



NEWS JOURNAL

"Members Helping Members"

**Remember: LCACE Christmas Party
December 7, 2003**

Windows XP Voice/Video Conferencing

I've always thought one of the neatest things you could do with an Internet connected computer is voice and video conferencing. The idea of using the Internet as a medium to connect to anybody in the world to have a voice/video conversation seemed to be the height of coolness. For the price of a local telephone call to my ISP, I could circumvent the traditional long distance telephone network and carry on real-time live voice/video calls!

Windows XP takes voice and video conversations to the next level by leveraging two different technologies. You can use the old Microsoft voice/video conferencing stand-by, which is NetMeeting, or you can use the new kid on the block - the MSN Messenger. These two voice/video technologies work in different ways and have slightly different capabilities.

NetMeeting is installed on Windows XP, although you won't see it in the Start menu. You have to search the hard disk to find the conf.e x e file and double click that file to get it started. NetMeeting uses a collection of networking pro-

ocols known as "H.323". The H.323 protocol "suite" allows you to do all sorts of things, including voice/video communication, instant messaging, file transfer, and application sharing.

The MSN messenger allows you to do the same things you can do with NetMeeting, but it uses a different set of protocols. The primary networking protocol is the Session Initiation Protocol (SIP). Although the MSN Messenger supports the same features as NetMeeting, the MSN Messenger does even more things, such as advanced noise cancellation (which prevents echoes from your speakers) and something called "presence awareness" so that you can find other users easily and make calls to them.

Both NetMeeting and the MSN Messenger work great if both the caller and the callee are directly connected to the Internet. When I say "directly connected" I mean that both computers are connected to their ISPs via a modem or network interface and both computers have a "public" IP address that is accessible to any computer on the Internet. When both computers are directly connected to the Internet, voice/video and data conversations are almost a no-brainer.

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Membership

Membership for L.C.A.C.E is open to all individuals and families interested in personal computing. Annual dues are \$20.00 per individual/family. Associate membership is only \$10.00 (out of state, unable to attend meetings). Membership includes a one year subscription to the L.C.A.C.E. News Journal and access to all club libraries and functions. Applications for membership may be obtained at the monthly meeting, by request on the club Hotline and are now available on our WEB site at - <http://www.lcece.org>

Meetings

L.C.A.C.E. meetings are held on the second Saturday of each month at the Grayslake Area Public Library 100 Library Lane, Grayslake, Illinois. The meeting location opens at 12:00 a.m., the formal meeting begins at 12:30p.m. All meetings are open to the public. Bring a friend!

Advertising

Ad rates per issue: Full page - \$25, Half page - \$15, Quarter page - \$10, Business Card - \$5. Discounts are available on advance purchase of multiple issues. Please send camera-ready copy and payment to the club address by the 21st of the month preceding publication. For more information on ad pricing, please call our Hotline. Ads are FREE to all paid members.

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You'll run into problems if you want to have voice/video conversations when computers are behind a "NAT" device. Most DSL "routers" are NAT devices. The Windows XP Internet Connection Service (ICS) is also a NAT device. Most standalone firewalls used to protect home and business networks are also NAT devices. In order to use the MSN Messenger and NetMeeting behind a NAT device, you need something called an "Application Layer Gateway (ALG)". For the MSN Messenger, you need a SIP ALG, for NetMeeting you need an H.323 ALG.

There aren't too many places you'll find an H.323 ALG. Microsoft's premiere firewall, Internet Security and Acceleration Server (ISA Server) includes a high quality H.323 ALG. Setting it up can be a complex affair but once you get it going it works great! We describe how to set it up in our ISA Server book "**Configuring ISA Server: Creating Firewalls with Windows 2000**". Many residential gateway manufacturers, like DLink, are now including software that will allow you to use the MSN Messenger to make voice/video calls to other users. You can also use the Windows XP ICS as your residential gateway and it will handle MSN Messenger voice/video conversations for computers on the network behind it.

The sad thing is almost no one I know takes advantage of these technologies! Every time I suggest that we save some money by using NetMeeting, the other person invariably says "why don't we just use the telephone". Arrgh! The telephone is going to cost us long distance charges! NetMeeting would be free. Maybe this is why the video phone never took hold? But even if the other guy doesn't want to be on video, we could still use just the voice capabilities.

Do you think voice/video conversations over the Internet is a good thing? Do you use them? If you don't use them, why? If you do use them, did you have to overcome any hurdles to make them work? Are they too hard? Let us know!

Tom Shinder, Editor
(email us with feedback: feedback@winxpnews.com)

GIVE WINDOWS THE RE-BOOT

Sometimes you make a change in Windows and you have to restart your system. This can be a slow process, but you can speed it up by re-booting just Windows. This is simple. Reboot the standard way (Start>>Shut Down>>Restart). But as you do so, depress the Shift key. This reboots Windows, not the computer.

ADD A SOUND TO YOUR CAPS LOCK KEY

Accidentally hitting the Caps Lock key and typing everything in upper case is irritating. It's especially aggravating if you don't immediately realize you're typing in upper case.

You can avoid this situation by adding a sound to the Caps Lock key. Go into Control Panel and double click Accessibility Options. Select the Keyboard tab. Check Use ToggleKeys. Click OK. This will also set sounds for Num Lock and Scroll Lock

Upgrade or not?

Stanley Miller II

Users of all levels weigh benefits of making change

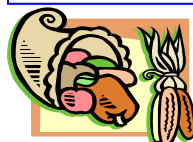
It's quickly becoming an age-old dilemma: When is it worth upgrading your operating system?

Computer users are constantly being pushed to buy the latest, whether it's worth their while or not.

Each round of software brings new features and promises of more stability and reliability.

Some of the changes in new operating systems are trivial, providing fixes for bugs and vulnerabilities that should be free. Other releases, such as the upgrade from Windows 3.1 to Windows 95, are truly dramatic.

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Upgrade?



Illustration/Kristin Pelisek

It's quickly becoming an age-old dilemma: When is it worth upgrading your operating system? Computer users are constantly being pushed to buy the latest, whether it's worth their while or not.

More than 80 members of the Wisconsin All-computer Users Club had to decide which category Windows XP fell into as they listened to a Microsoft pitch man spill for the company's latest operating system, which was released in October.

The computer club has members of varying ages and levels of expertise, from rookies just taking their first PC baby steps to hard-core tech-heads who build their own machines. The main group meets once a month to discuss technology trends, trade advice, sell used hardware and discuss the best deals on equipment locally and on the Web.

"Many of us upgrade frequently, and most of us aren't business users," said Terry Harvey, a secretary for the group who was handing out promotion items at the meeting late last week. "We have people who don't even have computers. They join to learn more, and we have plenty of experts to help them."

Sales pitch from Microsoft

The Windows XP show was old news for some of the early adopters in the group who had bought it as soon as they could. Many others who were

clinging to their aging editions of Windows 98 would base their decision to upgrade - at least in part - on the well-rehearsed song and dance of David Severino, a Microsoft sales representative.

Severino's sermon touched on some of Windows XP's strengths, beginning with basics such as user account management and the new desktop interface.

The crowd seemed pleased with Windows XP's stability, thanks to its foundation in the same architecture that makes Windows 2000 so reliable.

They gave a polite golf clap after the digital video editing demonstration using Windows Movie Maker, a utility bundled with XP.

And many were amazed by the Remote Assistance feature, which lets someone with a Windows XP computer access another XP machine over the Internet to help fix a problem, with their permission of course.

Kathy Biscoe of Franklin, who was new to the computer club, attending her second meeting and doesn't even own a computer yet, was sold on Windows XP's virtues.

"I had no idea it could do all that," said Biscoe, an administrative assistant who uses a computer at work every day. "I'm shocked by its capacity. And I didn't know this program was being sold on new computers, so I am glad that I waited."

Several computer buffs at the meeting with Windows XP experience agreed there is a lot about XP that makes it worth upgrading, but they also offered caveats.

Some reservations

"It's a lot less crash-prone, and the digital editing is better," said Dave Glish, a computer club member. "But upgrading was kind of frustrating because I had to update some of my programs. Otherwise, it's great."

Joe Dellosso, president of Southeastern Wisconsin Windows User Group, who also attended the meeting, said he wasn't pleased with the problems he encountered trying to get Windows XP to recognize some of the peripherals linked to his PC, including an HP printer.

"They have a Mickey Mouse procedure to get it to work, but I can't get all the functions," he said.

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"I need a driver. HP blames Microsoft, and Microsoft blames them. I am getting two stories."

Dan Fehrer of Cudahy, who repairs computers and runs a Web site, said his computer crashed, and he saw Microsoft's well-known "blue screen of death," a couple of hours after upgrading a computer to Windows XP but hasn't seen one since.

Fehrer runs Windows XP on three of the eight computers in his home and strongly recommended that users install the operating system to a second hard drive or hard drive partition and keep their original operating system to be on the safe side.

"I know a lot of people who just upgraded, and they are all shaky systems," he said. "Out of all the systems I run, it's not the same kind of upgrade. It's a little more chancey."

Bill Regner of Muskego, who upgraded a home-built computer to Windows XP, rolled back the installation when he discovered his external HP CD-ROM writer didn't work and then upgraded it again when software to make his peripheral work was released. Even after all those major changes to the system software, Regner said the PC runs smoothly, quickly and quirk-free.

"It's much faster, and I am pretty happy," he said.

Look at the bottom line

Most people upgrading to Windows XP will choose the home version, which costs \$99.

For another \$100, the Professional version upgrade has advanced features including support for two microprocessors, multiple languages, advanced networking and an encrypted file system that is especially good for laptop users who have information on the portable computers they want protected.

A full, non-upgrade version of Windows XP Professional costs \$299, and the full home version costs \$199.

John Howman, CEO of Allied Computer Group in Milwaukee and a "big fan" of Windows XP, offered a blanket guideline for people considering upgrading:

"Never spend more on an upgrade than the computer is worth," Howman said in a phone interview. "If somebody is running Windows 95 or early Windows 98, the machine is pretty old, and it might not be worth upgrading."

"People seem to be willing to spend a lot of

money as long as it's \$50 or \$100 at a time," he said. "Some of these upgrades that people feel forced to do almost aren't worth it."

The Web site for the Wisconsin All-computer Users Club is www.wauc.info. Microsoft's Web site for Windows XP is www.microsoft.com/windowsxp.

Appeared in the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel on Feb. 12, 2002

Come and Join Us At the L.C.A.C.E. Annual Christmas Party.



Lots of fun And Plenty of Door Prizes.

Bring a dish to pass. For more information & directions Check us out on the web at:

WWW.lcace.org



From the Editor

To start off with this month I hope everyone had a fun Halloween, and in November have wonderful Thanksgiving.

This years Christmas party is almost upon us. As in the past few years we are having it at the

University of Illinois Auditorium (Annex)
Lake County Fairgrounds 100 Rte. 45
Grayslake, Illinois

I will provide a map in next months journal, but if you know where the Lake County Fair Grounds is you are there. The only thing we ask is for you to bring a dish to pass.

I am looking for an assistant (or two) editor. Someone who can find articles and forward them to me for the News Journal. J.J. has done a wonderful job at keeping me with a full listing but it's not really fair. This is Our club which means everyone's and everyone should try to help. Any help at all will be greatly appreciated.

We are still looking for ideas and volunteers to run various SIG's. as well as monthly demonstrations. If you are proficient in any program/hardware or operating system and would like to share your expertise please let one of the Officers know and we will set up something.

Prize List for this years Christmas Raffle

1st Prize:

- BUSlink 48x USB 2.0 CD-RW Drive
- Ultra Fast Up to 480 Mbits/sec
- Backward compatible with USB 1.1
- NeroBurn ROM Software included!

2nd Prize:

- Acom Data 60GB External Hard drive
- Firewire and High Speed USB 20
 - 5400 RPM
 - For Windows 98SE/ME/2000/XP

3rd Prize:

Logitech Cordless Freedom Keyboard/Mouse

- Cordless keyboard
- Optical mouse
- Internet navigation and multimedia controls at your fingertip

4th Prize:

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www.ccxpo.com

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As much as we try, we do make errors. Please advise us if there is a mistake in your E-Mail address or if it is not included in this listing. Send E-Mail to editor@lcace.org with the additions and/or corrections. Thank you. **This listing last updated – April 1, 2002**

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If it is time for you to renew your membership, please fill out a new Application and a Member's Profile Sheet. These forms can be obtained at the meetings or downloaded from our WEB site.

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might see
yourself.

www.picturetrail.com/lcace

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webmaster@lcace.org

NEXT MEETING

November 16, 2002

Grayslake Public Library
1200—3:00pm

Meeting Room Opens 1200
General Meeting Starts 12:30

This month:

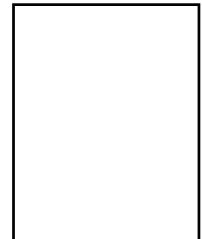
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- ◆ LCACE information
- ◆ LCACE history and pictures
- ◆ LCACE meeting, location and map
- ◆ LCACE members e-mail addresses
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