



## Microsoft Releases Internet Explorer 8

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### WEBSITES:

<http://www.microsoft.com/ie>  
<http://www.ieaddons.com/en>

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**M**icrosoft has released the latest iteration of its ubiquitous browser, Internet Explorer version 8 (IE 8). This browser is for all versions of XP and Vista, and is a 16.1mb download for XP.

I had tried one of the early beta (pre-release) builds of IE 8, and was impressed by its features and speed, a substantial improvement over what I felt was a lethargic Internet Explorer 7. Now I have downloaded and installed IE 8 on all of my computers, and my first impressions of it are quite positive. I have been using Firefox, IE's major competitor, almost exclusively for several years. I was not alone in using Firefox instead of IE, as Firefox has been taking market share from IE for years as it has generally offered more speed, features, and security than IE. Now with IE 8, Firefox has a worthy competitor which has added features, speed and security to challenge the gains made in the marketplace by Firefox.

Within minutes of its release, I downloaded the new version of IE 8 on my work computer. I went directly to Microsoft's IE website at [www.microsoft.com/ie](http://www.microsoft.com/ie) to download IE 8. Microsoft identified my operating system, and proceeded to connect me to the proper variety of IE 8, which I downloaded. The installation process was smooth, with several informational windows appearing with install options. One of the first windows to appear was a statement that the IE 8 install utility was

going to download the latest version of Windows Malicious Software Removal Tool, and scan my computer for malware prior to the installation of IE 8. My computer was free of any detected malware, and the installation continued. A reboot was required in order to complete the IE 8 process, which I allowed. After the reboot, a small window appeared displaying the setup sequences of the new software. Subsequent windows offered me the opportunity to install add-ons, and select default search engines. IE 8 imported my selections from IE 7, and asked if I wanted to keep my IE 7 defaults and use them in IE 8, which I did. The final window displayed correctly identified that I had other browsers installed on my computer, including Firefox, Opera, and Safari, and asked if I wanted to import bookmarks (favorites) and feeds from them; I selected yes, and data was imported from my other browsers into IE 8, making them immediately available on that platform. IE 8 did indeed load faster than IE 7 ever loaded, and web pages appeared to load faster, but I have no empirical data to corroborate that.

IE 8 is more feature rich than IE 7, and in many ways appears to emulate the finer points available in Firefox. One feature in IE 8 that offers improved possibilities is "Accelerators" which provide quick access to information by simply highlighting a word, phrase, address, or other item on a webpage. If the proper accelerators are installed, then appropriate information in the form of maps, web searches, translations, email, blogs, and other relevant resources and outputs are immediately displayed.

Another interesting feature in IE 8 that may be of interest to many users is "Web Slices", where the user can automatically monitor desired information, displaying updated information as it becomes available. Web Slices can monitor auctions, sports scores, weather, stock quotes, and other dynamic content, and can directly provide that updated information, without user intervention. If a Web Slice is available on a web page,

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Lake County Area Computer Enthusiasts  
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c/o Group Ambassador  
"J.J." Johnson

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# Relay For Life 2009

2009 is the 25th Anniversary of The American Cancer Society's Relay For Life. It's also been 3 1/2 years since I was diagnosed with lung cancer. I'm alive today and happy to say, "I am a Survivor!" My daughter's family formed the "Donna's Day" team shortly after I had part of my lung removed, while I was still sick and bald from the chemotherapy. Each year our team continues to raise funds for the Cancer Society in gratitude for all they did for me.

This year's Relay For Life will be overnight (6:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m.), July 25th and July 26th, 2009 on Saturday night and Sunday morning. We will be at the Lake Villa Township Park, commonly known as "Caboose Park," located at Grand Avenue and Fairfield Roads in Lake Villa. Please join us. It's so much fun. I can guarantee you will smile, laugh and perhaps shed a tear or two.

Now that it's income tax time, perhaps you're thinking of tax deductions. My fellow L.C.A.C.E. members, I think I can help you out for next year..... Please donate and help my team meet our fundraising goal. Make your tax deductible checks payable to The American Cancer

Society and mail them to me. (I encourage checks rather than on-line deductions.) Feel free to pass on this message to everyone you know. Thank you and may you NEVER have to hear the words: "You have cancer."

Donna Lee Kalinoski  
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**13264**

The cover of Smart Computing magazine, featuring the headline "The Perfect Home Network: A Step-By-Step Guide" and various tech-related articles.



## Robin's RAMblings

27 people attended our March meeting where vice president Mike McEnery introduced us to *Quicken*, assisted by treasurer Winnie Frost. Sherry Florian won the door prize, *Quicken Home and Business*. Tammy Gauger was our happy 50/50 winner. Winnie supplied us with hot coffee; Lew Seidenberg brought coffee cake and cookies. Bobby Jacobs, Highland Park, was a guest. Tammy Gauger of Round Lake, Bill Hamilton of Grayslake, and Gerald Straw of Round Lake Beach renewed their memberships. Linda & Robert Koudelka of Waukegan, John Urh of Waukegan, William Leider of Grayslake, and Kenneth and Perla Uding of Vernon Hills joined. Welcome to LCACE!

Our upcoming meetings are:

April 4-Election, club party, Show and Tell, and Ask the Gurus

May 9-Best Buy-Mundelein will return to talk about the latest in technology

June 13-Skeletons in our Closet: Researching a Family Scandal-Robin Seidenberg

Our election process began in February when Linda Busch, Sherry Florian, Winnie Frost, Terri Hanlon, Lester Larkin, Mike McEnery, and Robin Seidenberg accepted nominations. Fred Barnett, J.J. Johnson, Donna Kalinoski, and Dorothy Sutherland declined. Jim Rutledge was nominated at our March meeting, and later declined. We take nominations again and elect our board in April, and then elect our president from the board. Please think of people to nominate. You can nominate yourself.

Be sure to attend our April 4<sup>th</sup> meeting where we will celebrate the 26<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Lake County Area Computer Enthusiasts. To add to the festivities, we will offer as door prizes two free subscriptions to *Smart Computing* as well a wireless keyboard and mouse. Remember you have to be there to win!

Are you interested in trading rather than buying CDs, books, video games, clothing, etc.? If so, go to <http://dealnews.com/features/Swap-sites-that-let-you-trade-for-free/282549.html> to learn more.

**Happy computing!**

## SmartComputing

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**Give Your Computer Room To Breathe:** The new computer you received for Christmas is great. Now all you need is a computer desk so you can keep all your work materials in one convenient place. When looking at computer desks, hutches, armoires, and work centers, keep in mind that your computer needs room to breathe. Avoid purchasing a desk that forces you to place your computer tower into a cubby hole where the airflow is greatly reduced. Without the proper airflow, computer components can heat up and won't perform their best. Cubby holes with an opening in the front and back are generally OK

**Make Time For Cable Management:** When you set up your computer, spend some time managing the cables. Route wires so that they have a little slack and make sure that they don't hang over one another and create a trip-hazard. Bundle wires together and tie them with a twist-tie or Velcro tie (which can be found at electronics and hardware stores). Wind up any excess wires so that they don't collect dust. Your computer area will not only look nicer, but also benefit your computer, as well-routed wires can help with proper airflow around your computer.

**Not Your Typical Password:** A memorable, yet still fairly random password can be generated by using an acronym of a personal phrase or expression. For example, "I met my wonderful wife on vacation in Canada" becomes "1mMwWoV1c" after putting in a few strategic numbers in place of obvious letters.

## Let's Keep It Brief

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### Microblogging: Short & Sweet

The Internet provides a multitude of tools that let you document the moments of your life, share personal experiences, and communicate practical advice. Blogs are the medium of choice for many to share their thoughts and interests, but blogs aren't the only way for you to express your opinions. Microblogs are free

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a green icon will appear in the top right corner of the page; clicking on this icon will add the “slice” to the favorites bar, enabling real-time tracking of the selection. When new information is available about the selected web slices, the relevant web slice will be highlighted. Clicking on the highlight will take the user directly to the updated information.

IE 8 offers a “Smart Address Bar” which displays recommendations as a web address is typed in the address bar. The suggestions are distilled from the browsing history, favorites, and previously selected feeds, as well as Windows Live Search. If a single word is typed in the address bar, the Smart Address Bar will reach out and try to match the term against domain names, making web surfing faster and more efficient.

I frequently go online to show my L.I.T. students information on the web. Sometimes the fonts on the web pages are so small, that students in the back of the classroom can not view the displayed content. IE 8 solves that problem with its enhanced zoom feature, “Improved Zoom”. This feature improves the resolution and readability of a webpage, while maintaining the desired layout. Clicking on VIEW – ZOOM allows the user to zoom in or out on a webpage, from 50% (zoom out, smaller text, more information displayed) to 400% (zoom in, larger text, less information displayed).

Web surfers are often concerned about their personal privacy while browsing on the net. IE 8 offers a feature, “InPrivate” that allows the user to control the protection of his personal information while online. When selected, InPrivate deletes the browsing history, temporary internet files, filled forms, cookies, usernames, and passwords when closing the browser, leaving no traces of browsing or search history on the computer.

Sometimes a website appears to crash the browser while being viewed, shutting down all of the opened tabs, and requiring a reloading of the browser. IE 8 offers “Automatic Crash Recovery” where if the content in a tab crashes, the other opened tabs are unaffected, such that other opened pages are not closed or lost unexpectedly. IE 8 will attempt to recover the lost tab once it has identified and resolved the problem.

Phishing, identity theft, and web-borne malware have become endemic, and a threat to web users. IE 8 includes a “SmartScreen Filter” which incorporates anti-phishing tools to protect the user from imposter websites designed to trick the user into entering his personal information. The SmartScreen Filter also incorporates sophisticated anti-malware capabilities to help

prevent web-borne adware, spyware, and other dangerous software from installing itself on the users’ computer. If a dangerous website is opened and detected, the address bar and window will turn red on the page, and a prominent warning will be displayed on the red background. Other protection is provided by a cross site scripting (XSS) filter, which can detect and protect from malicious code execution while online, providing additional protection. A cute feature, which can help protect from phishing and identity theft is “domain highlighting” which highlights the domain name in the address bar, with the remainder of the address string in gray, displaying the true identity of the website.

Internet Explorer 8 is much improved over version 7, with improved security and enhanced features. Users of earlier versions of IE should upgrade to IE 8. Users of other browsers should give IE 8 a try, as they may be pleasantly surprised. Even though I have been a loyal Firefox user for several years, I will be using IE 8 far more than I ever used IE 7.

## XP Utilities

Written by Warner Mach, Editor of the SEMCO DATA BUS, newsletter of the Southeast Michigan Computer Organization

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I have discovered that Windows XP is chock full of various utilities to solve various kinds of problems. Some of the utilities that I have occasion to use in recent months:

### (1) Windows Task Manager

You bring up the Windows Task Manager by holding down **ctrl-alt-delete**. Some of the useful features are: (a) Go to the applications tab. This shows the running tasks and is useful for ending a task that refuses to go away. (b) Go to process tab. This shows all the miscellaneous tasks in the system and shows the CPU time that each is using. This can frequently be useful when you are not sure what the system is doing. (c) Go to performance tab. This shows the use of resources. Especially useful is the dynamic graph of CPU usage.

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## (2) Event Viewer

The Event Viewer has a log of recent events, including events at power up and power down. This was of value to me when I was attempting to learn about certain messages that were appearing at power down time. Under the 'application' and 'system' tabs the logs are listed. To get more detailed information on a particular problem, double-click on the 'type' portion of a particular entry. This will give some keyword search hints that can be typed into Google. You bring up the Event Viewer by going to start=>run and typing 'Eventvwr.msc' into the box => OK.

## (3) System Configuration Utility

The tab that was useful to me was the 'startup' tab. These are tasks that automatically come up at startup. By unchecking groups of entries (and saying 'apply' and then rebooting) I was able to zero in on one particular entry that was causing a problem. You bring up the System Configuration Utility by going to start=>run and typing 'msconfig' into the box => OK.

## (4) Check Disk

This utility checks the space usage on the disk. It also checks the control block chains to be sure that they are correct. Go to start=>all programs=>accessories=>command prompt and type in 'chkdsk.' If the program detects bad command chains and you want to correct the situation then type in 'chkdsk /F'. This command may require a reboot during which it runs stand-alone.

### Useful Resources

There is a useful list of utilities, with examples and explanations at:

<<http://tinyurl.com/9um8or>>.

There is also information about the Microsoft '906569' update at:

<<http://support.microsoft.com/kb/906569>>.

This update "... adds the tools tab to the System Configuration Utilities in Windows XP Service pack 2." But even if you don't want to do this, there is a list of useful utilities with an explanation of their function.



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online services that allow you to send brief updates and reflections (and sometimes images and videos) to a group of friends, family, or even business contacts. Your posts are sent directly to friends that choose to subscribe to your blog, and they can receive the

message in a variety of ways, including instant messaging applications, as text messages sent to their mobile phones, or through RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feeds.



## Fun, Simple & Useful

According to David Sacks, CEO of microblog service Yammer, "Compared to blogs, microblogs are designed to deliver short messages; you can think of a microblog post as a text message sent to all your friends."

**Twitter is a microblog service with over 2.4 million users.**

You can easily post a quick musing or tell your friends what you're doing or where you're going to be, so a microblog is ideal for planning events and generally keeping in touch with a large group of people who want to know about your everyday life. To help you follow the short-update format, most microblogs limit the number of characters you can type into a single entry. For instance, Twitter (twitter.com) and Plurk (www.plurk.com) both limit comments to 140 characters (around one or two sentences). Other microblogging services allow greater space for text.

The informal structure lets you impart glimpses of your current day to those who subscribe to your microblog, and because the content is sent directly to them, they don't need to make extra effort to keep up-to-date on your life. On the flip side, you can also subscribe to your friends' microblogs to see their broadcasted events, snapshots, and updates. Microblogs are offered as an online service, so you can post or view entries from any computer or mobile phone with Internet access.



**Only employees with a valid company email can access Yammer's microblog service, so users know their posts are secure**

Like many other social networking tools, the primary goal of microblogging services is to help you connect with others. But Microblog functionality isn't merely limited to friends and family. "If you need to regularly communicate with co-workers or clients, microblogs can help

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# Mike's Picks



Did you ever get one of those e-mails that were just so far out there that you couldn't figure out whether it was true or not? Have you heard that Coke contains cocaine? Here's a good one: going swimming within an hour will take you down with

cramps. You hear these stories or get the e-mails and wonder if they are true, and if so, should you pass them on. Fear no more. If you go to <http://www.snopes.com>, you will discover whether they are true or not, and usually where the story originated. Don't be the one passing on false information. Check Snopes before you pass it on.

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you manage schedules, track the progress of tasks, and instantly update others about a finished project," says Sacks. Many online services also let you share links, images, and files. For example, Yammer ([www.yammer.com](http://www.yammer.com)) is a microblogging service designed for businesses and organizations, and it includes an Attachments feature that lets you attach any file or image with your message. A company is given its own private service, so users only share news and opinions with other workers within the company.

## Stay Connected Wherever You Are

Microblogs make it easy for you and others to keep in touch because the services send updates directly to your subscriber network via a method of the subscriber's own choosing. Those who want to be updated via their computers may receive your posts via email, RSS feed, or by checking their microblogging profiles online. Some microblogging services can also integrate with instant messaging applications, such as MSN Web Messenger, Yahoo! Messenger, or AIM. Mobile phone owners may also choose to receive updates via text message. We should note that text messaging charges will apply to each post you receive, so you'll want to consider the cost before signing up to receive posts via text message. There are also a number of first- and third-party applications that can aggregate the updates from multiple microblogging Web sites and let you view

and post content on several Web sites from one application on your PC or mobile phone.

## Need A Quick Response?

The instant communication of microblogging services lets others respond in minutes, rather than the hours it may take others to view an email or blog. Thus, microblogging can be useful if you need to send directions to a group of people or immediately warn others during an emergency. In fact, several universities, including Pacific University in Oregon, have set up Twitter accounts that students can sign up for, so the university can quickly message all students in case of a school closing or other emergency. Some professors have also begun to use Twitter in the classroom to help students connect with each other for group work and to discuss class topics or resolve homework issues that cause them trouble.

It's also handy that microblogs maintain a record of your communications. If you forgot the location at which you were supposed to meet a friend or colleague, you can read through the communications log and find the information you need. Alternatively, everyone in the group can check the log to see which tasks or actions have and haven't been completed. For instance, if you're planning a St. Patrick's Day party, you could issue invites, estimate how many people plan to attend, and track what others will bring without needing to call or email all attendees.

## An Easy Read

There are many blog sites, such as MySpace ([www.myspace.com](http://www.myspace.com)) and WordPress ([www.wordpress.org](http://www.wordpress.org)), that allow you to network with an online community of friends. Microblogs offer the same kind of online interaction but in a format that's easier to write and read.

You can open the microblog and catch up on the lives of several people in a matter of moments. Although reading one to two sentences of content is arguably less meaningful than reading multiple paragraphs of text, people tend to update their microblogs often, and

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it's easy to read multiple updates during your down-time. The short nature of microblogs also makes it easy (and socially acceptable) to add one-sentence comments to other peoples' posts.

### It's Customizable

If you'd prefer to keep your online community small, nearly all microblogging services let you limit your updates so that only the friends you approve can read your comments. And when it comes to receiving friends' posts, you can often choose to receive updates via multiple methods, such as email, RSS feed, and text message, or limit the microblog service to only post updates to your Web site profile. And if you ever want to block someone from seeing your updates, you can simply remove the user from your friend network.

### It's Not So Bad Being Trendy

According to data from Nielsen Online, Twitter was the fastest growing social networking Web site in September 2008, with a 343% year-over-year increase. Based on the overall rise in popularity of microblogging Web sites, it's quite possible that microblogs will quickly become a part of mainstream culture. If you're looking for a simple, fun way to update and keep up-to-date with your friends, join a microblog and invite your friends to join, too. Then, you can become friends with their friends and grow your own social network community.

by Nathan Lake



## Food for Thought

### Tomato spread recipe

Submitted by Angus MacTavish

One 8-ounce package cream cheese, softened  
1/2 cup sun dried tomatoes, chopped  
4 green onions, chopped

Place all in a food processor and process until smooth and well blended.  
Serve on toast, crackers, or as a stuffing for celery, artichoke bottoms or other vegetables.

**ENJOY!**

# More from Smart Computing

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**Use Your GPS To Its Full Potential:** The next time you're in a strange place with time on your hands and find yourself looking for something to do, let your GPS (global positioning system) help you discover a few out-of-the-way places. Most GPS devices include listings of local restaurants and attractions. Instead of just looking up specific locations, browse the menus to uncover your location's hidden treasures. You never know what  
y o u m a y f i n d .

• **Make Your Cell Phone Battery Last Longer:** If your battery won't hold a charge very well or you don't always have access to a charger, there are a few things you can do to stretch your battery's charge time. When you're not using your phone, turn it off, unless you are expecting an important call. If you are in an area without service, turn your phone off so it isn't searching for signals. If you want to leave your phone on, you can change a few settings on the phone to save battery. Turn your phone's vibrate feature off and use a basic ringtone on low volume. Also, turn your backlight off, as it will take up excessive battery power. Features such as Bluetooth, Internet, cameras, etc., will drain the battery you have left, so try to use these features only when you absolutely need them.

• **Digital TV Transition:** If you are one of the nearly 6% of Americans, according to a January survey from The Nielsen Company, that is unprepared for the switch to digital TV, you'll want to mark June 12 on your calendar. The new transition deadline means that if you use an antenna to receive TV and your television doesn't feature a built-in digital tuner, you only have a little time before you absolutely must connect a DAC (digital-to-analog converter) to watch over-the-air  
T V .

A DAC (or DTV converter box) converts a digital signal to an analog output that can be used by an analog TV. If your TV has a digital tuner or you subscribe to cable or satellite, you don't need a DTV converter box; your existing cable and satellite equipment already transforms the signal. Only those that receive TV via antenna on a TV with an analog tuner are affected by the transition. To apply for a coupon and get more info, visit [www.dtv2009.gov](http://www.dtv2009.gov).

**Editors Note:** Links in the News Journal should now work. If it looks like a link or maybe a picture in an article click on it.

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**Take a good  
look, you  
just might  
see**

**LCACE CLUB PICTURES** at:  
<http://lcace.org/PhotoAlbums.htm>

## TIME TO RENEW

**All** memberships are now renewable annually on April 1st. This change in the payment of annual dues will allow the treasurer to budget our money more closely. If you haven't already renewed your membership, see Linda Busch or Winnie Frost.

Serving Lake County, Illinois



Since 1983

**NEXT MEETING**  
**April 4, 2009**  
Grayslake Area Public Library  
**at 12:30 pm.**

Visit us @ <http://www.lcace.org>

May 9, 2009

# Best Buy of Mundelein

Lake County Area Computer Enthusiasts  
409 S. Elmwood Avenue  
Waukegan, IL 60085

**POSTAGE  
REQUIRED**

