

News Journal

“Members Helping Members”

March 2022

Volume 39, Issue 12

Safe Experimenting

By Dick Maybach

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At the dawn of the personal computer age, life was simpler and more fun. Malware didn't exist, nor did the Internet, and the most valuable thing on our PC was the BASIC program Hunt the Wumpus. We continually tried new software (usually discarding it immediately). Now our PCs contain vital data, such as family photos, financial records, tax returns, and email history, which makes many reluctant to experiment. While the Internet is full of free and cheap software, much of it is tainted, and we are hesitant to take a chance with anything. Moreover, modern operating systems are complex, making tinkering with their organizations hazardous. As a result, we are sitting in a huge virtual library, but afraid to take a book off the shelf.

You can restore the adventure to PCs by setting up an environment, separate from the one presently on your machine, where you can experiment safely. However, remember that an effective backup discipline is always your last and best defense. Let's examine three such environments, virtual machines (VMs), dual-booting, and separate hardware.

No matter which environment you choose, you will need an operating system for it. If you use Windows, you have to purchase a separate copy, as the Microsoft license allows Windows to be installed in only

one environment. Windows 10 is available (from Amazon) for as little as \$50, which lets you achieve greatly increased security and yet stay in familiar surroundings. You also could use Linux, which opens up a whole new world of open-source software and which is generally malware-free, but the environment change may be traumatic.

The easiest separate environment to set up is a virtual machine, such as Oracle's VirtualBox, but it requires competent hardware, at least eight Gbytes of RAM (16 is better), and 30 to 50 Gbytes of available disk space. When the VM is running, your hardware is supporting two environments, the one on your PC (called the host) and the one on the VM (called the guest). As a result, the guest environment may be noticeably slow, but less so if your hardware supports virtual environments. The key features on the CPU are VT-x on Intel and AMD-V on AMD processors, and these are now common, even on laptops. Be sure to check your VM documentation, as these features may be disabled in your BIOS.

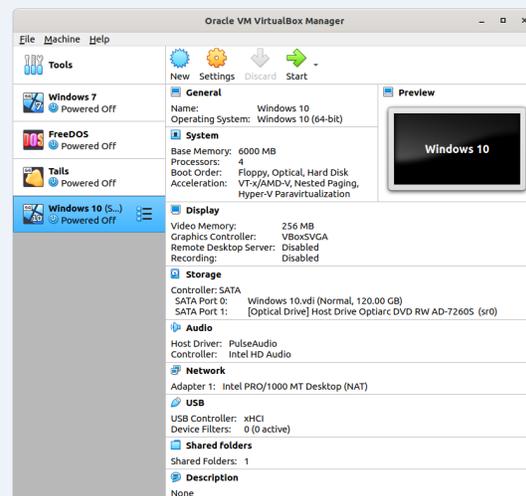


Figure 1. VirtualBox Manager.

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(since 1983)*

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News Journal

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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.

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Editor Notes

Spring is only a few weeks away and I have gone through two seasons in the past couple of weeks. Had to opportunity to spend a week in Charleston SC with 80-degree temperature, only to return home to shovel snow. Because of our changing weather our March meeting will continue to be Virtual on Zoom.

Nomination will again be open for those who would like to be on our Board of Directors, and I would like to thank those who have already been nominated. We are always looking for individuals who are willing to spend a few hours each month to help promote and guide the club in a direction to serve all the members.

Over the past month I have attended several zoom meetings from various clubs and organizations around the country. This has given me some insight into way we can improve our club meetings. But we are always looking for input from you, our members.

Recently, I have attended the local Catholic Charities luncheons and zoom meetings. They have also been offering hybrid meetings which I have been able to join. Although we have had Judy Taylour give us a presentation on "Everything Google," I have gotten tutorial on using Google Maps, Google, Sheets, and Google Sheets from Catholic Charities. Some of these meetings were just for fun. Just for Laughs, let the attendees share some of their favorite jokes with each other, and "The World's a Stage" allowed the attendees to be assigned a role in the reading of a script and play a part in the play no-memorization or

costumes needed!

I have been gathering information from other organizations from which I have been in contact for future presentations for our group. APCUG had a list of presenters that we can chose from, and I have reached out as far as Oklahoma for a future presentation. I am also in the process of creating a few from other suggestions that have been given to me. There is always space for any of our members who wish to give presentations. The February meeting got a little carried away with the Show n' Tell, not leaving us time to show your favorite website, there we will plan to try that again soon.

April will be the 39th anniversary of Lake County Area Computer Enthusiasts, and it is also our membership renewal month. Hopefully will have a in-person meeting and celebrate this occasion with a little cake and ice cream. As I have already mentioned, our election will be held for our board of directors, and we would like to see your name on the ballot.

Again, I would like to thank all who attended Phil Bock's wake and services. I believe all who attended received a Thank You card from Marge (Phil's wife) and she appreciated all who felt Phil was someone they all respected enough to attend.

See you are the March zoom meeting.

J. J. Johnson

Your Age Affects How You See This Famous Optical Illusion—What Do You See?

If you've every wondered why you see whichever woman you see first, an Australian study Conducted by two psychology professors concluded that it has to do with your age.



(Continued from page 1)

In operation, a VM looks like an application to the host; see Figure 1, which shows the VirtualBox manager. You use a virtual manager to add, delete, and configure VMs, and this PC has four, Windows 7, FreeDOS, Tails, and Windows 10. The figure also shows a summary of the VM running Windows 10.

The VM snapshot feature is useful for experimenters. Making a snapshot is equivalent to cloning the environment, and if the current experiment isn't successful, you can restore things with a click or two. Also, since VMs are just files on the host when you back up the host, you also back up the VMs.

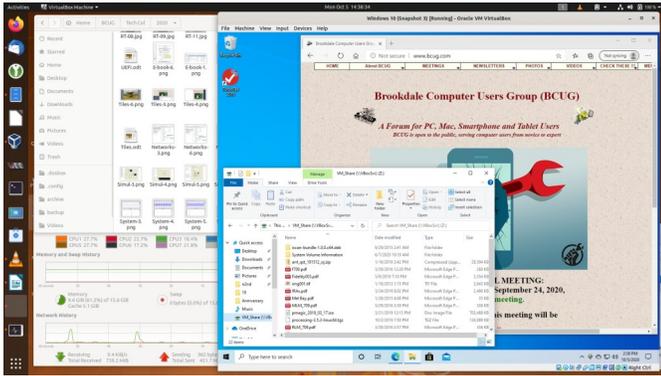


Figure 2. Host Desktop with a VM Running.

Figure 2 shows Windows 10 running in a VM on a Linux host. As you can see Windows has access to the Internet. Note also the file-manager window, which is looking at a directory on the host. Both Linux and Windows can access files in this directory, making it easy for the two to exchange information. You can also copy and paste between the two. However, these features require that you install the Guest Extensions to VirtualBox (see its documentation).

Before VMs became available, I used dual-booting for experimenting. This has the advantage of making all the resources of the host machine available to both environments; using VMs of course means that resources are shared between the host and the guest. The drawback is that setting up dual-booting

requires some expertise and adds some risk. Here are the steps.

- Back up the system.
- Defrag the operating system to ensure that nothing is stored at the high addresses.
- Shrink the partition to make space for a second one above it. The second partition should contain at least 100 Gbytes. If you are short of space on your disk, you'll have to install a second one.
- Install the second OS in the second partition.

This involves more risk than installing an application, so do your homework before attempting it. You also must be careful to back up the second environment separately.

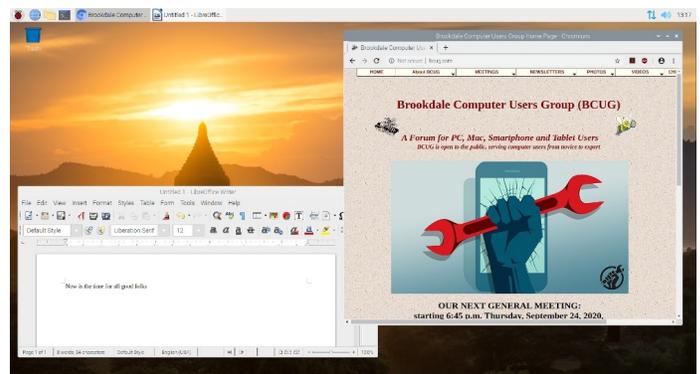


Figure 3. Raspberry Pi Desktop.

The last and safest method of obtaining a test environment is to use a separate PC. Many of us have old, unused machines, making this approach very cheap indeed. Its main disadvantage is the space occupied. If you don't have an unused PC or are short on space, consider a Raspberry Pi; it is model 4 that has as much power as a PC of not that many years ago; see Figure 3. If you share your PC display, keyboard, and mouse with the Raspberry, it uses almost no space. A KVM (Keyboard Video, Mouse) switch will allow you to do the sharing conveniently. Alternatively, you can set up a remote desktop to access the Pi from your PC, making the former appear as an application on the latter. It doesn't even have to be in the same room; all both need is a connection to your home network. If you

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haven't used a Raspberry Pi, you should first read the introductory material on its website, <https://www.raspberrypi.org/>. Setting one up is quite different than getting started with a new PC. Instead of a hard disk, it uses a microSD card, which you'll buy separately and on which you must install the operating system that you'll download from the Raspberry Pi website. The OS is a Linux variant, which probably involves yet more study, but the whole idea of experimenting is to learn.

Once you have hardware for your test environment, you'll need an operating system. A VM and dual-booting give you the most flexibility, as you can use anything your host PC supports. With a Raspberry Pi, you'll be running Linux. Your options on a second PC depend on its age; older units may not support Windows 10 for example. You might also consider switching to Linux, as many distributions support older hardware. It also has thousands of free applications available.

Regardless of how you choose to do your experimenting, continue to exercise care if you transfer files to your home PC, as they can carry malware. Also, when you use virtual machines and dual-booting, you are not completely isolated from your home environment. Cross-contamination, while unlikely, is not impossible.



The iPhone Camera is Just Super

By Jim Cerny

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January 2021 issue, STUG Monitor

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Do you remember taking a camera with you to take photos? Do you remember something called "film"? Today our smartphones take wonderful photos and

have many options available for us to make our pictures even better. In this article, we are going to review some of the fun options on the Apple iPhone, and they are available on other smartphones as well. They all begin by opening the "camera" app on your iPhone (or smartphone). Once you select an option, the phone may suggest other options or actions for you, such as moving closer or farther from the subject.

Photo – this is the default option, the "mode" you get by default when you open the camera app. Also by default, your camera will use a flash if it is needed (you can turn the flash option "off" if you wish, the icon is a small lightning bolt).



What are "live" photos? -- with Live Photos, your iPhone records what happens 1.5 seconds before and after you take a picture. What you get is more than a great photo; it's a moment captured with movement and sound. You take a Live Photo just like you do a traditional photo. You can tap an area on your screen to change the focus or exposure to a certain area or to see other options.

Reverse camera – In the bottom-right area of your screen is a circular icon of two white arrows pointing clockwise.

Touch this icon to use the camera on the opposite side of your device, this is how all those young people take "selfies".

Yes, your iPhone has two cameras!

Time-Lapse – This will take a periodic or a sequence of photos. Touch the shutter button once to start and again to stop the sequence. This sounds like fun, but I have yet to try it.

Video – When you select this option the shutter button changes from white to RED. Tap it to start your

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(Continued from page 5)

video and again to stop. Yes, you can edit videos, but I will leave that for you to “Ask Google”.

Slo-Mo – Use this option as you would “video” above, but you will have a slow-motion effect. If this is something that interests you, be sure to “Ask Google” about using this effect in different ways.

Photo – the default option – see above.

Portrait – This option will keep your subject in sharp focus and blur the background a little. This gives you stunning professional-looking portrait photos.

Pano – This pantographic option will capture a very wide photo, almost a full circle, around you. Hit the button and move the camera slowly in the direction of the arrow (left to right – you can “pan” right to left if you touch the arrow to change the direction). This is a very cool and wonderful option. Try it on a wide sunset or a street view to get a

super-wide photo.

Square – This will take a square photo (not rectangular) which is best for use in social media.

If you have a different smartphone than an iPhone, look for these options, they are probably available on your device too. And don’t forget the MANY free apps available for you to edit your photos after you take them. No, you will not run out of film but is it always a good idea to delete unwanted photos often to save space on your phone.

Copy the ones you want to keep to your favorite photo storage area, like Google Photos for example, which can be set to automatically save them for you.

Finally, to get the most out of your phone camera, take time to find out more about the options you like to use the most, you will be surprised what it can do. I think the next release will have a photo “X-ray” option to take photos through walls!



Loocid anti-fog wipes for glasses

While wearing a PPE mask, keep your glasses fog-free when you cannot carry a Rainx bottle

By **John Krout**, Writer/Presenter, Potomac Area Technology and Computer Society

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A few months ago I published an article about my use of the commercial RainX product as a way to minimize fogging of glasses when wearing a PPE mask.

There is at least one situation, airplane flights, where the mask use can last hours and no bottles of fluid can be brought aboard by passengers.

More commonly, if you forget to treat your glasses with RainX before leaving home, having an alternative in the car would be useful.

My daughter, who wears glasses, has traveled two times to the DC area from her home in Georgia during September and November 2020. She has bought tickets for a third trip in December 2020. She visits not only her immediate family but also her in-laws in Northern Virginia, along with her 16-month-old son.

So what can be done?

I found an answer on Amazon. Several firms sell individually packaged anti-fog wipes. I tried one brand that was especially highly rated. The brand is **Loocid**, spelled with two-letter Os, and the wipes are not what I would call inexpensive. The price ranges from 45 cents to 60 cents per wipe, depending on how many are purchased.

You can see the 30packet box of Loocid packets in Illustration 1.

(Continued on page 8)

zoom

Joining a Meeting

February 12, 2022

Membership Chairperson Report

Members

Attendees: 23

THANKS FOR JOINING

THANKS FOR RENEWING

Gary Quarnstrom

THANKS FOR VISITING

**MEMBERSHIP
RENEWAL**

2022-2023

Annual Dues



"People Born in March Are Natural-Born Leaders"

Albert Einstein

Alexander Graham Bell

Ruth Bader Ginsburg

Diana Ross

Lady Gaga

Harry Houdini

Shaquille Q'Neal

Desi Arnaz

Vincent Van Gogh

Steve McQueen

Aretha Franklin

Reba McEntire

Elton John

Ron Howard

Harriet Tubman

Leonard Nimoy

Dr. Seuss

William Shatner

pngtree.com



Not ready to upgrade?

Do this instead

[READ MORE](#)

(Continued from page 6)

Although the actual label depicts the two Os as a pair of glasses, you can find the product by using the name Looacid in the Amazon search field.

I found myself in the parking lot of a grocery store recently. I realized I had not applied RainX at home. So I pulled out a Looacid wipe packet, opened it, and got out the wipe. I wiped the inside of both lenses of my glasses, put on the PPE mask, and got out of the car.

The glasses fogged up *immediately*, before I was fully out of the car, possibly due to winter temperature in the parking lot. So I grabbed the same wipe and used the opposite side of the wipe to wipe the inside of my glasses again.

After that generous treatment, my glasses were fog-free not only for 20 minutes at that grocery store but also for another 30 minutes in another grocery store after roughly 15 minutes of car travel sans mask between the two stores.

The advantage of packets is that The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) will allow those to be carried by passengers.



I have been using Zeiss brand lens cleaner wipes to clean my camera lenses since late December 2019, because TSA will not let me carry my little bottle of lens cleaner fluid aboard an aircraft. I believe TSA would also object to a bottle of RainX.

TSA let me carry the Zeiss packets aboard when I last traveled by air in December, January, and February 2020. Therefore, I believe that TSA allows Looacid packets to be carried also.

If you travel by air during the pandemic, add up the time to be spent in airports, plus the flight time. You want your glasses to be fog-free for hours. Even if the initial treatment wears off, you can re-apply it when needed.

My only caveat about the Looacid packet is to apply each packet generously. Scrub scrub scrub.

I have an update on RainX. The company seems to have discontinued the smallest size of their interior glass anti-fog product. However, the next larger size of the product is still available, and on Amazon costs less per ounce of fluid than the smallest size.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: John Krout has been writing about uses of personal computer tech since the early 1980s. He is a frequent contributor to PATACS Posts, the newsletter of the Potomac Area Technology and Computer Society, and occasionally provides demos on various tech topics at PATACS meetings. He lives in Arlington Virginia with his son, many computers and cameras, and too many cats.

Upcoming Meeting Dates

- February 12—Economic
- March 12 Show n' Tell
- April 9— Ask the Guru / Elections



A standard bag of plain M&M's contain candies in how many different colors?

- ⇒ Five
- ⇒ Six
- ⇒ Seven

You Really Should Automate Your Windows Storage

(and How to Do It)

You should automate one of the most mundane task on your PC.



If you are frequently running out of space on your computer, here's a few steps to help you solve the problem.

[READ MORE](#)



PC Keyboard Shortcuts

Hold down first key as you press second key:

+ *Open File Explorer*

+ *Save your work*

+ *Print*

+ *Bookmark page*

+ *Find a word or phrase*

+ *Search for files & folders*

+ *Undo last action*

+ *Redo an action*

+ or *Zoom in/out*

+ or *Highlight text*

+ *Open start screen*

+ *New docmnt, email, etc*

+ *Copy selected item(s)*

+ *Cut selected item(s)*

+ *Paste selected item(s)*

+ *Select all items in document or window*

+ *Switch between windows*

+ or *View windows side by side*

+ *Close document*

BONUS: One-Key Help

Display help screen



Please recycle this after you read my message.





Windows & Android Tips

HOW YOUR VOICEMAIL GREETING COULD SAVE YOUR LIFE – “Earlier this year, the nation held a breath when snowstorms zapped power across the central and southern states. Thousands of families shivered in the cold without water or electricity in their homes. Tap or click here to prepare for winter storms. Ingenuity and preparation can make a world of difference in times like this. When disaster strikes, you want to have put together a game plan ahead of time. After all, no one wants to be left out in the cold. That’s why we’re sharing this tech hack that can help you in case you’re ever stranded in the middle of nowhere. If your battery is low and your service or data is still working, change your voicemail. It could just change your life.” Read more at [How your voicemail greeting could save your life \(komando.com\)](http://komando.com)

8 WAYS TO MAKE YOUR OLD LAPTOP FEEL NEW AGAIN – “A good computer is understandably expensive, but it sometimes feels like it isn’t worth the sticker price. After a few years of use, many laptops and PCs start to run slow; typical tasks are no longer as easy as they once were, and you find yourself eyeing the new computers on the market. The difficulty in giving computer advice is there are so many different types of machines out in the wild. Obviously, the great divide is between Mac and PC, but even within each of those categories, there are varieties and discrepancies. Some Apple machines are user-accessible and upgradable, while others aren’t. The same goes for specific PC models. In many cases, then, the following advice will need to be taken with caveats in mind.” Check out the PC and Mac tips [8 Ways to Make Your Old Laptop Feel New Again \(lifehacker.com\)](http://lifehacker.com)

HOW TO RECOVER ACCIDENTALLY DELETED FILES IN WINDOWS – “It happens all the time. You decide to clean up your hard drive and then three days later you can’t find an important file. It’s not in the right folder or the Recycle Bin, and you don’t have a hard drive back-up. You’ve accidentally deleted the file. So now what?”

Take a deep breath, unclench your jaw, and relax your shoulders. Whether it’s an Excel, Word, PowerPoint, Outlook email, or any other kind of file, with our help it’s possible that you can recover accidentally deleted files in Windows.”

[How to Recover Accidentally Deleted Files in Windows \(online-tech-tips.com\)](http://online-tech-tips.com)

MOVING FROM ANDROID TO IPHONE? HERE ARE 9 DIFFERENCES TO CONSIDER – “Upgrading your smartphone is always exciting. And if you’ve used an Android device for a while, you might consider switching over to an iPhone at some stage. Like other Apple products, iPhones have a reputation for being user-friendly. However, you’ll still have to go through a bit of a learning curve in the first few weeks of your switchover.

If you’re thinking about switching from Android to iPhone—or you’ve already bought your new smartphone—read this article for nine things you should know.”

[Moving From Android to iPhone? Here Are 9 Differences to Consider \(makeuseof.com\)](http://makeuseof.com)

HOW TO IDENTIFY FRAUDULENT AND/OR DANGEROUS WEBSITES – Fraudulent, fake and untrustworthy websites are all over the Internet these days, and it’s easy to find yourself on one without even realizing it. According to Internet Live Stats there are currently close to two billion websites on the World Wide Web. Unfortunately, not all of them are legitimate. With all of those sites competing for your clicks from the Google search results and links on other websites, it’s extremely important to be able to determine which sites are legitimate and which ones are fraudulent and/or unreliable. Learn more at [w to identify fraudulent and/or dangerous websites \(ricksdailytips.com\)](http://ricksdailytips.com)



Slowdowns, iPhone Mute Switch, and Google Fi

Q. My computer is seven-year-old Everything seems normal when it first starts up. but the longer I use it, the slower it runs, after an hour the wait is awful. Restarting returns it to normal but the slowdown repeats. Help!

A. This is a challenging problem to troubleshoot. Different things may cause this behavior

The instant a computer starts up. It begins to use three things: CPU. Disk space and memory. The computer is designed to keep these in balance, so the computer feels fast.

Your computer should have a built-in application that lets you peek under the hood. This crystal-ball like applications called "Task Manager" on Windows and "Activity Monitor" on Mac.

These apps present lists and gauges that show how hard the computer is working each moment. With a little practice and maybe a YouTube video tutorial on the basics -you can learn to make sense of the gauges.

Some are easy. If a process is always using 90 percent of the CPU, that is an obvious slowdown.

Some slowdowns are tougher to spot. For example, both disk space and memory are measured in gigabytes. but they are two different things entirely. The path to fixing slowdown is to learn what the crystal ball looks like after the computer starts. and compare it to how it looks after it slows down.

That should identify the culprit, so you can make adjustments, I wish I could be more specific. but every slowdown is unique. Good luck!

Q. What is the difference between the Do Not Disturb focus mode and the mute switch on my iPhone?

A. The official name of iPhone's tiny mechanical switch (pushbutton do not count) is the Ring/Silent switch. Its primary function is to keep the phone from ringing aloud. But it does more than that.

The switch is not connected to Do Not Disturb mode (the little half-moon icon). Do Not Disturb mode sends most calls directly to voicemail, silences notifications and blacks out the screen.

When the Ring/Silent switch is positioned so the indicator underneath the toggle is red, the phone will not make noise except in very limited circumstances.

Alarms in the built-in Clock app ignore the switch. App developers can also request special permission to override the switch. This is rare. and I have yet to come upon

an app that has it, but the override is intended for vital notifications. like medical alerts.

A few apps will continue working if it makes sense, like the music player will play music. But in general, if you see red on the switch. the phone will not make alert sounds.

A deep dive into Settings will provide more options, but. Because some settings overlap and can conflict. It gets complicated quickly. Be sure to experiment if you try out custom settings.

The bottom line: the default settings on the iPhone work very well almost all the time. To silence the phone in quiet places. flip the Ring/Silent switch to red.

Q. What is Google Fi?

A. Google Fi is a cellular carrier operated by Google. But the story only starts there. Google did not suddenly build a network of cell towers.

In a general sense. there are two types of networks in the United States: actual operators and virtual operators

Companies like Verizon and AT&T build and maintain their own cell towers. They are actual network operators.

Google Fi is an example of a Mobile Virtual Network Operator. Virtual networks have been around a very long time, and they are "invisible" to most consumers. (There is a comprehensive list of MVNO's on Wikipedia. See the link below.)

Virtual networks can be less expensive. but savings often come with limitations.

Because there are so many different networks, it is improbable to make universal recommendations. Buying decisions depend on the needs of each individual.

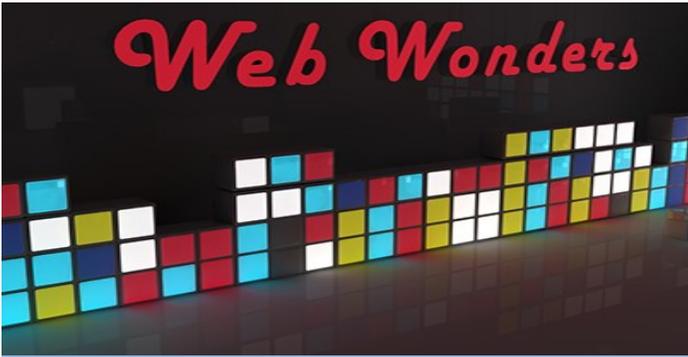
As for Google Fi itself. I am not especially impressed with its offerings compared to the plans from primary network operators like Verizon.

And Google, despite being an established technology brand, is a relative newcomer to direct end-user sales. I prefer to purchase tech products that are among the most important products each company offers.

However, Android is a key product for Google. That makes Google Fi important to watch.

"Man is still the most extraordinary computer of all."

- John F. Kennedy.



Virtual Mobile Network Operators

This long URL can also be found by searching Wikipedia for MVNO

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_state_mobile_virtual_network_operator

Senior Tech Club

Visit Don Frederiksen’s fantastic site for a catalog of friendly iPhone and iPad how-to-do recipes.

seniortechclub.com

Auto License Plates

This old school website contains a collection of license plates images from around the world.

worldlicenseplates.com



“Run! My laptop is so full of apps, downloads, old documents, screenshots and junk files, it’s about to explode!”



Hate waiting on hold when you call customer service?

Here's how to get transferred faster

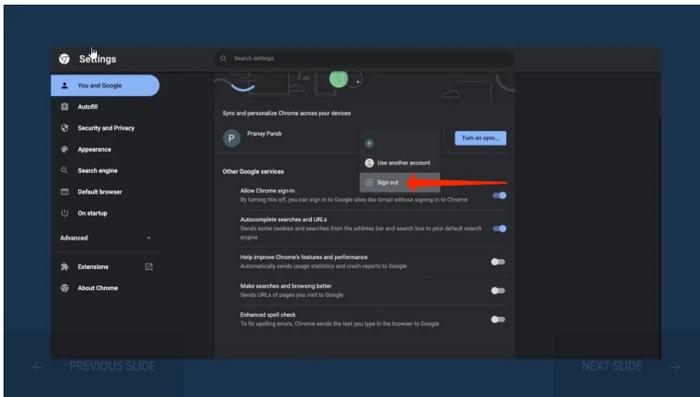
Few things are as annoying as calling customer service and waiting on hold... “voice-mail maze”. You probably already know that you can get transferred to a live person by pressing “0” or saying “representative”. But what about those instances when that does not work.

In those instances, try talking to the voice-recognition system in an angry tone. Yes, getting angry at the machine may get you transferred to a human faster! **Reason:** Some companies are adding software that monitors callers, speech and transfers them to a person faster if they exhibit signs of anger or frustration.

Important: Once you do get transferred to a human, switch from being angry to being pleasant. The phone reps will be more likely to help you if you are nice to them.



9 Default Chrome Settings You Should Change If You Care About Your Privacy



It only takes a few clicks to reduce Google Chrome's tracking

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Repurpose your old devices to create the ultimate DIY smart home



How to breathe new life into an outdate device

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Computer Services

**Desktops,
Laptops,
All-in-Ones
and more**



During our October Zoom meeting the following two computer services were mentioned.

[White Box Computers](#)

They say they are the place for all your computer repairs & upgrades at nearly half the prices of the competition.

<https://whiteboxcomputers.org>

847-833-9324

[ZYTEK Services](#)

Has been around for over 30 years and offers the best in fast, friendly, high-quality, fair price computer service solutions

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YouTube Videos

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Answer: The purpose of buying houses and hotels in the game Monopoly is to increase the rent on a property. This is the most evident and easiest way to win the game. In the classic version of Monopoly, houses are small green buildings and hotels are larger red buildings. Before you buy any houses or hotels, you must own all the properties in that color group. When you have four houses on each property in a color group, you can buy a hotel. You receive the highest rent when you have a hotel on a property, so this is the ultimate strategy for winning the game.

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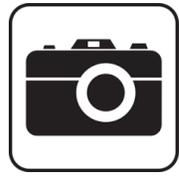
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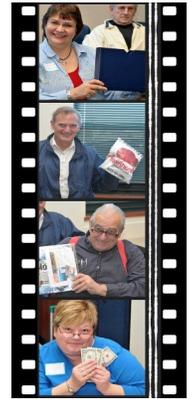
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