

Orange County PC
Users Group

nibbles & bits



presented by
**charlie
moore**

dosbox dos emulator for windows 7

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use dosbox to play classic pc games

by Charlie Moore

If you want to make your classic (pre-Windows XP) games run on a modern PC, you'll have to become familiar with DOSBox, a fully configurable DOS PC emulator. I'll show it to you at our January 10 meeting.

Who plays DOS games anymore? I don't, but I have a favorite DOS program that I use daily.

The club also has a couple of compiled Basic programs, that it uses to conduct raffles.

DOSBox is a DOS-emulator that uses the SDL-library which makes

DOSBox very easy to port to different platforms.

DOSBox has already been ported to many different platforms, such as Windows, BeOS, Linux, MacOS X. DOSBox also emulates CPU:286/386 realmode/protected mode, Directory FileSystem/XMS/EMS, Tandy/Hercules/CGA/EGA/VGA/VESA graphics, a SoundBlaster/Gravis Ultra Sound card for excellent sound compatibility with older games.

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You can "relive" the good old days with the help of DOSBox, it can run plenty of the old classics that don't run on your new computer!

DOSBox is totally free of charge and is an OpenSource program.

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editing in the raw

by Pim Borman

Driving home one evening before Christmas, I passed a house with an outrageous display of outside decorations, worthy of a couple of quick pictures. I always keep an old, 7.2 MP Casio camera in the car just for occasions like this, but the difficult lighting conditions really called for more capable equipment. However, as they say, the best camera is the one you have with you when you need it, so I decided to give it a shot anyway.

I needed to take the pictures from across the street to include as much of the scenery as possible. At that distance the built-in flash of the pocket camera was certainly inadequate. Not surprisingly, the resulting images were severely underexposed. It would take some snappy editing to rescue these wrecks.

All but the cheapest digital cameras these days are sophisticated special-purpose computers, capable of rendering good quality images from well-lit scenes under a variety of conditions. In doing so, the camera interprets the raw electronic data and applies a set of adjustments that generally will give good results. Finally the camera converts the original 16-bit color depth to 8 bits, accurate enough to render true colors, and compresses the image to the standard JPEG format, with significant loss of image data. If the user wants to further enhance the quality of the image with a photo editor he is limited to using what remains of the original data.



Original photo without retouching

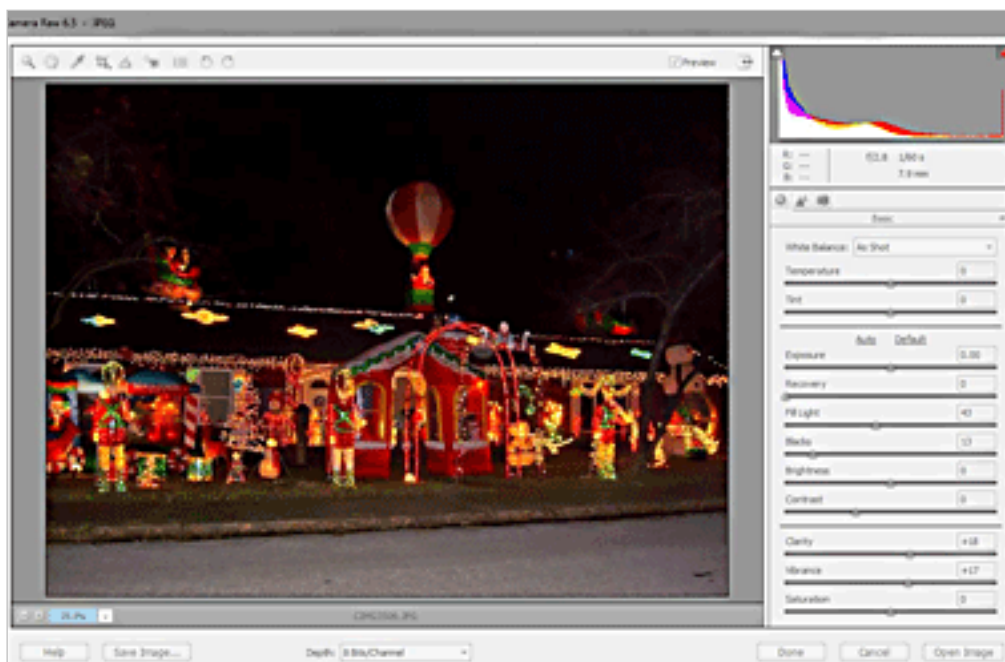


After modification in RAW format

Most DSLR cameras, and some of the better pocket cameras, offer an option to save the image with lossless compression and a minimum of preprocessing in a proprietary format usually referred to as "RAW." Note that the RAW format is not standard, like JPEG, but varies amongst camera brands. Canon cameras use the CR2 extension for RAW image files. I had been using Photoshop Elements (PE) to read the CR2 files of my older Canon DSLR. My newer Canon S85 pocket camera, capable of storing RAW images with the same CR2 extension, used an incompatible, updated version of the RAW format. I needed to update my PE version 9 program to import those files.

Photoshop Elements is the lite version of Photoshop, the expensive photo editor used by professionals. PE has greatly improved over the years and it is claimed that it can do every-

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A host of options are displayed in the RAW window.

thing Photoshop can do, although it make take more separate steps. It has three main parts: the Organizer to arrange your pictures in albums, the powerful Editor to optimize the photos, and the RAW editor that allows you to preprocess RAW photos, rather than leaving that job to the camera, before final editing in the Editor.

The RAW editor provides two consecutive sets of procedures to bring your pictures to life. The first set essentially is the manual equivalent of what the camera usually does to provide the JPEG image. It involves adjustment of the light quality as desired between warm and cold, followed by adjusting the exposure value. Here the advantage of working with more accurate, 16-bit light values lets the RAW editor recover some overexposed parts of the image that otherwise would be lost. Other adjustments take care of fill light, overall brightness, contrast, and some RAW variables called clarity and vi-

brance that speak for themselves and are very powerful.

The second set of operations is referred to as Details and mostly involves optimizing the sharpness of the image while preventing or removing artifacts that sharpening can cause. Specifically, dark areas of underexposed images often exhibit a mottling effect, with additional random color variations. In a traditional photo editor the mottling can be reduced by blurring the image, but that is usually not acceptable.

The Details section has the sharpening amount and radius controls used by most sharpening tools. In addition it has a Luminance adjustment that selectively smooths out the mottling, and a Color adjustment that removes the stray colors. Newer versions of PE, such as my current version 9, also have a Masking tool with which you can select the outlines of objects to be selectively sharpened without affecting the smooth portions

of the image where mottling is usually the greatest problem.

After completing this set of adjustments to a picture, which with some practice only requires a few minutes, the image is saved to the regular PE Editor. At this point you must reduce the color depth to 8 bits since the PE Editor can not handle 16-bit color. You can now further adjust the picture to your taste, but starting from a better basis.

Getting back to my Christmas picture of the lighted yard. The poor image could use some of the sophisticated optimization in the RAW editor, but it was

already in 8-bit JPEG format. Fortunately it is possible to import JPEG images in the PE RAW editor. From within the regular PE Editor (Not the Organizer) choose file... open as..... and pick Camera Raw from the options. Then load the file from your drive and it will open in the RAW editor. The big advantage of doing that is that it gives access to the powerful Details adjustments, in particular the Luminance, Color, and Masking sliders. The file can then be saved to the regular Editor for further optimization.

The result of my efforts is not of National Geographic quality, but it certainly has regained a lot of detail that was not visible in the original.

Pim Borman is a retired chemist. He was newsletter editor and webmaster of the SW Indiana PC Users Group before it disbanded in December 2008. His email address is swipcug@gmail.com.





say, do you know...

how wi-fi got its name and logo?

The term Wi-Fi suggests Wireless Fidelity, resembling the long-established audio-equipment classification term Hi-Fi (used since 1950) or high fidelity (in use since the 1930s). Even the Wi-Fi Alliance itself has often used the phrase Wireless Fidelity in its press releases and documents; the term also appears in a white paper on Wi-Fi from ITAA.

The term Wi-Fi, first used commercially in August 1999, was coined by a brand-consulting firm called Interbrand Corporation that the Alliance had

hired to determine a name that was “a little catchier than ‘IEEE 802.11b Direct Sequence.’” Phil Belanger, a founding member of the Wi-Fi Alliance, also stated that Interbrand invented Wi-Fi as a play on words with Hi-Fi, and also created the Wi-Fi logo.

The Wi-Fi Alliance initially used an advertising slogan for Wi-Fi, “The Standard for Wireless Fidelity,” but later removed the phrase from their marketing. Despite this, some documents from the Alliance dated 2003 and 2004 still contain the term Wireless Fidelity. There was no official statement related to the dropping of the term.

The yin-yang Wi-Fi logo indicates the certification of a product for interoperability. (Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wi-Fi#The_name_Wi-Fi)



Yin-yang Wi-Fi logo

who designed the “broken image” icons?

Hagan Rivers (née Heller), the UI designer for Mosaic Communications Corp., better known later as Netscape, hired Marsh Chamberlin (an icon design contractor) to create the “broken image” icon, which saw broad release in October 1994 with the release of Netscape 0.91.

Earlier Web browsers, including NCSA Mosaic and Cello, showed other placeholder pictures to represent a missing element.

For more details go to <http://www.quora.com/Icons/Who-designed-the-broken-image-icons>



Icons that indicate there is no linked image to display in your browser

EXCEL

can't empty the clipboard

Jerry is trying to cut information from one cell and paste it into another cell. He can cut it just fine, but when he tries to paste it he gets an error message, "Cannot Empty the Clipboard." Jerry wonders what causes this error.

This has been a problem in Excel for some time. (Actually, the problem seems to crop up in several different Office applications, not just Excel.) The solutions for the problem depend upon what is causing the problem and which version of Excel you are using. As an example, here are two different articles at the Microsoft Knowledge Base that address the issue:

<http://support.microsoft.com/kb/196620>

<http://support.microsoft.com/kb/899266>

Note that the articles are focused on entirely different versions of Excel and entirely different causes. Unfortunately, Microsoft hasn't seen fit to create a "here's how to fix it" article that addresses the wider range of potential causes. There are, however, resources available on the wider Internet that address the issue.

Here's a good one: <http://www.online-tech-tips.com/ms-office-tips/cannot-empty-clipboard/>

You can find lots of other such resources by searching for the phrase "cannot empty the keyboard" (make sure you include the quote marks).

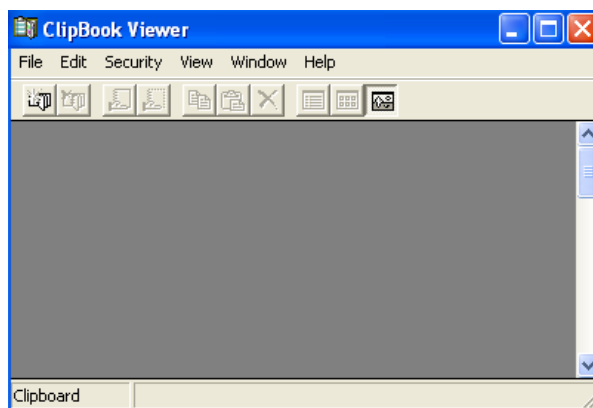
The underlying idea for all these potential causes and solutions is that there is some program (whether

it be Terminal Services, GetRight, Flashget, RealVNC, or Quickeys) that is interfering with how Excel wants to use the Clipboard. The idea is to figure out which program it is either stop using the program or implement some sort of workaround that is specific to that program.

This tip (9809) applies to Microsoft Excel versions: 97, 2000, 2002 and 2003. http://excel.tips.net/T009809_Cant_Empty_the_Clipboard.html

You can find a version of this tip for the ribbon interface of Excel (Excel 2007 and later) here: http://excelribbon.tips.net/T009810_Cant_Empty_the_Clipboard.html

One Method of Emptying The Clipboard



You can open the Clipboard by going to Start, Run and typing in `clipbrd.exe`. You can also go to your `Windows\System32` directory and double-click on `clipbrd.exe`. With Clipboard open (image above), go to Edit and Delete.



creating a google-proof persona

by Ash Nallawalla

A persona is a fictitious person that has certain defined attributes. In product marketing, we create personas for major groups of users who will use the product. For example, a word processor's set of personas might include a high school student, a university student, a generic office worker, a specialist author, a manager, and so on.

In the world of black-hat SEO or spamming, a persona is usually a very shallow person, with no thought given to its creation. Beyond a rather implausible Western name and Gmail address, there is no sophistication, perhaps because the only purpose of that persona is to send once-off spam. Since you can create billions of fake Gmail/Yahoo/Rediffmail accounts without any worry, you can create a new one for each email if you wish.

Aaron Wall has written an interesting flight of fancy (I mean it as a compliment) in Google+ (<http://bit.ly/un6hpU>) and probably had a lot of fun speculating how Google could determine a persona to be a real person. You can almost hear the chuckles in Amit Singhal's and Matt Cutts' teams at the Googleplex.

Aaron speculates that the following behaviours help to brand a persona as a real person:

- Quality of Gmail account and those of correspondents
- Google Wallet and Checkout usage patterns
- Google Maps use and travel patterns near credit card address
- Use of YouTube
- Use of +1 button
- For the details you will need to see his Google+ post.

my take

Aaron has made a great start but IMHO other behaviours can be deduced. I spend most of my time with large corporate sites and reading the above with that lens made me shake my head. There is often no corporate Google account other than to create a WMT account at best. There wouldn't be

Turn to next page



a credit card tied to that account. It wouldn't use Maps to get directions. It wouldn't watch YT. etc

Such a filter is fine for removing scraper sites from further evaluation, but I have a problem with his statement: "Of course no user will score super high on everything, but they can get probabilities & toss out usage data on anything below an 80% level of confidence."

If this were so, then most corporate personas would fail, leaving their sites in peril.

I strongly believe that sites that pass a TrustRank (PDF) test with a high score are immune from checks that the rest of our sites have to endure.

creating google-proof personas

Let's leave spammers out of this article. At my Australia/New Zealand Directory I see many SEO companies submitting links on behalf of clients with a fresh Gmail address that is probably not

used after an initial round of link submissions. They might use that address to submit some articles to directories and the really inept agencies might use it for comment and forum signature spam. That's it.

What's wrong with this picture? Anyone in our industry can spot one of these Gmail addresses as a fake often by looking at them. I delete whole chunks of waiting submissions merely by looking at the address and not the actual submission. They are always a text string that ends with some digits.

I am not a retail SEO, so I don't need to do this, but in the interests of improving the industry, here is how I would go about setting up a persona (leaving out details that might help the wrong people):

Create a spreadsheet with multiple columns and refer to it when using a persona. Place each persona on a new line.

Choose a realistic name that doesn't draw attention. A "Mark Smith" will pass visual scrutiny, but a Barr. Wardt Wodelt (a real example in my junk folder today) looks suspicious.

Find a realistic photo of someone who isn't a model. The plainer the better.

Fill the spreadsheet with the persona's CV and various details. If they were born in New York and live in Los Angeles, then they need to be seen to write various things as if they currently live in LA. Their high school and university could be in one of those two places.

Open accounts at various online places with the same nick and same personal details, so that a web search

for the nick will produce a lot of results pointing to the same full name and location. A real person would usually have a Facebook account, so ensure that it has some activity at regular intervals and performs things that real people do, e.g. add apps, Like articles, leave comments etc. Their LinkedIn account would need to show the same educational institutions and locations.

Create many more personas as needed, not all at once.

I won't elaborate on how to make these personas more convincing, other than to say that they should have been created a long time ago, gradually, perhaps from different cities when you were visiting them. Creating 20 Gmail accounts from the same IP address in one session is a bad idea.

I don't use many Google services, such as Checkout, Picasa, Gmail.com address, etc, so I might score low in Aaron's list of checkpoints. However, I use addresses that were created in 1994 and 2002 and have left a vast trail all over the web since then. Spoofed spam has been sent from one of those, but I have not noticed any lasting damage to rankings, if any. I do participate in Google+, Groups, Orkut, WMT, Maps, and some other Google services, so my various accounts should look very human.

Ash Nallawalla is a member of the Melbourne (Australia) PC Users Group and is a Digital Strategy Consultant. This article can be viewed at <http://bit.ly/tWJnLE>



WORD

copying headers and footers

If you have developed two documents that are closely related (perhaps they are even different versions of the same information), you may want to copy headers or footers from one document to the other.

This is easy to do using standard editing techniques in Word 2007:

1. Select the first document.
2. Display the Insert tab of the ribbon.
3. Click either the Header or Footer tool in the Header & Footer group. Word displays a list of options.
4. Click either Edit Header or Edit Footer, depending on which you want to do. Word switches to Print Layout view (if necessary) and positions the insertion point within the header or footer. The design tab of the ribbon is also displayed.
5. Use the controls in the Navigation group to display the header or footer you want to copy.
6. Select all the elements (text and graphics) in the header or footer.
7. Press Ctrl+C. This copies the header or footer information to the Clipboard.
8. Select the second document.
9. Display the Insert tab of the ribbon.
10. Click either the Header or Footer tool in the Header & Footer group. Word displays a list of options.
11. Click either Edit Header or Edit Footer, depending on which you want to do. Word switches to Print Layout view (if necessary) and positions the insertion point within the header or footer. The design tab of the ribbon is also displayed.
12. Use the controls in the Navigation group to display the header or footer where you want to paste your header or footer that you copied in step 7.

13. Position the insertion point in the header or footer, then press Ctrl+V. The information in the Clipboard will be inserted in the header or footer.

14. Close the header or footer area for each of your documents. (Click the Close button at the right of the Design tab of the ribbon.)

If you are using an older version of Word, follow these steps instead:

1. Select the first document.
2. Choose the Header and Footer option from the View menu. This displays the Header and Footer dialog box.
3. Use the controls in the dialog box to display the header or footer you want to copy.
4. Select all the elements (text and graphics) in the header or footer.
5. Press Ctrl+C. This copies the header or footer information to the Clipboard.
6. Select the second document.
7. Choose the Header and Footer option from the View menu. This displays the Header and Footer dialog box.
8. Use the controls in the dialog box to display the header or footer where you want to paste your header or footer you copied in step 5.
9. Position the insertion point in the header or footer, then press Ctrl+V. The information in the Clipboard will be inserted in the header or footer.
10. Close the Header and Footer for each of your documents.

This tip (1096) applies to Microsoft Word versions: 97, 2000, 2002, 2003 and 2007. http://word.tips.net/Too1096_Copying_Headers_and_Footers.html

major security flaw in wireless routers

A major security flaw was revealed in December 2011 that affects wireless routers with the Wi-Fi Protected Setup (WPS) feature, which most recent models have and enable by default, SANS.org said.

The flaw allows a remote attacker to recover the WPS PIN and, with it, the router's WPA/WPA2 password in a few hours. 1. Users have been urged to turn off the WPS feature, 2. although this may not be possible on some router models. <http://bit.ly/wbDmj>

CNET.com said, "The vulnerability itself is inherent in the Wi-Fi Protected Set-up protocol. This protocol, which is often bundled into Wi-Fi routers, is designed to allow unskilled home users to set up secure networks using WPA encryption without much hassle. Users are then able to type in a shortened PIN instead of a long pass-phrase when adding a new device to the secure network.

"The problem is that when security PINs are entered for access to the network, the router actually lets the user know if has gotten the first or last numbers of the 8-digit code correct." Different combinations of PINs can be "tried over and over until one is found that allows the hacker access. This can be done since most routers don't limit the number of attempts on the passwords used to access the router.

"Typically, it would take a hacker about 100 million tries to crack an eight digit code. But because the router indicates whether or not some digits are correct, that number drops to around 11,000 attempts before access can be gained," according to a paper written by a researcher. "Once an hacker figures out the PIN, it's much easier to figure out the router's password and gain access to the network.

"The security flaw could affect millions of people with Wi-Fi routers in their homes and businesses, since the protocol is integrated into most new wireless routers sold today. The US-CERT warning named all the major wireless router brands: Buffalo, D-Link, Cisco Linksys, Netgear, Technicolor, TP-Link, and ZyxEL.

(Source: CNET.com, <http://cnet.co/AgTQs3>)

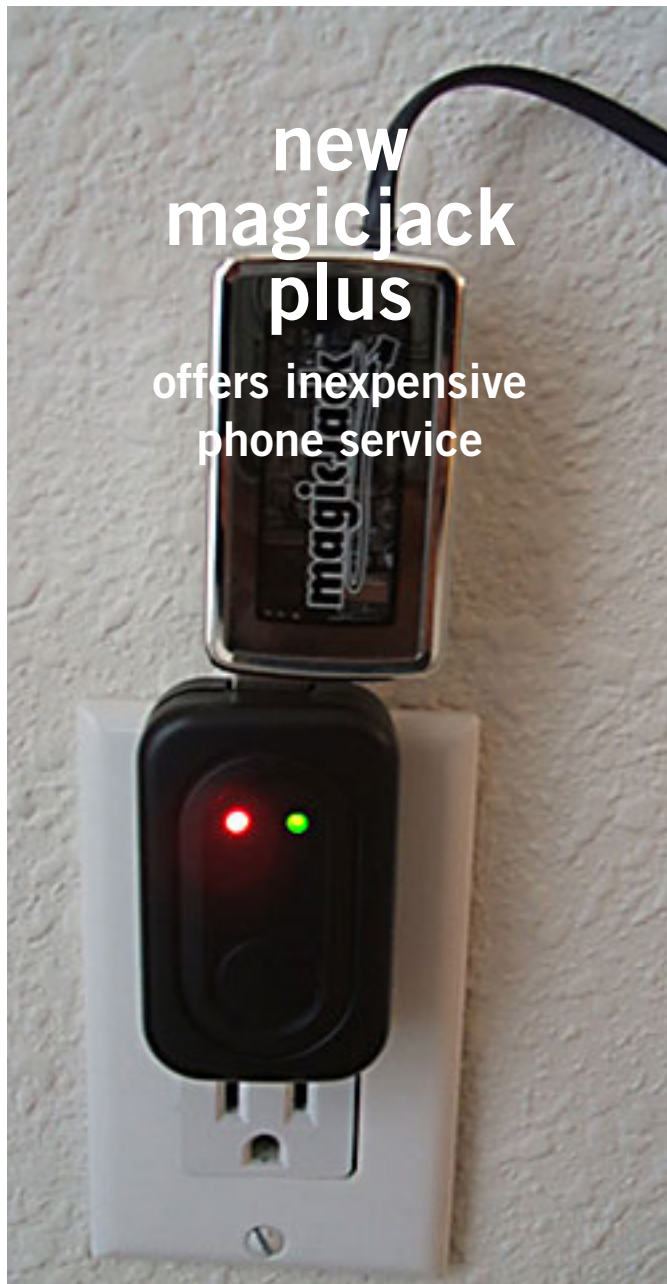


computer users
watch out for
security
flaws and
bugs

facebook awards credit to bug hunters

Facebook has started giving out White Hat Visa debit cards to bug hunters. Facebook began paying bounties for bugs in July 2011. Those reporting the flaws earn a minimum of US \$500 and there is no maximum amount; to date, the largest sum Facebook has paid for a vulnerability is US \$5,000. The bug hunters must abide by Facebook's responsible Disclosure Policy, which requires that they not publicly disclose the flaw until it has been fixed. <http://cnet.co/wPy2pL>

(Source: SANS NewsBites, December 31, 2011)



The new magicJack Plus can be connected to a live computer (just like the original product). Or it can be connected directly to a broadband router, which will provide an always-on capability and no need for a computer connection, as long as the broadband connection is live and the router is powered.

by Ira Wilsker

If you watch any TV, you have undoubtedly seen the countless commercials for magicJack, offering to save the users hundreds of dollars a year in phone bills, for a monthly fee of about \$2.

When it first came out about three years ago, I reviewed the original magicJack in this column and on my weekly radio show. At that time, magicJack offered some of the least expensive unlimited local and long distance phone service in the country by utilizing the small \$39.95 USB connected original magicJack device, a broadband internet connected computer, and an attached telephone.

MagicJack is very useful in that it offers unlimited local and long distance calling throughout the U.S. and Canada, deeply discounted international calling via prepaid minutes, free directory assistance, call waiting, voice mail, caller ID, and free international calling when calling the U.S. MagicJack also offers its users free conference calling; as long as the user creating the conference call is a registered magicJack user, anyone else may participate in the conference call. Creating a “conference call room” is very simple, and instructions are online at www.freemagicconference.com.

According to its website, over eight million of the original magicJack units have been sold. MagicJack uses VoIP (voice over internet protocol) technology to send and receive phone calls over the internet, a technology utilized by several other internet or “digital” phone services.

I used the original USB connected magicJack for about two years, primarily for making long distance calls from home rather than using prime time cell phone minutes.

I also took my magicJack and an old telephone with me when traveling such that I would have local and long distance service from hotel rooms, and thus avoid expensive hotel telephone charges, or using limited cell phone minutes. I took my magicJack and phone with me when evacuating from a series of coastal hurricanes, providing me with phone service

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while away from home. The final use of my original magicJack was in my office so that I could make or return long distance phone calls without incurring long distance charges for my college.

Except for one glitch during a periodic automatic upgrade of the original magicJack software, which led to the loss of my phonebook, it always served me well as long as I had a broadband internet connection and my computer was turned on.

The requirement that the original magicJack must be connected via USB to a powered and booted computer was its Achilles' heel.

While the voice quality was good, and features comprehensive, the original magicJack could only be used if the computer was on, and I always shut down my computer when I was not using it.

With the computer off, the original magicJack was also off, resulting in missed calls, or the



inability to make calls until the computer was on and booted.

Because of this inability to function while the computer was off, I started using a competitor's product, NetTalk Duo, which connected directly to my router, and did not require that it be connected to a powered and booted computer, meaning that it was always functional, as long as I had an internet connection.

Recently, a new magicJack Plus (\$69.99 retail, 30 day trial available) was introduced which maintained all of the features, portability, and

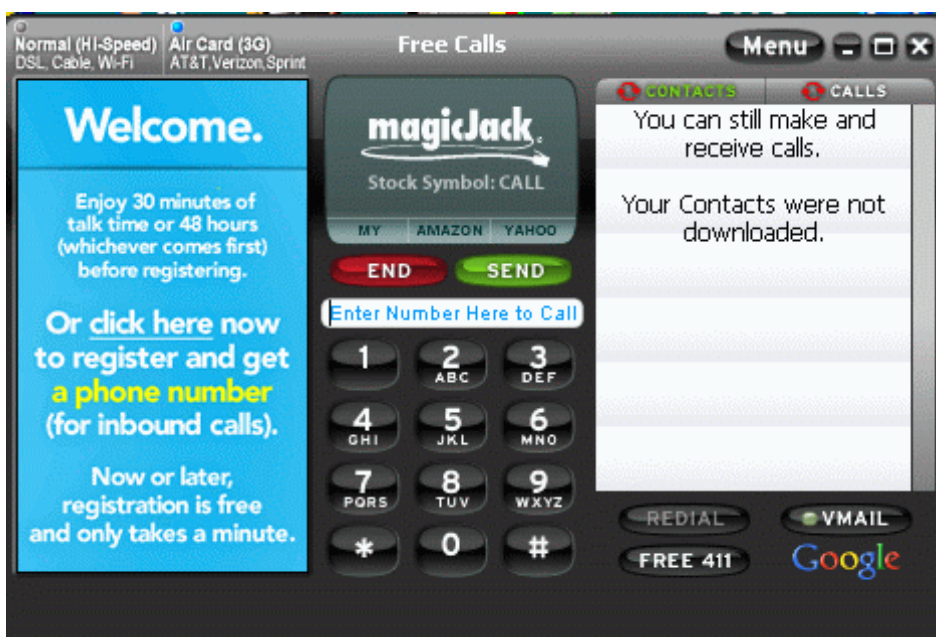
services of the original magicJack, including the first year of service, but now offers the user the choice of being USB connected to a live computer (just like the original product), or being connected directly to a broadband router, which will provide an

always-on capability. With this router connected option, there is no need for the magicJack Plus to be connected to a computer, as long as the broadband connection is live and the router is powered.

The new magicJack Plus comes in a package with the simple pictorial connection instructions inside the cover, and registration instructions on the back cover. The device itself is about the same small size as the original device, 1.7"x2.7"x0.7", black in color, with a small blue LED on the front corner which indicates that the device has power, and a green LED by the Ethernet connection, which indicates that a signal is present.

On the right side of the device is a standard male USB connector, with the left side having both Ethernet and phone jacks. In the package with the device is a short USB extension cable, Ethernet cable, and a wall plug transformer with a standard USB connection. Connecting the device is simple and intuitive. To originally setup and register the device requires that the device be connected to a powered USB port on the computer (or a fully powered hub); the included USB extension

Keypad, contacts and calls display in this box that runs minimized when not in use.



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2009 PRODUCT of the YEAR

magicJack PLUS

Use with or without computer

Enable Auto-Renew and You are Entitled to Receive a magicJack PLUS Lifetime Warranty

Enable [Auto-Renew](#) (you can disable Auto-Renew at any time at [my.magicjack.com](#)), and we will give you a FREE magicJack PLUS [Lifetime Warranty](#) (a \$20 value), absolutely FREE.

Thank you, enable Auto-Renew and my Lifetime Warranty

No Thanks, I'll take my chances.

During registration numerous “up sell” screens, such as this one, are displayed.

cable can be used to connect the device if port spacing is a problem.

When connected directly to the computer via USB either for the one-time registration process or for computer based telephone service, the device and its drivers will automatically load unless the security software on the computer blocks external devices from automatically running.

If the USB connected magicJack will not automatically load when inserted with the computer booted, the user may either uncheck the security software box that restricts external devices from automatically loading, or may manually run the “autorun.exe” on the magicJack drive, which will download, update, and install the magicJack software on the computer, and start the registration process. If it is desired to run in USB mode whenever the computer is on, the magicJack installation process will insert a file

in the computer startup sequence that will automatically load the magicJack software at the next boot.

While the actual one-time registration process was simple, it was burdened by a series of about a dozen screens attempting to up sell the user into purchasing additional features and services.

One of the first up sell screens offers the user the choice of being assigned a free local phone number by choosing a state, area code and city, or for a \$10 fee the user could create a vanity phone number using any combination of available numbers and letters, or the user can select a Canadian phone number.

While not displayed at this time during the registration process, magicJack does offer the ability to transfer an existing phone number to the magicJack service.

Another choice was the \$3 fee for selecting your own “last four digits” of your assigned phone prefix.

One problem became apparent for our local 409 area code; all of the phone numbers listed for 409 were for Galveston; there were no local numbers for the Golden Triangle area of Texas.

Another screen offers an optional “this one time only” no-fault comprehensive warranty on the device itself for \$1 per year instead of the normal \$10 per year.

The next screen offers the “5 Year Platinum Service Plan” which adds another 5 years of service, plus a 5 year extended warranty on the device, for a one-time charge of \$99.95.

A following screen offers a second year of service and a one year warranty extension for \$29.95.

Still another screen offered the user the option of buying additional devices for \$69.95, with free rush shipping.

Not yet done selling additional services, subsequent registration

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screens offer deeply discounted prepaid international calling, and a \$20 lifetime warranty.

Once these up sell screens completed their sales pitch, the user enters an activation code emailed by magicJack during the registration process; the user is then shown his magicJack phone number; given the opportunity (twice) to automatically email friends and family the new phone number; and then choose the desired connection method, USB or Ethernet.

The registration process is now completed, and the user may now make and receive unlimited calls using the magicJack.

Once registered and activated, the magicJack Plus can be used in USB mode by plugging any standard phone into the phone jack on the device; the power is provided by the USB port (note that this will not work on USB hubs that are not fully powered; many USB hubs do not provide full electrical power to attached devices).

The device is now fully functional, and calls may be made using the dial on the phone or by dialing using the magicJack phone book on the desktop.

Alternatively, once registered and activated, the magicJack may be connected directly to the router using the included Ethernet cable, and powered by connecting the device directly to the wall-plug transformer or by using the included USB extension cable to the wall-plug power supply.

Utilizing this method, which is my personal preference, is what provides the always-on functionality without the necessity of a powered computer.

websites

<http://magicjack.com>

<http://www.freemagicconference.com>



For those with a simple cable or DSL modem that does not include an extra Ethernet port, the big box office supply and electronics stores, as well as the discount stores, have a “network switch”, which is a simple box (about \$15) that provides additional Ethernet ports to the cable or DSL modem, and functions as a router.

I found the new magicJack Plus to be feature rich and reasonably priced for the amount of services provided, with very good voice quality. I like the portability and small size of the device, as well as the option to use it with a direct connection to the router, negating the necessity for a powered computer.

On an annual basis, having unlimited local and long distance calling, directory assistance, caller ID, voice mail, 911 service, and conference calling for about \$2.50 per month is a money saving bargain.

I also found that the new magicJack Plus does work fine with my home fax machine. Using the magicJack connected to my router, I have not encountered any functional problems with it; the only negative issue is not having a local Golden Triangle phone number.

Other than the several marketing screens displayed during the one-time registration process, the magicJack

Plus was very fast and easy to install, configure, and setup. For those with broadband internet, the new magicJack Plus may be an effective alternative to high local and long distance phone bills.



Ira Wilsker is an Associate Professor of Management Development at Lamar Institute of Technology in Beaumont, Texas; a Deputy Sheriff in Jefferson County, Texas; APCUG contributor and former APCUG Advisor and Board Director; and columnist for The Examiner newspaper in Beaumont.

For 16 years, he's hosted "My Computer Show" a call-in tech support show on KLVI radio, 560AM, 4-5 p.m. Pacific time, Mondays. The show streams live over the net at KLVI.com and on the free iHeartRadio app. His call-in number is 800-330-5584.

zagg invisible shield

A durable protective covering for smartphones, laptops, mp3 player, tablet, or other portable devices.



Shield has curves, cut-outs



Scratch Test with screws & drill

by George Harding, Tucson Computer Society

If you have a smart phone, MP3 player, tablet or other portable device, you need a durable covering for the faces of your instrument. ZAGG has a solution for you.

Why have a covering? Many reasons:

First, you want to protect the surfaces from scratches. Plastic scratches very easily and even glass can be marred.

Second, it's easier to clean than the natural surface.

Third, even the corners and curves are protected.

Fourth, the covering is easier to hold onto, so you're less likely to drop it. And last, it's invisible.

The product is specific to each device, since it must have the proper cutouts for the device you're going to protect. ZAGG has a product for just about every device known to the tech world.

The Invisible Shield product has a lifetime guarantee. If it gets damaged, ZAGG will replace it for free. You can't get better protection than that!

Installation is carefully done. First, wash your hands (didn't think of that, did you?). Unplug or turn off your device. Wipe it clean with a lint-free cloth. The kit comes with a small bottle of spray. You spray your fingertips with it. Then remove the paper backing from the clear plastic overlay for the surface you are working on (there are overlays for all sides of your device). Then spray the overlay.

Next, place the overlay on the surface you're working on and make sure it's aligned properly. If necessary, remove the overlay, spray it again and realign it. You can lightly spray the non-adhesive side of the overlay to make the squeegee move more smoothly. The squeegee (supplied) is then used to push out the bubbles and excess solution.

Soak up any excess solution with a clean cloth. You'll want to set your device aside for overnight to let the solution dry and cure.

The overlays won't scratch, tear or become damaged and should last for the lifetime of your device. If you encounter a problem, contact Zagg for replacement of the Invisible Shield, www.zagg.com. Price varies by device, but about \$25 for most.

windows live photo gallery



by Lee Reynolds, Boca Raton Computer Society, FL

For Windows 7, Microsoft has stopped furnishing the Windows Photo Gallery that was built into Windows Vista, and instead made a version of the program available from the Windows Live site. Windows Live Photo Gallery can also be installed in Windows Vista and Windows XP. By removing this component from the operating system, it is to be hoped that Microsoft will be able to provide updates and improvements in a much more timely manner.

You can download the latest version of Windows Live Photo Gallery from here: <http://www.windowslive.com/Desktop/PhotoGallery>

With Windows Live Photo Gallery, you can manage all your photos, search for them, import them from a camera or other removable media, order prints online, and publish them (upload to Windows Live Spaces, Flickr).

When you import photos, they are automatically grouped by date and time. You can edit them to fix red-eye, crop out unwanted sections, correct colors, and adjust the lighting, sharpness, etc. Any edit you make to your photos can be reverted later at any time.

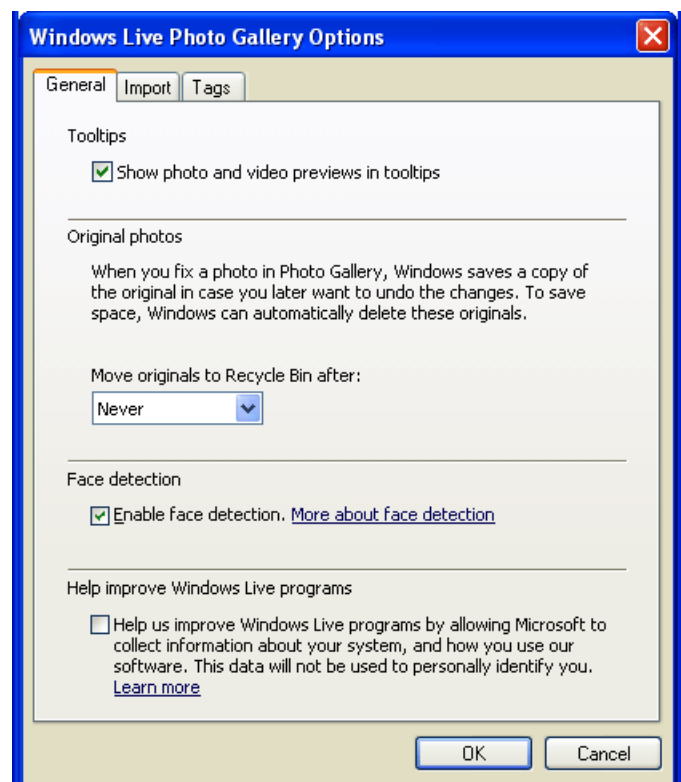
You can stitch several photos together to offer a “panoramic” view. You can also apply a treatment to color photos to convert them to black and white and shades of grey. The list of capabilities of the program goes on and on.

For example, you can send photos by e-mail, burn them to a CD, and print them.

You can add tags, ratings, and captions. Since Live Photo Gallery has the ability to automatically recognize faces, you can tag them with the names of the people in the photos and therefore be able to search by the people in your photos.

You can resize, rotate, delete and rename the photos.

There is QuickTime movie support if you have QuickTime 7 or later installed.



adobe makes major upgrade policy change

In November, Adobe announced a huge change in its upgrade pricing and policy for the popular Creative Suite software.

In past years, the company has offered a “three-versions-back” upgrade policy. For example, anyone who owned a prior Creative Suite product up to three major versions back would be eligible for discounted upgrade pricing of up to 80% when moving up to the latest release.

Adobe now says that policy will be ending. Starting in 2012 when CS6 comes out, upgrades will be only a “one-version-back” plan. This means to receive a price break when upgrading to CS6, you need to already be on CS5 or CS5.5.

What does this mean for those still running CS2, CS3, or CS4 at that time? Basically, if you want to upgrade later or have been waiting for CS6 to do so, it would cost you full price. To receive a discount from older versions, you’d need to upgrade to CS5 before CS6 ships.

In other words, Adobe will only be offering the traditional upgrade

savings for one major version back.

Perhaps there is a saving grace — people with older versions can upgrade now with an extra 20% off the currently-discounted upgrade price good through March 15, 2012.

Adobe appears to be making this change as a part of extending CS subscription offerings to encompass its recently-announced Creative Cloud initiative. The Cloud is also a subscription-based program.

Adobe is seeking to make more frequent updates to their software to reflect the dynamic environment of the web, smartphones, tablets, and mobile applications. They anticipate that customers will head over to cloud membership, which will also keep them current with Adobe programs.

However, if you wish, you can stick with your personally-owned, standalone software. If you don’t want to rent cloud applications, you might want to take advantage of Adobe’s discount offer of an extra 20% off for the short time it will be offered.

kelby sounds off about adobe change

“...From the information I’ve gathered, it appears to me that this new upgrade policy for the next version of Adobe Photoshop and the Creative Suite (presumably called CS6) will leave a significant number of your customers with no affordable upgrade path to Photoshop CS6 or the Creative Suite,” Scott Kelby, president of the National Association of Photoshop Professionals wrote on his blog.

“...While I understand that Adobe needs to make business decisions based on how it sees market conditions, I feel the timing of this new pricing structure is patently unfair to your customers (and our members). Here’s why: You didn’t tell us up front. You didn’t tell us until nearly the end of the product’s life cycle, and now you’re making us buy CS5.5 for just a few months on the chance that we might want to buy CS6 at a discount when it’s released. Otherwise, we have to pay the full price as if we were never Adobe customers at all.

“...I have always felt that Adobe was very customer centric, and that their decisions were based on what’s best for their customers, but in this particular instance I can’t see how cutting off CS4 and CS3 users, and making them either pay two upgrades in a row, or pay the full retail price to get CS6, benefits anybody but Adobe.”

Read the entire blog entry to Adobe at <http://bit.ly/w4pK7q>

Submitted by Darry D Eggleston



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time for renewal?

(2 mos. expired)

NOV. 1 Bill McGraw

(1 mo. expired)

DEC. 1 Dan Gonse

Carl Westberg

JAN. 1 Joe Gionet

LeRoy Kaump

FEB. 1 Mike Lyons,

Charlie Moore

MAR. 1 Frank Bollinger

Kevin Joe

APR. 1 Lothar Loehr

David Musser

MAY 1 Lloyd Boutwell

submitted by Charlie Moore

BRING USED INKJET PRINTER CARTRIDGES:

Hewlett Packard, Canon (BC-02, BC-05, BC-20 or BX-3), Lexmark, Dell, Compaq, Kodak, Samsung, Sharp; or any laser printer cartridge, to meetings for our ongoing fundraising project.

2011 raffle results

A link to the results of the Annual Christmas Fundraising Raffle is on our website, www.orcopug.org, on the Members page. Or, you can contact Charlie Moore, charlie@orcopug.org, and request the results.

Access the Members' Only! page by inputting a username (your first initial and last name, lowercase, no space), and a password. It is OCR (capital letters, no space before numbers) plus your member number.



Give Your Computer A Gift...become a member of ORCOPUG!

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membership application

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Meetings are the second Tuesday of every month. See www.orcopug.org for more information.

For about \$2 a month you can belong to our user group!

2011: net neutrality active, at&t denied 2012: *sopa/pipa still threaten internet*

Net Neutrality: This weak set of requirements against online discrimination went into effect November 2011, although they were passed on a 3-2 party-line in December 2010.

The rules now face a court challenge from Verizon and net neutrality could someday be overturned. For now, after years of debate, it's the official policy of the US government.

AT&T and T-Mobile: Opposition from both the Department of Justice and the FCC finally killed AT&T's plan to "help consumers" by buying T-Mobile USA for \$39 billion.

SOPA/PIPA: The PROTECT IP Act (Senate) and Stop Online Piracy Act (House) contemplate an official US Internet censorship regime aimed especially at foreign "rogue sites" that can't easily be reached by US companies with complaints about piracy.

While the issues are real, these absurdly over-the-top panders to Hollywood finally galvanized the online world to action late in the year.

Attempts to move both bills quickly have failed, but House and Senate leaders have both promised to move on their respective legislation early in 2012.

(Source: <http://bit.ly/wXMvnk>)

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Mac Life	\$10.97	—	—
Maximum pc	\$ 9.95	\$18.95	\$27.95
Microsoft System Journal	\$21.95	\$39.95	—
pc Magazine (digital, 12 issues/year)	\$14.95	\$24.95	\$35.95
pc World	\$16.95	—	—
Readers' Digest	\$16.95	—	—
Saturday Evening Post	\$11.95	—	—
Videomaker	\$11.95	\$21.95	—

Revised October 2009

thank you to our 2011 vendors!

Thank you Acoustica Software, cemOmax, Corel, Help Me 2 Learn, MGI, McGraw-Hill, Microsoft Press, O'Reilly, SmithMicro, Stardock Systems Inc., User Group Relations, and Wacom Technology Corporation for generously donating your products to our 2011 fundraising raffle!

thank you

newsletter contributors!

Ash Nallawalla, Charlie Moore, Darry D Eggleston, George Harding, Herb Goodman, Ira Wilsker, Judy Tylour, Lee Reynolds, Linda Gonse, Mike Lyons, Pim Borman, Sharon Parq Associates, Tim O'Reilly

February Deadline

JANUARY 21

secret

keyword raffle!

The secret keyword raffle is back! The prize is Audio Zone 2.0 computer speakers. The keyword is hidden somewhere in this newsletter or on our www.orcopug.org website. Find it and name it at the meeting and take home the prize!



member of the association of
personal computer user groups



benefits of User Group Membership

- Product & "How To" demos
- Free raffles and magazines
- Help from other members
- Newsletter and web site
- Special offers & discounts
- Monthly meetings
- Affiliation with worldwide group

User groups represent the spirit of the frontier, a community getting together to do things that no individual ought to have to do alone. The pioneers of the American west got together for barn raisings, cattle roundups, and the occasional party. The pioneers of new technology get together for installfests, new user training and support, and just plain fun. Being part of a user group is the best way to get more out of your computer, and lets you make friends while you're at it.

Tim O'Reilly, President
O'Reilly Media

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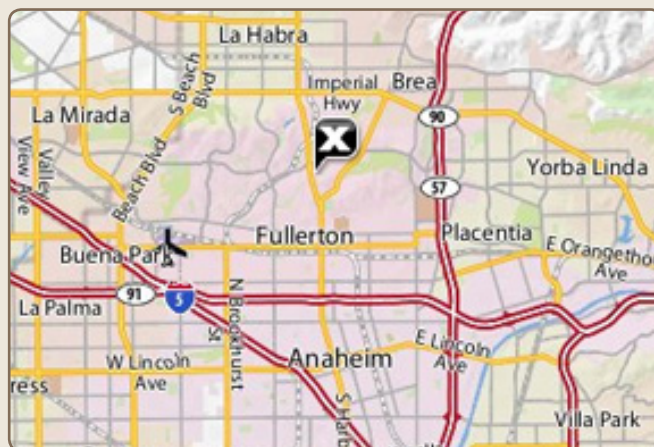


where are the meetings, when are they held?

next meeting: Tuesday, January 10, 6:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. — North Orange County Ymca, Fullerton

Regular meetings are held the second Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at the North Orange/County YMCA, 2000 Youth Way, Fullerton, CA 92835. Call 714-879-9622, for information. Meetings are free and the public is welcome!

Planning meetings are held the third Thursday of every month at 7 p.m. at Downey Savings & Loan, one block east of Harbor at Bastanchury in Fullerton. All members are welcome to attend planning meetings!



Go to www.orcopug.org for the Yahoo! location map