



Brevard Users Group



January 2004

Pres Sez

By George Rymer

Another year has come and gone. I trust you all had a Merry Christmas and a Safe and Happy New Years Celebration. We had an outstanding Christmas Party on 17 Dec. with approximately 50 attendees. The members brought scrumptious foods and deserts. I believe that everyone had a full tummy before the night ended. There was ample food and we invited the Library Staff to come in and share our good fortune. After everyone had their fill, there was still plenty of food left. The night was cold and the temperature was forecast to drop into the upper 30's (Unusual for us in Central Florida). There were four Homeless people outside the Library, so we invited them in to eat the food that we had left. They happily came in and ate and drank their fill and enjoyed getting in out of the cold for a while. What better way to celebrate the season than to share our good fortune with the less fortunate? This, I am happy to say, came about as a suggestion of our Treasurer, Ted Glaser. Thanks Ted! and I'm sure they thank you as well.

We wish to thank the contributors of many of our door prizes: the Mindsshare Users Group Support Div. of Microsoft Corp., Jerry Manus of CompUSA,

Melbourne FL. and Raven Technologies of Cocoa, FL. You are all very generous and we thank you so much.

I would also like to thank Joan Hefter, Eileen Cameron, Tom Wojnar and Ed Behm of the Party Committee, all the members who brought food and those of you who helped set up and take down the

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THE NEXT MEETING OF THE BREVARD USERS GROUP WILL BE ON

*Wednesday, January 21st, 2004
AT 7:00 pm*

IN

*the Melbourne Library
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Mary
Alice
Grant
Secretary

Prez Sez Continued from Page 1

tables and chairs. It was a great coordinated effort on everyone's part. THANK YOU ALL! "Members helping Members"

At the short Business Session we had at the party, we were able to finalize of the Ballot for the 2004 Officers. They Are:

- President; George Rymer,
- Vice President; Jack Nash,
- Secretary; Joan Hefter and
- Treasurer; Pete Lehotski.

The Vote will be at the monthly meeting on the 21st of this month.

HAPPY NEW YEAR ALL
Cheers George



BUG MEETING

George Rymer opened the meeting at 6:10pm. He announced that we now have access to the Internet at the Library.

Trying to finalize the slate for Officers of the BUG club, Eileen Cameron made two nominations from the floor for the office of President but both people turned it down. That is a shame as George Rymer has been President for several years and would like a break. However, rather than let the club go without a President he took it for another year. Please try to remember this next year and someone step up to the plate and take the job to give George a rest. It is for the good of the club. The ballot for next year's officers is: George Rymer, President, Jack Nash, Vice President, Joan Hefter, Secretary, and Pete Lehotski, Treasure. The ballot passed unanimously.

What a great Christmas Party. There were at least five long tables of food, in addition to drinks, snacks, and goodies to be had by everyone. In fact there was so much food, that we brought in three homeless people and fed them.

Thanks to Riverside Bank, Staples, Office Depot and Comp USA for donating gifts. Everyone who came to the meeting had a full tummy, and a bag of goodies to go home with.

Thanks to the Christmas committee for all the hard work putting it together.

Have A Merry Christmas and A Happy New Year.

Respectively given by Secretary,

Mary Alice Grant



E-Mail Jargon

If you are tired of the meaningless email acronyms, or want to join the crowd and start using them, here are a few:

- R - are
- U - you
- BTW - by the way
- BRB - be right back
- TYVM - thank you very much
- ROTFL - roll on the floor laughing
- YW - you are welcome
- LOL - laughing out loud
- IMHO - in my humble opinion
- L8R - later
- NRN - no reply necessary
- OT - off topic
- REHI - hello again
- SOS - same old stuff
- G2G - got to go
- SOH - sense of humor
- SYL - see you later
- THX - thanks
- TIA - thank you in advance
- HF - have fun



Treasurer's Report

By Ted Glaser

Not available at press time, ed



ARE YOU SECURE?

An organization that seems to have the "little guy" in mind is Steve Gibson of the Gibson research Company. He is a regular columnist of Information Week. I highly recommend you check out his web site at www.grc.com. This is a great web site to check out, to make sure that your computer is safe from hackers when you are connected to the Internet. About half-way down on the Home page you will see a link to "Shields Up."

"Shields Up" is a free service that you can run on any Windows computer. This is a program that will check to see if your computer is safe from unwanted attacks. "Shields Up" will attempt to contact the hidden Internet Server within your PC. Your computer may be functioning as an Internet Server without you knowing about it. You may be serving up all or many of your personal files for reading, writing or deletion by anyone in the world.

It will look at the most commonly used ports to see if it can see your computer. The program will report back to you whether you are vulnerable or not. After this test is completed you can click on "Probe My Ports", which is a program that will do a more in-depth search of your ports to see if you are vulnerable.

The Internet Probe Port test attempts to establish standard TCP Internet connections with a handful of standard well-known Internet service ports on your computer. This test will return one of three responses:

One of the responses is that a particular port is open. This is not good, as it means that your computer is open for the world to see.

Another response is that your port is closed. This is okay, but not great. It means that a hacker knows that your computer exists, but is currently closed to connections. This may slow an amateur hacker, but will not deter a professional hacker.

The best response is "stealth." This means that there is no evidence whatsoever that a port (or even a computer) exists at your IP address.

Extracted from an article in "Q-Bits", January 2003, by permission of the author, Wayne Steen



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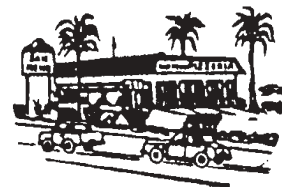
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Computer Parasites

by Brian K. Lewis, Ph.D.*

Member of the Sarasota Personal Computer Users Group, Inc.

So, you have finally realized that you need to keep your anti-virus software up to date and you have installed a firewall on your Internet connected computer. Now you are safe from any intrusions and you can relax, right? Wrong!! Now you only have to worry about programs that track you from web site to web site. Especially programs that run in the background on web pages and install silent reporting programs on your computer. These programs, generally referred to as malware or malicious software, are not all stopped by A-V software or firewalls. What they do and how you can block them is the subject of this article.

The easiest way to tell you what some of these programs do is to list and describe some of them. For example, Microsoft Money communicates, silently, with Microsoft at regular intervals. If you don't have a firewall that checks outgoing traffic, you would never be aware of this.

I installed SpywareBlaster which has a list of more than 144 different applications which can track your surfing habits, set up outgoing ports, report the software on your computer or other activities. However, just like A-V software, it has to be updated constantly because of newly identified parasites. Some examples (you may already have some of these on your system):

(1) NewtonKnows: a browser plug-in that supposedly helps users find comparison prices online. However, the software transmits LARGE amounts of personal data to the makers. The hard to find privacy agreement includes this clause: THE COMPANY MAY USE INDIVIDUAL INFORMATION FOR ANY LEGALLY PERMISSIBLE PURPOSE IN COMPANY'S SOLE DISCRETION. Removal can be very difficult.

(2) Go'Zilla: a download manager. It contains spyware/adware and reports information back to its vendor.

(3) PerMedia/FriendGreetings: Installed by an ActiveX download linked to "ecards" sent from friendgreetings.com. This software will send similar e-card messages to all addresses in the user's e-mail address book. It can track websites visited and transmit this information along with the user's e-mail address. It also pops up advertising windows during browsing.

(4) Aureate/Radiate: Tracks your Internet activity and sends a detailed report to its makers every time you open your browser. The information includes the name the computer is registered to and a list of the installed software.

(5) Lop.com: A browser hijacker. It sets your start page and IE search features to one of several Internet addresses. It will also reset your homepage and searchpage back to its choice if you try to change them back to your original settings. This software is frequently installed through pop-up ads and some sites may be able to install it without any warning due to security holes in IE.

(6) OnlineDialer: Allows WebPages to load and run an executable file. Once this control is installed, any WebPage has the ability run any executable file on your computer. Some pages that try to install this as an ActiveX drive-by-download may actually keep trying to download the software onto your machine multiple times.

(7) Aspam: This is a Trojan horse that provides remote access to an infected user's PC.

(8) Xupiter: An Internet Explorer toolbar that bundles a program that may launch pop-up ads and can download updates of itself. The toolbar contains links to the Xupiter search engine. It can hijack your homepage, search settings and favorites. It is installed mainly by drive-by-download. It may also download third-party software such as a casino loader application.

(9) Tinybar: A browser toolbar that may spawn pop-up ads. Some versions do not display the toolbar in IE, just the ads. Newer versions also carry out a denial-of-service attack against a spyware information site. Tinybar probably installs through a security hole in Microsoft's Java Virtual Machine.

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Parasites ... Continued from Page 5

(10) FreeScratchAndWin: A browser plug-for Internet Explorer. It changes your homepage, opens pop-up ads and tracks your browsing habits. It can download and install code through its update feature.

(11) TPS108 Dialer: If installed, it could dial to an overseas toll number without your knowledge and that would result in large charges on your phone bill.

Remember that this is only eleven of over 144 parasite identifications marked by SpywareBlaster. There are others that install as cookies and have to be cleaned by other software. The most common of these is "DoubleClick". Doubleclick is one of the largest advertising companies on the Internet. Anytime you encounter a web page with a DoubleClick ad on it, a cookie is loaded on your computer. If you already had a DoubleClick cookie it reports where and when it was created back to the DoubleClick company. This allows the company to collect information on your browsing habits. You might say that this is not really a problem. However, when it happens on a supposedly secure site, it could be a real problem. The following paragraphs are quoted from an article located at: <http://www.spywareinfo.com/newsletter/archives/feb-2003/5.php>

"Go to the Bank of America web site and click on "Online Bill Pay". It will ask you what state you are in. From there, click the "enroll" button. Then it takes you to a page located on a secure server. This means that the connection between you and the server is protected by 128 bit Secure Socket Layer encryption and that there are supposed to be no outside parties involved in the transactions between your browser and the secure web page.

On the bottom of that page there is a 1-pixel wide, 1-pixel high transparent graphic which is loaded from <http://ad.doubleclick.net>. In other words, a web bug. Normally a web bug will set a cookie, but uncharacteristically for Doubleclick, this web bug does not. The web bug is loaded from a secure server, so the normal browser warnings about a page that is not fully encrypted do not go off."

This article goes on to state that there is no information as to what is being collected by this DoubleClick web bug. However, it is on the page where the user enters personal information. This web bug runs a Javascript program that reports information back to DoubleClick. All this in spite of Bank of America's disclaimer that third parties have no access to you while on their secure web site.

So how do these parasites get on your computer? The most common method is loading using Internet Explorer's ActiveX installation option. These are the "Drive-by Downloads". This facility was designed for installing plug-ins to view multimedia files, Active-X controls for online games, fonts for international languages, and other legitimate uses. When a web page includes a link to an ActiveX program, a window may appear asking if the user wishes to execute it. If 'Yes' is clicked (or if IE security settings are set lower than normal so that it never even asks), the software is allowed to run. It can then do anything it likes on your computer, including installing parasite software.

"Browser Hijacking" can also occur as a result of ActiveX controls. This is where your browser settings, such as home page and/or search page are altered. The purpose of this is to force you to visit a web site of the hijacker's choice so that they can sell advertising. Most of the time this can be corrected simply by going to IE's tools menu and changing the settings under Options. However, some of these hijackers alter the registry settings so your restoration is undone. They may even reset their changes every time you boot your computer.

AOL also exploits the ActiveX controls and even downloads ActiveX components to your computer without notification. It is not known what these are doing, but since they could control your computer, they would be classified as "Trojans".

Another common strategy is the "EULA" or End User License Agreement. How many of you actually read the complete agreement when you are installing new software or an update? How many times have you noted that the agreement specifies that third-party software is being installed? This is what happened to

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Parasites ..Continued from Page 6

users of Intuit's TurboTax. The EULA specified that C-dilla software would be installed along with the Tax software. But who took the time to determine just what C-dilla was and would do? It is "parasite" software supposedly designed to prevent pirating of TurboTax. However, it is not removed when you remove the TurboTax software. Note that removal of the C-dilla application will prevent TurboTax from running. Just one example of how the EULA can be used to "sneak" software onto your computer.

Now that you know something about what these parasites are, how do you get rid of them? Some A-V software is starting to include a few in their screening process. However, this is really not adequate. There are several very highly recommended freeware applications that everyone should have on their computer. I have already mentioned one: SpywareBlaster. This is a 500K program that is available from: <http://www.wilderssecurity.com/spywareblaster.html>. This program modifies your registry to prevent any of its listed parasites from being installed by ActiveX controls on web pages you visit. Since these are registry entries they really don't consume system resources. This application does need to be updated frequently to block new spyware. SpywareBlaster does not affect any pages that download cookies to your computer. For that you need a different application. There are two highly recommended applications, Ad-Aware and Spy-Bot Search & Destroy. Ad-Aware is available in several different versions from www.lavasoft.de. There is a free version, a plus version and a professional version. For more information check out their new web page. You should also note that Ad-Aware had a 6 month period last year where no updates were issued. In the parasite business as in the anti-virus business, updates are essential to maintain your protection.

Spy-Bot Search & Destroy is also freeware and is available from www.security.kolla.de. I started using it when I realized my Ad-Aware software was out-of-date. Spy-Bot is a 2.3 MB application that needs to be run whenever you have been on the web. It will remove tracking cookies and other malware that has been downloaded to your computer. It should also be updated at least weekly.

So, if you have these Spyware removers, up-to-date Anti-virus software, and a good firewall you should be safer in your web surfing. At least until the next menace comes along.

Dr. Lewis is a former University & Medical School professor. He has been working with personal computers for more than thirty years and can be reached via e-mail at: bwsail@yahoo.com or voice mail at 941/925-3047.

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Use Your CD Drive More Productively

by Ira Wilsker

ira@apcug.org (click to email author)

Almost all newer computers come with a CD-RW drive, a CD drive that can write and rewrite compatible CD discs. For older computers, with a standard CD reader (play only, not write), the addition of a CD “burner” is a very popular and fairly inexpensive upgrade. A simple review of the Sunday sale books for the major electronics and office supply stores shows an abundance of CD-RW drives for between \$30 and \$100, often after rebate. These drives are typically easy to install, and may possibly be installed in addition to the existing CD reader (good for copying CDs), or as a simple replacement. If internal installation is not desired, there are several external CD-RW drives, advertised weekly, that connect to an available USB or firewire port. The external drives, typically the USB models, are also often a good choice for older notebook computers where internal installation is difficult or impossible. The Sunday ads often show the external USB drives for under \$100, after rebates.

Almost all CD-RW drives, whether factory installed, or after-market add-on, come with some CD burning software. The most widely distributed CD software provided with the drives is from Adaptec, or Adaptec’s successor (Adaptec sold their CD writing software division), Roxio. Another common software package included with some drives is from Nero, while other drives come with a variety of lesser-known software titles. As the price of blank CD discs plunges, often “free after rebate”, burning (writing to) CDs has become very popular. Still, many PC (and Mac) users are not using their equipment to its potential; large number of users still only use their CD-RW drives in read mode to install other software, and not to burn discs.

As had been stated many times here in previous columns, the three most important words in computing are “Backup, Backup, and Backup”. Remember that “Murphy’s First law of Computing” states that “A properly backed-up hard drive will never fail; a hard drive that has not been recently backed up will always

fail at the most inopportune time.” All too many users who have ready access to CD-RW drives have lost all of their important files to viruses or hard drive failures, despite the ease and low expense of copying important files to CD discs. The common blank discs hold from 660 to 700 megabytes of data, and are very inexpensive. Other than some time, there is no great investment to back up critical files at a minimum, or even better, entire hard drives.

There are a variety of excellent utilities available to backup hard drives. Some CD-RW drives come with a “lite” or “limited” version of popular backup programs. While minimally functional, these “lite” versions often lack useful functions such as compression (getting more data on a CD disc than its native capacity), or incremental backup (only backing up new files or files modified since the previous backup). I have been using “BackUp MyPC” from Stomp Software (<http://www.stompinc.com>), which was formerly known as Backup Exec, by Veritas (Seagate). This program is probably one of the most full featured backup programs, and easy to use. BackUp MyPC can backup to almost any type of device from CD-RW drives, tape drives, Jazz and Zip drives, and other devices. Some competing products are Roxio’s Go Back, Norton’s Ghost, and NTI’s BackUp Now (which I have also used). Since almost all computers can utilize some form of CD writer, and blank discs are cheap, there is absolutely no reason NOT to have at least critical data files backed up. The cliché “ounce of prevention...” is most apropos here. With over one in five PCs currently infected with at least one variety of the Klez worm, several versions of which are capable of destroying critical files on a hard drive, backups are imperative. The appearance and rapid spread of other destructive worms and viruses, such as the new “Hunch” worm which explicitly destroys the files in the Windows, My Programs, and My Documents directories, emphasizes the need for backing up hard drives. Still, probably the most damage is done by the old-fashioned hard drive crash. Remember Murphy’s law, and always have a reasonably current backup of critical files. For long-term archival purposes, better quality CD discs are advertised as having a 100-year archival life.

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Use Your CD drive... Continued from Page 8

There are other popular uses of CD burners. One of the most popular and most controversial uses is burning music to blank CD discs. Often in the popular MP3 format, or in native commercial music CD format, studies show that this is the most popular use of CD burners. Provided that copyright laws are rigidly obeyed, and we all know that they always are (snicker), homemade music CDs are very widely created and used. Online music or swap services, ranging from the now defunct Napster, to the very much alive and controversial KazAa and Morpheus, as well as the legitimate commercial music sites such as Sony, are popular sources of such music.

Another popular use is copying entire CD discs. Generally, it is considered "ok" to make a single archival backup of commercial CDs, provided that the copy is only used as a backup, and properly disposed of (destroyed) when the original software is no longer needed. With some software CDs, and an increasing number of commercial music CDs, this archival backup is becoming more difficult to create as sophisticated copy protection is being utilized more commonly.

Many use their CD drive, often with rewriteable CD-RW discs, as an additional, but removable adjunct to their hard drive. This allows archival and portable storage of massive amounts of data, at minimal expense. CDs are often ideal for moving large files between computers.

There are several other uses for the CD-RW drives now so common in our machines. Many other CD drive utilities are readily available for download, such as from <http://www.tucows.exp.net/system/cdrutil95.html> or <http://www.tucows.exp.net/mmedia.html>. Use the drives as they can be used, but make absolutely sure that critical data is frequently backed up.

There is no restriction against any non-profit group using the article as long as it is kept in context, with proper credit given to the author. This article is brought to you by the Editorial Committee of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG), an International organization to which this user group belongs.



Microsoft Office Suite Word . . . Create a single mailing label

Microsoft's Mail Merge Wizard is great for mass mailings, but if you need to create only a handful of labels, using Word's Envelopes And Labels dialog box is much more efficient.

For example, suppose you need to send the same letter to two of your customers. Type the letter to the first customer, and then select the customer's address in the letter. Next, follow these steps to create a mailing label:

1. In Word 2000, select Tools | Envelopes And Labels. In Word XP, select Tools | Letters And Mailings | Envelopes And Labels.

2. Select the Labels tab in the Envelopes And Labels dialog box. The customer's address that you selected will appear in the Address box.

3. To make formatting changes to the address, select and right-click it to bring up a shortcut menu, and make any needed changes.

4. To change or specify the address labels you wish to use, click the Options button in the Labels dialog box, and click OK to confirm.

5. Click Single Label, which will display the default: row 1, column 1.

6. Hand-feed one sheet of labels into the printer and click Print. The printer will print the address on the first label on the sheet.

To print the mailing label for the second customer, replace the first customer's address with the second customer's address in the letter. Select the address and follow the steps above. However, in Step 5, enter 2 for the column number. The address will print on the next available label.

*Reprinted from the
Chautauqua Cyber Club NL*



HOW I INSTALLED WINDOWS XP, HOME EDITION, ON MY COM- PUTER

By ED SCOTTY

Reprinted from the online NL of:
The Computer Club of Ocean County

For background I have a NEC Computer, 500 MHZ Intel Pentium with 128 MB of RAM. It was purchased in November, 1999, with Windows 98 installed by OEM. I have two hard drives, one 8.4 Gig, the other 13.0 G.

Recently I had a lot of problems with messages indicating there were unrecoverable faults and I had to restart my computer often. I saw that STAPLES had a sale on an upgrade to WIN XP for \$89.99 so I decided to do an upgrade.

When I first inserted the CDROM in my drive, and got to SETUP, it seemed that I would not have to spend too much time installing the program since there was a message in the window to the left that the program would install in 78 minutes.

There were to be several main stages in the installation, the first "Install", involved "Preparing Upgrade Report", (had to go on Internet for this so that some files could be updated by Microsoft}. This was divided into "Collect Information", "Dynamic Update", "Preparing Installation". Then I was STOPPED. Microsoft advised that I could not complete until I did various things.

There was an "Upgrade Report" of four and a quarter pages (both sides) which started out like this: "Setup found hardware or software on your computer that might not or will not work with Windows XP. You should read and understand this upgrade report before continuing. Setup has detected that some hardware or programs on your computer might not function correctly after the upgrade is completed. This lack of functionality can have an effect on things you might want to do, such as connecting to the Internet, accessing e-mail, printing, scanning, and playing sounds or music.

Setup will automatically back up your *existing* version of Windows. You can restore your computer safely even if these upgrade problems remain. To

uninstall Windows XP go to Add/Remove Programs in Control Panel."

Then the Upgrade Report had a section termed "BLOCKING ISSUES." It read: "Setup found some issues that will prevent you from upgrading your Windows installation. You must fix all of these issues before you can upgrade to Windows XP."

First, Software that must be Permanently Removed. "The following programs can cause problems during the upgrade process and Setup cannot automatically remove them for you. Therefore, before Setup can continue, you must uninstall these programs from your computer.

GoBack must be removed before you upgrade. You can reinstall after the upgrade is complete."

Next, "...the following hardware might need additional files in order to work with Windows XP. It is recommended that you obtain the necessary drivers in advance. Please note that some of the following entries might be software that is registered as hardware."

AGFA Scanner, AGFA SNAPSCAN 1212p (not currently present), SnapScan 1200p, Imaging Device, CanoScan FB62OU, Other Devices: Lexmark 5000, SCSI controllers, AGFA EPPSCSI Miniport Driver "Scanners or Digital Cameras That Might Not Work.

Setup did not recognize the following scanners or digital cameras. Check if it supports Windows XP, or contact the device manufacturer. Reinstall each device when Setup is complete, using the software that came with the device CanoScan FB62OU, FotoSnap 32 V3.00.05 - TWAIN " Software that Does Not Support Windows XP.

Setup has found programs on your computer that are incompatible with (that is, *they do not work with*) Windows XP. Contact your software vendors to obtain updates or Windows XP-compatible versions. If you don't update these programs before you upgrade the programs will not work after the upgrade is completed."

Configure AUX Button, Corel Versions, Cyber Warner, EZ Fix, EZ Recovery, Iomega Active Disk, (all in Control Panel) Iomega Copy Machine (on the start Menu)", Iomega Guest 95 (on the Start Menu)"

"Before you upgrade to Windows XP you should remove any incompatible programs if you can. After the upgrade, uninstall for these programs might not

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Install XP.. Continued from Page 10

work. Add/Remove Programs in Control Panel can help you uninstall most programs. Click Start, point to Settings, click Control Panel, and then click Add/Remove Programs.” “Norton Disk Doctor, Norton Image Disk, Norton Registry Tracker, Speed Disk - all these programs may have compatibility issues on this version of Windows.”

“Software that must be Reinstalled -Intellipoint 4.x” Settings that will not be Upgraded - “Some of your settings will not be upgraded because they aren’t applicable in Windows XP.

Dial -Up Connections that might not work. The following connections might not work after migration is complete. They will be migrated using Windows XP defaults instead of the incompatible settings.

Juno Web, Juno Web Backup” “Backup Files Found - Setup found files on your computer that appear to be a backup of part of Windows 98. During the upgrade to Windows XP Setup removes Windows 98 files.....including any backups you might have on your hard disk. Setup found 1541 files in your Recycle Bin. If you continue upgrading to Windows XP, these files will be deleted.”

Actions I took before trying to install Windows XP.

Removed GoBack (do not intend to reinstall since WIN XP has “System Restore.”

Removed CanoScan, FotoSnap, Adobe Home Edition. (I will go to the WebSite soon to download the latest files for my Canon Scanner, FB620U).

Deleted CyberWarner in Control Panel

Deleted EZ Fix and EZ Recovery in Control Panel. I have not been using these files so deleting them was no problem.

Went on Internet to download updated files/driver for my Iomega Zip Drive, 100 MB. The file was 8.21 MB and with my slow telephone connection took almost an hour.

I did nothing about my Corel WordPerfect files or those of Norton’s Systems Files as I did not think I would have major problems after installing WIN XP. I thought that I will be able to upgrade those files when time permits.

Downloaded new driver for my Lexmark Printer 5000 from Lexmark.

Performing Actual Installation of WIN XP

About a day later I was ready to try the actual installation. I inserted the CDROM and went through the first steps described above and got past any more warnings that I could not install. Then I went through the following stages in the installation:

Copying Installation Files; Installing Windows, broken down into (a) install devices; (b) install network; (c) deleting files; (d) copying files;

Completing installation, broken down into installing Start Menu items and registering components;

Finalizing Installation broken down into upgrading program and system settings, saving settings and removing Temp files used.

Then my computer was restarted and the WIN XP Logo appeared and I now was using the new program successfully. However I did not have a usable printer.

Even though I had downloaded new files for my Lexmark 5000 printer WIN XP did not recognize them. My printer was not in their list of “compatible” printers. Trying to get around this I noticed that the printer Lexmark 5700 was included in Windows listing. So I selected it to see if it might substitute for mine. Sure enough WIN XP processed all the files necessary to install the printer 5700 and I can print documents in all my programs so far.

However, when I open WIN XP for a new session I get a box in the lower right hand corner, just above the TaskBar, which shows WIN XP found new hardware, my Printer 5000 and wants to install it. Since I know that I do not have the proper files to install it I delete the box. I will try to clarify this in the future.

I do not know if I will encounter problems in certain programs in the future but up to now I do not have any. I will go on the Internet soon to upgrade my Corel Program and my Norton Systems Works Program.

Some of you may be wondering whether I am sorry that I continued on the path to upgrade to WIN XP despite the need to delete programs, get new files/drivers, etc.

No, I am not sorry. I now have a program that is supposed to be more stable than my previous one.

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Also, Microsoft has already announced that it soon will not be supporting WIN 98 (which I had before) so eventually I would have had to make changes. There were many changes I had to make, as described above, and quite a bit of time was required. Actually the biggest problem for me was when I had to download large files over the Internet with my slow telephone connection. I should note that the slow connection is usually not a problem for me when I am just accessing my e-mail or doing some searching. For those of you who have faster connections, less time will be required.



Boggle Your Mind

by Jim T, Bug Member

I just read that Intel is working on 65 nanometer chip technology, expecting to be producing the chips in 2005. The present technology is 130 nanometers, with 90 nano expected in early 2004. One nanometer is a billionth of a meter (39.37 inches).

Ten million 65 nanometer transistors would fit in a one millimeter square, a little more than 1/32nd of an inch (about .040 of an inch). That's about the size of a period printed in Arial, 22 point, bold type.

(■)

Try to imagine that 10 million times smaller.



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“Spam Pal” a way to Control Spam

by: Jack Nash, Bug Member

I have been getting a lot of unsolicited and unwanted e-mail cluttering up my in-box recently. It has gotten to the point where I had to do something. I looked around for some program that would control Spam on my system, be easy to use and preferably be free.

I found several programs but not many free ones. I eventually settled on a program called “SpamPal” that was free and seemed to be small enough to download using dial-up. I've tried it for awhile now and find it is really reducing the spam in my e-mail in box.

Here's how it works, you download the zipped file from www.spampal.com and then install the file. SpamPal will automatically block DSNLB inquiries from your computer. These include many overseas spam generators from places like Nigeria, Korea, China, etc. But to make SpamPal work for you it must be configured, download the instructions from the SpamPal site, save them, I printed the entire 16 pages but found I only needed about the first six pages. The other ten pages are needed if you don't have a POP3 e-mail setup. The instructions are excellent they give you step-by-step before and after screens for each procedure. Once configured, you can then add or remove e-mails from your whitelist or blacklist as you find necessary.

The program sets up a “Spam Trap” box in your e-mail program. I found several newsletters I subscribe to went into the Spam Trap box initially, but it was a simple procedure to move them to the whitelist file. So far my spam has been reduced by about 90%, and even when one gets through it takes about two clicks to drop them in the blacklist never to be seen again.

What I like about the program is that it works as advertised doesn't take a programmer to set it up and it's FREE. I'm sure there are other programs that work as well or maybe better, but this is the one I found. Try it, the cost is right and the results are excellent.



Newbies Corner

by Jim Hally B.U.G. member

CD- Redux

Several members of our club asked me some serious questions regarding last month's column on the longevity of CD media. Enough questions were brought to my attention that I figured I better do a little more research on the subject. As it turns out the topic is a lot deeper than I expected. Putting the pieces together is turning into quite a task. Therefore I have penciled in the names of the members who asked the questions, into my little black book. I know who you are!

I guess the first thing I can tell you is not to get yourself in a tizzy over this. The sky is not falling. You have to ask yourself just what are you backing up? Do you have a hard copy of the item? What did you do 15 years ago to safeguard the data? I understand. Believe me I do. You did the work and now you want to preserve it. But, how many of us are preserving this hard work and data on a CD we paid nothing for, nothing, but the price of a stamp and an envelope. Ok, You have to add the fretting you did on whether you would get the rebate or not. Relax. It will be all right.

Caveat

In the following paragraphs I will relay some information. You will have to decide how much value you want to assign to the selective information. I won't bore you with everything but I have read articles that contradict each other.

Theories

Older discs, thus more expensive ones, were thicker therefore better made. It is the choice of two coats of paint on a wall or just one. You have to do something if you are going to give the darn things away.

There are basically two manufacturers of CDs. Ricoh in Taiwan and Taiyo Yuden in Japan. The Japanese have higher standards. Both companies make discs for export. Both companies make discs for other firms. We all know what Made in Japan meant years ago. We know what Made in Taiwan means today.

I am sure there are other companies making CDs these days. As cheap as they seem to be I have no idea how they make any money. I guess the idea is they just keep stamping them out and must make enough off the poor guy who has to buy them off the shelf to make up for the ones they just about give away. With any manufacturing process there are items produced that do not meet certain standards. Do these become XYZ CDs that you get for near nothing? Good enough for backing up a music CD or giving more than 1.44 Mb of data to a friend but not something you want to put you last will and testament on?

Apparently there is another dye in use called phthalocyanine which when combined with a gold reflective layer, not silver is deemed to be archival. One of the names bandied about with these qualities is Mitsui. They run about .85 apiece. Not a bad price when you really want to keep the data. Fuji supposedly makes a similar CD only they use a silver reflective layer along with the phthalocyanine dye.

I remember the gold ones being more expensive. I have to admit I never spent too much on a CD-R. I really didn't buy them in bulk until I had a clean envelope lying around.

When the bulk CDs first came out the write speeds were pretty slow. In fact all the CDs started out with slow write speeds. When the main guys came out with the 4Xs the bulks were running about 1 or 2X. The price was right so we bought them. We didn't think about the future, we thought about the price. We knew darn well we had an 8X burner but the price was right. When we had problems we lowered the write speed. No problem. So what if it takes me a little longer, we thought. At this price I can wait.

Back then we all had quality or at least name brand CD writers, HP and Plector, Sony etc. There weren't that many around. Just look at the names out there today. I bet you don't have enough fingers and toes to count them all. Is the quality the same in these off brands? Is the burn rate and temperature of the laser consistent? Does this have a bearing on lets say a lower quality disc?

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Newbies Continued from Page 13

Burn speeds may have an effect on the quality of the data. Once again the opinions vary but the consensus seems to be that the slower the burn speed the better.

This may seem to be getting away from the longevity question of CDs but stay with me a minute. The idea here is that at the slower speed the data will be burned in more precisely. If that is how it is done that leaves the integrity of the land area intact as opposed to being a little burned but not enough to affect the data being read at this time, or next month for that matter. But with that laser burning at outrageous temperatures looking for a groove is it going to deteriorate that scarred area that used to be a land? After a few reads does the laser become confused and not see what it is looking for. Thus, an unreadable disc in the near future.

Editorial Section

If you look back at last month's column or go to the Newbies Corner disc you will see that all the CDs written about are Gold with a dye of green or blue. The only one with a Silver metal has a blue dye. This is not what we have been buying in bulk. We have been buying the silver metal with the green dye. The expected lifespan was 10 years based on the information that was available in '01 based on the gold & green combination. In other words there was no stated expectancy for the silver & green combination. Throw in some questionable quality control or cost cutting measures and we are left with a question mark. If CD name is getting someone else to make the CDs they are going to be shopping for the best price. If factory #2 gives them a better price you can bet they are going to use them the next time. As I said above they can only make money on the guy who gets in a pinch and needs to have a CD now. The rest is just a form of advertising.

I guess only the individual can put a value on the safeguarding of the data. I know there can be a lot of work involved in creating a project. Here's an example. My dad got a roster created in Works. He uses Quatro Pro so he couldn't read it. I had him mail

me the disk (floppy). I went to La Verne's and used her Works to save it to Excel. I sent him the disk because I knew Quatro Pro would read an Excel file. I had him save it to a floppy as well as on his hard drive. He doesn't know it but I have a copy as well. Every time I go over to my parent's house I take my floppy and update it. Then I bring it home with me. At least he will have something off site as a backup.

Here is another point. Just how long do you think you need to keep the data? Is this the Declaration Of Independence you are trying to save? Is it some correspondence with Aunt Tillie? Is it photographs? Maybe it is time to spend the money on a higher quality disc or two or ten to insure some longevity. Are two backups the way to go? Will the technology be available in 10 years that can read CD-Rs or will they go the way of the 5 1/4" disks? As cheap as they are a second hard drive may be the answer.

Some of the names bandied about regarding quality are Kodak, Maxell, TDK, Verbatim and Taiyo Yuden.

Just think. We can do this all over when they start questioning the longevity of DVDs. I feel another column in the making.



Thank You!

The BUG Club extends its sincere appreciation for the gifts at our Christmas party provided by:

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WINDOWS SIG

Meets 7:00 PM Thursdays
1st & 3rd Thursday at Eau Gallie Library.
All Other Thursdays at Melbourne Library on
Fee Avenue.

BEGINNERS SIG

Meets at 6:30 pm. Thursdays,
before the Windows SIG.
This is a trial, if we need more time,
we will make other arrangements.

IMAGING SIG

Meets at 7:30 PM the second and fourth
Thursdays, after the Windows SIG, at the
Fee Ave Library in Melbourne.

NEWSLETTER SIG

Meets twice a month on the Saturdays before
and after the BUG monthly meeting.
Members interested in helping develop the
newsletter are welcome.
Place is Jim Townsend's home
call 728-5979 for directions.

TINKERS SIG

Meets on most Sundays at
Bob Schmidt's house.
Call 952-0199 for directions
and to verify meeting.

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To be included in the BUG E-Mail roster,
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We will need your full name, E-Mail address and
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receive notices and updates on BUG activities,
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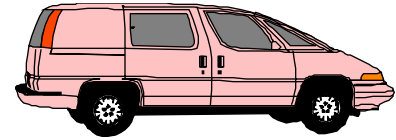
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