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The Tip Corner – January 2015

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Here it is, the start of another year. Happy New Year Everyone.

Looking back on what has transpired in the computer field takes my breath away. Take memory for example. In the 30 plus years of personal computing, memory has gone from 32 Mbs to double digit Gbs and machines, even laptops, now come with quad core CPUs. Storage space has become cheaper and cheaper. I was shopping the other day and saw a Seagate external hard drive of four TB and it cost just a few bucks more than the one TB I purchased a few months ago. Price? \$137! WOW! Registries have increased, and even the tablets have increased in RAM and storage. On the programing side we now have machines that have sophisticated Text to Speech and Speech to Text. I use a text-to-speech program to read my spreadsheet numbers so I can double check them. I remember sitting with another person as we read to each other to double check. We can now do it by ourselves. Video editing using free NLE (non-linear editing) programs is a snap, and they even break the film down into scenes based on time or change of scene so you can drag and drop in a second. If you are an old 8mm camera guy you must remember cutting, numbering and hanging up scenes so you could arrange and edit your home movies. The list goes on and on. But with all these great improvements we still can use some help on how to use them. so...**On To The Tips.**

### **Firefox 4.0 Quick Find**

Long for a keyword to help you search an article? You can hit Ctrl>F and type in your query, but in Firefox 4 just hit, the / key on your keyboard (located just to the left of the Shift key) and start typing.

### **Windows Copy as Path**

When you right-click on a file or a folder you brings up an action menu with basic choices, like "Open" or "Copy." If you hold down the Shift key when you right click in Windows the usual menu that pops up will now include an option called "Copy as Path." This will copy the entire path of the file or folder to your clipboard, and allows you to paste it wherever you want. This is useful once you've located a file in Explorer and you want to upload it to a Web site. So, instead of taking the time to browse for the file on the site, you can just copy and paste its path directly.

### **Print part of an email or other text**

While this is really a simple copy and paste exercise some people seem to have a problem with the concept, so here are some pointers and an explanation.

- When you highlight and right-click on what you would like to copy the highlighted portion goes into the Window's clipboard.
- You do not see it, but it is there.
- You can open another email or a blank word document or Notepad.

- You can then click Paste, and the text appears.
- If you copied some pictures along with the text that you do not want, instead of just right-clicking, go to Edit>Paste Special and click on unformatted text.
- None of the graphics will be included.
- You can then send out the email or save the text document as usual.

### **What's In A Word?**

To keep from overusing a word when writing we go to the shelf and bring down a thesaurus. Well forget Roget, here are some thesaurus sites you might be interested in.

#### ***The Cook's Thesaurus***

If you need a food substitute this is the site to go to. But it does more. It also has information, pronunciations, pictures and more!.

On the main page, there is a featured section where you'll find the Ingredient of the Month. You will learn how to cook it, what to serve with it, and even what to look for when buying it. Further down you will find a listing of categories. Everything is there from fruits to vegetables, flavorings, baking supplies, fats and oils and even equipment. Each category breaks down into a list of items that fit the category you can explore further. Along with the food substitutes you get an education about the ingredients and equipment you cook with. Find it at:  
<http://www.foodsubs.com/>

#### ***Open Office and Libre Office***

The document writer in these two free suites have a way to find substitute words. Right-click on the word to be changed. Towards the bottom of the list that opens you will see Synonyms. You will see a list of other words that can be used. Choose one and it will replace the one you started with.

If none of those words suit you, proceed to the Thesaurus. Like everything else there is more than one way to get there. While in Synonyms select Thesaurus at the bottom of the synonyms list. Or you could also go to the Tools menu, Language sub-menu, Thesaurus choice. But the fastest was is just highlight the word and use Ctrl>F7. Ctrl>F7 also works in MS Word. For those using Word 2007 and later the thesaurus is found on the Review ribbon. OK, and now for you texters. Being limited to 140 characters certainly puts a damper on the creative juices, but have no fear, just take a trip to [IronicSans.com/thrs/](http://IronicSans.com/thrs/). You type in a long word click the search button and it gives you a shorter synonym. To find out more about the Thrs, check out the "Why a shorter thesaurus?" link under the search field. It will tell you all about the site and why it was made.

So now you should never be at a loss for words.

### **I Love My XP What Can I Do?**

XP is user-friendly, and a lot has changed in the 12 years since XP was launched. But now that Microsoft has ending support, XP is highly vulnerable to external threats such as viruses and malware.

While we know that updating to Vista, Win7 and Win8 are valid options there is one more option that should be considered - Ubuntu.

Ubuntu is a Linux operating system and is considered a superior system to XP.

You may not be familiar with Linux. It's an operating system for computers, like Windows. And while Linux started out with text only operations it is now a fully operating GUI system. While I am a Windows User and have slowly migrated up to Win8, for those that have continued to use XP and like it, you might want to consider the switch. Especially for those older machines with minimum CPU and storage.

The switch from Windows XP to Linux Ubuntu may not prove to be the horrific experience that you might imagine. And while the family of Linux users pales beside Windows, some consider it a much better system. It will give you much more than you get from Windows XP or even from Windows 7 or 8.

Here are some of the pluses with Linux Ubuntu you might want to consider.

**Security:** Presently, Ubuntu claims to be a virus free OS, but just like Apple, once there is a community of users the hackers will arrive. But since XP is no longer supported the risks are greater that malicious software is out there.

**Speed:** Older computers with minimum resources have a tendency to clog when using windows. Ubuntu runs for a long time without any lag since it uses a lesser amount of resources and boosts performance in older machines.

**Cost:** Hello! Ubuntu is free. And no product key is needed.

**Space:** Ubuntu occupies much less hard drive space than XP. Other versions of Ubuntu such as Xubuntu, take up even less space and provide almost the same functionality.

**Drivers:** There's is no headache in installing drivers for audio, video and graphics from external sources in Ubuntu. The OS automatically detects your hardware and installs the latest drivers. Even if you have lost your drivers, you can still acquire sound and video drivers automatically while using Ubuntu.

**Software:** Ubuntu has lots of useful software absolutely free with no catches or hidden charges. Software like Firefox, Chrome, Libre Office, Open Office and many more can be found at Ubuntu Software center. Another special software, Wine, helps you run most of your Windows based software without any trouble at all.

**Customization:** Ubuntu users have full customization options. You have the choice to change your desktop colors, task bar sizes and make custom side bars.

So if you want to hang on to your old machine, Ubuntu offers a unique opportunity. So think about it, and perhaps give it a try. Actually, you can even have both systems on your machine while you take the time to so if it appeals to you.