana, CA 92705
(714)619-3487

OCIPUG Hardware SIG -

Meeting Recap September 9, 2003

There were 15 attendees (including SIG Leader, Ed Leckliter)
Featured Topic(s): Sound Processors, Sound Cards, and Speakers: 2003 Update and “Drive Cloning”

Hardware Submissions

Terry Dickson brought in his recently self-assembled, AMD Athlon-based system for a once over by the group. There were only a very few things noted. The floppy cable had the red stripe on the wrong side (stripe away from the power connector) - but the floppy worked fine (confirmed by the group). Terry had purchased PC3200 (PC400) DDR SDRAM because it was a bit cheaper than the PC2700 (PC333) that the motherboard's chipset supports. [The sales person told him - correctly - that the RAM would just run at the speed the chipset would support.] However, Terry had inadvertently set the BIOS (or left the default set) for PC2100 (PC266) - which caused the memory to run at PC2100 speed and flag the first boot-up screen with a 266 speed warning in bold. Ed changed the BIOS setting to “Auto” (or was it “SPD” - brain fade/senior moment) to use the on-module SPD (serial presence detect) feature to set the operating speed. At that setting the RAM was running at the chipset-supported speed of 333MHz but showed a first boot-up screen with a 400 speed warning in bold (since it identified the RAM as PC3200/PC400). Ed noted that this is the conservative approach, one that should result in a more stable system. Terry is considering exchanging the memory for the supported PC2700 (PC333) speed - and accept the price adjustment. Otherwise Ed made a few minor BIOS adjustments that would have made no significant difference if they'd been left alone. [NOTE: Prior to the meeting Terry had contacted Ed via e-mail regard his 2400+ CPU posting that it was an 1800+. Ed responded, “Check what the first boot up screen says near the top - Athlon XP 1800+ or Athlon XP 2400+. If 1800+ then you either need to set a jumper on the motherboard to 266MHz front side bus (FSB) or set a CPU multiplier jumper (or DIP switch) to Auto or do the equivalent in the BIOS.” Terry made the change (motherboard jumper) and the system answered up 2400+. The jumper allowed 100MHz or 133MHz - the double data rate equivalent of 200MHz and 266MHz, respectively. The AMD Athlon XP 2400+ has a 266MHz FSB.]

Random Access:

George Thuro inquired about the correct drive cable set-up to support two IDE (ATAPI) hard drives and two ATAPI optical drives. He had been told that CD burners would operate faster if the hard drive and the burner were on the same cable. Ah...NOT! Ed explained that the correct set-up is to have the two hard drives on one cable and the two optical drives on the other. Primary channel for the hard drives - boot drive on the end of the cable (set to master or cable select) - and secondary channel for the opticals. Since the opticals are ATA/33 (UDMA/2) devices, running an ATA/66 or faster hard drive on the same channel would slow the hard drive down to ATA/33 speed - and probably also result in a boot-up warning message regarding the mismatch. [As best Ed knows, there are no IDE/ATAPI opticals that run faster than ATA/33 (UDMA/2) speed - which supports drives almost twice as fast as the fastest CD and DVD drives available today.]

Next Meeting: October 14, 2003

Next Meeting Featured Topic(s): Other Components (Modems, NICs, Chassis, Power Supplies, HFAs, Fans, Keyboards, and Mice): 2003 Update and “Using the Motherboard CD”

Following Meeting: November 11, 2003

Following Meeting Featured Topic(s): Your New System (2003 Update): Planning Phase (the beginning of an updated five-meeting planning, sourcing, and hands-on assembly series) File(s) attached - also posted on the OCIPUG Hardware SIG website (http://www.edscustomcomputers.com/welcome_to_the_ocipug_hardware_sl.htm)

Presentation slides in Microsoft PowerPoint format (.ppt).

For the latest OCIPUG Hardware SIG info, please check the SIG's web site or contact Ed Leckliter (SIG Leader) at eleckliter@adelphia.net.

How to Sell on eBay

By Mark Borison

SeniorNet Intro to the Internet Instructor

Costa Mesa Senior Center

mborison@yahoo.com

<http://www.geocities.com/mborison/sellonebay>



I am the Introduction to the Internet Instructor at the Costa Mesa Senior Center's SeniorNet facility. We are currently offering 10 different classes, including classes in Windows (98 or XP) 1 and 2, Word Processing, Printshop, Digital Photography using Photoshop Elements 2, E-Mail, and the Introduction to the Internet. For information please call (949) 545-2356 or stop by the Costa Mesa Senior Center at 695 19th St. and inquire at the desk. Feel free to email me if you have any questions or any ideas for future articles. In October we hope to offer another Buying and Selling on eBay Workshop, if you are interested, call the number above or email me. I have put this document up on the web at <http://www.geocities.com/mborison/sellonebay> and I will put some additional links there also.

1. Register

Go to <http://www.ebay.com/> and click on Register

Take the How to Register on eBay Tour

<http://pages.ebay.com/education/howtoregister/index.html>

After you register on eBay you will have to also Register to Sell on eBay

Sign up to accept PayPal (optional)

2. Take the How to Sell on eBay Tour

<http://pages.ebay.com/education/howtosell/index.html>

3. Fill out the Sell Your Item form

The Sell Your Item form is where you'll create your eBay listing.

Here are some of the sections you'll find

Choose a Selling Format

Are you selling through eBay's standard online auction format, setting a fixed price, using your own eBay Store, or listing an ad in the Real Estate category?

Select a Category

Explore eBay categories ahead of time to help you choose the best place to list your item. Try searching for similar items and see where they are listed.

Write a Title

Be clear, complete, and descriptive. Your title should include words buyers would search for when looking for your item.

Item Description

Here's your chance to really describe and promote your item. Be clear and complete, of course. But you can also be creative, telling the history of your item or listing uses for it.

Add Pictures

Show off your item with vivid pictures. You can use eBay Picture Services, or you can click Web Hosting to use your own hosting service.

Pricing and Duration

How long do you want your listing to run? How many items are you selling? What will your starting price be?

Item Location

It's as simple as saying where you are and it helps people near you find your item.

Increase Your Item's Visibility

Explore the many listing upgrades that can help your item stand out from the crowd. Choose the options that are right for you.

Enter Payment and Shipping Information

How will you accept payment from your buyer when your listing ends?

eBay recommends offering PayPal, the fast, easy and secure way to accept credit card or checking account payment.

Where will you ship your item and who will pay for that cost? The more details you include on the Sell Your Item form, the easier the end of your listing will be.

Review and submit your listing.

Now you'll see a preview of your listing and a summary of its details.

Look this over carefully. If you're satisfied and finished, submit your listing.

Now your listing begins!

Closing the Deal: Overview

The end of your listing may be a busy time for you as a seller.

If your item sells successfully, there's a lot to do, from contacting your buyer to accepting payment to shipping the item.

If you don't receive any successful bids or something goes wrong with your high bidder, you can use the many tools and options available to solve problems and keep trying to sell your item.

Getting in touch to complete your sale

When your listing is over, it's time to get in touch with your winning bidder or Buy It Now buyer. If you're using Checkout, some or all of the information will be emailed to your buyer. If not, you'll need to email your buyer to exchange information. The buyer's email address will be provided in the email announcing the end of your listing.

Ask the buyer for:

The address they'd like the item shipped to

Tell the buyer:

Shipping cost

How you will ship the item to them

When to expect it

Which payment options you accept

The total price

Tax (if applicable)

Leave the buyer feedback:

eBay's feedback system helps create a trustworthy community for everyone. Your feedback about your buyer is important information for other sellers!

You're done! It's so much fun, you'll want to sell again right away.

Building Your Reputation: Overview

At eBay, as in any community, your reputation is important for doing business and making friends.

There are several ways to build a good reputation for yourself at eBay.

Your User ID

Other eBay members will come to recognize you by your User ID, so it's a good idea to choose one you'll want to use for the long term.

Your feedback profile

Made up of comments and ratings from users who have traded with you, your feedback profile is the most important aspect of your reputation at eBay. Be the best and most responsive buyer or seller you can be, and good feedback will follow.

How it works

The feedback rating system is easy. You receive:

+1 point for each positive comment

0 points for each neutral comment

-1 point for each negative comment

When to check it

Before you bid on an item, you can check the seller's feedback rating by clicking on the number next to their name, or from the view feedback request form. Sellers may also want to view the feedback profiles of bidders to see how reliable they've been in the past.

How to leave it

After you make a sale or purchase, remember to leave feedback for the eBay member you bought from or sold to. This helps everyone in the community know what it's like to deal with that member.

See a list of all the sales and purchases you still need to leave feedback for.

Feedback cannot be erased. The feedback you give is permanent, so be sure to make only fair and factual comments.

Developing a Positive Feedback Rating

Initially by buying a number of items, also a great way to learn about how successful sellers deal with their customers

Utilize You're my eBay Page

Take the How to use My eBay page Tour

<http://pages.ebay.com/education/myebaytour/index.html>

Your About Me page

Create an About Me page to tell other eBay users about yourself and your interests.

Selling Fees

Insertion Fees

There is a non-refundable Insertion Fee for listing your item on eBay. Insertion Fees vary by the type of listing:

Single Quantity, Online Auction Listings

The Insertion Fee is based on the starting price for your item.

Reserve Price Auction Listings

The Insertion Fee is based on the reserve price of the item you list for sale.

When you list a Reserve Price Auction, you will also be charged a Reserve Price Auction Fee, which is also based upon the reserve price. Reserve Price Auction Fees are fully refundable. At the end of the auction, if your item sells, the Reserve Price Auction Fee is refunded to your account. This also applies to Real Estate.

Starting Price,

Opening Value or

Reserve Price

Insertion Fee

\$0.01 - \$9.99

\$0.30

\$10.00 - \$24.99

\$0.55

\$25.00 - \$49.99

\$1.10

\$50.00 - \$199.99

\$2.20

\$200.00 and up

\$3.30

Tips from Successful Sellers

TIP - If your market is for the housewife, start your auctions in the morning. What time in the morning? Keep in mind, all auctions end at the same time they start.

TIP Use the evening hours to list items for the working families and the major ticket items for those folks who need to make a joint decision for the larger amounts.

TIP - The best months are January to the middle of June, then from the middle of September to the middle of December.

TIP - Use the reserve price to set the minimum amount that you will take for your item if you are starting with a minimum bid far lower than what you will accept if your item sells. So, set the starting bid at or near the amount you want. eBay recommends you keep the starting bid around 25% to 70% of the reserve price you have set.

TIP - If you type this after the title of your auction item, NR or N/R, you will get more bids per visitor. The NR and N/R indicates there is no reserve price to be met. This will create bidding frenzies to get started in some instances.

TIP - The hottest bidding times are when a listing is new and the last hour. So don't get discouraged if there is not much bidding activity during the days in between. The bidders are not asleep, they are like you, just monitoring their favorites.

TIP - The best tool to use in selling is to accurately describe the item using keywords that are most likely to be searched for.

TIP - Price the items fairly and treat buyers as you would want to be treated.

TIP - Try bidding on an item to see and get the feel for it. As soon as you make a qualified bid, eBay will send you an immediate email that your bid was accepted and that you are the high bidder. When you are outbid at a future time, eBay will also send you an email to let you know that you have been outbid by another.

TIP - At the top of each page on the left hand side is a link called my eBay. This is a very important link to an eBay seller. It will give you a full accounting and stats of your eBay account

TIP - Offer free shipping if the bid reaches a certain amount.

TIP - For credibility offer a money back guarantee.

TIP - Review your listing before it is submitted. Once a bid is made you cannot revise it. Also make sure your starting bid is what you want. If you push that "submit my listing button" you can not change the price.

TIP - Always leave a positive feedback for your buyers and ask them to leave positive feedback for you when the transaction is complete.

TIP - Information is your greatest asset. Read up on online marketing and read EVERY Ebay FAQ and help file. Know everything about your venue of sale.

TIP - Don't be afraid to try new things on Ebay

TIP - Offer quick shipping! Your customers want their merchandise quickly and efficiently. Charge reasonable shipping rates.

TIP - Set up an E-Commerce account. You need to be able to take credit cards and online checks to be a successful Ebay seller.

TIP - Don't put a ridiculous shipping price on your merchandise. Many purchasers look to the price of shipping before bidding.

TIP - Package your merchandise well. Your purchaser will remember what great care you have taken to get them their product safely to them.

What We Should Have Learned By Now

By Ira Wilsker

Hopefully by the time you read this column the attack of the SOBIG-F worm should be history, as it was scheduled to self-destruct on September 10. That does not mean that all attacks will cease, as there are still many users who have incorrect dates on their computers. That means if your date is 'slow' then any Sobig-F worms that may be residing on your computer will not know to self-destruct, and will continue to send infected emails to others without your knowledge.

I routinely received readers' messages which have headers placed by their email program giving the wrong year. Unless the computer is under the control of an administrator who does not allow changes, the time and date can easily be reset by simply clicking on the clock and resetting the date and time. If for some reason the clock is frequently incorrect that may be an indication of a more serious error, and possibly a pending problem. For those who would like to keep their computer clocks correct there are several programs available that will automatically reset the clock to some standard, such as the Naval Observatory, NASA, or the National Bureau of Standards. My personal favorite is 'About Time' available for free download at vps.arachnoid.com/abouttime. I use About Time to reset my computer clock to U.S. Naval Observatory time on an almost daily basis.

Sobig-F, and its predecessors, flooded our inboxes with undesirable emails that eventually became easy to detect and identify. I would estimate that on all of my email accounts I received over 10,000 Sobig-F emails. Since each was about 100k in size, I received about a gigabyte of trash email due to Sobig-F alone. If I had to download those messages before deleting them, that would be an enormous amount to download. At broadband speeds, the time needed to download all of those bogus emails would be considerable; at dialup speeds the volume and frequency of Sobig-F emails may mean that downloading all of the email could be interminable. Since I still get along at home with dialup internet access, I needed a method to screen my email before downloading it to my computer. This allowed me to delete or otherwise process spam, and delete possible virus-bearing and other unwanted email. My local ISP accounts provide for some type of web based method to view email without physically downloading it to my computer. By viewing suspicious emails using web mail without physically downloading them, a degree of protection from dangerous content is provided. I choose to view online email in text only, and not in HTML. Almost all web mail systems offer this option, and I strongly advise that users choose to view emails in text format only, and configure their web mail to that setting.

In local discussions, I have found that many internet users are unaware of the availability of web based email from their ISPs. I suggest that such users either check their ISP website support link, or contact their ISP to inquire about web based email. One warning; many web mail systems place deleted messages in some form of online trash folder. Please remember to purge that folder frequently. Once unwanted email has been deleted using the web based email viewer, there is less email to download, and a decreased chance of catching an email borne virus or worm.

There is an excellent utility available that can provide assistance in identifying email that possibly contains spam or viruses, and I use it on all of my computers. It is MailWasher, published by Firetrust, of New Zealand. Available in a free version, or a more powerful 'Pro' version (\$29.95), MailWasher allows for the easy screening of emails. MailWasher is very fast, even on a dialup connection,

because it only downloads the message headers, and a selected number of lines in the body of each email, rather than the entire email. Utilizing some of the internet 'blacklists', services that compile information on spammers, many suspicious emails are labeled by MailWasher as possible spam. Using the integral 'bounce' feature, spam can be bounced back to the sender giving the appearance of a defective email address. While I can give no proof that spammers delete bad email addresses, and there is always a risk of a forged email address, it is fun to bounce those critters. Many of the Sobig-F infected emails were labeled as 'possible virus' making them easy to identify and delete. Since Sobig-F infected emails were about 100k in size, I sorted the list of emails by size, and the Sobig-F emails all clustered together, enabling fast deletion of them all from the mail server. Emails can also be sorted by any column, such as date sent, size, from, subject, status, and other factors. MailWasher can be set to automatically check for new email at any desired interval. MailWasher is available for download at www.mailwasher.net.

A companion product, 'Benign', works with MailWasher, and is available from Firetrust at www.firetrust.com (\$34.95). Benign adds additional email screening and filtering functions for viruses (in addition to your antivirus software), malicious code, and other possibly harmful content from email before reaching your computer.

Ira Wilsker is the Advisor for Region 8, APCUG Representative & Bylaws Chair for the Golden Triangle PC Club, a columnist for The Examiner in Beaumont, Texas, and has two radio shows. He also graciously shares his articles with the APCUG editors.

Grandma's on the Net!



Grandma used to make us cherry pies and call us on the phone. She would talk to us for hours; now she leaves us all alone.

We miss her homemade biscuits and I'll make this little bet - If you want to contact Grandma, you'll have to surf the net.

Grandma's surfin' the net, yes, she's surfin' the net. We've been calling her all morning and we haven't got her yet.

She's on her e-mail network with all her electronic friends. If you want to talk to Grandma, you'll have to surf the net.

Grandma's never surfed at Malibu or caught a wave at Waikiki. She's never seen a surf board; hang ten doesn't mean a thing, you see.

She's never met a beach bum; to her Moon Doggie is just a pup. But when she heads to her computer, you know the surf is up.

Grandma's getting older and her eyes are getting dim. Her random access memory is half of what it's been.

When St. Peter comes to call, she'll say I can't go yet. He'll have to wait on Grandma, 'cause Grandma's surfin' the net.

written by just another old Grandma

Linux Moves In.

An 'operating system' is the collection of software programs that runs computers, including your PC. Once upon a time it seemed like it was inevitable that everyone would use Microsoft software everywhere. How things can change in a few short years! The increasing utility and usability of Linux have caused many people to take a serious look at it. Those looks have led to an explosion in the use of Linux. The robustness and openness of this twelve-year old software "phenomenon" are well known in the computing community. Uptimes of over a year are considering unremarkable when you're running Linux!

Originally used mostly as a server platform, Linux has improved so much over the last couple of years that many companies are now looking to deploy it on the desktop. The GUI (Graphical User Interface) has improved in usability and looks (leading to the phrase "eye candy"). Its increasing ease of use, and simplified installation and configuration, are making it more attractive for home desktops, too.

Unlike Microsoft OS's, many applications you'd need to buy come with Linux. Things like OpenOffice, a complete suite of great desktop apps compatible with MS Office; a great graphics program GIMP, to rival Printshop, and many other applications all come with the CD's, at the same low, low price! When you do a Linux installation they're all installed, and can be found on the menus for your use.

Yes, Linux is inexpensive. It can be had for as nothing, by just downloading the ISO (CD) images from the net. (See Error! Hyperlink reference not valid. for sites you can download Red Hat Linux from.) Or, if you're relatively inexperienced, buying a copy of a Linux distribution at your local store is a good way to start, as you get some great documentation with the CD's.

There are specialized versions of Linux, too. If you're interested in trying Linux, you can try it without even loading it on your hard disk. Knoppix Linux is a Linux that runs right off of a CD. You can get your feet wet with Linux without making a commitment. Knoppix Linux is found at <http://www.knoppix.net/>.

There are specialized versions of Linux. Some are designed to run strictly as a firewall for your household. They're fast and easy to install and configure. Search google for Smoothwall, IPCop, or ClarkConnect; I use the latter, and it was fast and easy to install and configure. I burned a CD, booted with it, answered a couple of questions about what type of incoming line I had (PPPoE, DHCP or static IP?) and turned it loose. Twenty minutes later it was up and running, protecting my household network!

What kind of hardware do you need to run Linux? In the famous words of Anonymous, "it depends". If you just want to use an old PC as a firewall, you'll need a PC with two Network Interface Cards (they don't have to be PCI, but it's easier if they are). The firewall will run nicely on a Pentium 100 with 32 Megabytes of RAM and 500 Megabytes of disk space.

On the other hand, if you want to run a workstation, with a high resolution screen with deep color depth, it takes more CPU power to move those windows around on the screen. Still for good performance Linux doesn't require as much horsepower as

WindowsXP (for example). Good results can be had with a 600 Mhz PC, 128 Megs of RAM, and 3-4 Gigabytes of disk space (a bit more if you go crazy and click on ?load everything?).

And if you don't feel comfortable with the idea yet of switching out your whole operating system, you can experiment with OpenSource software in the comfort of your Windows computer: OpenOffice is available for Win32 as well as Linux (<http://www.openoffice.org>). GIMP, the Photoshop replacement has been ported to Windows. (<http://www.wingimp.org/>), and GAIM, the GNU Instant Message program that's compatible with AIM, is found at <http://gaim.sourceforge.net>. It's improved so much recently that many people prefer it over AIM. It's also multi-lingual, speaking AIM, ICQ, MSN, and several other instant messaging protocols.

And if you burn CD's with these programs, feel free to share them with your friends; they're under the GPL (GNU Public License), and can be legally copied.

If you start working with Linux and need help, there are many LUGs (Linux Users Groups) around the Southland. Their members are happy to give you a hand. You can find your local LUG at <http://www.ssc.com:8080/glue/groups/>.

Additionally, the Southern California Linux Exposition, a non-profit, community organization, holds SCALE (the SoCal Linux Expo) every year. SCALE is a show where commercial Linux vendors, Linux enthusiasts, and academia demonstrate the many facets and features of Linux to a curious public. The first SCALE was held last November, and was a raging success. So much so that the 600 attendees overflowed USC's Davidson Conference Center. Pictures and an article about SCALE are here: <http://socallinuxexpo.com/past/2002/pictures/index.php>.

SCALE2X will be November 22nd, at the Los Angeles Convention Center. For up to the minute information, including complete lists of speakers and their bios, and sponsor info, check <http://www.socallinuxexpo.com>. <http://www.socallinuxexpo.com/> Come and see why Linux is so attractive. But be warned ? it's seductive in its power and utility!

*I can actually do remote surgery
and check my stocks
at the same time.*



Attack of the WORMS - Did We Learn Anything?

By Ira Wilsker

Recent weeks have seen the most prolific spread of computer viruses and worms in history. While computer viruses and worms have been around for years, the recent attacks of Blaster and Sobig-F, broke all records for the speed of dissemination and the numbers of computers infected. Fortunately, the payloads carried by these programs was quickly identified and neutralized before they could wreak more havoc on our cyber infrastructure.

While annoying and troublesome, they apparently did not carry a very dangerous payload.

My first indication of the Blaster attack was a cryptic call I received asking about some bizarre error statement that appeared in a window that popped up; she had opened no suspicious emails, and had updated antivirus software installed. A quick search turned up a warning from Microsoft dated mid-July that there was an identified vulnerability in Windows NT, 2000, and XP, and that Microsoft had released a "Critical Update" patch. Users were advised to download and install this patch immediately. Other references, also from mid-July, were news stories on computer security that there was this vulnerability in some version of Windows, and that Microsoft had released a patch to eliminate the threat. Some pundits also speculated that it was only a matter of time until someone took illicit advantage of the vulnerability. I told her to download and install the patch, to see if that resolved the problem. Minutes later my daughter called from Miami and said that she just had this weird window open on her computer, and a cryptic statement appeared, identical to the other caller's. Likewise, she had opened no email attachments, and had updated antivirus software installed.

Two strange but identical symptoms within a matter of minutes, on two XP computers, hundreds of miles apart, seemed to be more than a coincidence, but was likely some type of new virus. I posted a request on the restricted "High Tech Cybercrime Consortium" mail list to see if anyone else had encountered such a strange occurrence. Within minutes I received several replies indicating that others had similar inquiries, but other than a suspicion that it was some type of new virus, no one had any other information. A search of the major antivirus sites turned up no new alerts. Within the next hour, I had received several more phone calls and emails appealing for help. By that time the first security alerts traversed the net that a new computer worm, named "Blaster" or "Love San" had been identified. Blaster was transmitted directly from computer to computer over the internet or networks without the traditional vector of email, by using a sophisticated utility that searched for other vulnerable computers to infect, and then infected them. The victim had no warning other than to find that his computer was compromised. Carrying a denial-of-service payload, Blaster would have all infected computers attack the Microsoft

Windows Update server at predetermined times, in a coordinated attack. Most of the antivirus software publishers promptly updated their detection files, and provided a free downloadable utility to detect and remove Blaster from infected computers. Microsoft launched a media blitz encouraging users to download and install the security patch which

had been released a month earlier, and published instructions on removing the worm. Microsoft took down the server that was the target of the attack. While there are many computers still infected with Blaster, it can no longer shut down Microsoft.

Before we had a chance to catch our breath following the Blaster attack, inboxes were flooded with a variety of emails with the topics "Details", "Thank You", "Your Application", "Appr" "That Movie?", "Wicked Screensaver", or some variation, possibly using "Re:" as a prefix. That first morning of the Sobig-F assault, I turned on my computer, updated my antivirus software, and was greeted with an over-filled email box containing over 700 emails with suspicious topics. I use a free program, Mailwasher (www.mailwasher.net), to screen my email, and allow me to delete spam and viruses before they can get on my computer. Even though I was then not aware of Sobig-F, I knew better than to open suspicious emails, and to delete them. As with the Blaster attack, a similar sequence of notifications, antivirus updates, patches, and other fixes were made available in the hours following the onslaught. By that evening, I had received over 1200 copies of Sobig-F; the following day, I turned on my computer and found over 2000 infected emails, with additional emails arriving at the rate of several per minute; by the time I shutdown that evening, I deleted several thousand more emails. Sobig-F hijacks the address books of infected computers and repeatedly sends out emails with randomly selected "From:" lines concealing the source. Many servers automatically bounced infected emails, contributing to the avalanche.

Containing a payload that could launch a denial of service attack on multiple servers, as well as connect to a porn site, Sobig-F is scheduled to self-destruct on September 10.

So, what have we learned from this double-barreled attack? First, no matter how good it is, antivirus software may not protect us from rapidly spreading viruses and worms that become endemic before the publishers can respond; still, there is no excuse for not having frequently updated antivirus software installed. While Blaster spread through stealth, Sobig-F was a suspicious email attachment that often came from an acquaintance.

Practicing safe hex, would prevent Sobig-F infections. Also, we had better pay attention when Microsoft announces critical security updates, and install them. We must frequently check for these patches at windowsupdate.microsoft.com, and install them.

It was bad enough to become a victim of the insidious attacks. It will be even worse if we do not learn from them, and act appropriately. More such attacks will inevitably follow.

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Help! Help! Help!

This is an article for beginners. That is, it is mostly for beginners, but maybe human-nature being what it is, some of us intermediate users need to be reminded about how to ask your computer for help. It is stereotypical that "guys" don't look at the manual except as a last resort, just like they don't ask directions when lost. But the help tools on your computer have a big advantage, in that no one will know you have used it, so some face is saved. So, that is what this article is about?using the built-in help features of your PC. This is not a step-by-step instruction, not enough time, space, and smarts, this is encouragement to try it yourself. Mick Topping (Springfield Mo. Computer Clubs,

Don't get me wrong, there is nothing immoral with the .poke-and-hope? method of computer use, I do a lot of it myself, and of course, many more advanced users greatly appreciate a chance to display their skills and help you out personally. Sometimes, there is no choice other than getting outside assistance, because the beginner may just not have the language to describe what he wants to the relatively stupid help program. And the help program is truly STUPID! It will present you with information, but frequently, it is either information you don't want, or that you can't understand (that language barrier again) help programs are written by programmers after all, and they have little experience with English and users in general. But proper etiquette is to try to find out for yourself before asking.

Which programs have help, You will rarely use a Windows application that does not have some help built in. The help files may be limited, and of minimal use, but frequently they are a virtual textbook on your application. Internet applications, such as the browser and the Email client (and many other recent programs) will not only have the built-in help, but will have an internet interface to the vendor company help database. MS Office applications (Excel, Word, PowerPoint etc) have a specialized little dancing icon (called the Office assistant) that makes some beginners feel more comfortable using the help feature, and makes most experienced users nauseous. But almost all applications will have medium sized built-in help document that can be accessed with similar means. The document usually contains an index, a table-of-contents (ToC), and a word-search function. It may also contain a bookmark function to allow quick return to favorite pages. The index and ToC work just as their paper book counterparts.

How do you get to help?Like every other task in Windows, there are several ways to get help started. For most programs, the menu contains a help item, (as shown here) that causes a list of help choices to drop down.

Probably the least helpful, but nice to know is the about choice— (1) on the menu. This selection displays the program's version number, and frequently other reference material, very useful when contacting technical support. Usually found at the bottom of the list.

In the middle of the help drop-down list is a variety of choices (2)?perhaps an access to a web resident help function, perhaps a ?what's this? button (click it, then click other items to get info on that item). Some programs have a debugging tool in this area, and Microsoft Office applications may have a special, transitional help tool to aid in migration from other vendor's programs. Features in this middle area can be any sort of useful tools, MS Office puts their incredibly irritating Office Assistant here?try it you may find it useful. (Gag, retch, barf?)

But the nucleus of the help system, usually the top selection (3) goes under a variety of names. The most common are labels like Program help, or Help Topics, or Contents and Index, or Help and Support. Actually, anything that the program author decides is descriptive can be used to label the main help entry point. Here are some samples.

What can you expect from Help?Well, don't plan on Help being your only source of knowledge on a program. It is usually the case that programs are written in a great hurry. The software marketplace is a cruel taskmaster, and usually as soon as a program is finished, it is hurriedly deployed. Something like ?All right, we are done!oops, hold it, we gotta stick some help stuff on there?OK, there, she's ready to go?. Well maybe it is not quite that bad, most Help files contain a lot of information.

Help for Windows itself is found using the Start then Help or Help and Support buttons, depending on version.

Here is a sample help tool, from Word 2000, showing basic functions. Shown, is the Contents list?the Index (self explanatory) and the Answer Wizard (a search tool which will take literal questions as input) are available by clicking page-tabs above the left pane. The table of contents display has a hierarchy of chapters, where sub-chapters or topic titles can be seen by clicking the ?+? beside the little book.

The icons at the top of the frame include ways to change the display of the help pane, print a topic, and go back to a topic just viewed. Unfortunately, Word Help is one of those that do not have a book-marking function. Note that there is no help-on-help button?Bad Microsoft! Well, there is some help-on-help several chapters into the table of contents—fairly common trick of lazy programmers. If you are having trouble using the Help feature, look down the Contents list, to check for advice on how to use help.Large applications such as Excel and Word will have Help that is equal to a several hundred-page book, and newer versions of the program have imbedded ?tools? (buttons) that will ?demonstrate? (go to that feature of the program and simulate running it) how to accomplish certain actions. Well written Help tools will always have many hot links that will quickly jump to internal and external references, or similar topics.

Unfortunately, all applications have somewhat different help environments. Some have a simple two pane window, one containing ToC, or search result topics, and the other containing readable text and graphics. Other applications will have no useful help visible until the topic is selected, at which time the ToC and Search window vanishes. It can be re entered, but not too conveniently. This makes it impossible to give a step-by-step instruction help, you will have to work your way through it. But while it can be somewhat confusing the first time, there is no damage that will result from pressing the wrong button on the help menu. And it is well worth the effort to experiment.

If you have one of the new High-Rez displays, you may find the fonts tiny, and no obvious way to adjust them, but many newer help programs are based on the web-browser, and fonts will respond to the same <Ctrl>+<Mouse-Scroll>.

Shortcuts to help?Help can virtually always be obtained by pressing the <F1> key. Unfortunately, it is not very consistent in the type of help it provides. Some applications use the <F1> key to just start help. Some will allow starting to use a feature, like beginning to work a menu choice, then pressing <F1> to launch help already opened to the right section. Still other applications use <F1> to start the ?What's This? function, that allows clicking on a menu, button or other screen object for a short explanation of its function. Most commonly, the "What's This" function is started by <shift>+<F1>

Favorites, Printing, etc.? Most applications help tools have no way to mark areas for future reference, but at least Windows does. It is very worthwhile to skim down the list of top-level chapters, picking areas that look interesting, expanding those, and book-marking the topics in windows that you are interested in. Then when you get a slow minute, pop open help, look in your favorites, and learn how things work. Printing is something you should be careful with. Help can be so enormous, that printing can be very expensive. My recommendation is to print only those recovery tools that you may not be able to get on line, or lengthy step-by-step processes. And finally, the main and most important suggestion, is to practice it. Open an application, or just Windows, and help yourself.
Mick

Intel Pentium 4 3.06GHZ Processor/Motherboard

*Dennis Kemper-Executive Director
Las Vegas PC User Group*

Last year at the annual Association of Personal User Groups Conference, APCUG for short, we had a “new” vendor as a sponsor? this company is very well known in the PC Industry, and many of you have their products on your computers. You might remember phrases like 8086, 386, 486, and Pentium, oops I gave it away, this company is called Intel.

Intel is located in Santa Clara, California where they have been doing business for close to 35 years, they are the leading company in the development of microprocessors and are at the center of the digital revolution. We can thank them for the product we use so much in our daily lives — the personal computer. One can only speculate at what point this industry would be without Intel, it is impossible to think that it would be anything close to what it is today without them.

During the conference, Intel asked the million-dollar question, what could be done to help computer user groups from their end. The reply from “your officers” was to offer special pricing to user group members. Our focus has always been to interact with vendors in the PC Community, to form a mutually beneficial relationship with them that benefits computer user groups and with Intel, I believe, for the most part, we have been able to accomplish this.

Four months after the initial contact Intel started the ball rolling in our relationship, they offered a deal for the 2002 Fall Conference attendees ? a Pentium 4 3.06GHZ Hyperthreading Processor and an Intel D850EMV2 Motherboard for a discounted price, along with creating a special page for user groups. I believe this is the start of more things to come. Of course I had been lagging in the “latest and greatest hardware department” as usual (my current computer was over a year old) so a new case, memory, soundcard and DVD Drive were in order. The greatest aspect of this opportunity was the visit to “Fry’s Electronics! This store has to be one of the ten wonders of the world!

At this point, we are dealing with an empty case, boxed processor, bare motherboard, memory sticks, and the assorted cards to toss in the system along with a “quick install sheet” that is suited more for a drink coaster than an installation guide. However, in fairness they do say that this guide is intended for professional installers only? the full manual is available from Intel but it weighs in at 64 printed pages. The change in performance from the old machine is about double 1.4GHZ to 3.06GHZ.

The most intriguing feature of this combination is the Hyper-Threading Technology that enables multi-threaded software applications to execute threads in parallel. This level of threading technology has never been seen before in a general-purpose microprocessor. Internet, e-Business, and enterprise software applications continue to put higher demands on processors. To improve performance in the past, threading was enabled in the software by splitting instructions into multiple streams so that multiple processors could act upon them. Today with Hyper-Threading Technology, processor-level threading can be utilized which offers more efficient use of processor resources for greater parallelism and improved performance on today’s multi-threaded software. This boils down to much faster loading and execution time for applications that are multi-thread enabled. I have noticed a huge difference in Norton Antivirus and Adobe applications.

At the time of this writing Intel has started to offer another round of products, the 865-875 Motherboards, 3.0, 3.8, 2.6 GHZ 800MHZ Front FSB Processors, all of which deliver higher performance than what is listed in this article. For more information on Intel products please visit their website at <http://www.intel.com>

AS SMART AS YOU ARE ,I BET YOU DIDN'T KNOW THIS !!

Men can read smaller print than women can; women can hear better.

It is impossible to ‘lick your elbow.’

The state with the highest percentage of people who walk to work: Alaska!

The cost of raising a medium-size dog to the age of eleven: \$6,400

The average number of people airborne over the US any given hour: 61,000

Each king in a deck of playing cards represents a great king from history:

- Spades - King David
- Hearts - Charlemagne
- Clubs - Alexander the Great
- Diamonds - Julius Caesar

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If a statue in the park of a person on a horse has both front legs in the air, the person died in battle.

If the horse has one front leg in the air the person died as a result of wounds received in battle.

If the horse has all four legs on the ground, the person died of natural causes.

“I am.” is the shortest complete sentence in the English language.

Hershey’s Kisses are called that because the machine that makes them looks like it’s kissing the conveyor belt.

Conception occurs more often in December than any other month.

Half of all Americans live within 50 miles of their birthplace.

Bulletproof vests, fire escapes, windshield wipers, and laser printers were all invented by women.

Honey is the only food that doesn't spoil.

On Father's Day there are more collect calls than any other day of the year.

About 40% of all people at a party will snoop in your medicine cabinet.

In Shakespeare's time, mattresses were secured on bed frames by ropes.

When you pulled on the ropes the mattress tightened, making the bed firmer to sleep on. Hence the phrase: "goodnight, sleep tight."

It was the accepted practice in Babylon 4,000 years ago that for a month after the wedding, the bride's father would supply his son-in-law with all the mead he could drink. Mead is a honey beer and because their calendar was lunar based, this period was called the honey month we know today as 'The Honeymoon.'

In English pubs, ale is ordered by pints and quarts. So in old England, when customers got unruly, the bartender would yell at them mind their own pints and quarts and settle down. It's where we get the phrase "mind your P's and Q's"

Many years ago in England, pub frequenters had a whistle baked into the rim or handle of their ceramic cups.

When they needed a refill, they used the whistle to get some service. "Wet your whistle" is the phrase inspired by this practice.

In Scotland, a new game was invented.

It was entitled Gentlemen Only Ladies Forbidden and thus the word "GOLF" entered into the English language.

At least 75% of people who read this will try to lick their elbow



PRESIDENTS REPORT

Well, the ballots have been counted, and there was no need for a recount. All the dangling chads have been clipped, and for better or worse, I Michael Moore, have Accepted the role as the New President of the Orange Coast IBM PC User Group (OCIPUG) (oh see pug, ah see pug. Call us whatever you like, just as long as you call us)

First, I feel that I should tell you a little about myself. I have been in computers for over 20 years, starting with my First Commodore 64 Computer. Since that time I have also been involved with numerous computer organizations. And am still a member of many of the PC based user groups here in Southern California. I started coming to OCIPUG meetings back in 1994, I may have been to one or two meetings before this, but at the time, It was all Greek to me. Because at the time, I still did not own an IBM PC Shortly afterwards, I was able to get into what at the time was a low end IBM PC Computer, I then started getting more and more comfortable with how the IBM PC worked in comparison to the other computers that I had used, also, I had started going to more and more of the SIG (Special Interest Group) meetings, and picking up little bits and pieces that I was slowly able to implement into my own computing.

After time, I was asked to become the co-chair person of the OCIPUG Internet SIG, I was then asked to lead the Internet SIG, while I admit, that I am not a teacher in any since of the word, I feel that by all of us working together at the meeting, in some way, we all can walk away with a little something that we did not know.

This being my first experience in a long time of being president of an organization I have some ideas, which I hope will help OCIPUG grow once again, and help to shed some of the negative comments that OCIPUG has received by some members of the Southern California Personal Computer Community. I would like to also see that OCIPUG once again become a vital part of the community. But, I cannot do it without your help.

So, I would like too request from each and every member of OCIPUG, if you have any questions, concerns, or any comments in what you would like too see or not see at any of the meetings, please feel to contact me using the information that is on the first page of the newsletter. In Closing, I am looking forward to the challenges in the year ahead, and I hope that we can make it a good year.

Respectfully,
Michael R Moore
Michael R Moore, President
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OCIPUG

Orange Coast IBM PC User Group

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Meetings Location

Costa Mesa Senior Center
Southeast Corner of 19th and Pomona

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rwalker820@msn.com

Publication Guidelines

All material submitted will be published *exactly* as submitted, but may be subject to editing at the *Editor's* discretion. We reserve the right to refuse any material submitted for publication. Send all submissions as follows:

1. Send via Internet e-mail to: editor Robert Walker 949-642-5997
rwalker820@msn.com and newsletter coordinator
Michael Conway 714-962-2194 mchbca@aol.com
2. Mail a 3.5" disk so as to be received by the deadline by the Newsletter Coordinator at the OCIPUG mailing address above.
3. Hard copy to Editor at the OCIPUG mailing address above.

Membership

Benefits of OCIPUG Membership include, but by no means are limited to:
* Subscription to OCIPUG's monthly newsletter, *Readme.Doc*, with up-to-date information on meeting schedules as well as the newest software and hardware.

- * Free monthly General Meetings with speakers from industry and academia describing advances in technology.
- * Free Special Interest Group (SIG) meetings/seminars to exchange tips and tricks and to solve problems.
- * Free technical support from knowledgeable fellow members via telephone and/or e-mail.
- * Pleasure in helping your fellow member solve their problems.
- * Camaraderie with those of similar interests.
- * Discounts from vendors on software, hardware, and other items.

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