

News Journal

Lake County Area Computer Enthusiasts

Tablet or Laptop, a Popular Question

...and More App Reviews

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Unless you are a "hard core" computer gamer, you can now officially say goodbye to the laptop.

The day of computer frustration is coming to an end. The answer to pulling your hair out as you are trying to figure out why the laptop is so hard to use is called: "touch pads".

Recently, I was on a technology cruise out of Miami, where 400 plus geeks road the seas and clicked on computers in various seminars. Wait, that's not correct. It wasn't computers these everyday people were using. No, it was touch screen devices. Mostly iPads I must admit. This too is strange as the group was 99.9% Windows users. The average age in the 400 plus crowd was, shall I say, more than 50+. Most of them said they cannot believe the difference and ease when they switched from a laptop or desktop to a tablet.

Most people on the tech cruise, who recently bought a tablet and still owned a laptop/desktop computer, said that they "hardly ever use their computer anymore." The hot topic on the ship was the app. People were constantly sharing newfound apps for their tablets.

So what makes these tablets so popular? Price, ease of use, two click downloads for software, portability, and low price is enticing laptop/desktop are just a few of the factors enticing people to switch. Here are some tips when shopping for a tablet:

Test drive several. Ask friends who own them what they suggest. Do online searches for reviews.

Decide what exactly you are going to use it for then decide on the size. I wouldn't worry too much about the hard drive size as most of what we do on computer is heading to the cloud and soon you won't need software programs for your devices.

Make sure the tablet of choice has a USB slot for thumb drives, cameras, and other such devices. ITworld.com suggests "Decide on the operating system. The three main choices these days are iOS, Android or Blackberry Tablet OS. Do a bit of research on all three and pick the one that will work the best for you."

One final word...Most people will tell you once they bought tablets their other computers became lonely. Just ask anyone who owns a tablet and they'll tell you they "hardly use" their computers anymore because the tablet is "so much easier to use and less hassle".

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News Journal

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Logo designed on an Atari Stacy Laptop in 1989 by Dwight Johnson Jr.

Lake County Area Computer Enthusiasts

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Membership

LCACE membership is open to all individuals and families interested in personal computing. Annual dues are \$20.00 per individual/family. 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.lcace.org>.

Meetings

LCACE meetings are usually held on Saturdays at the Grayslake Area Public Library, 100 Library Lane, Grayslake, Illinois. The meeting room opens at noon and the formal meeting begins at 12:30 p.m. All meetings are open to the public. Bring a friend!

Newsletter Submissions

Club members are welcome to submit classified ads, reviews, tips and other articles for publication, to our newsletter editor in Microsoft Word format (.doc). **Publication deadline is the 20th of the month for all ads and articles.** Please do not use tabs or special formatting.

Newsletter 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 15th 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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Robin's RAMblings

My sincere appreciation to everyone who participated in last month's election. I will try to merit your confidence. Special thanks to Richard Eisenmann for conducting the election and Donna Kalinski and Dorothy Sutherland for helping count the ballots .

Thank you to all the people who helped to make 2011-2012 a success for LCACE. Our board consisted of Linda Busch - vice president, Winnie Frost - treasurer, Bobby Jacobs - secretary, Liz Barnett - membership chair, Lester Larkin - program chair/club historian/webmaster, Linda Koudelka - publicity chair, and Mike McEnery - president emeritus/newsletter editor.

Thank you also to club founder Dwight "J.J" Johnson for stepping in as temporary newsletter editor, as well as preparing great food for our holiday party and taking photographs with Santa. Rich Garling did a terrific job as Santa. Liz Barnett and Gail Robison anchored our holiday party kitchen and saw that we were all fed very well. Roger Busch, Lester Larkin, and Lew Seidenberg helped with holiday party cleanup.

Thank you to Liz and Fred Barnett for hosting a very successful July picnic. Fred Barnett, Julie Bell, John Colosimo, and Phil Nocerino served as gurus. Special thanks to Linda Koudelka and Lester Larkin for anchoring our pre-meeting computer help desk. Eric Rehberger

has been picking up our *First Glimpse* magazines from Best Buy.

LCACE officers until April, 2013 will be:

Robin B. Seidenberg-president
Linda Busch-vice president
Winnie Frost-treasurer
Bobby Jacobs-secretary
Liz Barnett-membership chair
John Colosimo-program chair
Linda Koudelka-publicity chair
Mike McEnery-president emeritus/newsletter editor

We have exciting programs scheduled for 2012:

May 5, 2012-Costco of Mettawa will talk about Ooma phone service and their other technology

June 2, 2012-Terri Hanlon will present "Genealogy". The Grayslake Area Public Library will co-sponsor this program.

July 14, 2012-Picnic at Liz and Fred Barnett's house

August 4, 2012-

September 8, 2012-

October 13, 2012-

December 1, 2012-holiday party at State Bank of the Lakes-Save the date!

Have you been backing up your computer? Disaster can strike at the least expected time. The following is part of an email sent by someone who had a BIG mess on his hands:

"Sent: Monday, March 26, 2012 10:03 PM
Subject: CAUTION... PC Cleaner Program

To Everyone !!

DO NOT try "PC Cleaner" to speed up your computer or for any other of their claims!!

I tried the program last week and they scanned

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Please remember to use the Amazon.com link on our website for your purchases:

Please click here  to help support our club with your on-line purchases

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Forester.com researchers predict "Tablets will cannibalize netbooks and outsell them starting in 2012. In 2015, 23% of all PCs sold to consumers in the US will be tablets."

Happy hunting.

App Reviews..."AppZilla 2" won the App of the year award.

I broke down and bought an app for my iPhone, AppZilla 2. Ninety-nine cents is a fair price to pay for an app that houses 120 apps with just one click. Apple reports this app "surpasses 2,000,000 downloads!" AppZilla 2 works on the iPhone, iPad, and iPod touch. Sorry droid users!

With 120 apps in one app it will take some time to test drive them all. Some are kinda corny but still fun. As a Google user of Docs, mail and much more, I like the way this app has corralled all the Google products for ease of use. They call this the "utility" app and rightfully so as there are levels, app for flashlight mode on your phone, path finder so you never get lost, night vision, password keeper, parking meter reminder with alarm, police scanner for many cities, and many more I haven't tried but sure will. I give this app a 10+.

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Visit the free website for 50+ learning computers:

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Free Basic Computer Help Workshops first Monday of every month 9:30 to noon: Grace United Church - Sarnia, Ontario - 519-542-1203



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my computer for any problems!

They said that I had 8925 Serious Problems!

For \$29.95 they would fix everything if I purchased "PC Cleaner Pro".

I recognized this for what it was, just a scam to get me suckered into buying their program.

I declined their offer and proceed to uninstall "PC Cleaner" from my computer using "Revo Uninstaller", which is rated one of the best by most computer professionals.

They were unable to find and remove part of "PC Cleaner" which was a Virus that caused a

large square that blocked the lower right corner of my monitor telling me that I needed to buy "PC Cleaner" to remove the 8925 problems still on my computer!

I tried every other programs including Malwarebytes Anti Malware, and others that I could find, and none were able to correct my problem.

I did a Google search and found many articles about PC Cleaner and their practices, some solutions, but none of them worked.

After two long days I was able to restore my computer to January 2011, using my "Acronis" backup program.

Now I am up and running again with no "PC Cleaner" problem. Just a big job ahead, re-installing many programs that I use, and finding my Bookmarks again.

Before you install any program you are not sure of check with Google... or someone you trust.

And Backup, Backup, Backup. It doesn't take long and may save you hours."

If this man had used his Acronis True Image Home program recently, he could have restored his backup image and been finished.

Everyone, if you haven't already done so, it's time to pay your LCACE dues.

Happy computing!



Streaming Media

By John Somers, member, ICON Users Group, MO March 2012 issue, The ICON – Newsletter of the Interactive Computer Owners Network
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"Streaming" is listening to music, watching a TV program or movie as it is being delivered to you

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over the internet. The technology is very difficult (say geek intensive) but it works and well for many of us and is an alternative to cable or satellite delivery of the signals. Several years ago Bill Gates said famously or infamously, "The internet, who needs it!" And this year Steve Jobs said, "We are in the post PC era". More and more people use the internet and communicate over smart phones and tablets and do not use computers as we know them. Smart phones and tablets are indeed computers but without a large monitor and a keyboard.

Streaming of music began in the mid to late 90's as personal computers became more powerful and the networks connecting them became capable of supporting faster data rates. As these trends continued, it became possible to stream TV programs and eventually movies. This is different from buying or renting a TV program or movie which is downloaded to your computer for you to watch at your convenience. The driving force is us—we do not want to be tethered to the radio or TV stations schedule or have to go to a movie theatre or to a store to buy a DVD. We want to watch what we want when we want it. Time shifting has become more sophisticated compared to the days of the VHS or Beta (remember them?) Netflix recommends 5 Mb/s or more for the best audio and video experience.

First, the sources. (And I will write only about common and legal methods/sources of content, not about illegal/pirated sources of content—mostly or completely off-shore now and clearly violating copyright.)

All the websites listed in this article are .com's unless another domain is listed. (Example: Pandora.com)

MUSIC: Pandora, Spotify, 8tracks, Deezer, fizy, Grooveshark, Last.fm, Mflow, MOG, Pandora, Qriocity, Rhapsody, Slacker, Thumbplay, we7, WiMP and Zune are among the streaming music sources. This list is probably not complete as things change practically daily. Pandora and Rhapsody are among the best known. Pandora is free but you get ads. There is a paid version (\$3.50/month) without ads. You get to choose your artist or genre or composer or song and they deliver that or similar material to you. It is also available on many automobiles and on tablets and smart phones as well as computers. For details of how each of these services work and if

you need to download a player, and whether they are free or pay I refer you to their websites. Which, if any, you choose, is a very personal choice: what works for you. Your computer will understand the format as all send MP3's and other common music formats. Only Microsoft uses Windows Media Audio files for music but Zune (Microsoft's service) streams in MP3, AAC, MP4, mp4, mov, and WMA formats.

TV Programs and Movies: some commercial, some not. Zune, Netflix, Atom.com, blip.tv, Break.com, Citytv.com.co, DaCast, EngageMedia, Flickr, iFilm, imeem, Metacafe, MoboVivo, Multiply, MyVideo, Openfilm, Phanfare, Qik, Revver, RuTube, ScienceStage, sevenload, showmedo, Tudou, Twango, U-verse, Veoh, Yahoo Video, Youku, and YouTube are among sources for streaming video on-line.

I want to emphasize the commercial ones with commercial TV programs and movies and those most used: Netflix, Hulu, and HuluPlus, and Amazon. You can also get TV in Win7 with Media Center set for TV. Some networks are increasingly moving you to their site for the TV programs (CBS on Hulu for example). Disney-ABC, NBC and Fox own Hulu. Netflix is an independent company which began renting DVD's by mail and more recently began streaming. You may be aware of the upset when they tried to separate the DVD service and the streaming and charge more for streaming.

Hulu free gives you the latest 5 episodes of your favorite TV programs. For \$7.99 monthly (HuluPlus) you get the full season and sometimes more than one season. Movies are the current ones and many older ones (Some services claim 10,000.) You get to choose. It's not the manager of your local Cineplex choosing. Once released on DVD they become generally available if the service has negotiated rights to the flick or to the studio's films. There clearly is conflict between Netflix, Hulu and Amazon and other

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streaming services and the studios. The movie companies are terrified about what happened to the music industry and only grudgingly cooperate.

How do you get the signal from your router/wireless access point to your TV and what equipment do you need? The simplest way is by registering your device with the service using your Xbox, Playstation 3, Wii, Blu-ray DVD player, smart phone, or other internet/wireless enabled device. Yes, you can use a computer and the HDMI output on your computer to the HDMI input on your TV. You can also use an Ethernet cable network or route the signal through a power line network. If you want to see other internet material on your big screen TV (using it as a giant monitor), you need a "smart" TV. Remember the signals on the internet are different from those on your cable/satellite/or over the air TV station, and a "brain" is needed for the conversion automatically. Some Smart TV's are wireless enabled, and Sony and Samsung make wireless adapters for their TV's. I presume other manufacturers do so also.

Amazon now has two forms of video access: Amazon Instant Videos and (Amazon) Prime Instant Video. The former provides rental or purchase of videos which may be watched by streaming or downloaded to your computer and watched later. Prime Instant Video provides unlimited streaming of thousands of movies and TV shows without commercials if you are a Prime (\$79/yr) member. Not all videos in the Amazon Instant Video store are in the Prime instant video catalog. Videos in the Prime Instant Video catalog can only be watched by streaming and are not available for downloading. There is a great deal of information on the Amazon site. Start on the upper left side of the home page where it says "Instant Video" and on the following page on the right side below "Start Your one Month Free Trial" is "Help and FAQ's." Click there and on the following page in the middle in blue is a link "Amazon Instant Video" and then on the next page in the middle is "Watching Videos" which gives several choices depending on whether you will be using a computer or an internet connected device. When you (tired yet?) go to your choice, you will get details of connection methods and possibilities.

The easiest way to connect is the HDMI cable from computer to TV and there are adapters to convert the business end of the HDMI to composite cables (3 cables, Red and white audio and yellow video) if your set requires those connectors.

Roku, a streaming device, available for about \$50 from roku.com has comprehensive connection directions. The Roku XD/S has HDMI and component output for high fidelity video on new and older televisions.

Nintendo has just announced that Hulu and HuluPlus can now be streamed on the Wii (they previously just had Netflix) but you will need to download an "app" from their website.

Redbox and Verizon have announced they will start a streaming service, no details yet.

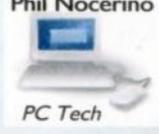
I will mention iTunes since everyone knows them. They stream radio stations, podcasts, and iTunes University (lectures from many U's; there is a huge list on their site) but not TV programs or movies. Those are rentals. If you rent a TV program or movie from them, it is downloaded to your machine (not streamed). You have it for 30 days, but once you start watching you only have 48 hours (TV) or 24 hours (movie) to watch it. From iTunes.com, download iTunes 10.5 for Mac/PC.

Important to remember: not all services carry all content (programs, movies), and not all devices other than computers (and Roku?) will display all content. Check their websites before plunging in. Apple TV and Google TV seem to be especially limited but other devices may be also.

The bottom line is that the power of computers, the capacity of operating systems, and the capabilities of the networks have improved to the point that streaming has become possible for almost everyone.



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Computer Password Tips and Strategies

By Jim Cerny, Director, Sarasota PCUG, Florida
March 2012 issue, Sarasota PC Monitor
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Most of us have several computer or internet “accounts” which provide us with many free services such as email, movies (Netflix), video communications (Skype), photo printing (at Wal-Mart, Walgreens, etc.), music (I-Tunes), banking, shopping, games, entertainment, books, and many more. In fact, your computer is the perfect window to the world and all the people and services in it! But each account you set up requires some sort of “ID” and a password. For example, your email account is your email address and it requires a password to access your email.

Many other accounts will use your email address as your ID (so they can email you notices and ads) but will require another password. How do you handle all your accounts and passwords? Here are some helpful tips:

1. ALWAYS WRITE DOWN EVERY ACCOUNT AND PASSWORD YOU HAVE. I cannot emphasize this enough. Review this list every few months and make sure it is current. Keep it with you when you travel. Keeping them on a small portable “jump” drive is a good idea too. You may have set up your computer at home to easily access your email, perhaps telling the computer to “remember me” or your password for you, but when you travel or use another computer you will need your passwords! Personally, I do not ever allow my computer to “remember” any of my passwords – I enter the password from the keyboard each time I “log in” any account. That way, no matter what computer I am using, the way I access my account stays the same – I always enter my account and password.



2. Write down the internet address of the web page where you enter your account and password. Many people use a “favorite” or an icon on the desktop to quickly get to the “log in” screen for their account. This is ok, but if you use another computer you will not have your shortcuts! So write down the web page address needed for each account.

3. The longer and more complex a password is, the safer it is. In fact, many services now require a password of 8 or more characters with some digits or other “non-letter” characters. Some accounts may require you to periodically change your password. But, hey, we are not spies guarding government secrets. Keep your passwords

simple. Use unusual combinations which are easy for you but would be difficult for someone else to guess. Children’s names, birthdates, and home address numbers are too easy for someone to guess since such information can be obtained without too much effort. Instead, try the make and model of your first car, a childhood favorite game or toy, the name of your superhero, the nick-

name you gave to your worst in-law, etc. Get the idea? Easy for you but hard for someone else to guess, and impossible to find out without knowing you personally.

4. Yes, you can use the same password for multiple accounts. Now if someone really wanted to use your Skype account or read your email and they had a hint to one of your passwords, it would be much easier for them to guess your other passwords. So your security is reduced. But, honestly now, who would really want to steal your passwords anyway? Who would care? Well, ok, maybe for banking or credit card accounts I would be more careful, but for most other accounts I do not feel the need for a super

secure password, so I do use the same password or a variation of it for several accounts. In business, things are different. Most companies are very careful about computer and telecommunication security. But for personal home use, I think you can be much less paranoid.

But remember -- If your computer is repaired or replaced, or if you use another computer, you will need to have your passwords!



Pass It On

By Elizabeth B. Wright, Member, Computer Club of Oklahoma City
March 2012 issue, CCOKC eMonitor
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In my beginning days of computing - 1982, Ms. E. Arly Bird was my mentor. (Not her real name of course.) She was a mathematical prodigy who became a computer expert in the very early days of personal computers. We were friends from another association and when she heard our daughter needed help doing some freelance PR work using a computer, she stepped in to get her up to speed.

Ms. Bird's mastery of the new machines was awesome. She later became a computer professional with clients in industry and offices in many locations. She and I both were members of the original IBM OKC PCUG, but she soon outgrew what the club had to offer. As my abilities lev-

eled off, the club remained my source of new information, but whenever I needed immediate help she was always willing. Everyone should have such a friend.

Mentorship is the "new" catch phrase, approaching networking in importance. Since mentors can help people of all ages, they are becoming highly esteemed. Think about what you have to offer a young person, or even an older friend who really needs encouragement. While the young people know enough about computers to do about anything they want, they don't really know about life yet. They need to be encouraged to make that knowledge count for something other than texting their friends or looking at a social network site. If you have the chance to become a mentor, regard it as a golden opportunity to hopefully make the world a better place.

In the past, parents sometimes punished their children (mostly boys??) for taking their toys apart. Then the world realized that the same curiosity which prompted such behavior resulted in adults who were much sought after for their engineering skills. Especially the ones who not only took their toys apart, but put them back together again. Since girls were usually given dolls for toys, there certainly wasn't much incentive to see how they worked (except for Betsy-Wetsy® of course). The world has made some progress in that area. Ms. E. Arly Bird must have had great parents. I know she had an outstanding mentor.

Mentoring can start at home. The recent computer breakdown at our office resulted in a temporary fix. My husband is closing the office gradually, so investment in new hardware was hardly feasible. We had a monitor, so we decided to hook it up to a laptop computer. The result is slightly less than satisfactory, but as he seems to be getting the "hang" of flipping his word processing program from the small laptop screen to the larger monitor, we will probably stay with this configuration until he closes the office for good. I think he has done pretty well for being a non-computer-literate 81 year old man.

For the type of setup mentioned above, the primary computer must be configured to accept the satellite monitor. We used a laptop computer, but a desktop machine can be used instead. For major business computing a desktop would be preferable. If you are planning to try this type of configuration, by all means call for help. Yes, you



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can get information online, but it will go faster if you have an expert set it up for you. As for “flipping” - also referred to as dragging - the physical movement of the cursor or program from screen to screen is not easy for some people.

Whether you use a regular desktop mouse, roller-ball type or a touch pad, the use of a mouse has historically been difficult for adults, especially older people. The cursor changes screens just by moving the mouse, but other data requires holding down the left mouse button while moving the item. If you are left handed, you might have switched the mouse buttons, so if you decide to try this added convenience, be aware which button to keep depressed while moving the mouse.

Secondary screens are becoming commonplace. It is an option you probably should try.

BE BRAVE, GO FOR THE BIG SCREENS!

Historian Report

Will Return

Next Month

LCACE's Help Desk

Do you have computer questions or need help with your computer? Visit the Lake County Area Computer Enthusiasts' help desk for one on one help 11:15 a.m.-12:15



p.m. at the Grayslake Area Public Library, 100 Library Lane, Grayslake, on

Saturday, March 3, Saturday, March 31, Saturday, May 5, Saturday, June 2, and Saturday, August 4.

This free service is open to anyone with an interest in computers so invite your family, friends, and neighbors.

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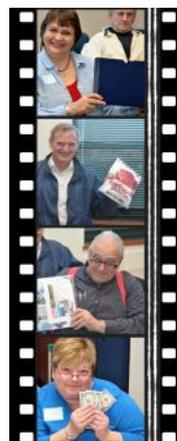
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Next Meetings



Agenda

**Costco of Mettawa will
present
Ooma phone service and
their other
technology products**

Saturday

May 5, 2012

Meeting Agenda
[http://lcace.org/
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