

No Personal Privacy

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I want to share (1) something to think about as we enter this time of “no personal privacy;” (2) a very useful program for keeping your PC applications up-to-date; and (3) a fun website for displaying street views of houses.

- 1) My wife was reading a book on her Kindle and was getting close to the end. She wanted to finish the book, so she cloistered herself in the snug family room chair and had at it. After about half an hour, she finished the book and explained that it really was a great book and she really enjoyed it. A moment or two later, her cell phone made the noise for an incoming email and she reached over and read it. It was from Amazon and it asked her how she liked the book that she just finished. That was so spooky! It really made us feel like our privacy had been compromised. I’m a very strong proponent of technology advances and all the good things that it can bring, but this just seemed like too much and too close.

A couple of days later, she started another book, read a few chapters and had to put it down as things get busy around the first of the month. Sure enough, after a couple of days, she gets an email from Amazon asking, “how’s it going.” Guess she wasn’t reading enough and needed to be prodded. Now, I don’t know what you think of that intrusion, but I find it really disturbing. Guess we’ll have to get used to it or take the Kindle offline.

- 2) An important part of being safe online is keeping your computer’s software up-to-date. Outdated software often contains security exposures that can provide hackers access to your computer. Outdated software can also be buggy and have performance issues which are usually fixed with a newer version of the software. Unfortunately, if you have lots of different programs this is an onerous task.

Patch My PC Updater will make patching your PC easy. It is free and keeps over 165 apps up-to-date on your computer. It is an easy way to update or install any of these programs on to your computer.

When you open Patch My PC Updater, it will scan your system for outdated programs. It will show programs that are outdated in Red, programs that are updated in Green, and programs that are not installed in Black. With one click you can easily do all your updates. You can download Patch My PC from <https://patchmypc.net/download>.

- 3) On a more fun note, I’ve been sharing a website called www.showmystreet.com. When you go to the site, you get a box where you can type in an address. It’s a

simple interface that lets you display almost all locations. Just start typing the location's address and the background Google Map is updated in real-time. Like any other regular Google Map, you can drag the map, zoom in/out, and select the following views: map, satellite, hybrid, and terrain. Wherever available, Show My Street will automatically display the Google Street View of the address. Type the address one character at a time and watch the location that it displays. It's amazing. The views can be directly shared on Twitter and Facebook. You can also obtain a direct URL to the view and share it with your friends online.

Be careful out there!